

# ARDESHIRE ZAHEDI'S VIEWS ON PRESIDENT OBAMA'S SECOND TERM



Following the re-election of Obama as President of the United States we had an interview with Mr. Ardeshire Zahedi, the former Iranian Foreign Minister and the Shah's last Ambassador to the United States, who is interviewed by many international news organizations, during which he gave us his views on the results of the recent U.S. elections by phone on November 7, 2012:

"On November 3, 2012 I read an article in the International Herald Tribune by the famous writer, Thomas Erd Brink about conditions in Iran. It was a kind and even-handed article which made me very sad. It talked of the hardship and deprivation of essential supplies particularly Herpantine medicine for cancer patients that the men, women and children of my country are living under the heavy weight of the international sanctions.

Again on November 6, 2012 at 5:15 P.M., I was interviewed by the BBC World Persian by Mr. Hamedani about the relations between Iran and the United States from the time of the Presidency of Franklin Roosevelt through the subsequent seven Presidents it has been my privilege to know. On November 7, 2012, I was eagerly watching CNN and BBC World until 7:15 AM by Switzerland time waiting for the results of the American election until President Obama's remarks in thanking the people of the America for having placed their trust for the next four years in his

hands. He spoke of the person who thanked him for saving his young girl's life who was suffering from cancer and would have died if not been for his health care legislation.

The President strongly urged the people to move forward with confidence during this time of war. His message for fathers and mothers of America touched my heart and reminded me of the plight of the mothers and fathers of my own beloved country who are suffering under the sanctions specially Herceptin, medicine for cancer those affecting payment problems for importation of medicines, which is not morally or humanely accepted and is not a part of the UN Resolution.

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I also heard the UN Secretary General BAN KI-Moon said in a report to the UN General Assembly released Friday: Iran's general population is feeling the brunt of international sanctions as inflation and unemployment continue to rise and lifesaving medicines are in short supply.

Protesters have taken to the streets of Tehran in recent days as the Iranian currency has plummeted, sharply driving up prices. Iran's rial has lost nearly 40 percent of its value against the U.S. dollar in the past week alone.

The U.N. Security Council has imposed four rounds of sanc-

tions aimed at curtailing Iran's nuclear program, which Iran maintains is peaceful. The U.S. and European Union have also hit the Islamic Republic with sanctions.

The sanctions imposed on the Islamic Republic of Iran have had significant effects on the general population, including an escalation in inflation, a rise in commodities and energy costs, an increase in the rate of unemployment and a shortage of necessary items, including medicine, Ban said in his report. Humanitarian operations have also been hampered, as payment problems have led to a shortage of medicines needed for treating diseases like cancer and heart and respiratory conditions, Ban said.

The sanctions have targeted Iran's vital oil exports and cut off access to international banking networks. Both measures have reduced the amount of foreign currency coming into the country.

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"I may have deep differences with the clergy's regime in Iran", he once said, "I may even dislike them, but when it comes to the issues of principle, such as Iran's rights to access nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, then my



conscious not emotions guides me", he adds.

I had the privilege of signing the non-proliferation treaty in 1968. According to the treaty, any country has the right to have atomic projects for peaceful purposes. I have said this in my previous interviews with you and others that while India, Pakistan and Israel have atomic weapons we can not deprive Iran of processing them. It is the height of hypocrisy to do so. We have signed this treaty but the problem of proliferation is a world wide problem which must be addressed in an international forum."

In answer to our question that according to a promise made by President Obama that in the next four years there will be peace in the world: Mr. Zahedi emphasized that this is my fervent wish as is that of all mankind. Wars and armed conflicts are the root causes of killings and destruction and it behooves all of us to work towards their elimination and through the establishment of justice and peace throughout the world. One way this may be achieved is for stronger countries not to interfere in the internal affair of the weaker ones. An example is the interference of the Prime Minister of Israel in the affairs of the United States which created quite a stir in the international community.

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I hope that injustice, bias, and inequality will never be a part of the relations with any country of the world and our country Iran.

The unique democratic election has cost \$6 billions for the first time as I heard and has been unique, amazing election. so would hopefully the children, Mothers, fathers not only in Iran but Middle East, Asia, Africa, Egypt. Palestine, Gaza will have the privilege of peace, and Tranquility in their region by Honest Even Handed Policy. Or I have wishful thinking?!

## A CONVERSATION WITH ARDESHIRE ZAHEDI

On November 14, 2012 we continued our interview with Mr. Ardeshire Zahedi, the former Foreign Minister of Iran, and Iran's Ambassador to the United States.

Q: On our November 7, 2012 interview you expressed the hope that peace would soon be established between Israel and the Palestinians. How do you see the prospects of this peace in view of the recent conflicts between Israel and the Palestinians?

A: It is less than 24 hours that this new conflict has erupted between these two, so perhaps it is too early to judge the situation and offer any conclusions.

International diplomats, journalists and various aware people are of the opinion that since The Israeli Prime Minister has lost some of his popularity both within and outside of Israel he is trying to show that he is a man of strength for his people by arranging for the death of Ahmad Al jabar Palestinian military leader.

Of course Israel has declared that their recent forays into Gaza is a response to Hamas missile strikes into Israel which have killed three Israeli citizens and disrupted the peace and tranquility of southern Israel. Palestinians argue that they are an occupied country and that Israel has completely isolated Gaza.

Some also believe that the recent events is to prevent the UN from allowing Palestine to become a member. With all due respect to Arab Spring, the newly elected leaders of these countries from Tunisia to Egypt want to show that they are their own boss and do not accept any pressure from outside. In other words they are trying to show that times have changed in the Middle east and today is way different from the past.

Since President Morsi of Egypt has been democratically elected, he and his people want the best for Palestine and its people and to show this, I heard he is recalling his ambassador from Israel without breaking diplomatic relations. Of course it is still too early to judge but this matter may be referred to the U.N. and I am sure that the West is worried about this and is trying to push both sides to be calm. All and all this is a very sad episode and I am sure that the people of Gaza are very sad and frustrated over the murder of their military leader.