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**American Foreign Policy towards Iran
2006-2010**

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Anotace

Vztahy mezi Spojenými státy a Íránem lze dlouhodobě označit jako komplikované, napjaté a nepřátelské. Tato diplomová práce se zabývá americkou zahraniční politikou vůči Íránu v období 2006-2010. Tato časová perioda byla důležitá pro Americko-Íránské vztahy hned z několika důvodů.

Zaprvé, americká rétorika vůči Íránu se silně vyostřila za vlády George W. Bushe. Začalo to Bushovou Osou zla (*“Axis of Evil“*) a vyvrcholilo Národní bezpečnostní strategií z roku 2006, podle které Spojené státy hodlaly docílit kompletní změny íránského vnitrostátního i zahraničního chování a byly připraveny k tomu použít všech dostupných prostředků. Nejvyšší íránský státní zastupitelé následně propadli paranoie a ve strachu o svou vlastní moc postavili Írán do ještě defenzivnější pozice, ačkoliv by Spojené státy potřebovaly pravý opak.

Zadruhé, v únoru 2006 předala Mezinárodní agentura pro atomovou energii (IAEA) záležitost íránského jaderného programu Radě bezpečnosti OSN. Tím Spojené státy získaly příležitost uvalovat multilaterální sankce na Írán. Zatřetí, na začátku roku 2009 čekala Spojené státy změna vedení v Bílém domě. Prezident Obama opakovaně sliboval Íránu nový začátek, ale nakonec to byla jeho administrativa, která prosadila prozatím nejtvrdší sankce.

A konečně, jelikož je dnešní situace v roce 2013 úplně stejná jako před sedmi lety, lze snadno usoudit, že americká zahraniční politika vůči Íránu mezi lety 2006 a 2010 byla neúspěšná a neefektivní. Je proto důležité identifikovat chyby, kterých se Bílý dům během této doby dopustil, aby bylo možné do budoucna vylepšit zahraničněpolitickou strategii.

Klíčová slova

Spojené státy americké, George W. Bush, Barack Obama, Islámská republika Írán, Blízký východ, terorismus, jaderný program, lidská práva, zahraniční politika, bezpečnost.

Abstract

In the long term, relations between the United States and Iran can be painted as complicated, tense and hostile. This diploma thesis analyzes the American foreign policy towards Iran between 2006 and 2010. This time period was essential for American-Iranian relations for several reasons.

First, the American rhetoric towards Iran got significantly intense during the George W. Bush administration. It started with the Bush's "Axis of Evil" and peaked with the National Security Strategy of 2006, according to which the United States were aiming at a complete change of Iranian internal and external behavior, and were ready to use all means necessary to achieve this ultimate objective. The highest Iranian leaders consequently gave in to paranoia and under the fear of losing their own power brought Iran into an even more defensive position, although the United States needed the direct opposite.

Second, in February 2006, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) handed over the issue regarding the Iranian nuclear program to the UN Security Council. Thereby the United States got an opportunity to push for multilateral sanctions on Iran. Third, at the beginning of 2009, the United States awaited the change of leadership at the White House. President Obama repeatedly offered Iran a new beginning, but it was his administration which enforced the so-far toughest sanctions.

And finally, because the contemporary situation in 2013 is absolutely the same like seven years ago, it can be easily concluded that the American foreign policy towards Iran 2006-2010 was unsuccessful and ineffective. It is therefore crucial to identify the mistakes which the White House made, so it would be possible in the future to improve the foreign policy strategy.

Keywords

United States of America, George W. Bush, Barack Obama, Islamic Republic of Iran, Middle East, terrorism, nuclear program, human rights, foreign policy, security.

Rozsah práce: 170 316 znaků (94,5 normostran)

Prohlášení

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V Praze dne 16. května 2013

Daniel Soukop

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Table of Contents

Introduction	2
1. American Criticism of Iran	6
1.1. Stability of the Middle East.....	7
1.2. Iranian Nuclear Program	11
1.3. Iran as a Sponsor of Terrorism.....	16
1.4. Human Rights Violations	20
2. Understanding Iran	25
2.1. Iran’s Worldview.....	25
2.2. Relations with the United States	32
2.2.1 Before 2002	32
2.2.2 From “Axis of Evil” to 2006	38
3. U.S. Foreign Policy 2006-2010.....	45
3.1. National Security Strategy 2006	45
3.2. George W. Bush	46
3.3. Barack Obama	52
3.4. National Security Strategy 2010	58
4. Reasons behind the Failure	60
Conclusion.....	70
Resumé	74
References	76
List of Data.....	84
Data	85

Introduction

The contemporary relations between the United States and Iran can be easily defined by three words – complicated, tense and hostile. America has been in recent years the most vocal critic of the activities of the theocratic regime. The list of issues was summarized for instance in the National Security Strategy (NSS) 2006:¹

The Iranian regime sponsors terrorism; threatens Israel; seeks to thwart Middle East peace; disrupts democracy in Iraq; and denies the aspirations of its people for freedom. The nuclear issue and our other concerns can ultimately be resolved only if the Iranian regime makes the strategic decision to change these policies, open up its political system, and afford freedom to its people.

Although the United States is a much larger country with a stronger army and economy [[see Annex 1]], Iran has been so far able to resist the American pressure. However, the political struggle between Washington and Teheran is affecting the state of affairs of many Middle Eastern countries, especially of Iraq and Afghanistan. Thus one might say that the tense relations between the two players are destabilizing the whole region, which is definitely not in the American interest. The problematic of American-Iranian relations is therefore crucial for understanding the whole security situation of the Middle East.

This thesis will examine and analyze the American foreign policy towards Iran between 2006 and 2010. The contemporary relations between the United States and Iran have generally been challenging, but there are several reasons why this particular time period deserves close attention. First, after the fall of Saddam Hussein, Teheran became the center of attention of President Bush' hawkish advisors. That resulted in a fairly tough rhetoric in the NSS06. The document declared, among else, that the United States seeks a complete change of behavior of the Islamic Republic and is willing to use all means necessary in order to achieve this objective. Since then, tensions were on the rise and the world impatiently observed the situation and waited, whether there will be another war in the Middle East.

Second, at the beginning of February 2006 the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the United Nation's nuclear watchdog, handed over the Iranian nuclear issue to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Since that moment, the UNSC was able to sanction Iran for its

¹ National Security Strategy 2006. Available at: <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/nsc/nss/2006/index.html> (accessed 27 April 2013).

misbehavior and lack of cooperation with the IAEA inspectors. The United States has been the most active proponent of the new resolutions directed against the theocratic regime.

Third, the United States awaited the newly elected President Barack Obama to take over the White House at the beginning of 2009. The Democratic candidate repeatedly promised Iran a new beginning and claimed he wanted to build his foreign policy on diplomacy and engagement. However, in spite of the rhetoric, President Obama managed during his first two years in office to push the so far toughest sanctions on Iran. The Obama administration used Executive Orders, the Congress and the UN Security Council to put more pressure on the theocratic regime.

And fourth, the American foreign policy between 2006 and 2010 conclusively failed its purpose and didn't bring the American-Iranian Relations out of the dead end. That is because, simply said, the contemporary situation in 2013 is absolutely the same as seven years ago. It is therefore crucial to understand the reasons behind this failure of this time period in order to improve the foreign policy strategy towards Iran for the tomorrow.

The methodology of this thesis is qualitative analysis. There are three basic objectives. The first one is to study the activities and ultimate goals of both the United States and Iran, and examine the reasons why both countries approach each other in such a hostile way. The second aim is to analyze the American foreign policy between 2006 and 2010, and to determine the reasons why it failed. That will be achieved by breaking the overall American foreign policy into a number of strategies and analyzing them separately. This procedure will also lead to the final objective, which is to discover any possibilities which the United States could use in order to bring the American-Iranian relations out of the dead end.

This thesis consists of four main chapters. The first one is dedicated to the American perception of the problematic and to the list of topics which the United States repeatedly criticizes about Iran. The American representatives on numerous occasions blamed Iran especially for its destabilizing influence on the Middle East, for its controversial nuclear program, for supporting various terrorist organizations, and for human rights deficit in Iran. This chapter is important in order to understand the repeated criticism included in many American official documents and public statements.

The second chapter is an attempt to understand the perspective of the other side of the relationship. Simply put, this chapter tries to empathically comprehend why Iran seeks a regional superpower status, why it rhetorically attacks Israel, why it supports extremist organizations, or

why is pursuing the nuclear technology, to name just a few commonly asked questions. Although the author of the thesis is limited by a language barrier and doesn't speak the Persian language, this chapter was built on a historical analysis and on many eligible sources, particularly secondary sources and dialogues with various experts. Understanding the Iranian worldview is vital in order to comprehend the complexity of the nature of the American-Iranian relations, and to identify the reasons why some of the U.S. foreign policy strategies failed.

The third chapter focuses on the American foreign policy in practice. This chapter is particularly dedicated to analyzing legal documents, especially Congress-approved bills and UNSC resolutions, which were enacted between 2006 and 2010. Also numerous speeches by George W. Bush and Barack Obama, both as a candidate and the president, were incorporated in this chapter. A large portion of attention was additionally focused on National Security Strategies 2006 and 2010. Both include the basic policy guidelines and the ultimate objectives in dealing with the Islamic Republic. By comparing these two documents, it can be also concluded whether the foreign policy approach 2006-2010 did make a difference or not.

The final chapter analyses the effectiveness of the American foreign policy towards Iran in the mentioned time period. In particular, the foreign policy of the United States is divided into eight basic policy tactics and examined separately. By using this method, it is possible to learn which foreign policy strategies against Iran were efficient, which were not, and which could have the potential to make a breakthrough in the American-Iranian relations.

This thesis puts a lot of focus on available primary sources, especially in the third chapter. Above all, both National Security Strategies 2006 and 2010 were the cornerstones of this research. Furthermore, numerous American legal documents were closely analyzed, particularly the Iran Human Rights Act of 2006, the Iran Freedom Support Act of 2006, the Iran Human Rights Act of 2010, and the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010. Additionally, the same amount of attention was dedicated to all six UN Security Council resolutions regarding Iran which were enacted during the same time period. All State of the Union Addresses 2006-2010 were studied as well.

Dialogues with various experts were also used as a valuable source. For instance, the issue of American-Iranian relations was discussed with representatives of the Iranian, Turkish, and Israeli missions at the UN, and with a representative of the IAEA. This thesis also used research and opinions of two professors at SUNY New Paltz, particularly of Dr. Serife Ilgu Ozler, who

specializes on the Turkish role in the Middle East and has close connections with many employees of various UN bodies, and of Dr. Lewis Brownstein, an expert on security issues in the Middle East.

Out of all secondary sources, there is none which could be labeled as dominant or crucial for the whole thesis. However, some sources were vital for particular chapters or subchapters. For instance, *Dějiny Íránu: Říše ducha: Od Zarathuštry po současnost* (“*A History of Iran: Empire of the Mind*” in English) from Michael Axworthy is a great book on ancient and medieval Persian history. This book also perfectly describes the Persian culture and has a fantastic insight into the Persian way of thinking. The only flaw of this publication is the concentration on pre-1979 events. The development after the revolution is mentioned, although only quite vaguely. Michael Axworthy is a known British academic. He also used to be the head of the Iran section at the British Foreign & Commonwealth Office between 1998 and 2000.

Another mentionable book is *Cíl Írán: Pravda o plánech Bílého domu na změnu íránského režimu* (“*Target Iran: The Truth About the White House's Plans for Regime Change*” in English) from Scott Ritter, who worked as a United Nations weapons inspector in Iraq from 1991 to 1998. This publication is aimed at the Iranian nuclear program from its beginning until late 2006. Ritter’s book includes particular findings of the IAEA, Iranian defending arguments and vindications, and numerous accusations of the United States which was allegedly trying to influence the IAEA inspectors. Unfortunately, Ritter published this book in September 2007, thus the UNSC resolutions and later findings weren’t included. Hopefully Mr. Ritter will write a sequel.

Additionally *Jaderné zbraně: Nejvyšší forma zabíjení* (“*Nuclear Weapons: The Highest Form of Killing*” in English) from Vladimír Pitschmann was also useful and is recommendable for all topics regarding nuclear technology. This book concentrates mostly on the history of nuclear weapons development. It includes a chapter dedicated only to the Iranian nuclear program and its history. Furthermore, this book is great in explaining the basic technical background of nuclear technology, which needs to be understood while analyzing the development of a nuclear program. For instance, the publication explicates the process of enrichment, the essential differences between nuclear and thermonuclear weapons, or when a nuclear program stops being civilian and turns military. Mr. Pitschmann also wrote a book on chemical weapons and teaches at the Czech Technical University in Prague.

Also an important publication was *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States* from Raymond Hinnebusch and Anoushiravan Ehteshami. This book perfectly explains inter-state relations in the Middle East, including Iran. This publication is vital for comprehending the rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia, the historic ties between Iran and Turkey, or the overall influence of the Iranian government on various Middle Eastern affairs. Mr. Hinnebusch works as professor of International Relations and Middle East Studies at the University of St. Andrews and he is also the director of the Centre for Syrian Studies. Mr. Ehteshami is the director of the Al-Sabah Programme and he also serves as a special advisor to the Islamic Criminal Justice Project in the Centre for Criminal Law & Justice.

And finally, the November/December 2010 issue of the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* was essential for the fourth chapter of the book. This issue included a special discussion topic which was named “The Iranian Quagmire: How to Move Forward”. It contained six different articles by six distinct authors. Every author chose one foreign policy strategy and defended it. These six papers were used in this thesis to separately analyze the various tactics of the overall American foreign policy.

1. American Criticism of Iran

America’s approach towards Iran has been during the recent years like a lion slowly walking around a scorpion. There is no doubt that the lion would crush its opponent and decisively win any confrontation. However, such a victory would cost him at least several venomous stings. Neither America nor Iran seeks conflict, but their deep-rooted disputes still prevent them to turn around and peacefully walk away.

The United States clearly understands the Islamic Republic of Iran to be a threat to its security interests. These interests could be summarized into four basic categories. First, America seeks stability of the Middle Eastern region, while Iran wants to transform it. Second, Washington fears the Iranian nuclear program. Third, Iran supports numerous extremist groups which the United States considers as terrorist. And fourth, America belongs among the long-term critics of the civil and human rights deficit in Iran. These four security concerns shape the nowadays foreign policy of the United States towards Iran.

1.1. Stability of the Middle East

Since World War Two, America functioned in the Middle East as an important player. The United States used its global superpower status to influence regional affairs on numerous occasions. Washington used political pressure for instance to stop the British-French-Israeli offensive against Egypt in 1956. Also, the White House made sure that Iraq had enough weapons to not lose the war against Iran in the 1980s.

Moreover, America has intervened many times into internal affairs of sovereign states, for example Iran 1953, Lebanon 1958, or Iraq 1959. And finally, since 1967, America is the most influential supporter of Israel and also serves as its protector. All these activities provoked the rising of anti-Americanism across the region.² However, the United States wasn't too concerned about this development, because it was only in the outer circle of the Middle East.

That changed soon after the Cold War when American troops established bases in Saudi Arabia and docked its navy in the Persian Gulf in order to suppress Saddam Hussein in his further expansion. Since then, the permanent military presence of the United States makes it an internal player in the Middle Eastern region. The United States' role in the area became even greater after 9/11 as American soldiers invaded Afghanistan and Iraq, and established military bases in these countries as well.

This changed the whole approach of the United States towards the Middle East. America was hitherto trying to protect its regional allies and economic interests, most notably oil production and export. Although that is a major commitment of its own, America is involved in a very similar way in almost all regions in the world. Now, Washington needs to get concerned in almost all political, economic and military problems in the Middle East. America needs to be more active, because any unfavorable development in this unstable region can become a serious security threat for all American men and women stationed in the Middle East, both military and civilian. Thus preserving peace, stability and, to a certain extent, the status quo in the Middle East has become one of the key goals of any contemporary administration, regardless whether the White House is controlled by a Democrat or Republican.

Coincidentally, Iran does not share the same objective. On the contrary, Iran wishes to break the status quo, rebuild the glory of the former Persian Empire, and once again become a regional

² Hollander, Paul. *Understanding Anti-Americanism: Its Origins and Impact at Home and Abroad* (Chicago: Library of Congress Cataloging, 2004), p 91.

hegemon [[see page 27]]. This incompatibility of long-term objectives brought America and Iran to an indirect confrontation on the Middle Eastern theatre.

There are several countries in the Middle East which would like to become the regional hegemon. Egypt tried to achieve this objective by playing the pan-Arabism card, especially during the 1960s and 1970s. Saudi Arabia exploits its hold of Mecca and Medina, the two holy cities, and presents itself as the leader of the whole Muslim world. Turkey is not yet trying to become the leading power in the Middle East, although Ankara has historic ties with the region and used to be the heart of the Caliphate a century ago. There have been speculations Turkey could once again turn back to the Middle East if it loses patience with the European Union which still refuses to accept it as a full member.³ However, the United States is at this point the only one in the Middle East who could be truly called the regional hegemon.

America has political, military, economic and technological advantage over all other countries combined. The second most influential country in the region today is Saudi Arabia, an ally of the United States. The status quo in this regard is more than preferable towards Washington. It would be difficult to believe the United States wouldn't mind Iran as a regional superpower, which would be spreading anti-Americanism across the region and countering American influence in the Middle East.

A more direct clash of objectives between Washington and Teheran can be seen in Iraq and Afghanistan. Since George W. Bush's "Axis of Evil" speech in 2002, Iran perceives American soldiers near its borders as a serious security threat [[see pages 42-43]]. As a result, Iran's main goal became to strengthen its influence in the neighboring countries in order to loosen the American geopolitical clutch, especially in Afghanistan.

The United States nowadays criticize Iran for supporting the Taliban, although Iran always hated it. Iran never recognized the Taliban as the rulers of Afghanistan before 9/11 and even considered the extremist organization as an ideological enemy. In fact, Iran openly welcomed the NATO campaign against the Taliban and Al Qaeda in fall 2001 [[see page 37]]. However, because the relations with the United States deteriorated in the following years, Iran began to perceive Taliban as a useful weapon against American forces in Afghanistan.

³ Aydıntaşbaş, Asli. "Ankara Looks East", *The Cairo Review of Global Affairs*, <http://www.aucegypt.edu/gapp/cairoreview/pages/articleDetails.aspx?aid=155> (accessed 21 April 2013).

There have been numerous reports about Iranian materials and financial support to the Taliban in recent years, although without any conclusive evidence. For instance, there were claims that elements within the Iranian Revolutionary Guards may have transferred long-range rockets to the Taliban across the Afghan borders and also provided training for new Taliban recruits. Even though Teheran has always denounced these theories, it is not a secret that Iran doesn't want the United States to win the Afghan conflict that easily.

Teheran prefers when Washington focuses more on Afghanistan rather than on containing Iran. But at the same time, the Islamic Republic doesn't want the Taliban to become the leading Afghan power once again. For that reason it is widely believed that the Iranian regime or Iranian non-state actors (possibly with Ayatollah's secret approval) assists the old adversary, although the support is quite limited.⁴ Nonetheless, regardless of the Iranian reasons, the United States is furious at the theocratic regime for supporting the American adversary in the Afghan War.

In the Iraqi case, the situation seems calm at a first glance as the number of terrorist attacks rapidly dropped during the last years [[see Annex 2]]. However, the state of affairs in nowadays Iraq poses a possible major security threat for the American interests in the future. Some fear the significant ethno-religious internal division in Iraq [[see Annex 3]]. According to these fears, Iraq will eventually collapse from within and dissolve into three separate states. This theory was firstly presented during the operation Desert Storm in 1991.

According to this hypothesis, Iraq would plunge into an intense civil war full of tribal and sectarian violence if the strong central government, i.e. Saddam Hussein, was removed. That would destabilize the whole region. A vision of an independent Kurdistan would inspire Kurds in Syria, Turkey and Iran to unify with their Iraqi brethren. War refugees would overflow the region and the international community would have to deal with a colossal humanitarian catastrophe. And most importantly, the Shia majority in Iraq would bind itself to Teheran, thus effectively bringing the Iranian sphere of power to the Saudi doorstep and greatly improving the overall Iranian influence in the Middle East. President George W. H. Bush described this in his book to be one of the major reasons why the American forces didn't overthrow Saddam Hussein already in 1991.⁵ This scenario is a possible threat even today as some extremist groups, for instance the

⁴ Milani, Mohsen. "Iran's Ties to the Taliban", *The Iran Primer*, 10 August 2011, <http://iranprimer.usip.org/blog/2011/aug/10/iran's-ties-taliban> (accessed 21 April 2013).

⁵ Bush, George W. H. and Scowcroft, Brent. *A World Transformed: The Collapse of the Soviet Empire, the Unification of Germany, Tiananmen Square, the Gulf War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1998), p 450-488.

Iraqi branch of Al Qaeda, are trying to evoke sectarian violence between the Sunni and Shia with the use of targeted bomb attacks.

A second unpleasant scenario for American long-term interests might come, ironically, from the democratic aspect of the political system, built and supported by the United States. Because the Shia Muslims are the largest ethno-religious group in Iraq, their political parties conquered both parliamentary elections in 2005 and 2010 [[see Annex 4-5]] and took power of the central government in Baghdad. The Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri Kamal al-Maliki had so far more than friendly relations with Iran. Experts predict the Iranian influence on Iraqi internal affairs will only increase.⁶

Regardless whether Iraq dissolves into three states or stays unified under a democratically elected Shia government, Iran's sphere of influence will only grow. Ironically, this wouldn't be possible if the United States hadn't overthrow Saddam Hussein in 2003. Needless to say American policy planners aren't too content about this idea.

The Iranian leverage over the Iraq Shia also limits the options of the American security planning. Iran has repeatedly indicated it is prepared to use its influence to turn Iraq into a "Lebanon-in-the-1980s style calamity" if Iran was attacked by the United States' military forces.⁷ Thus the Iraqi Shia serve as a deterrent against the United States as the Pentagon would have to deal with a much wider conflict in case of a war with Iran.

Furthermore, America needs to deal with intense Israeli-Iranian relations. The United States functions as a protector of the Jewish state for many decades and the pro-Israeli lobby in Washington D.C. has always been very capable of gaining bipartisan support for Israeli security interests. It is therefore very difficult for the American political leadership to make any friendly gestures towards Teheran as long as Tel Aviv considers Iran to be its main external foe. Perhaps the greatest source of tensions between Israel and the Islamic Republic is the controversial Iranian nuclear program.

⁶ Sky, Emma. "Iran Has Strong Influence in Iraq", *The New York Times*, 20 March 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2013/03/19/the-iraq-war-was-it-worth-it/ten-years-after-the-iraq-war-irans-influence-is-strong> (accessed 21 April 2013).

⁷ Gilligan, Andrew. "The Case for not Attacking Iran", *The Spectator*, 27 November 2004.

1.2. Iranian Nuclear Program

Iran's interest in nuclear technology stems from the early 1970s when Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi considered many possibilities to improve the economy and to secure Iranian energy independence for the future. As a result, the Shah decided to invest in nuclear technology and ordered several nuclear plants to be built. Iran was at that time already a party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which Iran signed in 1968 and ratified two years later. However, the Iranian nuclear program was later stopped by the new regime which found this kind of technology to be un-Islamic.⁸

The nuclear program was reconsidered by the Ayatollah in the mid-1980s when his country was at war with Saddam Hussein. Iran first tried to convince the Spanish-Argentine consortium to cooperate, but failed. Finally, in 1995, Teheran signed an \$800 million contract with the Russians who were to build one 1000 megawatt reactor in Bushehr. This deal was even accepted by the Clinton administration, even though Israel opposed.⁹

However, in December 2002, David Albright from the Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS) published on CNN satellite images of nuclear facilities in Natanz and Arak. Consequently the United States accused Iran of working on a covert nuclear program.¹⁰ That was the beginning of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspections which were based on suspicion and a war of words between Iran and the United States.

Since 2002, the inspectors of the IAEA repeatedly visited Iran's facilities and found several concerning things. For instance, the inspectors discovered in the middle of Teheran a large facility with centrifuges. It was in a building owned by the Kalaye Electric Company factory which was supposedly producing watches. During the first inspection the Iranians refused to allow the IAEA to take samples, and after the inspectors left, satellite images revealed a lot of motion in the surrounding area.

When the inspectors returned, they found all the equipment gone and the walls freshly painted. Nevertheless, the IAEA took samples of the dust which revealed small particles of highly enriched uranium. Iranians explained that that some centrifuges were contaminated by its previous owner which was later proven by additional testing by the IAEA.

⁸ "Iran", *Nuclear Threat Initiative*, <http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/iran> (accessed 11 May 2013).

⁹ Ritter, Scott. *Cíl Írán: Pravda o plánech Bílého domu na změnu iránského režimu* (Prague: Mladá fronta, 2008), p 55.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p 86-87.

Another object of concern, the IAEA discovered Iran was missing 1.9kg from the total amount which Iran received from China in 1991. That was explained by the Iranians as a failure of sealing. Also, there were several surprising revelations of new nuclear facilities inside Iran, although states are not obliged by the NPT to inform the IAEA about new installations when still under construction.

Furthermore, Iran had problems explaining how it received the technology to construct high-tech centrifuges P-2. This type of centrifuges was created by the European program URENCO and later was proliferated by a former employee and the “father” of the Pakistani A-Bomb Abdul Qadeer Khan. Cooperation between Iran and A.Q. Khan was later confirmed by the British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS). The SIS managed, with the cooperation of Libya, to intercept a ship full of cargo from A.Q. Khan. The SIS later found out that the exact same shipment was also sent to Iran. The IAEA compared official Iranian statements with this cargo. As the inspectors found out, Iran didn’t confess to receiving a blueprint of an implosion device. That kind of a device has no other use than in a nuclear warhead. Teheran later told the IAEA that Iran didn’t ask for it and that A.Q. Khan gave it to the Iranians only as a gift.¹¹

Although Iran always in the end answered all additional questions and cleared all doubts, its cooperation with the IAEA wasn’t even close to perfect. The whole Iranian nuclear program felt very mysterious and the IAEA never lost the impression that Iran is always trying to hide something. In addition, the IAEA couldn’t have passed over other aspects of the Iranian public diplomacy. First, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad used very aggressive rhetoric against the United States and Israel. And second, Iran proudly acknowledged the development of ballistic missiles Shahab-3 and Shahab-4, which can hit targets 1300 km away and 2500 km respectively. These missiles are very similar in design to the North Korean, which evoked speculations about military cooperation between Teheran and Pyongyang.¹² Needless to say, that didn’t improve the Iranian image in front of the international community. It is understandable why Washington believed that Iran was secretly developing a nuclear warhead and was prepared to use it against America or its allies.

