



"All war is a symptom of man's failure as a thinking animal."

-John Steinbeck

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the United Nations Security Council of La Martiniere Calcutta Model United Nations 2013! I can assure you that your time at LCMUN'13 will be an incredible learning experience, to say the least.

Over the years, MUN has gradually grown into a platform for students across the world to effectively further their deep interest in international affairs and politics. MUN has led me to discover the intricate thread that connects countries across the globe and understand the complex nature of domestic and international disputes. It allows us to emulate international diplomats and find solutions to world issues which engage and confound top diplomats and bureaucrats across the world and it is for this very reason that MUN is so essential in today's conflict ridden world as we strive to be more culturally and politically aware of the world around us.

A quick introduction to your board: your director, Aishani Sheth, is probably the liveliest individual you've come across and is superbly talented, having won numerous accolades at local and national MUN conferences. Your rapporteur, Shubhangi Bhotika, is an enthusiastic MUNner and debater who holds a certain fascination for photography, Damien Rice and poetry. As for me, I'm a Humanities student and an avid debater with keen interest in Economics, Law and International Relations. I hope to pursue law in college next year.

The topic for discussion is a highly complex and intriguing one, one which I personally find incredibly engrossing which has been debated on and off in recent years-

"Nuclear development in Iran and its International repercussions"

Iran's nuclear programme continues to be a controversial issue heavily influenced by numerous social ideological factors, international rivalries and the feverish revolutionary atmosphere that now characterises the Middle Eastern Region in light of the recent Arab Spring and developments in the Arab-Israeli Conflict. Iran continues to remain the target of international economic sanctions and restrictions for its defiant pursuance of uranium enrichment which far from trying to ameliorate the situation have been recognized to have a significant impact on the world economy. Deeply entrenched in all this is Iran's fierce rivalry with Israel and the United States of America, two huge players in the region both of which are unafraid to declare war if circumstances demand so. Delegates, the situation is a delicate one- the solution of which requires a high degree of compromise and vigorous diplomacy. I encourage you to take advantage of the opportunity, delve into the turbulent region that is the Middle East and discover new aspects of conflict and dissent within the topic itself, all of which will make for dynamic and engaging discussion in the conference.

We are working tremendously hard and hope you're just excited as we are! We look forward to meeting you in May and would love to hear from you so don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Thanking you,

Namrata Sarah Caleb

Chairperson of the United Nations Security Council

STUDY GUIDE

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WORKING OF UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL

United Nations Security Council

The United Nations Security Council is the most important international organization primarily responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security. It is widely recognized as a body possessing tremendous power and decision making ability. The Security Council held its first session on 17th January, 1946 in Westminster, London. Since its first session, The Security Council now permanently resides at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City. All members of the United Nations agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council. While other organs of the UN, such as the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council can make recommendations to member states, only the Security Council has the power to recommend action which states are obligated to introduce and implement under the UN Charter. As such, its mandate cannot be easily defied and thus the position of the Security Council in today's conflict-ridden world is of immense significance. The Security Council functions continuously and meetings are held when called for by the President when he deems necessary. The position of President is rotated among members every month. The interval between two meetings shall not exceed fourteen days. Admission of new members to the United Nations is done by a decision of the General Assembly, following the recommendation of the Security Council.



First Session of the United Nations Security Council on Seventeenth January, 1946.

Mandate

According to the United Nations Charter, the Security Council has the following functions:

- i. Maintain international peace and security
- ii. Ensure friendly relations between countries
- iii. Promote cooperation in solving international problems and in ensuring respect for human rights
- iv. To act as a centre for harmonizing relations between nations



A session of the United Nations Security Council in the United Nations Headquarters, New York.

Methods of Conflict Resolution

According to the UN Charter, the Security Council is required to consider the following steps while solving international disputes:

1. Recommends that parties come to consensus by peaceful means
 - i. Through investigation and mediation
 - ii. The dispatch of a special mission
 - iii. The appointment of special envoys.
2. In the case of an increase in hostilities, the Security Council can consider:
 - i. The issue of a ceasefire agreement which can help prevent the escalation of the conflict
 - ii. The dispatch of military observers or a peacekeeping force to help reduce tensions

Beyond this, in the case of extreme situations the Security Council has the mandate to apply economic sanctions, arms embargos, financial penalties, restrictions and travel bans, severance of diplomatic relations and collective military action.

Membership of the Security Council

The Security Council consists of five Permanent Members and ten Non-Permanent members. The ten non-permanent members are elected on a rotational basis. Apart from these, a number of countries of **observer status** are allowed to participate in general debate if a topic concerning their interests is being discussed. However, such a country shall participate without a valid vote and thus will not be allowed to vote on the final resolution to be passed. The Council can create conditions for the presence of such a country.

Permanent Five

- i. United States of America
- ii. United Kingdom
- iii. Republic of France
- iv. Russian Federation
- v. People's Republic of China

(For a list of the non-permanent members and observers please refer to the country matrix available on the site)

Process for Security Council Reform

As stated in Article 108 of the UN Charter, the Charter can be amended by a resolution passed by the General Assembly, approved by two thirds of the General Assembly membership and ratified by two-thirds of the member states including the Permanent Five of the Security Council.

Veto Vote

The veto is essentially a 'negative vote', which may be exercised by any of the **Permanent Five** members of the Security Council while voting on a resolution. The veto enables such countries to prevent the adoption of a substantive resolution regardless of the fact that there may be considerable international support for the same. Thus, if a veto is exercised, regardless of the number, a resolution will cease to pass in the Security Council.

LMCMUN 2013 allows for the passage of one resolution and delegates must strive to arrive at consensus in the midst of conflicting opinions and policies.

HISTORY OF NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT IN IRAN

The Iranian Nuclear program began on March 5th, 1957, with a joint announcement by Iranian and American authorities regarding a "proposed agreement for co-operation in research in the peaceful uses of atomic energy" as a part of Eisenhower's Atoms for Peace program. Iran at that time was a monarchy under Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, who was supported by Western powers such as United Kingdom and United States of America.

Under the Atoms For Peace program, with aid from USA, the first nuclear reactor, the Tehran Nuclear Research Center, was opened in November. Iran signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968 and the NPT's Safeguards Agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in 1974. West German company, Kraftwerk Union, agreed to construct two light water reactors to produce nuclear energy at Bushehr.

President Gerald Ford of USA supported Shah Pahlavi's ambitions by helping Iran formulate a plan to build 23 nuclear power reactors. Ford proposed a multinational reprocessing plant in Iran that would enable the United States to participate in the project. Iran rejected this and pushed for a national nuclear program. In 1978, Iran and the United States initiated a nuclear agreement in which Iran agreed to safeguards beyond NPT requirements, in exchange for becoming the "most favoured" country for reprocessing fuel.

In January 1963, the Shah embarked on a campaign to modernise and westernise the country. He launched the 'White Revolution', a programme of drastic modernisation or westernisation. Resentment of Pahlavi's autocratic style fuelled discontent against his regime. During the 1970s, the inequality between Iran's rich and poor grew. The economy at the time was heavily dependent on oil and gas. This led to further distrust in the Shah's economic policy.

Hence, radical revolutionary groups soon sprung up. At their head was Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, a religious scholar from Qom. Demonstrations against the Shah commenced in October, 1977. The revolution came to a head in 1979, when Khomeini replaced Pahlavi. Iran now became an Islamic Republic, which firmly opposed Western beliefs and culture. Khomeini crushed any opposition and dissent caused by his rule. Following the revolution, international nuclear cooperation with Iran was cut off.

In 1979, November, Islamic militants took 52 Americans hostage inside USA's embassy in Tehran. They demand the extradition of the Shah, who was in USA for medical treatment, to face trial in Iran. The hostages were held for 444 days in the embassy. This incident is referred to as the Hostage Crisis of 1979 and it led to the complete severance of diplomatic ties between USA and Iran.

THE NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY AND IRAN

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which acts as the binding party of the IAEA and the UN, was put in force in order to prevent the spread of proliferation of nuclear weapons.

An abridged version of the text of the treaty is as follows (Note to reader: Abbreviations are applied. It is advisable to see the original text.)

The Treaty advises the nuclear States amongst Parties to the Treaty to not distribute its nuclear arsenal amongst non-nuclear states, and to not promote the manufacture of nuclear devices in non-nuclear States, that are intending to use them for non peaceful uses.

Non-nuclear states should also not accept any military-grade nuclear material from nuclear states, or maintain any nuclear facilities of its own, which process such nuclear material. The Parties to the Treaty should pursue agreements with the IAEA to meet the requirements of this Treaty. Such negotiations should be conducted 180 days after the Treaty is enacted, and should

be brought into force eighteen months after the initiation of negotiations. Nothing in the Treaty should be interpreted as having violated any of the Parties' right to trade and maintain its nuclear facility for peaceful purposes, as long as the Party follows the IAEA's and the Treaty's safeguards. All Parties to the Treaty should engage in a fluid transfer of nuclear devices and scientific information, especially for the benefit of non-nuclear developing nations. The Parties to the Treaty should ensure that the benefits of peaceful nuclear power should be made available to all non-nuclear States that consist of the Party.

All Parties may propose amendments to the Treaty. If one-thirds of the members of the Parties agree, a meeting may be convened, and the amendment may pass if it receives a majority vote from all Parties to the Treaty. Five years after the Treaty is brought into force, a conference should be conducted to discuss its operations and the enforcement of the safeguards. If the Parties agree, more such conferences should be organized. If a member of the UN chooses not to sign the Treaty, she or he may do so afterwards. All Parties should, however, ratify the Treaty at some point. For all intents and purposes, a 'nuclear state' is one which possessed a nuclear arsenal prior to January 7, 1967.

The treaty was signed on July 1, 1968. It was brought into force on 5 March, 1970, and signed by all but three members of the UN- India, Pakistan, and Israel. Though India and Pakistan have publicly confirmed their nuclear testing, Israel maintains a policy of deliberate ambiguity regarding its own program. In 2003, North Korea also withdrew from the Treaty, and currently there are implications of a nuclear stronghold.

Iran, despite still being officially a signatory of the NPT, has been subjected to repeated suspicions of being in possession of nuclear weapons. An official IAEA report dated from 2005 stated that Iran is not evidently conducting nuclear tests. However, the report also stated that Iran does not comply with the Treaty's safeguards. Even though Ayatollah Khamenei and President Ahmedinejad have dismissed the allegations, it is suspected by the United States' Department of State that Iran is at a close proximity to achieving the possession of nuclear technology for military purposes.

