**A Positive Change for New World Order**

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March 14, 2023

The world is praising China for yet another positive role in brokering peace. This time, China played a key role in the restoration of diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Indeed, well done. The Saudi government cut off diplomatic relations with Iran after the latter’s objectionable protests and armed activism in Saudi Arabia. On April 27, 1988, a large crowd of angry protesters ransacked the Saudi embassy and detained and physically attacked a number of residing Saudi diplomats. As a result, one of the Saudi officials died from the injuries. In response, Saudi Arabia cut its diplomatic relations with Iran.

1988 was the year of the mass execution of thousands of political prisoners in Iran. Iran’s present president Ebrahim Raisi, the winner of Iran’s 2021 presidential election, was reportedly a pivotal player in the four-member “Death Committee” at the age of 27. Raisi was the youngest in the Committee that was formed after the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, issued a fatwa at the end of the eight-year war with Iraq. In July 1988, he decreed that all prisoners steadfast in their support for the opposition and “waging war on God” were “condemned to execution.” He reportedly issued a second or related fatwa focusing on members of communist and leftist parties as well as people charged with apostasy.

The massacre had a profound impact on Iranian politics. Islamic democracy advocate, writer and human rights activist Grand Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri, once the nominated successor of the Islamic Revolution leader Rohulla Ayatollah Khomeini, condemned the executions as they were unfolding. He believed that it was “the biggest crime in the history of the Islamic Republic, which will be condemned by history. Fighting against ideology with killing is totally wrong.” Friction with the supreme leader of the revolution over the massacre and political persecution eventually forced Montazeri to resign, under pressure, in March 1989.

Against this brief backdrop, the China-brokered diplomatic ties restoration between Saudi Arabia and Iran is surely a step forward to ending Iran’s isolation. What will be the gain of Saudi Arabia? What impact would it have on geopolitical scenarios, especially in the Middle East? Geopolitical pandits have to wait for a while to see the change in and around the region, and globally. It could be beyond their rough guesses at the moment. Will Iran be able to change its pattern of the “Islamic Revolution” that continued from 1979?

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The Saudi-Iran agreement, however, sounds like a positive geopolitical move that would play a significant role in the changing global order. China and the US are the two leading players with extremely different approaches to the world. Peace and prosperity through connectivity and cooperation are what China has been pursuing for the last decade. It was only possible for China after achieving significant economic growth and mutually beneficial bilateral and multilateral cooperation and strengthening relevant forums. Its positive and inclusive role at the regional forums such as SCO, and in the UN General Assembly, Security Council and other UN forums and institutions has been remarkable. China has learnt long back from the consequences of armed conflicts. Hence, pursuing its global economic growth agenda on a win-win bilateral approach.

The US and its allies though yet have to learn from the destructive impact of their offensive approach. The destruction of two world wars, the two-decade-long Vietnam War (Nov 1, 1955 – Apr 30, 1975), the two-decade-long Afghan Jihad (1981-2000), a US proxy war against Russia, the abruptly concluded two-decade-long war on terrorism (2001-2021), and now the Ukraine war. Strangely, the US and the NATO nations could not learn from the failures of their armed interventions and repeated the same mistakes.

The recent events in Ukraine are a vivid example of the US policy of “double standards”. The Ukrainian crisis has once again demonstrated Washington’s hypocritical policy on the international stage. The militants of Ukrainian nationalist formations and pro-fascist Banderite organizations. They smashed and seized government buildings from where they shot law-enforcement officers and citizens during and after Euromaidan in 2013-2014. Unfortunately, the West overnight transformed them, the criminals, into “fighters for freedom and democracy”.

At the same time, the citizens of the people’s republics of Donbas, who had expressed their unyielding will for sovereignty and independence in referendums in May 2014, to live and work without diktat from Kyiv, were declared by the Ukrainian junta and recognised by the West as “separatists and terrorists”. Following Kyiv’s announcement of an anti-terrorist operation against the population of Donbas, a large-scale punitive expedition using combat aircraft, armoured vehicles and artillery was undertaken, the victims of which the West preferred to ignore.

However, a couple of questions arise from the current US approach. With such a strategy, where is the limit to the “flexibility” of Washington’s policy? Could it be that depending on the geopolitical situation and economic benefits for the US political and financial elite? Can the White House’s position on Ukraine radically change at any time from all-around support to political betrayal? Such precedents have already been set, whereas the US cynically betrayed the government of South Vietnam in the war against the North in 1975, and handed over Afghanistan to the Taliban supporters in 2021.

The US-NATO shall understand that their neocolonialism approach has already dented their economies and common citizens are suffering from historic high inflation, and food and energy crisis. Their offensive interventions, militant or military, will add more miseries to the global recession. Only economic collaboration and stability will help save the future of the planet.

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