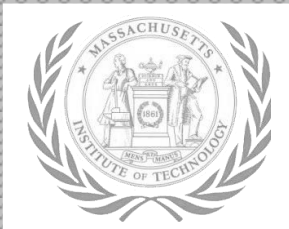


2013

# TRIUMVIRATE 2013 BACKGROUND GUIDE

MIT MODEL UNITED NATIONS  
CONFERENCE V



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## LETTER FROM THE DAIS

Dear Delegates,

You have chosen to participate in MITMUNC's second Triumvirate style crisis committee. The Triumvirate is a joint crisis style committee between three different sub-committees tasked with creating a solution to the incessant problems between the feuding nations of Israel and Iran. Two of these bodies represent the ministerial cabinets of Israel and Iran; the third committee is composed of representatives from the international community that are involved with or could be affected by the conflict and is the UN Summit on the conflict of Israel and Iran.

A list of all delegate positions has been provided in Appendix C as well as a description of useful bloc positions for the UN Summit in Appendix A. References used to write this document and useful readings for debate can be found in Appendix B. This Background Guide is a brief history of the conflict as well as more in depth responses to topics that we feel are the most important to the crisis and will play pivotal roles during our conference in February.

We ask for all delegates to read through this document thoroughly before the start of the conference to understand not only the background of the situation between Iran and Israel, but also the policies of the bodies of the International Summit as well. The three committees must work together throughout the conference in order to draft a resolution that can create peace between two feuding nations of the Middle East. They must also respond to

crises that will arise throughout committee sessions. Through communiqués, press releases, and direct representation, the committees will be able to speak to each other throughout the conference in order to make progress on any resolutions or discuss any disagreements. For example: the Iranian cabinet can send a direct communiqué only to the Israeli cabinet informing them of plans to lower the levels of enriched uranium, or they can send their Vice President of Scientific and Technology Affairs to give a speech to the Israeli cabinet.

Unlike other MITMUNC committees, the chairs will represent individuals with interests in the debate. They will be able to offer advice on solutions and guide debate if they feel that integral components of the crisis at hand are not being addressed. Each cabinet will be chaired by their nation's President (or Chief of State) and assistant to the President of their respective countries, but their power will be limited to directing debate only when necessary. The chairs of the International Summit will be completely neutral. The chairing staff of the Triumvirate of the Iran and Israel crisis consists of these MITMUNC enthusiasts:

**Colin McDonnell-Israeli President**

"Hello, my name is Colin McDonnell, and I'm a freshman at MIT. I'm majoring in Computer Science and Molecular Biology with a concentration in political science. I did MUN all throughout high school, including The Hague International MUN, and it has served me well in college. Can't wait to see you all in February!"

**Willy Vasquez-Assistant to the Israeli**

**President**

"My name is Willy Vasquez and I am from Dallas, TX. I am a sophomore majoring in computer science and minoring in math. This is my first Model UN, but hopefully not my last. I enjoy amateur astronomy, studying math, reverse engineering applications, and going on adventures."

**James Tsao-Iranian Chief of State**

"My name is James Tsao, and I am a Freshman at MIT. I am an international student who originally came from Taiwan, so pardon me if I use incorrect grammar. This is my first time chairing at MITMUNC and hope we'll all have a wonderful conference!"

**Tanya Talkar-Assistant to the Iranian Chief of State**

"I'm Tanya Talkar, a freshman at MIT, currently thinking about majoring in computational biology. I've immersed myself in many things here, from Indian dance to working in a biological engineering lab. I'm excited to see all of you all this year's MITMUNC!"

**Sabina Maddila-Chair of World Summit**

"Hi there! I'm Sabina Maddila, and I'm super excited for MITMUNC. I'm a sophomore majoring in electrical engineering and computer science. I'm involved with the radio station here on campus. This is my second time chairing, and if experience serves as any indication, you're in for a great couple of days of debate, policy, and fun! Can't wait to see you all soon!"

**Danielle Espinosa-Vice Chair of World Summit**

"Hi! My name is Danielle Espinosa, and I

am a freshman here at MIT. I haven't decided on a major yet, but I am interested in physics, math, and engineering. I have lived in Los Angeles County in Southern California my whole life. I am still getting used to life at MIT, but I like it here. MIT is a great place, and I hope you enjoy your time here!"

**Whitney Loo-Crisis Director**

"My name is Whitney Loo and I am a sophomore at MIT majoring in chemical engineering and minoring in chemistry and political science. When I'm not hanging out with my sisters of Alpha Phi, you can find me working in the Langer Lab in the Koch Institute on Type I Diabetes research. This is my second time chairing MITMUNC and it is great to be back!"

*Colin McDonnell*

*Willy Vasquez*

*James Tsao*

*Tanya Talkar*

*Sabina Maddila*

*Danielle Espinosa*

*Whitney Loo*

Triumvirate Chairs,  
MITMUNC V,  
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**Topic:****IRAN ISRAEL CRISIS****Introduction**

*"The Iranian nation is standing for its cause and that is the full annihilation of Israel."- Maj. Gen. Hassan Firouzabadi (May 20th, 2012)*

*"...under no circumstances would Israel be able to tolerate nuclear weapons in Iranian possession."- Shaul Mofaz (November 2003)*

Since the Iranian revolution led by Ayatollah Khomeini in 1979, Iran has completely severed its once diplomatic ties with Israel and has begun to act with extreme hostility. Khomeini declared Israel an enemy of the state of Islam not because of their Jewish faith but instead due to their close ties with the United States. While Iran refuses to open its border to any Western entity, Israel is willing and often wants to cooperate with the United States in a variety of projects. Since the rise of Khomeini, all of his successors have taken a similar stance towards Israel using strong rhetoric to express their disdain for a Jewish state in a Muslim region.