In its latest February 2013 report, the IAEA stated that Iran has been enriching Uranium in two facilities- one which uses 8,271 Kg of Uranium, and the other which uses 280 Kg of Uranium, enriched upto 5% and 20% respectively. It was reported that such percentage of enrichment is beyond that of civilian standards. The same report also stated the IAEA's suspicions that Iran was conducting hydrodynamic experiments in a large explosives containment vessel, and proof of such experiments would be strong indicators of possible nuclear weapons development- the failure of Iran's part to report so would be a direct violation of the NPT's safeguards. The information gathered by the IAEA suggested that the site had been located in Parchin from 2000 onwards. Iran has denied the Agency's request to carefully investigate the site.

Iran has been suggesting that it maintain a policy of secrecy to shield itself from the states that are attempting to deny it nuclear technology.

ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

The late 1940s and early 1950s for the United States were primarily characterized by its strong security concerns regarding the potential nuclear proliferation of different nations for the world. The Baruch plan, brought forth by President Harry S. Truman, proposed that the United States would shut down its nuclear facilities, and submit all its patents and scientific documents containing the mechanism of its nuclear plant, to the UNSC. In exchange, the Security Council

would be required to pass a resolution forbidding all countries to maintain nuclear technology. The plan, despite being well-received by the members of the GA, was not agreed upon by the Soviet Union.

Years following its failure, in an effort to reduce the problems that could arise out of the spread of nuclear technology for military purposes, President Dwight D. Eisenhower presented his 'Atoms for Peace' speech, envisioning a world where nuclear energy's positive aspects would be utilized to as large an extent as possible, and nuclear warfare would be kept minimal. The Soviet Union and anti-American personalities suggested that the Atoms for Peace speech was merely propaganda on the US's part to support Containment (The Cold War-era attempts of the USA to limit the spread of the Communism and influence of the USSR). Four years after the speech, however, the United Nations announced the construction of an international body to regulate the use of nuclear technology. This body was named the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The Agency began functioning with three main purposes:

- 1) To accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world.
- 2) Ensuring, as far as it is able, that assistance provided by it or at its request or under its supervision or control is not used in such a way as to further any military purpose.
- 3) Preventing all possible hazards attached with the responsibility of running a nuclear enrichment facility.

The IAEA has since been involved in regulating all nuclear activities, and attempting to keep a nuclear war at a distance. Despite being criticized for nuclear disasters such as Chernobyl and Fukushima, the IAEA has been appraised for its consistent efforts to maintain its safeguards.

However, through the course of the 2000's decades, the IAEA has paid attention to, in particular, the nuclear program maintained under the Supreme Authority of Iran. In 2003, when Iran confirmed the presence of a nuclear facility, the IAEA, acting under the impression that Iran's nuclear facilities were also used in conducting military experiments, ordered the country to shut down its facility. However, President Ahmedinejad announced that Iran would pursue its peaceful nuclear enrichment regardless of the IAEA's desires or orders.

In November 2003, the IAEA was given the permission to fully investigate Iran's nuclear technology. Despite finding no evidence of their allegations of Iran maintaining a nuclear arsenal, the IAEA announced that that Iran had violated the safeguard agreements of the NPT and would be liable to be penalized for the offense. After the IAEA presented its findings to the UNSC, the Council advised Iran to suspend its enrichment activities. However, after refusing to do so, Iran was economically sanctioned under the authority of the Security Council.

Ever since, the SC has assured Ahmedinejad that suspending its nuclear activities would be beneficial to the country. They stated that if Iran were to comply with their orders, they would subsequently commission the IAEA to take measures to build a peaceful atomic program in Iran. However, these efforts produced no effect.

However, Iran, in order to explicitly express the peaceful nature of its enrichment program, has offered the IAEA to use their full investigative powers on its facilities. However, in response to the implementation of stricter economic sanctions, Iran ceased its cooperative activities with the IAEA in February 2006. In its latest February 2013 report, the IAEA reported the increase in Iran's nuclear enrichment centrifuges at a steady, consistent, rate. In 2011, the IAEA had

discovered evidence that suggested that prior to 2003, Iran had been funding through research nuclear military technology, and provoked strong international criticism. However, those allegations, according to President Ahmedinejad, were baseless.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

IRAN AND AFGHANISTAN

Political Relations:

Iran has been an extremely influential force in reconstruction process in Afghanistan. Since Afghanistan's independence, both countries maintained close diplomatic relations. Following the seizure of power by the Taliban in 1996, Iran refused to recognize the new government and instead provided military support to the North Alliance opposition. Currently, Iran has developed friendly relations with the Hamid Karzai government. It has participated in the reconstruction of Afghanistan, continued supporting its traditional allies and pressed for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from the country.

Economic Relations:

In February 2006, Iranian officials announced that they intended to give an additional amount of \$100 million in aid to Afghanistan to help them in their reconstruction. In 2002, Iran had donated \$570 million in aid to Afghanistan. The Iranian parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Commission announced a transit railway linking Iran and Afghanistan would soon be operational. The National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company have also signed a memorandum permitting Iran to provide 300,000 tons of oil products to Afghanistan over a period of six months.

Nuclear Relations:

The Afghan Foreign Ministry's policy states that they seek universal disarmament of all nuclear weapons and fully support an Asia and the Middle East free of nuclear weaponry. In 2008, the Non-Aligned Movement, of which Afghanistan is a member, released a statement saying that they "welcomed the continuing cooperation being extended by the Islamic Republic of Iran to the IAEA." They also "reaffirmed the basic and inalienable right of all states to develop research, production and use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes, without any discrimination and in conformity with their respective legal obligations."

CUBA AND IRAN

Political Relations:

The political and diplomatic relations between Cuba and post-Revolution Iran are stable, bilateral and one of co-operation, after the state of allegiance between them being magnified by their mutual foreign policies regarding the United States and the Western Bloc, and their symbiotic bloc position in the Non-Aligned movement. Both countries, on a quarterly basis

conduct state visits, and the Ayatollahs have declared their support of Cuba in combating the foreign powers against monopolizing them.

Economic Relations:

Cuba and Iran have maintained bilateral economic relations that had been conceived in 2005, following Iran's financial assistance to improve Cuba's degenerating transport facilities and infrastructure. The assistance was in the form of a trade deal, which resulted in Iran selling 750 railway cars to Cuba under a loan 300 million USD. In February 2008, Cuba and Iran formed their first agreement -facilitating scientific and technological cooperation that focused on the biotechnology fields of medical and pharmaceutical development. In June 2008, the two countries signed a memorandum of understanding reiterating their bilateral economic cooperation.

The trade between the two countries progressed from 23 billion USD in 2007 to 46.5 billion USD the next year. In September 2009, Cuba put into force a trade agreement signed by itself and Iran in 2007. The agreement planned to increase trade between the two countries by decreasing tax on 88 different Iranian products imported into Cuba. In the November of that year, Iran and Cuba reached an understanding about expanding bilateral co-operation. With this agreement, Iran increased its credit line to Cuba from 300 million Euros to a total of 500 million Euros.

Nuclear Relations:

Cuba, an opponent of the UN economic sanctions on Iran, has expressed support for Iran's nuclear program and has defended its right to peaceful nuclear technology. Cuban President Raul Castro serves as the Secretary-General of the Non-Aligned Movement, which released a statement in July 2008 declaring that its member states, supported the continuing hospitality extended to the IAEA by Iran, and that they support Iran's choices and decisions, including those in the field of nuclear development. In November 2009, the IAEA rebuked Iran for building a second enrichment plan in secret, and passed a resolution to that accord. Cuba, along with Venezuela and Malaysia, opposed the resolution, which called on Iran to halt uranium enrichment and freeze ongoing construction of its nuclear facilities.

IRAN AND THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Political Relations:

China has always rallied for Iran's cause, since the 1990s. Iran has explicitly rejected the scheme for the independence of Taiwan. Chinese officials on occasion have expressed their desire to increase ties with Iran. In spite of China's dependence on Iranian oil, it supported IAEA sanctions against Iran regarding financial and shipping enterprises related to proliferation-sensitive activities.

Iran is China's third largest supplier of crude oil—roughly 500,000 barrels a day.

Much to the western powers concern, Iran and China have remained steadfast allies.

Economic Relations:

China and Iran share extensive economic relations, regardless of sanctions by the UN Security Council and the US. Hundreds of Chinese companies function in Iran and Beijing further seeks to

increase its influence in the Iranian market.

China, especially since 2009, has become a major economic partner of the Islamic Republic, with bilateral exchanges worth \$21.2 billion. Their oil company has replaced western influence, especially the French oil company. Due to this, they receive discounted oil.

Nuclear Relations:

As a permanent member of the UN Security Council and a member state of the P5+1, China has always reaffirmed Iran's right, as a signatory of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, to use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes and stressed that negotiations and dialogue are the right approach to address the Islamic Republic's nuclear issue. In the past, China had provided support to Iran's nuclear program, but withdrew to preserve relations with the US. However, unofficial reports state that China provides clandestine support to uranium enrichment in Iran.

REPUBLIC OF FRANCE AND IRAN

Political Relations:

Following the Iranian Revolution, when the US-backed Shah was replaced with the establishment of an Islamic Republic, Iranian relations with France suffered a grave setback. Iran's mistrust of France was further fuelled by the military aid that France provided Iraq during the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980's. The later release of French hostages in Lebanon through Iran's mediation efforts and a contract made between a French oil company and the Iranian government led to bilateral relations between the countries. Although France continues to maintain an embassy in Iran and conduct official state relations within the country, the conflict over Iran's nuclear program has significantly hampered relations between both countries.

Economic Relations:

France has reduced its economic cooperation with Iran beyond the requirements of the UN Security Council sanctions. It has supported EU sanctions against some of Iran's major banks for their cooperation with Iran's nuclear program. Yet, outside of its support of UNSC and EU sanctions, France has continued trade with Iran and has resisted American pressure to further reduce bilateral trade. Recent reports affirm that France has been one of the Islamic Republic's major trade partners in 2008. Iranian media reports state that France and Iran held talks in 2008 to discuss a petrochemical contract, roughly worth a million Euros. Reports also claimed that Iranian exports to France have increased due to oil and manufactured goods sales.

In 2009, the US administration was required to publish a report of all companies doing business with the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and its affiliates. The French-based company Total S.A. was among the companies listed as Iran's biggest refined petroleum suppliers.

Nuclear Relations:

France has never encouraged or cooperated in Iran's nuclear program. Instead, France has supported EU and UNSC sanctions against Tehran's nuclear program and has worked towards its abolishment. In fact, it is so intent on discontinuing the nuclear program that in April 2010,

French President Nicholas Sarkozy travelled to Beijing in an attempt to convince China of backing new sanctions against Iran.