Even though Teheran refused the American speculations, the United States pushed the IAEA to hand over the case to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). That happened on 4

¹¹ Ibidem, p 142, 221.

¹² Pitschmann, Vladimír. *Jaderné zbraně: Nejvyšší forma zabíjení* (Prague: Naše vojsko, 2005), p 228-231.

February 2006, when the 35 member Board of Governors of the IAEA voted to report Iran to the UNSC. This motion was sponsored by the United Kingdom, France and Germany, and backed by the United States. Three states voted against (Cuba, Venezuela and Syria), five abstained (Algeria, Belarus, Indonesia, Libya and South Africa), and twenty seven supported the measure, including China and Russia. In response, Iran abandoned the ratification process of the Additional Protocol, which would expand the investigative powers of the IAEA inspectors.

Since then, the Security Council is able to impose sanctions on Iran under Chapter VII whenever it believes Teheran is not fully cooperating with the IAEA or when there are reasons to think that Iran is violating international law. Between 2006 and 2010, the UNSC passed in total six resolutions which punished Iran for the lack of transparency of its nuclear program. All of these resolutions were prepared and pushed by the United States – five by the George W. Bush administration and one by Barack Obama's staff [[see pages 49-51, 54-55]].

Constant obstructions, lack of transparency and evasive answers from Tehran lead to a widely accepted believe that Iran is hiding something from the international community. However, there might be another possible explanation for Iranian mysterious behavior regarding its nuclear program. It is possible that Iran is only strongly paranoid since the United States used unreliable evidence and unconfirmed testimonies to legitimize its invasion to Iraq in 2003. Iran is afraid to present the world any controversial information as it fears the United States might present it as a smoking gun.¹³ Furthermore, the United States also underestimates the motivation why is Iran trying to acquire nuclear technology at the first place [[see page 31]].

Iran also still insists on its original statement that its nuclear program serves only civilian purposes, even though it has now been a decade since the disputes started. Iran builds its defense on its right, supported by the NPT, to have its peaceful nuclear program. In fact, the NPT encourages the member states to exchange nuclear technology with each other.¹⁴ However, the difference between a civilian and a military nuclear program is very narrow.

Basically, uranium found in the nature is enriched at about 0.7% rate. That means that only seven kilograms of highly reactive U-235 can be found in a thousand kilograms of natural uranium, the rest is U-238. One needs 3.5%-5% enriched uranium for generating electricity, around 20% for medical purposes, and above 90% for a nuclear weapon. However, the higher the

¹³ Dialogues with Dr. Serife Ilgu Ozler, a professor at SUNY New Paltz, in April 2012.

¹⁴ The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), entered into force on 5 March 1970. Available at: <http://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2010/npttext.shtml> (accessed 11 May 2013).

number is, the faster the process of enrichment gets. Thus the jump from 20% to 90% is much quicker than 1% to 5%.¹⁵ Also, the U-238 byproduct can be transformed into plutonium, which is also usable for a nuclear weapon.¹⁶ Therefore the Iranian argument that it enriches uranium only for peaceful purposes is a balancing act on a very thin ice, which makes the international community very uncomfortable.

Some often argue that Iran doesn't even need a peaceful nuclear program as there are many rich oil fields in its territory. Nonetheless, the capacity of these fields is not infinite and, one day, they will get depleted. Also, when oil was not used to producing electricity, Iran could use the surplus to increase its oil exports and improve its budgetary revenues.¹⁷ Because there are strong arguments for both sides and the program lacks transparency, it is impossible to tell, whether the Iranian nuclear program is civilian or also military.

However, regardless whether the Iranian nuclear program is only civilian or not the United States approaches Iran as if Teheran was actually developing the atomic bomb. Although many experts expressed the opinion that the Iranian bomb would be used only as a defensive tool and a deterrent [[see pages 39-40]], the United States builds its security policy on the presumption that Iran would be the first one to use the A-Bomb on its foes, namely Israel, Saudi Arabia or American military personnel in the Middle East. According to the American view, Iran would do that either by directly deploying the bomb with a ballistic missile, or by giving the nuclear warhead to third party, which would be a proxy organization such as Hamas or Hezbollah. This scare is extremely intensified by the 9/11 paranoia as Americans got frightened of the possibility that terrorists could use Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) against American civilian targets.

On the other hand, it needs to be said Iran is by far not the only one who has a controversial nuclear program. To name just a few, also Syria and Myanmar have been criticized by the IAEA [[see page 40]]. One might also recall the United States wasn't that strict on Pakistan or India, while these two countries were actually developing nuclear weapons. Thus the United States has been repeatedly accused of a certain level of bias against the Iranian nuclear program.¹⁸

¹⁵ Ritter. *Cíl Írán*, p 67-68.

¹⁶ Pitschmann. *Jaderné zbraně*, p 50-58.

¹⁷ Dialogues with a representative of the Iranian mission at the UN in March 2012.

¹⁸ Dialogues with a representative of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) in March 2012.

This bias against Iran also infected the western media. A wonderful example was the situation from February 2012. Numerous respected newspapers, including *The New York Times*¹⁹, *The Washington Post*,²⁰ or *The Daily Telegraph*,²¹ informed about the IAEA inspectors being denied access to a nuclear site in Iran. Needless to say, this supported the negative perception of Iran around the globe. However, the media didn't present the complete picture.

The IAEA wanted to inspect a military site, for which they needed the approval from Iranian authorities. Although the NPT allows the IAEA to enter any nuclear sites without the need to get a permission, that is not applicable on military sites. That would be possible if Iran ratified the Additional Protocol, which it did not. Nevertheless Iran was willing to let the inspectors in if the United States agreed to resume the negotiations. America nonetheless refused this proposal, thus the Iranians didn't have the motivation to give the IAEA the approval to enter the site.²²

The American prejudice against Iran might be explained by the secondary, less direct reasons why the United States doesn't want Iran to be a member of the nuclear club. First, there is a high probability that Israel would try to destroy the Iranian research sites once it is proven that Iran is really working on a nuclear weapon. Tel Aviv did so by bombing an Iraqi site near Osirak in 1981 and a Syrian site near Deir Alzour in 2007. Studies have shown that Israel would need more than one hundred airplanes in the Iranian airspace at the same moment if Tel Aviv wanted to attack the Iranian nuclear sites.²³ Additionally, Israel might need to repeat these strikes for several times for maximum impact.²⁴ There is no doubt that this operation would be considered by the Iranians as *casus belli*. A war between Israel and Iran is not in the interest of the United States to let this happen.

¹⁹ Sanger, David E. and Cowell Allan. "Nuclear Inspectors Say Their Mission to Iran Has Failed", *The New York Times*, 21 February 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/22/world/middleeast/iran-says-un-weapons-inspectors-wont-visit-nuclear-sites.html?_r=0 (accessed 23 April 2013).

²⁰ Warrick, Joby and Erdbrink, Thomas. "IAEA mission to Iran ends in failure; Iran still defiant", *The Washington Post*, 22 February 2012, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/iaea-mission-to-iran-ends-in-failure/2012/02/21/gIQANEcLSR_story.html (accessed 23 April 2013).

²¹ "Iran: UN inspectors denied access to key military site, IAEA say", *The Daily Telegraph*, 22 February 2012, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iran/9097533/Iran-UN-inspectors-denied-access-to-key-military-site-IAEA-say.html> (accessed 23 April 2013).

²² Dialogues with a representative of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in February 2012.

²³ Bumiller, Elisabeth. "Iran Raid Seen as a Huge Task for Israeli Jets", *The New York Times*, 19 February 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/20/world/middleeast/iran-raid-seen-as-complex-task-for-israeli-military.html?_r=1&partner=rss&emc=rss&pagewanted=all (accessed 23 April 2013).

²⁴ Allin, Dana H. and Simon, Steven. *The Sixth Crisis: Iran, Israel, America and the Rumors of War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), p 53.

Second, there are concerns that development of the first Iranian bomb might immediately start a regional arms race and eventually opening of new nuclear programs by other Middle Eastern countries, especially Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Iraq or Egypt. On one hand, none of these countries have an active nuclear program at this moment and it would take them two or three decades to build their first usable nuclear warhead.²⁵ However, this nuclear arms race would definitely bring many problems for the United States in the long run.

Third, the United States is concerned that Iran might use its know-how from the nuclear program to sell valuable information to rogue states, e.g. Venezuela, Cuba or Sudan, or various non-state organizations around the world. And even if Iran didn't want to sell any intelligence regarding its nuclear program there is always a chance a scientist might go rogue and sell the know-how without Teheran's permission. That happened for instance in the case of Pakistan when the "father of the Pakistani bomb" A.Q. Khan started his own business and cooperated with Iran, Libya or North Korea, just to name a few.²⁶

And fourth, America needs to make sure that any state won't violate the NPT once it signed and ratified. It was a major blow for the international community when North Korea disrespectfully withdrew from the NPT in January 2003 and tested its first nuclear warhead just three years later. If the United States allowed Iran to do the same it would only support the North Korean precedent and bring the international legal system on the brink of collapse. The United States serves as a protector of the international treaty system and it would transform in complete chaos if the Americans failed their task.²⁷

1.3. Iran as a Sponsor of Terrorism

One of points of dispute with the United States is Iran's support of some radical Islam groups which Washington considers as terrorist organizations. For instance Teheran is well-known for its political, material and financial support of Hezbollah in Lebanon, Hamas and Islamic Jihad in Palestine, the Front Islamique du Salut (FIS) in Algeria, the Hassan al-Turabi's National Islamic Front in Sudan, the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan, the al-Nahda Party in Tunisia, and the Jihad

²⁵ Dialogues with a representative of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in February 2012.

²⁶ Pitschmann. *Jaderné zbraně*, p 210-212.

²⁷ Dialogues with a representative of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) in March 2012.

group in Egypt. Additionally Teheran historically supported the Islamic Moro National Liberation Front movement in the Philippines in the 1980s and the Bosnian Muslim insurgents in 1990s.²⁸ However, it needs to be remembered that Iran doesn't understand these movements as terrorist and perceives its assistance to these groups as another way how to link itself with people of the Middle East through Islam [[see pages 31-32]]. Nonetheless, the United States doesn't have such an understanding for this Iranian reasoning.

More recently, the United States repeatedly accused the Quds Force, the elite branch of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, of terrorist activities. For instance, there was an assassination attempt on the Saudi ambassador in Washington D.C., which was prevented by the FBI in October 2011. According to the FBI the assassin was connected to the Quds Force. Nevertheless, just few hours after this shocking news, many experts on the Middle East and Iran condemned these acquisitions. For instance, Reza Sayah, a CNN international correspondent for Egypt, summarized the events with a hint of sarcasm:

Did an elite branch of Iran's military handpick a divorced, 56-year-old Iranian-American used-car salesman from Texas to hire a hitman from a Mexican drug cartel to assassinate the Saudi ambassador to the United States by blowing up a bomb in a crowded restaurant in Washington?

In Mr. Sayah's opinion, it would be very illogical if Iran attempted something like that, because Teheran would definitely lose more than it would gain. Additionally, Iran never did anything like this and there is no precedent for this behavior.²⁹

Robert Mackey from the *New York Times* called this plot a "rejected Quentin Tarantino script" and presented opinions of several Middle Eastern experts on the issue. For instance, Kenneth Katzman of the Congressional Research Service in Washington commented the allegation: "There is simply no precedent — or even reasonable rationale — for Iran working any plot, no matter where located, through a non-Muslim proxy such as Mexican drug gangs". Another opinion was given by Meir Javedanfar, an Iranian-Israeli analyst based in Tel Aviv. He said: "This would be extremely sloppy and unprofessional work by a government that has, over the years, become adept at hiding its tracks."³⁰

²⁸ Hinnebusch, Raymond and Ehteshami, Anoushiravan. *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002), p 287.

²⁹ Sayah, Reza. "Some analysts skeptical of alleged Iranian plot", *CNN News*, 17 October 2011, <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/10/12/us/analysis-iran-saudi-plot> (accessed 23 April 2013).

³⁰ Mackey, Robert. "Some Experts Question Iran's Role in Bungled Plot", *The New York Times*, 12 October 2011, <http://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/10/12/iran-experts-ponder-an-alleged-terror-plots-b-movie-qualities> (accessed 23 April 2013).

Thus it is quite probable the assassination attempt on the Saudi ambassador in Washington D.C. had nothing to do with the Quds Force. However, there have been other violent events which probably were executed by the elite branch of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, although there was never any conclusive evidence to support it.

The most publicized events were terrorist attacks in Georgia, India and Thailand in the middle of February 2012. These three attacks happened almost simultaneously, all were targeted at the Israeli diplomats and the attackers used similar explosive devices in all three cases. Although the Georgian and Indian attacks had no connection with Iran, the Thai assassin was caught by the local authorities and soon identified as an Iranian citizen. However, these attacks need to be put in context. The assassinations came very shortly after numerous Iranian nuclear scientists were assassinated. Teheran blamed these attacks on the Israeli Mossad.³¹

Iran has also been a target to several cyber attacks during the recent years. The Iranian nuclear facilities were firstly damaged by the Stuxnet virus in 2010, by the Duqu virus in 2011, by the Flame virus in 2012 and most recently by the Gauss virus. The origin of these cyber-weapons was eventually traced to the United States and Israel.³² Therefore it is believable that the attacks in Georgia, India and Thailand in February 2012 were in fact an act of revenge. Some even speak of a shadow war between Iran and the Israeli-American alliance. Although the Iranian actions perfectly fit into any description of terrorism, it is by far not a one sided game of terror.

Furthermore, American right-wing politicians and journalists also tried repeatedly to connect Iran with Al Qaeda. For instance Jennifer Rubin, a columnist for *The Washington Post*, demonstrated satisfaction with an allegation of several Senators that Iran is helping Al Qaeda with money-laundering. She concluded her article with: “So actually it wasn't difficult to prove the Iran-al Qaeda connection, it was just hard to admit it.”³³ Actually, it is much more than difficult to prove any links between these two in spite of the popular theory that a common enemy is often the strongest connecting link. There are several reasons why alliance between Teheran and Al Qaeda is so unimaginable.

³¹ Dialogues with a representative of the Iranian mission at the UN, and with a representative of the Israeli mission at the UN in March 2012.

³² Sanger, David E. “Obama Order Sped Up Wave of Cyberattacks Against Iran”, *The New York Times*, 1 June 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/01/world/middleeast/obama-ordered-wave-of-cyberattacks-against-iran.html?pagewanted=all> (accessed 23 April 2013).

³³ Rubin, Jennifer. “Oh, yeah, there is an Iran-al-Qaeda connection”, *The Washington Post*, 29 July 2011, http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/right-turn/post/oh-yeah-there-is-an-iran-al-qaeda-connection/2011/03/29/gIQAKi14gI_blog.html (accessed 23 April 2013).

First, both sides are theologically the exact opposites. Iran is a Shia dominated country and for many centuries presented itself as the global advocate and protector of all Shia. On the other hand, Al Qaeda is largely Salafi which is the most radical form of Sunni Islam. Additionally, the vast majority of Sunni Muslims consider the Shia as heretics and the Salafi have always been the loudest proponents of these allegations. This antagonism between Iran and Al Qaeda was obvious in February 2006 when the terrorist organization destroyed the golden dome of the al-Askari shrine in Samarra, Iraq.³⁴ This site used to be one of the holiest sites in Shia Islam.

Second, Iran and Al Qaeda are the exact opposites also ideologically. The Salafi element in Al Qaeda urges Muslims to return to the original teaching of Quran. A part of this teaching is a complete denial of the existence of a state and of borders between them, which were imposed on the Muslim world by “Western infidels”. The Salafi acknowledge only the universal realm of all Muslims.³⁵ On the other hand, Iran is a modern national state in spite of its theological basis. Furthermore, Iran wasn’t a part of the Caliphate during the Ottoman era and it is very unlikely Iran would join an Al Qaeda Caliphate, which is the ultimate goal of the organization. Iran wants to become the regional hegemon, not a region or a satellite of another empire. Also, some elements of the Iranian system are built on basic democratic principles, which is something the Salafi teaching would never approve.³⁶

Third, Iran and Al Qaeda have never cooperated. In the late 1980s and the 1990s the group around Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri helped Taliban to establish its rule over Afghanistan while Iran did not even established diplomatic relations with the Taliban. And, when Al Qaeda attacked the United States on 11 September 2001, Teheran was one of the only countries in the Middle East who denounced this act and consequently helped NATO with the Afghan invasion.

And finally, Iran strongly disagrees with killing innocent civilians, which is basically the core of Al Qaeda’s military tactics. Iran has shown its disgust for instance in 1997 when President Khatami condemned the Luxor killings in Egypt and called this action as inhumane and cowardly.³⁷ This terrorist attack was executed by Al-Jamaa Islamiya which merged with Al

³⁴ Burke, Jason and Allen, Paddy. “The five ages of al-Qaida”, *The Guardian*, 11 September 2009, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/interactive/2009/sep/10/al-qaida-five-ages-terror-attacks> (accessed 24 April 2013).

³⁵ Keegan, John. *Válka v Iráku* (Prague: BETA-Dobrovský, 2005), p 82-83.

³⁶ Dialogues with Dr. Lewis Brownstein, a professor at SUNY New Paltz, in February 2012.

³⁷ Mockaitis, Thomas R. and Rich, Paul B. [eds.]. *Grand Strategy in the War against Terrorism* (Portland, Oregon: Frank Cass & Co., 2003), p 45.

Qaeda in 2006.³⁸ Iran also denounced numerous attacks executed by Al Qaeda, for instance 9/11, the London 7/7 bombings or the 2009 terrorist attack in Jakarta.³⁹ Most recently, Iran also officially condemned the Boston bombings in April 2013.⁴⁰

1.4. Human Rights Violations

Since the Declaration of Independence, the United States has presented itself as the lighthouse of democracy. Each American administration focused on spreading basic liberal values around the world, although not every president gave this issue the same amount of attention. It is therefore not surprising that the problematic question of civil and human rights protection influences the contemporary relationship between the United States and Iran.

When the Iranians overthrew the Shah, they hoped for a better future. The situation was actually not that different from Czechoslovakia, Hungary or Poland in 1989. The main contrast lies in the fact that the most influential dissidents in these Central European states believed in democracy, freedom and liberty. In Iran, the Ayatollah Khomeini, the most vocal and prominent critique of the Shah, had his own plan for statehood – a strongly centralized regime where the religious authorities had absolute power over the political system.

As a result, Iran approved a new constitution just after the revolution in 1979. Although it has some democratic principles, it still concentrates the majority of power in the hands of one individual – the Supreme Leader. This position is by far more powerful than any other body of the Iranian system, including the Parliament and the President.

Another important breach of basic democratic principles lies in the Guardian Council, which consists of six experts on Islamic law and six experts on secular law, and its power to veto electoral candidates. This power is often misused in order to prevent opposition gaining seats in the Parliament (*Majles*) or to succeed in Presidential elections.

From the perspective of civil rights, it is interesting that five seats of the Parliament are always reserved for religious minorities – two for Armenians and one each for Jews, Catholics

³⁸ “Al-Zawahiri: Egyptian militant group joins al Qaeda”, *CNN News*, 5 August 2006, <http://edition.cnn.com/2006/WORLD/meast/08/05/zawahiri.tape/index.html> (accessed 23 April 2013).

³⁹ Dialogues with a representative of the Iranian mission at the UN in March 2012.

⁴⁰ Fischer, Max. “Iran condemns the Boston bombing, with a caveat”, *The Washington Post*, 17 April 2013, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2013/04/17/iran-condemns-the-boston-bombing-with-a-caveat> (accessed 24 April 2013).

and Zoroastrians.⁴¹ Although it is not a large representation, it does give the minorities space to speak on Iranian political ground whenever they chose to do so.

In spite of these problems, Iran is, in theory, quite close to a western-style democracy. However, the main problem lies in practice. The last two presidential elections, in 2005 and 2009, were subjected to international criticism of fraud and manipulation. In 2005, Ahmadinejad gained three times more votes in the second round than in the first.⁴² By any means, that's an enormous and unusual success. After the elections, the unsuccessful candidate Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, who was expected to win without any difficulties, accused Ahmadinejad of cheating.⁴³

Rafsanjani received support across the globe. The world especially criticized the fact that more than a thousand candidates were banned from the election by the Guardian Council. Rafsanjani was also supported in the United States, for instance by the Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. Mr. Rumsfeld said in an interview that he doesn't know much about Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, but:⁴⁴

[H]e is no friend of democracy. He's no friend of freedom. He is a person who is very much supportive of the current Ayatollahs, who are telling the people of that country how to live their lives. (...) My guess is, over time, the young people and the women will find him, as well as his masters, unacceptable.

The 2009 elections became even more controversial. Mahmud Ahmadinejad won the second round with 62.6%, more than eleven million votes higher than the defeated Mir-Hossein Mousavi, who was a reformist candidate.⁴⁵ This time the Guardian Council approved only four male candidates of 476 men and women who had registered for the vote.⁴⁶

According to many sources, the 2009 elections were full of violence and fraud. For instance, only several days before the election, the Mousavi's campaign offices were burned down and there was also an attempt to assassinate Mohammed Khatami, the Iranian President, 1997-2005, who helped Mousavi with his campaign. No one officially claimed responsibility for any of these

⁴¹ Axworthy, Michael. *Dějiny Íránu: Říše ducha: Od Zarathuštry po současnost* (Prague: Lidové noviny, 2007), p 195-196.

⁴² "Islamic Republic of Iran: Presidential Election of June 2005", *Psephos Adam Carr's Election Archive*, <http://psephos.adam-carr.net/countries/i/iran/iran2005.txt> (accessed 24 April 2013).

⁴³ Axworthy. *Dějiny Íránu*, p 210-211.

⁴⁴ "Rumsfeld slams Iran's 'mock' elections", *CNN News*, 26 June 2005, http://edition.cnn.com/2005/WORLD/meast/06/26/iran.us/index.html?_s=PM:WORLD (accessed 24 April 2013).

⁴⁵ "Islamic Republic of Iran: Presidential Election of 12 June 2009", *Psephos Adam Carr's Election Archive*, <http://psephos.adam-carr.net/countries/i/iran/iran2009.txt> (accessed 24 April 2013).

⁴⁶ Eqbali, Aresu. "Iranian Women Need More Rights: Candidate's Wife", *Google News*, 29 May 2009, <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jDD9Q1xNs5VIqwgzYINkyU2y5Upg> (accessed 24 April 2013).

incidents nor was anyone arrested.⁴⁷ Iran also temporarily blocked Facebook two weeks before the elections. Coincidentally, the ban became effective just after Mousavi created his fan site on the social network which quickly gained more than five thousand supporters.⁴⁸

In the aftermath many students protested in streets of Teheran and many countries around the world expressed concerns about the elections.⁴⁹ For instance, United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon urged Iran to respect fundamental civil and human rights, and especially the freedom of assembly and expression.⁵⁰ The White House applauded the young people who came into the streets and protested against these electoral frauds: “Like the rest of the world, we were impressed by the vigorous debate and enthusiasm that this election generated, particularly among young Iranians.”⁵¹

For a long time, Iran was trying to present itself as different from the typical Middle Eastern-style autocracies. The number of democratic elements, although fairly limited, provided the Islamic Republic with a sort of legitimacy. However, the blunders of 2005 and 2009 Presidential elections completely eliminated the quasi-democratic image which Iran enjoyed in the preceding years.⁵²

The quality of human rights protection in Iran is constantly being criticized also by the civil society. In particular, Amnesty International (AI) belongs among the most vocal critics of the Iranian system. The condemnation is obvious from the first sentences of the 2012 Annual Report, the most recent document covering Iran:⁵³

Freedom of expression, association and assembly were severely restricted. Political dissidents, women’s and minority rights activists and other human rights defenders were arbitrarily arrested, detained incommunicado, imprisoned after unfair trials and banned from travelling abroad. Torture and other ill-treatment were common and committed with impunity. Women as well as religious and ethnic minorities faced discrimination in law and in practice. At least 360 people were executed; the true total was believed to be much higher. Among them were at least three juvenile offenders. Judicial floggings and amputations were carried out.

⁴⁷ “Violence Mars Iranian Election Campaign”, *The Jerusalem Post*, 2 June 2009, <http://www.jpost.com/Iranian-Threat/News/Violence-mars-Iranian-election-campaign> (accessed 24 April 2013).

⁴⁸ “Iran blocks access to Facebook: Report”, *The Gulf News*, 24 May 2009, <http://gulfnews.com/news/region/iran/iran-blocks-access-to-facebook-report-1.69649> (accessed 24 April 2013).

⁴⁹ “Timeline: Iran after the election”, *Al Jazeera*, 11 February 2010, <http://www.aljazeera.com/focus/iran/2009/11/200911411259869709.html> (accessed 24 April 2013).

⁵⁰ “End Iran violence, UN chief urges”, *BBC News*, 23 June 2009, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/8114085.stm (accessed 24 April 2013).

⁵¹ “Statement by Press Secretary Robert Gibbs on the Iranian Election”, *The White House*, 13 June 2009, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Statement-by-Press-Secretary-Robert-Gibbs-on-the-Iranian-Election (accessed 24 April 2013).

⁵² Takeyh, Ray. “Why Iran’s Mullahs Cannot Rest Easy”, *The International Herald Tribune*, 19 April 2012, p 8.

⁵³ Amnesty International, “Annual Report 2012: Iran”. Available at: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/iran/report-2012> (accessed 24 April 2013).

