

T.C.
ISTANBUL AYDIN UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES



**THE NUCLEAR CRISIS WITH IRAN FROM AN INTERNATIONAL
SECURITY PERSPECTIVE**

M.A.THESIS

Adel TURAN

Department of Political Science and International Relations

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Thesis Advisor: Assist. Prof. Dr. Özüm Sezin UZUN

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Adel TURAN

FOREWORD

This research, although at times challenging, has helped me understand the political system to a much greater level than previously. I am sincerely grateful to the professors and students who invested their work and time to assist me.

I would like to express my deep gratitude for the help I received in the preparation of the thesis for my supervisor Assist. Prof. Dr. Ozum Sezin Uzun. From choosing the topic to completing the work she helped me a lot and not only helped me fix mistakes in the work but also gave me valuable advice and recommendations. Her interesting lectures also helped motivate me to write about the Iranian nuclear program.

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ABBREVIATIONS

P5+1	: The US, UK, France, Russia, China and Germany
IAEA	: The International Atomic Energy Agency
JCPOA	: Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action
NPT	: Non-Proliferation Treaty or NPT, is an international treaty whose objective is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, to promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.
U.N	: The United Nations.
APOC	: The Anglo-Persian Oil Company.
SIPRI	: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
WMD	: Weapons of mass destruction
IMF	: The International Monetary Fund
OCHA	: Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
TRR	: Tehran Research Reactor
GCC	: Gulf Co-operation Council
U.S	: The United States.
U.K	: The United Kingdom.

ULUSLARARASI BAKIŞ AÇISINDAN İRAN NÜKLEER KRİZİ

ÖZET

Uluslararası güvenlik tanımına ve nükleer silahların çoğalmasının barışı sağlayıp sağlamayacağına veya nihayetinde ciddi çatışmalara yol açıp açmayacağına dair akademisyenler arasında çok çeşitli tartışmalar vardır. İran nükleer programı konusunda İran'ın uluslararası toplumun güvenliğine ne kadar tehdit oluşturduğuna dair farklı görüşler var. Bu tez, İran nükleer programını ve esas olarak 2002'den bu yana Natanz'daki zenginleştirme tesislerinin keşfiyle gelişen olayları kapsamaktadır. İran'daki nükleer programla, İran'ın uluslararası toplumla ve uluslararası güvenliğin arasındaki ilişki analiz edilmiştir.

Bu tez, İran nükleer meselesini çevreleyen tüm sorulara nihai bir cevap ve sonuç vermenin zor olduğu sonucuna varacaktır, ABD, İsrail ve Saudi Arabistan tarafından paylaşılan bir görüş olmasına rağmen, İran'ın güvenlik ve uluslararası çıkarlar için acil bir tehdit oluşturmadığı sonucuna varılabilir. Aynı zamanda, özellikle nükleer silahların yayılmasını önleme ve bölgesel güvenliğin geleceği ile İran'ın durumu, endişe verici sebepleri olduğu kabul edilmektedir. Bu araştırma, İran'ın nükleer durumunun sürekli gelişimini kabul etmekte ve ilgili devletlerin hükümet yönetimleri de değiştikçe değişim potansiyelini ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *İran, uluslararası, nükleer silahların yayılması, anlaşma, güvenlik, anlaşma, kriz*

THE NUCLEAR CRISIS WITH IRAN FROM AN INTERNATIONAL SECURITY PERSPECTIVE

ABSTRACT

There is a wide range of debate amongst academics on the definition of international security and on whether the proliferation of nuclear weapons maintains peace or eventually leads to serious conflict. On the subject of the Iranian nuclear program there are differing views as to how much of a threat Iran poses to the security of the international community. Opinions in The Middle East vary considerably from those in Israel who view Iran as a major threat, to Egyptians who express mixed views but have supported Iran and its ambitions in the past. This thesis examines the Iranian nuclear program and major events that have transpired, mainly focusing on the time period since 2002 and the discovery of enrichment facilities at Natanz. Firstly, the research looks at the history of the nuclear program within Iran including details surrounding the enrichment of Uranium, then recent developments regarding the JCPOA agreement are introduced. The research goes on to examine the influence of the war with Iraq and Iran's relationship with the international community. Differing opinions on the spread of nuclear weapons from an international security perspective are analysed before discussing the implications of Iran possessing a nuclear weapon. Finally, the research further analyses the agreement between Iran and the P5+1 and comments on the implementation of the Iran deal to date – including the U.S withdrawal from the JCPOA.

This thesis will conclude that while it is difficult to provide an ultimate answer and conclusion to all questions surrounding the Iran nuclear issue, it is possible to conclude that Iran does not pose an immediate threat to security and international interests although this may not be a view shared by the U.S, Israel and Saudi Arabia. At the same time, it is acknowledged that the Iranian situation does provide plenty of reasons for concern, especially regarding the future of nuclear non-proliferation and regional security. This research acknowledges the constant evolution of the Iran nuclear situation and notes the potential for change as the governmental administrations of the states involved also change.

Keywords: *Iran, international, nuclear proliferation, agreement, security, deal, crisis*

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will look at the background to the Iranian nuclear crisis and show that the situation with Iran's nuclear program is a complicated but significant topic because it raises provocative questions in regard to the future of nuclear proliferation regime. The problems associated with the possible intention of Iran to create nuclear weapons has stimulated arguments between regions and states of the world and ultimately resulted in sanctions for Iran. In recent years, many major world powers such as the U.N, the European Union (EU), the U.S, China and Russia have been involved in solving the Iranian nuclear issue. The United States has perhaps played one of the most significant roles in the task of seeking a solution to the Iranian nuclear problem. The U.S has made no secret that it views Iran as a sponsor of international terrorism and therefore sees it as a major threat to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

If US continues to perceive a threat from Iranian nuclear program, it is hard to argue that the comprehensive deal, which required between P5+1 and Iran, would be successful to reduce political motivations of Iran to acquire nuclear weapons.

This research will employ a qualitative analysis approach in explaining the nuclear crisis with Iran from the viewpoint of a varied group of academic scholars. This chapter will detail the methodology used in this research and provide viewpoints from some of the major theorists on the topic.

This thesis will attempt to answer the following research questions:

- Would the JCPOA with Iran be successfully serve for the international security?
- If the nuclear deal fails what would be the impact?

These research questions will be answered through the following chapters.

Together with the research questions a basic hypothesis statement will be used to frame a discussion on the current status of the Iranian nuclear crisis;

As long as the U.S and Israel continue to perceive a threat from the Iranian nuclear program, the JCPOA will be less successful in reducing motivation for Iranian nuclear weapon ambitions and consequently, also less successful at reducing international security concerns.

Chapter 1 details on an introduction and background to the Iranian nuclear crisis Chapter 2 will look the historical background of Iranian nuclear program which resulted in the nuclear deal.

Chapter 3-4 focuses on the impact of Iranian nuclear program on regional and international security. Details the spread of nuclear weapons and the right to use nuclear energy for peaceful use under the regulations of the IAEA. It will also look at what international security means and what it would mean if Iran did possess nuclear weapons capability.

Chapters 5 analyses the nuclear deal that was signed in 2015 to promote global and regional security and the U.S withdrawal from the agreement. Responses to the withdrawal are also examined.

1.1 Methodology

This thesis analyzes articles, books, journals and web-based literature on the Iranian nuclear program and International security. The thesis will make a textual analysis of data from a wide variety of sources related to the subject such as official statements, resolutions and reports published by the government agencies and official documents as well as from secondary sources like newspaper reports, books, articles and internet resources. Also, some diagrams will be used for illustrative purposes.

It was important for me to get input from different areas of academia and collate them together to form opinions and conclusions that were not restricted by a single viewpoint or bias and would rise above social and political prejudices. I contacted professors and students as well as using existing data and literature, in all forms of media to form my opinions. The contribution of my thesis is to bring these viewpoints together to provide an overall understanding of the most important issues. The Iranian nuclear issue changes almost daily and so my thesis is one of the most up to date perspectives on a complicated and often

changing situation. It is important for scholars to continue to add and update their views on topics related to nuclear proliferation, the security of the international community and the nuclear crisis with Iran so that the literature does not become out-dated. Events occurring since theorists have made their conclusions may alter and influence opinion.

1.2 Background

The Islamic Republic of Iran or Persia as it is sometimes called, is one of the world's most ancient civilisations and can justifiably claim to be a major empire. In modern times, however, Iran has often found itself embroiled in a struggle between world super powers. Many of the recent issues have centered on Iran's nuclear programme. Some members of the international community such as Russia, China believe it is more aimed at producing weapons rather than for civilian use. This has led to increased tensions in The Middle East - an already fragile area of the international community. One reason for Iran's involvement in issues related to international security could be its location and size – a large nation positioned right in the center of the region. Even if another nation was in the same geographical area it might be seen by its neighbours as a higher level of threat. Traditionally, security has been seen as protection from invasion and a state's military capabilities are part of the formula that other states contemplate when evaluating the risk posed to a region. Nuclear weapons are the biggest threat in the military arsenal of any country. Possession of a nuclear weapon changes the dynamics of a country and can also destabilise global stability (Waltz, K). During the first 3 decades of the nuclear age, membership of nuclear powers has grown from the main 5 to 9 with the addition of India, Pakistan, North Korea and Israel. As the possibility increases of further nuclear weapons being acquired by countries whose governments are considered to be unstable it is likely to cause a crisis. It is also a commonly held belief that the chances of a nuclear weapon being used by a state depends on their overall objectives and the competence of their political system and administration. With a Western backed monarchy, Iran was viewed as trustworthy and had developed its nuclear energy programme with outside support. During the early period of Iran's nuclear program, the U.S initially

encouraged the building of reactors, centrifuges and helped train nuclear scientists (Rabinowitz, 2014). Dialogue and actions taken by Iran in relation to real or imagined nuclear ambitions since regime change in 1979 have caused great concern amongst regional neighbours such as Israel and also with the international community.

To understand the international nuclear crisis with Iran from a global perspective, it would be wise to have an awareness of the main points of modern Iranian history. An understanding would help explain where some anti-Western discontentment originates and help unravel some of the motives behind actions in relation to the crisis. This would include the rebellion towards the Shah in 1905, the drafting of the constitution in 1906 and the finding of sizeable oil fields in 1908 which formed the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (APOC). Perhaps more importantly the plot between Britain and the U.S. which led to the overthrow of Iran's P.M, Mohammed Mossadegh, in 1953 and U.S. assistance in starting Iran's nuclear program. In 1957, the U.S. agreed on a civil nuclear collaboration deal with the shah of Iran, opening the door for Tehran to build its nuclear program. Then there was the 1979 revolution where the ambitious for the nuclear plans did not come to pass and overthrown the shah's regime. Iran's revolutionary authorities tore up lucrative contracts for the building of a number of nuclear facilities (Sahimi, 2005).

Reza Khan had come to power in 1921 and in 1925 made himself Shah, ruling for more than a decade and a half. In September 1941 Reza Shah was forced to step down and his son, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi became Shah. During the early 1960's, Iran initiated economic and social reforms which was called as the Shah's White Revolution. The main part of the programme was land reform but using one of the largest petroleum reserves in the world it expanded and led to rapid economic growth and modernization. Pahlavi remained in the role of Shah, supported by the U.S, until the revolution of 1979. That year was a critical turning point in modern Iranian history and had wide implications on how Iran was viewed by the international community.

The Shah was replaced with a new Islamic Shia regime under the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khomeini. Amongst the various reasons for the popularity of the rebellion included a resentment of Western involvement in the region.

This popular revolution took place in a nation that was experiencing an economic boom. This is in contrast to common scenarios for regime change. It took the place of a powerful pro-Western monarchy with a dictatorial religious theocracy which was more anti-West. This significantly changed the attitudes of Western powers towards Iran. Any assistance that was occurring internationally in regard to Iran's nuclear programme whether it be from the U.S or from Israel, quickly ended. The level of trust of the new regime was in sharp contrast to the outgoing monarchy.

The period of time after the revolution included war with Iraq from 1980 to 1988 and was motivated partly by fears that the 1979 Islamic Revolution would inspire rebellion among Iraq's suppressed Shi'i majority. Other reasons included Iraq's perception that Iran was in a weakened state after the Revolution and could be an opportunity to replace Iran as the most powerful force in the region(Beeman, 2004). The war was thought by a large number of Iranians to have been supported and even initiated by the U.S. Amidst the growing anti U.S feeling, on the 4th of November in 1979, the U.S. Embassy in Tehran was seiged by Iranian militants and hostages were taken. 52 American diplomats and civilians were detained from November 4, 1979 until January 20, 1981. The event led to a serious break down in already worsening relations between Iran and the U.S. Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini gained greater power and popularity during this time as relations with the West worsened and as a consequence, economic sanctions were implemented against Iran.

Ali Khomeini became the new leader following the death of his predecessor on June 3rd, 1989. Later that year, Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani was elected President by a landslide and then again in June 1993. Mohammad Khatami-Ardakani was elected President in August 1997 with a significant majority and then re-elected again in June 2001. Elections took place for the 7th Majles where many reformists were barred from competing. This was seen as a flawed election resulting in a more conservative Majles taking seats (Beeman, 2004). It is interesting to note that both political contestants, Mir Hossein Moussavi and Mahmoud Ahmadienjad commented on the fact that people appeared to view neighbouring Pakistan with much more respect due to it's possessing nuclear

weapons. These comments were in contrast to the Iranian government's declaration that nuclear weapons were against islam (Kessler, 2013).

Iran's nuclear program remained a prominent subject of contention with the international community in the following years, especially after the revelations of secret facilities in Natanz in 2002. Countries such as Israel continued to express anxiety that Iran's nuclear program could redirect civilian nuclear technology into a weapons programme (Kam, 2008). In 2009, the US Director of National Intelligence Dendis Blair said that according to their investigations - Iran would not be able to develop a nuclear weapon until 2013 (IPS News, 2009). Many such statements and revised deadlines have been commented upon over recent years. By 2009, Iran maintained diplomatic relations with almost a hundred members of the United Nations, but this did not include the United States or Israel. Israel has not been recognized by Iran since the 1979 Revolution and the Israeli perspective on the Iranian nuclear crisis is least likely to be a positive one in terms of feelings of security.

Iran became a signatory of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in February 1970. Under the terms of the of treaty, uranium enrichment was allowed. Assistance and cooperation would be offered in exchange for promises of compliance, supported by international checks to ensure that no materials would be reassigned to be used in the development of nuclear weapons. Refusing any part of the deal would result in exclusion from international nuclear technology trade and lead to general lack of co-operation. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was set up by the U.N in 1957 to help nations in developing nuclear energy for non-military aims. The IAEA assisted in reassuring the international community that countries involved are honouring their treaty commitments to use nuclear materials and associated facilities solely for non-weapon related purposes. The IAEA carries out ongoing inspections of nuclear sites to check the legitimacy of information provided to it. These inspections are supported by the threat of international sanctions. Iran was subject to such sanctions after the discovery of secret underground facilities that many considered were of far too large a scale to be intended only for civilian use. Iran's insistence that the facility was to create medical isotopes did not agree with the conclusions of observers who noted that the facilities were

too far from any hospitals to be of any practical medical use (Beardsley, 2008). The resulting isolation of Iran from the international community left the situation in deadlock with the future solution to Iran's nuclear programme a difficult issue to resolve.

The Iranian Nuclear program has had significant influence on the perceived state of international security and particularly since the Natanz revelations of 2002, has attracted the attention of the world community. The focus of the attention has mostly been on the ability of Iran to produce nuclear weapons. Such a move which would be a step too far for some nations – particularly Israel and the U.S. Amongst the main concerns are the use and misuse of nuclear weapons and the danger of nuclear materials getting into the hands of terrorists. Citing the right to develop peaceful nuclear energy, Iran's government has displayed hostile views towards Western countries attempts to curb their nuclear ambitions. The United States and Israel are often the most vocal opponents. The E.U has also questioned the insistence of Iran that its involvement with uranium enrichment is entirely for the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

After increased friction in relations with the international community after 2002, Iran was faced with sanctions, isolation and increased attention from the IAEA. In order to halt or curtail Iran's nuclear ambitions, many believed US foreign policy needed to be altered to offer economic incentives in exchange for compliance (Beardsley, 2008). In July 2015, Iran and the P5+1 (this consists of the US, Great Britain, Germany, France, China and Russia) agreed on The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action agreement in relation to the Iranian nuclear programme. The U.S would later withdraw from the agreement and this will be examined in chapter 6 together with the reactions of other countries that signed the agreement. The basic provisions of the agreement being that Iran should disable two thirds of their centrifuges to enrich uranium and keep them under strict international supervision. Iran would get rid of 98% of its stockpile of enriched Uranium and be subject to unhindered IAEA inspections. In exchange, Western countries would gradually remove sanctions once it could be observed that Iran is in full compliance with the requirements. This recent agreement may well be an important step in addressing the Iranian nuclear issue with the

implications for international peace and security being of such vital importance. The agreement has surely had an impact, but this will be discussed later.

