

Research Article

The Post-Revolutionary Israeli-Iranian Rivalry and Iran's Nuclear ProgramSyed Umair Jalal ^a

Abstract: There were big changes in the Middle East after the Iranian Revolution of 1979. The rebels were against Israel. Tel Aviv had a good relationship with Tehran until 1979, but it was hostile towards its Arab neighbours because of a longstanding desire to rule the area. In times of change, Israel has grown afraid as Iran's power has grown. Israel is against Islam and Muslims. A lack of balance of power in the area and Iran's desire for nuclear weapons have made Iran and Israel compete with each other. A lot of Israelis think that Iran's nuclear project is a threat to their very survival and that it needs to be stopped. This piece talks about the bad feelings between Iran and Israel, the risks that could come from Iran having nuclear weapons, and different ways to get Iran to give up its nuclear programme. The piece is divided into four parts. The first part talks about the history of relations between Iran and Israel and why they are at odds with each other. The second part briefly explains how the division of power in the region led to a direct war between Tehran and Tel Aviv. The third part talks about Iran's nuclear project and the threats it makes against Israel. The last part talks about current plans for sanctions against Iran to get it to give up its nuclear weapons.

Keywords: Iran, Israel, Post-Revolution, Nuclear Program

Introduction

When it comes to Middle Eastern affairs, there aren't many fights that have been as long and complicated as the one between Israel and Iran. Because of the Iranian Revolution of 1979, people don't like each other (Kaye, 2011). That revolution was a big deal. It changed the politics of the area and began a competition that still goes on today in many ways. When Iran was going through its revolution, there was trouble between the two countries. It's hard to deal with Iran's nuclear project. It's now a worry for everyone and the centre of the political games being played between these two big forces in the area. At the heart of this argument is the fact that both sides don't like each other. Not only did the Iranian Revolution, which was headed by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, result in Iran becoming an Islamic Republic, but it also brought about significant transformative changes in the manner in which the country interacted with other nations (Skocpol, 1982). The academic and public declarations that the revolutionaries made against Israel made the conflicts that already existed between them and the Jewish state even more severe. Since the very first establishment, there has been a continuous conflict between different ideas and approaches that have been going on for more than forty years. An analysis of the complex competition that has continued between Israel and Iran after the revolution is presented in this essay. The historical, ideological, and geopolitical elements that have contributed to the mutual animosity that exists between these two countries are given careful consideration in the course of this investigation.

It is the thorny issue of Iran's nuclear project that is at the centre of this competition. Individuals all across the world, as well as those in the immediate vicinity, are extremely concerned about this idea. The prolonged level of tension is a direct result of Iran's unrelenting pursuit of nuclear weapons. As a result of this circumstance, a number of countries have enacted prohibitions on them, diplomatic negotiations between nations have failed, and there is widespread concern that this situation may lead to an increase in the amount of military equipment in the dangerous Middle East region. Israel is adamantly opposed to Iran's efforts to develop nuclear weapons (Bahgat, 2006). The Iranian capital of Tehran is regarded as a big threat, and they are making concerted efforts to prevent it from acquiring nuclear weapons. The pursuit of nuclear

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weapons by Iran is met with vehement opposition from Israel due to these concerns. The purpose of this essay is to investigate the many historical occurrences, beliefs, and political forces that have had a role in shaping the relationship between Israel and Iran. There are many facets to the war that exists between Israel and Iran, and in order to comprehend its complexities, a comprehensive examination is required (Dallas et al., [2013](#)). We hope that by doing a study of the complex dynamics that surround Iran's nuclear project, we will be able to gain a better understanding of the factors that are contributing to the intense power struggles, political manoeuvrings, and unstable equilibrium in the Middle East. The examination of key historical sites, choices made by the government, and strategic manoeuvres carried out by Israel and Iran makes it quite clear that these two countries are involved in a multidimensional competition that goes beyond geographical issues. The trajectory of the Middle East is currently being influenced by a complex amalgamation of historical resentments, novel concepts, and enduring objectives. The ongoing negotiations continue to influence the trajectory of the Middle East's future. This article seeks to offer significant novel insights into one of the most prominent and enduring rivalries in contemporary geopolitics by analysing these mechanisms and presenting a more lucid depiction of the contest.

