

Denouement on P5+1 Iran Nuclear Deal?



Russian S-300 MPU Air Defense System Moscow, Feb. 20, 2015

Source: AFP/Getty Images

Yesterday, President Putin was up to his usual antics [lifting](#) the 2010 moratorium on sale of the Russian S-300 advanced air defense system. This was exquisitely timed to consternate the efforts of President Obama and Secretary of State Kerry in the midst of trying to sell Congress today on the merits of the inchoate P5+1 nuclear deal with Iran. In diplo-speak the most the White House and State Department could say in response was that Putin's action was "unhelpful." State Department spokesperson Marie Harf in response to questions raised in yesterday's Daily Press Briefing [said](#):

"We think given Iran's destabilizing actions in the region, in places like Yemen or Syria or Lebanon that this isn't the time to be selling these kind of systems to them." But she added: "We don't think this will have an impact on unity in terms of inside the negotiating room."

For Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu it was evidence that Russia, as we [wrote](#) in January may have signed on to the Axis of Resistance. At the time on January 20th, smiling Russian and Iranian Defense Ministers [met](#) in Tehran, shook hands and publicly announced that the moratorium was passé. The \$800 million paid by Iran for the S-300 air defense system would finally be honored and the new toys delivered to protect Iran's nuclear and military development centers from an air assault by Israel. We wrote:

Russian Defense Minister [Sergei Shoigu](#) [signed](#) an

“cooperation” agreement with Iranian Defense Minister [Hossein Dehghan](#) in Tehran. Both countries are the targets of Western and US Sanctions. Both countries are afflicted with erosion of oil and energy revenues. Both countries are seeking to blunt opposing US interests in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. That is reflected in a comment of Iranian State television by Dehghan [reported](#) by *AFP*, that Iran and Russia had a “shared analysis of US global strategy, its interference in regional and international affairs and the need to cooperate in the struggle against the interference of foreign forces in the region.” There is also the matter of weapon systems deals with proceeds which might bolster Russia’s depleting foreign currency reserves, while combating America’s ally in the Middle East, Israel.

Iranian Defense Minister Dehghan in light of Putin lifting the moratorium on the S-300 sale said: “Extra-regional threats and the spread of terrorism by (insurgent) groups have increased the need to further expand cooperation.” Note this *Wall Street Journal* [comment](#) about who directly benefits in Russia from the sale of the Antey S-300 System to Iran:

Rostec Corporation Chief Executive Officer Sergei Chemezov said in February that Iran was still considering Russia’s offer to supply Antey-2500 missile systems, with a range of about 200 kilometers (125 miles), according to Russian state news agency TASS. Rostec didn’t immediately respond to questions about the status of the offer on Monday.

Mr. Chemezov, who [among those sanctioned](#) by the U.S. over the crisis in Ukraine.

That was a prelude to yesterday’s announcement from the Kremlin. Putin purposefully chose yesterday to rattle the West Wing, Foggy Bottom and Jerusalem by proving that sanctions, whether UN, EU or Congressional are next to useless when it comes to dealing with rogue regimes. The only thing these

masters of disinformation and mischief understand is the willingness to back up words with commitment to use military power. Something lacking in the backbone of the P5+1 cabal lusting after exchanges with the Mahdist Mullahs in Tehran with visions of billion dollar and Euro development deals dancing in their minds. Senator Mark Kirk (R-IL), unlike the Metternichean Munchkins in the West Wing [said](#) it best in today's *Wall Street Journal*:

“Before a final nuclear deal is even reached, [Russian President] [Vladimir Putin](#) has started to demolish international sanctions and ignore the U.N. arms embargo,” said Sen. Mark Kirk (R., Ill.), who sponsored legislation that seeks to impose new sanctions on Iran if a final deal isn't reached by June 30.

Notice the assist that Foreign Minister Lavrov [provided](#) as rational for his boss' latest chess move:

“At this stage, we believe the need for this kind of embargo, and a separate voluntary Russian embargo, has completely disappeared,” Mr. Lavrov said Monday, citing the recent progress in nuclear talks. He called the missile system “exclusively of a defensive nature” and said it “doesn't threaten the security of any governments in the region, including, of course, Israel.”

Not trusting these fine words from Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov, Israeli Strategic Affairs Minister Yuval Steinitz [said](#):

“It's proof that the economic momentum that will come for Iran after lifting sanctions will be exploited for an arms buildup and not for the welfare of the people of Iran,” Israeli Intelligence Minister Yuval Steinitz said.

[That must have garnered more respect from Secretary Kerry poised to brief House and Senate members this week on the nuclear deal with no content announced in Lausanne 12 days](#)

ago. Kerry had the cupidity to praise Russia for its constructive stand, a reference to a Foreign Ministry announcement allegedly saying that the State Department Fact Sheet on the parameters for a final agreement to be reached by June 30th was “accurate.” Note what Josh Earnest, White House Press Spokesperson said