1.3 Literature Review

There are a wide variety of reasons for states to seek to obtain nuclear weapons capability. It could be for defence against an external security threat, to gain domestic advantage or to wield greater power amongst neighboring states. It could be for the prestige such a defence capability brings or it could be for a combination of reasons.

There are perhaps two main theorists of international relations commenting on the existence of nuclear weapons, Kenneth Waltz and Scott Sagan hold contrasting views on the ongoing ownership and proliferation of nuclear weapons by states in the 21st Century and why these states seek such weapons. Together they authored a book entitled ‘The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A Debate.’ (Waltz, Sagan, 1995). They analysed the reasons behind states wanting to pursue a nuclear weapons development program and the political fall out this might have from regional and international perspectives.

Waltz believes that the nuclear deterrent factor can prevent conflict and that nuclear weapons can be used as a positive force for peace. This is in contrast to Sagan who questions the suitability of the organisations that ultimately control the use of the weapons. In his view, these organisations have biases and interests which if left unchecked can lead to deterrence failures.

Presently there are over 30 countries with active nuclear power plants for civilian use (IAEA, 2016). There are 5 long-term members of the U.N Security Council plus Pakistan, India, Israel and North Korea which are known to have weapons or have the capability to produce them (see Diagram D).

With these nuclear states sometimes appearing to be in a greater position of authority, persuading other countries that they do not need to possess such powerful military assets may not always be an easy task. Once a country has successfully started a peaceful nuclear power program they are then in a position where they could move to using nuclear energy for military purposes. Such moves could have repercussions on a domestic and international level.

Presently it is Iran's nuclear program that has caused the greatest concern amongst international powers to the point that it has at times reached crisis levels. The issue is undoubtedly one a major security and diplomatic challenge of recent times. The possibility of a nuclear armed Iran complicates an already fragile area of the Middle East. It is a region that historically has been no stranger to internal disputes and conflicts. There were serious concerns among surrounding states towards Iran's nuclear programme and whilst many of those states may feel progress has been made with the JCPOA, Israel and the U.S still hold those concerns. This can be demonstrated by the more recent U.S withdrawal to be discussed later in this thesis. Reactions from domestic and global states to Iran's nuclear program has been varied according to the state's relationship with Iran and the influence upon that state of world superpowers.

Whether Iran's nuclear program has a military objective remains open to cultural bias and political persuasion. There is little doubt that perceptions of an antagonistic and aggressive Iranian foreign policy have influenced western views towards Iran's nuclear program and the issue has sharply increased regional and international tensions over recent decades. These tensions exist in spite of Iran's firm assurances that the nuclear program is for non-military energy purposes only (Albright and Hinderstein, 2003). Analysts and academics have tried to evaluate the Iranian nuclear program and its potential effect on localised and international stability by looking at historical examples and examining theoretical scenarios.

Along with differing opinions on how to view specific threats from states such as Iran there are very differing points of view about nuclear weapons and their further spread. As already mentioned, it is believed by some analysts that the spread of nuclear weapons poses an immense risk and could cause further instabilities in the world. In contrast, there are those that believe that increasing the number of states possessing nuclear weapons would not necessarily be a disaster and surprisingly might bring some stability to the Middle East (Waltz, 1990). This view has some historical examples that might add weight to the idea. It is commonly believed that nuclear weapons-maintained stability between the US and the USSR when Cold War tensions were at their height. A growing body of literature however suggests this could be an oversimplified

view and that there were many nuclear security oversights between the US and the USSR which could have escalated into something serious (Sagan, 1993).

Sagan (1993) argues that the spread of nuclear weapons does not cause stability and instead causes anxiety and leads to states wishing to defend themselves against such threats. He believes that the unique fragile nature of the region means that if Iran gains nuclear weapons or continues with its nuclear objectives, there will be serious implications both at a global and international level. The results of such a scenario would include international conflict at varying levels of seriousness.

There are a multitude of theories, ideas and logic that can be applied to the topic of the Iranian nuclear issue including organizational politics, domestic and norms models, democratic peace models, ideas of multi-polarity and nuclear deterrence theory. Along with these theories come differing opinions as to their application to the Iranian nuclear topic. There is an argument that deterrence theory would not be likely to work in the Middle East. If Iran possessed a nuclear weapon, it would not necessarily dissuade an adversary from taking military action. Israel, Saudi Arabia and the U.S view a nuclear Iran a major danger to their own homeland and to the international security interests. This is not necessarily a view shared by European states and other signatories who remain committed to the JCPOA.

Advocates of nuclear deterrence give less emphasis to the negative impacts of spread of nuclear weapons in the situation in the Middle East. Whilst they say that nuclear deterrence between Israel and Iran could cool tensions in the Middle East, some claim they overlook other political realities, the fragility of the region, and anxiety about how dangerous Iran might become if it gains nuclear capability (Hagerty, 1998). The limitations to deterrence theory in relation to Israel and Iran in the Middle East are magnified because of a variety of reasons for proliferation that occur independently of the assumptions of deterrence theory (Hagerty, 1998).

Miller (1993) argues that there is very little evidence to support the idea that nuclear weapons promote peace and stability. Dunn (1982) agrees and expands on the view by suggesting that many of the key aspects of stable nuclear

deterrence might not exist in the Middle East, where there is a higher possibility of the actual launch of nuclear weapons. He adds that there is less flexibility in The Middle East and it is an area which is particularly susceptible to turmoil and conflict.

Posen (1991) suggests that the behaviour of the military and the need to maintain security can escalate into conflict. The case of India and Pakistan is relevant to add weight to this case of potential accidental use of nuclear weapons. Pakistan entered into a conflict with India which could have potentially escalated into a nuclear war whether by accident or design (Betts, Sagan and Waltz, 2007).

Some academics such as Snyder (1961) emphasise that a limited conventional war is possible even amongst nuclear weapon states whereas Nye (1987) suggests that in the complicated world of international relations, any minor escalation has the possibility of turning a conventional military conflict into a nuclear one. The Middle East is far from being a stable political environment and any conflict there could lead inadvertently to nuclear escalation with Iran, the U.S and Israel being the likely players. Nuclear accidents and unauthorized nuclear use are more prone to occur in unstable regions where there is more than one state that possesses a nuclear weapon (Hagerty, 1998). It could be argued that this applied to Ukraine with the Chernobyl disaster and concern about its stockpile of nuclear materials falling into the wrong hands, but it applies less to disasters in areas such as Fukushima, Japan.

A major critique of nuclear deterrence theory is organization theory. The theory highlights the role that misunderstanding, and misinformation can play. Weltman (1981) agrees that the lack of suitable communication systems might result in misunderstanding between the players involved. For deterrence to be effective, it is necessary that states have the ability to counter strike and the time to organize events satisfactorily and in good time. In the Middle East example, Iran and Israel's distrust of each other and poor communication channels make the possibility of errors more likely. Iran's nuclear program could create more security issues as opposed to balancing power in the Middle East. It could be argued that the possession of greater military power by another country, such as Israel, contributes to the friction. There does appear to be

obvious favour granted from the U.S toward Israel and different standards of behaviour expected from Iran. This could fuel discontent, to borrow ideas from Karl Marx, where there is inequality, there could be conflict. Perhaps it is not fair to point the finger at Iran as the dangerous state when they are in a situation that is not balanced in their favour.

Iran's rivalry with other Arab states and with the US is an additional problem and adds to the concerns that Iran's nuclear ambitions could encourage nuclear proliferation across the Middle East' (Mabon, 2013). Arab states are likely to feel the need to take counter-measures in response to security concerns with Iran. Nuclear weapons are an option that could be difficult to ignore. In the Middle East there is a great deal of economic power to initiate a nuclear program if Iran acquires nuclear weapons and other states wish to follow suit. Posen (1991) also argues that state leaders may not comprehend the result that their behavior may have on others. A balance of power between Israel and Iran may result in less of a balance of power between Iran and Saudi Arabia for example.

In regard to Iran's nuclear program, neighbouring Arab states and Israel, are worried about Iran's actions if it achieves nuclear capability. Ehteshami (2010) notes, GCC states, that are often engaged in internal disputes, are more or less united on the issue of a nuclear Iran. Iran's history with neighbouring states is littered with political disputes, political wrangling and rivalry. Gause (2007) notes that Iran and the GCC Arab states have differences in ideology and ethnicity which can put them on the road to conflict rather than to harmony and cooperation.

Many fears that if Iran gains nuclear capability it will become more confrontational as a result. With the fall of Saddam in the nearby state of Iraq, an Iranian nuclear program has a less credible strategic need (Chubin and Litwak, 2003). Iran may have used Israel and its support for Palestine to divert attention away from its nuclear program. Israel's strategic fears are more than justified. Iran does not recognize Israel and supports attacks against it, often seeking to disrupt peace processes (Chubin and Litwak, 2003). Whether Iran's nuclear program is offensive in nature or not, makes no difference to the perceptions felt by its neighbours. Proliferation of nuclear weapons is likely to

occur if Iran obtains nuclear weapons and this would likely complicate the Iranian nuclear crisis on a domestic and international level (Ehteshami, 2010). There is a question as to the capability of the international community to be able to stop such a spread of nuclear weapons in the Middle East or further a field. Countries that have the potential to become part of the nuclear arms race are Bahrain, Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (Edelman, Krepinevich and Montgomery). If any of these countries do seek nuclear capability it would seriously hamper the attempts of international institutions to stop the spread of nuclear weapons.

Nuclear interaction between more than two nuclear states in the region could lead to a chaotic situation. A Middle East with multiple nuclear states would not be the same as the Cold War scenario, when the U.S.S.R and the U.S were faced off against one another (Hagerty, 1998). Multipolarity is thought of as having less stability because situations can change rapidly and provide the right set of conditions for a strike (Edelman, Krepinevich and Montgomery, 2011). Contributing more to these anxieties is the additional risk of a pre-emptive strike from the U.S or Israel. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has repeated a number of times that he would prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons, whatever it takes (Atlantic, 2009). Some analysts have suggested that the size of Israel puts it at a disadvantage in a nuclear exchange (Rosenbaum, 2012). Iran's larger size means that it could win a nuclear war with Israel as nuclear detonations against it would be more disastrous to the nation as a whole. It is likely that Israeli leaders would strike first for this very reason. Chubin and Litwak (2003) claim that the results of a pre-emptive military strike on Iran could be catastrophic and may trigger such anti-U.S. feelings that the situation would eventually lead to another world war.

A pre-emptive strike would not cause Iran to dismantle its nuclear program but could instead increase Iran's determination to go nuclear (Edelman, Krepinevich and Montgomery, 2011). In the Middle East, smaller states are concerned about getting caught up in any conflict where Iran might have the ability to strike against U.S military sites in their countries in retaliation.

Considering all the issues involved, it is clear that Iran's nuclear program is capable of having an impact on the security and stability of the Middle East and

beyond onto the global arena. The Iranian nuclear issue is a long running dispute that has widened divisions between Iran and the West and led to an array of sanctions that has affected Iran on the world stage. More recently agreements between the International community and energy agencies verified that Iran has completed steps to ensure Iran's nuclear program remains peaceful. This may well bring down diplomatic barriers and stimulate Iran's economy. US President Barack Obama hoped that the agreement announced in Vienna would make for a safer and more hopeful world. The issues mentioned in the paragraphs above will be discussed throughout this thesis and will provide an understanding of the main aspects of the Iranian nuclear crisis as seen from a regional and international security perspective.

2. HISTORY, NUCLEAR PROGRAM & RECENT AGREEMENT

2.1 A History of the Iranian Nuclear Program

After decades of controversy surrounding Iran's nuclear programme, international concern reached a high in 2002 with the discovery of nuclear sites that were previously undisclosed. Iran was in the process of obtaining the components required to provide enough enriched uranium to produce nuclear weapons. The sites of concern included those at Arak, Saghand, Ardakan, Natanz and nuclear reactors at Bushehr. In March 2003, following these revelations, the IAEA began further investigations. (Cordesman and Al-Rodhan, 2006).

Iran had always insisted that its nuclear programme was in compliance with international law. Every country, in good standing, has the right to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. (Joyner and Joyner, 2011). After the discovery of the apparently secret underground nuclear sites, Iran had severely damaged the trust of some members of the international community. It was considered that Iran already possessed a suitable civilian energy program and therefore the real aim was to produce a nuclear weapon. These beliefs were not just down to the revelations in 2002 but were a gradual build up of mistrust and grievances that had occurred over a much longer period of time. It is necessary to look further back in history to gain an understanding of the origins of the mistrust from the perspective of the international community and from the viewpoint of Iran.

During the mid-1970s Iran's nuclear energy programme was well under way. In 1974, the Shah had targeted the production of over 20,000 megawatts of power from a number of nuclear power plants to be achieved within decades. This was with the assistance of other world powers. Numerous contracts were signed with the U.S and Europe. Examples included a deal with West Germany and France to construct a number of 1,200 megawatt reactors at Bushehr and other sites (Sahimi, 2005).

The 1979 Iranian revolution slowed down work on the Iran's nuclear programme for a period of a few years. The 1980 war with Iraq impaired Iran's existing nuclear infrastructure. The two power reactors being constructed at Bushehr were targeted by bombing a few times during the Iran–Iraq war and projects were abandoned.

It wasn't until near the end of 1980's that the Iranian nuclear programme was able to restart and a decade later was once again progressing with assistance from Russia, China and Pakistan. The renewal of the programme was met with hostility by the U.S who worked to hamper some aspects of the deals made with these countries (Islam, 2013). Russia and China continued to assist Iran against pressure from other Western governments. During this period, Iran is also alleged to have obtained Uranium enrichment technology illicitly by Pakistani scientist A. Q. Khan. Khan was sentenced to imprisonment in 1983 but much later in February 2004, President Musharraf pardoned him due to political concerns (Boer, Slijper and Koster, 2004).

The assistance Iran received from countries such as Russia in the 1990's enabled it to make significant progress in its nuclear efforts. By 2003, as the details of its nuclear program became more apparent, Iran had already made progress towards obtaining the technology required to create enriched uranium (Iran Watch, 2016). Many of Iran's nuclear experiments were suspected to be in violation of the agreement with the IAEA and it was demanded that Iran was provide updated information on it's nuclear programme and to explain its purpose. Iran's explanations, together with the findings of the IAEA's inspections, were detailed in Agency reports beginning in June 2003. The report indicated that Iran had not met its obligations with respect to its reporting of nuclear materials and had not co-operated on a number of issues. It did concede that the quantities of nuclear material involved were not large. Iran responded by denying the allegations and refusing to suspend enrichment-related activities as it had previously pledged. Perhaps the suspicions surrounding Iran's nuclear activities made these kinds of events almost inevitable. There was evidence against Iran from the contents of a stolen laptop which were strongly suspected to be fraudulent. Along with alledged assassinations of Iranian nuclear scientists and the wish not to be seen as being too compliant to Western powers, it was

perhaps placing high demands on Iran to comply with all parts of the NPT. Sympathisers would say that Iran never diverted nuclear material for military purposes – and that would surely be the main assurances the observations were intended for.

In 2002, the Iranian centrifuge enrichment program moved to Natanz (See diagram A) with the installation of 50,000 centrifuges planned. Iran claimed that Natanz was to produce nuclear fuel for power with uranium enriched from 3 to 5 percent (Einhorn, 2004).

2.2 The Enrichment of Uranium

It is important to understand a little on the background of how Iran could achieve uranium enrichment. Much of the distrust towards Iran came in 2002 after the discovery of secret underground nuclear facilities. The NCRI exposed the secret facility at Natanz and the construction of a heavy water plant at Arak capable of making plutonium-based nuclear weapons. The Iranian regime had no choice but to acknowledge their existence and the IAEA inspected the sites.