INDIA AND IRAN

Political Relations:

Indio-Iran diplomatic links were established on 15 March 1950, because of which, bilateral consultative mechanisms exist at various levels, whose meetings take place regularly. In addition, the Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) of India and the Institute of Political and International Studies (IPIS) of Iran hold regular round table to exchange views and ideas on bilateral and multilateral issues. Indo-Iranian relations have been strained as of December 14, 2012, due to India's "move towards Washington," but with the recent boost in Indo-Iran trade, Iran's relations with India are once again developing positively.

Economic Relations:

Indian import of Iranian crude oil is the major factor in Indo-Iran trade relations. Moreover, India is the third largest market for Iranian crude. India's exports to Iran include petroleum products, rice, machinery and instruments, manufactures of metals, primary and semi finished iron & steel, pharmaceuticals and fine chemicals, processed minerals, human made fabrics, tea and chemicals.

According to a Reuters report, dated March 8th, 2013, India is set to halt all crude imports from Iran as insurance companies in the country have stated that refineries processing the oil will no longer be covered, due to Western sanctions. An Indian government source provided assurances that New Delhi would find a way to ensure refineries have cover but gave no details as to how this would come into effect.

India and Iran are in discussions for the setting up of a number of projects such as the IPI gas pipeline project and a long-term annual supply of 5 million tons of LNG. Both countries have set up joint ventures such as the Madras Fertilizer Company and the Chennai Refinery as well. India is also a member of the International North-South Corridor project. The two countries are in the process of finalizing a Bilateral Investment Promotion & Protection Agreement (BIPPA) and a Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA). India and Iran hold regular bilateral talks on economic and trade issues at the Indo-Iran Joint Commission Meeting (JCM).

Nuclear Relations:

India voiced support for Iran's nuclear program, expressing its concerns over the situation in Iran. India reiterated its call to support a comprehensive and lasting settlement of the situation, which would only be realised through political and diplomatic means, such as holding negotiations and talks to find an acceptable solution.



Iran-Iraq war (1980-88)

IRAN AND IRAQ

Political Relations:

Since the Iraq war, Iran has tried to influence Iraqi politics by uniting with Shiite and Kurdish parties to allegedly create a weak federal state, dominated by Shiites and subjected to Iranian influence. According to American news reports, Iran's goal is to unite Shiite parties so that they can yield political influence and consolidate Shiite primacy for the first time. Tehran has supposedly encouraged its closest allies- The Supreme Council of Iraq, the Dawa and the Sadrists to participate in regional politics and help mould Iraq's nascent institutions.

The military relations between Iran and Iraq were subjected to a vast amount of criticism from the global media. The Quds Force is a special operations unit of Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps, which was accused by U.S officials of providing weaponry and training to Shiite militias. The arms provided to them predominantly include rocket propelled grenades, Katyusha rockets, and roadside bombs. Specifically, the American officials further alleged that the investment includes the support, training and finance of militias like the Badr Brigade, the armed wing of one of Iraq's most religious Shiite parties based in southern Iraq.

However, the military aid provided to Iraq by Iran is hardly an irregular occurrence. Tehran, to cite as an example, has commissioned intelligence operatives in northern Iraq actively since 1993. The sites of intelligence operations include base offices in Irbil and Sulaymaniya.

Economic Relations:

Following Turkey, Iraq as of yet remains the second-largest economic partner of Iran, with the

value of the bilateral trade relations being placed at 5 billion USD in 2012. Exports to Iran mostly include processed food, inexpensive consumer goods and cars, whereas Iraqi exports to Iran include crude and refined oil products, sulfur and iron. Iranian investors and construction firms are largely active in Baghdad. The free-trade market in southern Iraq has initiated a surge of Iranian goods into local shops in Basra, including kerosene and cooking gas.

Iran is also in the process of constructing a highway to link Basra with Iranian commercial centres across the border. Due to the devastating physical damage to the infrastructural facilities of Iraq during the 2003 Invasion, the Iraqi government has sought to rebuild them using the funds generated by maintaining trade with Iran. In addition to the humanitarian investments made in the construction of power plants, banks, schools, hotels and brick factories as a part of Iraq's reconstruction efforts, Iran's commercial exports to Iraq include construction materials, petrochemicals, industrial and medical equipment and food grains.

Iraq's cabinet approved a 365 million USD contract with Iran in 2011, to construct a pipeline from Iran to Iraq, for the purpose of power generation. The deal will generate 2500 MW of power for Iraq, which is healthy asset considering Iraq's electricity shortage.

Nuclear Relations:

On April 17, 2010, a conference on nuclear disarmament was hosted by Iran, where the foreign ministers of Iraq, Syria and Lebanon expressed their support for Iran's nuclear program. Iraq's foreign minister, Hoshyar Zebari publicly voiced his country's recognition and support for Iran's right to a nuclear program for peaceful means. In January 2011, the Iraqi government approached the IAEA with concerns regarding Iran's plans to construct a nuclear reactor near their shared border. Baghdad requested that the IAEA provide them with additional information pertaining to the facility's construction.

It was also announced that Iraq would take the necessary diplomatic measures in co-operation with the IAEA to suppress the dangers and complications that could potentially arise from the installations of nuclear facilities near the Iran/Iraq border. On September 25, 2008, Zebari joined the foreign ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council in a joint statement that called for Iran's public assurance that it was, at the time, not seeking to proliferate. In March 2006, Zebari had officially announced that the Iraqi government does not support the construction of nuclear weapons in Iran, though they were in support of peaceful atomic energy.

ISRAEL AND IRAN

Political Relations:

Diplomatic relations between Iran and Israel has been widely cited as being non-existent, and are subjected to much anxiety from the global community.

Before the Iranian Revolution of 1979, Iran had maintained a relationship of political and economic alliance with Imperial Iran. However, under the revolutionary regime of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini there began grave animosity between the two nations, mostly due to Khomeini's Islamist, far right ideologies. Israel, in an attempt to resolve the conflict between them, provided Iran with funds and assistance during the Iran-Iraq War. However, those attempts were in vain.

After the fall of the Soviet Union, the United States and Israel found no reason to maintain a Western buffer zone in the Middle East, and attempts to restore diplomacy with Iran were abandoned. Since then, relations between the two nations have been strained. Possible reasons for the absence of diplomacy may be the regional competition for influence.

Following the Iraq-Iran War, Iran and Israel remained the most powerful entities in the Middle East. The other predominant reason for the hostility between the countries is the IAEA's suspicions that Iran is under possession of a nuclear arsenal. The state of unrest between the two countries (commonly referred to as a 'cold war') has been indicated by a series of proxy war throughout their recent history.

An instance of proxy warfare between Iran and Israel is demonstrated in the ongoing Gaza War, between the IAF and Hamas, an Islamic Jihadist organization, which states in its official manifesto, its commitment to annihilate Israel.

Economic Relations:

The ambiguity between Iran and Israel regarding their trade relations has generated wide suspicion, and allegations that the two are actively engaged in trade relations, despite the fact that bilateral trade between them is outlawed in both countries.

According to Anne Barker, a news correspondent for ABC World News, the two nations have maintained clandestine trade relations even following the Gulf War-era. Barker brings to light the case of The Ofer Group, a privately owned multinational industry that was sanctioned by the US, after being found to have maintained economic relations with the Iranian government. According to Equasis, an international shipping database, the Ofer Group had sold an oil tanker to Iran's national shipping company, Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines, in a trade amounting to over 8.4 million USD.

Additionally, Equasis reported that 13 of the ships docked in IRISL's port, containing crude oil, were transported from Israel, through Equasis. The Knesset has ordered the conduction of a parliamentary investigation, pertaining to the issue.

Under Israeli law, illegal trade with the Iranian public sector is a punishable, federal offense, with one individual being sentenced to 17 years in prison for having sold gas to Iran. Furthermore, according to Israel's economic policies, any corporations that have engaged in trade with Iran are considered black listed in Israel, and maintaining economic relations with such corporations are inadvisable for domestic enterprises. However, according to local reports, Iran has not been in full compliance with its own policy.

Nuclear Relations:

Iran's alleged nuclear military facility is said to be a deterrent against a foreign attack, especially from Israel. Though Iran's possession of a nuclear facility is not as of yet publicly confirmed, and Israel's nuclear weapons are still under ambiguity, both the nations have made a wide range of threats against each other. High-ranking military officials from Iran have announced to the media that the nation is close to achieving their true target, "annihilation of Israel." Though these statements are not official threats, Western media has widely portrayed Iran as a highly unstable region at the verge of attacking Israel unexpectedly.

However, the threats are mirrored by Israel, where President Shimon Peres announced that Israel would have no problem in 'wiping Iran off the map.' President Ahmedinejad responded by insisting that even Iran would not be incapable of removing Israel from 'the pages of time.' Tel Aviv announced in November 2003 that Israel would be prepared to take unilateral military actions against Iran, if the international community failed to halt its nuclear program. In response to the threat, President Ahmedinejad stated that if Israel were to initiate a military strike on Iran's nuclear facilities, Tehran would not hesitate to declare war. Such a state of cold war balances the nuclear deterrents of both the States.

According to the New York Times, Israel sought help from the United States, in planning a military attack against Iran. Israel apparently asked for bunker-busting bombs, to facilitate an attack on Iran's major nuclear complex. Iran also asked for permission to fly over Iraq to reach Iran's nuclear facility at Natanz. The Bush administration did not comply with the requests.

IRAN AND LEBANON

Political Relations:

Iran and Lebanon have actively pursued positive relations since the Islamic Revolution in 1979. After formation of the Islamic Republic, Iran's revolutionary head, including Ayatollah Khomeini began providing financial and spiritual support to the Shia community in Lebanon. The Islamic Republic allegedly continues to act as Hezbollah's primary external supporter providing funding, arms and military support. In recent years, the governments of Iran and Lebanon have taken additional steps to enhance economic and diplomatic cooperation.

Lebanese President Michel Suleiman assumed office in 2008. Since then, has been active in encouraging bilateral ties between the two Middle Eastern countries. Given both Iran's similarity towards Israel and Lebanon's history of conflict with the Jewish state, Tehran's political interactions with Beirut are mostly related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Iran has been repeatedly accused of manipulating the Lebanese parliamentary elections, using Hezbollah proxy candidates, though nothing was proved.

Economic Relations:

In 2009, the two allies agreed to a \$50 million Memorandum of Understanding to increase cooperation in the energy sector. Official bilateral trade has continued to expand, increasing from \$78.4 million in 2006 to \$180 million in 2010—the overall volume lags significantly behind that of other regional partners, such as the United Arab Emirates, Syria, and Iraq.

The complete extent of economic cooperation between Iran and Hezbollah is unknown, though the U.S. Department of Defence has estimated that Iran provides \$100 million to \$200 million per year to the Hezbollah. With the 16 documents, Lebanon and Iran will develop bilateral relations and cooperation in the areas of agriculture, energy, oil and gas, trade and handicrafts, tourism, higher education, health, environment, media, communications, information technology and techniques.

