

**‘A RENEWED IRAN DEAL AND ISRAEL'S OPTIONS’
WITH EFRAIM INBAR
SUMMARY OF A ‘MIDDLE EAST FORUM’ WEBINAR
25 JUNE 2022**



Efraim Inbar is president of the Jerusalem Institute for Strategy and Security. He previously was professor of Political Studies at Bar-Ilan University, where he founded the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies (BESA), as well as a visiting professor at several American universities having also served as a paratrooper in the Israel Defense Forces.

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS BY EFRAIM INBAR

- Although the likelihood of a renewed nuclear deal with Iran, or ‘JCPOA 2’, has looked faded in the past several weeks, Tehran and Washington still can make it happen, though because of priority that is now been given to Ukraine, the Iran issue is at this time of less importance for both the US and Europe.
- It is however a fact that because Europe has always been interested in expanding its trade relations with Iran, it has always been at the forefront of placing less pressure on the Iranians.
- According to Inbar, for the Iranians “who are strong at bargaining and are flexible on timing and price”, they are in no rush for moving forward because they are aware that the Europe and America are now ready for a deal.
- As a result, Iran has been piling pressures by expanding its nuclear activities and not cooperating fully with the IAEA etc.
- According to Inbar, the big question was whether Iran was in a position to miss the current opportunity for signing a new deal given its need to legitimize its nuclear program in addition to the much needed \$100 billion that would become available to it as a result.
- More importantly from an IRI perspective, signing a deal will at the same time also delegitimize any Israeli military action that might be taken against Iran.
- For its part, the West was also unlikely to end the negotiations, irrespective of the fact that the IAEA Board of Governors had censured Iran for its lack of cooperation and various breaches of its commitments.
- Inbar surmised that in these circumstances, it was likely that some form of an agreement would be reached, although it was unlikely to resolve anything serious.
- Such an agreement was something that Israel did not want (especially because Iran wanted it). With no agreement, any Israeli attack on Iran would be more legitimate.

- Inbar was of the view that agreement or not, escalation was inevitable as witnessed by the rising number of individuals assassinated by Israel in Iran and the Iranian resort to retaliate against Israel by targeting Israelis and Jews anywhere they could find to attack them.
- Inbar noted that in Syria, the recent attack on Damascus airport to disrupt the delivery of Iranian weapons to Hezbollah and the destruction of some 100 Iranian UAVs was itself an escalation of sorts.
- Inbar also pointed to the fact that the conflict had now also extended to the Red Sea (with the Houthis) and included a possible disruption to the plans of the Israeli and Lebanese government - in face of Hezbollah agitations - to reach an agreement for the export of Israeli gas to Europe in the coming years.