Iran produced over 8 tons of low-enriched uranium which would be sufficient to fuel nuclear weapons if further enrichment was completed. Under the JCPOA agreement, Iran was required to decrease its low-enriched uranium to under 300 kg. Iran achieved this by moving most its uranium to Russia in 2015 (Iran Watch, 2015)

Uranium enrichment levels were raised at Natanz plant IN and this was seen by the IAEA as a move nearer to a possible goal of fuelling an atomic weapon (Iran Watch, 2016). Iran's explanation was again that it was for research purposes only. The presence of another plant at Fordow underground facility (see diagram A) was uncovered by the U.S in 2009. Additional material was being produced at this plant and it raised concerns that the site had been picked because of its usefulness as a barrier against air assault. Under the late JCPOA, Fordow will be utilized for atomic research with no enrichment scheduled to happen for at least 15 years. Plutonium is another fissile material Iran had been actively seeking to produce and it can also be used to fuel nuclear weapons. In

the 1960s, the U.S had provided Iran with a five-megawatt reactor yet ceased assistance with fuel supply after the revolution.

More cooperation was found with Russia who helped Iran construct a 1,000-megawatt light-water reactor at Bushehr (See Diagram A). This plant is equipped for contributing around four percent of Iran's overall power yield to the national grid. From another perspective it was suitable for providing Iran with enough weapon-level plutonium to build 35 atomic weapons per year. To utilize the plutonium from Bushehr in an atomic weapon, Iran would need to develop a plant to concentrate plutonium from the spent reactor fuel. Iran would also need to store the fuel. Under recent agreements Iran has allowed the reactor and its fuel to be subjected to checks and testing by the IAEA.

According to the JCPOA, Iran was required to make changes to the reactor at Arak and making some aspects of it inoperable. The IAEA concluded that Iran had complied with this requirement in January 2016. This type of compliance could be seen to add some weight to those that argue Iran and its nuclear power program is not a serious threat to international security (Broad and Sanger, 2007). If Iran are indeed complying with the international community then maybe they are not as much a threat as perceived. However, the distrust that exists in nations such as Israel and the U.S means that suspicions over-ride any potential feelings of improved regional security.

Iran has always claimed that it's reactors are intended for civilian research including for medical and industrial use (Sadr, 2005). Many states that have built similar reactors have nevertheless used them to produce nuclear weapons. Some well-known examples of this are Israel's Dimona reactor, and the Cirus reactor in India. Iran would not be the first state to switch the purposes of their program from civilian to military. Evidence of Iran's compliance with the international community could still be demonstrated at sites such as the IR-40 reactor at Esfahan. Iran stopped producing fuel assemblies for the reactor in accordance with the JCPOA at the start of 2014.

Nations attempting to build atomic weapons have always come across an array of obstacles and problems to overcome. A minimum amount of fissile material-uranium 235 or plutonium is required to fuel any intended device. In addition, a

device with the capability of bringing about an atomic chain reaction detonation is required. Those that warn of Iran being a threat to international security point to steps Iran has taken to disguise its treatment of fissile materials and say that Iran could have been attempting to make atomic devices.

A variety of intelligence reports gave cause for concern for some members of the international community. Some reports made available to the IAEA in 2004 suggested that Iran was seeking to purchase Deuterium gas from Russia (Saeidi, 2005). This gas can be used, in conjunction with Tritium, to enhance the yield of fission in thermonuclear explosions. In France, intelligence concluded that Iran had sought items suitable for nuclear tests, as well as details relating to flash radiography and pulse generators (Aghazadeh, 2005). According to a 2003 media report, high-voltage switches from a German company were discovered and confiscated by customs agents. The switches could be used in the detonation process of nuclear weapons.

Although Iran has complied with the IAEA on many occasions, suspicions about Iran's intentions have been aroused when they have not co-operated with requests. At the start of 2008, the IAEA detailed information in a report (IAEA Safety report, 2008) that seemed to show that Iran had formulated production related to the creation of nuclear weapons. Iran believes that these were fabricated documents and would not assist the agency in investigating their validity – denying access to records and sites of interest. Iran prevented inspectors from interviewing military officials at nuclear research centers (Aghazadeh, 2017).

Another 2011 IAEA report (IAEA Safety report, 2011) detailed information indicating that Iran was perhaps planning to develop a nuclear weapon. The report detailed construction of a containment vessel which could be used to conduct explosive tests and also contained evidence of detonation research. The report cited production of a neutron initiator which could be used to generate a nuclear chain reaction. Included in the report were details of a program to install a new payload system onto a Shahab-3 missile, allowing a nuclear device to be installed.

During the period from 2011 to 2015, the IAEA often reported that the Iran was not providing answers to questions related to the agency's investigation into Iran's possible intentions to produce weapons (IAEA Safety report, 2011). At the time of the JCPOA in 2015, Iran and the IAEA had agreed to resolve the IAEA's outstanding questions related to these investigations.

In December 2015, the IAEA compiled a final report on Iran's alleged weaponisation program, arriving at the conclusion that Iran had a nuclear weapon related program up to 2003, and that this had continued on until 2009. The IAEA report showed that Iran did not satisfactorily provide any meaningful resolutions to many of the investigations continuing issues. Iran provided no new details and instead offered denials or gave explanations that were not sufficient to calm suspicions. Nevertheless, IAEA members voted to halt further investigations (IAEA Board report, 2015).

According to the terms of the NPT, Iran should allow IAEA inspections of its nuclear-related materials to enable the agency to confirm its intended use. Iran must also supply inventory change reports and provide details of the design of its nuclear storage facilities (Einhorn, 2016).

Analysis of the complex details of inspections seem to indicate that it is technologically difficult to fully determine what Iran is using for peaceful means or what could indicate military purpose. On top of this Iran has shown that they have possessed the capability and motive to hide their nuclear ambitions at the Natanz site in 2002. It is perhaps part of the reason why the international community is concerned.

2.3 The Recent JCPOA Agreement

Under the JCPOA, Iran would be subject to a limit of around 5,000 of the less advanced centrifuges at Natanz for a 10-year period compared to the 20,000 centrifuges of 2015. Iran's uranium stockpile will be significantly downgraded by 98% for 15 years and will retain its level of enrichment to around 3.5%. Research will be conducted at Natanz and be limited for almost a decade. Enrichment will not be authorised at Fordow for 15 years, with some of its facilities converted into a scientific research center. The centrifuges will be

used for medical purposes, agriculture, science and industry and this will be strictly enforced.

Iran agreed to alter their Arak reactor, so it will not be able to produce any weapons-grade plutonium. All spent fuel will be exported to other countries and most of the heavy water that the Arak facility produces will be relocated to the U.S. Only a small amount will be kept making isotopes for medical use. The JCPOA states that Iran will not be allowed to build any more reactors or store any excess heavy water for a decade and a half (JPCOA, 2015).

Inspectors from the IAEA will monitor Iran's declared nuclear sites and related fissile materials continuously. Iran has also agreed to allow inspectors entrance to any site they request access to. For 15 years, Iran will have little more than 3 weeks to comply with any such IAEA requests. Under the plan, Iran has agreed not to take part in any research and development that could assist in the development of an atomic weapon. The U.S believed (under the previous administration at least) that the JCPOA will halt the capability of Iran to develop a nuclear weapon and contribute to a renewed period of improved international security.

In return for compliance Iran will regain access to more than \$100 billion in assets that were previously denied access to. It will also be able to recommence selling oil to international markets. Should Iran violate any part of the agreement, sanctions would automatically resume for 10 years, with the possibility of extensions (JPCOA, 2015). A recent poll amongst the Iranian public showed that only 19% said they believed the U.S would continue to comply with the JCPOA (Al-monitor, 2016). This scepticism and uncertainty about the future of the deal is not limited to Iran. Contradictory statements from the current U.S administration as to whether the agreement would be revised or revoked altogetherraised questions about the future of the deal. A deal of such importance needs clarity in order to hold fast with the international community and Iran's regional neighbors. In the short term there was perhaps some cause for optimism but since the U.S withdrawal from the JCPOA the agreement looks extremely fragile.

3. WAR, INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY & REGIONAL RELATIONS

3.1 Iran and the Iraq War

To fully comprehend Iran and its relations with the world community it is wise to look at the background to Iran's atomic program in relation to Iraq and the lead in to war in 2003. The discussion over Iran's atomic program became prominent at about the same time as the U.S driven coalition set out on a war with Iraq in the Middle East. This highlighted concerns about other local regions such as Iran and their nuclear program. Iran and the West struggled with Iran's compliance of the responsibilities under the NPT. The ability of states to participate in atomic research for energy purposes against the scenario of perceived weapons of mass destruction in Iraq created a fragile political environment at that time.

These were not the only problems. There were other issues that influenced the way in which Iran's nuclear programme came to be a central issue on international security agendas. After the cold war, the Middle East and North Africa emerged as more strategically important and the Persian Gulf was perhaps seen as an unsettling and volatile region of the world.

The issue of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction pointed to possible failures of the IAEA to spot Iraq as a potential threat. The international community later discovered in the Chilcott report that mistakes had been made with intelligence. Some argue that the real purpose of the United States and the coalition was to remove the Iraqi dictator from power and create political change in the Middle East enabling greater control by Western powers (Lieberfeld, 2005). Many considered whether the same idea should be used against Iran. Iraq's international and regional isolation worked against it and Iran was perhaps viewed in the same way. This was exacerbated after the 911 terrorist attacks when countries identified by then president George Bush as 'the axis of evil' were Iran, Iraq and North Korea. The use of force was seen as a way to pre-

empt any problems arising with the uncertainties about weapons capabilities in the unstable regions of The Middle East.

Iraq was seen as a rogue state and it was deemed capable of constructing and using weapons of mass destruction against neighbouring states and even Western countries. Iraq was seen as a state that backed international terrorism and was said to be a haven for terror networks. It was seen as a threat to international security and against Israel and The Middle East peace process. It was therefore endangering the region's prospects for long-term peace and stability. Iraq was a major risk to international peace and security even after intervention. Iran was viewed in a similar way to Iraq and perhaps the failures of intervention in Iraq could be diverted by the start of a more focused international campaign toward Iran.

The knowledge that Iran's nuclear technology might be developing with the assistance of other countries, outside of the of the IAEA, intensified international concerns about Iran's possible threat. Concerns grew about the efficiency of the NPT and the IAEA's ability to make Iran meet the obligations of their agreements. While Iran insisted on its rights as an NPT member to access and make peaceful use of nuclear technologies and nuclear power, it was much less cooperative in explaining issues relating to the more unknown details of its programme. As previously mentioned, Tehran had not given access to some military sites which the IAEA suspects of having conducted nuclear weapons-related research. It also provided no viable reasons why it had plans for nuclear-weapons construction, or why its missiles programme had been experimenting with delivery systems related to nuclear warheads. Iran's inability to address its extensive uranium enrichment activities or explain its scale, fuelled international fears that Iran's enrichment effort was motivated by a desire to become a nuclear power.

The NPT issue was important for other reasons. North Korea had abandoned membership so that it could develop its nuclear weapons. India, Pakistan and Israel did not belong to it and perhaps the IAEA had to make the NPT more relevant to ensure that it remained credible (Iran Watch, 2003). If Iran was to withdraw from the NPT, it could signal nuclear intent and would therefore provoke strong responses from the U.S. and Israel. If Iran were to withdraw

from the NPT for some reason, it would be wise to announce its intention to rejoin the treaty as soon as the reason had been negated. Withdrawal from the NPT might undermine the effectiveness of the treaty and therefore it provides Iran with some bargaining power.

3.2 Iran and the International Community

The international community is an often-used phrase to refer, seemingly, to a broad group of countries, people and governments around the world. It is commonly used to infer the idea of a common point of view towards international matters on global issues. To the cynical, the use of the term ‘international community’ means - the United States its allies and the connected media of these collective states (Chomsky, 2012). Some academics such as Martin Jacques (2009) have suggested that the term is more specifically related to dominant Western powers rather than reflecting the democratically sourced views of the true global community as a whole. For this thesis the term applies to a selection of states whose views and opinions appear in academic literature related to the crisis with Iran and who have vocally expressed a view in the media. This in no way suggests that other opinions and viewpoints do not exist.

Israel’s opinion of Iran’s nuclear program is perhaps the most apparent and vocal from a regional viewpoint. According to Israel Iran’s nuclear programme has a single main aim which is the development of nuclear-weapons capability. Israel continues to fear that Iran’s program aims for the total destruction of Israel. This is supported by the often quoted (but open to accusations of misinterpretation) speech by Iran’s Ahmadinejad to ‘wipe Israel off the map’. Israel sees Iran’s nuclear programme as aimed at an attempt to achieve domination of the region. Any such achievement could encourage other countries such as Egypt and Turkey to also develop their own nuclear capability fearing that a nuclear Iran would be dangerous and a threat to regional security (Salama and Hilal, 2006).

3.3 Policy Options Toward Iran

Internationally there are few places where the Iran nuclear debate has been more prolific than in Israel and the United States. The main opinions center around the use or non-use of force. Those in Israel and in the U.S arguing for aggressive action against Iran see it as a dangerous country whose regime will do anything it can to secretly gain nuclear weapons and potentially destroy other countries (Martel and Pendley, 1998). They point to religion and ideology and consider Iran a huge danger to international stability. Pre-emptive military action is the only way of stopping Iran from achieving these nefarious goals. A strike on Iran is the only way of dealing with wider problems in the region and a strike now will avoid a more serious war. Some opinions posit that a strike now while Iran is weaker is better than to wait until a time in the future when it has nuclear capability. Provocative language is often used with examples of timescales on how many months or years Iran is from obtaining a weapon.

Others argue against military action and are equally confident in their reasons, arguing that Iran is influential, militarily capable and that if it is struck, it would cause trouble across the region and further (Kreps, 2008). They say there is no urgency and a strike now would be bound to result in an increase in Iranian supported actions of aggression against targets in the West, similar to those that occurred in Europe in the past. Additionally, a strike against Iran would provoke immediate retaliation towards Israel in order to make the war regional rather than isolated against Iran. War would not be a wise course of action as the consequences would be unknown and would potentially have far reaching consequences (Huntingdon and Brzezinski, 2007). Consequences would surely include the possibility of a world war, perhaps allying Russia and China with Iran. This could occur whether Iran gains nuclear capability or not. It seems to be the perception of a threat that is more important than the existence of one. An example of such a scenario can be seen in the Iraq war where the perceived existence of weapons of mass destruction were the catalyst for war but were never discovered.

War might benefit the Iranian elite and provide them with the opportunity to strengthen their power and influence in the regime and in society as a whole.

Any military action on Iran would alter the dynamics of the region and make it less predictable in an already volatile and unstable region. Action would perhaps further radicalise elements of the population. It might also provide impetus for radical Islamist forces in Syria and set back plans for democratic reform (Sahimi, 2005).

The results of a strike could be high inflation and an atmosphere of instability around the world. A strike by the U.S could mean major isolation for the United States on the global arena. Oil availability and cost would rise dramatically after a strike, despite other producer's efforts to saturate the market with more supplies. The world economy would not be healthy enough to be able to deal with such events. The negative economic consequences of war could last a long time and be devastating. They would add to global uncertainty and international insecurities. An attack against another country in The Middle East by the West would also further deteriorate relations with the Islamic world (Huntingdon and Brzezinski, 2007).

For Russia, Iran has proved itself useful as an ally by helping to promote stability in the Central Asian regions and those surrounding the Caspian Sea. It has assisted in regional affairs and helped combat terrorism. Russia also has certain economic interests such as providing nuclear fuel for Iranian nuclear power plants and various military contracts. These are likely to become even more lucrative following the recent deal with Iran. From the Russian perspective, the Iranian nuclear program represents a less serious threat than that seen by other states but is a threat nonetheless. A nuclear capable Islamic regime so close to Russia could weaken their influence in former USSR regions as well as destabilising the situation in the Middle East. These fears have caused Moscow to revise aspects of its cooperation with Tehran. For example, Russia rejected Iran's efforts to obtain licenses for the production of Russian weapons in Iran (Washington Institute, 2012).

In general, however, Russia has tried to act as an obstacle to placing sanctions on Iran as they can damage trade between the two nations. Russia frequently disputes evidence that Iran is conducting nuclear weapons research. In November 2011 when the IAEA claimed that Tehran displayed signs of attempting to construct a nuclear weapon, Russia accused the agency of being

biased and not helping create a solution. Russian leaders may not be certain as to whether authorities in Iran are intending to create a nuclear weapon, but they believe that the Iranians are unable to produce such a weapon at the moment. Russia may view some of the more antagonistic behaviour from Iran as efforts to enhance bargaining conditions with western powers (W.I, 2012).