In 2010, the Lebanese Foreign Ministry's Director of Economic Affairs Mustapha Hamdan

and Iran's Housing and Urban Development Minister Seyyed Ali Lotfizadeh signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) during a follow-up committee meeting at the sixth joint economic commission held in Iran. The MoU stated that the Iran-Lebanon committee would continue to meet every four months to discuss economic cooperation between the two states.

In 2011, Iranian and Lebanese officials agreed to a Memorandum of Understanding to cooperate in the energy field, Iran is ready to provide help in gas explorations and gas experts. By 2011, there were seventeen trade agreements between their countries in the sectors of oil, gas and trade.

Nuclear Relations:

Lebanon has been supportive of Iran's nuclear program, stressing that it views Iran's program as peaceful. The Lebanese government has urged a diplomatic resolution to the ongoing conflict between the Islamic Republic and the international community over its nuclear efforts. In 2010, Lebanon abstained from voting on a UN Security Council Resolution calling for additional sanctions on Iran.

NORTH KOREA AND IRAN

Political Relations:

North Korea has had political relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran since the Iranian Revolution of 1979. Iran and North Korea are working to cement their political relations. Iran and North Korea are widely regarded in the world media as being the epitome of unstable nuclear proliferators. For that reason, there remains a state of empathy and co-operation between them. Since the regime change, North Korea has been politically allied with Iran. During the Iran-Iraq War, Pyongyang has supplied Tehran with conventional military hardware to combat the Iraqi Forces. In 2007, Japanese news reports stated that North Korea had agreed to supply submarines to Iran, in response to massive government debts.

Despite the Iranian government quickly claiming that there is no military trade between the two countries, Ahmedinejad stated in 2008 that there will be co-operative activities between the two countries within the foreseeable future. In August 2009, the Financial Times reported that the UAE had detained a ship bound for Iran, after discovering several containers of North Korean weapons. The vessel was carrying rocket-propelled grenades and ammunitions supposedly ordered by an Iranian company linked to Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. The ship was searched in accordance with the UNSC resolution 1874.



Kim Jong-Un, current North Korean leader

Economic Relations:

Most of the economic relations between Iran and North Korea include missiles and parts, which are exported from North Korea to Iran. These exports include Scud-B ballistic missiles in 1989 and Nodong-1 medium range ballistic missiles in 1993, which became the basis for the Iranian Shehab-3. North Korea and Iran have discussed cooperation in a number of spheres related to energy. Some of the spheres discussed were exploration, production, and processing. Since both countries want to fight against the imperialism of the superpowers, political and trade relations are quite strong between the two. Iran supplies North Korea with oil and North Korea supplies Iran with refined oil and ammunition.

Nuclear Relations:

North Korea supports Iran's right to developing nuclear technology for domestic purposes, recognizing Iran's constructive efforts to stabilize the Middle East region. North Korea has provided Iran with nuclear advice and materials to develop ballistic missiles. Allegedly, North Korea has supported Iran with its nuclear enrichment program and shared data and experience with Iran's scientists. However, North Korean diplomats in Iran claimed that there hadn't been any such agreement made.

Concerns about the nature of North Korea's exchanges with Iran have still risen due to a deal signed between Iran and North Korea, in 2012, dealing with cooperation in the fields of science and technology. American officials and nuclear experts believe that Pyongyang is close to

mastering the technology to mount nuclear warheads on top of medium-range missiles. In comparison, there is no conclusive proof that Iran has acquired any nuclear weapons.

IRAN AND PAKISTAN

Political Relations:

An important South-East Asian ally, Pakistan and Iran enjoy strong diplomatic relations. Their relationship began following the partition of India in 1947 and Iran was the first to extend recognition to the new state. Similarities in Islamic ideology, despite Sunni-Shia differences are an important factor in the growing Iran-Pakistan relationship, especially after the Iranian Revolution of 1979. The political turmoil following the Cold War and their shared antipathy towards Soviet intervention in Afghanistan only served to further this relationship.

In a post-War scenario, with growing US domination, Iran and Pakistan began to cooperate in security developments, particularly nuclear research and nuclear technology. No doubt, sustaining the relationship has been difficult owing to internal conflicts, wide ramifications between communities, ethnicities and cultures and international pressure, but strategic geopolitical analysis and calculation have convinced Pakistan of the necessity of supporting the Iranian nuclear programme in order to maintain regional power-balance, reducing Western domination and securing assistance for its own nuclear facilities.

Economic Relations:

Trade relations between the two countries have flourished for years but have recently suffered a setback owing to the economic sanctions applied against Iran. Pakistani business communities have urged the Pakistani government to defy such international action while supporting efforts such as the Iran-Pakistan pipeline, which is said to be a massive achievement towards greater energy security. According to a recent IMF report, Pakistan ranks as the 17th major export partner of Iran with 349.4 million Euros and eighth leading export collaborate, with 1090 million Euros.

Defying the sanctions is difficult and unofficial reports state that majority of the trade is carried out by underhand means, through smuggling or through a third country such as the United Arab Emirates. To increase bilateral and regional trade, Iranian officials have stressed the importance of the establishment of banking channels and the two countries have agreed to open banking branches and engage in currency swap. This has had positive results.

Nuclear Relations:

Pakistan and Iran's nuclear relationship began in the 1980's, during the rule of Zia-Ul-Haq. Reports mention that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) found that Pakistan had transferred nuclear technology for advanced centrifuges to Iran, which the latter accepted as having received in 1987. The IAEA found 36% enriched uranium, originally sourced from Russia which had been transferred from China to Pakistan, and then eventually to Iran. This is clear evidence of the intricate nuclear network which has been established between these countries. Some unofficial reports say that Iran had made an offer of \$3.2 million assistance to Pakistan's nuclear programme, in exchange for nuclear technology.

One of the principal architects of Pakistan's nuclear bomb, Abdul Qadeer Khan, has stated that he had provided Iran, Libya and North Korea with relevant nuclear technology to produce nuclear weapons in the past 15 years. However, without extensive knowledge of the involved individuals and substantial proof, such allegations may be regarded as controversies.

Today, official inter-state contacts have gradually reduced and the Iran-Pakistan nuclear relationship largely revolves around the Khan network. This makes it extremely difficult for the international community to gauge the extent of official Pakistani government involvement in assistance to Iran's nuclear programme.

PALESTINE AND IRAN

Political Relations:

Following the Iranian Revolution in 1979, Iran ended its alliance with Israel and started supporting Palestinians. This was symbolized by turning over the Israeli embassy in Iran to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). The PLO had close ties with Iran. They also backed the 1979 Revolution. However, relations worsened when Khomeini criticized the PLO for its nationalist and pan-Arab agenda and when the PLO supported Iraq in the Iran-Iraq war. Tehran condemned PLO chief Yasser Arafat after he recognized Israel's right to exist and called for peace talks with Israel. During the second Palestinian intifada in September 2000, Arafat released Hamas and Islamic Jihad militants held by the Palestinian Authority. Iran applauded Arafat for his resistance and Ayatollah Khamenei praised the intifada for restoring Palestinian unity.

Iran also aided emerging Palestinian Islamic groups, such as the Islamic Jihad and the Hamas. The Islamic Jihad is closest to Iran and unlike other Arab and Sunni groups, it supported Iran during its war with Iraq. The Islamic Jihad maintains a representative in Iran and has been armed, trained, and funded by the country.

Hamas and Iran both shared a common goal of wanting to see Israel replaced by the Islamic state of Palestine. Hamas relations developed with Iran after the PLO called for making peace with Israel. Iran promised military and financial support- reportedly \$30 million annually- as well as advanced military training for Hamas activists.

Economic Relations:

Iran economically supports the Palestinian Authority. In 2002, a ship reportedly destined for Gaza, carried 50 tons of advanced weaponry, including Katyusha rockets, rifles, mortar shells, mines, and anti-tank missiles, and was found to have been loaded in Iranian waters. An Israeli commando raid in the Red Sea interdicted it. Arafat denied any involvement; the arms were a clear violation of Palestinian-Israeli agreements, but Israel interpreted the shipment as a sign of Iran's renewed support for the PLO resistance.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND IRAN

Political Relations:

Under the rule of the Shah, Iran and Russia did not enjoy close relations. Even after the Shah's regime was replaced by the Anti-American Islamic Republic, relations between both countries remained tense. This was mainly due to Soviet support to Iraq during the Iraq-Iran war. However, with the end of the war and the gradual disintegration of the Soviet Union itself, Iranian threat perceptions of Russia were greatly reduced.

The Arab Spring presented the two countries with overlapping, but dissimilar challenges and opportunities in the Middle East. The American withdrawal from Afghanistan has given Russia and Iran more opportunities to collaborate closely in resisting Taliban threats, as they did before 9/11.

Economic Relations:

Russia and Iran have well-established trade relations. The overall trade volume between the countries is about \$4 billion per year. The countries signed a treaty in January 2008, agreeing to cooperate in the development of some of Iran's vast oil and natural gas reserves. They also agreed to trade natural gas in order to increase their export efficiency and profits. Russia and Iran have expanded their trade ties through a large agriculture agreement and a telecommunications contract. Both countries have also emphasised on collaboration in the fields of rail, road and sea transportation. Russian aviation sales to Iran are considered highly important for both parties.

Nuclear Relations:

Iran and Russia have extended their relations into the field of nuclear technology. From Moscow's perspective, Iran's withdrawal from the NPT would be dangerous. According to them, the world community should do everything to keep Iran under the jurisdiction of the NPT, even if under less than ideal circumstances.

Though Russia has voted in favour of UNSC sanctions against Iran's nuclear program, it has publicly supported Iran's right to peaceful nuclear technology and has helped supply the materials and expertise required to build the Bushehr nuclear plant. In 2009, Russia discussed a 10-year fuel supply deal with Iran to fuel the Bushehr nuclear power plant.

In 2010, a trade deal was proposed by the United States in which Iran would send Russia 1200 kg of its fissile uranium. Russia approves further enrichment and ensures its use for medicinal purposes.

The trade was allegedly a test to confirm whether Iran was processing military-grade weapons, as complying with its terms would ensure that their nuclear technology was only being used for domestic purposes. However, the trade did not occur at that time.

SOUTH AFRICA AND IRAN

Political Relations:

South Africa and Iran maintained formal relations during the reign of the Shah at the level of Consulates-General and had good relations in the field of trade, science, technology, defense, medicine, energy, and mining. However, after the Iranian Revolution in 1979 and the fall of the Shah, Iran severed all ties with South Africa to the extent that it imposed a total trade and oil boycott against the country. Diplomatic relations were re-established between the two

countries in 1994 and since then relations between the two countries have expanded in many fields.