Furthermore, the AI report states human rights in Iran were generally limited and some nonexistent. The largest human rights violation was related to the freedom of expression, association and assembly. For example, local authorities refused to permit a demonstration in February 2012 called in solidarity with the uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt, and conducted pre-emptive arrests. The access to alternative sources of information is also very difficult. Foreign television and radio broadcasts are occasionally being jammed by the central government. The internet, particularly social media, is also often filtered, sometimes completely blocked. Amnesty International furthermore claims that the Iranian “cyber army”, a hacker branch of the Revolutionary guards, repeatedly attacked foreign servers which contained anti-governmental material.

Amnesty International reports examples of inequality between men and women. Women were discriminated against in law and in practice. An example of restrictions for women was a mandatory dress code or segregation of students by gender at some universities. Women rights activists were often harassed and persecuted.

According to the report, many minorities within Iran faced discrimination on a daily basis. For instance, use of minority languages in governmental offices and schools remained prohibited. Like in the case of women rights activists, proponents of extending human rights for minorities faced threats, arrests and imprisonment. There were also reports of gay people being accused of sodomy and consequently executed.

The report also accuses the Iranian justice system of unfair trials, occasional torture of detainees and serious abuses in prisons by members of the security forces. Amnesty International additionally highlights the high number of death penalties. In 2012, Iranian authorities acknowledged 360 executions and AI has credible sources suggesting there were 274 additional executions. Up to eighty percent of these executions were for drug-related crimes. According to AI, people sentenced to death under the Anti-Narcotics Law of 2012 appeared to be denied the right to appeal. Other executions were connected for instance with murder, armed robbery, sexual offences, espionage, and political violence.⁵⁴ The number of executions was much higher than

⁵⁴ Ibidem.

just a year earlier. In 2011, Iran officially executed 252 people, including five women and one juvenile offender, and unofficially another 300 people.⁵⁵

The Human Rights Watch (HRW), another famous civil society representative, also accuses Iran of far-reaching violations of civil and human rights. For instance, HRW criticizes Iran for extensive restrictions on the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, and association, and the widespread use of torture, ill-treatment, and unfair trials of political detainees. The HRW claims that the number of executions, including juvenile offenders, has steadily risen in recent years. In conclusion, the Human Rights Watch states that Iran continuously refuses to cooperate with United Nations Human Rights bodies and that Teheran repeatedly violates eight articles of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.⁵⁶

The United States usually leaves the criticism of Iranian human rights violations on civil society and independent media. Nonetheless, even the White House occasionally condemns Iran for its civil and human rights violations, although mostly just on *ad hoc* basis. The only exception is the annual Human Rights Report, prepared by the U.S. Department of State.

All the reports between 2006 and 2010 were almost identical, regardless who was the American president at that time. All focused mostly on the democratic deficit of the Iranian system. The largest amount of criticism was aimed at the fact that the Supreme Leader, the Ayatollah, is not elected by the people and that the second most important political figure, the President, came out of foul and unfair elections. Furthermore, the Human Rights Reports list all misdeeds done by the Iranian state.

For instance, the Department of State informed about severe restriction of the right of citizens to change their government peacefully, disappearances of people, torture, unjust executions, unfair trials, incitement to anti-Semitism, official corruption, arbitrary arrests and detention, violence against women, discrimination ethnic and religious minorities, public persecution of homosexuals, and much more.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Amnesty International, "Annual Report 2011: Iran". Available at: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/iran/report-2011> (accessed 24 April 2013).

⁵⁶ Human Rights Watch, "Human Rights Issues Regarding the Islamic Republic of Iran", <http://www.hrw.org/news/2011/08/29/human-rights-issues-regarding-islamic-republic-iran> (accessed February 2, 2012).

⁵⁷ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. "2006 Human Rights Report: Iran", 6 March 2007, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/78852.htm> (accessed 13 May 2013).

Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. "2007 Human Rights Report: Iran", 11 March 2008, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2007/100595.htm> (accessed 13 March 2013).

However, it needs to be remembered that Department of State doesn't use original research and own observation, which inevitably reduces the overall informative value of its Human Rights Reports. Because the United States doesn't have diplomatic relations with Iran since 1979, i.e. an open embassy in Teheran, the Department of State derives its information only from reports by NGOs or other states.⁵⁸

One slightly different report was the one from 2009. Besides the criticism of traditional misconducts, this report informed also about the fraudulent presidential elections from June 2009. The most obvious misconduct was using violence against demonstrators: "The official death count was 37, but opposition groups reported approximately 70 individuals died, and human rights organizations suggested as many as 200."⁵⁹

The United States also often uses the issue of human rights violations as a cover for imposing new sanctions on Iran. Since 2006, the U.S. Congress discussed numerous bills forcing unilateral economic sanctions on Iran, which were very similar in the name – the Iran Freedom Support Act of 2006, the Iran Human Rights Act of 2006, Iran Human Rights Sanctions Act of 2010, and the Iran Human Rights and Democracy Promotion Act of 2011.

2. Understanding Iran

2.1. Iran's Worldview

Iran, formerly known as Persia, belongs among the oldest states in the world. The great Persian Empire several times controlled vast lands from the river Indus in the east to the shores of the Aegean Sea in the west. This long history full of fame and glory is an eternal source of pride for the contemporary Iranian nation.

Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. "2008 Human Rights Report: Iran", 25 February 2009, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/nea/119115.htm> (accessed 13 March 2013).

Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. "2009 Human Rights Report: Iran", 11 March 2010, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/nea/136068.htm> (accessed 13 March 2013).

Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. "2010 Human Rights Report: Iran", 8 April 2011, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2010/nea/154461.htm> (accessed 13 March 2013).

⁵⁸ Ibidem.

⁵⁹ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. "2009 Human Rights Report: Iran", 11 March 2010, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/nea/136068.htm> (accessed 13 March 2013).

The Persian Empire has been here almost continuously since the ancient times. It was the Persians who fought the Greeks at Thermopiles and Marathon more than two thousand years ago. Even though Persia was conquered for a short time by Alexander the Great, it lost nothing of its strength. The Persians belonged among the few nations who successfully resisted the pressure of Roman legions. Even some of the most experienced Roman generals like Marcus Licinius Crassus or Marcus Antonius tried to conquer Persia in order to imitate Caesar's victorious campaign in Gallia to gain immortal fame. However, they found only defeat. Persia became the main adversary to the Byzantine Empire after the fall of Rome.⁶⁰

During the Middle-Ages, Persia faced many challenges, but still remained its identity. At first Persia was converted to Islam. Soon it used the religion to its advantage and became the leading Muslim power. Persia was later on invaded repeatedly by barbarians from Asia, most notably by the Mongols and Turks, but eventually restored its sovereignty and rebuilt its strength. Persia waged many balanced wars with the Ottoman Empire for regional dominance, just at the time when the Ottomans crushed European armies in the Balkans. During the eighteenth century, Persia reached its medieval peak when Shah Nader united most of the Middle East under the rule of a single emperor.

The might of a nation can be also demonstrated by expansion of its language beyond borders of its realm. In the case of Persia, its language was rooted since the Middle-Ages in today's Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, western India, in parts of the former Ottoman Empire, and was also widely used as a diplomatic language in the Middle East. Its dialects remain an official language in some of these countries today.

However, empires rise and fall and Persia was overwhelmed by better equipped and trained European forces in the nineteenth century. Persia soon became a weak nation, only an object of disputes between the Europeans in their hunt for dominance in Asia. This proud nation faced a very similar humiliation like other great non-European powers, such as China, Japan or Siam. Although these nations didn't become colonies, they lost much of their independence. Often they had to accept non-equal and humiliating treaties with the Europeans and settle with inferiority. One can only imagine the frustration of these once-great nations.

Persia became a disputed country at first during the Napoleonic Wars between the British and Russians on one side and the French on the other side of the barricade. Persia became

⁶⁰ Axworthy. *Dějiny Íránu*), p 35-39.

afterwards, together with Afghanistan and Tibet, the frontier of the so-called Great Game between the British Empire and the Tsarist Russia.⁶¹ The Germans joined this balancing game at the beginning of the twentieth century and remained an influential power until the end of the Second World War. At this time the Europeans got interested in Persia especially because of its newly-discovered oil reserves.

During this era, Persia didn't even have the control of its territory. For instance during the First World War, armies of both sides repeatedly marched through Persia without permission. Persia was at that time, of course, too weak to do anything about it. Furthermore, the British didn't hesitate to preemptively overthrow the Persian government in 1941, when German allies took control of the government in Iraq. The British appointed Mohammed Reza Pahlavi the new Shah, who worked as a solid British and American ally until 1979.

Another issue of these difficult times was the lack of modernization. The European powers successfully prevented all attempts of modernization in Persia in order to retain this buffer state. When Persia, in 1935 renamed to Iran, regained its sovereignty after the World War Two, its infrastructure was a disaster. Iran had only few usable roads and railways, an outdated industry, only few telegraph lines, and almost no access to electricity.⁶² Iran was now only a weakened fraction of the former Persian Empire.

After World War Two, Iran focused on a single ultimate goal – to rebuild the power and glory of the former Persian Empire. In other words, Iran wanted to become a hegemon in the Middle East and a globally respected power. This objective was pursued by both the Shah during the monarchy era and by the theocratic ayatollahs since 1979. The Iranians even today sincerely believe their nation has a significant place in the world and is predestined to greatness.

Since the Islamic Revolution of 1979, Iran is trying to achieve this objective mainly by using religion. Persia identified Shia Islam as the state religion in 1501 and since then presents itself as the advocate and protector of all Shias in the world.⁶³ Today, Iran is trying to refine its position to a leader of all Muslims, both rhetorically and by supporting various Muslim causes.

However, as some polls tell us [[see Annex 6-8]], religion doesn't actually influence the Iranian population as much as it does the other nations in the Middle East. Thus one might conclude that Iran's exploitation of its religious authority is a more pragmatic tactic than an

⁶¹ Marek, Jan. *Dějiny Afghánistánu* (Prague: Lidové noviny, 2006), 194-226.

⁶² Axworthy. *Dějiny Íránu*, p 130-165.

⁶³ Hinnebusch and Ehteshami. *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, p 297-303.

ideological one. Nevertheless this strategy has numerous consequences for international affairs and stability in the Middle East.

First, Iran became a direct rival and a foe of Saudi Arabia, who is today respected by the Sunnis as the leader of the Muslim world. This rivalry was the most visible during the Iraqi-Iranian War during the 1980s, when Saudi Arabia openly supported Saddam Hussein. It was a direct reaction to Ayatollah Khomeini who encouraged the Shias in Saudi Arabia to start an open revolt, because in his opinion monarchies were un-Islamic.⁶⁴ More recently, leaked American embassy cables, published in 2010 by WikiLeaks, tell us that Saudi king Abdullah has repeatedly urged the United States to stop the Iranian nuclear program, even by force if needed.⁶⁵ Tense animosity between the two rivals escalated even more in fall 2011 when an alleged Iranian agent tried to assassinate the Saudi ambassador in Washington D.C., although the connection with Iran was never fully proven [[see pages 17-18]].

Second, it creates tensions with many neighboring countries, mostly with Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan. Soon after Khomeini took power after the Islamic Revolution he called to all good Muslims in Iraq to overthrow Saddam Hussein. Iran also openly acknowledged it had tried to assassinate Tariq Aziz, the vice-premier of the Iraqi government. This animosity was repaid by a war which in the end devastated both countries.⁶⁶ Since the fall of Saddam Hussein in 2003, relations between Iraq and Iran could be described as stable and quite friendly as the Iraqi Shia majority is currently in control of the elected central government in Baghdad [[see page 10]].

Iran always had a significant role in Afghan Affairs. In modern times, Iran focused mostly on protecting the Afghan Shia minority, the Hazara. During the 1980s, Iran supported the anti-Soviet resistance amid ongoing war with Iraq and domestic turmoil. A decade later, the Taliban became the dominant force in Afghanistan and started suppressing all its opposition, including the Hazara. Iran never stopped supporting the Shia minority and widened its assistance to the whole Northern Alliance since Taliban took power over Afghanistan. That brought mutual relations to ground zero and almost into an open conflict.

At the end of 1998, the Taliban forces seized the Iranian consulate in Mazar-i-Sharif, a city located in north Afghanistan, and executed its nine diplomats. In response, a quarter of a million

⁶⁴ Ibidem, p 197-199.

⁶⁵ Black, Ian and Tisdall, Simon. "Saudi Arabia Urges US attack on Iran to Stop Nuclear Programme", *The Guardian*, 28 November 2010, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/nov/28/us-embassy-cables-saudis-iran> (accessed 13 April 2013).

⁶⁶ Keegan. *Válka v Iráku*, p 58-60.

Iranian soldiers were mobilized on the Afghan borders. The UN Security Council had to intervene in order to prevent war.⁶⁷ About three years later, the United States invaded Afghanistan and overthrew the Taliban while pursuing Usama bin Laden. Iran welcomed the development and offered the United States its cooperation [[see page 37]]. However, the American presence in Afghanistan became a new security threat for Iran after President Bush presented his “Axis of Evil” speech in January 2002.

The situation in Afghanistan also functions as one of the three basic elements which influence the contemporary relations between Iran and Pakistan, a loose American ally. Teheran and Islamabad differ in their objectives in Afghanistan. Iran seeks basically two goals, which are an Afghani government which will protect the Hazara, i.e. not a Taliban government, and limited to none American military presence on Afghan soil.⁶⁸ On the other hand Pakistan is still obsessed with its “strategic depth” doctrine. That means Pakistan will work to disrupt any possibility of an alliance between India and a stable Afghanistan, which would threaten Pakistan on two fronts in case of a conflict.⁶⁹

The same Pakistani doctrine is also directly applicable on the relations between Iran and Pakistan. When it comes to the triangle Iran-Pakistan-India, there is one basic rule. If relations between Iran and India improve the Pakistani-Iranian relations equally deteriorate. And relations between Teheran and New Delhi today seem very healthy, especially in economic cooperation. Imports of crude oil from Iran to India increased rapidly during the last ten years amid American pressures and Iran became the third largest oil supplier to India in 2012 [[see Annex 9-10]]. Furthermore a number of Indian companies recently announced to heavily invest in the Iranian oil industry.⁷⁰ India also tried to negotiate a direct deep-sea oil pipeline from Iran to India which would bypass Pakistan. Nonetheless this project was eventually discarded and replaced with a

⁶⁷ Rubin, Barnett R. “Women and Pipelines: Afghanistan's Proxy Wars”, *International Affairs* 73, no. 2 (1997), p 291.

⁶⁸ Pant, Harsh V. “Pakistan and Iran’s Dysfunctional Relationship”, *Middle East Quarterly*, Spring 2009, 43-50.

⁶⁹ Siddique, Qandeel. “Pakistan's future policy towards Afghanistan”, *Danish Institute for International Studies*, August 2011, p 18-21. Available at: http://www.diis.dk/graphics/Publications/Reports2011/RP2011-08-Pakistans-future-policy_web.pdf (accessed 13 April 2013).

⁷⁰ PTI, “OVL, IOC, OIL to invest \$5bn in Iran gas field”, *The Times of India*, 25 June 2009, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/OVL-IOC-OIL-to-invest-5bn-in-Iran-gas-field/articleshow/4701018.cms?> (accessed 13 April 2013).

new terrestrial pipeline leading through Pakistan. This pipeline has the potential of improving relations both between Iran and India, and between Iran and Pakistan.⁷¹

Unfortunately for Pakistan, its security policy at the same time works as a uniting element which brings Iran and India closer to each other. Both Iran and India especially fear the Pakistani nuclear program. In the Iranian case, Teheran is extremely anxious about the possibility that the Pakistani state could collapse and be replaced by a radical Sunni regime with access to nuclear weapons.⁷²

Third, the Iranian position complicates relations with Israel. The Palestinian issue belongs among the most delicate concerns for all Muslims. Thus when Iran started to present itself as the leader of the Muslim world Teheran had to start supporting the Palestinian cause openly. That was a very unpleasant change for Israel as the Shah used to be a close Israeli friend [[see page 33]].

Since Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was appointed as the Iranian president in 2005, the pro-Palestinian and anti-Israeli rhetoric intensified. Many were frightened especially by his claim that “Israel should be wiped off the map”. That also later became one of the most common arguments demonizing Iran and comparing Ahmadinejad to Hitler or Stalin. It later came out Ahmadinejad actually never said such a thing. This quote was very badly translated and interpreted. The Iranian president actually referred to Ayatollah Khomeini: “Our dear Imam ordered that this Jerusalem occupying regime [Israel] must be erased from the page of time. This was a very wise statement.”⁷³

According to experts on Iran, such as Juan Cole of the University of Michigan and Arash Norouzi of the Mossadeq Project, pointed out that the original Khomeini’s statement didn’t claim that Israel should be wiped from the map, but that it should collapse instead and be replaced with a righteous regime that would equally represent all present religious groups - Muslims, Christians and Jews.⁷⁴

⁷¹ Ezdi, Asif. “Politics and the Pipeline”, *The International News*, 18 March 2013,

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-165923-Politics-and-the-pipeline> (accessed 14 April 2013).

⁷² Dueck, Colin and Ray Takeyh, Ray. “Iran’s Nuclear Challenge”, *Political Science Quarterly* 122, No. 2 (Summer 2007), p 194.

⁷³ Teitelbaum, Joshua. “What Iranian Leaders Really Say About Doing away with Israel”, *Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs*, 2008, p 7. Available at: <http://www.jcpa.org/text/ahmadinejad2-words.pdf> (accessed 12 May 2013).

⁷⁴ Kessler, Glen. “Did Ahmadinejad really say Israel should be ‘wiped off the map’?”, *The Washington Post*, 5 October 2011, http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/fact-checker/post/did-ahmadinejad-really-say-israel-should-be-wiped-off-the-map/2011/10/04/gIQABJKML_blog.html (accessed 14 April 2013).

Furthermore, experts point out that Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is more of a populist than anything else what he says in the public. If he actually wanted to wipe Israel and its population out of the map, he would start by persecuting the Jewish minority in Iran, which is the second largest Jewish community in the Middle East.⁷⁵ And that isn't happening. According to critics, Ahmadinejad's other most vocal statements, like support to democracy in Iran, his anti-Imperialism and the claims that his administration protects especially the poor, are also nothing else but pure populism.⁷⁶ Nevertheless, Ahmadinejad's quotes are often used without context by the Israeli and American policy makers and media as a cornerstone of the anti-Iranian rhetoric.

Fourth, Iran also wants to be a regional leader in technology development. That is visible especially in the military branch of research. Iran has repeatedly presented the world that it has newly-acquired ballistic missiles of short and medium range or that the Iranian scientists are working on advanced aerial technologies, for instance stealth fighters or Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs). Furthermore, Iran invests vast resources in its controversial nuclear program. This hunt for modern technologies is perceived by the international community, especially by the United States and Israel, as very suspicious.

Next to pure military reasons, there are also two other sources of motivation, which are generally being overlooked – nationalism and the everlasting lust for knowledge. First, the Iranians are very proud of their history and every newly developed technology increases the nation's international prestige. That applies especially to the Middle Eastern realm, where the Iranians always distanced themselves from “backward” Arabs. And second, the Iranians very often present Persia as the cradle of knowledge and science.⁷⁷ Centuries ago, Prophet Mohammed acknowledged this phenomenon: “If knowledge is to be found in the heavens, the Persians will go and get it.”

And finally, Iran gets an international label of a supporter of radicalism and terrorism. As the self-appointed leader of the Muslim world, Iran gives support not only to moderate Muslim groups, but also to some extremists and armed radicals who are fighting for the Islamic cause. The most known radical organizations supported by Iran are Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in the Palestine. However, Iran doesn't perceive these groups as terrorists and repeatedly refused the

⁷⁵ Axworthy. *Dějiny Íránu*, p 206.

⁷⁶ Rahnema, Saeed. “Ahmadinejad: Anti-Imperialist Or Deceptive Populist?”, *ZCommunications*, 28 December 2010, <http://www.zcommunications.org/ahmadinejad-anti-imperialist-or-deceptive-populist-by-saeed-rahnema> (accessed 14 April 2013).

⁷⁷ Dialogues with Dr. Lewis Brownstein, a professor at SUNY New Paltz, in February 2012.

American accusations.⁷⁸ The United States also labeled the Iranian Quds Force, the elite branch of the Revolutionary Guards, as a terrorist organization [[see pages 17-18]].

Furthermore, Iran has more or less friendly ties with several regimes across the Middle East which are usually portrayed by the western media as rogue. Iran has good relations with Syria, Sudan or Yemen, to name just a few.⁷⁹ Needless to say, this aspect of the Iranian Muslim leadership intensively deteriorates relations especially with the United States, the European Union and Israel.

Although the United States often portrayed Iran as an irrational regime, Iran always had a rational cause behind its actions. Teheran exactly knows what it wants, i.e. to become a regional hegemon again, and has a strategy how to achieve it. Nonetheless Iran cannot succeed in reaching this objective as long as the United States stands in its way.

2.2. Relations with the United States

2.2.1 Before 2002

At the time when Persia was a subject of European submission, the United States fought for its freedom in an open war and eventually won its independence. The Iranians openly admired the Americans. It was thought both nations were supposed to be natural friends, perhaps even allies. The Shah even invited several American experts to help him with modernization of his country in the early twentieth century.⁸⁰ For instance, William Morgan Shuster served as a respected manager of state finances in Persia. Unfortunately, the United States eventually missed several chances in making Iran its stable ally.

The positive image that Americans are nothing like the Europeans was severely shaken in 1953, when Premier Mohammed Mossadeq was overthrown with a push by the CIA. It later came out that President Dwight Eisenhower and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill claimed that Mossadeq would bring Iran under the sphere of Soviet influence despite his open disgust with socialism.⁸¹

⁷⁸ Hinnebusch and Ehteshami. *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, p 287.

⁷⁹ Dialogues with a representative of the Israeli mission at the UN in March 2012.

⁸⁰ Axworthy. *Dějiny Íránu*, p 137-142.

⁸¹ Gasiorowski, Mark J. and Mohammad, Malcolm B. *Mosaddegh and the 1953 Coup in Iran* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2004), p 125.

Many historians today argue the actual reason behind the coup was oil. The Anglo-Persian Oil Company gave hitherto only 20% of their profit to Iran, which was far less than the usual in the region. The Iranians tried to negotiate more favorable terms (50%:50%), but the British oil company refused. Premier Mossadeq thus replied by nationalizing the oil resources in 1951. It is therefore speculated the British pushed the White House to intervene in Iranian internal affairs not because of the communist problem, but because of the United Kingdom's economic interests.⁸²

After the fall of Mossadeq, Iran became a close ally to the Western bloc. Teheran was a member of the Baghdad Pact, which was founded in 1955 and which included Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Pakistan and the United Kingdom. This pact served as a Middle Eastern alliance against communism. During this time, the Shah gladly cooperated with the United States and was a strong supporter of Israel. In fact, Iran was after Turkey the second country in the region to recognize Israel and later, during the Six Day War of 1967, Teheran provided Tel Aviv with crucial oil supplies.⁸³

However, Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlavi was not only a western ally, but also a strong autocrat and an oppressor of civil and human rights. He also irritated the public with his lavish lifestyle while the poor suffered by hunger and lack of medical aid. The connection of the coup organized by the CIA and the following repressive autocracy of the Shah significantly worsened the image of the United States among the Iranian people.

The negative perception of Americans was increased because of the Vietnam War, which was widely covered in the Iranian press and television. The Iranians viewed Vietnam as the exemplary anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist struggle in the cause of national unity and identity. Needless to stress out that the Iranians remembered their own history and the contemporary tyranny under the Shah while watching the Vietnamese fight for their freedom.⁸⁴

Additionally, many Americans came to Teheran with international oil companies and they, simply said, didn't know how to behave. Opposed to local values, the Americans were often drunk, loud and didn't respect the local authorities, not to mention the Iranian culture. Every American also had diplomatic immunity, thus occasional violations of the Iranian law got by

⁸² Axworthy. *Dějiny Íránu*, p 196.

⁸³ Bialer, Uri. "Fuel Bridge across the Middle East: Israel, Iran, and the Eilat-Ashkelon Oil Pipeline", *Israel Studies*, Vol 12, No 3 (Fall 2007).

⁸⁴ Ansari, Ali M. *Confronting Iran: The Failure of American Foreign Policy and the Next Great Conflict in the Middle East* (New York: Basic Books, 2006), p 74.

without punishment.⁸⁵ The Iranians were angry at both the Shah and his American allies. There was no surprise that the 1979 Revolution was accompanied by burning American flags.

In September 1979, all these anti-American sentiments intensified even more and combined into a perfect storm when President Jimmy Carter allowed the Shah to enter the U.S. for medical treatment. The Iranians called for the Shah to return to his homeland and face trial for his bad management of the country under his reign. The American decision functioned as an insult and consequently an angry crowd overran the U.S. Embassy in Teheran.⁸⁶ The American diplomats were held hostage for 444 days and got released on 20 January 1981, just moments after of Ronald Reagan's presidential inauguration.

Another blunder for mutual relations was the American involvement during the war between Iraq and Iran. Because the significant anti-American sentiment during the 1979 Revolution, the United States thought of Iran as a bigger threat for regional security than Saddam Hussein. As a result, America together with other Western countries supplied Iraq with weapons and other material aid. There are also claims that Saddam Hussein got equipment, technology and expertise usable for developing chemical and biological weapons from the West, including the United States.⁸⁷ It is estimated that more than 50,000 Iranians died to Iraqi chemical weapons.⁸⁸ The generation which fought the Iraqis in 1980s and faced their chemical weapons now runs the Iranian state.

Additionally Iraq began in 1984 with attacking Iranian tankers in international waters and *vice versa*. In response to this situation the United States sent its navy to protect the neutral area. In July, 1988, the American cruiser *Vincennes* followed an Iranian battleship into Iranian waters and, after a series of miscalculations, fired several land-to-air missiles. One of those missiles accidentally hit an Iranian civilian flight and killed all its 290 passengers. Afterwards, not only didn't Ronald Reagan apologize, he instead refused to accept any responsibility.⁸⁹ The issue was

⁸⁵ Axworthy. *Dějiny Íránu*, p 185.