Significance of the Research

The study provides new insights into a global struggle with deep historical roots, affecting many countries. This academic study examines Iran's nuclear program's ideological foundations, historical roots, and contemporary status in the context of Israel-Iran geopolitics. This knowledge may help legislators, scholars, and the public understand complex regional power dynamics and predict the repercussions of Iran's nuclear armament. The scholarly examination holds significant importance in the realm of diplomatic strategies, facilitating astute decision-making processes and cultivating a more profound comprehension of the recurrent predicaments that persist within the volatile region of the Middle East. Furthermore, it aids in endeavours aimed at enhancing the safety and stability of the region, thereby exerting an impact on the broader realm of global security.

Objective Of The Research

- ▶ The main goal of the study paper is to look closely at the historical, ideological, and geopolitical factors that have made Israel and Iran so hostile towards each other. The main focus of the piece is on the effects and difficulties of Iran's nuclear programme.

Literature Review

The Origins of Israel-Iran Enmity

The 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran, led by Ayatollah Khomeini and his allies, changed the Middle East's military and political structures (Parvaz, [2014](#)). The Islamic Revolution transformed modern Iran. It transformed Iran's international and internal policies. Iran has not hidden its ideological passion in its anti-Israel stance. Israel has long been considered an enemy of Islam, Iran, and humanity by the Islamic Republic. Israel has long been considered a threat, an enemy, a vital factor in US-Iran relations, an American agent in the region, and a country with outstanding strategic talents. Since Israel was founded on May 14, 1948, Iran's geostrategic obligations and desire to maintain stable relations with its neighbours to become a regional leader have affected its relations with Israel. Iran was the first Muslim nation to establish diplomatic relations with Israel before becoming a strategic partner (Kaye et al., [2011](#)). In the 1970s, the Shah dubbed Tehran a geostrategic buddy and was proud of his tight relationship with Israel. Tehran kept its links with Israel secret even while their relationship was at its finest. A well-planned strategy redefined "world realpolitik." Both nations used each other to achieve their goals. Israel aims to cultivate partnerships with non-Arab nations since some Arab nations are unfriendly. Iran coined the "periphery doctrine." Most people believed Israel might outmanoeuvre its Arab opponents by forming deals with non-Arab nations. The Shah supported the peripheral doctrine because he shared Israel's goal of ending Gamal Abdel Nasser's pan-Arabism, which was also against the Shah's rule (Summitt, [2004](#)). Iran was outraged at Arab countries because they sought to nationalize and rename the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Gulf. Arab desires for Arabistan, the Iranian province of Khuzestan, demonstrated this. Because of this, the Shah believed that good

relations with Israel were crucial and could be traded for Palestinian rights. The Shah believed Iran's investment in Israel was worth more than its probable return from aiding extremist Arab enemies. The Shah believed the US would support an alliance with Israel. Iran was the sole country that kept Israel supplied amid oil problems and delivered it oil following the 1956 Suez crisis. Iran was the only Islamic nation to oppose the Arab powers' pledge to destroy Israel and support its independence. After that, Iran supplied Israel with oil during the 1973 Yom Kippur War (Islam, [2021](#)). The 1979 Islamic Revolution under Ayatollah Khomeini ended this strong relationship. Iran modified its foreign policy, which affected its relationship with Israel. After the revolution, Ayatollah Khomeini terminated diplomatic ties with Israel, saying he was displeased with the world. Iran's foreign policy goal since then has been to undermine Israel's legitimacy.