Economic Relations:

Iran has been a major supplier of crude oil to South Africa. Oil deals grew and broadened into greater official cooperation beyond the energy segment. As of 2006, South Africa received 40% of its crude oil from Iran. Bilateral trade and corporate relations between the two countries have also increased, such that in 2008, South Africa put bilateral trade at \$4 billion with Iran. South Africa also recently agreed to several joint development projects in Iran, including refineries and a massive mobile phone contract for South Africa's Mobile Phone Network (MTN).

In January 2009, South Africa discussed increasing economic cooperation with Iran. In May 2009, South African ministers attended a conference on foreign investment in Iran hosted by Tehran. In June 2009, the National Iranian Petrochemical Company announced that the South African Company, Sasoul, would be involved in Iranian petrochemical projects. However, after the stricter implementation of sanctions in 2012, trade relations have been adversely affected.

Nuclear Relations:

In 1997, the South African government discussed selling enrichment materials from its own nuclear program and reportedly offered to sell uranium oxide concentrate to Iran, which the country could use to develop its nuclear program. Although South Africa denied its participation in any enrichment activities, it has asked the United States and Israel to cease their threats against Iran's nuclear program and has suggested that all embargos, including arms and financial bans, against Iran and the Revolutionary Guard be dropped in order to encourage greater diplomatic engagement.

In March 2008, after the United Nations Security Council's adoption of the third resolution regarding Iran's nuclear activities, South African ambassador to the U.N. stated that although South Africa did not want Iran to possess nuclear weapons capability, it also did not want to deny a NPT member the right to peaceful nuclear technology.

SYRIA AND IRAN

Political Relations:

Syria, as of now, is amidst a civil war being fought between anti-government rebel groups and the government-backed security forces. Due to this, foreign investors have pulled out most of their financing in the private sectors. Currently, the government is headed by Bashar al-Assad and his party- the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party. The anti-government forces have formed a coalition body called Syrian National Council (SNC). The SNC is being provided assistance by Friends of Syria by way of arms, training, and funding. This group was created as a rejoinder to the veto exercised by Russia and China on a Security Council resolution that condemned Syria. USA, UK, and Iraq are a few member nations of Friends of Syria.



Basshar al-Assad

Iran has announced its support for the Syrian people. Additionally, Iran has condemned western powers for supplying rebel groups with armaments, stating that this has only complicated the situation further. The Iranian authorities have repeatedly stated the importance of carrying out negotiations, so that a suitable solution can be found for the crisis.

They have reaffirmed that the Syrians should decide their own destiny, without any foreign interference and they have voiced their support for Ban-Ki-Moon's and Kofi Annan's efforts towards peace and security in the region. Allegedly, Syrian guerrilla fighters are also being trained in Iran, according to some press journals.

Nuclear Relations:

In October 2007, Syria became part of the international nuclear proliferation agenda when a small reactor under construction in the east of the country was destroyed in an Israeli air raid. This reportedly was North Korean-designed reactor optimized for production of bomb-grade plutonium. Syria denies it was a nuclear site and insists its nuclear activities are entirely, civilian, permitted under the NPT, which it signed in 1969. Syria also is widely believed to have a substantial biological and chemical weapons capability.

TURKEY AND IRAN

Political Relations:

Iran and Turkey have maintained relatively close relations since the inception of the Islamic Republic. In 2010, Turkey hosted a nuclear missile shield in its region, on behalf of NATO. This adversely affected the political relations between Turkey and Iran. With the dawn of the Arab Spring, ties between the countries have worsened further. However, Iran continues to consider Turkey a valuable political and economical ally. Turkey has expressed interest in developing and preserving relations with Iran, while remaining cautious of Iran's nuclear program.

Economic Relations:

Iran and Turkey are member nations of Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO). Both countries have maintained strong economic relations, despite alternating political relations. Trade relations between Iran and Turkey had hit an all-time high before the coming of the Arab uprising. Trade had nearly stopped in 2012, due to stricter implementation of sanctions placed on Iran and the clash over the Syrian crisis, but in March 2013, Turkey imported 120 million dollars worth of gold to Iran. Turkey has garnered a 6-month waiver until July 2013 from the UN sanctions on Iran.

The Iranian and Turkish authorities have both expressed the desire to double the trade volume between the two, in the near future. An important indication of close economic relations between the two states is the presence of the Tabriz-Ankara gas pipeline, which runs from Tabriz to Ankara and measures 2577 kilometers, and facilitates the trade of gas between the two countries.

Nuclear relations:

Turkey has adopted a "conciliatory" attitude to peacefully resolve the issue of Iran's nuclear program, through dialogue and continuing negotiations between the different parties, to reach a mutual consensus. In May 2010, a deal was struck between the governments of Turkey and Iran, the terms of which required Iran to ship 1200 kg of low-enriched Uranium to Turkey. In exchange, Turkey would export to Iran fissile fuel for a research reactor, within a year.

That particular grade of Uranium, according to the IAEA, can only be enriched unto 20%, which can only be used for the functioning of a civilian facility. During the time of the Iran-Turkey deal, Iran was enriching over 2300 kg of nuclear material, and the deal would allow Iran to retain almost half of its nuclear power.

IRAN AND THE UNITED KINGDOM

Political Relations:

Relations between the United Kingdom and Iran have experienced several fluctuations in the years that followed the Iranian Revolution of 1979.

In 2011, student Basij militia entered the British embassy in Tehran and a residential compound in the north of the city, causing extensive damage. However, the Iranian authorities made no substantial efforts to intervene and following this incident, the embassy was closed and all diplomats were withdrawn.

In addition to this, all Iranian diplomats were ordered to leave the UK on December 2, 2011. Today, diplomatic relations have not been completely severed, but they are at a minimal level. Sweden now represents British interests in Iran through their embassy in Tehran, while Iran's interests in the UK are currently represented by the Sultanate of Oman through its embassy in London.

As mentioned before, Iran has been repeatedly accused of supporting the Hamas, Lebanese Hezbollah and other Palestinian Rejectionist Groups. It has also been accused of supporting anti-government militia groups in Iraq and the Taliban in Afghanistan. All this completely undermines international efforts to bring about stability and security in these countries, and has caused serious tension between Iran and UK. Although Great Britain has continued to advocate a diplomatic resolution to the conflict, it has voted in favour of UNSC sanctions against Iran as well as additional sanctions enacted by the European Union.

Iran has also, in the past accused Britain of playing a role in the protests following the 2009 presidential election and interfering in its internal affairs, claiming that the massive protests were a plot by Iran's enemies to overthrow the system of religious rule through a strategically planned revolution.

Economic Relations:

Like much of the EU, the UK has limited its official economic relations with Iran due to UN sanctions against Iran's nuclear program. As mentioned, the European Union has imposed sanctions against Iran's Bank Melli for its support of Iran's nuclear enrichment activities.

Despite these activities, Iranian officials have claimed that Iran's trade volume with the UK has increased from \$1.2 billion to \$1.8 billion between 2008 and 2009. Though the British government has supported sanctions against Iran and curtailed official cooperation with the Islamic Republic, British companies still have business ties with Iran, particularly in the oil and natural gas industries.

The United Kingdom also attended the Iranian gas forum in Tehran on September 26-27, 2009 with Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, South Korea, and Malaysia. In addition to this, British aviation company Balli Aviation Limited pleaded guilty to illegally exporting Boeing aircraft to Iran and were ordered to pay a total of \$17 million in civil penalties.

Nuclear Relations:

The United Kingdom has made several attempts, in cooperation with France and Germany, to diplomatically engage the Islamic Republic on its nuclear program by offering diplomatic and economic incentives in exchange for greater transparency of Iranian enrichment facilities. In 2005, Great Britain cast its vote in the IAEA to adopt safeguards against Iran, and in 2006 voted in favour of taking the conflict to the UN Security Council.

Due to Iran's lack of compliance with IAEA and UNSC resolutions, the UK has called for Iran to completely shut down its nuclear program until the international community and Iran can reach a conclusive agreement on the dispute. As part of the EU, Britain has supported a diplomatic resolution of the international conflict, though it has voted in favour of UNSC sanctions against Iran's nuclear program.

IRAN AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Today, Iran-US relations are fraught with tension but for several years, the two countries had shared a close relationship. With U.S support, Iran kick-started its nuclear programme in the 1950's as part of the "Atoms for Peace" programme. Under U.S guidance, Iran signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1968. As mentioned before, the Iranian Revolution 1979 overthrew the US-backed government, replacing with it an Islamic Republic. This drastic change in political structure, fundamentally different from the United States was an important factor in the decline of relations. Relations deteriorated further when Iranian officials took American diplomats hostage at the end of 1979.

The United States' response to Iran's nuclear programme is manifested in a number of ways. The country has listed Iran as a state sponsor of terrorism in response to its alleged support of Hamas and Lebanese Hezbollah. Allegations continue, and the Iranian government has been attacked repeatedly for alleged human rights abuses against Iranian citizens.

The United States intervened in two of Iran's closest neighbours, Afghanistan and Iraq, devastating their political and social structure much to the dismay of the international community. The U.S invasion of Iraq in 2003, sparked a violent uprising, and the United States has accused Iran of assisting in this uprising.

Another important factor contributing to Iran-U.S relations is the United States staunch support for Iran's regional rival, Israel. Any escalation of tensions between the two would rope in the United States, a key ally of Israel, resulting in a fierce regional war, which would have a devastating impact on the political and economic structure of the region.

Recessionary conditions in the United States have prompted the country's officials to revisit this policy, mainly because its economy is dependent on the oil flows from the Middle Eastern region. Any increase in oil prices would have a detrimental impact on the U.S economy, plunging the entire world into another recession.

The massive political transformation that Middle Eastern countries are facing in the light of the recent Arab Spring is of immense significance in this regard. U.S policy must be carefully deliberated, taking into consideration Iran's role in the tumultuous, highly convoluted regional politics of this region.

U.S Sanctions on Iran:

Iran's enrichment of nuclear uranium despite sanctions and international criticism is an issue of considerable concern for the United States of America. Though the International Atomic Energy Agency has found no conclusive proof that Iran has begun building nuclear weapons the U.S. refuses to believe the same. As a result, a number of sanctions have been applied against Iran.

U.S. applied sanctions against Iran's nuclear programme range over thirty years, and fluctuations in decision making reflect the many shifts in this relationship. The sanctions initially began in response to the hostage crisis of 1979, when President Jimmy Carter declared an emergency and ordered an immediate freezing of all Iranian assets.

