

40 Years After the Revolution: Understanding the Islamic Republic of Iran

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Remarks by Richard Goldberg, director for countering Iranian weapons of mass destruction,
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RICHARD GOLDBERG:

Thank you for having me.

40 years of failure: that's what the Islamic Republic has produced for the Iranian people.

In a country with such vibrant history and culture, advanced educational opportunities and plentiful natural resources, the people of Iran rightly look at their leaders today and wonder: where did all our money go?

Billions of dollars wasted on terrorist organizations far away from Iran's borders. Billions of dollars wasted on threatening missile systems that serve no defensive purpose. Billions of dollars wasted in Syria. Billions and billions not spent on the Iranian people.

Inflation is out of control, prices are rising and Iran's leaders spend money sending missiles to Yemen?

Workers are striking, the rial is under enormous pressure and Iran is headed into recession – but Iran's leaders keep pouring resources into Syria?

Layer on top of that the decades of corruption, graft and diversion. The money siphoned away from the Iranian people for the personal enrichment of an elite few.

40 years of failure. It's no wonder the Iranian people are finally asking a basic question: Where's the money going?

40 years of failure; 40 years too long. The Iranian people could have a much brighter future if their leaders chose a different path – the path of a normal nation.

As Secretary Pompeo has said, the United States is prepared to fundamentally change the relationship with Iran – including diplomatic and economic relations – if Iran's leaders fundamentally change their behavior.

Comply with international obligations and expectations when it comes to missiles, nuclear activities, proliferation and human rights. Release our citizens. End state-sponsorship of terrorism. Stop threatening your neighbors and fomenting chaos outside your borders.

Until Iran's leaders decide to put the interests of their citizens ahead of their own self-interest, the U.S. maximum pressure campaign will continue and strengthen.

We know where the money goes. It doesn't go to the Iranian people. And so, the United States will do everything we can do to dry up the money the Islamic Republic uses for illicit, dangerous and destabilizing purposes.

When the President says maximum pressure, he means maximum pressure. As Special Representative Hook recently noted, jurisdictions that received Significant Reduction Exceptions to import Iranian crude should not expect those exceptions to be renewed. The oil market is well supplied and can absorb the loss of Iranian crude.

U.S. sanctions will be enforced. As Ambassador Bolton and the State Department have repeatedly said: Special purpose vehicles are no exception.

More sanctions are on the way. The re-imposition of sanctions in November should be considered a first step. It is a baseline, not a finish line.

40 years of failure; 40 years too long. We know where the money goes – and, like the Iranian people, we've seen enough.

Thank you so much.