⁸⁶ Ansari. *Confronting Iran*, p 87-88.

⁸⁷ Frankel, Glenn. "How Saddam Built His War Machine – With Western Help", *The Washington Post*, 17 September 1990, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/inatl/longterm/iraq/stories/wartech091790.htm> (accessed 14 April 2013).

⁸⁸ "Iraq Chemical Weapons", *Central Intelligence Agency*, 20 February 1991. Available at: https://www.fas.org/irp/gulf/cia/960702/73922_01.htm (accessed 14 April 2013).

⁸⁹ "Islamic Republic of Iran v. United States of America: Case Concerning the Aerial Incident of 3 July 1988", *International Court of Justice*, 24 July 1990. p 8-15. Available at: <http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/files/79/6629.pdf> (accessed 7 May 2013).

later resolved by the International Court of Justice. The court closed the case at the moment when the United States eventually in 1996 agreed to pay compensation.

The next major American error happened just after the First Gulf War of 1991. Saddam Hussein was defeated and his regime got internationally isolated. Nevertheless he was still in power, furious and prepared to punish everyone who betrayed him. That included the Kurds in the north and the Shia in the south of Iraq, who answered to the American call to revolt against the autocrat's rule.

After the war, Saddam Hussein exploited the fact that America didn't leave any troops in Iraq as peacekeepers and slaughtered thousands of Kurds and Shias with the use of his Republican Guards and some even by chemical weapons.⁹⁰ Needless to say, Iran, the advocate and protector of all Shia Muslims in the world, was more than appalled by the American incapability to protect those who helped them during the war.

The next major thing which happened to the relations between Iran and the United States was the George W. Bush's State of the Union Address in January 2002. Since then, diplomatic ties between the two countries dropped from tense to hostile and this situation remains even today. At the beginning of 2002 President George W. Bush included Iran in his concept of an "Axis of Evil" next to Saddam Hussein's Iraq and communist North Korea. "Iran aggressively pursues these weapons [of mass destruction] and exports terror, while an unelected few repress the Iranian people's hope for freedom,"⁹¹ the President argued in his speech. Although this statement was not totally untrue, George W. Bush overlooked some clear signals from Iran from the preceding years.

The aggressive rhetoric of Ayatollah Khomeini and his pledge to spread the revolution brought Iran to war against Iraq. After eight long years of intense conflict Iran's economy was weak and unstable. Iran suffered from extreme economy cycles, very high inflation, and 14% people lived in poverty [[see Annex 11-13]]. Furthermore the infrastructure took severe damage during the war, especially in the western parts of the country. It took few years for the oil industry to resume its pre-war production.

Needless to say the moral of the military personnel and generally of the people was significantly shaken. Iran now needed to focus on domestic affairs and rebuild the country.

⁹⁰ Keegan. *Válka v Iráku*, p 66-77.

⁹¹ Bush, George W. "State of the Union Address", 29 January 2002. Available at: <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/01/print/20020129-11.html> (accessed 14 April 2013).

Otherwise the regime probably wouldn't survive for a long time. In order to do that, Iran had to change its foreign policy. Thus the previously expansionist regime started to open itself to the world once again and soon rejoined the international community and regional cooperation.⁹²

In the early 1990s Iran reestablished its diplomatic ties with Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Tunisia and normalized its relations with Morocco and Egypt. Also President Khatami showed the world a more friendly face. In comparison with his predecessors Khatami visited many foreign countries and accepted a number of foreign ambassadors, for instance from Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt.

Iran tried also to improve relations with the United States. Just after the Gulf War, Iran expressed a wish to join the security apparatus which was about to control and contain Saddam Hussein. President George H. W. Bush agreed to let Iran in and to begin the process of normalizing, although only after Iran officially condemned terrorism and softened its rhetoric. President Rafsanjani did so on 20 December 1991 at a Friday Prayer's sermon. He condemned both terrorism and anti-Western rhetoric. Nonetheless, Bush had just presidential elections ahead of himself and his political advisors recommended him that any connections with Iran might hurt his preferences. Bush allegedly wanted to start the rapprochement process with Iran just after his reelection, which didn't happen.⁹³

The Clinton era didn't bring any major changes to the American-Iranian relations. Another major attempt to normalize relations with Iran came under President George W. Bush. When he became the President of the United States he ordered his staff and advisors to review American policy towards Iran and explore the possibilities that could improve the complicated relationship. This task was given to Richard Hass who was involved with Iranian issues on and off since the Carter administration.

Richard Hass argued in his findings that sanctions on Iran were ineffective and unnecessarily antagonistic. Hass proposed several minor gestures which would send Teheran some positive signals. For instance, the United States could have abandoned its long-term policy of opposing Iran's membership in the World Trade Organization. Also Vice President Dick Cheney's Energy Commission stated that existing sanctions imposed on Iran should be reviewed. And, additionally, the White House closed its investigation over the bombing of Khobar Towers in

⁹² Hinnebusch and Ehteshami. *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, p 297-303.

⁹³ Ansari. *Confronting Iran*, p 131-132.

1996. In the final report Iran was mentioned, but a lack of evidence prohibited the continuation of denigrating of Iran by American officials.⁹⁴

When Al Qaeda attacked the United States on 11 September 2001, condolences came from all countries around the world with the exception of the Middle East. These tragic events revived many anti-American sentiments across the region and pictures of rejoicing crowds burning American flags were not uncommon.⁹⁵ Yet, surprisingly, there was one country in the region which didn't share the same opinion on the 9/11 attacks. In spite of the complicated history between Iran and Washington over the last twenty years people in Teheran held candlelight vigils and through the Iranian president sent its sincere condolences to the Americans. Iran's Supreme Leader Khamenei even suspended the ritual chant of "Death to America" at Friday prayers at Teheran University.⁹⁶ That pleasantly surprised many people in the White House.

After the attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon the whole concept of American foreign and security politics drastically changed. The main and only concern became Al Qaeda and its stronghold in Afghanistan. Other historical problems turned irrelevant, including those with the Islamic Republic of Iran. Therefore President George W. Bush sent a message via the Swiss asking Iran to join America's "War on Terror" and help the allied forces with confronting Taliban.

Iran always hated the Taliban [[see pages 28-29]]. In September 2001 America and Iran held several meetings, although only on low-levels of staff. Nevertheless, this led to significant agreements. The Iranian government promised to provide search-and-rescue help and assistance with planning, targeting, intelligence cooperation, exchange of tactical information, and providing cultural information. Teheran also agreed to close its borders to fleeing Taliban and Al Qaeda fighters and to allow coalition aircraft to stage from airfields in eastern Iran. On the other hand, the United States pledged to respect and not to violate Iranian airspace. After the fall of Kabul, the Iranian delegates also helped in negotiations with the Northern Alliance and convinced it to adopt democratic principles while establishing a new Afghan government. Such intense cooperation between Iran and the United States was after 1979 unprecedented.

⁹⁴ Murray, Donette. *US Foreign Policy and Iran: American-Iranian Relations since the Islamic Revolution* (New York: Routledge, 2010), p 119.

⁹⁵ Hollander. *Understanding Anti-Americanism*, p 126-130.

⁹⁶ Murray, *US Foreign Policy and Iran*, p 120.

2.2.2 From “Axis of Evil” to 2006

After the fall of the Taliban regime, the White House shifted its focus on a new enemy – Iraq and its autocratic president Saddam Hussein. In order to convince the American public to support an invasion, George W. Bush and his staff needed a tougher rhetoric. They decided to use the classic narrative of good versus evil, which was previously used with success for instance by Woodrow Wilson, Franklin Delano Roosevelt or George Kennan. It is the theme in which the United States is the protectors of justice and freedom, and an enemy of all dictators, tyrants and other daemons. Thus the “Axis of Evil” concept was born.

However, there are serious logical flaws in the concept of the “Axis of Evil”. From the structural point of view, the word “Axis” tries to create a connection between the World War Two and the contemporary world. During the World War, the Axis consisted of Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and Imperial Japan. These three states actually were allies and cooperated on a global scale. Whereas the Bush’s “Axis” contained Iraq, a non-religious autocracy led by Sunni Arabs, Iran, a theocracy led by Shia Persians, and North Korea, an anti-religious communist dictatorship.

There is no significant evidence of intense cooperation and coordination between these three very different countries. The only exception is nowadays loose collaboration of Iran and North Korea in ballistic missile research and production. Nevertheless that is not enough for calling it an alliance. Furthermore presenting Iraq and Iran as allies was absurd. States usually don’t become close allies only fifteen years after they fought a total war against each. Furthermore, George W. Bush used in his speech three basic arguments – the Iranian nuclear program, terrorism sponsoring and human rights.⁹⁷

First, Iran aggressively pursues weapons of mass destruction. The American president was obviously aiming at Iran’s controversial nuclear program. It needs to be mentioned, however, that even all major American intelligence agencies even today doubt Iran is in a process of developing

⁹⁷ Bush, George W. “State of the Union Address”, 29 January 2002. Available at: <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/01/print/20020129-11.html> (accessed 14 April 2013).

a nuclear weapon.⁹⁸ The same opinion was later shared by top Israeli military officers. For instance, this is a statement by Lt. Gen. Benny Gantz from April 2012:⁹⁹

[Iran] is going step by step to the place where it will be able to decide whether to manufacture a nuclear bomb. It hasn't yet decided whether to go the extra mile. (...)It will happen if Khamenei judges that he is invulnerable to a response. I believe he would be making an enormous mistake, and I don't think he will want to go the extra mile. I think the Iranian leadership is composed of very rational people.

In addition, even if Iran decided to build the nuclear warhead, many experts seriously doubt Iran would use it offensively. Iran has no rational cause to do that. It would be suicide if Teheran bombed anyone by itself or if it gave the A-Bomb to a third party, e.g. Hezbollah, Hamas or another extremist group. The American, and possibly also Israeli, retaliation would happen immediately and there is no way how Iran could get out of this confrontation as a victor.

Although Iran often uses aggressive and propagandistic rhetoric, it has always been really a rational player and all its actions were logically explainable. For instance, according to Robert Pape not a single Iranian leader since 1979 has ever shown a “reckless disregard for America’s capacity to retaliate for unprovoked aggression against it, so we have no actual basis to doubt that we could live with a nuclear Iran.”¹⁰⁰

Because the theocratic regime in Teheran is strongly paranoid and wants to ensure its survival, experts estimate the Iranian nuclear bomb would actually serve only as a self-defense capability and a deterrent. Since the end of the Cold War, American forces openly attacked Iraq in 1991, Yugoslavia in 1999, Afghanistan in 2001, Iraq again in 2003, and Libya in 2011. America also used limited military means for instance against Somalia in 1993, Sudan in 1998, Afghanistan in 1998, or Yemen numerous times since 9/11. Neither of these countries possessed a nuclear warhead. On the other hand, the North Korea’s communist regime, arguably the largest threat for international security today, still stays intact as Pyongyang has strong deterrent capabilities, including a nuclear weapon since 2006. This American approach has shown that a state needs to have strong deterrent like a nuclear warhead in order to be left alone by the United

⁹⁸ Risen, James. “U.S. Agencies See No Move by Iran to Build a Bomb”, *The New York Times*, 24 February 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/25/world/middleeast/us-agencies-see-no-move-by-iran-to-build-a-bomb.html?_r=0 (accessed 17 April 2013).

⁹⁹ Harel, Amos. “IDF chief to Haaretz: I do not believe Iran will decide to develop nuclear weapons”, *Haaretz*, 25 April 2012, <http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/idf-chief-to-haaretz-i-do-not-believe-iran-will-decide-to-develop-nuclear-weapons-1.426389> (accessed 17 April 2013).

¹⁰⁰ Pape, Robert. *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 246-247.

States.¹⁰¹ Thus it is absurd to paint the Iranian nuclear program as a pursuit to strengthen Ayatollah's offensive arsenal.

Additionally, the perception of the Iranian nuclear program is covered with an intense bias. Actually, Iran is by far not the only one who has difficulties with the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the United Nations' nuclear watchdog International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). To name just a few, Syria built a nuclear reactor at Al-Kibar without the permission of the IAEA,¹⁰² Libya dismantled its advanced nuclear program just in December 2003, i.e. almost two years after the "Axis of Evil" speech,¹⁰³ and many experts recently expressed concern about Myanmar's missile activities, possible interest in a nuclear program, and close ties with North Korea.¹⁰⁴ Also it needs to be remembered the United States never used such a tough rhetoric against India and Pakistan, who actually developed nuclear weapons, and Israel, who is widely believed to have nuclear capabilities but never actually confirmed it.

Second Bush's argument was related to the problematic of terrorism sponsoring. Iran actually does support many extremist groups, which are perceived as terrorist organizations by the United States and other Western countries [[see pages 16-17]]. Nevertheless, Iran was by far not the only one who at that time supported Hamas or Hezbollah. As it was said previously, the Palestinian issue is perhaps the most important concern of the Muslim world. It is a matter of prestige for the Middle Eastern countries to support armed groups which are at war with Israel.¹⁰⁵

There were also occasional allegations that Iran is secretly cooperating with Al Qaeda, the number one enemy of the United States. However, there never was concussive evidence of this connection and there are numerous arguments why Iran and Al Qaeda can never have a friendly relationship, not to mention an alliance [[see pages 18-20]]. Also it needs to be said there were countries which had much closer connections with Usama bin Laden before 9/11, but weren't mentioned in the "Axis of Evil" speech. For instance, Sudan, Somalia or Yemen had numerous Al Qaeda training camps on their soil, its members were recruited mostly in Saudi Arabia and Egypt, the most generous financial sponsors of the terrorist organization can be traced to Jordan

¹⁰¹ Dialogues with a representative of the Turkish mission at the UN, and with a representative of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) in March 2012.

¹⁰² "Syria", *Nuclear Threat Initiative*, <http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/syria> (accessed 17 April 2013).

¹⁰³ "Libya", *Nuclear Threat Initiative*, <http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/libya> (accessed 17 April 2013).

¹⁰⁴ "Myanmar", *Nuclear Threat Initiative*, <http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/myanmar> (accessed 17 April 2013).

¹⁰⁵ Dialogues with Dr. Lewis Brownstein, a professor at SUNY New Paltz, in March 2012.

or Saudi Arabia, and Al Qaeda affiliates could have been found across the whole region of the Middle East and Northern Africa.

And controversially, George W. Bush's accusation that Iran supports terrorism contains a hint of hypocrisy. There have been allegations, for instance by a Pulitzer Prize laureate Seymour Hersh, that the United States secretly supported the People's Mujahedin of Iran (MEK) few years ago. Although MEK presents itself as a peaceful exile opposition movement, it is considered as a terrorist organization by Teheran, and formerly also by the United States (1997-2012) and the European Union (2002-2009).¹⁰⁶ Iran also reminds the United States its hypocritical position on every convenient occasion, most recently while condemning the Boston bombings in April 2013.¹⁰⁷

The third and last argument of President Bush was the lack of democracy and liberty in Iran. There is not a doubt that Iran has serious issues concerning civil and human rights. Nonetheless the vast majority of the world is being constantly criticized by civil society. And it would be really harsh to declare that the Iranian regime belongs among the worst, especially if you compare it to China, Myanmar, Pakistan, Sudan, Saudi Arabia or Ethiopia. Furthermore, the Iranian political system has at least some democratic principles and religious freedoms [[see pages 20-21]].

As was proven, the "Axis of Evil" concept is overfilled with logical flaws. Although George W. Bush was technically correct with the accusations, Iran is by far not the only problematic regime in the world. Iran can be painted as a sponsor of terrorism, but so can be the vast majority of the Middle East. Iran has a controversial nuclear program, but so do Syria and Myanmar, and formerly Libya. Iran has serious issues with the civil and human rights deficit, but Teheran is by all means not worse than China, Saudi Arabia, Sudan or other autocratic regimes across the globe. Therefore a simple question has to be given: Why Iran?

According to several interpretations the pursuit for a strong rhetoric was by far the main reason for incorporating Iran into the "Axis of Evil" triangle. An interesting point of view is provided for instance by Donette Murray, who is a British Army expert on American foreign

¹⁰⁶ Goodman, Amy. "Seymour Hersh: US Training Iranian Terrorists in Nevada", *AlterNet*, 10 April 2012, http://www.alternet.org/story/154938/seymour_hersh%3A_us_training_iranian_terrorists_in_nevada (accessed 17 April 2013).

¹⁰⁷ Fischer, Max. "Iran condemns the Boston bombing, with a caveat", *The Washington Post*, 17 April 2013, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2013/04/17/iran-condemns-the-boston-bombing-with-a-caveat> (accessed 24 April 2013).

policy, international security and Iran. In his words, Condoleezza Rice and Stephen Hadley, two of the main Bush's advisors on foreign policy, were keen to include Iran to provide some cover for the war plan for Iraq and also to add legitimacy in eyes of the American public.¹⁰⁸

A similar opinion is shared by Kenneth Pollack, a noted former CIA intelligence analyst and expert on Middle Eastern politics and military affairs. According to Mr. Pollack, Iran was added to the "Axis of Evil" at the very last moment and literally served as a random victim. People responsible for writing this Bush's speech sought a catch-phrase and needed a third member of this axis, preferably a third-world country.¹⁰⁹

These interpretations can be supported also by the development just before the "Axis of Evil" speech was presented. In January 2002, the Israelis made a sudden and fortuitous seizure of a ship full of weapons which was destined for the Palestinian Authority. The name of the ship was *Karine A* and the Israelis claimed it was dispatched by Iran, which immediately denied these accusations. Also many experts doubted the Iranians had to do anything with it, because all Iranian shipments are usually sent by air, not by a boat, and through Syria or Lebanon. Nonetheless, the *Karine A* incident led to the connection of Iran and terrorism in the Western media, thus Iran became an easy object for George W. Bush and his advisors.¹¹⁰

Murray and Pollack's interpretations, the *Karine A* media case, and numerous logical flaws suggest that the "Axis of Evil" was an artificially created concept which only rhetorically supported the Iraq Invasion of 2003. The vast majority of Americans nevertheless accepted the Bush's speech and consequently supported the Iraq Invasion of 2003. The "Axis of Evil" concept served its purpose well in spite of its ridiculous design.

After a promising start of the decade in the American-Iranian relations, the 2002 State of the Union Address shocked the whole regime in Teheran. After two decades of first-class hostility, the last months seemed to be a breakthrough. However, the "Axis of Evil" speech eliminated all previous progress. In response, Teheran boycotted the next scheduled Geneva meeting concerning Afghan affairs.¹¹¹

After George W. Bush presented his "Axis of Evil" speech and invaded Iraq a year later, Teheran became terrified of the possibility that it could become the next one on the American

¹⁰⁸ Murray, *US Foreign Policy and Iran*, p 123.

¹⁰⁹ Pollack, Kenneth M. *The Persian Puzzle: The Conflict between Iran and America* (New York: Random House, 2005), p 352.

¹¹⁰ Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p 186-187.

¹¹¹ Axworthy, *Dějiny Iránu*, p 209-215.

military “to do” list. From the geopolitical perspective, Iran couldn’t get into a more difficult situation. In the west was Iraq, newly occupied by American armed forces. Turkey in the north-west refused the Americans to build a northern access to Iraq during the 2003 invasion, but still was a solid NATO member. American battleships and carriers controlled the Persian Gulf to the south, and the nearby Saudi airbases also could have been used by the American forces in case of need. To the east was Afghanistan, home for hundreds of thousands American soldiers and their allies. Pakistan in the south-west was an ally of the United States, although not as stable as the Americans would wish. Also it needs to be remembered that Israeli fighters, bombers and ballistic missiles were also within range. Simply said, in case of war, Iran could have faced hostile forces from almost all directions. That is not a situation any defense strategist would like to get into.

In order to prevent war, Iran tried numerous times to normalize relations with the United States during the next years. The first gesture happened in February 2002, when Iran answered the American demand and released Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, an Afghan mujahedeen commander. Teheran also froze his assets a year later.¹¹²

The most essential bargain was made in 2003. Teheran offered the United States to cease its support to Hezbollah and Palestinian militant groups, to make its nuclear program more transparent, and to help the United States in stabilizing newly occupied Iraq. In exchange, Iran wanted Washington to end its hostility, to end all sanctions, and to disband MEK and repatriate its members. According to Lawrence Wilkerson, a former senior U.S. official, the offer was quickly rejected by the Vice-President Dick Chaney:¹¹³

We [The U.S. Department of State] thought it was a very propitious moment to do that [accept the offer], but as soon as it got to the White House, and as soon as it got to the Vice-President's office, the old mantra of 'We don't talk to evil'... reasserted itself.

After that, Iran repeatedly proposed a variety of concessions regarding its nuclear program. For instance Iran offered in 2005 to lower the number of its operating centrifuges. Teheran wanted in return America to ease the sanctions. The United States refused as it didn’t want any enrichment going on at all. Iranian also numerously bargained to switch from multilateral talks to only bilateral with the United States. Washington didn’t show any interest to accept that.

¹¹² Tahir, Muhammad. “Gulbuddin Hekmatyar’s Return to the Afghan Insurgency”, *The Jamestown Foundation*, 29 June 2008, http://web.archive.org/web/20080602104444/http://www.jamestown.org/news_details.php?news_id=325 (accessed 12 May 2013).

¹¹³ BBC Newsnight, “Washington 'snubbed Iran offer’”, *BBC News*, 18 January 2007, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/6274147.stm (accessed 17 April 2013).

Furthermore, Iran offered several times to make a swap deal. The most notable bargain was presented in May 2010, this time with the help of Turkey and Brazil. Both were at that time non-permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. According to this proposal, Iran was supposed to ship 1,200kg of low-enriched uranium to Turkey and should have received 120kg of nuclear fuel from the Vienna group (U.S., Russia, France and the IAEA).¹¹⁴

This effort was, however, toppled by the United States which simply didn't believe Iran was serious about this bargain [[see page 55]] and which successfully pushed for new economic sanctions in the UN Security Council only few weeks later (S/RES/1929). Both Turkey and Brazil voted against the resolution and Lebanon abstained. Nevertheless other twelve members approved it and the resolution came into effect. Iran consequently abandoned the proposal. The resolution also turned to be a major blow to all Turkish-, Brazilian- and Iranian-American relations.

During the recent years, Iran also repeatedly expressed the desire to engage into bilateral talks with the United States, which were offered to both George W. Bush¹¹⁵ and Barack Obama.¹¹⁶ This bargain also received some international support, most notably from the Iraqi Shia leaders.¹¹⁷ Nonetheless, the United States so far didn't agree to hold direct negotiations with Iran. Although Barack Obama expressed during one of the presidential debates with Mitt Romney that his administration is open to such a possibility in the future,¹¹⁸ the diplomatic meetings so far remain in the multilateral format of the P5+1 group.

Another source of tensions between Iran and the United States are numerous economic sanctions, authorized by both recent American presidents – George W. Bush and Barack Obama [[see pages 48-49, 56-57]]. Although all of the historic problems might be eventually forgotten, there will not be a chance for a major improvement in American-Iranian relations as long as the embargo goes on.

¹¹⁴ BBC News, “Iran signs nuclear fuel-swap deal with Turkey”, *BBC News*, 17 May 2010, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8685846.stm> (accessed 17 April 2013).

¹¹⁵ Arsu, Sebnem. “Iran Open to U.S. Diplomatic Talks, Official Says”, *The New York Times*, 19 July 2008, http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/19/world/middleeast/19iran.html?partner=rssnyt&emc=rss&_r=0 (accessed 15 May 2013).

¹¹⁶ “Iran seeks 'authentic' bilateral US nuclear talks”, *BBC News*, 3 February 2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-21313384> (accessed 15 May 2013).

¹¹⁷ Fathi, Nazila. “Iraqi Shiite Calls for U.S.-Iran Talks”, *The New York Times*, 6 February 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/02/06/world/middleeast/06iran.html> (accessed 15 May 2013).

¹¹⁸ Borger, Julian. “Obama opens door to bilateral negotiations with Iran”, *The Guardian*, 3 February 2013, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/oct/23/obama-iran-negotiations-presidential-debate> (accessed 15 May 2013).

3. U.S. Foreign Policy 2006-2010

3.1. National Security Strategy 2006

The complicated relationship with Iran brought the American diplomacy and security planning a very difficult task. There are only few other topics which were similarly challenging as the approach towards Iran. The ultimate goal for the period between 2006 and 2010 was described in the National Security Strategy (NSS), published in March 2006.

Iran was mentioned in three chapters of the NSS 2006. First, the Iranian regime was painted as a tyranny among a group of states like North Korea, Syria, Cuba, Belarus, Burma, and Zimbabwe. This document named tyrannies as a security threat, because: “All tyrannies threaten the world’s interest in freedom’s expansion, and some tyrannies, in their pursuit of WMD or sponsorship of terrorism, threaten our immediate security interests as well.” According to the document, although an end to tyranny will not be enough to end all global ills, tyranny must not be tolerated, because tyranny is a crime of man, not a fact of nature.

Second, Iran was named in the chapter regarding terrorism. In this section, Iran is portrayed as an ally of terror. Together with Syria, Iran has allegedly chosen to be an enemy of freedom, justice, and peace. The NSS 2006 stresses that the United States and its allies “make no distinction between those who commit acts of terror and those who support and harbor them, because they are equally guilty of murder.” According to the document, the world must hold these regimes to account.

And finally, Iran was referred to as a threat to WMDs proliferation prevention. According to the NSS 2006, Iran repeatedly violated the obligations of the NPT safeguards and refused to provide objective guarantees that its nuclear program served peaceful purposes only. The NSS 2006 stated that the United States may face no greater challenge from a single country than from Iran.

