

How to Respond to the June 2026 U.S. Agreement with Iran

written by Frieda Afary | June 24, 2026

Below are excerpts from Frieda Afary's presentation to a webinar entitled "How to Be Anti-War in a Multipolar World" sponsored by the Northeast Los Angeles Alliance for Democracy. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rgz456NfSV9WEQmMTNojgZk_vrUaQvap/view

On February 28, when the U.S. and Iran launched another brutal and destructive war on Iran, and wreaked havoc to the region and the world economy, some expected a U.S. deal with a faction of the Iranian army (IRGC). No one however, had predicted that almost 4 months later, the U.S. would remove all restrictions on the Iranian regime, grant it a lucrative deal, break with the Netanyahu government and leave in utter defeat.

Let's look at some of details of the agreement which is called "The Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding Between the U.S. and the Islamic Republic." <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/06/17/us/politics/us-iran-agreement-deal-text.html>

It promises "permanent termination of all military operations on all fronts, including on Lebanon; It "removes its forces from the proximity of the Islamic Republic within 30 days,"; It removes all sanctions on Iran, releases the Iranian government's frozen assets without any restrictions, creates a \$300 billion fund for Iran's reconstruction with guaranteed licenses and permits; implicitly allows Iran to charge transit fees on the Strait of Hormuz after 60 days, promises that the U.S. and Iran will "refrain from interfering in each other's internal affairs." It calls for open-ended talks on Iran's nuclear program and makes no mention of Iran's missile program or its proxies in the region.

Of course it remains to be seen whether Israel will abide by any ceasefire agreement.

If the ceasefire remains in effect, it would be a relief to see a pause to this war for now, after all the suffering and destruction experienced by the Iranian people, the people of the region and after all the global economic suffering. However, from a geopolitical standpoint, the agreement that the U.S. has signed with Iran is a gift to the Iranian regime. It gives it a new life economically, politically, militarily and strategically. It also does not say anything about the regime's violations of human rights or Iran's regional proxies promoting war and destruction in the region.

In previous presentations, I have said quite a bit about the need to oppose not only U.S. and Israeli imperialism but also the Iranian government which is a brutal, authoritarian state capitalist, militarist, religious fundamentalist and misogynist regime which has for the past 47 years, killed tens of thousands of its citizens, and is hated by the large majority of its own people. Iran has the highest execution rate in the world after China. This regime run by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps or IRGC which is Iran's real army, has wreaked havoc in the Middle East region through its regional imperialist military interventions in Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, and has provided missiles and drones to Russia in Russia's imperialist war on the people of Ukraine.

What we have seen with the latest Middle East war is that the U.S. government is more than willing to make a deal with Iran's regime and no longer even pretends to "liberate" the Iranian people. Just recently, it was revealed that before the February 28 war was launched by the U.S. and Israel, the Trump and Netanyahu administrations had made a secret deal with the former Iranian president

Mahmud Ahmadinejad to bring him to power after assassinating “the Supreme Leader”, Ayatollah Khamenei. Ahmadinejad is a member of the Iranian regime who has a history of crushing the 2009 Iranian Green Movement and promoting Holocaust denial. He represents not only another faction of the IRGC or Iranian army, but also everything that the U.S. and Israel claimed they were fighting against. This says a lot about what the Trump and Netanyahu governments and their monarchist and MEK backers meant by liberation. <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/05/19/us/politics/iran-israel-us-leader-ahmadinejad.html>

What we are witnessing on a global level is the increasing spread of authoritarianism and fascism and new alliances between authoritarian and fascist powers. Global powers such as the U.S., Russia and China are carving up the world into spheres of influence for now and trying to destroy any efforts by struggles for social justice and human rights on the ground in any country whether it is Iran in the Middle East, or Ukraine in Europe, or Taiwan in East Asia, or human rights struggles in Latin America and Africa and elsewhere. In the Middle East and South Asia region, regional imperialist powers are also creating new blocks of alliances, most recently with Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Turkey on one side and UAE, India and Israel on the other.

Given this situation, it is more important than ever for anti-war activists to have a global view and to side with human rights struggles and progressives inside each country.

In Iran, those progressive forces are the following: 1. Imprisoned and furloughed feminist human rights activists such as Nasrin Sotoudeh, Narges Mohammadi, and Pakhshan Azizi, a Kurdish feminist who is facing the death penalty . 2. Kurdish and other national minority activists in and out of prison who oppose both the regime and various imperialist powers. 3. Imprisoned labor activists including members of the Teachers’ Union 4. Student and intellectual activists many of whom have demanded a system of education free of dogma and religious fundamentalism.

A principled opposition to war also requires an end to U.S. military aid to Israel, opposition to Israel’s occupation of Palestinian land, and support for Palestinians and Israeli Jews who believe in the peaceful coexistence of two peoples in a secular democracy whether in one state or in two states.

Let us also not forget about solidarity with Afghan women’s rights activists who are some of the most courageous progressive forces in the Middle East and Central Asia region. Since the U.S. withdrawal in 2021 after 20 years of imperialist occupation of Afghanistan, the Taliban have returned to power. They have forced women out of schools beyond sixth grade and out of almost all jobs. They do not want women to be out in the streets even with the full hijab and chaperoned by men. two weeks ago, protests by women and men against Taliban’s misogynist and religious fundamentalist dictatorship emerged in the province of Herat. They need our support.

On the U.S. home front, we have seen a growing popular opposition to the U.S. and Israeli war on Iran and on the Palestinian people. However, we cannot assume that the opposition now emerging from below will go in a progressive direction. Fascism in the form of MAGA still has a very strong mass base in the U.S. Various fascist leaders and commentators such as Marjorie Taylor Green and Tucker Carlson have been trying to push the mass dissatisfaction with this war in the direction of anti-Semitism and simply opposing Trump’s actions as a sign of derangement. They also defend Putin’s imperialist invasion of Ukraine and support Europe’s extreme Right. They continue to promote anti-immigrant hatred, misogyny and America First extremist nationalism and racism.

For anti-war activists in the U.S., a principled opposition to war requires addressing the wars abroad and at home, and the structural reasons for them. The alienating capitalist working conditions that the majority of people in the U.S. experience, the disinformation promoted by Big Tech monopolies,

the history of slavery and anti-Black racism in the U.S., and the backlash against gains made by women and LGBT have all made many people in the U.S. more prone to fascist and authoritarian demagoguery. The capitalist tendency toward the increasing concentration and centralization of capital in the hands of few entities and states is leading to destructive global competition and wars.

For the opposition to war in the U.S. to move forward in an affirmative direction, progressives need to delve into these issues, offer holistic global analyses that oppose all imperialist powers, articulate a humanist opposition to capitalism, racism, sexism and gender-based violence.

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June 21, 2026