Through propaganda, the new government disseminated Islamic philosophy by battling "Zionism" in the region and worldwide. They also opposed Israel and supported the Palestinians, which the Islamic Republic immediately adopted. Yasser Arafat, the chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation and Israel's worst nemesis, was the first foreign leader to visit Iran since Iran is anti-Israel. He was worshipped by Iranians during the revolution. Ayatollah Khomeini told Arafat that Iran's insurgency would end soon. He added they would plot a "historic victory over the Zionists." if Iran's leadership was stable. In weeks, the PLO established a station at the old Israeli embassy in Tehran. They repeated it at Ahwaz and Khoramshahr, in Iran's oil zone. Khomeini intended to be the region's most hardline Islamist. Thus, Iran maintained ties with extreme Middle Eastern regimes and Jihadist groups like Hamas, Hezbollah, and the Islamic Jihad. Iran's revolution changed the Arab-Israeli conflict (Brandenburg, [2010](#)). Iran's policies turned Israel's criticism and calls for its annihilation into reality, turning the "golden age" into a "cold war." Tehran demanded a Palestinian state and labelled Zionism hateful, rejecting it. Israel was considered an adversary of Islam and Muslims by everyone under the Shah. Ayatollah Khomeini promoted imperialism and the concept that Israel was an enemy of Muslims during the Islamic revolutionary dictatorship.

The Ayatollah remarked, "This source of corruption (Israel), which has settled in the middle of Islamic lands with the help of the superpowers, should be destroyed by the efforts of Islamic countries." Iran's antagonistic tone increased when it gave huge quantities of money and weapons to Palestinian resistance groups battling Israel. Iran led Middle Eastern and Muslim world anti-Israeli efforts to counter the Shah's actions. Iran tried to convert the Arab world's pan-Arab concept into a pan-Islamic one to become closer to it. This would help Iran stop its longstanding animosity with its Arab and Sunni neighbours. Iran was hostile to Israel, but Israel had friends there. Some Israelis considered Iran as a strategic counterbalance to Arab foes. Israeli politicians spread the perception that Iran's revolution was in peril for their own benefit. Israelis believe relations did not worsen in the 1980s, even though Ayatollah Khomeini spoke harsher against Israel. This was because the USSR and Arabs threatened both countries. Sohrab Sobhani quotes Israeli analyst Avner Yaniv: "It is hard to ignore how strong and long-lasting Israel's relationship with Iran is." No history, theory, or cultural links make this relationship feasible. Iran and Israel always reach out due to the balance of power game, regardless of regime. This negotiation could be named "deterrence." Although there is little shared interest, it has always existed. Israelis believed that after Khomeini died, the Arab military challenge would force Iran to honour its tacit pact with Israel. Despite the new government, Israel wanted to maintain its alliance with Iran. In 1987, Yitzhak Rabin told the press, "Iran is Israel's best friend, and we do not plan to change our position with Tehran because Khomeini's regime will not last forever." Iran's realpolitik kept up its antagonistic discourse, but it eventually returned to the 1980s, when it employed strong language against Israel that didn't matter. In the 1980s, Tel Aviv requested Washington to sell weapons to Tehran and talk to government leaders instead of listening to them. Due to the power struggle in Tehran, thousands of political opponents were slain or imprisoned. Therefore, Israel's security establishment believed Ayatollah Khomeini would be overthrown shortly.

Due to mutual animosity towards Iraq and a desire to maintain influence with moderates in Iran's government, Israel supplied weaponry to Iran in the 1980s. Israeli concern for interests beyond those of the Iranian Revolution prompted some Iranian politicians to seek alternative forms of leadership. The pragmatic foreign policy stance of the regime was viewed by Israeli authorities as evidence that the revolution had been mistaken (Parsi, [2006](#)). Given its geographic isolation and the number of Arab nations actively working to

undermine it, they reasoned that Iran would see the light and make peace with Israel so it could benefit from the technological benefits that Israel could provide its friends. Israeli operatives and intermediaries established clandestine diplomatic and commercial relations with Tehran through the armaments trade. Moderates dissatisfied with the Ayatollahs' reform were among the new government members they spoke with. After the Shah cut off 90% of Iran's weapon purchases from the United States, the situation in the Iraq War deteriorated rapidly. Because of this, Tehran began seeking other sources for US weaponry and components. Above all else, Iran required Israel's offer. According to research by Israel's Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) in Tel Aviv, an amount of \$500 million was delivered to Iran to be utilised in weapons manufactured in the United States (Rezaei et al., [2014](#)). Covert action was taken notwithstanding the United States embargo on Iranian trade that was in place for the first three years of the Iraq War.