Eventually, the NSS 2006 summarized all the facts and concluded what should be the American approach regarding Iran for the next four years:¹¹⁹

The Iranian regime sponsors terrorism; threatens Israel; seeks to thwart Middle East peace; disrupts democracy in Iraq; and denies the aspirations of its people for freedom. The nuclear

¹¹⁹ National Security Strategy 2006. Available at: <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/nsc/nss/2006/index.html> (accessed 27 April 2013).

issue and our other concerns can ultimately be resolved only if the Iranian regime makes the strategic decision to change these policies, open up its political system, and afford freedom to its people. This is the ultimate goal of U.S. policy.

In the interim, we will continue to take all necessary measures to protect our national and economic security against the adverse effects of their bad conduct. The problems lie with the illicit behavior and dangerous ambition of the Iranian regime, not the legitimate aspirations and interests of the Iranian people. Our strategy is to block the threats posed by the regime while expanding our engagement and outreach to the people the regime is oppressing.

In short, the NSS 2006 blamed Teheran for all the problems of the contemporary American-Iranian relationship and declared that the United States shall not take any compromises. The American foreign policy would change only under the circumstance that Iran would completely change its behavior from both the inside and outside. And, until Teheran does this, the United States will undertake all necessary measures to protect its security interests. It was then up to President Bush to meet this confrontational foreign policy in practice.

3.2. George W. Bush

Although George W. Bush wanted to focus mostly on domestic affairs when he became president, the tragic events of 11 September 2001 drastically shifted his attention to international issues. Since 9/11, the Bush administration invested a lot of effort to unite the world in the War on Terror. On the other hand, under the doctrine “you are with us or against us”, Bush pushed for international isolation and tough sanctions against countries which opposed the global American leadership, and, according to the White House, supported terror and were a threat to the international security. To name just a few, among these countries was Afghanistan under rule of the Taliban, Saddam Hussein’s Iraq, the communist North Korea, Bashar al-Assad’s Syria, or the theocratic regime in Iran.

An indicator of George W. Bush’s foreign policy priorities is the number of how many times he mentioned a country in his State of the Union Addresses [[see Annex 14]]. In his 2001 State of the Union Address, George W. Bush didn’t mention Iraq, Iran, or North Korea even once. Foreign policy played only a minor role in his plans. He talked instead about improving the educational system, Medicare and social security, or about rising pensions for the veterans.¹²⁰

¹²⁰ Bush, George W. “State of the Union Address”, 27 February 2001. Available at: <http://www.infoplease.com/t/hist/state-of-the-union/214.html> (accessed 27 April 2013).

In 2002, Afghanistan was referred to the most, obviously because of the hunt after bin Laden. Since then, Iraq dominated President Bush's priorities. In the Iranian case, although Bush mentioned it in all of his remaining addresses, the theocratic regime was never Bush's main concern. Nevertheless, Iran received more attention since 2006.

In the 2006 Address, President Bush pointed out the same three problems regarding to Iran which he had already used in his 2002 State of the Union/Axis of Evil speech [[see pages 35, 38]] – terror sponsoring, lack of transparency of the nuclear program, and the democratic deficit. The President acknowledged that the people of Iran are not the problem, only their unelected leaders. He then expressed a wish that Iran and the United States would become allies again in the future:¹²¹

Tonight, let me speak directly to the citizens of Iran: America respects you, and we respect your country. We respect your right to choose your own future and win your own freedom. And our nation hopes one day to be the closest of friends with a free and democratic Iran.

In the next Address, George W. Bush spoke about the nuclear program, but only quickly in a single short sentence. The democratic deficit and the violations of human rights weren't even mentioned. On the other hand, the President dedicated a large portion of his speech to the problem of terrorism. The Palestinian organizations and Hezbollah were also remembered, but Bush focused more on the Sunni and Shia extremism which brought blood and suffering on Iraq. He especially referred to the terrorist attack on the Golden Mosque in Samarra, Iraq, one of the holiest monuments of Shia Islam:¹²²

This atrocity, directed at a Muslim house of prayer, was designed to provoke retaliation from Iraqi Shia – and it succeeded. Radical Shia elements, some of whom receive support from Iran, formed death squads. The result was a tragic escalation of sectarian rage and reprisal that continues to this day.

In his final State of the Union Address, President Bush accused Iran of “funding and training militia groups in Iraq, supporting Hezbollah terrorists in Lebanon, and backing Hamas' efforts to undermine peace in the Holy Land.” Furthermore, he again reminded the Iranian people that the United States respects their traditions and history, and that America wishes the Iranians more

¹²¹ Bush, George W. “State of the Union Address”, 31 January 2006. Available at: <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/stateoftheunion/2006/> (accessed 27 April 2013).

¹²² Bush, George W. “State of the Union Address”, 23 January 2007. Available at: <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2007/01/20070123-2.html> (accessed 27 April 2013).

liberty and freedom. However, according to Bush, the theocratic regime in Teheran opposes and counters any democratic changes wherever freedom advances in the Middle East.¹²³

President Bush also verbally attacked the Iranian regime on other occasions. For instance, Bush made a direct appeal to the Iranian people in his speech at the United Nations on 19 September 2006. He again expressed the United States have problems with the theocratic regime, not with the people. According to Bush, the Iranians deserved to determine their own future in a more liberal regime, to elect their own rulers, and to live in peace and prosperity. The President also highlighted the effort of American diplomacy towards Iran:¹²⁴

Despite what the regime tells you, we have no objection to Iran's pursuit of a truly peaceful nuclear power program. We're working toward a diplomatic solution to this crisis. And as we do, we look to the day when you can live in freedom, and America and Iran can be good friends and close partners in the cause of peace.

Another example of George W. Bush's rhetoric regarding Iran was his statement on 17 October 2007. The American president warned that a nuclear-armed Iran could be the trigger of a World War Three. He aimed particularly on Ahmadinejad's proclamation, according to which "Israel would be wiped off the map", despite the fact this Ahmadinejad's quote was very badly translated and interpreted [[see pages 30-31]]. Bush furthermore explained his objective: "My intent is to continue to rally the world, to send a focused signal to the Iranian government that we will continue to work to isolate you in the hopes that at some point somebody else shows up and says it's not worth the isolation."¹²⁵

President Bush also tried to push Iran multilaterally. For instance, during a Middle Eastern trip in January 2008, he urged the American allies in the Persian Gulf to rally against Iran "before it is too late". He also called Iran, once again, the world leading sponsor of terror and expressed serious concerns regarding the Iranian nuclear program.¹²⁶

In his last two years as President, George W. Bush didn't issue any Executive Orders (EO) regarding Iran. However, his EO 13382 from 28 June 2005, which froze the assets of individuals connected in any way with the Iranian nuclear program, was still in effect.

¹²³ Bush, George W. "State of the Union Address", 28 January 2008. Available at: <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2008/01/20080128-13.html> (accessed 27 April 2013).

¹²⁴ Bush, George W. "Speech at the United Nations", 19 September 2006. Available at: <http://edition.cnn.com/2006/POLITICS/09/19/bush.transcript> (accessed 27 April 2013).

¹²⁵ Stolberg, Sheryl Gay. "Nuclear-Armed Iran Risks World War, Bush Says", *The New York Times*, 18 October 2007, www.nytimes.com/2007/10/18/washington/18prexy.html (accessed 27 April 2013).

¹²⁶ Myers, Steven Lee. "Bush Urges Unity against Iran", *The New York Times*, 14 January 2008, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/14/world/middleeast/14prexy.html> (accessed 27 April 2013).

Nonetheless, during the same period, the Congress passed one bill regarding Iran. The bill was enacted on 30 September 2006 under the name Iran Freedom Support Act. This document was sponsored by Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, a Republican and a Congresswoman from Florida, and cosponsored by two Democrats and one Republican. The approval process went smoothly. The document was passed by the House of Representative by a voice vote, passed two days later by the Senate without an amendment and unanimously, and signed by the President on the same day. At this time, the House of Representatives was controlled by Democrats 233-202 and the Senate was tied 44-44.

The Iran Freedom Support Act of 2006 supported previous President Clinton's Executive Orders, which terminated almost all trade with Iran, and made these sanctions permanent. Furthermore, this document extended a provision of the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act of 1996, according to which the President was obliged to impose two or more listed sanctions [[see Annex 16]] on all foreign companies which invested in the Iranian nuclear program. And most importantly, this bill authorized the President to provide financial and political assistance to domestic and foreign individuals, organizations, and other entities working for the purpose of supporting and promoting democracy for Iran.¹²⁷

In 2006, there was an attempt to pass a second bill regarding Iran, although this time unsuccessfully. The document was named Iran Human Rights Act and sponsored by Sam Brownback, a Republican Senator for Kansas. If this act passed the State Department would establish a special envoy for human rights and democracy in Iran. Additionally, the act called for supporting groups which promoted democratic and human rights development in Iran, called for fulfilling the NPT safeguards, and officially opposed the use of terror. The bill would also reform pro-American broadcast to the Iranian people.¹²⁸ This document didn't get past the committee stage.

The George W. Bush administration was also very active at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). During the last two years of Bush's presidency, the United States successfully pushed five resolutions. The first one was the Resolution 1696, passed on 31 July 2006. Fourteen countries voted in favor, only Qatar was against. This resolution included the Chapter VII clause,

¹²⁷ Iran Freedom Support Act of 2006, H.R.6198, enacted on 30 September 2006. Available at: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-109publ293/pdf/PLAW-109publ293.pdf> (accessed 27 April 2013).

¹²⁸ Iran Human Rights Act of 2006, S.3870.IS, introduced on 7 September 2006, not enacted. Available at: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-109s3870is/pdf/BILLS-109s3870is.pdf> (accessed 27 April 2013).

thus all mentioned regulations were legally binding and enforceable by sanctions.¹²⁹ The Security Council demanded Iran to suspend all enrichment activities, including research and development. Among else, the UNSC also called upon all member States to prevent transfer of any items, materials, goods and technology that could contribute to the enrichment process in Iran.¹³⁰

The second resolution, number 1737, was enacted on 23 December 2006. In this case, all fifteen members approved the resolution, including Qatar which voted against the previous resolution. Acting under the Chapter VII of the Charter, the UNSC decided that Iran shall without further delay suspend all enrichment activities and working on heavy water-related projects. Furthermore, the Security Council repeated the decision that all States shall prevent supply, sale or transfer of any items and technology that could be usable in the enrichment process and extended this provision on all heavy water-related projects. States also should deny access on their territories of any transportation vehicles that would carry material for the Iranian nuclear program. And finally, the UNSC ordered the States to freeze all assets that are owned or controlled by persons or entities listed in the resolution, with the exception of funds designated for humanitarian help.¹³¹

Resolution 1747 was passed by the Security Council on 24 March 2007, accepted by all fifteen members, again including Qatar. Under Chapter VII, the UNSC called upon all States to exercise vigilance and restraint regarding the entry into or transit through their territories of all individuals who are engaged in, directly associated with or providing support for the Iranian nuclear program, with the exception of State's own nationals. Also, the Security Council called upon all States and financial institutions not to enter into new deals with Iran, except for humanitarian and development purposes.¹³²

Resolution 1803 was enacted on 3 March 2008. In this case, Indonesia abstained, although previously voted in favor of resolution 1747. Fourteen other members accepted the resolution, including Libya which replaced Qatar as the Arab representative in the UNSC. Under Chapter VII, the UNSC decided that all States shall prevent the entry into or transit through their territories of additional individuals, listed in the resolution. Again, this provision didn't force any States to restrict movement of their own nationals. Furthermore, the Security Council called upon

¹²⁹ Dialogues with a member of the UN Security Council supporting staff in February 2012.

¹³⁰ Resolution S/RES/1696, United Nations Security Council, enacted on 31 July 2006.

¹³¹ Resolution S/RES/1737, United Nations Security Council, enacted on 23 December 2006.

¹³² Resolution S/RES/1747, United Nations Security Council, enacted on 24 March 2007.

all States to exercise vigilance over the activities of financial institutions with all Iranian banks. The resolution 1803 also marked the beginning of diplomatic talks between Iran and the P5+1 group (U.S., U.K., France, Russia, China, and Germany).¹³³

Resolution 1835, enacted on 27 September 2008, was the last resolution enacted during the Bush administration. The resolution was passed unanimously, although this time the document didn't include the Chapter VII clause. Therefore one might say this resolution served only as a warning, not as a source of further sanctions. Resolution 1835 only repeatedly called upon Iran to comply fully and without delay with its obligations under previous resolutions of the UNSC, and to meet the requirements of the IAEA Board of Governors.¹³⁴

The Bush administration also used other means of dealing with Iran, in particular soft power, the ballistic missile shield, and selling weapons to Middle Eastern allies. First, George W. Bush invested vast funds into soft power, which was called the "freedom agenda". In the first years of the Bush presidency, the White House used on this foreign policy tool annually only \$11 million at max. These expenditures skyrocketed in 2006 up to \$75 million and continued to rise in the consequent years.

These funds were used mostly for student and internship exchange programs. In February 2006, the Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice supported the exchange study initiatives with Iran: "I've read that it is forbidden in some quarters to play Beethoven and Mozart in Tehran. We hope that Iranians can play it in New York or Los Angeles." Some funds went also on supporting civil society organizations both outside and inside Iran, and on public diplomacy in general.¹³⁵

However, numerous experts on the Middle East accused Bush's administration for spending vast resources into the "freedom agenda" without even understanding Iran. As a result, these public diplomacy programs usually had the directly opposite impact in Iran than the White House wished for [[see pages 66-67]].

Another tool of the United States' soft power is the radio, television, and internet broadcasting. The most notable stations are Voice of America, Radio Free Europe, and Radio Free Asia. The first two are also available in Persian language. These stations are managed by the

¹³³ Resolution S/RES/1803, United Nations Security Council, enacted on 3 March 2008.

¹³⁴ Resolution S/RES/1835, United Nations Security Council, enacted on 27 September 2008.

¹³⁵ Azimi, Negar. "Hard Realities of Soft Power", *The New York Times Magazine*, 24 June 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/24/magazine/24ngo-t.html> (accessed 28 April 2013).

U.S. Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG). Its budget continued to grow during the last two years of the Bush administration, although only slightly [[see Annex 15]].

The next tool of the Bush administration was the ballistic missile shield, which should have incorporated military bases in Poland and the Czech Republic. The program was called Missile Defense Agency and it was aimed at only limited ballistic missile attacks, thus against Iran. Although this defense would be worthless against a massive ballistic missile attack from Russia or China, these two countries expressed deep concern about the American plans.¹³⁶

Another part of George W. Bush's containment strategy was selling weapons to the American allies in the Middle East. The 9/11 effect resulted in much larger American weapon sales, even to states which had bad human rights records, but supported the United States in the War on Terror. The sales to Africa, the Middle East, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia rose by 400% since the five years prior to 11 September 2001. Practically almost all states in the close perimeter to Iran had the opportunity to buy weapons from the United States.¹³⁷

3.3. Barack Obama

Iran has been a challenging issue not only for President Obama, but also for Barack Obama as a presidential candidate. He presented his plan for Iran in November 2007. At that time, Obama was trying to distinguish himself from other presidential candidates, especially from Hillary Clinton, his main rival in the Democratic primaries. Thus he envisioned his determination to always prioritize diplomacy and to engage in negotiations without any preconditions even with countries like Iran, North Korea or Syria.

Obama mentioned the Iran support for terrorist activities and the nuclear program as serious threats to international security. However, his main concern at that time was Iraq, its stabilization and the Iranian influence on the Shia majority. Obama expressed that Iran could be awarded for instance by a World Trade Organization (WTO) membership if became more cooperative. He continued:¹³⁸

¹³⁶ Masters, Johnatan. "U.S. Ballistic Missile Defense", *Council on Foreign Relations*, 1 May 2013, <http://www.cfr.org/defensehomeland-security/us-ballistic-missile-defense/p30607> (accessed 13 May 2013).

¹³⁷ Sherwood, Ross. "US Weapons Sales: President Bush Arming Fellow Tyrants Globally", *Global Research*, 19 January 2008, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/us-weapons-sales-president-bush-arming-fellow-tyrants-globally/7850> (accessed 13 May 2013).

¹³⁸ Gordon, Michael R. and Zeleny, Jeff. "Obama Envisions New Iran Approach", *The New York Times*, 2 November 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/02/us/politics/02obama.html> (accessed 29 April 2013).

I think it is important for us to send a signal that we are not hell-bent on regime change, just for the sake of regime change, but expect changes in behavior. And there are both carrots and there are sticks available to them for those changes in behavior.

On another occasion, in July 2008, candidate Obama again discussed the Iranian problem on his visit to Israel. In his speech in Sderot, when talking about Iran, he focused this time just on its nuclear program. Obama explained that a nuclear Iran would be a grave threat and the world must prevent Teheran from obtaining the technology. The presidential candidate hinted that his approach would give the Iranians a chance to rejoin the international community if they gave up their pursuit for nuclear weapons, but also would face more serious sanctions if refused to fulfill their NPT obligations.¹³⁹

Although Barack Obama was quite active in addressing foreign issues as a candidate, he didn't give them too much space in his first two official speeches as the President of the United States – his Inaugural Address in January 2009 and his first State of the Union a month later. He focused rather on domestic affairs. However, Obama didn't neglect the Iranian problematic for long. The President demonstrated his talent in using new media and made a direct message to the Iranian people on YouTube in March 2009.

In this three and a half minutes long video, Obama at first highlighted how the Iranian nation benefited the mankind: “Over many centuries your art, your music, literature and innovation have made the world a better and more beautiful place. (...) We know that you are a great civilization, and your accomplishments have earned the respect of the United States and the world.” He continued with a statement that the United States and Iran have common goals, shared by the whole humanity, like giving opportunities to children, protecting families, supporting the progress of the community, and building peace between nations. Obama then turned to the Iranian leaders:¹⁴⁰

We have serious differences that have grown over time. My administration is now committed to diplomacy that addresses the full range of issues before us, and to pursuing constructive ties among the United States, Iran and the international community. His process will not be advanced by threats. We seek instead engagement that is honest and grounded in mutual respect. You, too, have a choice. The United States wants the Islamic Republic of Iran to take its rightful place in the community of nations.

You have that right, but it comes with real responsibilities, and that place cannot be reached through terror or arms, but rather through peaceful actions that demonstrate the true greatness

¹³⁹ Obama, Barack. “Speech in Sderot, Israel”, 23 July 2008. Available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/23/us/politics/23text-obama.html> (accessed 29 April 2013).

¹⁴⁰ Obama, Barack. “The President's Message to the Iranian People”, *The White House*, 19 March 2009. Available at: http://youtu.be/HY_utC-hrjI (accessed 29 April 2013).

of the Iranian people and civilization. And the measure of that greatness is not the capacity to destroy. It is your demonstrated ability to build and create.

President Obama again remembered Iran in his second State of the Union Address, presented on 27 January 2010. He emphasized the importance of multilateral effort to stop nuclear weapons technology proliferation. According to the President, that was the reason why the international community got more united and why the Iranian theocratic regime became more isolated. Obama afterwards promised the Iranian leaders that sanctions will expand if Teheran continued with ignoring its international obligations. Obama also gave support to the people in Iran who were fighting for their individual rights.¹⁴¹

The diplomatic approach of George W. Bush and Barack Obama was very different. Bush preferred an uncompromising stance and was prepared to ease the embargo only after Iran changed its whole policy both internally and externally. For Bush, there was almost no maneuver space in his foreign policy. And from the Iranian perspective, it was almost a mission impossible for Teheran to bring any negotiations with the Bush administration to any form of success.

On the other hand, Barack Obama gave Iran at least the opportunity to improve the complicated relationship. Obama's approach could be labeled as Tit for Tat diplomacy. That means, if the other side makes a positive gesture it will be also answered with a positive act of a similar scale. Nonetheless, if Iran doesn't play by the rules and doesn't cooperate the White House will respond with extending of the sanctions and Iran will get even more isolated from the international community. However, the difference was the strongest only in rhetoric. In practice, the change in the White House actually didn't bring anything different for Iran. A perfect example was the UNSC resolution 1929.

In May 2010, Iran offered a compromise to the international community. Teheran was ready to exchange some of its low-enriched uranium for nuclear fuel made abroad. This deal was prepared with the help of Brazil and Turkey, two members of the UN Security Council, thus this bargain had some credibility. If Obama applied the rules of Tit for Tat America would answer with a positive step. Even if Washington decided that this deal is not agreeable, Obama could have rewarded Iran for the gesture, for instance by partly lifting the embargo or any other minor action.

¹⁴¹ Obama, Barack. "State of the Union Address", 27 January 2010. Available at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-state-union-address> (accessed 29 April 2013).

On the contrary, the United States pushed for new sanctions at the UN Security Council. The White House justified its action by several arguments. First, the Obama administration argued that a similar deal was on the table in October 2009 and Iran eventually backtracked. Second, in this deal Iran would have given up only a half of its uranium deposits, not everything like in the previous offer. Third, Iran already said it would continue with enriching the uranium which would have stayed on Iranian soil, which was a direct breach of the previous UN resolutions. And finally, this deal also came during the negotiations about the new resolution, thus the United States accused Iran of only playing for time.¹⁴² In short, the Tit for Tat diplomacy didn't work out in this case, because Obama simply didn't believe Iran meant its offer seriously.

The nuclear swap deal was immediately scrapped after the Security Council enacted the resolution 1929 on 9 June 2010. This time, only twelve members of the Security Council approved the document. Turkey and Brazil voted against, and Lebanon abstained. Although Resolution 1929 was the only resolution regarding Iran which was pushed in the UN Security Council during the first two years of the Obama administration, it was also the strictest resolution passed by the UNSC up to date.

Acting under Chapter VII, the Security Council affirmed that Iran has failed to meet its obligations of the IAEA Board of Governors and of the previous UNSC resolutions. The Security Council furthermore requested Iran to fully cooperate with the IAEA inspectors on all outstanding issues and to comply with its IAEA Safeguard Agreement without further delay. Additionally, the UNSC decided that Iran shall not acquire any interest in any commercial activity in any State involving uranium mining, production or use of nuclear materials and technology.

For the first time, the resolution 1929 also forbade Iran to undertake any activity related to ballistic missiles capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including development and purchasing technology abroad. The resolution also ordered all States to freeze any funds of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards and its members. And finally, the UNSC authorized all States to inspect, in accordance with international law, all cargo to and from Iran if there were reasonable grounds to believe the cargo contained prohibited items.¹⁴³

¹⁴² Sanger, David E. and Slackman, Michael. "U.S. is Skeptical on Iranian Deal for Nuclear Fuel", *The New York Times*, 17 May 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/18/world/middleeast/18iran.html> (accessed 29 April 2013).

¹⁴³ Resolution S/RES/1929, United Nations Security Council, enacted on 9 June 2010.

During the first two years of the Obama administration, the Congress discussed two bills concerning Iran. The first one was introduced in February 2010 and was named the Iran Human Rights Act. This document was sponsored by Michael E. McMahon, a Democrat and a Congressman for New York, and cosponsored by 29 other members of the House of Representatives from both parties. This bill was aimed at sanctioning people connected with abusing human rights in Iran.¹⁴⁴ This bill was, however, not enacted by the Congress as it didn't get past the committee phase.

Nonetheless, the more or less same provision was achieved by Barack Obama's Executive Order 13553, issued on 28 September 2010. This EO blocked property of individuals which were named in the document as people connected with serious abuses of human rights abuses in Iran. These individuals, named by the EO, were generally members of the Iranian government, members of any subdivisions or agencies to the Iranian government, and all their family members. These people received no compensation from the American government.¹⁴⁵

The second document was more successful in the Congress. The bill was presented under the name Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act. Its sponsor was Howard L. Bergman, who used to be at that time a member of the Democratic Party and a Representative of California. The document had a huge bipartisan support as other 343 Congressmen and Congresswomen cosponsored it. The bill was introduced in House already on 30 April 2009. The final version was eventually passed on 24 June 2010 by an overwhelming majority of 408 in favor and 8 against, and signed by the President on 1 July 2010. Both chambers of the Congress were at that time controlled by the Democrats, 257-178 in the House and 57-41 in the Senate.

In the document, the Congress expressed an opinion that international diplomatic efforts would be more likely to be effective if strong additional sanctions were imposed on the Iranian regime. The first major provision was the extension of sanctions on individuals, companies and governments which invested in the Iranian nuclear program. Previously, the President was obliged to impose two or more sanctions listed in the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act of 1996 [[see Annex 16]]. Now, the President had to impose three or more of these sanctions. The same

¹⁴⁴ Iran Human Rights Act of 2010. H.R. 4647, introduced on 23 February 2010, not enacted. Available at: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-111hr4647ih/pdf/BILLS-111hr4647ih.pdf> (accessed 29 April 2013).

¹⁴⁵ Obama, Barack. Executive Order 13553, enacted on 28 September 2010. Available at: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2010-10-01/pdf/2010-24839.pdf> (accessed 29 April 2013).

measure was newly also applicable on individuals and companies investing in the Iranian oil industry, and on entities for violation of provisions regarding WMDs or advanced conventional weapons. This provision is at this moment effective until 31 December 2016.

Second, the bill authorizes a state or local government to enforce measures to divest its assets from or prohibit the investment of assets it controls in any person that has invested in the Iranian energy sector. Third, the document banned all imports of Iranian origin goods. This provision, however, had only little impact as the United States hasn't imported any Iranian crude oil since 1991 [[see Annex 17]]. Only American consumers got affected, because this measure included Iranian luxury goods, for instance carpets, pistachios and caviar.

And fourth, the document ordered the President to require an export license for American goods, services, and technologies that, if diverted to Iran, would contribute to Iran's nuclear program, weapons programs, defense capabilities, or support of terrorism. The President should temporarily abandon this licensing requirement if the importing country takes specified measures to prevent diversions to Iran.¹⁴⁶

Like Bush, Barack Obama also used additional means to deal with Iran. His administration invested in soft power, it used containment tools like the ballistic missile shield and selling weapons to other Middle Eastern states, and for the first time in American history engaged into cyber warfare.

The most known soft power activity of Barack Obama was his YouTube message from March 2009. Besides that, Barack Obama continued in using other traditional soft power tools, particularly student exchanges and projects of the U.S. Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG), responsible for Voice of America and Radio Free Europe. Obama was a bit more generous than his predecessor, although the change was effectively minimal [[see Annex 15]].