These tensions have only grown in the recent years with the introduction of nuclear technology and weapons in the region, instigating the constant threat of nuclear war between the two states. Israel has admitted to having nuclear weapons for self-defense because it is a Jewish nation in a Muslim region, and with Iran's constantly growing nuclear program and continuous denial of entry of the IAEA into their borders, their lack of nuclear weapons is becoming extremely

suspicious. Also, because Iran has been sponsoring radical terrorist groups including Hamas and Hezbollah, which wreak havoc in Israel, there is no end to the tension in sight. Both nations have begun to take action through violence. Iran has supported the Hamas in the recent Gaza conflict by supplying them with weapons and rockets and Israel has attacked a weapons factory in Khartoum, which was supplying weapons to Iran. With the potential for nuclear war stemming from this volatile situation in the Middle East, immediate action is necessary to relieve the tension between these two feuding nations.

**History of the Issue***Overview*

Given the current political climate between the two countries, it may be surprising that the enmity that persists between Iran and Israel is a relatively new phenomenon. Even from ancient times, Persians from modern-day Iran and Jews from modern-day Israel have maintained a strong and positive relationship with one another. This strong relationship persisted after the creation of Israel in 1948, through overt (and secret) political, economic, and security cooperation up until the Iranian Revolution in 1979.

Following the Revolution, scandals, while not necessarily highlights in history, suggest that the Islamic Republic was willing to set aside religious fervor and once again cooperate with Israel, their former partners in the Middle East, in the name of self-preservation.

Remnants of this Israeli-Iranian relationship between the two can be seen even today. To this day, Iran remains home to the largest Jewish population in the Middle East outside of Israel. Israel, likewise, continues to broadcast Farsi-language (Farsi, also known as Persian, is the official language of Iran) television and radio programming in both Israel and Iran. Once more, neither Iran nor Israel have any territorial disputes and don't compete with one another economically. The Iranian Revolution provided a large turning point in Iranian-Israeli relations.

Within a span of months, both countries became at odds with one another ideologically. Despite this, Iran and Israel have not come to consider each other as direct rivals until the last decade[1]. In fact, the Israeli security establishment didn't consider Iran to be its predominant national security issues until as late as the 1990s[2].

#### *Arab-Iranian-Jewish Ethnic Tension: A Historical Overview*

In order to fully understand the nature and nuances of the Iranian-Israeli relationship, it is important to recognize it as a dynamic interaction between Iran, Israel, and their Arab neighbors. Arab nationalism and the Pan-Arab movement in particular have put Iran and Israel at times at odds with the majority of Middle East and have forced the two to collaborate. Likewise, the exchange of hostilities between Iran, Israel, and her neighbors have forced many of the Arab countries in the Middle East to change alliances and reform policies that align with one side or the other.

#### *Arab-Israeli Relations*

Arab-Israeli relations have long been defined by religious and ethnic difference, both of which will be recounted later in this background guide. The modern conflict between Arabs and Israelis since the creation of the Israeli state has manifested into the Arab-Israeli conflict in the 1950s through 1970s, and now currently remains relevant in the Middle East as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The original conflict with Israel and her neighbors originate from a conflict between Palestinian Jews and Arabs that emerged early in the 20th century. Since the creation of Israel in 1948, there have been numerous wars between Israel and her Arab neighbors.

Many of the wars Israel fought with the Arabs in the period from 1948 – 1973 often included Egypt and Syria as the main aggressors. Large-scale hostilities stopped, however, thanks to a ceasefire following the 1973 October War. Peace agreements between Israel and Egypt were signed in 1979. Likewise, peace-agreements between Israel and Jordan were signed in 1994.

#### *Arab-Iranian Relations*

Arabs and Persians (modern day Iranians) have a long history of ethnic conflict, rising from more than a thousand years ago when Arabs conquered Persia (modern day Iran) and converted her people to Islam[3]. This ethnic rivalry has persisted far into modern years. An example of how far this rivalry extend can be taken from 2005 when Iran reacted angrily to a National Geographic map that



referred to the names “Arabian Gulf” and “Persian Gulf” next to one another in reference to the body of water[4].

Beyond that, this ethnic rivalry is further compounded by religious sectarianism. Most Arabs are practicing Sunni Muslims, while Iranians tend to lean towards the Shi’a interpretation of Islam[5]. The difference in the interpretation of Islam alone have led to a long a bloody conflict between both Sunnis and Shi’as, and have only served to increase the divide between Iran and her neighbors.

Arab nationalism and a long history of Arab-Iranian conflicts have led to a great deal of mistrust with Iran and her Arab neighbors[6]. This ethnic rivalry has led to a historical policy of isolation by Iran’s Arab neighbors[7]. These relations only deteriorated further during the Iran-Iraq war and the Iranian’s pledge to export its Islamic revolution in the 1980s. Iran made a few inroads with her neighbors with her stance on Palestinian nationhood and the election of liberal, reformist President Mohammad Khatami in the 1990s[8]. Still, a public opinion survey in 2009 showed that a majority of the population in 18 Arab countries say that Iran proves to be a greater threat than Israel[9].