The internal and external politics of Iran created issues that Israel had to address. Despite hopes for better relations, military sales ceased in the mid-1980s. Israel and Iran severed diplomatic ties following the 1988 Iraq War. This effectively ended Iran's ability to engage in covert cooperation with Israel. The United States and its allies finally defeated Iraq after three long years in Operation Desert Storm. With the Cold War coming to a close and Moscow's interest in a warm water port satisfied, Tehran could rest easy knowing that Khuzestan's oilfields were safe from a "smash and grab" assault. Because of this shift in regional power dynamics, cooperation between Iran and Israel is now less probable. Following the peace accord at Camp David, hostilities between Israel and the Arabs were effectively ended. Because of this, tight relations between Iran and Israel were no longer necessary, and a perimeter policy became unnecessary. The conflict harmed Iran and Iraq, but it improved Israel's military standing. While Iran was busy trying to destabilise secular Arab regimes and spark an Arab revolution, hardly one was paying attention to Israel's foes. The increasing influence of Tehran in the region has increased Tel Aviv's fear (Maher, [2020](#)). As Iran asserts itself as a key actor in the Middle East, the likelihood of an agreement between Washington and Tehran increases. Tel Aviv has been persuaded to comply with the regulations that the "Iran-committee" cautioned against since it has no other choice. Iran has shifted its attention from cooperating with Israel to the Palestinian issue. The Arab and Muslim world is becoming increasingly hostile towards Israel as a result of Iran's increased efforts to sway public opinion. Iran's training, financing, and arming of its foes exacerbated an already tense situation between the two countries, which had its roots in ideology and animosity. Islamic Jihad and Hezbollah, based in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, have called for Israeli attacks. This means that Iran and Israel now have a common border, and Iran will engage with Israel through its agents.

Rivalry and Division of Power

Iran and Israel are currently engaged in direct competition because of the recent shift in the balance of power in the region. This transformation occurred when the United States of America ascended as the sole global superpower. Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the victory of the United States and its allies in the first Gulf War (1990-1991), the perception of the Middle East underwent a significant transformation (Khan, [2001](#)). Following these occurrences, both Russia and Iraq ceased to pose a threat to either Iran or Israel. Consequently, neither nation faced any threat from the other. This led to a direct competition between Iran and Israel for regional leadership. Simultaneously, the potential ascendance of Iran as a regional power has jeopardised Israel's status as the dominant country in the region. This is due to the potential for a reconciliation between Washington and Tehran, which might negatively impact Israel's alliance with the United States. The preservation of Israel's military deterrent was in jeopardy, and the survival of the country hinged upon its status as the preeminent military force globally. An increasingly formidable military Iran poses a potential danger to Israel's military supremacy. A number of Israeli officials believed that the most effective approach to prevent Iran from exerting influence in the region and curtail its strength was to establish alliances with moderate Arab nations as a substitute for Iran and endeavour to persuade them to adopt a more accommodating stance towards the Arab-Israeli conflict (Simon, [2016](#)). Additionally, they instructed the Israeli government to resume efforts towards achieving peace with the Arab nations and to cease its "strategy of cultivating alliances with peripheral states," which entailed entering into agreements with Turkey, Iran, and Ethiopia in order to manage the antagonistic Arab countries. Should this modification be implemented, Israel and Iran will find themselves on opposing sides of the newly established equation. In

1992, Shimon Peres declared that Iran was the most significant threat and presented the most pressing issue in the Middle East. Due to its pursuit of the nuclear option and its precarious position of radical religious militancy, it poses a significant threat. Simultaneously with Peres, Joseph Alpher, a former Mossad operative, cautioned the global community that "Iran must be recognised as the primary adversary, as it would possess a nuclear weapon by 1999".