One of the first actions of President Obama was changing the Bush's ballistic missile project. Barack Obama didn't terminate it, only altered it. On 17 September 2009, Obama announced his plans regarding the ballistic missile defense program. The name of this project is "Phased Adaptive Approach" and its goal is to build a solid ballistic missile defense in Europe. It's built

¹⁴⁶ Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010, H.R.2194, enacted on 1 July 2010. Available at: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-111publ195/pdf/PLAW-111publ195.pdf> (accessed 1 May 2013).

particularly on the Aegis missile defense system with parts located in both land military bases and seaborne. It was designed to be deployed in four phases between years 2011 and 2021.¹⁴⁷

Barack Obama also continued with arms sales to the Middle Eastern states. The primary goal of the Obama administrative was to help the states in the Gulf to have air superiority, and not only against Iranian jet fighters, but also against ballistic missiles. An example of recent continuity of this plan was the United Arab Emirates' announcement in 2011 that it will buy Lockheed Martin's mobile land-based anti-ballistic missile system, which should be able to counter any contemporary Iranian arsenal. However, arming the Middle Eastern states is a complex challenge for the Obama administration. That is because Barack Obama needs to balance the defensive capabilities of the Arab states, so they could defeat Iran, but not Israel.¹⁴⁸

And finally, the Obama administration was the first one in American history which ordered large cyber attacks on another country. According to recent reports, Obama secretly ordered in his first months in the White House the deployment of advanced computer viruses targeted against the Iranian nuclear program. The first virus was detected in 2010 and received the name Stuxnet [[see page 18]].¹⁴⁹

3.4. National Security Strategy 2010

In May 2010, Barack Obama published his own National Security Strategy (NSS). It was very different than NSS06 even from the first glance. George W. Bush visibly focused more on spreading democracy and freedom, and on the issue of terrorism, while Barack Obama gave more space to human rights, development, or climate change [[see Annex 18]].

The NSS10 also criticized Iran, nonetheless in a more refined way. The topics remained the same – support for terrorism, stability of Iraq, and pursuit for nuclear weapons. Stress was put especially on meeting the obligations of the NTP and IAEA. The NSS10 used Obama's Tit for Tat approach:

¹⁴⁷ Collina, Tom Z. "The European Phased Adaptive Approach at a Glance", *Arms Control Association*, February 2013, <http://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/Phasedadaptiveapproach> (accessed 13 May 2013).

¹⁴⁸ Thompson, Loren. "Obama Makes Arms Sales A Key Tool Of U.S. Foreign Policy", *Forbes*, 2 January 2012, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/lorenthompson/2012/01/02/obama-makes-arms-sales-a-key-tool-of-u-s-foreign-policy/2/> (accessed 13 May 2013).

¹⁴⁹ Sanger, David E. "Obama Order Sped Up Wave of Cyberattacks Against Iran", *The New York Times*, 1 June 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/01/world/middleeast/obama-ordered-wave-of-cyberattacks-against-iran.html?pagewanted=all> (accessed 23 April 2013).

[If] Iran meets its international obligations on its nuclear program, [it] will be able to proceed on a path to greater political and economic integration with the international community. If [Iran] ignores [its] international obligations, we will pursue multiple means to increase [its] isolation and bring [Iran] into compliance with international nonproliferation norms.

Also Obama's 2010 National Security Strategy prepared a guideline what should be the approach of the United States foreign policy towards Iran. The ultimate goal was named shortly as "Promote a Reasonable Iran". In the long version, the United States wanted to help Iran rejoin the international community if Teheran showed desire to cooperate:¹⁵⁰

For decades, the Islamic Republic of Iran has endangered the security of the region and the United States and failed to live up to its international responsibilities. In addition to its illicit nuclear program, it continues to support terrorism, undermine peace between Israelis and Palestinians, and deny its people their universal rights. Many years of refusing to engage Iran failed to reverse these trends; on the contrary, Iran's behavior became more threatening.

Engagement is something we pursue without illusion. It can offer Iran a pathway to a better future, provided Iran's leaders are prepared to take it. But that better pathway can only be achieved if Iran's leaders change course, act to restore the confidence of the international community, and fulfill their obligations.

The United States seeks a future in which Iran meets its international responsibilities, takes its rightful place in the community of nations, and enjoys the political and economic opportunities that its people deserve. Yet if the Iranian Government continues to refuse to live up to its international obligations, it will face greater isolation.

In rhetoric, the language of National Security Strategy 2010 was much gentler. And Tit for Tat diplomacy definitely gives more space to negotiations than the George W. Bush's "all or nothing" approach. Nevertheless, even this fancier language clearly makes the same conclusions. That is great discontent with Iran and its activities, and low to none willingness to be nice if Teheran doesn't meet its international obligations.

Furthermore, even if Iran decides to make a cooperative gesture, it doesn't mean there could be a breakthrough in Iranian-American relations. There is always a chance the White House won't believe Iran is serious about its offer, like it happened just before UN Security Council passed the resolution 1929 in June 2010. Mutual trust is crucial for Tit for Tat to work in practice. However, the list of historic and contemporary issues between Washington and Teheran is just too long.

¹⁵⁰ National Security Strategy 2010. Available at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/national_security_strategy.pdf (accessed 1 May 2013).

4. Reasons behind the Failure

With the negligible exception of language use, there was basically no difference between National Security Strategies from 2006 and 2010 in dealing with Iran. Both criticized the theocratic regime for the same misconducts, ordered the White House the same uncompromising policy, and presented the same ultimate goal. Also it needs to be remembered that NSS10 didn't mention any major development since 2006. Thus there is only one conclusion to be made. The American foreign policy towards Iran between 2006 and 2010, executed by both George W. Bush and Barack Obama, was in the end completely unsuccessful. Two questions remain, however. Why did it fail? And what are the options for the future?

In order to answer these two questions, one needs to identify the elements, out of which the U.S. foreign policy consisted of, and analyze them separately. An exemplary list of approaches was given by the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* in its November/December 2010 issue. In the magazine's discussion part, numerous experts on American foreign policy chose a strategy, defined it, and reasoned why this tactic would be the best way to move forward. These foreign policy approaches were: containment, tough bargaining and deterrence, Tit for Tat, resurrecting the nuclear-swap deal, confident diplomacy, and the military option. Also the possibility of rapprochement and promoting soft power were widely discussed among other experts.

The policy of containment was defended by Lawrence J. Korb, who is a Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress and a Senior Adviser to the Center for Defense Information. Mr. Korb suggested the United States should continue with the sanctions and work on isolating Iran from the rest of the world.¹⁵¹

Between 2006 and 2010, the United States forced numerous unilateral sanctions on Iran. All forms of trade between the two countries were prohibited by presidential Executive Orders and Congress-approved legislation. The United States also sanctioned any individual and company which were involved in the Iranian nuclear program, weapon development, or oil industry. On the multilateral level, the White House pushed six resolutions through the UN Security Council which punished Iran with sanctions for its reluctance to fully cooperate with the IAEA. There are, however, indicators according to which all these sanctions had almost no effect on Iran.

¹⁵¹ Korb, Lawrence J. "Position: Containment and Deterrence", *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* 66, no. 6 (November/December 2010), p 99-100.

From the economic perspective [[see Annex 19-24]], Iran's revenues from oil exports continued to rise even after 2006, when the sanctions started to get intensified. The only exception was a downfall in 2009. Nonetheless, the same drop also happened to Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, and other oil producing countries in the Middle East. Furthermore, the revenues from oil exports of all these countries stabilized in 2010 and then started to grow again. Thus this drop was caused more likely by the start of the global economic depression rather than by sanctions.

Iran's overall trade also wasn't affected as both total exports and imports continued to rise relatively steadily and the Iranian trade surplus even increased during the last years. Moreover, according to the graphs, sanctions didn't prevent the technology expansion in Iran. If sanctions worked and hit hard the governmental revenues Teheran would have simply less money to spend on discretionary expenditures. The consequent budget cuts would have then most likely prevented the spread of the internet and cell phone coverage. However, some statistics do indicate that sanctions could have had at least some minor impact.

Even though the Iranian Gross Domestic Product (GDP) continued to increase, the GDP growth slowed down in 2005 and almost stopped in 2007. In addition, it seems Iran had to slightly cut some of its mandatory expenditures. It is visible especially in the military budget. On the other hand, there could have been dozens of other factors behind these budget cuts rather than only sanctions. Furthermore, it needs to be remembered that the goal of the United States was to cripple the Iranian economy, not just to slow it.

Many foreign policy experts also doubt the effectiveness of the sanctions. For instance Abel E. Folch, a scholar focusing on comparative political economy and authoritarian politics, claims economic sanctions are not effective on every authoritarian rule. When the regime is based only on the role of a single person, sanctions tend to significantly weaken his position, which inevitably leads to a coup. That is because personalist regimes have usually weak governmental institutions, thus they are not so able to quickly transfer funds from one section of the economy to another. Also lone dictators are not likely to have full control of the military. On the other hand, sanctions are useless on single-party or military regimes, because these political systems control

the armed forces and are able to mobilize the funds in the case of a crisis.¹⁵² Unfortunately for the United States, the Iranian autocracy is not build on the rule of a single person.

Another critique came from Stephan M. Walt, a professor of international affairs at Harvard University. In his words, the United States is trying to blackmail Iran, but states generally don't like to give in to threats, because they worry that any signs of weakness will only provoke more pressure. Mr. Walt also reasoned that the United States is also attempting “to get Iran to give up the potential to acquire a nuclear deterrent by threatening them, which merely reinforces their desire for the very thing we don't want them to get.”¹⁵³

The policy of sanctions was additionally criticized also by the Iran Project, a non-governmental organization (NGO) dedicated to improving the relationship between the United States and Iran. In its most recent report, the NGO stated that sanctions significantly contributed to an increase in repression and corruption within Iran. The Iran Project also believes that sanctions are not helping the diplomatic cause, which was one of the basic arguments of the White House. On the contrary, according to the NGO, the economic pressures are inevitably leading to mutual alienation between Americans and the people of Iran.¹⁵⁴ This document was supported by Zbigniew Brzezinski, Brig Gen Stephen A. Cheney, or Senator Timothy A. Wirth, to name just a few.

There is another reason why economic sanctions didn't work – the isolation is simply too far from perfect. That is because America is by all means not the most important trade partner of Iran. However, Iran imports from and exports to an only limited number of countries [[see Annex 25-28]]. That means Iran is highly dependent only on a handful of states, especially on trade cooperation with China, Japan, South Korea, Turkey, the European Union, UAE, and India. Thus containment still could have an impact if applied more internationally. There is no doubt the economic sanctions would be more effective if the United States convinced these countries to join the embargo. A truly multilateral approach would also go hand-in-hand with the efforts of the UN Security Council.

¹⁵² Folch, Abel E. and Wright, Joseph. “Dealing with Tyranny: International Sanctions and the Survival of Authoritarian Rulers”, *International Studies Quarterly* 54 (2010), p 355.

¹⁵³ Walt, Stephan M. “Why Sanctions on Iran Aren't Working”, *Foreign Policy*, 26 march 2013, http://walt.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2013/03/26/our_myopic_approach_to_iran (accessed 4 May 2013).

¹⁵⁴ “Strategic Options for Iran: Balancing Pressure with Diplomacy”, *The Iran Project*, April 2013. Available at: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/136389836/Strategic-Options-for-Iran-Balancing-Pressure-with-Diplomacy#fullscreen> (accessed 4 May 2013).

Although the targeted UNSC sanctions didn't fail their purpose, they didn't fulfill the American hopes either, because Iran wasn't weakened by these sanctions. The UNSC tried particularly to prevent the Iranians from gaining resources and technology for their nuclear program and ballistic missile development program. In that regard, the sanctions succeeded as there were no reports of imports of these illicit items to Iran since 2006. On the other hand, Iran already imported enough material and know-how before the sanctions were enacted. Also it needs to be remembered that the Iranian nuclear program has been developed mostly domestically by Iranian scientists which have been researching the technology now for several decades.¹⁵⁵

The second advised foreign policy style was tough bargaining. It was promoted by Emily B. Landau, a journalist writing for various Israeli newspapers. Mrs. Landau recommended that "Iran must come to the conclusion the US is strong, determined, and in control of the situation. Iran must be convinced the US will take action if necessary; it must feel pressured and credibly deterred."¹⁵⁶ This approach was followed especially by the Bush administrations. However, in spite of Mrs. Landau's belief, this tactic didn't work in practice.

President Bush repeatedly used tough uncompromising rhetoric when referring to Iran. Bush stated on many occasions that issues between the United States and Iran can be resolved only if the theocratic regime decided to change its policies, both domestically and internationally [[see pages 47-48]]. In other words, the United States laid down the rules of the play and it was now up to Iran to follow the rules unconditionally whether it liked it or not. The United States additionally used military deterrence in order to further motivate Iran to cooperate.

The tools of deterrence were particularly the ballistic missile shield, keeping armed personnel in the Persian Gulf, and selling weapons to allies in the Middle East. The geopolitical situation became very unfavorable for Iran, because the Islamic Republic got surrounded by the military forces of the United States and its allies from almost all directions [[see pages 42-43]]. Furthermore, the Iraq Invasion of 2003 had an intense psychological effect on the Iranian regime. Since then, the Iranian leadership became extremely paranoid that it could become the next target. Thus one might say that the policy of deterrence was executed perfectly as Iran got

¹⁵⁵ Dialogues with a representative of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in February 2012.

¹⁵⁶ Landau, Emily B. "Position: Tough bargaining tactics", *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* 66, no. 6 (November/December 2010), p 118.

significantly pressured by the United States and its regional allies. But at the end of the day, Iran actually didn't start to play by the American rules and didn't change its policies.

This can be explained by the same arguments which Stephan M. Walt and the Iran Project used against the policy of containment and sanctions. In short, the overall international pressure, isolation and deterrence led only to an intensification of the hostility between the United States and Iran. As a result, the theocratic regime was forced to fight for its survival. The United States needed Iran to abandon its principles and the dream of becoming a regional hegemon, but instead Teheran got strongly motivated to build up its defensive capabilities and undermine American political goals in the Middle East. The Iranian dream of growing into a leading Middle Eastern power is simply too strong to be relinquished under the pressure of isolation and deterrence.

The third given option was Tit for Tat diplomacy. This policy was defended by Kayhan Barzegar, who used to teach at Harvard University and now works as the Director of the Institute for Middle East Strategic Studies (IMESS) in Tehran. Mr. Barzegar argues that the United States should eliminate the policy of deterrence and weaponization, and instead focus on building a win-win cooperation. For instance, Mr. Barzegar recommended that the P5+1 should start by making three gestures: (a) accept the Iranian nuclear status if Iran agrees to enrich uranium only up to 3.5%; (b) pressure Israel to sign the NPT, which would start the process of regional nuclear disarmament; and (c) eliminate the UNSC sanctions in exchange for the ratification of the Additional Protocol by Iran.¹⁵⁷ These particular provisions seem perhaps a bit too ambitious, nevertheless the principle was defined clearly.

Another possible starter for Tit for Tat diplomacy was proposed in the next article from the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, which pushed for resurrecting the nuclear swap deal. This opinion was presented by Mustafa Kibaroglu, who is the Chair of the International Relations Department and the Director of the Center for Eurasian Studies at Okan University in Istanbul. Mr. Kibaroglu believes the international community has to come up with a significant initiative in order to achieve a lasting solution to the problem. He continued by explaining why he proposed particularly this kind of a bargain: "The nuclear swap deal was literally the one and only

¹⁵⁷ Barzegar, Kayhan. "Position: Tit-for-Tat Diplomacy", *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* 66, no. 6 (November/December 2010), p 113-114.

document Iran ever signed over the many years since the debate on its nuclear program began to dominate international political discourse.”¹⁵⁸

The Tit for Tat style of foreign policy was followed by Barack Obama, although only to a certain extent. The Obama administration repeatedly offered the Iranians the chance to rejoin the international community if Teheran started cooperating [[see pages 52-54]]. However, the Obama’s policy was effectively only a passive form of Tit for Tat, because the United States only waited for Iran to do the first positive gesture.

That didn’t come because Teheran was significantly pressured by Obama’s predecessor, thus it took a bit longer for Iran to gather enough confidence to start seriously negotiating again. Iran eventually responded with the nuclear-swap deal in May 2010, but that effort was not perceived as credible by the White House. Simply said, Obama and Iran never met in the middle for Tit for Tat to work in practice. Thus Obama became only active in the second part of the Tit for Tat approach – increase the sanctions and international pressure if Iran misbehaves again.

In effect, the passive and negative Tit for Tat policy had in the end the exactly same effect as George W. Bush’s tough bargaining approach. Because the United States wanted Iran to change its internal political system and abandon its fundamental international interests without making any concessions, Iran consequently lost its interest to cooperate. Needless to say, the Iranians must had become frustrated after Barack Obama offered them a new beginning, but eventually was as uncompromising as his predecessor in the White House.

The fifth foreign policy alternative was confident diplomacy, advocated by Thomas R. Pickering. Mr. Pickering used to be in the 1980s and 1990s a U.S. Ambassador to Russia, India, Israel, Jordan, Nigeria, or the United Nations. In his opinion, both the United States and Iran would lose too much if they forgot about diplomacy as mutual conflict would have severe consequences for both actors. According to Mr. Pickering, they still have some time to repair the relationship and both will need to make serious efforts. Also he thinks the United States, which is the larger and more powerful state of the two, should take the lead.¹⁵⁹

Because the United States so far refused to engage into bilateral talks with Iran, which the Iranians repeatedly called for [[see page]], the main burden of diplomatic negotiations was on the

¹⁵⁸ Kibaroglu, Mustafa. “Position: Resuscitate the Nuclear Swap Deal”, *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* 66, no. 6 (November/December 2010), p 105.

¹⁵⁹ Pickering, Thomas R. “Position: Confident Diplomacy”, *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* 66, no. 6 (November/December 2010), p 105.

so-called P5+1 group. Its activity began with the UN Security Council resolution 1803 from March 2008. However, the greatest achievements of this group were only the nuclear-swap deals from October 2009 and May 2010. Both eventually failed. Pure diplomacy cannot work until the United States and other members of the P5+1 group refuse to acknowledge that the Iranians will not give up its nuclear program and its aspiration to become a regional hegemon.

Another foreign policy element was widely utilized by both George W. Bush and Barack Obama, although it wasn't mentioned in the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*. That is the use of soft power, especially student and internship exchanges, radio and television broadcasting, and generally promoting the American culture in Iran. However, the American soft power approach towards Iran was repeatedly criticized by many experts. One of them was Suzanne Maloney, a former member of the policy-planning staff at the Department of State (DoS). Mrs. Maloney was one of the very few of staff members at the DoS who spoke the Persian language and actually had visited Iran. At this moment, she works as an expert on the Middle East and Iran at the Brookings Institution.

Mrs. Maloney didn't oppose the use of soft power generally, just its practical application. She commented in an interview on the American soft policy that spending money on supporting freedom sounds terrific in a small room. It also wins political points at home. However, Mrs. Maloney stated she repeatedly found herself doing a lot of damage control at the State Department:¹⁶⁰

I was worried about the safety of those on the receiving end of the funds. But I also just wondered if this was feasible. I don't see how a U.S. government that has been absent from Tehran for 30 years is capable of formulating a program that will have a positive effect. You had to wonder where this money was going to go and what's going to happen when you don't have the time to sit down and sift through the more questionable proposals. There's just not enough oversight. Of the 100 or more preliminary proposals I saw under the first call, it was an enormous challenge to find anything viable. This may have been a very high profile, sexy project, but the likelihood of real impact was minimal.

The criticism that the United States doesn't know how to deal with soft power is widespread. The critics usually point out that soft power shouldn't be about throwing money into random development projects, but rather about investing into only a limited and carefully chosen

¹⁶⁰ Azimi, Negar. "Hard Realities of Soft Power", *The New York Times Magazine*, 24 June 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/24/magazine/24ngo-t.html> (accessed 28 April 2013).

programs which have the most potential to benefit the United States in the long run. Some even claim Iran is outplaying the United States in this discipline.¹⁶¹

According to some experts, the American soft power is generally very weak in the Middle East. For instance, the United States was so far unable to effectively explain the Muslims why it supports Israel, why it fights radical Islamists, or why it overthrew Saddam Hussein.¹⁶² Soft power has a strong potential in the Iranian case, because the young generation of Iranians has generally pro-Western¹⁶³ and pro-reformist¹⁶⁴ attitude.

There are other two foreign policy alternatives, which weren't actually used by either Bush or Obama, but which offer the United States a way how to deal with the deadlocked situation. Those policy styles are the military option and rapprochement. The first one was proposed by Bennett Ramberg in the last article from the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*.

Mr. Ramberg served in the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs during the Bush administration and wrote a number of books on American security issues. In his opinion, there is no time to waste and the United States should strike the Iranian nuclear program, before it's too late. Mr. Ramberg particularly proposes a combination of an Osirak-style aerial strike and a limited war model.¹⁶⁵

The Osirak-style model refers to Israeli bombardment of a nuclear facility in Iraq in 1981, later repeated in Syria in 2007. Nonetheless, it needs to be remembered that Iran is a larger country and much further than both Iraq and Syria. As previously mentioned, the United States or Israel would need at least a hundred of airplanes in the Iranian airspace at the same moment to succeed and perhaps even one air campaign wouldn't be enough to deal enough damage [[see page 15]]. Furthermore, according to a recently published study of the CRS, an Osirak-style attack would probably only delay the Iranian nuclear program for several months up to one year.¹⁶⁶ Thus this type of a strike alone would most probably not achieve the sought achievement.

¹⁶¹ Rubin, Michael. "Does Iran Outplay America in Soft Power", *The Commentary Magazine*, 15 April 2012, <http://www.commentarymagazine.com/2012/05/15/does-iran-outplay-america-in-soft-power> (accessed 7 May 2013).

¹⁶² Hollander. *Understanding Anti-Americanism*, p 137-143.

¹⁶³ Ehteshami, Anoushiravan. "Iran's International Posture after the Fall of Baghdad", *Middle East Journal* 58, no. 2/Spring 2004.

¹⁶⁴ Cohen, J.A. and Milani, Abbas. "The Passive Revolution", *Hoover Digest*, no. 3/Fall 2005.

¹⁶⁵ Ramberg, Bennett. "Position: The Military Option", *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* 66, no. 6 (November/December 2010), p 127.

¹⁶⁶ Zanutti, Jim et al. "Israel: Possible Military Strike Against Iran's Nuclear Facilities", Congressional Research Service, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/R42443.pdf> (accessed 7 May 2013).

Mr. Ramberg wanted to combine the Osirak-style aerial strike with a limited war model. He used the First Gulf War as an example. The Iraqi nuclear program was annihilated during the American invasion and the United States didn't have to spend too much resources and energy on occupation and rebuilding the Iraqi state. However, Mr. Ramberg describes only the positive implications of this model and lacks to discuss the negative ones. The most obvious one is the survival of the Iranian government and its lust for retaliation.

Even though that could be prevented if Washington proceeded the same way like with Iraq in 1990s, this policy would lead to other difficulties. During the 1990s, the international community, led by the United States, used crippling sanctions and complete isolation against Iraq after the withdrawal of the military forces, thus Saddam Hussein was unable to achieve his revenge. However, these provisions also caused extreme rising of anti-Americanism across the Muslim world. If the United States did the same to Iran after the limited invasion the spread of anti-Americanism might become a serious problem for America's interests in the Middle East, especially in the long run.

Furthermore, the isolation of Iraq led to a severe consequence which the policy planners from Washington didn't think of. The Middle East became united against the American aggressive foreign policy, which perfectly benefited one particular enemy of the United States – Al Qaeda, which seeks unification of the Islamic world under the law of *sharia*. The suffering of the Iraqi people even became one of the cornerstones of bin Laden's propaganda, next to American support of Israel and the presence of "crusader" armies in the holy land of the Arabian Peninsula.¹⁶⁷

Al Qaeda also claims that America's War on Terror is in fact War on Islam and bolsters this fact by pointing at the American aggressive rhetoric and uncompromising foreign policy against Iran and its people. It is easily imaginable how much more effective would Al Qaeda's propaganda become if the United States switched from offensive words to actual military strikes.¹⁶⁸ It is surely not in the interest of the United States to support Al Qaeda's hears-and-minds campaign by any means.

¹⁶⁷ bin Laden, Usama. "Al Qaeda's Second Fatwa", 23 February 1998. Available at: http://www.pbs.org/newshour/updates/military/jan-june98/fatwa_1998.html (accessed 7 May 2013).

¹⁶⁸ Mockaitis, Thomas R. and Rich, Paul B. [eds.]. *Grand Strategy in the War against Terrorism* (Portland, Oregon: Frank Cass & Co., 2003), 31.

In short, a rigorous military campaign would most probably seriously damage and perhaps even definitely stop the Iranian nuclear program, however, only at a huge expense. The rise of anti-Americanism in the Middle East would be inevitable, which would gravely threaten American political, economic, and security interests in the region. Not to mention, all kinds of Islamic radical groups would gain more supporters, sponsors and volunteers, including Al Qaeda.

The last political alternative was the rapprochement, which refers especially to the warming of Sino-American relations in the 1970s. It is basically a faster and more radical form of Tit for Tat, and the elemental principle behind this foreign policy style is to establish a cooperative relationship by building mutual trust step by step. Both sides usually start by agreeing on as many interests and positions which they have in common. The problematic issues are discussed the last, sometimes even completely ignored.

This approach was defended for instance by Sam Sasan Shoamanesh, who is a legal advisor at the International Criminal Court (ICC). According to his advice, the United States should start by acknowledging that some security issues in the Middle East cannot be solved without Iran. Also Washington needs to exploit the fact that Iran has signaled it is ready to engage in constructive talks. The United States have to use every opportunity. Mr. Shoamanesh then recommends the United States to find common goals in Iraq and Afghanistan, to refrain from using force, deterrence and sabotage, to give Iran a stake in the global economy, and eventually promote democracy and human rights development.¹⁶⁹ However, rapprochement is easily said than done.