#### *Iranian-Israeli Pre-Revolution Relations: 1948 - 1979*

Both Iran and Israel remain ethnic and religious outliers in the Middle East. Israel remains the only Jewish state in the world. Iran remains distinct from culturally and religiously distinct from her Sunni Arab neighbors as the last vestige of the Persian Empire and the largest Shi’a government.

The period immediately after World War II and the creation of the Israeli state proved to be extremely tumultuous, and put both Israel and Iran at odds with their neighbors, particularly Egypt and Iraq. In fact, during the period, Israel fought several different wars in this period with its neighbors, primarily Egypt. Thus, prior to the Iranian Revolution, both Iran and Israel shared a pro-Western bent and cooperated together both publically and covertly on economic, political, and security issues.

For Israel, Iran provided refuge for Jews fleeing Iraq. Iran also proved to be a vital part of Israel’s strategy to develop ties with other non-Arab states on the Middle Eastern periphery, such as Turkey and Ethiopia[10]. Israel proved to be another pro-Western ally who had considerable influence in the United States. Iran saw value in building strategic ties with a growing military power that had, by then, a record of defeating Arab armies that proved a good counterweight to Iran’s Arab neighbors[11]. Still, given the tense political climate, particularly in the 1950s and 1960s, Iran was careful not to embrace Israel too closely, and never formally recognized Israel[12]. Still, Israel operated a permanent delegation in Tehran until 1979, and Israeli construction firms and engineers had contracts in Iran[13].

#### *The Islamic Revolution in Iran, 1979*

At the time the Iranian Revolution struck, Iran was a monarchy, supported financially by Israel and the United States.

Under the leadership of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, Iran and Israel retain a

“cozy” relationship. Despite Iran’s economic growth under the shah, many Iranians opposed the shah and his use of the SAVAK, the secret police, to control the country and increasingly saw the shah as a Western puppet in the arms of the United States[14]. Likewise, at the time, the shah was also becoming considerably less popular in the West given his weak human rights record[15]. Even further, the shah’s ambitious economic plans created frequent bottlenecks and shortages and further increased economic insecurity for much of the Iranian population.

Shi’a clergy have historically had significant influence over the Iranian population. Religious opposition to the shah—notably from the Shi’a majority—mounted to such a degree that Iran was on the verge of civil by 1979[16]. Ayatollah Khomeini, who at the time was exiled, led the opposition and ushered in the Islamic Republic[17]. In his campaign the overthrow the government, Ayatollah Khomeini declared Israel an “enemy of Islam,” hinting at the same anti-Zionist rhetoric that would later be a signature of Iran’s new Islamic Republic[18].

In the second phase of the Iranian Revolution—the establishment of the Islamic Republic—Iran cut off all relations with Israel[19]. By April of 1979, Iran had become the world’s first theocratic republic[20]. Later that year, members of the Iranian Islamic Students stormed the U.S. Embassy and took 66 hostages[21]. The hostage crisis was only resolved with the Algiers Accords in 1981, 444 days after the hostages were first taken, and resulted in the falling out between Iran and United States, later evidenced in fighting between the two after the Iran-Iraq War[22].

By 1980, the United States and Iran sever ties due to hostilities over the hostage crisis[23].

*Post-Revolution Relations: 1979-Present Day  
Iran-Iraq War, 1980 – 1988*

Many of Iran’s Arab neighbors found the Iranian revolution to be quite threatening, in particular Saddam Hussein’s Iraq. In particular, tensions were fuelled even further by the stark contrast between the Shi’a Islamic Revolution in the Iran and Pan-Arab nationalism in Iraq[24]. Iraq, who was also considered as Israel most prominent security threat at the time, as a result invaded Iran in 1980, thinking Iran would be too weak to following the Revolution. Around this time, the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, a paramilitary organization designed to protect the Iranian regime, grew in prominence given the Iraqi threat[25].

Israel, seeing a chance to work again with Iran to fight the dominant security threat in the Middle East at the time, provided weapons to Iran despite Iran’s fundamentalist rhetoric[26]. Israeli forces even bombed an Iraqi nuclear reactor, benefiting both Iran and Israel[27]. At this time, Israel, seeing an opportunity to align itself with a former ally, lobbied the U.S. to bring Tehran “back into the Western fold[28].” Indeed, as late as the 1990s, Israel didn’t see Iran as its predominant security threat[29].

The United States, in hopes of limiting Soviet expansion into Iran and Iranian expansion to countries on the Persian Gulf, recognized the creation of an anti-Communist government in Iran, but

proceeded on Iran with great caution given the events that unfolded with the Iranian Hostage Crisis. In 1985, Iran made a secret request to buy weapons from the United States to replenish Iran's stock of U.S. made weapons[30]. In spite of the official embargo placed on the Iran, the U.S. proceeded to sell arms to Iran, often using Israel as an intermediary, in hopes to improve relations with Iran and Lebanon[31]. However, in 1987 and 1988, Iranian expansion into the Persian gulf lead to clashes between the U.S. Navy and the Iranian military forces[32].

Despite repeated calls by the United Nations Security Council for a ceasefire, hostilities between Iran and Iraq persisted until in 1988, a UN brokered ceasefire was agreed upon by both sides. The Iran-Iraq War remains the deadliest war ever fought between developing countries but has left the borders of both countries unchanged.