Israel was becoming increasingly concerned about Iran's connection with the United States at this juncture. Tel Aviv anticipated that the dissolution of the USSR would diminish the strategic significance of the United States (Conley et al., [2010](#)). Additionally, they foresaw that Iran's increasing power and influence in the region would pose challenges to Israel's ability to sustain its military supremacy in the Middle East. Considering this, Israel endeavoured to persuade Washington to cease communication with Tehran and maintain its perception of it as a menace. In reaction to the Oslo peace process throughout the 1990s, Tehran intensified its verbal attacks on Israel and attempted to establish communication with the armed Palestinian opposition factions. However, several Iranian scientists and officials maintained the belief that Iran's recent shift in attitude towards Israel was a strategic error. Additionally, they asserted that the government exhibited an even greater level of commitment to the Arab-Israeli peace process than the Pope, who is traditionally seen as the highest authority in the Catholic Church. It was stated that Tehran's emphasis on the Israeli-Palestinian problem was detrimental to the country.

Furthermore, they asserted that embracing the Arab-Israeli deal constituted the most effective approach to cease hostilities with Israel by use of intermediary factions. According to some individuals, the disputes involving Muslims in Palestine and Jews in Israel bear striking similarities to the disputes involving Muslims in Chechnya and Christians in Russia, as well as Muslims in Kashmir and India. A Tehran University lecturer named Ahmad Naqibzadeh expressed scepticism against the statement "Israel should be eradicated." He inquired about the feasibility of this and expressed his belief that Iran should not be "a bowl that is warmer than the soup" (kaseh daghtar az ash). Similarly, Abdullah Nuri, the initial security minister of Khatami's administration, expressed doubt on Tehran's treatment of Israel. "What is the justification for Iran's belief that it possesses the authority to enforce its own regulations upon the Palestinians?" Adopting such a stance simply serves to tarnish the reputation of Iranians since they are perceived as supporting acts of terrorism. Continuing his statement, Nuri emphasised that the Palestinians currently possess an autonomous governing body that exercises authority over their population. Arafat engaged in a prolonged conflict with Israel over the majority of his lifetime. However, he now desires to reconcile with them. The current state of affairs may not be ideal, but it is imperative that we address them in accordance with actuality rather than attempt to exceed the standards set by the Pope. This argument has not significantly altered Iran's official stance towards Israel. Israel's concerns escalated upon learning of Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons through its nuclear programme. Consequently, Israel perceived Iran as a formidable menace to its own existence.

The Nuclear Program of Iran

After hearing that Iran had a nuclear programme, former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin told the Clinton government about it in May 1992 (Hurst, [2018](#)). By 1991, the U.S. Task Force on Terrorism and Unconventional Warfare of the House Republican Research Committee thought that Iran had almost everything it needed to make two or three nuclear bombs that could be used. Before 2001, the CIA thought that Iran's nuclear project was for peaceful reasons. On January 1, 2001, the Department of Defence put out a study saying that Iran was the country most actively seeking NBC technologies for weapons and missiles (Cordesman, 2015). The "smoking gun" was produced by the Mujahidin-i Khalq (MEK) and its political wing, the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), on August 14, 2002. This made the Americans very worried, but in the end, they were satisfied. The MEK said that Iran was quietly making nuclear materials in Natanz and Arak, which are in the central part of Iran, south of Tehran. According to the NCRI, official sources in Iran found a factory and research lab for making nuclear fuel at Natanz and a plant for making heavy water at Arak. This suggests that Iran has a nuclear weapons project. When it was revealed that Iran was making fissile material, it caused a lot of discussion around the world. The NCRI's Committee of Defence and Strategic Studies didn't