Further sanctions were applied in response to Iran being accused of involvement in the bombing of the U.S. Marine Base in Beirut, Lebanon. In the sphere of weapons development, Washington has formulated the Iran-Iraq Arms Non-Proliferation Act (October 23, 1992) and the Iran-Syria- North Korea Non-Proliferation Act, and Executive Order 13382, which was signed by President George Bush in June 2005.

Regarding Iran's acquisition of nuclear technology and hardware, the United States formulated the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act of 1996 were aimed at preventing Iran from acquiring relevant material by sanctioning non-U.S. business investment in Iran's nuclear energy sector. Analysts note that the ISA sanctions have had very little impact on Iran's nuclear programme and foreign support of the programme continues to exist.

In the sphere of trade and investment, in 1995, President Bill Clinton announced a comprehensive ban on all American trade and investment in Iran. Subsequent U.S. Presidents, have reinforced this decision. Sanctions include sanctions on insuring and investing in the Iranian oil and gas sector while expanding sanctions to a number of new businesses. Recently, in 2012, President Obama announced fresh sanctions, mainly penalties on the purchase of Iranian petrochemical products and certain entities which have attempted to bypass sanctions.

U.S. financial dealings with Iran have been affected as well and the U.S. Treasury Department has applied a number of financial sanctions against Iran. Efforts include the U.S. ban on Iranian banks from accessing the American financial system. In 2011, the Iranian banking system was accused of supporting terrorist activities in neighbouring Israel and Lebanon.

An important part of the U.S. strategy includes pressure on some of its important allies to apply sanctions against Iran some of which are heavy importers of Iranian oil. Such allies include South Korea, India, Turkey and South Africa. Strangely enough, several countries like Japan and the European Union organisation have been exempted from such pressure.

Terrorist attacks in New York and Washington have resulted in the freezing of assets of individuals and organizations deemed responsible for the attacks. Washington has sanctioned several banks, defence contractors and the Revolutionary Guard Corps. President Obama also applied a law penalizing foreign and domestic companies for selling refined gasoline to Iran. President Obama has stated the move as being instrumental in the consolidation of previously applied UN-backed sanctions against Iran.

China and Russia have condemned this move, stating that such action would have a detrimental impact on their trade and diplomatic relations with Iran. Experts are often sceptical of sanctions and question their effectiveness. Iran imports gasoline from a number of U.S.-allies including

India, France, the Netherlands and a number of Gulf States. Applying sanctions would alienate such entities while encouraging defiance as opposed to much needed cooperation.

ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

Background:

At the end of World War I, the League of Nations awarded the territory now comprising Israel, Jordan, the West Bank, Gaza, and Jerusalem to the United Kingdom, as the mandate for Palestine and Transjordan. In 1922, the British divided the mandate by establishing the semiautonomous Emirate of Transjordan, while continuing the administration of Palestine under a British High Commissioner. The Jewish-majority State of Israel was created in 1948. It was preceded by more than 50 years of efforts to establish a sovereign state as a homeland for Jews. These efforts were initiated by Theodore Herzl, founder of the Zionist movement, and were given added impetus by the Balfour Declaration of 1917, which asserted the British Government's support for the creation of a Jewish homeland in Palestine.

The day after the establishment of the State of Israel, 3 Arab countries, i.e., Jordan, Syria and Egypt, attacked Israel. They were defeated despite Israel's status as a fledgling State. There were 2 more wars waged against Israel- one in 1956 and the second in 1967. The Arab States, on the formation of the regional body, Arab League, declared in the charter that Israel was a 'Zionist entity'. Tensions continued to rise between Israel and Palestine over the years.

Religious Sentiments:

The three largest Abrahamic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—claim Jerusalem in their religious and historical narratives. Israel asserts that the city should not be divided, and should remain unified within Israel's political control. Palestinians want to lay claim on the parts of the city that weren't a part of Israel prior to June 1967. Israel is the only country in the world where the majority of the population is Jewish. Palestine, on the other hand, has a majority of Islamic Arabs as residents.

Extreme religious groups in both States push for complete ownership of Jerusalem. Adding to this, there have been events of racial discrimination by Israeli authorities, against non-Jews. Furthermore, in 2012, the Israeli Supreme Court upheld a law that stated that an Israeli with a Palestinian spouse wouldn't be allowed to reside within the country's borders anymore.

Territory Dispute:

'Occupied Palestinian Territories' is the term used by the UN to refer to the West Bank and Gaza Strip—territories which Israel conquered from Egypt and Jordan in the 1967 Six-Day War—in the conflict. The Israeli government uses the term "Disputed Territories", to indicate its position that some territories cannot be called occupied as no nation had clear rights to them and there was no operative diplomatic arrangement when Israel acquired them in June 1967. Israeli-occupation of the Palestinian area is subject to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement. The status of the Occupied Palestinian Territories is to be decided through further negotiation.

Humanitarian Crises in the Region:

There are about four million Palestinians and their descendants who were expelled or fled from Israel following its creation, by the actions of Zionist terrorist organizations. Osama bin Laden told Peter Arnett a reason why his Al Qaeda may have had a motive to attack the US was the illegal occupation and oppression of the Palestinian people by Israel, also strongly supported by the US. However, there are no official documents proving USA's support in the abuse of Palestinians.

The Israeli authorities generally withheld construction permits from Palestinian in the areas where Israel retains full authority for planning and zoning, obstructing their right to adequate housing. The Israeli authorities increased the demolition of Palestinian homes and other facilities in the West Bank that had been built without permits, in 2011. The Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip have a 35% unemployment rate. 90% of the water reaching Gaza cannot be used as drinking water, leading to a water shortage.

Israeli military checkpoints and barriers hinder Palestinians' access to workplaces, schools and hospitals in the West Bank, and Israel has continued its construction of the wall along the Green Line, mostly on Palestinian land within the West Bank, separating thousands of Palestinian farmers from their land and water sources. Palestinians weren't allowed to access to areas surrounding Israeli settlements, established and maintained, despite international law. Allegations of torture and other ill-treatment, including of children, continued to be reported. Among the cited methods, the most common were threats to the detainee or their family, sleep deprivation, and being shackled in painful positions for long periods. Confessions obtained under duress were accepted as evidence in Israeli military courts, according to some unofficial documents.

Israeli settlers in the West Bank have repeatedly attacked Palestinians and their property, as well as international peace activists and human rights defenders who sought to document their attacks on Palestinians.



Palestinian Refugees

Current Situation:

Abuse of authority is taking place, both in Israel and in Palestine. Israel is engaging in discriminatory practices against the Palestinians, while Palestine is committing atrocities against its own people. Both Israeli forces and Palestinian armed groups were charged with severe violations of the laws of war, during the skirmish in November, 2012. These rights abuses haven't been addressed yet and their allies and supporters have failed to pressure the Israeli and Palestinian authorities into trying those responsible.

Israeli security forces destroyed hundreds of Palestinian homes and buildings in areas under sole Israeli control. The Israeli authorities denied West Bank Palestinian communities access to

natural resources and basic utilities, displacing even more Palestinians. There were non-violent protests held by the Palestinians, which were ruthlessly oppressed by Israeli forces.

The security services of Palestine Authority, that is, one of the two major political parties of Palestine, were responsible for serious rights violations in the West Bank. Some of the violations included arbitrary arrests, harassment of journalists, and assault of peaceful demonstrators. They allegedly tortured or mistreated detainees as well. Despite strong evidence of torture, no security officials were convicted.

In Gaza, Hamas, the other major political party, carried out six judicial executions. Some were after unfair trials. Security forces conducted arbitrary arrests, frequently denied detainees access to their lawyers and tortured detainees with impunity. Armed groups in Gaza launched indiscriminate rockets into Israel, killing civilians. They also executed Palestinians accused of spying for Israel, without a fair trial beforehand.

There continues to be an evident disparity between the affluence of the Israeli population and the Palestinians. Palestine suffers from high unemployment rates and a declining economy. Additionally, more than 30% of Palestinians don't have food security, according to figures given by United Nations. This collapse has been caused by the harsh restrictions imposed by the Israeli authorities on movements of people and goods, according to World Bank. Israel's continued military occupation and confiscation of privately owned land in the West Bank, in violation of UN orders, and control over Gaza, are extremely oppressive, with Palestinians having minimal control over their lives.

Role of Iran:

Allegedly, Iran has been supplying the Hamas with long-range missiles and other weapons, propagating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict even more. Tehran denied any such accusations, saying that the Hamas were capable of obtaining weaponry on their own. Some reports have stated that Iran is attempting to incite the conflict on new levels. They say that Iran is trying to escalate tensions between Israel and Palestine. Some experts have said that with the rise of Islamism, in the wake of the Arab Spring, the Hamas is not as reliant on Iran for weapons, as before the Arab Spring.

Another possible effect, according to some reports, is that Iran risks increasing international isolation by further involvement in the Israel-Palestine region. However, there is no official document to ratify the given reports. Iran condemns the Member Nations of the Arab League who refuse to convey any real aid to the destitute Palestinians. Iran supports the establishment of Palestine as a recognised nation, while at the same time, seeking the destruction of Israel.



SANCTIONS

UNITED NATIONS (UN) SANCTIONS AGAINST IRAN

Resolution 1696

UNSCR 1696, acting under Article 40 of Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, calls on Iran to co-operate with the IAEA and suspend all its enrichment-related and nuclear processing activities, including research and development. It contains no sanctions but notes that subsequent resolutions would be adopted under Article 41 of Chapter VII.

Resolution 1737 (2006)

UNSCR 1737, acting under Article 41 of Chapter VII, demands that Iran suspend uranium enrichment. It also bans exports to Iran of items on Part B of the Nuclear Suppliers Group trigger list (with the exception equipment for the light water reactor at Bushehr). It also advises States against providing Iran with technical cooperation related to its nuclear program (except where the IAEA deems such cooperation necessary for humanitarian or medical purposes). It calls on states to deny transit to people associated with the nuclear or missile programs, and freezes the funds of people and entities designated by the UNSC as involved in "proliferation sensitive activity". An Annex attached to the resolution names 12 individuals said to be associated with Iran's nuclear and/or ballistic missile programs and 10 entities involved with the nuclear/missile program, which includes IRGC and Government officials as well.

Resolution 1747 (2007)

UNSCR 1747, like its predecessor acting under Article 41 of the UN Charter's Chapter VII, adds incrementally to the provisions of 1737. It imposes a ban on military exports by Iran, and advises UN member States not to engage in providing funding or assistance to Iran's nuclear program. It expands the entities and people named in the Annex to include an additional 10 entities and 8 individuals involved in nuclear and/or ballistic missile work. It also names Bank Sepah, reportedly Iran's fourth largest bank, as an entity affiliated with the IRGC and thereby a subject to the financial restrictions outlined in the resolution.