#### *Israeli-Iranian Relations in the Past Decade*

Iran and Israel have only truly emerged as rivals within the last decade. In recent years, Iran has attempted to curb hostility for her Arab nations and end its isolation through use of religious fervor and its strong stance on Palestinian statehood[33]. The rise of Iranian fundamentalists and the Revolutionary Guards under President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad since 2005 has only served to heightened tensions between the two countries through increased Iranian hostility and directed threats toward Israel[34]. Indeed, the present day regime has produced such ideological hostility unseen since the early days of the Iranian Revolution[35].

The 2011 Arab Spring has fed Israeli concerns that Iranian influence will grow throughout the Middle East, especially in Gaza and Lebanon, and that Iran will bolster its perception that the United States is a power in decline[36]. Still, the Arab Spring has created rendered, in some instances, Iranian vulnerabilities and limitations. The Arab Spring, as well as the election protests of 2009 (see below), caused the Iranian government to take significant, often harsh, action to prevent a likewise uprising in her own population[37].

#### *The History of the Iranian Nuclear Ambitions: 1984 – Present Day*

Iran began launching nuclear projects with the assistance from the U.S. and Europe while still under the rule of the shah. In fact, Iran was already conducting nuclear research and education at the University of Tehran when the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty came into force in 1970[38].

The Iranian Revolution in 1979 halted this research for a number of years, with resources further drained in the Iran-Iraq war. During the Iran-Iraq war, two power reactors were bombed several times, pushing back the Iranian nuclear program[39]. Iran resumed its nuclear program in the early 1990s with assistance from the Russian, Chinese, and Pakistani governments. Russia and China both continued to assist Iran with its nuclear program throughout the decade despite their pledges to curb Iran's nuclear proliferation[40].

The restart of the Iranian nuclear program was revealed to the international



community in 2002 by an Iranian resistance group[41]. By 2003, it was well aware the Iran had already built or was in the process of building everything needed to enrich uranium, used in nuclear reactors and weapons[42]. Iran has long maintained that its nuclear program is only reserved for peaceful purposes, namely energy, legal under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. Still, given Iran's large reserves of oil and gas, the U.S. has claimed that this program is merely a front for a nuclear weapons program[43]. Calculations by the U.S. show that it would indeed cost several times more for Iran to produce a kilowatt of electricity using nuclear energy than by using natural energy reserves[44].

*The History of the Israeli Nuclear Program: 1953 – Present Day*

Israel's possession of nuclear weapons, at least in official statements, are also ambiguous. Current Israeli policy maintains that “[she will]...Not be the introduce nuclear weapons into the Middle East” according the Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu[45]. It is however well know that Israel has been in possession of nuclear weapons for more than 40 years[46]. Experts estimates that the Israeli nuclear arsenal ranges somewhere between 75 and 200 weapons, making it the sixth largest arsenal of such weapons in the world[47]. This “strategic ambiguity” has come to greater focus as diplomatic pressure on Iran regarding its own nuclear program has increased greatly in the last few years.

The Israeli nuclear program developed as a means of providing the “ultimate deterrent,” justifying nuclear proliferation

with Israel's Arab's neighbors' alleged biological and chemical weapons program[48]. Development of an Israeli nuclear weapon began after then Egyptian President Gamal Nasser closed the Straits of Tiran in 1953[49]. By 1956, Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres secured an agreement with France for a nuclear research reactor[50]. In May of 1967, Israel crossed the nuclear threshold on the eve of the Six Day War with Egypt by improvising two deliverable nuclear explosive devices[51].

Despite the close relationship between the United States and Israel, Americans were only able to confirm the existence of Israel's Dimona nuclear complex in 1958[52]. There was still significant uncertainty of whether or not Israel had developed a nuclear weapon for several years. The numerous inspections of the Dimona reactor proved largely fruitless because of the heavy restriction placed upon inspectors[53]. Finally, in 1974, the CIA revealed strong suspicion of an Israeli nuclear arsenal in a special national intelligence estimate, stating that “we believe that Israel has already produced nuclear weapons...[but]...we do not expect the Israelis to provide confirmation of widespread suspicions of their capability, either by nuclear testing or by threats of use[54].

It is important to not that, unlike Iran, Israel has not signed the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, therefore is not technically forced to abide by nuclear anti-proliferation conventions[55].

## Integral Topics for Debate

### *Ethnic and Religious Differences*

Many of the political feuds between Israel and Iran stem from the inherent ethnic and religious differences between their governments. Israel was founded as a haven for the Jewish people after the Holocaust and Iran is currently an Islamic republic. The feud between the two religious has led to a significant portion of the political tension in the Middle East.

Israel, founded in 1948, was a source of contention in the Middle East since its creation. Jews, Christians, and Muslims all claimed to have holy land in Jerusalem and in areas of Israel, and the Arab countries of the Middle East lay claim to this holy land. The conflict between Palestine and Israel over land has mostly been religious, and Palestine has garnered support from the Arab countries, especially Iran. However, government and religion do not always mix well in Israel. The government mandated laws regarding the high holidays have been largely ignored by the populous. For example, many storeowners still sell leavened bread on Passover, a day during which only unleavened bread can be consumed. In addition, many of Israel's residents aren't Orthodox, and therefore don't agree with the government being involved in religious activities. Israel is very different from Iran, because while Jewish values form the core beliefs of the government, religious goals are not purported as the main purpose of the government.