share its findings, which made people think that Israeli intelligence gave them to them. It's possible that Iran never meant for these facilities to be part of a peaceful plan. Instead, Iran was caught making a secret underground place to make fissile materials. So this makes sense since Israeli intelligence has been in touch with the Mujahidin-i-Khalq (MEK) since the mid-1990s. The news was bad for the regime because the pilot project involved high-speed centrifuges, which are a complicated technology that may have made the US nervous. It would have been possible to make enriched uranium for nuclear weapons like the ones used against Hiroshima if the plant had been bigger. Iran looked like it was almost done building the Arak heavy water plant, which was meant to make plutonium for the Nagasaki bomb.

Observers have pointed out that when the Natanz and Arak facilities are put together, Iran might be able to make highly enriched uranium (HEU) for both commercial and military use. American and British intelligence didn't know it, but the facilities were almost finished by 2001 and were hidden by a lot of cover. Iran having nuclear weapons would be a threat to Israel's safety in two ways. There is a chance that Iran's nuclear weapons could make Israel hold back by giving anti-Zionist groups peace of mind (Babaei, 2008). This could stop Israel from killing as many people as it has in the past and encourage those who are against Israel to keep fighting. The biggest worry is that it could lead other Middle Eastern countries to do the same, which could bring Iran into any fight between radical groups and Israel. Israel is worried that Iran might give a nuclear weapon to a terrorist group that wants to attack Israel. Terrorist groups might be able to do bad things without worrying about the effects if they use Iran's nuclear power, which could even lead to a regional arms race. If Iran got nukes, it makes you wonder if it would still follow the Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) principle from the Cold War, no matter what effects it would have on other countries in the area. Can Israel and Iran, both of which have nuclear weapons, get back to the security of the Cold War? Is Israel's ability to make nuclear weapons a deterrent to an Iranian nuclear attack? A lot of people in academia, the general intellectual community, and politics are talking about Iran's nuclear justification. Some historians and politicians see the religious leaders of Iran as a clerical elite, and they see important people in the military dictatorship in Tehran as cunning. These outsiders say that the Iranian government stays in power by protecting itself, which makes the containment strategy work. In fact, they say Iran is driven by reason instead of religion. It's not a given that Iran could launch a nuclear attack on Israel; that would mean that the regime's leaders are willing to risk destruction through nuclear retaliation. Security experts think that Iran would never attack Israel with nuclear weapons because Israel could kill them. Analysts think that the leaders of Iran know that if they drop a nuclear bomb on Israel, they will quickly and completely destroy themselves. An expert says that Iranian leaders don't usually threaten Israel with nuclear weapons.

Even though Ephraim Kam says Iran would be more aggressive if they had nuclear weapons, he doesn't think they would use one against Israel, even though they don't recognise Israel's existence. Iran is being warned by Kam that if they try to fire a nuclear bomb on Israel, the US and Israel will respond strongly. Former head of U.S. Central Command, John Abizaid, doesn't think that Iran is a suicide state. This method works with Iran. The Iranians probably aren't serious when they say they want to start a nuclear war. Paul Pillar, a top scholar at Georgetown University's Centre for Security Studies, says that bombing Iran would not kill as many people as most people think. The Trita Parsi says that Israel has behaved as if Iran is a reasonable government. 'Dolphin subs' that can carry nuclear-armed cruise missiles were bought by Israel from Germany in 1999 and 2004, according to Parsi (Othman, 2016). The only reason the US is buying cruise missile-equipped submarines is to have a reliable second-strike option in case Iran attacks. Some people who keep an eye on Iran think that even if military threats don't work to stop Iranian leaders, they might still want to avoid attacks that could hurt their Islamic beliefs. It is clear that Iran wants to protect the religious towns of Qom and Mashhad. These scholars say that even though Iranian officials use words to threaten Israel's existence, they have behaved in a way that makes sense and is good for their country. These experts think that the regime will make smart choices about its foreign policy if it gets nuclear weapons because it bases its decisions on a cost-benefit analysis. This decision looks at the regime's foreign policy after the revolution, taking into account its goals of staying in power and protecting its territory. This decision says that Iran's foreign policy puts the survival of the regime ahead of going to war with Israel or other countries in the area.

