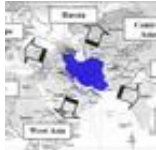


## Iran Review > Energy and Economy



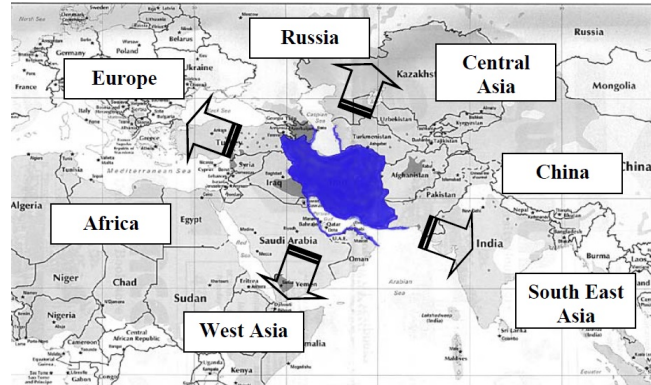
# Iran's Post-JCPOA Priorities: Manpower and Energy

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After several months of negotiations between Iran and the P5+1 group of countries, the promised day finally arrived and sanctions that had engulfed our Iran for many years, are now lifted. This measure will undoubtedly lead to improved relations between Iran and other countries and can greatly affect the country's fate. We have gone through a hard period of time. Those who made the decision about imposing smart sanctions on Iran were well aware of how sanctions could paralyze, not the Iranian government, but the Iranian people, especially the urban middle class. It was a time when a university professor could not buy a book from foreign publishers through electronic means; a period when any ship that approached an Iranian tanker ship would risk confiscation of its property in the United States; a period when Iranians, who wanted to travel to an European capital onboard a plane, had to wait long hours for refueling in another country; a period when no letter of credit (L/C) could be opened and Iran's money was frozen in Asian countries.



Now, in the period following the conclusion of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), Iran is faced with many opportunities. Everybody casts a look at the outlook of Iran's progress and development from their own standpoints. I, for my turn, want to have a share in this look to the future.

1. It seems that the first opportunity before our country is paying attention to one of the great God-given resources in this country, which is nothing but human resources and specialized manpower. During past years, our engineers, physicians, businesspeople and managers were unrightfully denied the opportunity to achieve their deserved position in other countries, especially in West Asia region. Removal of sanctions can start a new period for Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to pay attention and follow up on the facilitation of the activities of specialist Iranians in other countries. India's experience in forming a special ministry to see into the affairs of expatriate Indians, and China's organization, which is responsible for connecting to the Chinese living overseas, are available to us. Many years ago, when I was working with the Foreign Ministry, I proposed that one person must be present in every Iranian mission in other countries as Iran's research representative to promote the country's public diplomacy by taking part in conferences and seminars and establishing contacts with elites in that country. Now, I propose that Iranian embassies must get activated in order to create the suitable atmosphere and resolve problems that face Iranian specialists, entrepreneurs and knowledge-based companies. Even in Afghanistan, we lag behind India and Turkey in terms of the number of Iranians that are working there and also from the viewpoint of engineering services that we export to that country.

2. Iran's second remarkable resource is its energy reserves. Oil and gas resources are one of important elements and factors that affect national security of our country. Following the discovery of oil in Iran, this raw material has gradually played its role as the most important element affecting Iran's economy, politics and, in general, national security. At global energy market, Iran is the focus of attention and a center of international interactions from two viewpoints:

- **Firstly**, due to its geopolitical position and its location within the world's energy ellipse, and

- **Secondly**, due to Iran's vital role in maintaining global energy security.

Playing an essential role in global energy supply will guarantee adequate revenues for the development of the country, while at the same time, guaranteeing national security of the country. Our country connects three major regions where global energy reserves exist, which include the Persian Gulf, Western Siberia, and Central Asia. From the viewpoint of energy consumption, Iran is a link between two major hubs of energy consumption in the world, that is, India and China to the east and Europe to the west. These two specifications have caused international system to attach double importance to security of Iran and its peripheral region. Iran's oil and gas industries need investment. As put by King Hubbert, most Iranian oil reserves are now past their "oil peak" and need the use of various methods in order to boost their production, which include increasing the pressure inside those reservoirs. Iran also needs investment in active sectors and new fields of activity. Oil and gas projects need billions of dollars in investment each. Attracting such investment needs a national resolve to organize an integrated management system, which would include technical, legal, financial and social sectors of the country. Amending oil and gas contracts, making efforts toward self-sufficiency in various fields of energy, and increasing productivity of energy consumption inside the country can be among the country's goals following achievement of JCPOA.

**3.** Let's take advantage of the opportunity offered by the Chinese president's visit to Tehran. China is the biggest trade partner of Iran. This country follows a centralized plan to boost its relations with other countries. If the Chinese president comes to Iran at the head of a 1,000-strong delegation, it means that the Chinese side has been planning this trip in various sectors since months ago. Therefore, it would be expedient for the Iranian side to take decisive steps for the attraction of Chinese capital and implementation of projects in view of opportunities offered by JCPOA.

**4.** Iran's relations with the United States and Europe make up an important part of the Islamic Republic's foreign relations. The past is a beacon for the future. We are past the peak of change in our trade relations. Since five years ago, the volume of Iran's trade with Asian countries has been higher than the combination of Iran's trade with Europe and North America. It took about 200 years for this major shift to come about. It seems that a return to past times is not logical. Therefore, we must take care not to allow relations with countries like Russia, India, China and other Asian countries be removed from our list of priorities.

**Key Words:** Iran, JCPOA, Priorities, P5+1, Sanctions, Specialized Manpower, Energy Reserves, Global Energy Security, Russia, India, China, United States, Europe, Maleki

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