

An Iranian Nuclear Breakout Is Not Inevitable

by [Patrick Clawson \(/experts/patrick-clawson\)](/experts/patrick-clawson)

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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Much of the rhetoric surrounding the Iranian nuclear impasse has been marked by Tehran's staunch refusal to budge and pessimism among Western analysts that increasingly strong diplomatic and economic measures will ever have their desired effect. Yet several avenues for progress have opened up amid an environment of incrementally effective sanctions, political fragility in Tehran and allied regimes, and continuing covert action against the nuclear program.

In this Policy Note, Patrick Clawson argues that we have time, both tactically and strategically, to prevent a breakout. By continuing to push on the Islamic Republic's many pressure points, the United States and its allies can still show the regime that nuclear weapons cost more than they are worth.

THE AUTHOR

Patrick Clawson is director of research at The Washington Institute, where he heads the Iran Security Initiative. Widely consulted as an analyst and media commentator, he has authored more than 150 articles about the Middle East and international economics as well as eighteen books or studies on Iran.

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