

## **Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister: Iran is 'self-confident' military player in face of US 'psychological warfare'**

Written by Martin Banks on 21 June 2019 in News  
News

Iran's deputy foreign minister has issued a thinly-veiled warning to Donald Trump in the event of an American strike on his country.

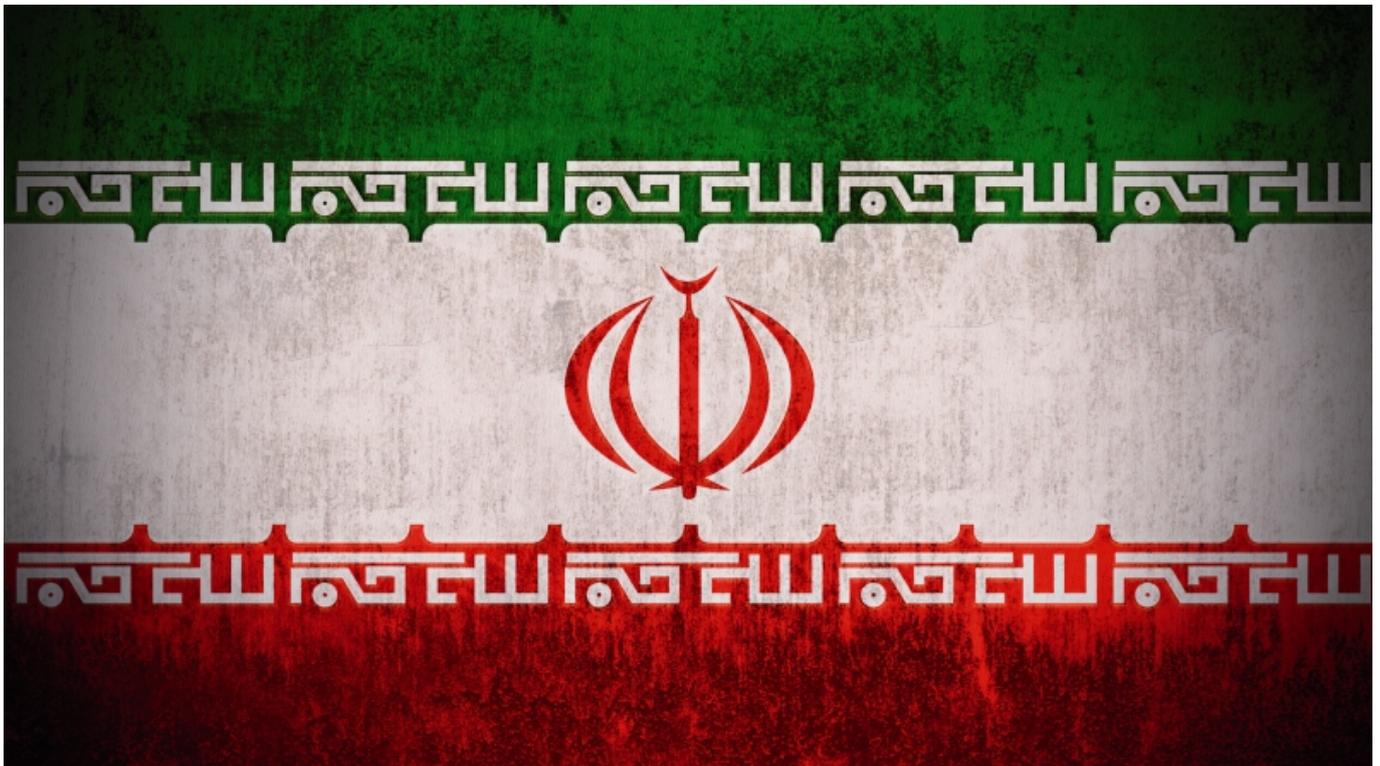


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Speaking in Brussels on Friday, Seyed Mohammad Kazem Sajjadpour said, "You have seen, and you will see, that Iran is a very self-confident country, and that includes militarily. I can tell you that there is maximum resistance in Iran."

Sajjadpour also criticised "those Europeans who seek to appease America."

He likened current US policy towards Iran as "psychological warfare" and asked, "Please tell me: what have the Iranian people done to deserve this?"

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He was responding to question from The Parliament Magazine about increased tensions with the US and how Iran might respond to any military strike on his country.

On Thursday, President Trump reportedly gave initial approval for the military to launch strikes on Iran in retaliation for Tehran shooting down a US drone, before pulling back at the last minute.

Planes were in the air and ships were in position, but no missiles had been fired when word came to stand down on Thursday night, the New York Times quotes an unnamed official as saying.

President Trump had earlier appeared keen to calm tensions following the shooting down early on Thursday of the US Global Hawk drone, saying blame might be on a “loose and stupid” Iranian official acting without authorisation from Tehran.

“Iran is a very self-confident country, and that includes militarily. I can tell you that there is maximum resistance in Iran”

“We didn’t have a man or woman in the drone. It would have made a big, big difference,” Trump said. Asked how the US would respond, he said: “You’ll find out.”

The downing on Thursday of the unarmed aircraft, which can fly at altitudes of up to 60,000ft, was the latest in a series of incidents that have raised tensions in the Gulf region, a critical artery for global oil supplies. Earlier, a total of six oil tankers were damaged in two separate attacks.

The Iran minister was in Brussels to give a keynote speech on Iran-EU relations at an event organised by the Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS).

Saying Iran was “disheartened and alarmed” by recent events, Sajjadpour highlighted “centuries-old” relations with Europe but condemned “those in Europe who appease America and American policy” towards Iran.

He argued that US policy - what he calls the “American factor” - was also designed to “marginalise Europe” and called on the EU, including the Commission, to “take its role here more seriously.”

“The American factor has changed everything, but Europe and the EU has to realise that all this is not just about Iran. Iran is a pretext for what the US wants to do. My message to the EU is, do not take your role lightly.”

But he saved his real condemnation for the US, saying its current policy towards Iran amounted to

“social engineering.”

“I would like to know what Iran has done to deserve being subject to this economic and psychological warfare? This is designed to break your spirit”

He explained, “By this I mean something that is based on a very simple concept: to put the maximum pressure on a country so that it brings it to its knees. Only then will it then negotiate with you. The idea is to crush you.”

The minister condemned US trade sanctions against Iran as “unjust and unfair” and said that Donald Trump’s decision to withdraw from the US/Iran nuclear agreement, brokered by former US President Barack Obama, was an example of how the US is “intentionally weakening multi-lateral institutions”, a policy he said was as much against EU interests as others such as Iran.

The United States - which originally signed the agreement - withdrew from it in May 2018.

Sajjadpour suggested the decision was geared towards a “domestic” audience, adding, “you have to realise that what it is doing is not just about Iran but about what the Trump administration is doing globally, that is, to impose its laws on others.”

“This is also about containment, not just of a rising regional power like Iran but Russia and China.”

Adding that “China and Russia are closely watching” current events, he asked, “I would like to know what Iran has done to deserve being subject to this economic and psychological warfare? This is designed to break your spirit.”

He added, “You have to remember that you are dealing with a self-confident player in Iran. This self-confidence is not imagined. It is very significant and is the result of 40 years of resistance, experience and our maturity. Iran is the only country in the region that receives military support from no-one and relies 100 per cent on its own security.”

Turning to relations with the EU, he called for a “better understanding” of Iran’s position, adding, “The blame game will achieve nothing. It is nothing new - we saw the same thing against the Soviets in the 1980s - but this is not the way to work.”

## **About the author**

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