Some people, though, say that Israel's nuclear power might not stop Iran from using nuclear weapons against Israel. They say that the current leadership of the regime might make the "nuclear deterrence policy" against Iran less effective. Instead of a threat, Tehran may see its atomic bomb as a chance to build the global government of Shiite Islam that God promised. For its own safety and survival, Israel must take the steps it needs to protect itself. A lot of researchers and officials think that Iran's weapons could help the country reach its revolutionary goals without using them. Nuclear weapons can increase the power of other weapons and change the rules of the game. If Tehran got them, it would have a big effect on the area. North Korea's recent actions show that nuclear powers can act freely on the world stage. What will happen if Tehran doesn't use the weapon against its allies is less well known. One expert says it doesn't matter how rational Iran is. If Iran gets nuclear weapons, the West might try to reach a Middle East Yalta agreement with Tehran. This could mean pulling out of the area, which would be bad for smaller Gulf states and impossible for Israel.

Coercive Actions to Stop Iran from Developing Nuclear Weapons

The international community is deliberating on how to address Iran's probable irrational conduct. This section examines the efficacy of continuous sanctions in deterring Iran's pursuit of nuclear armament. Once more, a division into two factions has emerged. Sanctions are believed by some to have the ability to dissuade Iran from continuing its nuclear project. Experts and government officials in this group hold the belief that applying economic pressure could compel Iran to halt its project. Critics contend that these limitations are ineffectual in thwarting Iran or other nations from attaining their nuclear objectives. Sanctions are deemed to be unreliable, frequently evaded, and tend to produce unfavourable results, even when imposed on susceptible nations such as Iran. Experts think that the Iranian dictatorship may possess a level of irrationality that would lead them to persist in the proliferation of weapons, regardless of the significant expenses involved, even in a difficult economic climate. Proponents of non-proliferation contend that Iran can be convinced to halt its project with the provision of explicit guarantees. Nevertheless, some contend that the international community is incapable of fulfilling Iran's objective of regional dominance through the provision of such guarantees. This primarily hinges on the perception of Iran's motivations and the subjective perspective of the observer. Meghan O'Sullivan, an expert in optimism, asserts that the effectiveness of punishments relies on their appropriate integration with other instruments (O'Sullivan, [2017](#)). Efficient sanctions should be complemented by diplomacy, threats of force, economic incentives, or other strategic instruments. If Iran perceives that its security and survival are contingent upon acquiring nuclear weapons, it is improbable that sanctions will have any impact on its determination to do so. Imposing more restrictions could heighten Iran's susceptibility and motivate them to pursue ultimate deterrence. Comprehending Iran's nuclear weapons doctrine is essential in order to identify viable options to compel Iran to decrease its programmes, as stated by proliferation researchers.

Iran pursues nuclear weapons as a means of deterring Israel and the US/West while also aiming to acquire diplomatic and political leverage in the Middle East and the Arab world. While a nuclear programme may have numerous advantages, there are now no substantial motivations or alternatives to dissuade Tehran from actively seeking nuclear weapons. According to Iran specialist Ofira Seliktar, sanctions would not effectively discourage Iran from advancing its nuclear capabilities, as they could potentially find methods to bypass them or deem the economic costs acceptable. Iranian adversaries may employ acts of sabotage, specifically software sabotage or bombing of installations, as protective measures to impede their operations. The efficacy of previous or forthcoming initiatives is uncertain. Largely unexplored. Joseph Nye suggests a remedy to reduce sanctions by permitting Iran to retain a maximum of 1000 kg of low-enriched uranium within its borders while also facilitating rigorous inspections conducted by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). If the sanctions are eased, Iran might potentially achieve the status of a 'near nuclear' state without surpassing the threshold that concerns other nations. This may incentivize a retreat. According to Mahmoud Sahimi, a political specialist with pro-Iranian views, the Western countries have successfully put a stop to Iran's nuclear development. The sanctions are inflicting substantial damage upon millions of Iranians. It caused deliberate damage to nuclear power stations. Although engaging in the assassination of nuclear experts and presenting Iran's dossier to the UN Security Council, these measures have proven ineffective in diminishing Iran's nuclear development.