When it comes to China, sanctions by western countries on Iranian oil and other products have affected Chinese interests. China would like to see the lifting of economic sanctions on Iran as they have caused great financial loss to Chinese companies with investments there. China is one of the largest purchasers of oil from the Middle East and is focused on trade and investment as a means for helping to modernize and mutually affect both Middle Eastern and Chinese economies. Avoiding conflict and ensuring energy security are therefore China's main interests when it comes to Iran. Additionally, the establishment of guidelines for Iran's nuclear program could have significant implications for China. The guidelines could become part of an international standard that could apply to other non-nuclear-weapon states seeking nuclear weapon capabilities. If the recent Iranian deal can be maintained between the P5+1 countries and Iran, and if China can be seen to be participating then the U.S may become less anxious about China's future relationships with Middle Eastern countries (Center of Global Policy, 2015).

The Iranian regime has gained some popularity for displaying resistance to international pressure regarding its nuclear program. The power of nationalism has assisted in pushing forward its negotiations with the international community and also limiting the regime's power. The population have made significant sacrifices as a result of international sanctions and there will be a feeling that these sacrifices should reap some kind of reward. The UNSC sanctions and those of the E.U and the U.S have raised inflation and therefore increased the cost of housing, transportation, travel and general lifestyle (Okumu, (2007). During the same period, sanctions have had financial benefits for those involved in the black market, such as the revolutionary guard.

The Iranian political system does not correspond to the Western one, which is why the West, through sanctions, is seeking a change in the country. Perspectives of the development of Iran's political system to a large extent will

depend on external factors. In the light of Iran's talks with the P5 + 1 and lifting of sanctions, potential economic recovery, and the normalization of relations with Western countries, perhaps there will be greater openness from Iran which could lead to the liberalization of public life.

3.4 Regional Relations with Iran

The ongoing evolution of Iran's nuclear program is constantly affecting the foreign policies of neighbouring Middle Eastern countries, such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Since the start of the Islamic revolution up to the election of President Ahmadinejad, their relationships with Iran have changed very little. Both countries considered Iran as a threat to the region and believed that the nuclearization of Iran would affect their security. This could lead other regional powers to seek weapons of mass destruction to keep the balance of power. It is perhaps up to existing nuclear powers on the world stage to lead by example and pursue a decommissioning of nuclear weapons and encourage action on other nation states to do the same.

After the elections in 2005, the strategies of neighbouring states for dealing with the Iranian nuclear issue have altered. The Egyptian government has begun to act with more disapproval to sanctions or any military action against Tehran while it seeks to restore ties with the Iranian regime (Khaleej Times, 2007). Saudi Arabia, in contrast, has continued its hostile position towards the region. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia feels anxiety about the increasing influence of Iran in the region. The source of the rivalry between Tehran and Riyadh can be found in politics and religion and a nuclear arming of Iran could well be the catalyst for a regional confrontation (Roston, 2007).

Before the 1979 revolution, Saudi Arabia and Egypt had positive diplomatic relations with Iran. Relations became more complex, after the Shah was overthrown in 1979 during the revolution. Saudis and Egyptians were concerned that the revolution would proliferate and affect the whole region. They also had anxiety about Iranian support for Islamic extremists. Iran served as a half way house for the Mujahideen, who concentrated their attention on fighting the Arab regimes after fighting in Afghanistan. These activities supported by the Iranian regime destabilized Sudan which intensified hostility towards Iran. In the Iraq-

Iran war, Saudi Arabia and Egypt assisted Iraq diplomatically and politically to lessen the power of the Iranian regime.

The Saudis are anxious about Iran's hostility towards the monarchies that control oil in the Gulf, particularly Saudi Arabia. Saudi newspaper Elaph reported that King Abdullah requested that Iran curtail its nuclear ambitions and called on the West to act more cautiously toward it (Al Monitor, 2016). Bilateral relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have been tense concerning different issues such as interpretations of Islam, ambitions for leadership of the Islamic world, policy on oil exports and ties with the U.S and other Western countries. Although Saudi Arabia and Iran are both mostly Muslim majority nations and follow Islamic scripture, their relations are often confrontational, due to differences in political agendas and differences in faith. Saudi Arabia is a right-wing conservative Sunni Islamic kingdom with a tradition of close links with the U.S and Europe. Iran is a Shia Islamic Republic founded in an anti-Western revolution with much closer ties to Russia and China. Both Saudi Arabia and Iran are viewed as having ambitions for leadership of Islam and have different viewpoints on stability and regional plans (Al Monitor, 2016). It is inevitable that this tug of war between regional nations will affect how the Iranian nuclear crisis is viewed from the perspectives of different states, regionally and internationally.

More recently there have been developments in the relationship between Egypt and Iran. There have been diplomatic talks to improve relationships during increasing tensions over the Iranian nuclear issue. Egypt and Iran hope to improve dialogue to prevent any future military attacks on Iran's facilities and create instability in the region. Egyptian State Information Service said that Foreign Minister Ahmed Abul Gheit stated that Egypt wanted to improve relations with Iran through constructive talks (ESIS, 2007). The statement was made following meetings with Iranian and Egyptian foreign ministers. It was also stated that the two countries had agreed to promote relations at a high level followed by relations at the foreign ministry.

Saudi Arabia appears not to be convinced by Iran's dialogue with Egypt and has not communicated any intention of repairing relations with Iran. The Saudis may be anxious about Iran's hostility towards the powers that control Gulf oil

reserves, especially Saudi Arabia. The Saudi newspaper Elaph recently reported that King Abdullah has requested that Iran curtail its nuclear ambitions and urged Western powers to treat Iran with more caution. During a visit to Germany in 2007, the Saudi King said that Iran's nuclear program is intended for peaceful use and so the Saudis do not see any reason for confrontation or escalation of the issue (Iitidal, 2007).

Saudi Arabia is presently trying to manage Iran and isolate its influence in preference to restoring relations. The Saudis believe that Iran is attempting to achieve its ambitions of regional leadership through its nuclear program.

Egyptian attitudes toward Iran's nuclear program are mixed. While it seems that the regime is ultimately against a nuclear armed Iran, a significant amount of Egyptian people supports Iran and its desire to become a nuclear power. Some believe that the American policy in the Middle East is mostly influenced by its support for Israel. Iran and Syria are the only countries in the region that can stand up to the U.S and Israel. The Egyptian public are not happy that the U.S. ignores the Israeli nuclear program. They also see inequality with Israel being the only country to have nuclear weapons in the region (Christiani, 2006). Despite this 80% of Egyptians responding to a poll in 2010 indicated that they saw at least some level of threat from the Iranian nuclear program (see Diagram B). This was echoed by pollsters in Jordan and Lebanon in the same poll. Similar polls taken in Saudi Arabia led to results supporting stronger sanctions (see Diagram C).

Egypt fears that the Iran nuclear crisis will lead to a military confrontation with the U.S. or Israel. This would increase Islamic militancy and weaken the domestic policy of the Egyptian regime. The Muslim Brotherhood, which is currently barred from being a political party, could achieve popular success within society. Egypt also wants to sustain an acting role as a major force to be reckoned with in the Middle East peace process. After wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Palestine and Lebanon, the effectiveness of Egyptian diplomacy is open to doubt. The failure of Egypt to prevent Iran gaining nuclear capability would have a major effect on the Israeli/Palestine situation. It would increase tensions between Iran and Israel, which would weaken Egypt's role in the region by making the negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis far more complicated.

A large number of Egyptians and Saudis have voiced their concerns about the vulnerabilities of the NPT and declared that it does not seem to be catering to Arab interests. It did not succeed in disarming Israel and forcing it to join the treaty as a non-nuclear state. The requests from Egypt and Saudi Arabia to create a W.M.D free zone in The Middle East have not been successful (Nuclear Threat Initiative, 2006). However, if Iran becomes a nuclear power, it is quite possible that Egypt would leave the NPT. The regional ambitions of Iran are clear to some in Egypt and Saudi. The rivalry between the two main Arab capitals for control over the Middle East is fierce. As the Gulf displays more anxiety about the Iranian nuclear program than Egypt, officials may fear that Saudi Arabia could go nuclear with the help of Pakistan as a precaution.

Egypt is aware of the close relationships between Pakistan and Saudi in regard to nuclear cooperation. Both these countries see an international community that is moving from non-proliferation to the the spread of nuclear weapons. An article in Cicero, a German magazine, claims that a number of Saudi scientists have been employed in Pakistan's nuclear facilities since the middle of the 1990's (Salama, 2006).

Saudi's Sunni Wahabi Muslim leaders believe that it is difficult to halt the Iranian Shi'ite regime from achieving its nuclear ambitions. To deal with perceived regional threats, the Saudis could decide to move ahead and accept the nuclear assistance of Pakistan in exchange for discounted Saudi oil (Nuclear Threat Initiative, 2006). The Iranian and Saudi Arabian reaction to geopolitical threats may have a profound effect on international security regimes, even if such actions are believed by both countries as measures to balance the power and create stability in The Middle East.

There were also reports that Egypt had been involved in secretive nuclear activities. In January 2005, the IAEA stated that it had found evidence that Egypt had completed nuclear experiments that could be used to develop a nuclear weapon (NPT, 2005). Unlike Egypt, Saudi Arabia does not hold ambitions to join the Security Council. Nonetheless, the maintenance of its regional leadership remains critical for the Saudi presence in the Middle East. Perhaps Iranian power is increasing in the region. Tehran is involved in three primary conflicts in the Middle East. Firstly, it has firm connections with

Hezbollah, which Iran uses as a way to destabilize Israel and to increase its influence in Lebanon. Secondly, Iran is involved in the conflict between Israel and Palestine through its support of Hamas. Thirdly, Iran's influence now is more present in Iraq due to its religious and traditional relationships with the Shi'a community. In all of these significant situations, Saudi Arabia has been using all its diplomatic and economic efforts to lessen the influence of the Iranian regime on the Shi'a community in the Gulf states and in Iraq (Fattah and Fathi, 2007). Saudi newspapers and Wahabi religious leaders urge caution regarding the Persian threat and consider Iran a danger to Saudi interests, internal stability, and the Muslim community as a whole. During Al Hajj periods, Iran allegedly provides encouragement to some of its pilgrims to cause disturbances in the holy places of Mecca to destabilize the Saudi forces. They regularly call on Muslims to overthrow the Saudi family, seize its oil wealth, and threaten its role as defender of Islamic holy places (International Health Tribune, 2006). Saudi officials always emphasise that the Iranian regime established by the Shi'a clerics is not easy to approach. They use their media to portray Iran in a poor light. The increase in power of Iran may already be causing internal conflicts within Saudi Arabia. Criticism within the Wahabi regime, the political competition between the Saudi family members, and the problems of Riyadh to confront Iran are all issues that may lead Saudi to assess its foreign policies to secure its role as one of the major Middle Eastern powers (Nuclear Threat Initiative, 2007).

A nuclear Iran would lessen the influence that Saudi and Egyptian have as allies of the U.S in the Middle East. Many Arab countries believe that in addition to the Iranian crisis, Israel's nuclear arsenal is also a cause for anxiety. If Saudi Arabia and Egypt found themselves surrounded by nuclear armed Israel and Iran, it would greatly increase the motivation on them to seek other security options. Egypt would be in a very risky situation. It might develop a secret nuclear program but the political consequences of doing so would be significant. The U.S. might decrease its yearly financial support to Egypt. Cairo would also lose its credibility in the view of its fellow African countries. It is unlikely that Saudi would develop its own nuclear capabilities, but it could look into the possibility of obtaining nuclear weapons technology from elsewhere.

This could lead the Middle East to a regional arms race which is likely to be destabilizing for the international community as well as locally. Efforts to stop the spread of nuclear weapons would collapse if multiple states chose to go nuclear at the same time.

Turkey has not played along with western efforts which are perceived by some as seeking to make Iran the enemy and paint it as a global threat to security. On the contrary, Turkey has voiced its opinions that Iran has the right to develop nuclear capabilities for peaceful purposes. There are good reasons why Turkey has been attempting to improve relations with Iran. Firstly, Iran is a major supplier of natural gas to Turkey. Secondly, Turkish and Iranian people share a mutual cultural and historical relationship. Additionally, it is believed that cooperation with Iran is a key factor to prevent and resolve existing crises in the region. Turkey has also suffered directly and indirectly from western sanctions administered in the region following the Iraq war.

Turkey therefore has a vested interest in the resolution of the Iranian nuclear crisis. Turkey has settled into a mediatory role for the West and the Islamic world and the Turkish AK Party is opposed to Iran's development of nuclear weapons. It does believe though that sanctions and military action are not helpful and only strengthen the resolve of Iranian regime. For the moment, Turkey is interested in maintaining its role in diplomatic negotiations to ensure that an American or Israeli military attack is kept at bay (Güney, 2011). From a Turkish perspective, the potential danger caused by a nuclear capable Iran is not as serious as the regional catastrophe that could ensue if the United States or Israel were to attack Iran. This is an example of how the Iranian nuclear crisis differs considerably according to the perspective of a particular state.

The regional ambitions of Iran are most likely aimed at becoming a geopolitical rival. For some regional neighbors, more than others, Iran remains a credible security threat. Therefore, it is prudent to alleviate the situation through negotiations.

4. PROLIFERATION, SECURITY & IMPLICATIONS OF WEAPONS

4.1 The Spread of Nuclear Weapons

Speculation has always existed as to how near Iran is to acquire a nuclear weapon and this of course assumes that Iran wants to be a nuclear power. Instead of preventing it, there are those that advocate that allowing states to become nuclear is a better course of action. Kenneth Waltz (1981) believes spreading nuclear weapons would be more likely to encourage a more stable Middle East than to spread conflict.

Waltz said that nuclear weapons had reduced the possibility of conflict amongst the main superpowers and that nuclear weapons had been a major force for creating unity since the second world war. Nuclear weapons make less powerful states behave more cautiously. States are aware that other nuclear states can retaliate with their own weapons. Waltz argued that a spread of nuclear weapons to smaller powers could stimulate stability in previously volatile areas. Use of nuclear weapons would be controlled by the U.S. and the Soviet Union who would never let the balance of power be dramatically altered.

Waltz suggests that nuclear proliferation helps expand acknowledgement of the risks and dangers of nuclear war to more countries. He goes on to predict that no regime would risk disaster and the spread of nuclear weapons therefore makes conflict less likely. If nuclear deterrent was to fail, then launching just a few of these weapons would bring about quick de-escalation and would not necessarily lead to escalation into further nuclear strikes.

Waltz suggested that military action to try and stop states obtaining nuclear capability could be ineffective because it would only increase the resolve of countries to become more powerful. Waltz argues letting Iran achieve its nuclear aims could be a way to stabilise the region. If Iran gains nuclear capability then Iran and Israel will deter each other, as nuclear powers have often done in the past. Waltz believes that no other country in the region will

have a reason to go nuclear after Iran and the current crisis will finally disappear. This will lead to a more stable Middle East (Waltz, 2012).

This spread of nuclear weapons is an important area of study of international relations and security. There is an ongoing debate about whether nuclear proliferation increases the risk of war. Most analysts think that nuclear war will become more likely as more states go nuclear and there are many good reasons to believe this. If more states have nuclear weapons, the possibility that a particular leader might use them would logically increase. This would also include the possibility of accidental use as well as due to deliberate use during conflict. The spread of nuclear weapons also provides greater opportunity that components of such weapons would be stolen and used to make a weapon that could be detonated in a major city somewhere in the world. These concerns have become magnified since the attacks of September 11th in New York (Samuel, 2012). A state's desire for nuclear weapons can be a source of tension even when the efforts are not successful. A state that fears that an enemy is developing nuclear weapons may launch preventive attacks against its enemy's nuclear facilities. An example of this happened in 1981 when Israel attacked an Iraqi nuclear reactor at Osirak and again later launched an attack at another Syrian nuclear plant in 2007. Many analysts believe that the U.S. or Israel might attack sites related to Iran's nuclear program. This provides motivation for other states in the region to seek to increase their military power and even try to obtain nuclear weapons themselves as they may feel threatened by a conflict occurring nearby.

The main effort to limit nuclear proliferation is the 1968 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). The NPT requires that countries without nuclear weapons do not try to obtain them (See diagram D). It acknowledges that states without nuclear weapons have a right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, provided that they accept the procedures detailed by the IAEA. The NPT also requires nuclear weapon states should try to decommission or even get rid of their nuclear arsenals altogether. Many academics argue that states seek nuclear weapons because they can provide them with a counter threat to any aggressive act towards their country. Nuclear weapons may be the best means of deterring attacks whether it be with nuclear or conventional weapons. This explanation of

nuclear proliferation implies that states will be less likely to go nuclear and may even reduce their nuclear arsenal if they feel no threat to their security.