It needs to be remembered that the Sino-American rapprochement was motivated largely by a common Soviet threat. Therefore there is a question if the United States and Iran could find such a powerful unifying element. Rapprochement would additionally require the United States to acknowledge that Iran is trying to become a regional hegemon in order to make cooperation a mutual trust even possible. That would inevitably lead to a general change in the whole Middle Eastern power structure. Not to mention that there is a significant chance that other regional players, such as Turkey, Saudi Arabia or Israel, would not welcome this shift. The United States would need a serious motivation to do this.

¹⁶⁹ Shoamanesh, Sam Sasan. "How and Why to Promote US-Iran Rapprochement", *MIT International Review*, 1 June 2009, <http://web.mit.edu/mitir/2009/online/us-iran.html> (accessed 7 May 2013).

Conclusion

The relationship with the Islamic Republic of Iran remains one of the most challenging issues of the contemporary American foreign and security policy. Since 1979, relations between these two countries have been tense and complicated, which contributed to the instability of the Middle East. This thesis analyzed the American foreign policy towards Iran between 2006 and 2010 and was divided into four main chapters.

The first chapter focused on the many times repeated arguments which the United States uses while criticizing Iran. Those arguments were present in many speeches by both Bush and Obama, in both National Security Strategies from 2006 and 2010, and in a variety of U.S. domestic legislature. The criticism could be divided into four basic groups. The first one is the stability of the Middle East.

The United States needs the Middle East to stay as stable as possible. Washington has stakes in rebuilding Iraq and Afghanistan, in protecting the American personnel in the region, and obviously in steady and cheap oil exports. However, Iran is a very active player in the region and seeks to transform the region for its benefit. The United States especially condemns Iran for influencing the domestic affairs in Iraq and Afghanistan, and since the Arab Spring 2011 also the Iranian support of Bashar Assad's side in the Syrian civil war. Americans are also deeply concerned about the Iranian relations with Israel and Saudi Arabia.

The next widely discussed topic is the controversial Iranian nuclear program. The development of nuclear technology was the main reason behind numerous UN Security Council resolutions against Iran in the last years. The UNSC especially criticizes Iran for not fully cooperating with the IAEA, for lack of transparency and for continuing with the prohibited enrichment.

What also makes the United States furious is the Iranian support to numerous extremist groups, which are present in the American list of terrorist organizations. Among these groups are most notably Hezbollah, Hamas, the Islamic Jihad in Palestine, the Front Islamique du Salut (FIS) in Algeria, or the Hassan al-Turabi's National Islamic Front in Sudan. And finally, the United States belongs among the most vocal critics of the constant civil and human rights violations in Iran.

The second chapter was aimed at understanding the other side of the barricade, the Iranian worldview. Iran, previously known as Persia, belongs among of the oldest civilizations in the

world. The Persians conquered many other nations and controlled the area from nowadays India to the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. That came to an end in the nineteenth century when Persia was subdued by better equipped and trained European armies. Since World War Two, when Iran regained its real independence, Iran is trying to reclaim its former power status as the hegemon of the Middle East.

Iran does so by various means, which, unfortunately for Teheran, create tensions with other countries in the region and the United States. Contemporary Iran uses especially religion to gain authority among other Muslim countries. That includes the support of the Palestinian cause and bolstering Muslim groups fighting against secular authoritarian regimes. Iran also exploits the Shia card by behaving as the protector of all Shia Muslims, which eventually brought Iran to war against Iraq and which caused deep problems with Saudi Arabia or the Taliban. Furthermore, Teheran seeks modern technologies including advanced aircraft and the nuclear program, because technological superiority always distanced Iran from the “backward” Arab nations.

Iran and the United States used to be close friends during the Shah era. However, the Shah used to be a cruel autocrat and when he was overthrown by the people his connections with the United States led to burning American flags in the streets of Teheran. Since then, the American-Iranian relations have been nervous and complex, and both sides were responsible. For instance Iran took the embassy staff as hostages and rhetorically was attacking Israel. On the other hand the United States supported Saddam Hussein in his war against Iran and Washington didn't save the Iraqi Shia from chemical weapons. There was a sign of an improvement during the 1990s and Iran helped the United States after 9/11 with the Afghan Invasion, but that all became clouded by George W. Bush's “Axis of Evil” speech. Since 2002, the American-Iranian relations remain freezing cold.

The third chapter examined the practical side of the American foreign policy towards Iran between 2006 and 2010. George W. Bush's approach could be labeled as “all or nothing”. The NSS06 stated that Iran has to change effectively its whole domestic and foreign policy, and the United States will continue with containment and deterrence until it happens. During the last years of the Bush administration, the Congress passed the Iran Freedom Support Act of 2006 which tightened the unilateral economic sanctions on Iran. Bush's cabinet also pushed five resolutions through the UN Security Council which marked the beginning of Iran's international

isolation. Furthermore, George W. Bush invested a lot of credit into developing the Central European ballistic missile shield or selling weapons to Middle Eastern allies.

Barack Obama was rhetorically very different as he used the Tit for Tat diplomacy. However, there was no real change for Iran. The theocratic regime didn't make any believable offers and didn't stop its nuclear program, thus even Obama continued with the sanctions. During his first years in the White House, the economic pressure intensified by the Executive Order 13553 from September 2010 and by the Congress-approved Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010. Also the UN Security Council enacted the resolution 1929 (2010), which included so far the most powerful multilateral sanctions. Barack Obama additionally used the ballistic missile shield program, selling weapons to Israel and other allies in the Middle East, cyber capabilities, and soft power as tools of his foreign policy.

Because the NSS06 and NSS10 criticized Iran for the same issues, ordered the White House the same policy and determined the same ultimate objectives, and because the contemporary situation in 2013 stays absolutely the same, it can be easily concluded that the American foreign policy towards Iran between 2006 and 2010 failed. The final chapter analyzed the reasons behind this failure.

In that chapter, the American foreign policy was divided into eight basic policy styles which are widely discussed by politicians, policymakers, analysts and experts from the academic sphere. Six of these strategies were already used by George W. Bush and Barack Obama, although without a major success. After understanding why certain tactics failed, the United States could learn from its previous mistakes and improve its future approach towards Iran. Out of these eight different strategies, four could have the potential to succeed and bring the American-Iranian relations from the dead end.

First, the United States could improve its policy of containment. The current form is inefficient, because the American economy has almost no real effect on Iran. And at the same time, Iran's most important trade partners ignore the American call and continue with economic cooperation with the Islamic Republic. If containment is to succeed the United States needs to pressure the major trading partners of Iran, especially the largest importers of Iranian crude oil. Those are China, Japan, India, South Korea, the European Union, and Turkey. If these business partners joined the American embargo the Iranian economy would quickly fall apart. The theocratic regime would then be more motivated to accept the American demands.

Second, a more active form of Tit for Tat diplomacy could help. Barack Obama invited Iran to rejoin the international community on numerous occasions. Nonetheless, the Obama administration played in reality only a passive role and waited for Iran to make the first gesture. And because Iran didn't, Obama continued with expanding the sanctions. Since the President Obama pushed Iran into a deeper isolation, it is now very unlikely that Teheran could start making significant gestures by its own. The White House would need at this moment to be much more initiative and active if it wanted Tit for Tat to work also in practice, not just on paper.

Third, a more sophisticated soft power could achieve the American objectives. So far, the United States invested billions of dollars into soft power, but actually without achieving anything. As many experts remarked, Washington usually just pumps money into any development programs without really thinking it through. The United States needs instead to wisely choose those projects which are tailored directly for Iran and its people. That means the White House needs the best experts who have a good grasp on Iranian internal politics, economics, culture and religion. If American soft power was effective the Iranian people would lean closer to the United States, therefore it would be much more difficult, if impossible, for the theocratic regime to hold its anti-American position. The potential of soft power lies especially in the fact that the young Iranians have generally pro-Western inclination.

And finally, the United States could deal with Iran in a similar way how it did with China in the 1970s – by rapprochement. That strategy would require the United States acknowledge the Iranian aspiration to become a regional hegemon, thus the United States would have to bring Iran to the negotiation table on such issues such as the future of Afghanistan, the stability of Iraq, the escalation of the Syrian civil war, and perhaps even the peace process between Israel and the Palestine. Washington would have to make the first step a work on building mutual trust, which is the most important element of this strategy. However, there is a question whether the United States would be willing to basically transform the whole Middle Eastern power structure and to risk relations with other Middle Eastern allies in order to achieve rapprochement with Iran.

Resumé

Vztahy s Íránem patří mezi nejkomplikovanější a přitom nejdůležitější zahraničněpolitické výzvy, kterým současné Spojené státy čelí. Tato diplomová práce se zabývala časovou periodou mezi lety 2006 a 2010.

Diplomová práce byla rozdělena na čtyři kapitoly. První se věnovala americkému pohledu na věc, to znamená výčtu témat, které Spojené státy dlouhodobě využívají ke kritice Íránu. Tuto kritiku lze rozdělit do čtyř základních skupin. Prvně jde o mír a stabilitu na Blízkém východě, neboť je to tak příhodné pro americké spojence v regionu, pro nižší vývozní cenu ropy a pro bezpečnost Amerických vojáků a civilistů, kteří se momentálně nachází na Blízkém východě. Naproti tomu Írán má za cíl transformovat region, aby více vyhovoval jeho zájmům.

Dále Spojené státy opakovaně slovně napadají íránský jaderný program. Washingtonu zejména vadí jeho neprůhlednost, časté obstrukce ze strany Íránu, konstantní porušování mezinárodně závazného nařízení neobohacovat uran a neochota Teheránu plně spolupracovat s Mezinárodní agenturou pro atomovou energii (IAEA). Třetím bodem kritiky je íránská podpora extrémistických skupin, jako jsou například Hamás nebo Hizballáh, které Spojené státy považují za teroristické organizace. A začtvrté, Spojené státy patří mezi nejhlasitější kritiky neustálého porušování lidských práv v Íránu.

Druhá kapitola byla zaměřena na pohled z druhé strany. Írán, dříve znám jako Persie, patří mezi nejstarší civilizace na světě. Konečným cílem novodobého Íránu je pak obnovit tuto zašlou slávu a získat opět status regionálního hegemona. Tento cíl pak ovlivňuje téměř veškerá zahraničněpolitická rozhodnutí íránského režimu. Patří mezi ně mj. podpora mnohých muslimských uskupení, vybízení k nastolení spravedlivého režimu na Izraelsko-Palestinském území nebo ovlivňování ší'itů na Blízkém východě. Tato politika ovšem vede k růstu napětí mezi Íránem a různými státy v regionu, zejména pak Izraelem a Saudskou Arábií.

Írán rovněž vnímá technologický vývoj jako další aspekt, kterým lze dosáhnout velmocenského postavení v regionu. Íránský národ vždy využíval technologickou převahu a vzdělanost k oddělení se od „zaostalých“ Arabů. Nejdůležitějšími aspekty tohoto technologického pokroku jsou jaderný program a vývoj pokročilých leteckých technologií, zejména pak stíhacích letounů s technologií *stealth* nebo bezpilotních letounů.

Třetí kapitola analyzovala praktickou stránku americké zahraniční politiky mezi lety 2006 a 2010. Prostor byl vymezen zejména pak veřejným proslovům obou prezidentů z té doby, George

W. Bushe a Baracka Obamy, a veškerým oficiálním dokumentům z této doby, zejména pak americkým zákonům a rezolucím Rady bezpečnosti OSN. Největší pozornost byla věnována Národní bezpečnostní strategii z roku 2006 a 2010, neboť právě tyto dva dokumenty obsahovaly konečné cíle a zahraničněpolitické směrnice ohledně Íránu.

Čtvrtá kapitola se věnovala efektivitě amerického zahraničněpolitického přístupu. To bylo docíleno rozebráním zahraniční politiky jako celku na osm různých strategií, které jsou často předmětem diskusí mezi analytiky, politiky i experty z akademické sféry. Šest z těchto taktik již bylo různě využito oběma americkými prezidenty. Tato analýza odhalila čtyři alternativy, které by mohly mít úspěch a které by mohly přivést americko-iránské vztahy zpět ze slepé uličky.

Zaprvé, Spojené státy by mohly využít multilaterálnější verzi potlačování a docílit tak úplné mezinárodní izolace Íránu. K tomu by však potřebovaly spolupráci největších obchodních partnerů Íránu, zejména pak nejdůležitějších odběratelů íránské ropy. Těmito partnery jsou zejména Čína, Japonsko, Jižní Korea, Indie, Evropská Unie a Turecko.

Zadruhé, efektivním řešením by mohla být i aktivnější verze *Tit for Tat*. Tento styl diplomacie do jisté míry zastával i Barack Obama, avšak on pouze vyčkával, až Írán udělá první krok. Jelikož k tomu nakonec nedošlo, vedlo to pouze k dalším sankcím, nikoliv ke spolupráci. Pokud by Spojené státy byly aktivnější a udělaly ústupek jako první, mohlo by to znamenat průlom v americko-iránských vztazích.

Zatřetí, Spojené státy by mohly lépe využívat *soft power*, tj. propagaci americké kultury a myšlenek, podporu rozvojových programů, výměnných studijních programů atp. Do této doby Spojené státy povětšinou pouze vlévaly peníze do náhodných projektů, aniž by zkoumaly jejich specifickou efektivitu na íránský národ. Tento přístup má dobrý potenciál, neboť íránská mládež má povětšinou prozápadní smýšlení.

A začtvrté, Bílý dům by mohl udělat průlom stejným způsobem, jako učinil v případě Číny v 70. letech – tzv. sblížením („*rapprochement*“). I v tomto případě by Spojené státy musely učinit první krok, aby byla obnova vzájemné důvěry vůbec možná. Zároveň by tento přístup vyžadoval, aby Spojené státy přijaly realitu, že Írán chce být regionální velmocí, a tedy přizvaly Írán k vyjednávacímu stolu ohledně budoucnosti Afghánistánu, stability Iráku nebo řešení občanské války v Sýrii. Je otázkou, zda by Spojené státy byly připraveny transformovat celé mezinárodní vztahy na Blízkém východě kvůli sblížení s Íránem.

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List of Data

- Annex 1: Basic Facts about the United States and Iran (table)
- Annex 2: Number of Suicide Bombings in Iraq 2003-2010 (graph)
- Annex 3: Ethno-Religious Division of Iraq (graph)
- Annex 4: Iraqi Parliamentary Elections, January 2005 (table)
- Annex 5: Iraqi Parliamentary Elections, March 2010 (table)
- Annex 6: Religion vs. Nationalism in the Middle East (graph)
- Annex 7: Participation in Religious Services (graph)
- Annex 8: Gender and Political Leadership in the Middle East (graph)
- Annex 9: India's Crude Oil Imports (graph)
- Annex 10: India's Crude Oil Imports in 2012 (graph)
- Annex 11: Iran's GDP Growth Rate 1979-2009 (graph)
- Annex 12: Inflation in Iran 1979-2011 (graph)
- Annex 13: Poverty Headcount Ratio 1986-2005 (graph)
- Annex 14: Used Words in the State of the Union Addresses (graph)
- Annex 15: Financing of the U.S. Broadcasting Board of Governors (graph)
- Annex 16: Iran-Libya Sanctions Act of 1996, Section 6 (document)
- Annex 17: U.S. Crude Oil Imports from Iran 1973-2001 (graph)
- Annex 18: Used Words/Phrases in the National Security Strategies 2002, 2006 and 2010 (table)
- Annex 19: Iran's Oil Exports 1980-2010 (graph)
- Annex 20: Oil Exports of Other Countries 1980-2010 (graph)
- Annex 21: Iranian Trade Balance 1995-2012 (graph)
- Annex 22: Technology Expansion in Iran (graph)
- Annex 23: Iranian GDP 1980-2009 (graph)
- Annex 24: Governmental Expenditures in Iran 1995-2010 (graph)
- Annex 25: Iranian Crude Oil Exports in 2011 (graph)
- Annex 26: Iranian Exports by Product in 2010 (graph)
- Annex 27: Iranian Major Exports Partners in 2011 (graph)
- Annex 27: Iranian Major Imports Partners in 2011 (graph)

Data

Annex 1: Basic Facts about the United States and Iran (2012)

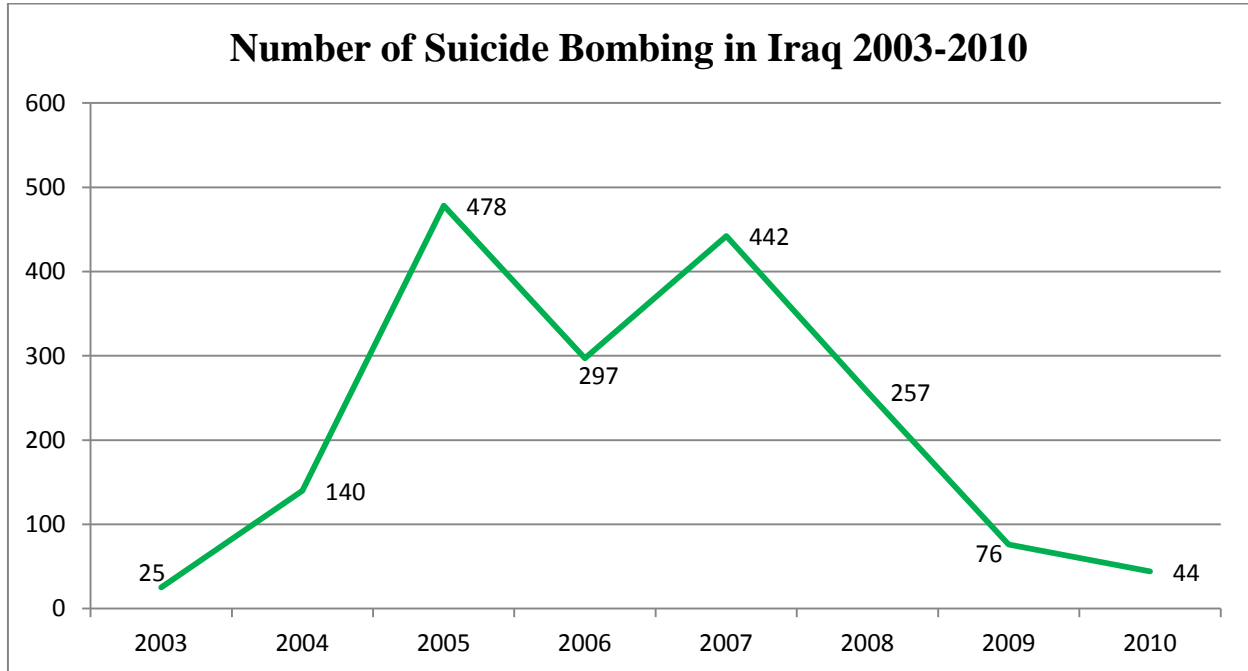
	United States of America	Islamic Republic of Iran
Area:	9.8m km ² (#3 in the world)	1.6m km ² (#18 in the world)
Population:	316.7m (#3)	79.8m (#18)
Population growth rate:	0.9% (#124)	1.247% (#94)
Net migration rate:	+3.62 migrants/1k population	-0.11 migrants/1k population
Ethnic groups:	white 65%, Hispanic 15%, black 13%	Persian 61%, Azeri 16%, Kurd 10%
Religion:	Protestant 51%, Roman Catholic 24%	Shia Muslim 89%, Sunni Muslim 9%
Urbanization:	82%	71%
Infant mortality rate:	6 deaths/1k live births	41.11 deaths/1k live births
Life expectancy:	78.49 years (#51)	70.35 years (#147)
Literacy:	99%	77%
GDP:	\$15.66 trillion (#1)	\$997.4 billion (#17)
GDP per capita:	\$49,800 (#15)	\$13,100 (#100)
Budget revenues:	\$2.465 trillion	\$131.2 billion
Budget expenditures:	\$3.649 trillion	\$92.63 billion
Public debt:	73.6% of GDP	18.8% of GDP
Labor force:	154.9m	27.05m
Unemployment:	8.2%	15.5%
Young unemployed:	17.6%	23%
Education expenditures:	5.4% of GDP	4.7% of GDP
Below poverty rate:	15.1%	18.7%
Gini index:	45.0 (#41)	44.5 (#45)
Military expenditures:	\$689.5 billion (#1)	\$7.5 billion (#25)
Military expenditures:	4.7% of GDP (#23)	1.8% of GDP (#60)
Army size:	2.3m (#9)	2.4m (#8)

Source 1: “United States”, *CIA World Factbook*. Available at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/us.html> (accessed 4 May 2013).

Source 2: “Iran”, *CIA World Factbook*. Available at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ir.html> (accessed 4 May 2013).

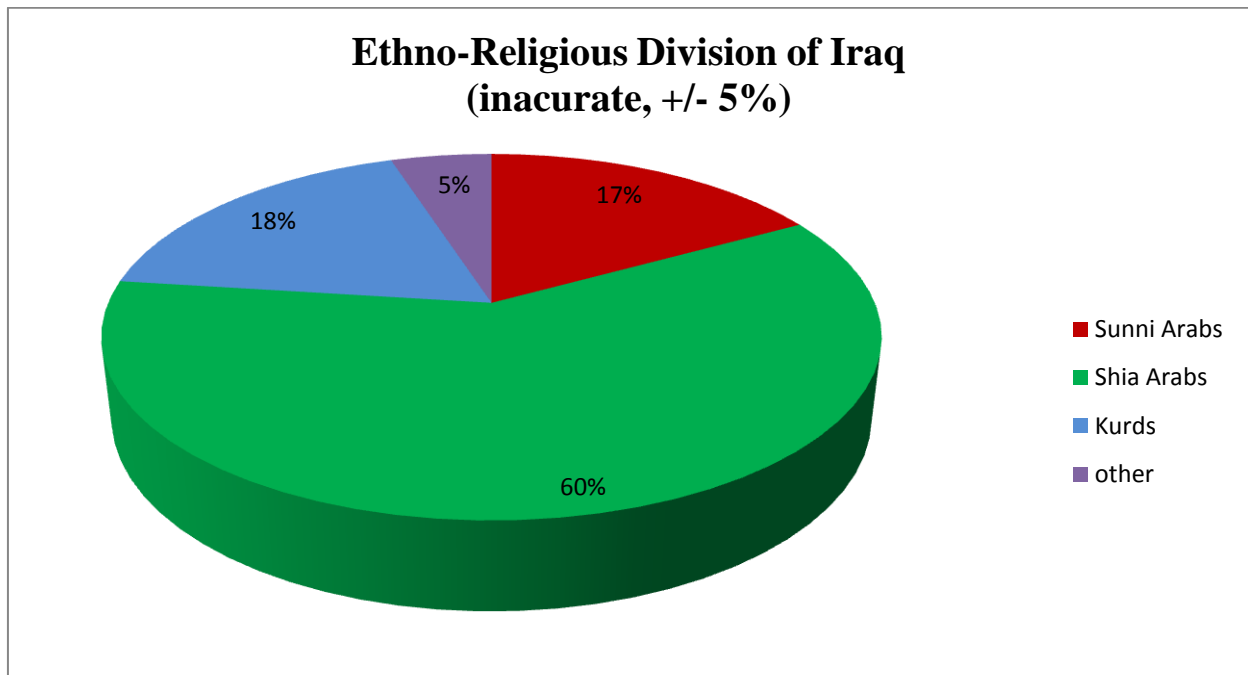
Source 3: Hackett, James [ed.]. *International Institute for Strategic Studies: The Military Balance 2010* (London: Routledge, 2010), p 31, 251-253.

Annex 2: Number of Suicide Bombings in Iraq 2003-2010



Source: Original research.

Annex 3: Ethno-Religious Division of Iraq



Source: "Iraq", *CIA World Factbook*. Available at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/iz.html> (accessed 4 May 2013).

Annex 4: Iraq Parliamentary Elections, January 2005

Total seats:	275
Turnout:	60%

party	description	votes	seats won
United Iraqi Alliance	Shia islamists	4,075,292 (48.19%)	140
Kurdistan Alliance	Kurdish	2,175,551 (25.73%)	75
Iraqi List	Shia secularists	1,168,943 (13.82%)	40
in total		8,456,266 (100%)	275

Source: Burns, John F. and Ives, Nat. “Shiites Win Most Votes in Iraq, Election Results Show”, *The New York Times*, 13 February 2005, <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/02/13/international/middleeast/13cnd-iraq.html> (accessed 21 April 2013).

