



EU & IRAN CAN DO IT

Dr. Nader Maleki, CEO of Maleki Group

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Dr. Nader Maleki is CEO and chairman of the Maleki Corporate Group. He is also President of the International Bankers Forum, the largest privately organized professional association for bankers and financial service providers in Germany, which counts around 1,000 institutional and personal members across Europe. In The Association for Iranian Banks in Europe (AIBE), which he initiated in 2017, he holds the position of Vice Chairman.

Born in Tehran in 1947, Dr. Nader Maleki studied Business Administration in Munich. After receiving his doctorate, he joined Deutsche Bank in Munich, and shortly thereafter moved to the bank's Frankfurt headquarters. In 1987, Dr. Nader Maleki laid the foundation stone for his group of companies - with the approval of Deutsche Bank and his mentor Alfred Herrhausen he founded The Service for Banken GmbH, today's Maleki Corporate Group GmbH.

■ **Dr. Maleki, thank you very much for taking your time for this interview. Please tell us more about Maleki group and what your company does.**

Maleki Corporate Group is a conglomerate covering a portfolio of different industries, all linking to finance related projects. We put an enormous effort in addressing all key topics which are of decisive importance and shape the global economy. Ranging from conferences, roadshows, financial consulting to professional training, Maleki Corporate Group endeavours to make an impact and improve current structures and procedures. We provide highest quality KYC „Know your client“ solutions to our partners.

■ **Despite numerous pleas not to withdraw from the JCPOA deal, President Trump did it anyway. Why has he taken this step? Was it to be expected?**

The US President has fulfilled a promise, to withdraw from the JCPOA, that he made to his people during the election process. I did not expect this step from the USA, and they put themselves in a position not in harmony with their allies.

■ **The Iranian leader said that the deal would survive without the US. Meanwhile, Russia and the EU have pledged to stay committed to the deal. What are your prognoses as to what future is in store for the JCPOA?**

Iran has proven in the past that such sanctions will not have great effect in the long run. Until today, the allies have confirmed that their position towards the JCPOA will not change. Still, the US withdrawal from the JCPOA will certainly slow down the development. Iran has proven its positive input about approaching the global market and contributing peacefully to the world's economy which as an Iranian I was very happy and proud about. However, I strongly believe that together with the support of the EU, Iran will be strong enough and able to compete as well as contribute positively to the business world.

■ **Do you think the US can still pressure its European allies to change their stance and try to strike a new deal with Iran? Would the allies give in?**

I am not a supporter of the words "pressure" and "giving in". Business should be

based on mutual interest and fairness, as well as giving clients and partners a chance to contribute equally. One of the difficulties with Europe is that the 28 states do not always speak with a single voice. The more recent reaction of allies lets us hope.

■ **Iranian lawmakers are introducing a motion that calls for "proportional and reciprocal" action by the government. What are we to expect from Iran now that Trump pulled out the US from the deal?**

I believe that Iran will grow into a country where they are no longer only looking for allies but concentrate on making their own people strong. This in turn will lead to feasible relations between government and the people. Therefore, I believe that Iran will employ its comparative strongholds and leverage their own talents, know how and resources.

■ **Iran also stated that the US move was a violation of the accord that would isolate the US. What are your thoughts on this assessment? In what way could the US decision backfire?**

I am convinced that nowadays a strong global bond between all the countries involved is absolutely important. Therefore, the US would be better advised not to enforce an independent role as ruler and decision maker but should look at the larger picture and the outcome of their actions. We should not speak of "backfire" but more of a resentment that other countries could develop against the US behavior.

■ **Probably, Iran's proper exploration of economic countermeasures will involve discussions with European diplomatic corps, central banks, export credit agencies, sanctions authorities, and industrial entities in a set of all-encompassing deliberations. As such, Iran must reorganize its manpower to better engage in an effective dialogue with the full range of relevant European stakeholders. How effective these countermeasures will work for Iran?**

I think they will work very effectively. Iran needs to seek to engage more with European authorities, create think tanks, more representative offices in Europe and develop a stronger bond between the continents. Therefore, with the support of Europe, Iran will benefit and become also more positive towards cre-

ating business.

■ **The FATF's suspension of Iran's position on the blacklist will expire in June. How important is the status of Iran with FATF in order to allow Europeans to devise protective measures to maintain financial linkages with Iran?**

The FATF recommendations are the internationally endorsed global standards against money laundering and terrorist financing. They increase transparency and enable countries to successfully take action against illegal and unwanted use of their financial systems. That's why it is of enormous importance that Iran's position is perceived to improve in these topics.

■ **The Iranian government must foster economic resilience and enable strategic patience. This can be best achieved by launching a new program of public investment in order to boost capital formation and create jobs. In your opinion, is it worth risking higher inflation rates in order to achieve higher growth, especially as interest rates will remain high anyway?**

A very difficult question, as inflation is already high in Iran. One could research if in the past similar economic patterns showed up, and to what effect. I strongly believe that domestic investment should only be granted if the relations with other countries are manifested. Iran should only boost investments in the own country if they have support from other strong partners, too.

■ **How do you see the prospect of Iran's economy after President Trump's pulling out of JCPOA?**

Obviously, businesses face difficulties due to that dreadful event. However, I believe that one man cannot forbid a country to prosper, I think that time will heal all wounds and eventually the JCPOA will not be the reason for a whole country to be held back from development and welfare. Now we go through tough times, but with focus, business excellence and strong hope it will gradually become better. Inshallah.