Other analysts and academics focus more on domestic explanations for nuclear proliferation. They argue that outside threats on security are usually less important than internal issues. For example, the nuclear scientists in a country often will have an incentive to maximise the resources required for their programs. Nuclear policy can also be inspired by public opinion. A leader experiencing low popularity may try to improve their ratings by testing a nuclear weapon (Montgomery, 2005).

If nuclear weapons are seen as unacceptable and there is major opposition to acquiring them, fewer states are likely to seek them as an option. Many observers believe that the NPT has fostered a negative attitude towards nuclear weapons. External incentives may influence domestic factors. States that seek nuclear weapons may face economic sanctions and lose entitlement to aid. Whether a state is attracted to these external incentives may depend on its integration into global markets, and its overall structure. Some analysts also argue that states that are able to get nuclear materials are more likely to obtain nuclear weapons.

The policies chosen to limit proliferation mirror an understanding of proliferation's causes. If states seek nuclear weapons because they want to improve their domestic security, the logical nonproliferation policies include promises by major powers to defend weaker states, and not use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states. If a specific interest group is driving a states desire for nuclear weapons, external support for other groups may be the best way to stop proliferation. Unifying against nuclear weapons and nuclear proliferation may affect the political assessments of a large number of states that might otherwise decide to seek the nuclear weapons option (Sagan, 1994). The NPT and other aspects of the existing nuclear nonproliferation regime include many elements of these policies. Understanding and preventing nuclear proliferation needs to start with analysis of the reasons states seek to get nuclear weapons.

There are those that argue that states seek to obtain nuclear weapons because they are threatened by the nuclear arsenals of other states that are within range of them. The Soviet Union felt the need to develop nuclear weapons after the U.S. nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Britain and France responded in turn to the Soviet threat by acquiring nuclear force. China was first threatened by the U.S. and again later by the Soviet Union. This provided multiple reasons to construct its own weapon. India reacted to China's nuclear weapons program by starting its own program. This then prompted Pakistan to seek the bomb. This security model explains nuclear restraint as a reply to the lessening of threats. Argentina and Brazil used this reasoning and ended their nuclear programs as they felt that they were no longer a threat to each other. The insecurity of international politics makes it highly likely that more states will desire nuclear weapons. Opinions about the positives or negatives of the spread of nuclear weapons strongly influence how one views the Iranian nuclear crisis from a security perspective.

The domestic politics model subscribes to the idea that obtaining nuclear weapons can serve the interests of domestic groups and institutions such as energy establishments, the armed forces and politicians. Whereas the security model focuses on the importance of threats as initiators of nuclear programs, the domestic politics model views these threats as influenced by opportunity. An example is South Africa which started its nuclear program in the 70's. Used initially for mining, nuclear devices were produced by South Africa's nuclear groups without involving the military. South Africa made the decision to dismantle its nuclear weapons when external threats to South Africa were reduced. Domestic issues also may have played a role when Argentina and Brazil decided not to obtain nuclear weapons in the 80's. This was despite there being no reduction in external security concerns. Argentina may have had more incentive to develop nuclear weapons after its unsuccessful conflict with Great Britain, which was a nuclear power. Both Argentina and Brazil decided to ignore the nuclear weapon option because they were controlled by parties that did not want to endanger access to international markets.

The norms model believes that states make policy about nuclear weapons according to believed standards and norms about accepted international

behavior. Nuclear weapons are symbols of a state's identity, not for national security. Whether a state seeks or does not wish for nuclear weapons may depend on already existing international norms. International regimes and the positions of the leading powers influence beliefs about what behaviour is legitimate and responsible. Nuclear norms have altered over time and The NPT contributed to the arrival of new norms against nuclear weapons. The situations of Ukraine and France show the changes in nuclear norms since the 1950's. According to the norms theory, France sought nuclear weapons because it believed that owning such a weapon would demonstrate France's status as a power to be reckoned with. Nuclear weapons would make France appear stronger on the international stage. France began to seek nuclear weapons even before its confrontation with the Soviet Union in the 1956 Suez crisis. For President Charles de Gaulle, the atomic bomb was firstly a symbol of French might, not a deterrent against aggression. Ukraine, in contrast, decided to get rid of the nuclear arsenal it had acquired after the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991. This decision does not seem to follow the security model's focus on how states rely on nuclear weapons to react to threats. Ukraine's rejection of nuclear weapons was first linked to its quest for independence. Ukraine lobbied for international support to leave the Soviet Union by stating that it would be neutral state without being a nuclear nation. It did not want to be regarded as a dangerous state. U.S. policies that provided economic support for Ukraine, on condition of denuclearization, also played a part.

The 'democratic peace' argument holds that democracies are less likely to go to war with each another. Democratic political systems are supposed to more trustworthy and have some transparency than more authoritarian states. These characteristics may make democracies more likely to join nuclear regimes. The factors that maintain peace among democracies may not explain if democracies join nuclear regimes or not. In most cases, including the NPT and international regimes consist of democracies and non-democracies. According to Solingen, political freedom therefore does not seem useful or well judged for the rise of a nuclear regime. She also suggests that the democratic peace has been mostly amongst advanced industrial democracies as opposed to developing countries. Lessons from the experience of these more advanced countries may not be so

applicable to more unstable democracies. Democracies can still assist in contributing to the nuclear programs and resulting situations of other countries nevertheless. In South Africa, U.S. peaceful nuclear assistance assisted in starting the country's nuclear weapons program. The United States helped construct a reactor, provided enriched uranium, and training. South Africa's atomic energy institutions made progress and acquired political influence. Israel was able to construct a nuclear weapon far quicker because France assisted in reprocessing and Norway, the U.K and the U.S supplied heavy water. North Korea received technical assistance and a reactor research purposes from the Soviet Union in the 1950's (Beardsley, 2008). It then used the information it gained to develop a nuclear device.

Ukraine and Kazakhstan both had nuclear weapons when they achieved independence in 1991, but they had not constructed these weapons themselves and had restricted control over them before they were moved to Russia. South Africa was influenced by international pressure to bring about the end of their nuclear program. De Klerk thought that dismantling South Africa's nuclear weapons and joining the NPT would gain valuable political and economic support for its efforts to change its political system. Liberman (2001) observes that South Africa's nuclear disarmament ties in with theories about liberalization and nuclear restraint. He states that the organisational politics theory might well explain the expansion of South Africa's nuclear capability but does not explain the reasons behind constructing and then decommissioning nuclear weapons. Alterations in South Africa's security situations might explain their nuclear policy, but this is not the sole reason. International pressure and more open attitudes within the country also explain a few of the changes in policy. U.S. policies might also have played a part in influencing South Africa's actions toward a nuclear weapons program. The U.S. may have given security guarantees and provided career opportunities to South Africa's nuclear scientists. Sanctions may have also played a part.

Sometimes countries might want to make other regional powers think that they are near to obtaining nuclear capability (Rosenbaum, 2012). States may also attempt to gain security commitments from other states. There may be a national strategy of appearing to maintain an option for the potential to acquire nuclear

weapons. Many argue that the U.S. has played a central role in dissuading countries from creating a nuclear program by offering security guarantees as well as threatening sanctions or withdrawing aid. It could be argued that these policies have been partly successful in Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Japan, Egypt, South Africa, Taiwan and South Korea (See diagram D). In other countries, such as North Korea, India and Pakistan, these policies appear to have failed.

Nuclear terrorism is seen as a major threat by analysts and although many terrorists may not actively pursue nuclear weapons some groups such as al-Qaida have not tried to disguise their desire to obtain nuclear weapons for use against the United States and other enemies. Well funded terrorists have the potential to build a nuclear bomb of sorts if they have access to the nuclear material. This could be stolen from nuclear facilities in countries with a nuclear program. Pakistan and Russia are thought to be particularly vulnerable to theft. Terrorists could steal enriched uranium from research reactors internationally and criminal activity has been detected already. Once they have stolen or constructed a nuclear device, terrorists would possibly be able to take it covertly into the United States. Even a small detonation in a U.S. city would create catastrophe and mayhem. In spite of these fears, there is no current evidence that terrorists have managed to obtain the material required to make a nuclear weapon. Fortunately, there are many obstacles and technical problems to overcome in any attempt to build a bomb. Materials and knowledge are hard to come by. Security at sites around the world are improving, which makes it less likely that terrorists will have the opportunity to steal nuclear materials. The Global Threat Reduction Initiative (GTRI) has made progress in making sites more secure. Nevertheless, there are still states where security levels are unknown such as in China, India, and Pakistan.

Alexander Montgomery (2005) disagrees with claims that rogue states have speeded up the spread of nuclear weapons and are determined to build their own weapons. He suggests that administrations in favour of proliferation should hold back on their aggressive dialogue and their desire to overthrow the regimes of states such as Iran. Montgomery suggests using incentives and disincentives to stop states from going nuclear by negotiating directly with the so called rogue

states. Montgomery disputes that there is evidence of a rapid spread of nuclear weapons programs. He points out that, the The United Kingdom, Israel, France, India and the U.S are all democratic states and have also become nuclear states (See diagram D). Montgomery also urges for the United States to end its policy of attempting to usurp the regimes of potential nuclear weapons states. Similarly, to Waltz, he believes that attempting to isolate or contain the spread of nuclear weapons is likely to be counter productive. Montgomery recommends using incentives and disincentives such as sanctions in the case of Iran. He proposes rolling back the proliferation networks those states have created before it is so complex that it is impossible to untangle.

Others such as Raas and Long (2007) note that Iran's nuclear complex includes a number of sites throughout the country. Iran has argued that its nuclear facilities are parts of a civilian nuclear power program that will produce enough energy to meet Iran's future needs. Iran is developing uranium enrichment capabilities that could produce weapons-grade uranium, as well as a plutonium reactor and reprocessing facilities for spent fuel and for extraction of plutonium. Iran is building heavy water reactors and there may be additional facilities not known about. Raas and Long doubt that Iran has a comprehensive secret nuclear program running in parallel to their civilian one. If Israel really wished to hamper Iran's ability to build nuclear weapons, it would probably target facilities at Isfahan, Natanz and Arak. The uranium conversion and enrichment facilities are the most important for producing highly enriched uranium for nuclear weapons. Raas and Long do not believe Israel would launch strikes against the Bushehr reactor because it is not important enough in Iran's desire to gain nuclear weapons. Since the 1981 Osirak raid, the Israeli Air Force has added precisionguided munitions to its arsenal of weapons. This enables it to neutralise targets such as Iran's underground facilities at Natanz. Attacks from Israel would have less problems destroying facilities at Isfahan and Arak. Iran lacks an effective air defence system and its military systems are out dated and in need of repair. If the Israeli force consisted of strike aircraft of a reasonable number they would almost certainly be able to reach their target and deliver their munitions. Iranian air defenses would have to intercept less than half of the Israeli planes to prevent the attackers from delivering enough ordnance to

achieve their aims. It is not likely that Iran would be able to do this. Even if Iran downed more Israeli planes than expected and others malfunctioned, the remaining aircraft would be able to inflict significant damage on Iran's nuclear facilities.

It could be concluded that Israel has the capability to destroy even well armoured targets in Iraq without too much difficulty. Analysis suggests that guided weapons can be a useful tool against the spread of nuclear weapons if the relevant intelligence is available. Response to the spread of weapons should not be reliant on military actions alone. The spread of nuclear weapons could partly be seen as a deterrent and to maintain security. Some may feel that the question of disarmament is for another day, since many countries are not responsible or trustworthy enough for total global disarmament. One of the most important issues is that nuclear weapons do not fall into the hands of terrorist groups.

4.2 The Implications of Iran Possessing a Nuclear Weapon.

Kenneth Waltz and Scott Sagan looked into the likely consequences of the spread of nuclear weapons in their 1995 book 'The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A Debate'. Waltz stated that a counter strike nuclear capability is an effective means for a state to defend itself by using a nuclear response as a deterrent. Sagan raised the idea of the possibility of accidental or non authorised uses of nuclear weapons. The topic is relevant to the ongoing policy situation towards Iran, and whether Israel, the United States, or some combination of states should use preemptive strikes against Iran's suspected nuclear program. Outgoing President Obama stated recently, that U.S. policy was to do everything it could to prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon and creating an arms race in the region. If the international community believed that Iran possessed a nuclear weapon it would undoubtedly affect international policy towards the regime. Again, it would seem that the perceived threat of a state such as Iran acquiring nuclear weapons could become the reason for a conflict rather than preventing one. Waltz (2012) would argue that if Iran was known to have a nuclear weapon, it would not lead to catastrophe but also concedes that it is Israel's nuclear monopoly in the region that fuels much of the friction there.

Other academics too believe that a nuclear-armed Iran would not be likely to act much differently to how they do presently and would have no incentive to use its nuclear weapons in aggression. Attacks against Israeli or American targets would provide little benefit to Iran and have extreme consequences. The idea is that nuclear weapons are an effective deterrent that calm aggressive acts. According to this idea, the main benefit to Iran of acquiring nuclear weapons is only to deter military threats by its main enemies, Israel and the United States (Beardsley, 2008).

In contrast, a nuclear armed Iran could make threats that might gain it economic support and political advantages. Iran would be a significant threat to international peace and security. It could lead to further nuclear proliferation as other countries in the region would also seek nuclear weapons for their defense and to maintain the balance of power (Kreps, 2008). Iran's restraint in its foreign policy would likely change and it might step up support for terrorist groups and display a more aggressive foreign policy that would unsettle international peace. A nuclear Iran would influence U.S policy in the Middle East by providing a possible response to any U.S. involvement in the region. It would be far easier for a crisis in the region to escalate and result in nuclear war (Kroenig, 2010).

There is little doubt that Iran's possession of a nuclear weapon would significantly change stability in The Middle East, at least in the short-term. Whether it would change Iran's foreign policy is another matter. Since the 1979 revolution, Iran has been heavy on rhetoric sometimes but has been largely militarily inactive. There is an argument to say that Iran's policies have generally been calculated and rational. This could indicate that Iran would not necessarily be quick to use nuclear weapons should they acquire them. Iran's leaders would like to remain in power and they want their regime to continue. A nuclear armed Iran would be more impervious to attack and might require Iran to increase support for armed groups. Additionally, possession of a nuclear weapons would be likely to result in Iran's isolation from the international community which would not be desirable. Iran would therefore be likely to use any advantages of possessing a nuclear weapon in a way that would not significantly increase its international isolation even further. The Islamic

Republic does not intend to self-destruct, and nuclear weapons would not change that (Samuel, 2012).

There is historical evidence to suggest that Iran would achieve very little just by possessing a few nuclear weapons. Such weapons are not particularly useful for forcing other nations to comply with demands. This can be seen in the case of Israel which did not gain the ability to control other countries in the region when it obtained nuclear weapons. The same can be seen with China, North Korea and other powers that obtained nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons have never proved to be useful tools of coercion. Nuclear threats lack credibility. If they are used against an enemy it would result in international isolation and unify other powers against it. Nuclear weapons are effective tools of self-defense – to deter another country using them against other nuclear states (Fuhrmann, 2009). If nuclear weapons are only as a deterrent, then this could also be the case for any state having other types of military superiority. The danger of nuclear weapons being used due to a breakdown in communication between states or by accident adds credence to implementing moves to abolish them from the international stage. Conventional weapons can cause collateral damage but nuclear weapons by their nature tend to result in large numbers of civilian casualties and so they may be a deterrent that is not worth the cost.

4.3 Defining International Security

To understand the nuclear Crisis with Iran from an international security perspective it is important to define what is meant by ‘international security’ The term has attracted many definitions over the course of academic studies. The definition of international security is open to cultural bias and influence by ideology. Despite the difficulty in defining what it is, security is a factor that has become a driving force in international situations such as in the Iranian nuclear crisis. In the name of security, governments have taken actions where the results have become difficult to contain. Due to its lack of exact definition, security is used to encourage support for many political situations, both regionally and at international levels (Miller, 1994).

With security, it is quite commenting to create distinctions between national and global security. Although, there is a difference, it is not so vast a difference.

Issues of global and regional security interact and evolve. There are issues at the international level that may need domestic security administrations to deal with them. National security has been described as the ability of a state to deal with the protection and defence of its citizens. Global security has evolved from the demands that globalization, amongst other factors have placed on states. These are demands that no national security has the ability to cope with alone and therefore calls for the cooperation of countries. The global interdependence among states that the world has experienced and continues to experience in the cold war period, makes it a necessity for states to cooperate more.

One of the main challenges with the field of global security are situations in which the security concerns of states are interconnected to the level that a state's security needs cannot be catered for without also considering the security requirements of other states. The threat content of this 'security complex' creates competition among other states. This is true of The Middle East and the Iranian situation with its nuclear program. The solution for such competition can be seen in cooperation which can only be discovered in global security initiatives between states (Gibson, 2015).