Resolution 1803 (2008)

This resolution was adopted as a response to Iran's decision not to comply with any of the previous resolutions. UNSCR 1803 reaffirms resolutions 1747, 1737, and 1696 in calling for a suspension of Iran's uranium enrichment. This resolution calls for inspection of cargo of aircrafts and vessels travelling to and from Iran, that are owned by Iran Air Cargo and Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping line, provided that there are reasonable grounds to believe it is carrying suspicious goods that are prohibited.

The sanction also reiterates the willingness of the P-5 to engage in diplomatic discussions aimed at ending the issue provided Iran suspends enrichment. It expands the number of individuals to be subjected to travel restrictions. This resolution introduces a requirement that States must report to the Security Council when they inspect the cargo of an Iranian aircraft or vessel.

Resolution 1929 (2010)

This resolution bans Iran from investing in nuclear and missile technology abroad, including investment in uranium mining. It establishes a complete arms embargo on Iran, banning the sale of “battle tanks, armored combat vehicles, large caliber artillery systems, combat aircraft, attack helicopters, warships, missiles, or missile systems” to Iran. Iran is also prohibited from undertaking any activity related to ballistic missiles, and the resolution requires states to take necessary measures to prevent technology relevant to ballistic missiles from reaching Iran. It also updates the list of items banned for transfer to and from Iran.

Resolution 1929 also subjects Iran to a new inspection regime designed to detect and stop Iranian smuggling. States are called upon to inspect vessels on their territory that are suspected of carrying Iranian prohibited cargo, and are expected to comply with these rules on the high seas, including disposing of confiscated Iranian prohibited cargo. States are also required to refuse services to ships that do not comply with these sanctions. This resolution includes financial sanctions targeting Iran’s ability to finance proliferation activities.

Three companies related to the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines are subjected to an asset freeze and states are requested to report any circumventing of sanctions by Iran. 15 IRGC-related companies and 40 other Iranian companies are to be subjected to an asset freeze. Resolution 1929 requests that the Secretary-General create a panel of eight experts that will “assist the Committee in carrying out its mandate” and “make recommendations on actions the Council, or the Committee or State, may consider to improve implementation of the relevant measures.”

EUROPEAN UNION (EU) SANCTIONS AGAINST IRAN

During the initial stages, the EU and Iran enjoyed extensive trade cooperation. The European Union also lent extensive support to the Iranian nuclear programme but when allegations ensued, the EU policy experienced a drastic change and relations between Iran and the EU thus gradually disintegrated.

When one of Iran’s foremost banks, Bank Melli allegedly provided illegal funding to support Iran’s nuclear program, the EU implemented sanctions along with the UN. In response to concerns about Iran’s proliferation-sensitive nuclear activities, the EU has gradually introduced comprehensive restrictive measures since 2007. They implement UN decisions, but also implement strong EU autonomous measures.

The European Union has gradually reduced export and import of goods and technology related to nuclear enrichment to Iran, including nuclear materials and facilities, certain chemicals, electronics, sensors and lasers, navigation and avionics. Any form of fuel transportation has been prohibited. Trade in gold, precious metals and diamonds with companies based in Iran is considered illegal.

Delivery of Iranian denominated banknotes and coinage to the Iranian central bank or payments are not to be authorized, if related to food items, health care, medical equipment,

agricultural or humanitarian purposes, personal remittances and specific trade contracts. Additionally, an arms embargo has also been implemented.

Nations part of the EU are not allowed to open branches or engage in joint ventures with Iranian banks. The EU banks are not allowed to create joint ventures in Iran either. Prior notice has to be given for cargo import. No maintenance service to Iran's cargo aircrafts may be provided if they are suspected of carrying prohibited goods.

There are travel restrictions and visa bans on persons recognized by the UN, who allegedly provide assistance for the development of nuclear weapon delivery systems. Member states require their nationals to exercise vigilance over business with entities incorporated in Iran, including those of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and of the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRISL).

The EU, in collaboration with the UN, has successfully imposed harsh sanctions on Iran to effectively stunt the growth of the Iranian economy. Hindering nuclear development remains the primary objective and this has been achieved to some extent.

IMPACT OF SANCTIONS

IMPACT ON IRAN'S DOMESTIC SPHERE

The sphere hit the hardest by the sanctions is, inarguably, Iran's trade. Iran has the second-largest reserve of natural gas. Hence, 60% of Iranian exports in 2011-12 were comprised of crude oil and natural gas. Although export in oil has dropped considerably in 2012-13, non-oil exports continue to grow. Iran's imports include machinery, food products, pharmaceutical products, iron and steel products, processed chemicals, petroleum products, electrical devices and raw materials for other factories. Iranian trades continue to export products such as pistachio, saffron, carpets and low-end automobiles. Automobile exports have been halved while pistachio exports have been doubled in the past few months.

A barter system has now replaced payment using currency, since Iranian rial is not accepted in banks and institutions, due to sanctions. Due to this, Iranian food merchants are now compelled to use expensive intermediaries or inefficient barter arrangements. Even though Iran's rate of inflation has increased and the rial has depreciated considerably, in comparison to other currencies, the domestic economy continues to function.

On the other hand, the depreciation of rial allows the exporters to quote prices that are more competitive and continue to make big profits. It has boosted demand for Iranian products as well. The Iranian Ministry of Commerce supplies the small traders with information about the raw materials required by the market, for which they barter their own goods. Labour-intensive exports, especially, are holding up considerably well against the sanctions.

The sanctions have had an adverse effect on the health care offered in Iran. The Iranian pharmaceutical industry is allegedly struggling to import essential raw materials. This is indirectly due to the sanctions placed on Iran. Payment for raw materials requires transfer of Iranian currency from the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) which itself is under a number of sanctions. Pharmacies, hospitals and clinics are reportedly running out of anaesthetics and other necessary drugs.

Some reports have statements that say only critical patients are receiving treatment, while the hospital is unable to treat other patients, due to lack of proper medication. Export of medical isotopes for cancer treatment has been prevented due to the sanctions as well. Iran has managed to import medical isotopes from its allies, though Iran had to buy them at double the market value.

There have been over 15 air accidents in Iran in the past 13 years. These air accidents have been blamed on Iran's aging aircraft and poor maintenance, since these aeroplanes were bought before the Iranian Revolution of 1979. The Iranian aviation industry is strapped for cash and the sanctions prevent Iran from updating its aircraft, purchasing spare parts and new aeroplanes. Iran has come to rely on Russian aeroplanes, which are mostly Soviet-era planes. These planes are harder to get parts for since the Soviet Union's fall.

Allegedly, the politicians, from the countries imposing sanctions on Iran, mean to adversely affect the well-being of the Iranians in general. They want to encourage discontentment amongst the Iranian masses to inspire a revolution against the current government led by Ali Khamenei. However, there is no official document that states this. Sanctions while affecting the political and economical sphere, are also affecting the general health and safety of the Iranian people.

According to World Bank, inflationary pressure, unemployment and lack of foreign exchange will hamper progress in medium and long term. Most oilfields are aging and will require intensive maintenance. The economic sanctions are delaying corporate restructuring, as they reduce the firms' access to foreign markets and better infrastructure. In addition, rampant inflation will result in rapid erosion of domestic energy prices, eroding the benefits from the Iranian reforms in 2011. The official inflation rate is estimated at 28.7 percent in 2012, according to World Bank, but official data is widely thought to understate actual inflation.

IMPACT ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Many question the effectiveness of sanctions against Iran in the face of international opposition. Experts note that opposition from China and Russia has reduced the effectiveness of international sanctions in the past. Both nations have deepening economic ties with Iran and have repeatedly opposed unilateral measures by the United States of America. A debate over the effectiveness of the sanctions has ensued and many countries support long-term negotiations with Iran as a more practical measure. Sanctions are recognized to have a detrimental impact on Middle Eastern society and experts voice their concerns that if such devastation is allowed to continue, recovery will be expensive and difficult.

The United States has attempted to build a broad coalition of opposition against the Iranian nuclear programme. Such countries include India, South Korea and Turkey. However, many of these countries are now beginning to resist U.S pressure to apply sanctions against Iran. Sanctions-related disagreements have complicated U.S efforts to achieve Security Council unity on assistance to the opposition movement in Libya, 2011. Analysts note that disagreement over sanctions has also reduced the ability of the Security Council to adopt an effective resolution towards International action in Syria.

European countries seem equally sceptical about Iranian sanctions, and opposition to them almost sparked off a trade war in 1998. The United States then waived sanctions on a number of

European projects in Iran. For example, The U.S has waived sanctions on French involvement in developing the South Pars gas field in Iran. The ongoing economic crisis in a number of European countries has also contributed to growing discontentment and in 2011, a number of EU countries objected to sanctions on the Iranian Central Bank.

As seen above, sanctions applied against Iran have adversely affected International Relations, world economical stability and internal cohesion within political factions in Iranian society and thus their effectiveness must be addressed in the course of debate.

IRAN'S ALLEGED INVOLVEMENT WITH TERRORIST UNITS

Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)

Before the Islamic Revolution of 1979 in Iran, Shah Muhammad Reza Pahlavi was heavily dependent on a powerful military to ensure national security and his stability as a leader. Following the revolution when, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini came to power, he too realised the importance of a powerful entity committed to consolidate his leadership and revolutionary ideals. As a result of this, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps was established in 1979. It has since become a major military, political and economic force in Iran, with close ties to the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, a former member.

The force is boasts its own ground forces, navy and air force, and oversees Iran's strategic weapons. The Revolutionary Guards have also increased their already substantial stake in Iran's economy, with the purchase of a majority stake in the main telecommunications company.

Three important subsidiaries of the IRGC are the Basij, the Quds Force and the Ansar-ul-Mehdi Corps. The Basij serves as an auxiliary force engaged in activities such as internal security, the providing of social service, organizing of public religious ceremonies, and more famously, moral policing and the suppression of dissident gatherings. The Quds Force is a special operations unit, handling external activities beyond the Iranian border. The Ansar-ul-Mehdi Corps is primarily responsible for the protection of top officials of government and parliament (excluding the Supreme Leader). As an elite, secretive force within the I.R.G.C Ground force, its officers are entrusted with many other special assignments, such as Counter Intelligence & Covert Operations beyond Iran's borders.

During the Lebanese Civil War, the IRGC allegedly sent troops to train fighters in response to the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon. The American CIA has blamed the IRGC for many terrorist activities such as the 1983 United States Embassy bombing in Beirut.

The IRGC has also been accused of activity in post-Hussein Iraq. The US has also accused the Quds Force of supplying roadside bombs to Shia militants in Iraq. The IRGC's involvement in suppressing protestors in Syria also caused a stir in the international community. Iran had dispatched advisers from its domestic secret police forces and the Basij had taken over direct supervision of anti protest suppression.

