By Mazda Majidi
November 27, 2013
Reprinted from LiberationNews.org

In the early morning hours of Nov. 24, the world powers reached a deal with Iran on its nuclear program. The interim agreement is for a duration of six months, during which the signatories hope to reach a more comprehensive and long-term agreement.

Details of the deal are sketchy. Broadly, however, it is known that the agreement imposes significant limitations on Iran's nuclear program in exchange for minor relief in the sanctions imposed on it. It is reported that the deal allows Iran to continue enriching uranium to 5 percent purity, used as fuel for its power generating nuclear reactor. But Iran will no longer be able to enrich uranium to 20 percent purity, used for medical isotopes, and will be required to relinquish its stockpile within six months. Washington and its allies accuse Iran of pursuing a nuclear weapons program and view the 20 percent enriched uranium as dangerously close to nuclear bomb material—even though that requires enrichment levels of 97 percent.

In exchange, while the U.S.-imposed sanctions will remain in place, there will be $7 billion in sanctions relief and a promise of no new sanctions for six months. The $7 billion in relief is essentially the unfreezing of Iran's own assets in international financial institutions, part of an estimated $100-$120 billion that have been frozen and will continue to be "inaccessible and restricted."

Given the harsh conditions imposed on Iran, it is a testament to the capitalist class media monopoly that the main discussion in Western media is whether Iran has been given too much. Since the agreement, President Barack Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry have been making the case for the deal by emphasizing the huge concessions Iran was forced to make and that the sanctions relief is reversible.

Why did Iran make the deal?
The agreement should not be confused with a fair deal that observes the interests of both sides. Diplomacy in general, and this agreement in particular, occurs within the context of power relations. How could it be called justice when nuclear-armed nations impose sanctions and harsh conditions on a country that has no nuclear weapons, nor any stated or documented plan to have such weapons? This is not a negotiation between a country that has no nuclear weapons, nor any stated or documented plan to have such weapons? This is not a negotiation between a country that has no nuclear weapons, nor any stated or documented plan to have such weapons? This is not a negotiation between two comparable adversaries working on the terms of future relations and trade. Iran could do nothing to the imperialist alliance that is lined up against it. But the U.S. and its junior partners have imposed extreme hardship on the Iranian people, essentially locking Iran out of international trade. So, in effect, Iran has to negotiate with a gun to its head.

Details of the deal are sketchy. Broadly, however, it is known that the agreement imposes significant limitations on Iran's nuclear program in exchange for minor relief in the sanctions imposed on it. It is reported that the deal allows Iran to continue enriching uranium to 5 percent purity, used as fuel for its power generating nuclear reactor. But Iran will no longer be able to enrich uranium to 20 percent purity, used for medical isotopes, and will be required to relinquish its stockpile within six months. Washington and its allies accuse Iran of pursuing a nuclear weapons program and view the 20 percent enriched uranium as dangerously close to nuclear bomb material—even though that requires enrichment levels of 97 percent. Additionally, Iran will permit unrestricted access by UN inspectors to its nuclear sites. In exchange, while the U.S.-imposed sanctions will remain in place, there will be $7 billion in sanctions relief and a promise of no new sanctions for six months. The $7 billion in relief is essentially the unfreezing of Iran's own assets in international financial institutions, part of an estimated $100-$120 billion that have been frozen and will continue to be "inaccessible and restricted."

Given the harsh conditions imposed on Iran, it is a testament to the capitalist class media monopoly that the main discussion in Western media is whether Iran has been given too much. Since the agreement, President Barack Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry have been making the case for the deal by emphasizing the huge concessions Iran was forced to make and that the sanctions relief is reversible.

Why did Iran make the deal?
The agreement should not be confused with a fair deal that observes the interests of both sides. Diplomacy in general, and this agreement in particular, occurs within the context of power relations. How could it be called justice when nuclear-armed nations impose sanctions and harsh conditions on a country that has no nuclear weapons, nor any stated or documented plan to have such weapons? This is not a negotiation between two comparable adversaries working on the terms of future relations and trade. Iran could do nothing to the imperialist alliance that is lined up against it. But the U.S. and its junior partners have imposed extreme hardship on the Iranian people, essentially locking Iran out of international trade. So, in effect, Iran has to negotiate with a gun to its head.

Continued on page 2
The fact that the Iranian leadership energetically pursued a deal does not indicate that the deal is just. Iran voluntarily agreed to the deal that the U.S. and others presented. Iran has no choice but to agree to such a deal, and the negotiations resulted in a comprehensive agreement that amounts to an embargo. It is not just that the United States and its allies have not supported Iran, but that the U.S. will impose sanctions on other states for trading with Iran. Iran's oil sales, a main source of its income, have been dropped to below half of what they used to be.Iran's economy has been severely hit by its trade in petrochemicals, automobiles and practically all other products. Similarly, it has been extremely difficult for Iran to get military equipment, even from the West, but Iran still manages to get some. A modern economy cannot exist indefinitely under such conditions. The situation is extremely difficult, not to mention living under the constant threat of a military attack.

Given the damage done to Iran's economy, it is no surprise that Iran has supported the government of Syria, whose economy was at risk of collapse. In response to the damage done to Iran's economy, Iran prepared to make major concessions. A modern economy cannot live without freedom to trade. Iran was forced to relinquish its plans for bombing Syria.

The major change that made the deal possible was Rouhani's election in 2013. Rouhani's campaign promise was one of peaceful coexistence, not just with the West but also with the Arab world. Rouhani's promise was a contrast to the regime's policy of isolation under Ahmadinejad. Rouhani's approach to foreign policy is a reflection of the Iranian people's desire for peace and dialogue. Rouhani's conciliatory tone towards the West, and his readiness to engage in negotiations, has been a significant factor in the decision to lift sanctions against Iran. However, Rouhani's approach is not without risks. The Iranian government must ensure that the United States and its allies do not undermine the agreement with their continued threats of military action.

The U.S. policy shift is a result of the election of Rouhani, who has shown a willingness to engage in negotiations. The U.S. policy shift is not just a result of Rouhani's election, but also of the domestic and international situation. The U.S. policy shift has the potential to create a more stable and peaceful region, and it is important for the international community to support the agreement and work towards a lasting solution.

The fact that Iran is willing to engage in negotiations is a positive step. However, the United States and its allies must demonstrate a commitment to non-military solutions. The United States and its allies must also respect Iran's right to development and peaceful nuclear energy.

The United States and its allies have an opportunity to build a better future for the people of the region. The United States and its allies must work towards a stable and prosperous future for the region, and they must do so through peaceful and diplomatic means.