It has become a requirement for states to make concerted efforts towards establishing links with other states and to engage in international security initiatives. OCHA (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs) expanded definition of security calls for a wide variety of security areas such as creation of employment and measures against poverty, efforts toward containment of problems related to hunger and famine. It also includes measures against disease and lack of access to normal levels of health care. In addition, it calls for measures against environmental damage, depletion of resources, natural disasters and pollution. As well as this there should be actions taken against crime, terrorism, domestic violence and abuses in the labour market. It also details measures against religious tensions, political suppression and abuses against basic human rights. A critical analysis of these OCHA human security measures makes global security an important exercise to analyse. There are many states where the capacity to deal with issues of unemployment are severely lacking. The same relates to food provisions and issues such as crime and health care.

Apart from deliberate human activities, another area of concern is the consequences of internal conflicts, which include issues with refugees and other problems which go beyond geographical situations. Disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction are other areas that make global cooperation important. The development of nuclear weapons has become a major threat to national and global security and this is demonstrated by the Iranian example. The hard-line taken by many states towards disarmament requires the development of morals that can only be reinforced by cooperation at a global level (Gibson, 2005).

It might be true that states are rivals. To a great extent, there seems to be a lack of trust on the global stage. It could be that the cold war never ended but just changed in nature. There have been suggestions that world leaders continue to act as if security of their respective states is dependant on military power continues to be credible in the present day. His advice that states need to develop a new spirit of mutual understanding is important and valid. There is an urgent need for states understand that the only safe plan of action is one in which the well-being and security of each is looked at from an international security perspective. Global security is best achieved when it is planned and constructed in a way that is good for the many rather than just the few (McSweeney, 2009).

The international community stands to gain from better cooperation between states. Greater interaction will help build trust and confidence. As can be seen with the Iranian nuclear situation, national and regional security breakdowns are a global security problem. Therefore, it is in the interest of all that no national security challenge is able to deteriorate into a serious conflict. As mentioned before in this thesis – a perceived threat is often all that is needed for conflict. It could be argued that neither the possession or the limitation of states having nuclear weapons is the solution – but rather that steps be taken for the total abolition of nuclear weapons on the world stage.

5. ANALYSIS & DEAL IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 The Effectiveness of the Agreement between Iran and P5+1

After almost 2 years of negotiations, on 14 July 2015 Iran and the P5+1—the five permanent members of the Security Council agreed on a deal designed to limit Iran’s nuclear enrichment program and prevent it from gaining nuclear weapons capability. In return Iran would get relief from the sanctions that have been stifling its economy over the course of the most recent decade. Iran now has the capacity to return to the international community and take advantage of all the benefits and opportunities that brings.

The deal helped Obama and his administration be able to quote the deal as a significant achievement and point to it as one reason Obama’s Nobel peace prize might not be such a questionable award. The deal could also avert a possible nuclear arms race between Iran and its regional neighbours such as Saudi Arabia. For decades these two nations have tried to gain regional superiority. Halting any potential nuclear threat would prevent the likelihood that local rivalries could escalate into nuclear conflict. Israel too could benefit from the agreement even though the current government would not be keen to admit it. The restrictions imposed on Iran’s nuclear programme could ensure the security of Israel for at least the next decade. If Iran’s nuclear threat does dissipate, there would be less need for Israel’s nuclear deterrence and they might not deserve to be the only country in the Middle East exempted by the U.S from joining the NPT. If the nuclear threat from Iran disappears perhaps Israel would have less leverage with the U.S and Iran might be more of a threat as an emerging economic power in the region.

The implications and effectiveness of the nuclear deal with Iran are now far more uncertain with the recent U.S withdrawal from the agreement. The election of Rouhani in 2013, a more moderate leader who seemed to seek relief from the economic sanctions imposed upon Iran made the possibility of a deal much

easier to implement. It has not been made so easy by the attitude of the Israeli leadership and the U.S congress who continue to see Iran as totally untrustworthy, demonstrated by the recent U.S withdrawal which will be discussed in more detail in the final chapters of this thesis.

Supporters of the agreement in the international community have a shared belief that the deal has made the world safer by removing the materials and means for Iran to build a nuclear weapon (Einhorn, 2016). They point to the level of access now granted to IAEA inspectors, and the election of more moderate candidates in Iran's most recent election cycle as signs of positive development. Most other observers of the deal would at least agree that Iran had complied with its obligations under the agreement so far. It remains to be seen if this will continue to be the case after the U.S withdrawal from the agreement.

Proponents also point to Iran's increased expenditure on international markets as a sign of further positive progress. There have been investments in infrastructure and commercial aerospace markets. An order for 100 Airbus aircraft immediately followed the lifting of sanctions against Iran, and in late June of 2016 Iran placed an order for 80 Boeing airliners (USNI, 2016).

Critics of the agreement in the U.S continued to voice their concerns about the nuclear deal (Einhorn, 2016). Many focused on what would happen when the terms of the JCPOA expired in 10-15 years. Others point to evidence of Iran still supporting forces opposed to the U.S in Israel, Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen. Still more critics in the U.S contend that expected social reforms such as press freedoms have not transpired and more significant social reforms should have been demanded from Iran. This would perhaps have been difficult to implement in a nation as large, complicated, and politically fractious as Iran.

There were also positive implications of the deal for Israel and Iran itself. Many of the problems in The Middle East have been difficult to resolve as a result of the lack of communication between the U.S and Iran. The Obama administration understood that a relationship with Iran could help the United States resolve problems and turn its attention towards Asia. Tensions will likely be reduced across the region with the United States, the EU and the Gulf States, and this

could lead to a mutual effort against ISIS and other terrorist elements. A deal would help stabilise the region and repair ties between Sunni and Shia.

Iran could also use its influence in Syria to assist with a solution to the problems there and try to pressure Hamas to seek peace with Israel. Tehran has provided training to many Palestinian militants and provided a large amount of the weaponry used against Israel (Iran Primer, 2016). They might be persuaded to halt their support or be part of negotiations with the militants.

For Shiite Iran, the Palestinian groups are among its most important Sunni allies. The lifting of sanctions against Iran could help promote positive relations with other emerging powers which had been stifled due to U.S intervention. The reopening of the British embassy in Tehran was evidence of an improvement in diplomatic relations between Iran and the E.U. which would be another positive argument for the relative success of the JCPOA prior to the U.S. withdrawal. There are sure to be areas where nations disagree but diplomacy and direct dialogue was shown to reap benefits and the JCPOA was an example of this until the recent withdrawal at least.

Proponents and opponents of the agreement have differing opinions on the implications for the politics and security of the Middle East (Group, 2017). By reducing the chance that Iran obtains nuclear weapons, proponents suggest that the JCPOA improves the security of Israel, the Gulf States, and others in the region, and also improves efforts by the U.S. and its regional allies to deal with the other security threats that Iran may pose. They argue that the deal and attempts to integrate Iran into the global economy are likely to strengthen some factions in Iran and could help moderate Iran's behavior.

It is apparent that the U.S and Iran may both have the potential to gain significantly from the nuclear deal although the Trump administration clearly does not agree with the deal in its current form and this will be discussed later. A wide array of sanctions on Iran were relaxed on Implementation Day. In recent months, the impact on Iran's economy has become increasingly apparent. Oil production and exports returned to levels similar to that before sanctions commenced at 3.85 million barrels per day (Group, 2017). The country received more than \$10 billion of foreign investment, trade with the European

Union increased by 42 per cent and Iran regained access to billions of dollars of seized assets. Inflation fell to less than 8 per cent by the end of 2016 and Iranian companies signed lucrative contracts with European, Asian and U.S. firms. The IMF predicted that the economy would rise 4.5 per cent during the 2016-2017 fiscal period, an increase of 0.5 per cent on the previous year (Group, 2017).

5.2 The Implementation of the Iran deal.

Iran was required under the JCPOA to rapidly lessen its capacity to produce nuclear materials that would be able to be used in nuclear weapons. This included deconstructing and moving over 12,000 centrifuges, shipping over 10,000 kilograms of enriched uranium to Russia and dismantling the core of the Arak reactor. Meeting these requirements was a mammoth task. The speed at which implementation occurred may have been partly influenced by the possibility that early sanctions relief would give President Rouhani and his supporters impetus in the February elections in the Iranian parliament. Iran made quick and thorough preparations to start tasks punctually and processed the necessary plans efficiently. Iran's strict compliance with its nuclear commitments during the time before the implementation day was a positive sign for the future of the agreement although this of course has been severely dampened by the U.S withdrawal.

Significant issues might have substantially delayed Implementation Day, such as the amount of centrifuge components to be removed and agreement on the characteristics and efficiency values of advanced centrifuges. Nonetheless, solutions were found by Iran fairly quickly. The U.S and its P5+1 partners insisted on results that strictly complied with the JCPOA and that set the bar for equally thorough and timely enforcement in the future.

Concern in the U.S and perhaps regionally will of course be that incentives and motivation for complying will be reduced now that Iran has recovered billions in frozen assets. This could hamper and delay problem-solving with any future extensions of the plan, especially since U.S withdrawal. Supporters of the deal believed that, even after the suspension of sanctions, Iran would continue to be motivated to comply with its commitments. The leadership in Tehran know that

compliance disputes could generate anxiety in the international business community about the possible reintroduction of sanctions. Such concerns could have major impacts on the benefits Iran had gained since Implementation Day and this will now become even more apparent since U.S withdrawal. Iran was vocal in criticising the U.S and European parties for failing to implement the deal as promised. From an Iranian perspective, this meant ensuring sanctions were lifted in a way that encouraged financial institutions to re-enter the Iranian market (Royal United Services Institute, 2016).

In September 2016, Rouhani addressed the U.N and criticised the U.S for failing to stick to obligations under the agreement (Royal United Services Institute, 2016). Many analysts fear that if the economic benefits to Iran do not materialise, the agreement will collapse. Since the U.S withdrawal from the deal this is now an even more major concern. While Iran continued to support the agreement, Rouhani faced elections in May 2017 and was under pressure to show that the deal was having observable benefits for Iran. Some members of the Iranian Parliament stated that if sanctions are not to be lifted and banking transactions are not done, there will be no reason to go on with the agreement (Islamic Republic News, 2016) and they will surely be making their voices heard now that the U.S under Trump have left the deal. U.S and European powers were struggling to ensure that the situation would not occur. In May 2016, U.S Secretary of State, John Kerry tried to persuade representatives from European financial institutions, that doing Iran-related business is to be encouraged. This prompted HSBC Chief Legal Officer Stuart Levey to point out the irony for Washington to be urging non-US banks to do what it is still illegal for American banks while not providing assurances as to how this would be viewed by U.S law enforcement authorities (Levey, 2016). For the banks there seemed to be a disparity between Western foreign policy objectives and the enforcement actions of U.S regulators who influence policy on the risks of financial re-engagement with Iran. Diplomatic aims are to cultivate new business relationships with Iran in the hope that it will stimulate Iranian relationships with the international community. Financial institutions were much more cautious to take part. Only when the risk reduces or disappears does engagement make sense. Since the U.S withdrawal however, the risks have

increased. The business perspective conflicts with the process of engagement sought by diplomats. Some major banks such as HSBC and Barclays have publicly stated that they have no intention of opening up business relationships with Iranian counterparts in the near future (Royal United Services Institute, 2016).

The agreement and Implementation of the JCPOA was heralded by the U.S and Iranian administrations and the other parties that negotiated the deal, but its future was far from guaranteed and there were many obstacles to overcome. The recent U.S withdrawal demonstrated how large these obstacles were.

5.3 The U.S with Drawal from the JCPOA

The historic agreement reached in 2015 when the JCPOA plan was adopted removed the previously imposed economic and financial sanctions from the UN Security Council, the U.S and the E.U. Irans's economic recovery has always been hampered by tensions with the U.S, with President Donald Trump now stating that previous sanctions could be reimposed, or new sanctions introduced as the U.S withdraw from the deal. This has deterred many banks and foreign companies from risking new ventures in Iran.

Such uncertainty and the increasing fragility of Iran's financial system has meant that the Iranian government urgently needed to restructure and recapitalize banks and credit institutions. Iranian banks were weakened during the time of the sanctions due to a slow economy, government meddling in lending decisions, and too much competition with unregulated financial institutions. Discussions are under way on what do to with the billions of dollars of unpaid debts. These are complex problems that cannot be solved immediately. The Rohani government has proposed changes which it believes would strengthen regulation against money laundering and tackle the issue of any funds that could be used for terrorism. The IMF encouraged Iran to implement these proposals in early 2018 so that it would assist Iran re-integrate into the global financial system. Iran's central bank has been supporting foreign exchange markets to strengthen the rial currency due to current international uncertainty over the situation in Iran (Reuters, 2018).

More than two years since the signing of the JCPOA, there was a wide international consensus that the agreement was a landmark achievement for multi state diplomacy and for non-proliferation aims and objectives. Nonetheless, the continuation of the JCPOA werebrought increasingly into doubt because of U.S President Trump's statement that, unless some issues in the Iran deal were fixed by mid-May 2018, he might re-instate sanctions against Iran and withdraw the U.S from the agreement altogether. [RAND, 2018]. Recent developments of the U.S withdrawal have shown these were not empty threats.

European members of the nuclear deal were attempting to address the U.S administration's concerns. With the May deadline approaching rapidly, Europe were increasingly looking at how it could persuade the USA not to withdraw from the JCPOA. It was unclear whether an agreement could be reached that would be acceptable to all parties involved. Events since have shown that it was not possible.

The U.S administration was not content with the current deal, citing Iran's non-compliance with certain rules of the agreement, accusing them of the continued funding of terrorism. Before becoming president, Trump called the treaty with Iran one of the worst deals ever made (Whitehouse, 2017). The problems for the U.S were how to deal with different aspects related to the deal. Firstly, there was the problem of Iran's possible nuclear ambitions and how to deal with them if they existed. This could be dealt with by sanctions or by restricting on Iran's nuclear program. Despite the contradictory nature of the deal with Iran, it does impose restrictions on the Iranian nuclear program in exchange for real economic benefits. On top of this, many Western leaders support the treaty, even if they are not completely satisfied with every detail of it. This was demonstrated by the condemnation of many of these leaders during the recent U.S withdrawal (Arms Control, 2018). Even high-ranking diplomats within Israel at least partly accepted that the agreement created some encouraging conditions for curbing the Iranian nuclear threat. Former Israeli senior defense officials and national security advisors voiced their opposition to U.S withdrawal from the deal. [Brookings, 2018]

Current U.S rhetoric seems to support the opinions of Israel and Saudi Arabia. The Israeli Prime Minister has called for the re-introduction of sanctions against Iran, continuing the agreement on the Iranian missile program and toughening measures of pressure over the Iranian nuclear program. Saudi authorities also support the new

U.S strategy and believe that Iran has used the lifting of sanctions against it to develop its missile program, which they perceive is a threat to the entire region. They also agree with the U.S that Iran continues to support terrorist groups. [RAND, 2018]

Some of the reasons for U.S, Israeli and Saudi opposition to the agreements stems from the belief that the JCPOA doesn't deal with Iran's support for militant groups in areas such as Syria and Yemen. Iran might be able to use economic gains from the lifting of sanctions to increase their involvement in areas that go against other regional and international interests. Those involved believe that the JCPOA should not only limit Iran's nuclear programme but it's ability to interfere militarily in other conflicts.

The current deal was not only between Iran and the U.S. European states can see significant business potential in Iran and they would like to pursue these opportunities. With a population of around 82 million and significant oil reserves, Iran represents a largely untouched market, it provides a unique opportunity for ambitious Western businesses will to take the risk (NY Times, 2018). Russia and China also believe that there are no compelling reasons to cancel the agreement and the decision is likely to push these 2 countries closer together and create more hostility at a time when agreements such as the JCPOA were hoping to unify world powers. U.S withdrawal from the agreement will only worsen the situation and affect the security and stability of the region, at least in the short-term. The agreement marked an opening of relations between Iran and the U.S and a move toward regional and international co-operation. If the agreement demonstrated an openness toward reducing mistrust between nations, then the withdrawal returns the mistrust to previous levels. The U.S withdrawal will also have implications for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons throughout the world as other states in the region may feel the need to protect themselves against any perceived threat.

