

500 French, British and German MPs write to their US counterparts to support the JCPOA

On May 12, president Donald Trump might decide to finally abandon the JCPOA, the deal between France, the UK, Germany, the United States, China, Russia and Iran regarding Teheran's nuclear program. Several hundred members of parliament of the three European signatory states, from all parts of the political spectrum, have decided to plead to the US congress to help keep this major diplomatic breakthrough alive. It is a pledge for transatlantic strength and a promise for further collaboration on the Iran issue and many other pressing challenges of international politics.

Letter Text

To the members of the United States Congress:

For more than a decade, we – Europeans, Americans, and the international community – have feared the imminent threat of a nuclear-armed Iran. To counter this threat and make the Middle-East a safer place, the international community came together, using the might of diplomatic negotiations and the force of sanctions, agreed upon by most of the major economic powers.

Then, after 13 years of joint diplomatic efforts, we reached a major breakthrough and signed the JCPOA . With that, we were able to impose unprecedented scrutiny on the Iranian nuclear program, dismantle most of their nuclear enrichment facilities, and drastically diminish the danger of a nuclear arms race. Not a drop of blood was spilt. Furthermore, these controls will not cease after the ten years of the JCPOA: Iran will continue to be subject to the strict controls prescribed by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which will continue to limit enrichment.

The only reason why we were able to achieve this breakthrough is that we stood together. Together, Europeans and Americans, we have proven that a strong and united transatlantic partnership can bring about a coalition extending to Russia and China, endorsed by the international community.

This coalition is now at risk, as the US government moves towards abandoning the JCPOA without any evidence of Iran not fulfilling its obligations. The short term effect of this abandonment would be the end of controls on Iran's nuclear program, resulting in another source of devastating conflict in the Middle East and beyond. The long-term risk is even more serious: lasting damage to our credibility as international partners in negotiation, and more generally, to diplomacy as a tool to achieve peace and ensure security. Abandoning the deal would diminish the value of any promises or threats made by our countries. It would also diminish our capability to keep Iran nuclear-free after the expiration of the special provisions of the JCPOA. If we maintain our alliance now, we will be in the position to keep Iran's nuclear aspirations in check in the long run.

Our credibility is all the more urgently needed when we look at the instability in many parts of the world today. With regards to Iran it is an essential ingredient in our much-needed efforts to curb the country's aggressive regional and domestic policy. As much as we share the concerns expressed by many vis-à-vis this Iranian behavior, we are deeply convinced that these issues must be treated separately (as we are doing already) – and not within the context of the JCPOA.

It is the US's and Europe's interest to prevent nuclear proliferation in a volatile region and to maintain the transatlantic partnership as a reliable and credible driving force of world politics. We are open to dialogue on the best ways to tackle these challenges together. But let us be clear: if the deal breaks down, it will well-nigh be impossible to assemble another grand coalition built around sanctions against Iran. We must preserve what took us a decade to achieve and has proven to be effective.

Building coalitions and winning consensus is one of our main tasks as members of our respective Parliaments. We therefore urge you to stand by the coalition we have formed to keep Iran's nuclear threat at bay. This

would not only be a powerful sign of the durability of our transatlantic partnership, but also a message to the Iranian people.

Together, let's keep the JCPOA alive and protect the fruits of successful diplomacy.

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