Iran has had a turbulent past leading up to its current government. In 1979, the monarchy was overthrown during the Iranian revolution, and the religious leader Ayatollah Khomeini took control of Iran,

proclaiming himself supreme leader. The Shah before the revolution had been calling for more westernization of the nation, but the new government quickly ended those programs and returned to its Persian past, predominantly a Shia culture. There are many ethnic groups in Iran, ranging from the Azeris and Arabs, who are Shiite, to the Kurds and the Sunni Baluchis. Within Iran itself, there are conflicts, especially between separatist Kurds and Shiites. In current times, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's presidency has followed the extremely conservative path, openly protesting the policies of the West. During the recent Israel-Palestine conflict in Gaza, Ahmadinejad was very vocal in his opposition of Israel. He said that Zionists have reached a point where they cannot help but recognize the state of Palestine and referred to Israel's strikes as terrorism. He, along with Hamas, are working together to try and eliminate Israel from the Middle East, citing that a Jewish state is an anomaly in the region and it should be removed as to prevent further conflict.

### *Iranian and Israel Relations with the West*

After the replacement of the Shah in Iran, relations with the Western World have been filled with turmoil and sanctions. The US had instilled the Shah after WWII in order to gain an upper hand in the vast oil resources located in Iran and both prospered greatly. In 1979, the Iranian revolution led by Ayatollah Khomeini called for the instilment of a new Muslim based government. Since then relations have been hostile and unclear and have resulted in many deaths. The current president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, has stated in relation to the west and Israel,

"Fundamentally we do not take seriously the threats of the Zionists," he told reporters in New York. "We have all the defensive means at our disposal and we are ready to defend ourselves".<sup>1</sup> Iran, which has built its first atomic power station - at Bushehr, in the south of the country, with Russian help-says its nuclear ambitions are peaceful. President Ahmadinejad says Iran has an "inalienable right" to produce nuclear fuel. In 2002, US President George W Bush declared Iran as part of an "axis of evil". While Mr. Bush's successor, Barack Obama, has softened his tone, Washington continues to accuse Iran of trying to develop nuclear weapons. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's harsh rhetoric has often caused outrage abroad, most notably over Israel and Jews. He has likened Israel to a "cancer" and demanded its replacement with a Palestinian state, while describing the Holocaust as a "myth". Currently many western countries such as members of NATO and the EU have sanctions on Iran.

Israeli - U. S. relations are an important factor in U. S. policy in the Middle East, and Congress has placed considerable importance on the maintenance of a close and supportive relationship. The main vehicle for expressing support for Israel has been foreign aid; Israel currently receives about \$3 billion per year in economic and military grants, refugee settlement assistance, and other aid. U. S.-Israeli relations have evolved from an initial American policy of sympathy and support for the creation of a Jewish homeland in 1948 to an unusual

partnership that links a small but militarily powerful Israel, dependent on the United States for its economic and military strength, with the U. S. superpower trying to balance competing interests in the region. Some in the United States question the levels of aid and general commitment to Israel, and argue that a U. S. bias toward Israel operates at the expense of improved U. S. relations with various Arab states. Others maintain that democratic Israel is a strategic ally, and U. S. relations with them strengthen the U. S. presence in the Middle East. Israeli relations with the states of Western Europe have been conditioned by European desires to further their own commercial interests and ties with the Arab world and their heavy dependence on Middle Eastern oil. Europeans have provided political support for Arab states and the Palestinian cause, even though Europe has served as the battleground for Arab and Palestinian terrorist groups. Western European states have been important trading partners for Israel; about 40 percent of Israel's foreign trade occurred with European countries. Furthermore, there has been strong European-Israeli cooperation-- except with Greece--in the area of counterterrorism especially in dealings with Iran.

#### *Israel and Iran: Oil*

A few years ago, Israel discovered oil in the part of the Mediterranean Sea off of its coast. This initial discovery catalyzed the unearthing of Israel's rich oil supply. It is estimated that there are 250 billion barrels of shale oil in Israel, along with 3.2 billion barrels of conventional oil; enough to match the oil wealth of Saudi-Arabia. Although production is currently

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-202\\_162-57518754/ahmadinejad-we-do-not-take-seriously-the-threats-of-israel/](http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-202_162-57518754/ahmadinejad-we-do-not-take-seriously-the-threats-of-israel/)

minuscule, Israel has incredible potential. In addition, it is estimated that Israel has 50 trillion cubic feet of natural gas.

On the other hand, Iran has been a major oil exporting country since 1913. Iran held 10.3% of the world's total proven oil reserves at the end of 2009; however that number is sure to decrease as Israel's oil reserves are fully realized. The Iranian government is heavily reliant on oil revenues and they have heavily subsidized the energy industries which figures out to be about 12% of Iran's GDP. Iran has been unable to reach its full economic potential due to a combination of sanctions and war imposed on the region for many years.

Moreover, Iran has the world's second largest reserves of natural gas, possessing 15.8 % of the world's total reserves. Like Israel, Iran is also continuing to discover its natural resources. Israel's exploration efforts are just beginning; however this new discovery will have an immense impact on Israel's stability, as well as its relations with the world. Already Israel has been approached by Russia and Canada to collaborate with the extraction of this oil. Israel's discovery will cause the Gulf countries and Russia to lose a lot of the political advantages due to their dramatic increase in energy wealth. These previously powerful nations will have less ability to restrict supply and to manipulate prices than they have had in the past. Oil and gas are going to be less special when supplies are more abundant and more broadly distributed. These new discoveries have the power to make Israel, for the first time in her history, both energy-independent and an increasingly desirable ally and partner for any number of rich,

powerful and above all, energy-hungry countries. The Israeli government will use its nascent energy wealth to improve its embattled political position.