The Former U.S administration, Rouhani and many young Iranians in Tehran hoped that the recent treaty would improve relations between Iran and the U.S but this has not happened. Conversely, it is difficult to see how cancelling the nuclear deal with Iran will improve the situation either. This is not just an agreement between Iran and the U.S but an international treaty with the participation of leading international states. Iran's trade deals with Europe are growing significantly and in that sense the

agreement with Iran is working on some level. Now that the U.S has decided to reconsider the deal, serious tensions may begin to show between the U.S and some of its most important allies. In addition, it would not be an easy task to restore the previous sanctions against Iran in full. In Europe, the JCPOA agreement is therefore seen as a major success. By diplomatic means it was possible to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the Middle East. The E.U might expect all partners that have signed the JCPOA agreement to fulfill their obligations in order for the promising start of the agreement to continue (SPIRI, 2018).

However, regardless of the decision the U.S takes on the nuclear agreement in mid-May, Iran's hope for an economic revival after the lifting of sanctions has deteriorated. The disappointment of many Iranians to the fact that their life has not changed for the better after the nuclear agreement, was one of the reasons for the December protests. Difficulties in Iran may be due to internal causes - poor economic regulation and rampant corruption.

Even after the signing of the nuclear agreement, Iran remained separated from international financial markets. Large banks and businesses will not want to operate in Iran whilst the U.S threatens the resumption of sanctions. For most international companies, Iran remains too unstable from a legal and economic perspective. [RAND, 2018]

The current more aggressive U.S policy toward the deal could provide an opportunity for Iran to create division between states in favour of maintaining the deal. Iran could accuse the U.S of not wanting to work with the international community and that they are treating Iran unfairly. Iranian President Rouhani recently warned on state television that the US will face 'historic regret' if Trump abandons the nuclear agreement with Iran (BBC, 2018). He warned Iran would confront any decision that Trump took. The U.S withdrawal demonstrates his threats were not persuasive enough. Rouhani was not the only person to take to T.V to try and influence the decision. Benjamin Netanyahu attempted to show 'secret nuclear files' which he said showed Iran had lied in 2003 and had secretly gained the technological knowledge on how to build nuclear weapons which was in breach of the agreement at that time. The documents he produced were mostly revamped versions of previous allegations already dealt with by the IAEA. They still caused the U.S secretary of State to confirm the authenticity of the documents and to agree that the

2015 Iran nuclear deal was built on dubious foundations. Netanyahu again spoke out against Iran suggesting that it was better to confront Iran sooner rather than later. He also accused Iran of supplying weapons to the Syrian government which he argued posed a direct threat to Israel. [BBC, 2018]

The argument that Iran's previous behaviour constitutes a breach of the JCPOA is not a strong one. The 5+1 powers involved already knew most of the details about the suspicions relating to Iran's nuclear weapons program in 2003. Some had assisted in supplying the IAEA with security information that it used in various reports. These reports had made it clear that there were indications that Iran had a nuclear weapons program, and that integral parts of its facilities and investment in nuclear energy were possibly weapons related.

Even though the JCPOA may have been agreed with the knowledge of these allegations of mistrust, the U.S. might still argue that Iran's continued denials were a breach of the agreement. Nevertheless, it does not mean that the JCPOA was without its benefits. Whilst Iran continued to comply with the terms of the agreement and did not pursue weapons development then there was still reason for some optimism. (CSIS, 2018)

Transatlantic differences over the future of the Iran nuclear deal are jeopardising a nuclear accord that most parties, except the U.S, see as delivering on its purpose. They also increase the risk of the U.S and European allies working towards different aims in relation to Iran and its wider regional policies. To avoid such a situation, the E.U and the U.S need to work together to avoid break downs in communication and to attempt, if possible, to re-negotiate the Iran deal, and to secure its benefits for regional and global security.

Worryingly though - U.S and European attitudes towards Iran have become increasingly separate. The U.S and Europe differ in their level of threat perceptions, their chosen foreign policy, and their general opinion about Iran. Perhaps this relates to U.S closer ties with Saudi Arabia and Israel.

Europe do not necessarily see Iran as the main source of instability in the Middle East and have stressed the significance of diplomacy in addition to any more persuasive measures.

In his January 12th statement, President Trump issued an ultimatum to Congress and his European partners, giving them a final chance to deal with the issues of concern by mid-May 2018 [CSIS, 2018]. The administration sought to revise certain clauses of the deal by making some of its conditions permanent, to add further restrictions on Iran's missile programme, and to change criteria so that inspections are possible at any time. If these new revisions were not included, then the President stated that the U.S would leave the agreement altogether. These were not empty threats as recent developments have shown.

There is still a general European desire to maintain the current nuclear agreement under the terms of the JCPOA. However, it might well be that other members of the deal are unable to find a way to keep the U.S. within the framework of the JCPOA. As the U.S. leave the agreement - transatlantic co-operation will still be needed to prevent further worsening in relations, which could make dealing with Iran difficult and even spark a trade war. With or without U.S involvement in the deal, transatlantic co-operation is much preferable to the alternative. The U.S and Europe share the main aims of preventing Iran from becoming a nuclear weapon state, stopping its development of long-range missiles, encouraging improvements in human rights issues and halting any nefarious activities in the region.

Uncertainty about the re-introduction of U.S sanctions still exist. Talks on how to turn some of the restrictions on Iran's nuclear activities into more general norms and rules within non-proliferation aims would have the advantage of seeking to extend some of the limits beyond the timelines contained in the JCPOA while also making them applicable to other states. Communication on the advantages of nuclear non-proliferation could strengthen the N.P.T. This approach could make better use of the JCPOA itself to direct concerns about Iranian compliance with that of the regulations of the NPT itself.

In order for the Iran deal to continue, all the parties involved needed to cultivate communication between all parties to address issues and concerns. There needed to be regular status reports from the U.S and from Europe to keep the deal alive. Now that the U.S has left the agreement provisions could still be made for the U.S to return later should modifications be made that satisfy its concerns. U.S withdrawal does not need to lead to the total collapse of the nuclear deal. As long as the remaining states continue to follow the rules set out by the JCPOA the deal could

continue and Europe could minimise sanctions where possible. Iran might be persuaded as to the merits of continuing with the agreement due to the economic benefits.

If the Trump administration acts to stifle economic cooperation between the E.U and Iran, a tough European response is likely. Given the wide international support for the JCPOA from key US allies such as Japan, India, Australia, South Korea and Canada, the U.S might find itself isolated from large parts of the international community. There may be some cost for the U.S in leaving the deal, including damage to U.S reliability from the perspective of it's global allies.

French President Macron may have tried to create a compromise which could unify U.S. and European action, and act as powerful leverage on Russia and China. French officials indicated that some elements of such a compromise may be possible, and President Trump may still have some real opportunities to create a longer-term approach to the JCPOA if the U.S renegotiate a deal that can compensate for its defects and help address the other three threats that Iran poses to the U.S. and its strategic partners in the Middle East. (CSIS, 2018)

Now that the U.S have left the deal, transatlantic conditions for coming to terms on nuclear and non-nuclear-related issues may worsen significantly. The U.S and its European partners run the risk of a trade war and make an effective co-operation of their policies toward Iran unlikely. The collapse of the Iran deal could bring Iran closer to becoming a nuclear power and the international community would be divided and unable to react appropriately. This is a scenario that all parties would agree is best avoided.

All sides need to find common agreement on how to deal with issues of mutual interest to and to find solutions. Such co-operation is important even if it cannot encourage the U.S to return to the JCPOA. Such communication could increase the chances of the nuclear deal's survival. It would also show that the U.S and Europe maintained a powerful alliance in the international community and can still work together despite some disagreements. However, it is not yet clear if the E.U can find the political desire and unity to enter into an economic trade war with the U.S. Recent statements by E.U officials suggest that it might be prepared for it though. When asked how Europe would respond to U.S sanctions being reimposed

on Iran, E.U ambassador to the U.S David O’Sullivan said that he believed that the E.U would act to protect the interests of E.U businesses. There is some evidence that this is likely. The European Commission has put forward proposals to support operations of the European Investment Bank in Iran. Additionally, credit agencies in other European countries such as Italy are willing to supply export guarantees to Iran. [Reuters, 2018]

If the U.S decisions interfere with trade with Iran, European actions will prove crucial for the continuation of the JCPOA. The reinstatement of U.S sanctions would be a breach of the JCPOA and the only way Iran could be persuaded to continue to comply with the nuclear deal any further would be if the other parties involved remained committed to the terms of the agreement regardless of what actions the U.S take.

Due to its international economic and political power, the U.S does have several ways to undermine and even end the JCPOA. It could create a crisis worse than the period before 2015. Diplomacy between Iran and the U.S would be at a critical level. Military options would once again be a serious possibility for dealing with the Iranian nuclear issue.

5.4 Responses to the withdrawal

On 8th May President Trump declared that the U.S. would be leaving the Iran deal saying that: ‘As we exit the Iran deal, we will be working with our allies to find a real, comprehensive, and lasting solution to the Iranian nuclear threat. This will include efforts to eliminate the threat of Iran’s ballistic missile program, to stop its terrorist activities worldwide, and to block its menacing activity across the Middle East’ (FAS, 2018)

Global responses to the declaration matched the fairly consistent positions previously taken by countries and leaders involved in the agreement. There was support from Israel, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the U.A.E. These are all countries that had previously indicated that they believe Iran is a threat to their security and were unhappy with Iranian involvement in Syria and Yemen.

The reaction from Europe mainly came from France, Germany, and Britain as well as the EU collectively who issued a joint statement expressing ‘regret’ over the decision. European leaders stated that they remained committed to the JCPOA due to its importance to maintaining security. The European reaction seemed to express dismay at the failure of their efforts to address President Trump’s anxieties through some form of a re-negotiated agreement. Since the end of 2017 Britain, France, and Germany had held various meetings with U.S. to discuss steps that could negate Mr. Trump’s concerns. In April, French President Emmanuel Macron and Germany’s Chancellor Angela Merkel each met with President Trump in Washington to express support for working with the U.S. to amend the JCPOA to address the expiration of nuclear restrictions, Iran’s regional activities, and the Iranian ballistic missile program.

President Macron’s comments during his visit suggested he might be willing to try to engage Iran, Russia and China in new negotiations regarding the issues (FAC, 2018). However, no agreements were made during the course of the visits. European leaders indicated that it would not be wise to endanger the agreement without a clear alternative in place and they also indicated that they intended to continue upholding the JCPOA even if President Trump withdrew from it.

Iran’s President Rouhani reacted to the May announcement promptly, stating that Iran would continue to work with the remaining signatories to the deal to uphold it. He indicated that Iran would continue to keep to its commitments providing Iran still had the economic benefits of the agreement, a veiled threat that Iran might leave the deal if new U.S. sanctions significantly damaged its economy. On May 8, Rouhani directed Iran’s nuclear program officials to be prepared to restart suspended aspects of Iran’s program if the deal collapsed entirely.

Iranian officials have repeatedly said that they would not re-negotiate the JCPOA for any reason. Iranian hardliners would likely oppose any renegotiations as it would be seen to be submitting to demands relating to its right to have a civilian nuclear program and a ballistic missile program which Iran says is required for defence purposes. On May 9, Iranian parliamentarians set fire to copies of the JCPOA and outed anti-U.S. rhetoric in Iran’s parliament to display their opposition to the U.S. decision (FAS, 2018)

The E.U, Russia, China, and other Iranian trading partners might attempt to obtain exemptions from many U.S. penalties for their business deals with Iran that violate newly imposed U.S. sanctions. The E.U may be able to do so by blocking regulations or via World Trade Organization complaints processes. If large international firms continue to trade in Iranian markets, it might be possible to sustain the JCPOA without U.S. involvement in the deal.

It is also possible that the JCPOA could collapse without U.S. participation. Major international firms may find themselves shut out of the large U.S. market and might decide to leave Iran which would cause Iran's economy to worsen rapidly. If Iranian leaders see that Iran is no longer receiving any benefits due to compliance with the JCPOA then they may resume the nuclear activities that are restricted under the deal.

A lot would depend on whether Iran would continue to allow IAEA monitoring.

Even if Iran were to discontinue complying with the JCPOA, it would still be required to comply with the NPT.

There is opportunity for Iran to respond to the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA in other ways. Iran could increase its support in Syria and Yemen and conduct more missile tests. Saudi Arabia might be prompted to develop its own nuclear weapons to counter a possible nuclear armed Iran.

Any continuation of Iran's restricted nuclear activities could prompt Israel or the U.S to decide to strike Iran's nuclear facilities as a preventative measure.

In his May 8, 2018, statement, President Trump said, "If the regime continues its nuclear aspirations, it will have bigger problems than it has ever had before"—a statement that could potentially be interpreted as including possible military action (NBC, 2018).

6. CONCLUSION

This thesis started by looking at historical events such as the 1979 Islamic Revolution, the U.S embassy hostage crisis and war with Iraq and how they contributed to a change in relations between Iran and the West. Relations had already been fragile since 1953 when there was a coup against Iran's elected prime minister Mohammad Mosaddeq and the CIA has publicly admitted that it was involved, along with the British government (Guardian, 2013).

The thesis then analysed the JCPOA agreement reached by Iran and the P5+1 (China France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States) in July 2015. The agreement restricted enrichment of uranium and allowed monitoring by the IAEA. For 15 years Fordow would be converted to a research facility and there would be no introduction of Uranium at the facility. The Arak reactor would essentially be severely restricted for 15 years and there would be no reprocessing of nuclear fuel. There would be unprecedented amount of monitoring by the IAEA for decades and in return sanctions would be gradually monitored and terminated as Iran complied with the agreement which Iran appeared to be doing up until the recent U.S withdrawal from the agreement. The withdrawal was not a total surprise as President Trump had been expressing his opinion that the Iran nuclear deal was flawed during his election campaign and had made known his support for Israel. Before Trump's decision Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu reprised details of the revelations of the hidden facilities found at Natanz in 2002. Netanyahu stated that the nuclear deal had been built on lies (BBC, 2018) whilst others would say these concerns over Iran's nuclear ambitions were partly what led to a deal with the international community in the first place.

Earlier in chapters 4 and 5 this thesis examined the debate as to who the 'international community' are in relation to Iran. A pessimistic view of some academics such as Chomsky sees the use of the term 'international community' meaning the U.S and its allies and their connected media operations. This suggests that the term is more specifically related to dominant Western powers rather than

reflecting the views of the whole global community. In wider terms the international community in regard to the Iranian crisis would seem the other countries such as Turkey, Russia, Saudi Arabia, China, Israel and Egypt.

As discussed earlier in this thesis, these countries want to suspend the Iranian nuclear program to halt the proliferation of nuclear weapons, to ensure these weapons do not get into the hands of terrorists and to avoid bringing conflict to the region. Neighbouring states want to ensure the security of their country and the surrounding region. If Saudi Arabia and Egypt found themselves surrounded by a nuclear armed Iran, it would greatly increase the motivation on them to seek other security options and hence further nuclear proliferation could occur. Other countries would then have the potential to become part of the nuclear arms race are Turkey, Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the U.A.E. Attempts by these countries to seek nuclear capability would seriously hamper the attempts of international institutions to stop the spread of nuclear weapons.

Different perspectives on nuclear proliferation have been examined in this thesis. Kenneth Waltz and Scott Sagan hold the most widely known contrasting views on the ongoing ownership and proliferation of nuclear weapons. Waltz believed that there were not any other countries in the region that would have a reason to go nuclear if Iran achieved nuclear capability and it would lead to stability in the Middle East (Waltz, 2012) but this seems idealistic and it is likely Saudi Arabia would bolster their nuclear weapons program in the eventuality that Iran obtained nuclear weapons. Also, in the Middle East example, Iran and Israel's distrust of each other and poor communication channels make the possibility of errors more likely and is then a reason for the international community to focus on preventing Iran from gaining nuclear capability.

To prevent Iran obtaining nuclear weapons, the UN imposed sanctions and restrictions against Iran when they believed Iran had not complied with the rules of non-proliferation agreements. This has not solved the crisis and has perhaps aggravated the situation in Iran. The U.S has called on Iran to comply with the rules imposed on it, but Iran has not always agreed with them and that resulted in stricter sanctions. Many argue that Iran had no alternative but to enter into negotiations for a deal, confronting not only the nuclear issue, but also the situation in the entire region.

At the start of this thesis it was hypothesised that if the US continues to perceive a threat from the Iranian nuclear program it is hard to argue that the comprehensive deal, which is required between P5+1 and Iran will be successful in reducing the political motivations of Iran to acquire nuclear weapons. Perhaps then there will need to be more diplomatic efforts to diffuse the distrust between the U.S, Israel and Iran. This is essential and may require that Iran takes steps to show it is taking action to deal with any such perceived threats in the area of terrorism. The U.S and Israel would also need to make efforts to be more optimistic if re-negotiations do occur.