Danny Yatom, the former head of the Israeli Mossad, contends that clandestine operations and economic penalties are insufficient to hinder Iran's leadership from obtaining a nuclear weapon. We are faced with the choice of either allowing Iran to acquire nuclear weapons or resorting to military intervention. If the world chooses to be apathetic, Israel has the prerogative to utilise its inherent right to self-defence. Brig. Gen. (ret.) Shlomo Brom, a distinguished research associate at the Institute for National Security Studies in Israel, believes that reaching an agreement with Iran to halt uranium enrichment is now improbable. An equitable accord will restrict Iran's uranium enrichment, shutter the Fordo facility, and enforce enhanced surveillance. If this is not achievable, the possibility of military intervention against Iran may be contemplated, but it is improbable to effectively impede its nuclear programme. On April 13, 2009, Defence Secretary Robert Gates asserted that a military intervention might potentially delay Iranian development for a period ranging from one to three years. Engaging in a preemptive attack on Iranian nuclear facilities would result in severe and negative outcomes. Proponents of optimism argue that the implementation of diplomatic measures and imposing harsh sanctions can dissuade Iran from its pursuit of nuclear weapons. Their proposal entails implementing stringent penalties on Iranian officials and their families, which would involve imposing travel restrictions and freezing their financial assets. Washington and its allies may increase pressure on Tehran by optimising their current strategies and effectively coordinating global, bilateral, and unilateral measures. An alternative proposal that more effectively fulfils these criteria could hinder Tehran's utilisation of nuclear energy for non-peaceful intentions. Advocates of sanctions contend that penalties can be advantageous when employed judiciously by policymakers. Sanctions optimists argue that the nuclear policy calculations of the Iranian government are being influenced by economic and political concerns in the country. The imposition of sanctions has prompted a debate in Tehran over the logic behind continuing nuclear development. Political developments indicate that the United States strategy of imposing sanctions on Iran is producing the desired results, and there are indications of a significant restructuring of Iran's strategic approach.

Conclusion

The Iran-Israel conflict derives from post-Cold War power shifts, not the 1979 Iranian revolution. Geopolitics, not ideology, caused it. Growing Iranian might and nuclear programme endanger Israel's regional military dominance. Iran may not use a nuclear bomb against Israel, but it might put Israel in a vulnerable position by pushing extremist groups to be more hostile. Iran may consider nuclear weapons as a rare opportunity to advance Shiite Islam's God-promised worldwide dominance, not a deterrent. Religion may hamper nuclear deterrence. Therefore, Iran with nuclear weapons may accidentally or apocalyptically cause a nuclear tragedy. This is different from nuclear opponents signing MAD agreements. Despite disagreements over Iran's rationality, analysts agree that if it gets nuclear, the world may confront a major security threat in the 21st century. Iran's nuclear weapons might spark a regional arms race, endangering world security. Sanction analysts vary on how to stop Iran from gaining nuclear weapons and how to coerce Iran into abandoning its nuclear development. After years of delay, the international community, led by the US, put sanctions on Iran's economy. Iran might bypass sanctions or rationalise economic sacrifices to expand nuclear capabilities, making it uncertain if they will stop. How outsiders see Iran's motivation and actions affects sanctions' effectiveness. Non-proliferation analysts feel that specific foreign guarantees can convince Iran to stop, while others say that no assurances can achieve Iran's regional hegemony. The substantial literature on punishment effectiveness is inconclusive. syed.jalal@f.rwu.edu.pk

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