*The funding of terrorist organizations in Iran and Israel*

If Iran acquires or constructs a nuclear device, the probability of a nuclear terrorist attack will skyrocket. Iran has been accused of directly committing state-sponsored terrorism, primarily assassinations of political dissidents and vocal pro-Western politicians. However, the probability that Iran would directly deploy a nuclear device is low, as the United States and its allies may escalate a nuclear war on the nation as a whole. For this reason, there would be tremendous political opposition to the idea, which would restrict the ability of the regime to openly execute an attack, as the leaders of the regime (Supreme Leader Sayyed Ali Khamenei and President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad) do not wish to destabilize their already shaky legitimacy to rule.

However, most authorities agree that Iran actively supports terrorism within the Middle East region. The State Department of the United States said in an annual report last year that "Iran remained an active state sponsor of terrorism in 2011 and increased its terrorist-related activity." Iran has used its tax revenue to directly arm, train, and fund terrorist groups for several decades, including Hamas, Hezbollah, Iraqi insurgents, and scores of regional terrorist groups operating within the borders of Western allies both in the Middle East and in Europe. Also, information from Iranian surveillance and intelligence agencies is

supplied to such groups to assist in the planning and successful execution of terrorist attacks. As a part of the Iranian regime's ultimate goal of establishing an Islamic empire, they have funded a vast array of terrorist organizations.

In Iraq, Iran has funded and armed the insurgents that have fought against American occupying forces since 2003, including al Qaeda and the Mahdi army of anti-Western cleric Muqtada al-Sadr.

Some reports estimate that almost 30% of American casualties in the Iraq War were inflicted using weapons originally sourced from Iran. Evidence suggests also that Iran directly harbored and trained the al Qaeda operatives that perpetrated the 9/11 attacks, even purchasing a Boeing simulator to practice flying the targeted planes.

In Israel, Iran has funded the terrorist organization Hezbollah. Hezbollah is based in Lebanon and receives funds from Iran to the tune of \$100 million annually.

Its second largest supporter is Syria. It is responsible for several large-scale bombings against Israeli and American targets, notably the Beirut barracks bombing of 1983 and the Israeli embassy bombing of 1992 in Argentina. In addition to violent attacks, Hezbollah has kidnapped Israeli military personnel and held them for ransom. The ultimate goal of Hezbollah is the creation of an orthodox Muslim state and the destruction of Israel. Iran is also the main supporter of Hamas, the militant terrorist organization that currently has control of the Gaza region in Israel. They have been funneling weapons into Gaze for Hamas to use against the Israeli government in order to support the Palestinian cause in

the region. Like Hezbollah, Hamas wants to create an orthodox Muslim state through the creation of a formal Palestinian state and the destruction of Israel.

#### *Nuclear Security issues regarding Israel and Iran*

Israel, often viewed as the first and only Middle East country to possess nuclear weapons, first started their nuclear program in the 1950s under the administration of David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first prime minister. Ben-Gurion believed that due to Israel's inferior location, resources, and population size, the only way for the country to fight against the neighboring nations' hostility was through technological development. Israel had sought help from the U.S. under the Atoms for Peace initiative, but soon turned to France for assistance after realizing that the U.S. would not supply Israel with plutonium, and any reactor built will be safeguarded. The France assistance in development ended on 1961 after the secret cooperation was found out by the United States, yet the research of nuclear weaponry in Israel continued.

Israel has maintained "Nuclear Opacity" even to this day. Israel claimed that it "will not be the first to introduce weapons into the Arab-Israel area", leaving the term introduce vaguely described[1]. Whether the term introduced is defined as the creation of nuclear weapons, or the utilization of such weapon is left unexplained. Because of its ambiguous nature, it is hard to get further details on Israel's progress on nuclear weaponry development; however, the Nuclear Threat Initiative website estimated that



Israel has produced enough plutonium to arm 100 to 200 warheads over the years. Iran's nuclear program also started in the 1950s, in cooperation with the U.S. Atoms for Peace initiative under the administration of Mohamed Reza Shah.

The Shah created the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) in 1974, and had high hopes for Iran's nuclear projects. However, Ayatollah Khomeini terminated the project after the 1979 revolution. The Iranian government resumed in developing nuclear technology in 1984, when Khomeini no longer viewed the nuclear program "un-Islamic" and started to seek international help in continuing the projects. As of now, Iran has a well-developed nuclear infrastructure, capable of mining, milling, converting and enriching Uranium.

In addition to the low profile and secret nature of its nuclear program, Israel is also not a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). As a result, the nuclear facilities in Dimona are free from International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspections. However, Israel is a signatory of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and is agreed to ban all nuclear explosions in any environments, no matter the purpose. Israel holds a strong opposition towards the development of nuclear weaponry in other countries in the region; such position leads to the air strikes on Iraq's Osiraq reactor in 1981, which resulted with Iraq creating a more aggressive and underground nuclear program for a period of time. In 2007, Israel also conducted a preventive air strike on what Israeli intelligence believed as a nuclear reactor in Al-Kibar, Syria. However, because Israel

remained silent about the attack, and Syria's decision to cover up the site and refuse to fully cooperate with the IAEA, the attack did not result an international outcry as the Osiraq reactor incident did.