Whether the nuclear deal between Iran and P5+1 has been effective in maintaining some kind of global security depends on definitions of security and what is meant by 'global'. There was a fair amount of international support for the JCPOA so there was reason for some optimism. This of course has been severely dampened by the U.S withdrawal. If the deal is to be re-ignited it will require much attention, diplomacy, clarity and co-operation within the international community and with the relatively new U.S administration.

Whether the U.S withdrawal is a sign of the failure of the deal remains to be seen. Perhaps the U.S will renegotiate with Iran and there has been recent comments coming from the Trump administration regarding this. President Trump said that he was willing to meet President Rouhani without pre-conditions, saying "I think it's the appropriate thing to do". (Financial Times, 2018). These have been treated with suspicion by leaders in Iran who believe that Trump may be trying to appear to be open to negotiations on the surface to make it look as though it is the Iranian regime that is not willing to re-negotiate and stop the re-introduction of sanctions. Perhaps in the hope that Iranians blame their rulers for the consequences of new sanctions. Mohammad-Ali Abtahi, a former reformist vice-president said that "Mr Trump thinks the mere gesture of offering negotiations is a victory for him, but he does not seem to have any intention to give Iran anything in return." (Financial Times, 2018).

For a renegotiated deal to happen would need Iran to take steps to begin improving relations with Israel. This could improve the situation in the Middle East and the possible economic prosperity of Iran in the future. Iran's nuclear infrastructure has been reduced or altered in significant ways, but continued implementation of the JCPOA agreement now faces many obstacles. Much depends on the actions and reactions of the U.S, Iran, Israel and European signatories.

In the meantime, the U.S withdrawal is not necessarily a failure of the deal itself. If the deal is able to continue without U.S involvement or to be re-negotiated to include them then it should make the region at least more secure for the international states involved at the moment. Nobody can be quite sure of future events and the security felt by some. Without cooperation of other states involved such as Russia, China, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and other regional states - this international crisis could develop further.

At the moment though, the deal will likely continue to hold in the short-term, maintained by the diplomatic measures of the E.U and the ongoing interests of Iran. Nonetheless, as time moves on., the EU will be unlikely to be able to maintain this role if the U.S aggressively pursue further sanctions. The E.U could not be able to provide satisfactory economic benefits to Iran whilst the U.S do the opposite and the JCPOA would collapse.

Up to now, European signatories of the JCPOA, including Russia and China, have stated that they intend to uphold the agreement. It remains to be seen how severely the U.S intends to re-introduce sanctions and how much it will affect the international businesses that were seeking to trade with Iran. Reinstating US sanctions is a complex process and the Trump administration may delay implementing them immediately to give more time for the chance of renegotiations.

It's possible that, with the U.S away from the deal, a different kind of diplomacy with Iran may develop and there may be an increased focus toward making the Middle East a non-nuclear region. U.S withdrawal from the JCPOA has isolated them somewhat from traditional allies that have historically had close ties with the U.S. The U.S are increasingly looking to Israel and Saudi Arabia, as its stronger partners.

Reducing the domination of the U.S may be a positive development for the international community. A new era of international diplomacy might materialise free from any issues that were previously hampered by the U.S and non-military solutions may be focused on including a greater push toward nuclear abolition. Perhaps, as the U.S become more isolated there will be an international collaboration between social movements and politicians and the U.S withdrawal may end up having a far more positive outcome than expected.

If the deal holds despite the U.S. withdrawal, it could contain Iran's nuclear ambitions, perceived or otherwise and in turn, those of its neighboring states and lead to a period of stability in The Middle East. Iran has been seen to comply with the terms of the deal and it would take some time before it could commence a nuclear weapons program. This gives some breathing space to the international community to prepare a response if Iran does show indications of moving in a more hostile direction. If Iran were to seek nuclear a nuclear solution, neighbouring states such as Saudi Arabia might start their own weapons programs or seek assistance from the U.S. for their security and this is a more dangerous scenario. Perhaps to stop such as scenario there needs to be a demonstration to non-nuclear armed countries in the NPT that the nuclear arsenals of existing nuclear powers are being reduced if the non-proliferation aims of the NPT are to be achieved and so that other countries have no requirement to build nuclear weapons programs of their own.

The JCPOA has helped foster an atmosphere where Iran's neighbours do not feel pressured to construct their own nuclear weapons programs. If the JCPOA were to be dismantled completely because of the U.S withdrawal then international security could be elevated to some degree at least. The worst case scenario would be the start of a U.S. Iran war which would be a conflict that would take the Iranian crisis to a dangerous level. With the JCPOA less secure after Trump's withdrawal, the potential for Iran to re-start prohibited nuclear activities in retaliation is a possibility.

After the U.S announced its withdrawal from the deal, Iran was quick in sending a signal to the international community by starting work on increasing its uranium enrichment capacity in case the JCPOA collapsed entirely. The head of Iran's atomic agency told reporters it was preparing infrastructure to build advanced centrifuges at the Natanz facility. The agency says it is officially notifying the U.N nuclear agency about the changes which were said to be in line with instructions from Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei (BBC, 2018). For the present time Iran will continue to move within the framework of the JCPOA but the re-introduction of U.S sanctions are imminent and if Iran loses the financial benefits of being in the JCPOA then the deal may collapse and Iran could decide to seek nuclear capability and it would be difficult to argue that International security would not be affected.

It seems naïve to believe that If Iran gains nuclear capability then Iran and Israel will deter eachother and the current crisis will disappear. There just does not appear to be

a large amount of evidence to suggest that there is more likely to be peace when more states possess nuclear weapons.

In the case of Iran, the level of inspections and monitoring in place as part of the JCPOA did at least assist the international community in knowing if Iran was enriching uranium for peaceful or military purposes and while that is maintained then there is at least some temporary perception of security for the wider international community. This may change now the U.S has withdrawn, despite President Trump saying that he was making the world safer by leaving the deal (Chicago Tribune, 2018).

Much of the repercussions of U.S withdrawal from the JCPOA remains to be seen. Major international companies are already showing signs of distancing themselves from Iran due to the promise of the reintroduction of U.S sanctions. As business opportunities begin to wane, the deal could have less appeal with European signatories. The fragility of the JCPOA has never been greater. Perhaps a new revised deal can be negotiated but this may be very difficult to do so without international support. Few countries apart from Saudi Arabia, Israel, the UAE, and Bahrain - have supported the US withdrawal from the JCPOA. Most countries involved are supportive of the existing nuclear deal. Representatives at the E.U pledged to preserve the JCPOA and highlighted the importance of co-operation on resolving international issues.

Failure of the JCPOA agreement could see Iran escalate its presence in Syria and its support for militia groups across the region, including in Iraq, to increase its pressure on the U.S military presence that surrounds it in the Middle East. The U.S may find Iran trying to increase its security guarantees. Iran will try to seek economic guarantees from the E.U. and seek alliances with Russia and China.

The U.S withdrawal may encourage Iranian nationalism and lessen the value of engaging in diplomacy with the West amongst the Iranian public. It is the Iranian public that will have to bear the difficulties of any new sanctions regime and the blame is likely to be placed on the U.S decision to withdraw from the JCPOA. This plays into the hands of hardline Iranian leadership and undermines the aims of the more moderate President Hassan Rouhani as diplomacy with the West looks more futile.

European and Iranian officials have condemned the U.S. decision to withdraw from the JCPOA and vowed to continue separate negotiations to maintain the nuclear deal. The U.N called on signatories to the deal to maintain their commitments despite the U.S. violation. It is unclear how long that is likely to continue though.

Iran could react to the U.S withdrawal in other ways. A senior Iranian official said that Iran might quit the NPT as one possible response to U.S withdrawal (Reuters, 2018). Although this was possibly rhetoric designed only to apply pressure, rather than being a likely outcome - it would have a significant effect if carried out. The maintenance of the NPT is important because the aim of preventing nuclear proliferation cannot be achieved a few countries alone. It requires the commitment and cooperation of the international community to stop the spread of nuclear weapons. Any threat to the strength of the NPT affects the belief of the global community and individual states to the possibility of achieving non proliferation objectives.

There is a frustration among some states that some NPT signatories do not discuss their own disarmament. The NPT obliges it's members to seek negotiations to disarm but many nuclear-weapons states within the treaty have not seen a problem of themselves possessing a nuclear arsenal. This is perhaps encouraged by the doctrine of deterrence that reductions might weaken international security. Of course this is not a view shared widely among non-nuclear-weapon states. Recently these states signed the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) to ban the use, possession or even threat of use of nuclear arms. The treaty also prohibits nuclear sharing arrangements so that states cannot store weapons on other states territory. This negates the logic of deterrence theory by making threats of use illegal.

The TPNW could be another major step toward the establishment of a new international order where international policy is not dictated by world powers such as the U.S. The international community needs to agree on policies and strategies to achieve the reduction of nuclear arsenals to provide regional and worldwide security. All states need to be encouraged to develop a common interest in effective nuclear disarmament.

Perhaps it is time for the original aims of the NPT to be remembered. It was never intended that some countries should have a monopoly on nuclear arsenals and would

dominate other states. To truly create international security and a world free of nuclear weapons it is time that signatories to the NPT started reducing their nuclear capability too with the aim of total nuclear disarmament. It is worth remembering that the NPT's Article VI states:

“Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.” (NPT, 1970).

Perhaps if the U.S, Israel and other nuclear states took measures toward nuclear disarmament then it could reduce the political motivations of Iran to acquire nuclear weapons. There would be no outside threat and a comprehensive deal would not be necessary. It is likely to be a long time before such a scenario is achieved though.

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APPENDICES

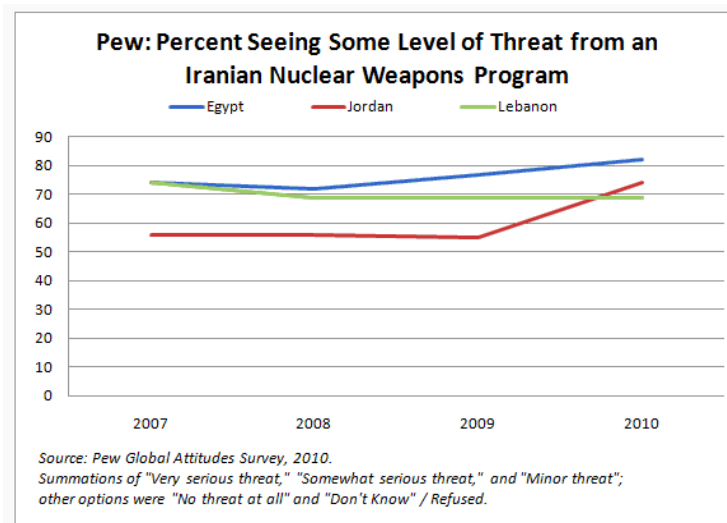
Diagram A



Source: IAEA

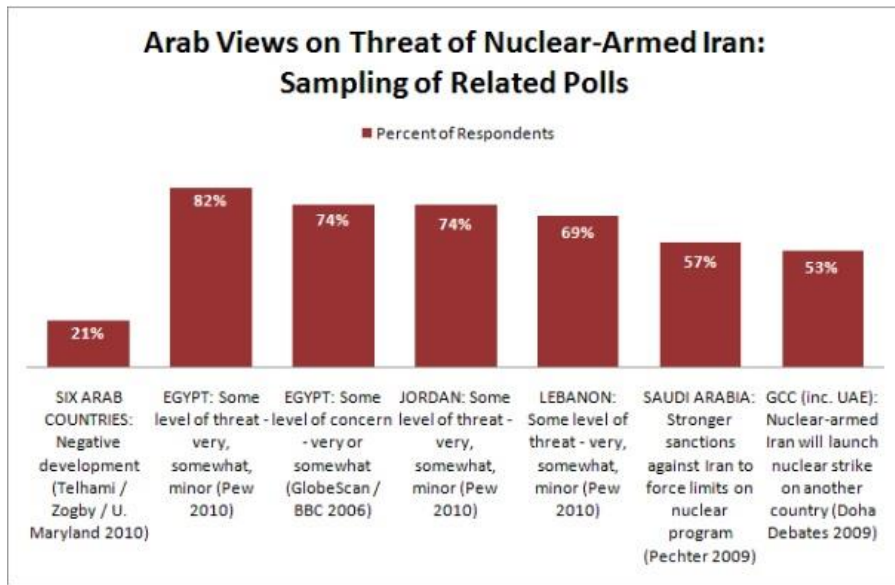
Source: <https://www-ns.iaea.org/projects/iraq/map.asp?s=8&l=66>

Diagram B



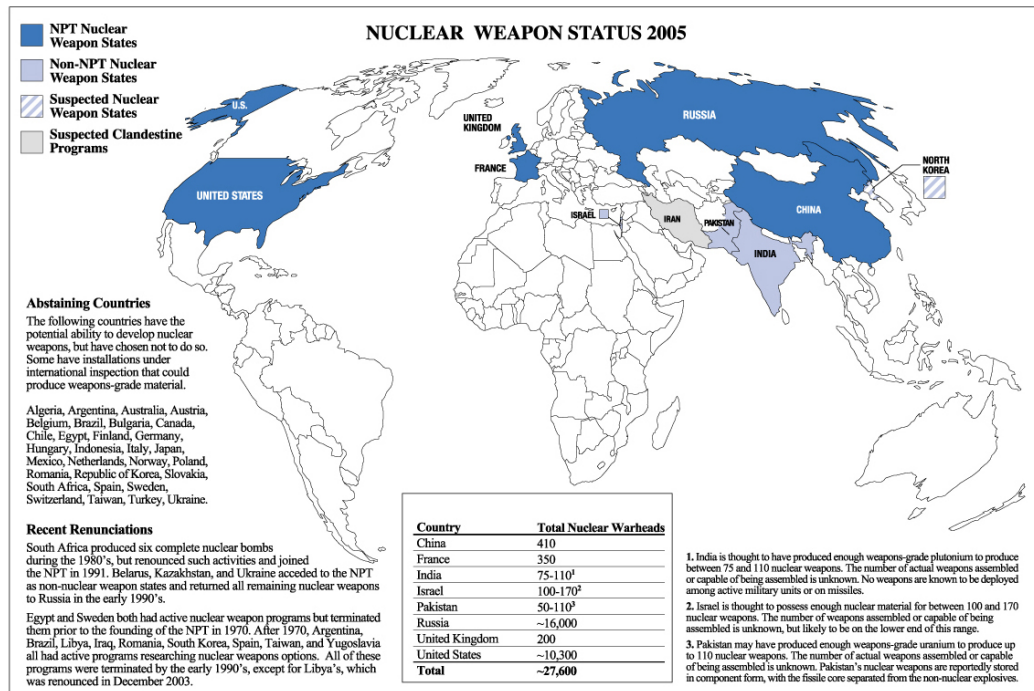
Source: www.pewglobal.org/

Diagram C



Source: <https://www.aei.org/publication/have-arabs-learned-to-stop-worrying-and-love-the-iranian-bomb/>

Diagram D



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‘**ANTO**’ **LLP** 2015- Present

Director

March 2013 - February 2014 “**Capital Gate Central Asia**”

Assistant to Director

Manager at Charitable Fund «Universe»

2007 -2008 «**Ramstore Kazakhstan**» **LLP**» Almaty, Kazakhstan

Marketing Manager

Education and training

February 2014-2018 MA Political Science and International Relations (in English)
(with Thesis)

Istanbul Aydin University Istanbul, Turkey

September 2007 to June 2012

BA International Relations

International Educational Corporation (Campus of Kazakh – American University)
Almaty, Kazakhstan

Intern

Development Traineeship, «Discovery project».

Discovering and traveling around Sicily, Documentary and photography.

AIESEC Catania, Italy

Certificate

Intern

Management Traineeship

Export/Import; Search and cooperate suppliers from Russia

«Mercan Kimya» A.S.» AIESEC Denizli, Turkey

Certificate

Intern

Development Traineeship, «Teach Yours Learn Ours».

Conversation classes in weekday with a turkish students, learn culture, traveling around

Turkey.

AIESEC Denizli, Turkey

Certificate

November -December 2009

«International department at International Education Corporation» (Kazakh-American University) Almaty, Kazakhstan

Intern

Personal skills and competences

Mother tongue: Kazakh

Other languages: Russian – fluent; English – pre-intermediate; Turkish – intermediate ;

Computer skills: Windows 98, 2010; XP, good command of Microsoft office (Word, Excel, Power Point)

Personal qualities: sociable, strong, responsible

Hobbies, Sports: ski, reading, ice-skating, cycling, tennis etc.

Driving license: 08.06.2013 Categories B