

The Iranian Deal: What Happens Next?

The **deal** is done. The Iranian leaders are claiming victory. The White House is claiming victory. Most European governments, as well as Russia, are claiming victory.

The Israeli government, meanwhile, is horrified. They, and many of their citizens, feel more isolated than ever. As I [reported](#) from Jerusalem, this was true before the deal was struck. It is even more true now.

“One [Israeli] radio host on Sunday repeatedly played clips of President Obama, during his visit here in March, reassuring Israelis, in Hebrew, that ‘you are not alone,’ and then said ominously, ‘We are in fact alone,’” reports *The New York Times*.

Below, you’ll find a selection of key articles I’ve found helpful over the past 72 hours to understand the deal and the reaction to it from various quarters. Above all, I encourage you to read the full text of the interim deal for yourself, along with President Obama’s statement, the Ayatollah Khamenei’s comments and Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu’s comments. These primary source documents will give you the basic facts and contours of the debate:

- [Full text of the Iran nuclear deal](#)
- [President Obama’s statement](#)
- [Ayatollah Khamenei’s statement](#)
- [Prime Minister Netanyahu’s statement](#)

Then we need to ask two critical questions:

1. What will the Saudis do now?
2. What will the Israelis do now?

The **Saudis** have been [signaling in recent weeks](#) they are losing

confidence in their alliance with the U.S., they are increasingly prepared to buy nuclear weapons from Pakistan, and they might even create a tacit alliance with Israel and the Gulf states as a bulwark against Iran. Is all that bluster or is Riyadh serious?

Meanwhile, the initial consensus among most Mideast analysts is that **Israel** is now constrained from launching a preemptive military strike lest the Netanyahu government risk a massive backlash from the international community that has just agreed to an interim agreement with Iran, pending a comprehensive agreement in 2014. But I've also seen several examples of Israelis saying this deal makes a preemptive strike more likely, and possibly even inevitable, especially if the Saudis will help. Is this true or just the bluster of those frustrated by what they perceive as the world's **betrayal**?

To be candid, I don't have the answers to these questions. Not yet. In part, this is because I don't think the Saudis or the Israelis at the highest levels have come to clear answers about how to proceed from here. At the moment, I would lean toward agreeing with those who believe Israeli won't take any military action during these next six months, but there are many factors I cannot see from this angle.

I don't want to see a scenario like the one I portrayed in [*Damascus Countdown*](#) unfold. I'd much rather see a **diplomatic solution** that truly worked. That said, I'm deeply concerned that the world powers just let themselves be hoodwinked by the mullahs in Iran and that the world has suddenly become a much more dangerous place with **Iran** in a better position to build and deploy nuclear weapons.

There are many variables here. And there are likely to be many twists and turns on the road ahead. The best I can do is promise to keep you posted on developments as they unfold. Let's keep praying for the Iranian nuclear threat to be neutralized peacefully, if at all possible.

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