On the other hand, Iran is a party to the NPT, although the IAEA often finds the reports troubling. For instance, Iran has double the number of centrifuges installed near the city of Qum this summer. They have also cleansed another site where the Agency suspected explosion experiments that may be relevant to nuclear weapons development. What makes Iran's nuclear situation more alarming is that Iran has been working to acquire ballistic missiles and space launch technologies. The UN has passed several resolutions in the past, demanding Iran to halt its uranium enrichment activities. Negotiations aimed towards solving the nuclear issues between the United States, China, Russia, the United Kingdom, Germany, France and Iran have not been able to produce a solution to the issue.

As of now, Iran maintains the position that it has no intension of acquiring nuclear arsenal, yet it has the right to develop nuclear technology for peaceful means as a member of the NPT. On the other hand, almost every Israeli opposes Iran to further develop its nuclear program, yet the means of achieving this is still in debate. The Israeli government is still allowing the US and Europe to try solve the crisis through economic sanctions and diplomatic resolutions, although the call for military action has increased over the past few years. Whether a preventive strike is necessary is still in debate. Opponents argue that an attack will only serve to slow down Iran's nuclear

programs, and lead Iran to attack Israel in retaliation; the proponents argue that the lack of action and allowing a nuclear Iran to exist will lead to the shift of balance of powers, the protection for militant groups like Hamas and Hezbollah, and further nuclear proliferation in the Middle East. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu had demanded that Iran must stop enriching uranium by spring or summer of 2013 during his annual General Assembly speech in September, all while pushing the United States to take military actions on damaging the Iranian nuclear program, such as declaring a vaguely explained “red line” where an attack will be conducted automatically. The United States have currently declined drawing such a line, although the Obama administration stated that it will work to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon.

#### Current State of the Issue

Due to Iran’s nuclear program and its capabilities to develop nuclear weapons and the anti-Israel rhetoric from the Iranian government, Israel fears of an Iranian attack. In May of 2012, Iran’s Military Chief of Staff, Major General Hassan Firouzabadi, stated, “the Iranian nation is standing for its cause and that is the full annihilation of Israel”[1]. This statement came after the IAEA flew to Iran to negotiate inspections of Iranian nuclear facilities. However, officials from Israel’s Mossad and the US have agreed that Iran is a rational party of the international community and will consider the consequences of its actions. Gregory Stanton, founder of Genocide Watch, states that Iran has already completed six out of eight of the steps on the path to genocide.

They are prepared for killing by denying a past genocide and creating weapons of mass destruction and have portrayed their potential victims, Israelis, as “cancer” which needs to be eradicated. Because of Iran’s actions supporting genocide, many nations such as Canada have completely severed their ties with Iran[2].

In the November 2012 there was a conflict in the Gaza strip of Israel between the Hamas and the Israeli government. This conflict has taken attention away from the tension between Israel and Iran, but the Hamas is a viable partner for Iran to work with against Israel. Iran will retaliate against Israel if they are attacked, and due to the rising conflict between Gaza and Israel, Iran has acted accordingly and utilized Hamas. It is believed that Iran has already given Hamas a weapon that can hit inside of Israel, a long-range rocket, as well as helped them coordinate other rocket attacks throughout the conflict. Iran has been facilitating the weapons transfer into Gaza and has been assisting with their assembly as well[3]. Gaza thanked Iran for their continued support through Hamas with billboards after eight days of conflict with Israel. No official party has taken responsibility for the public declaration of support for Iran, but Hamas has had control over Gaza since 2007 so it is suspected that the militants played a role in the billboard’s display. Israel now considers Iran to be its most dangerous enemy due to its role in the Gaza conflict through its support for Hamas and its suspected nuclear weapons program.

However, both parties were present at the international nuclear non-proliferation conference in Brussels focused on banning

weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. The mood of the meeting was described as “respectful and positive” and the UN is hoping for a productive outcome from the academic seminars and meetings of the conference. It was unclear if the next conference, the Helsinki conference would proceed in December, but there were no denunciations at the conference, which was an improvement from the previous year’s conference. As expected, Israel will only sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty if the surrounding region becomes a nuclear weapons free zone to guarantee their security[4].

## **Bloc Positions**

### *The United States*

The United States has an undying loyalty for Israel since the creation of the state in 1948. However, relations with Iran have not been as diplomatic since the Iranian revolution in 1979 when the Shah placed by the US after WWII was overthrown.

### *China*

China relies heavily on Iran for oil and gas and they have a thriving economic relationship. In 2011 an agreement was reached between the two nations stating that China could have sole ownership of three of Iran’s main oil and natural gas fields if they defended them as if they were a part of their own nation. It is also believed that China has helped Iran with training its military and providing it with technical support. China also provided Iran with its first research nuclear reactor in the 1980s. Iran also relies on China’s power in the Security Council for veto

power and to protect it from US or UN led action.

### *Russia*

Russia and Iran share a common interest in limiting the global power of the United States. Along with China, they have worked to limit the United State’s influence in central Asia through the formation and use of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. However, as Russia becomes increasingly dependent on the West, it has become more conservative about its relations with Iran.

### *United Kingdom*

The United Kingdom and Iran had good diplomatic relations up until recently when the UK placed economic sanctions on Iran for their suspicious nuclear activity, political ideology, and worsening human right’s situation. The UK works closely with Israel on issues relating to Iran but does not recognize its sovereignty over any region of Jerusalem much like the rest of the international community.