The EU and the USA imposed a number of sanctions on Iran for human rights violations and atrocities committed on Syrian civilians and aid given to the Syrian dictator Assad. Some Middle Eastern news agencies have even termed Iran's involvement in Syria as a 'proxy war'.

The force is believed to have staff in embassies around the world, from where it allegedly conducts intelligence operations and organises training camps and arms shipments for foreign militant groups that Iran supports, such as Hezbollah. There has been proof that the IRGC has provided funds, arms and training to several organisations such as Hezbollah, Hamas, the Iraqi Shiite insurgents and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad. This led to the US declaring it as a state sponsor of terrorism.

Hamas

Hamas, the largest and most influential of Palestinian militant movements, is one of the two primary Palestinian political factions, along with the more moderate Fatah party. It is predominantly a Sunni Islamist group established in 1987 during the first Intifada, as an offshoot of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. The US has designated it as a Foreign Terrorist Organisation. It exercises de-facto rule in the Gaza Strip ever since it wrestled power from its rival Fatah. From the late 1980s to the year 2000 over 10 percent of Hamas's funding came from Iran. Till date there are strong ties between Iran and Hamas, and the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) and the USA claim to have considerable proof that Iran supplies Hamas with weapons, training and funding.

Since Hamas gained power in the Gaza Strip in 2007, it has been acquiring weapons from an intricate network of tunnels under the Gaza-Egypt border. It is increasing its stockpile of weapons with funding from Iran. The IDF says that most of Hamas's weapons are either supplied directly by Iran or are manufactured in Gaza using mainly Iranian technology. Hamas has launched several attacks on the Israeli cities of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem with the medium-range Fajr-5 Rockets which are made in Iran or the M75, made in Gaza using Iranian technology. There have also been allegations that Hamas recruits are given training in Iran. Hamas leader Khaled Mashaal had issued a very public acknowledgement of gratitude towards Iran for supplying them with military assistance.

Hezbollah

Iran's historical backing of Islamist groups such as Hezbollah is part of Iran's fundamental strategy of waging proxy wars against its adversaries while maintaining diplomatic relations. In fact, since the 1980's when the Iranian Revolutionary Guards first created the Hezbollah in order to limit Israeli influence in neighbouring Lebanon, Iran has gradually constructed a powerful "Axis of Resistance" meant to promote and sustain Iranian interests in the tumultuous Middle-Eastern Region.



Hezbollah troops

In the wake of Iran's invasion of Lebanon 1982, Iranian Revolutionary Guards set up training camps in the Bekka Valley where the Hezbollah jihads were introduced to Ayatollah Khomeini's vision of political Shiism and anti-Semitic ideology. Hezbollah and Hamas's gradual gain in power has served to further Iranian interests in the region while also acting as an efficient bulwark against its chief enemies- United States of America and Israel. It is widely recognized that strong ties with Hezbollah have enabled Iran to influence political and security developments on the Israeli Northern Border. According to alleged reports, provided by Israeli Defence officials familiar with recent intelligence, Iranian aid to Hezbollah is now estimated to be \$700 million per year.

Alleged reports also suggest that Iran provides military aid to Hezbollah through the provision of short-range military rockets, long range military rockets and Unmanned Aerial Devices or UAVs, often used against Israel. This financial and military assistance is crucial to Hezbollah's success in driving Israeli presence out from Lebanon, defeating Israeli Defence Forces in 2000 and its emergence as a significant power in Beirut. However, it is recognized that in the absence of hard facts, Iran's role in the support of Hamas and Hezbollah is speculation and conspiracy theories are neither facts nor news.

POSSIBLE REPERCUSSIONS OF NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT IN IRAN

Regional and International

The risk of an arms race is definitely dangerous but the risk of a nuclear arms race is unparalleled. The Middle East is one of the most unstable, violent regions in the world. Religious

strife, ethnic tensions, and strategic competition between both countries in the region and those abroad, combined with modern military capabilities make the Middle East a heated topic for discussion. Countries in the region have at least a minor weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) capability, be it nuclear, biological, chemical, or some combination thereof, and some, in the past, have shown a willingness to use them. Global superpowers have vested interests in the Middle East, which will encourage their involvement in any conflict in the region. Countries outside the region often stress the risks of proliferation among other Middle East countries, especially Iran and to a lesser extent Syria.

Terrorist groups such as the Hamas, Hezbollah and Al Qaeda are rampant in the Middle East, due to the alleged sponsorship by State governments. Nuclear weaponry falling into the hands of these groups spells out the destruction of civilization, as we know it. War mongering, a constant occurrence, in the Middle East, will be further complicated by involvement of nuclear proliferation.

Egypt had proposed the establishment of a Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone (WMDFZ), in 1990. Before this, Iran and Egypt had together proposed establishment of a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (NWFZ), in 1974. The Arab nations reached consensus on the ideas of a WMDFZ and NWFZ but due to various reasons, the establishment has been delayed. One of the major reasons for this delay is the Arab-Israeli conflict. Arab nations believe that Israel has a considerable nuclear arsenal and they feel threatened since they have been longstanding enemies.

The primary reason for a nation to procure WMDs is for national security. If Iran succeeds in its alleged endeavour for nuclear weaponry, then other Arab Member States will also be compelled to obtain nuclear weapons. Furthermore, Arab states and Iran perceive a double standard when Western powers refrain from answering to their suspicious considering Israel's nuclear arsenal, yet sanction Iran for its alleged development of nuclear weapons.

North Korea tested a nuclear bomb recently, ensuring that the radiation was well-contained. This recent development has already tipped the security balance in Asia, with USA deploying drones over the Korean peninsula to ensure the wellbeing of its allies, South Korea and Japan. This is an indication of the dangers nuclear proliferation represents.

Economic

Dramatic changes have occurred in the governance of most Middle East countries in the past two years, due to the Arab Spring. The Arab Spring is the term used to refer to the series of uprisings in the Arab World, in the past few years. The recent political upheaval has caused turbulence in the economies of the Arab States. Due to this, the economic growth in this region has fallen drastically and fiscal deficit increased. Factors like unemployment, oil export prices and food shortage also increased due to the upheaval.

The World Bank, in its annual report, talks about the “triple threat” – food, fuel and financial crises. As mentioned before, a major conflict in the Middle East involved the superpowers of the world as well. Due to growing animosity among nations and formation of alliances, trade relations will be disrupted. Food and water crises will be further intensified, along with the fuel crisis. Disruption of trade with Middle-Eastern countries would lead to a further increase in fuel prices.

As seen in numerous occasions, the rise in fuel prices has the ability to increase the prices of a variety of commodities plunging numerous countries into a state of inflation. Further, economic sanctions would lead to a boost of illegal trade and illicit activities. Fiscal deficit and unemployment would rise while growth rates would fall. Economies would be hit hard due to worldwide conflict.

IRAN AS A GLOBAL PLAYER

The role and importance of the Islamic Republic of Iran in today's world cannot be undermined and countries across the world are revamping their foreign policies in response to the fast-changing radical atmosphere that surrounds the Middle Eastern Region. Regional politics, cultural differences, civil conflicts all play a huge role in the way international politics and diplomacy eventually manifests itself. A growing regional power, Iran, has immense say in the Arab-Israeli conflict and the ongoing civil war in Syria.

Further, cordial relations with neighbouring countries have allowed Iran to intervene to some extent in internal affairs, ensuring that political leaders in such countries support Iran's best interests. Alleged support for terrorist units such as Hamas and Hezbollah have enabled Iran to make its way into the complex fabric of Middle Eastern society while exercising tremendous power, for which the United States regards it as a part of its "Axis of Evil".

Iran's role is not limited to the Middle East but extends to the Asia Pacific, with close relations with countries like Pakistan and North Korea. Delegates, it is important to understand Iran's role in the ongoing conflict between the Democratic Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea. The regime change of 1979, and the crude beginnings of nuclear development in Iran all serve an important role in shaping international and regional politics. The acquisition of such arms of Mutually Assured Destruction is the main reason behind the tremendous lack of trust in the region contributing to regional hostilities.

Iran's fierce rivalry with Israel and the United States due to this is an issue of major concern and attacks (both traditional and unconventional) have been deliberated and often carried out. International sanctions have not been found to be effective enough and Iran still continues a massive amount of trade through a number of alternative means. . Indeed, its influence is expansive, cutting across all regions of the globe. The committee needs to address the issue carefully, while taking in to in consideration the volatile nature of the situation and its solutions.

POSITION PAPER REQUIREMENTS

All delegates are required to submit a Position Paper, by _____. Submission of a Position Paper is mandatory and delegates failing to do so will be subject to penalties as per the discretion of the Executive Board.

Normally, Position Papers have three parts: Introduction and Statement of the Issue, your country's policy and initiatives and relevant solutions. In a committee like the Security Council,

a Position Paper will assist you in the formulation of your policy and will be an effective guide to the stance you will eventually take in the conference. The Position Paper also provides the Board with an insight into your level of understanding of the topic and your ability to arrive at substantive, concrete and practical solutions. All Position Papers must have:

- i. Names of Delegates
- ii. Name of School
- iii. Name of Committee
- iv. Agenda to be discussed

All Position Papers must be roughly one and half pages in Size 12, Times New Roman Font. Delegates are advised to strictly abide by the given format to ensure uniformity.

QUESTIONS A RESOLUTION MUST ANSWER

1. What effective measures can be put in place, other from sanctions, which can ensure Iran's compliance with the terms of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty?
2. How can trade relations and economic stability be sustained in the light of such action?
3. How can strained relations between specific countries be improved to ensure greater global cooperation?
4. What process of mediation must be followed in dealing with Iran?
5. How can the medical and humanitarian aspects of sanctions be effectively dealt with?
6. What should be the involvement of international organizations such as the IMF and the IAEA in tackling the situation?
7. To what extent is nuclear disarmament a viable option?
8. How should immediate concerns regarding nuclear proliferation be dealt with effectively and quickly?
9. Within what time frame should the above measures be organized and be implemented?
10. How can nations ensure greater transparency in their respective nuclear activities?

CONCLUSION

As mentioned before, the Executive Board has tried to make this Study Guide as comprehensive as possible, but we would advise you to go beyond it in order to enable greater understanding of the issue. Relevant research into political implications will give you a keen eye into your allies and enemies alike while research into social, economic, legal and cultural aspects will allow you to attain a holistic understanding of the Middle-East. With over-bearing political implications, strained diplomatic relations and delicate power-balances as indispensable parts of the topic at hand, there is tremendous scope for compromise and accusation and the Board would urge you to use this opportunity intelligently. We wish you all the best with your further research and hope that LCMUN2013 is a conference you can take back from, both in terms of experience and new friendships. Looking forward to Meeting you in May!