### *France*

France and Iran have had friendly relations throughout history until recently due to Iran’s refusal to slow down their enrichment of Uranium and France’s support of referring Iran to the UN Security Council. Now, they have also placed economic sanction on Iran, which has strained relations. French relations with Israel have improved in the past years due to the growing anti-Iran sentiments.

### *Germany*

Germany currently has severe sanctions on Iran for both its nuclear program and its rhetoric towards Israel. German Chancellor Angela Merkel stated, “A president that question’s Israel’s right to exist, a president that denies the Holocaust, cannot expect any tolerance from Germany” in reference to Iranian President Ahmadinejad in 2006.

### *Jordan*

Jordan and Iran have a thriving economic relationship. Jordan and Israel have diplomatic relations since the signing of the Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty in 1994.

### *Syria*

Syria and Iran are close allies are the two largest supporters of Hezbollah. Their alliance grew out of the Iran-Iraq war and work together to smuggle arms to Hezbollah in Lebanon. They both believe that the United States and Israel present the biggest threat to the global community.

### *Iraq*

Under the dictatorship of Saddam Huessein a war broke out between Iran and Iraq in 1980 and after eight years of fighting and a UN ceasefire, the war finally ended. However, now bilateral relations are improving as anti-US sentiments grow in the United States and with frequent visits of high-level officials, they are rebuilding a relationship. Like most Muslim nations in the Middle East, Iraq is hostile at best with Israel. They do not have any diplomatic relations since Israel’s formation in 1948.

### *Saudi Arabia*

Both Saudi Arabia and Iran want Muslim dominance in the Middle East, but they have different visions for achieving regional order which creates tension. Saudi Arabia has always been open to the United States much to the dismay of Iran. Iran has also accused Saudi Arabia for not taking a strong enough stance against Israel especially with in relation to the injustices committed towards the Palestinian people.

### *Qatar*

Qatar and Iran have cordial relations. Qatar and Russia have been working with Iran through the creation of the Gas Countries Exporting Forum. Qatar has offered to restore relations with Israel twice but both have been refused due to the possibility of Hamas interference.

### *Lebanon*

Iran and Lebanon have close ties including an energy agreement. Lebanon agrees with Iran’s use of nuclear power and call for Israel to surrender its nuclear arsenal. Like Iran, Lebanon also does not recognize Israel as a nation.

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## APPENDIX A: DELEGATE POSITIONS

### Iranian Cabinet

- Chief of State (chair)-Ayatollah Ali Khameni
- President-Mahmoud Ahmadi-nejad
- Vice President- Mohammad Reza Rahimi
- Speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly (Majles)-Ali Ardeshir-Larijani
- Vice President for International Affairs-Ali Saidlu
- Vice President for Executive Affairs-Hamid Baqai
- Vice Pres. for Legal & Parliamentary Affairs-Lotfollah Faruzandeh-Dehkardi
- Vice Pres. for Planning & Strategic Supervision-Behrux Moradi
- Min. of Defense & Armed Forces Logistics-Ahmad Vahidi
- Min. of Economic Affairs & Finance-Shams-ed-Din Hoseini
- Min. of Foreign Affairs-Ali Akbar Salehi
- Min. of Intelligence & Security-Heidar Moslehi
- Governor, Central Bank of Iran-Mahmud Bahmani
- Min. of Petroleum-Rostam Qasemi, *Brig. Gen.*
- Vice Pres. for Scientific & Technological Affairs-Nasrin Soltankhah
- Min. of Justice-Morteza Bakhtiari

### Israeli Cabinet

- President(chair)-Shimon Peres
- Prime Minister-Binyamin "Bibi" Netanyahu
- Vice Prime Min.-Silvan Shalom
- Min. of Communications-Moshe Kahlon
- Min. of Defense-Ehud Barak
- Min. for Development of the Negev & Galilee-Silvan Shalom
- Min. of Economic Strategy-Binyamin "Bibi" Netanyahu
- Min. of Finance-Yuval Steinitz
- Min. of Foreign Affairs-Avigdor "Ivet" Lieberman
- Min. of Home Front Defense-Matan Vilani
- Min. of Intelligence & Atomic Energy-Dan Meridor
- Min. of Internal (Public) Security-Yitzhak Aharonovitch
- Min. of Science & Technology-Daniel Herkshkowitz
- Min. of Strategic Affairs-Moshe "Boogie" Yaalon
- Attorney Gen.-Yehuda Weinstein
- Governor, Bank of Israel-Stanley Fischer

### UN Summit

- United States Secretary of State-Hilary Clinton
- China Min. of Foreign Affairs-Yang Jiechi
- Russia Min. of Foreign Affairs-Sergey Viktorovich Lavrov
- United Kingdom Sec. of State for Foreign & Commonwealth Affairs-William Hague

- France Minister of Foreign Affairs-Laurent Fabius
- Germany Minister of Foreign Affairs-Guido Westerwelle
- Jordan Minister of Foreign Affairs-Nasser Judeh
- Syria Min. of Foreign & Expatriate Affairs-Walid al-Mualem
- Iraq Min. of Foreign Affairs-Hoshyar Mahmud Zebari
- Saudi Arabia Min. of Foreign Affairs-Saud al-Faysal bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud
- Turkey Min. of Foreign Affairs-Ahmet DavutogluAVU
- Qatar Min. of Foreign Affairs-Hamad bin Jasim bin Jabir Al Thani
- Lebanese Minister of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants-Adnan Mansour
- USG for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations -Hervé Ladsous

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