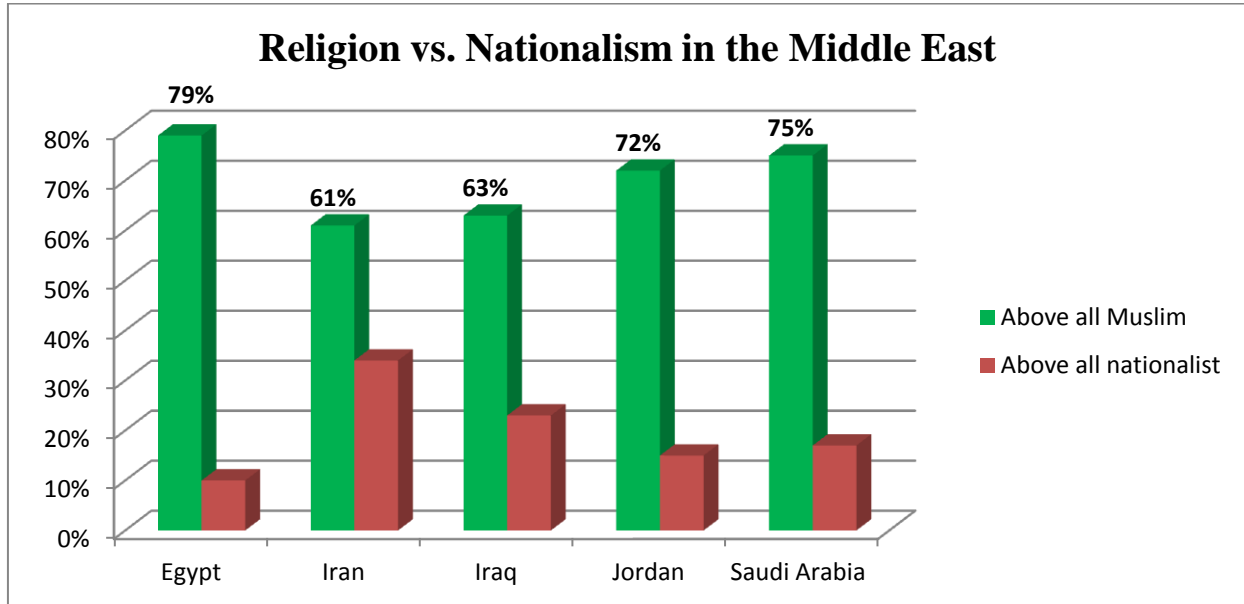
Annex 5: Iraq Parliamentary Elections, March 2010

Total seats:	275
Turnout:	62,4%

party	description	votes	seats won	change
Iraqi National Movement	Secular nationalists	2,849,612 (24.72%)	91	+54
State of Law Coalition	Shia islamists	2,792,083 (24.22%)	89	+64
National Iraqi Alliance	Shia islamists	2,092,066 (18.15%)	70	-35
Kurdistan Alliance	Kurdish	1,681,714 (14.59%)	43	-10
in total		11,526,412 (100%)	275	

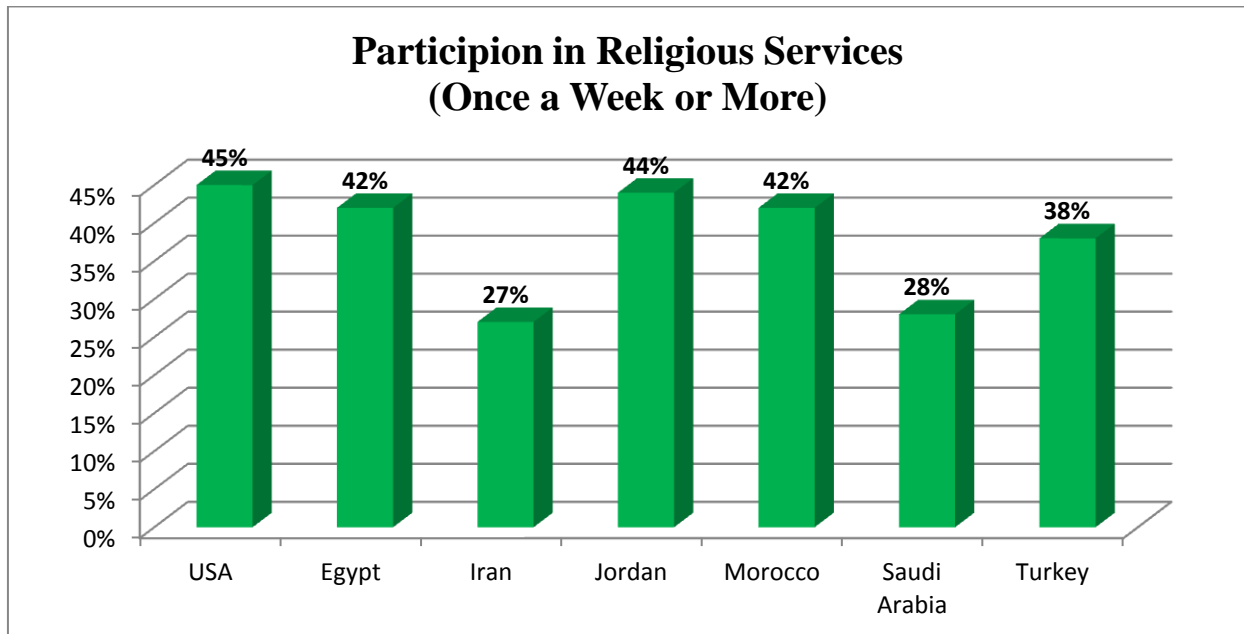
Source: Fairfield, Hannah and Tse, Archie. “The 2010 Iraqi Parliamentary Elections”, *The New York Times*, 7 March 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/03/11/world/middleeast/20100311-iraq-election.html> (accessed 21 April 2013).

Annex 6: Religion vs. Nationalism in the Middle East



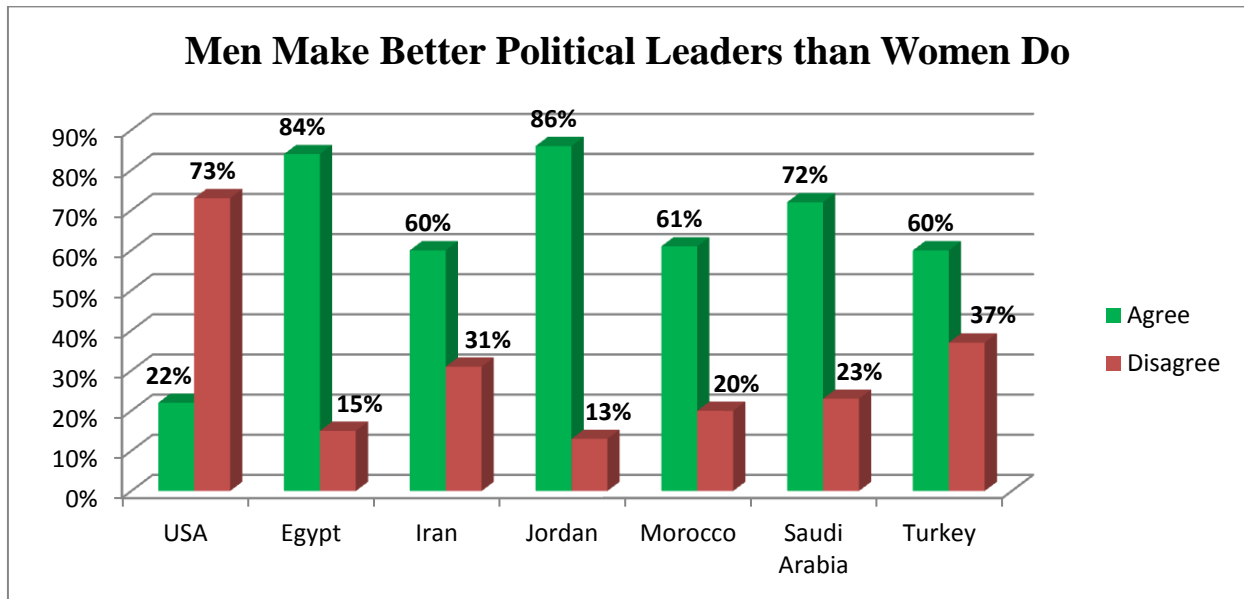
Source: Axworthy, *Dějiny Íránu*, p 209.

Annex 7: Participation in Religious Services



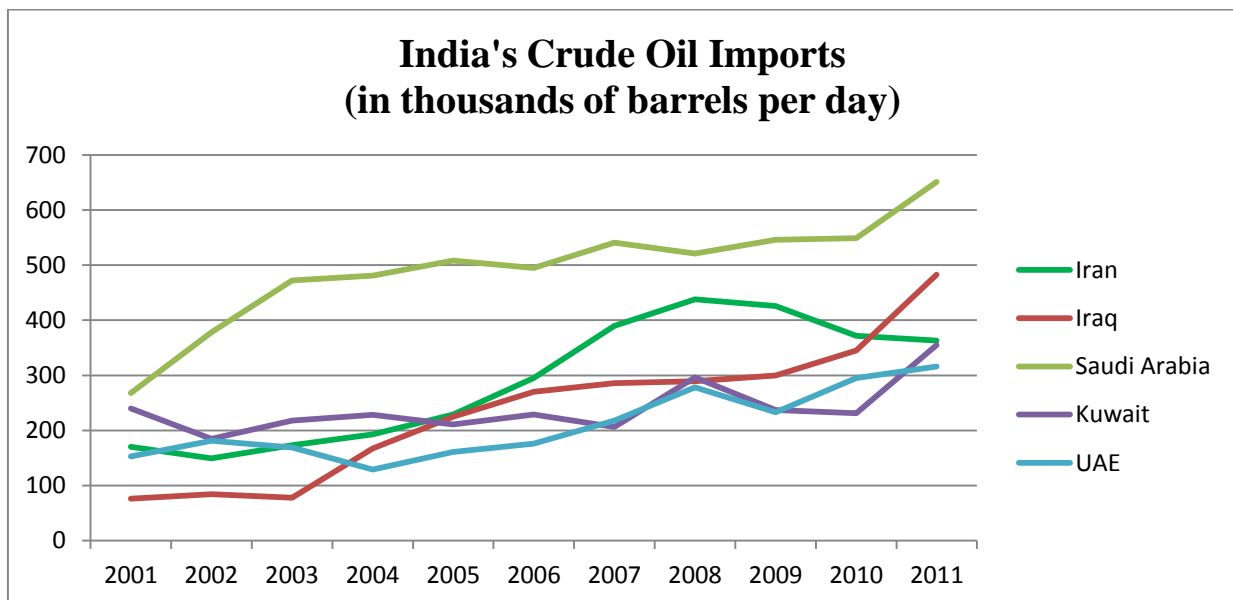
Source: Mansoor Moaddel, "The Worldviews of Saudi Citizens vs. Other Islamic Countries and Americans: Findings from Values Surveys", *Population Studies Center*, May 2004, http://www.psc.isr.umich.edu/research/tmp/moaddel_capitol-hill-may04.pdf (accessed 13 April 2013).

Annex 8: Gender and Political Leadership in the Middle East



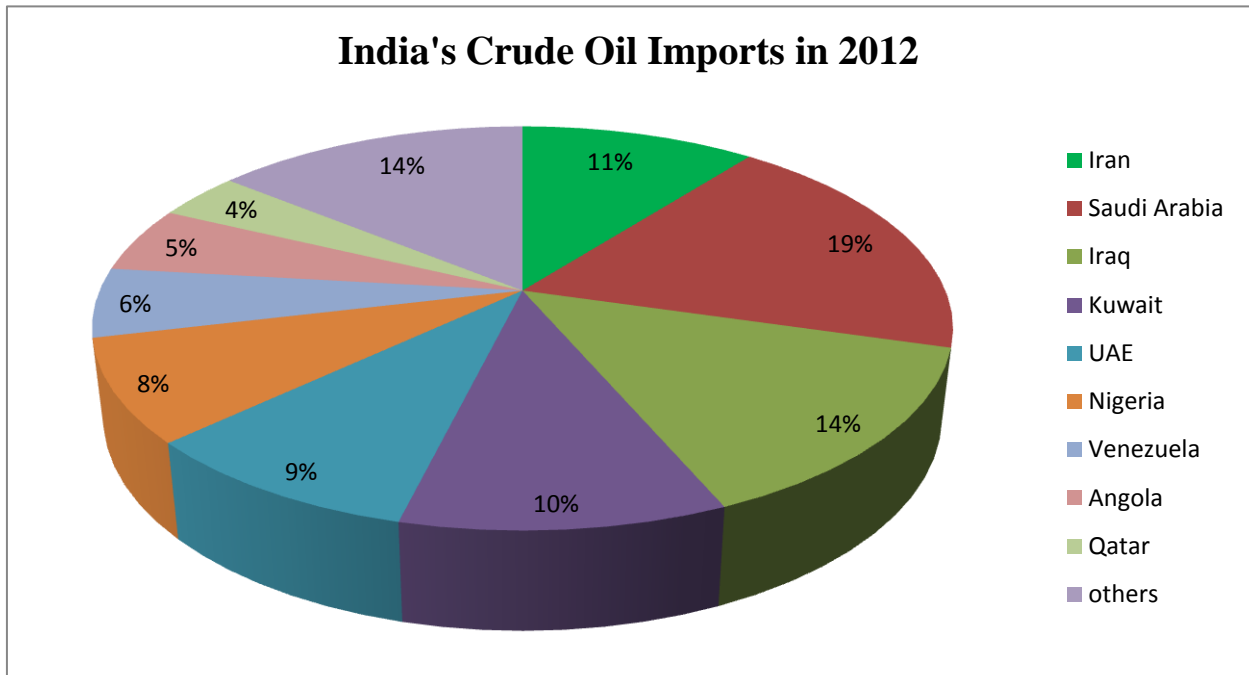
Source: Mansoor Moaddel, “The Worldviews of Saudi Citizens vs. Other Islamic Countries and Americans: Findings from Values Surveys”, *Population Studies Center*, May 2004, http://www.psc.isr.umich.edu/research/tmp/moaddel_capitol-hill-may04.pdf (accessed 13 April 2013).

Annex 9: India's Crude Oil Imports



Source: Reuters. Available at: <http://in.reuters.com/article/2012/08/06/india-crude-import-idINL4E8IU4HI20120806> (accessed 13 April 2013).

Annex 10: India's Crude Oil Imports in 2012



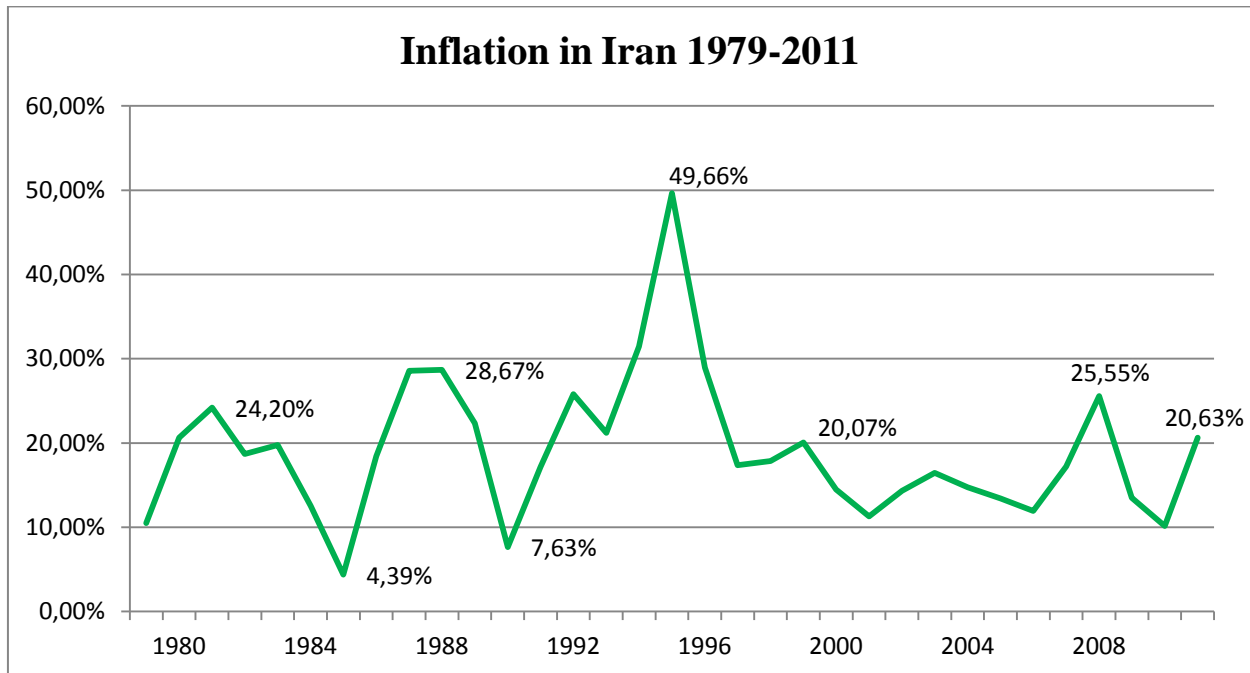
Source: Reuters. Available at: <http://in.reuters.com/article/2012/08/06/india-crude-import-idINL4E8IU4HI20120806> (accessed 13 April 2013).

Annex 11: Iran's GDP Growth Rate 1979-2009



Source: World Bank. Available at: http://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=d5bncppjof8f9_ (accessed 4 May 2013).

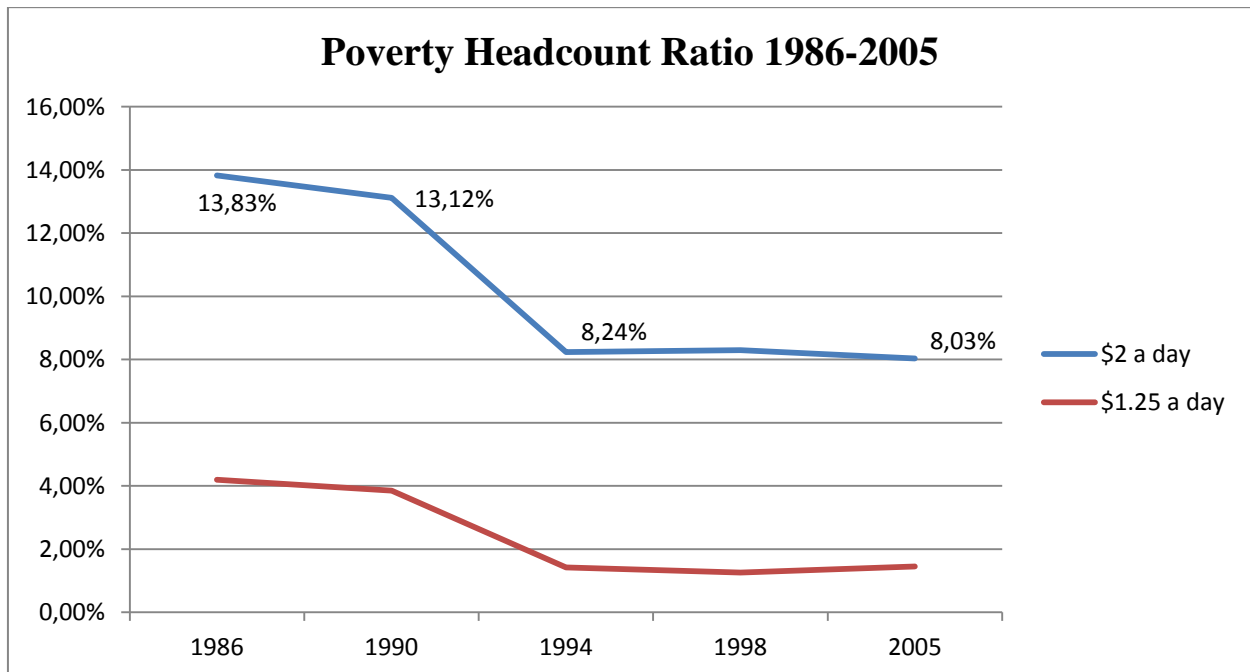
Annex 12: Inflation in Iran 1979-2011



Source: World Bank. Available at:

http://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=d5bncppjof8f9_ (accessed 4 May 2013).

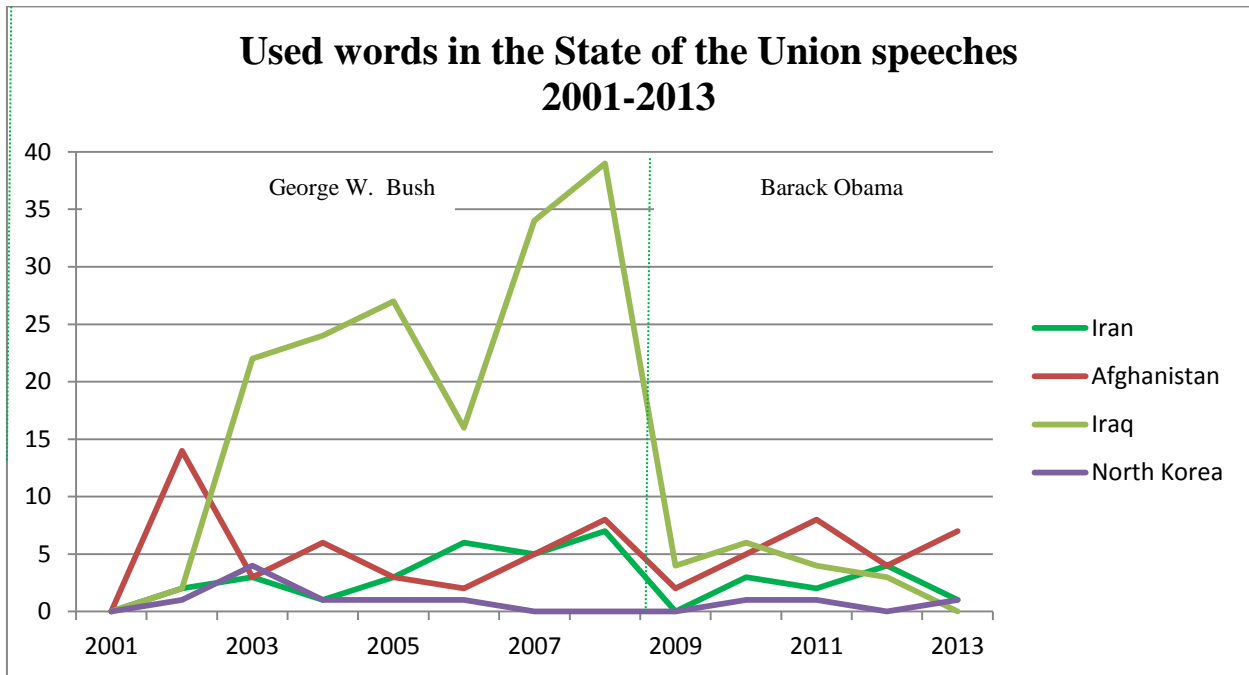
Annex 13: Poverty Headcount Ratio 1986-2005



Source: World Bank. Available at:

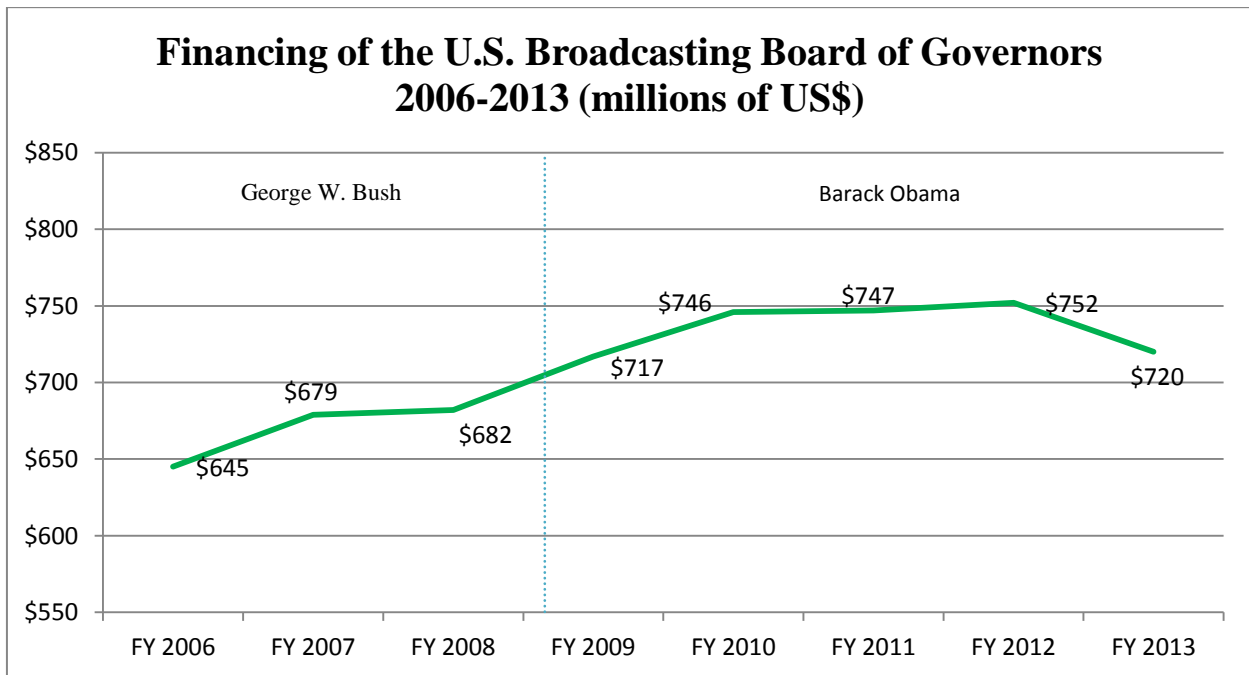
http://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=d5bncppjof8f9_ (accessed 4 May 2013).

Annex 14: Used Words in the State of the Union Addresses 2001-2013



Source: Original research.

Annex 15: Financing of the U.S. Broadcasting Board of Governors 2006-2013



Source: U.S. Broadcasting Board of Governors. Available at: <http://www.bbg.gov/about-the-agency/research-reports/budget-submissions> (accessed 4 May 2013).

Annex 16: Iran–Libya Sanctions Act of 1996, Section 6 (Description of Sanctions)

The sanctions to be imposed on a sanctioned person under section 5 are as follows:

(1) **EXPORT-IMPORT BANK ASSISTANCE FOR EXPORTS TO SANCTIONED PERSONS.** — The President may direct the Export-Import Bank of the United States not to give approval to the issuance of any guarantee, insurance, extension of credit, or participation in the extension of credit in connection with the export of any goods or services to any sanctioned person.

(2) **EXPORT SANCTION.** — The President may order the United States Government not to issue any specific license and not to grant any other specific permission or authority to export any goods or technology to a sanctioned person under—

(i) the Export Administration Act of 1979;

(ii) the Arms Export Control Act;

(iii) the Atomic Energy Act of 1954; or

(iv) any other statute that requires the prior review and approval of the United States Government as a condition for the export or re-export of goods or services.

(3) **LOANS FROM UNITED STATES FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS.** — The United States Government may prohibit any United States financial institution from making loans or providing credits to any sanctioned person totaling more than \$10,000,000 in any 12-month period unless such person is engaged in activities to relieve human suffering and the loans or credits are provided for such activities.

(4) **PROHIBITIONS ON FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS.** — The following prohibitions may be imposed against a sanctioned person that is a financial institution:

(A) **PROHIBITION ON DESIGNATION AS PRIMARY DEALER.**—Neither the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System nor the Federal Reserve Bank of New York may designate, or permit the continuation of any prior designation of, such financial institution as a primary dealer in United States Government debt instruments.

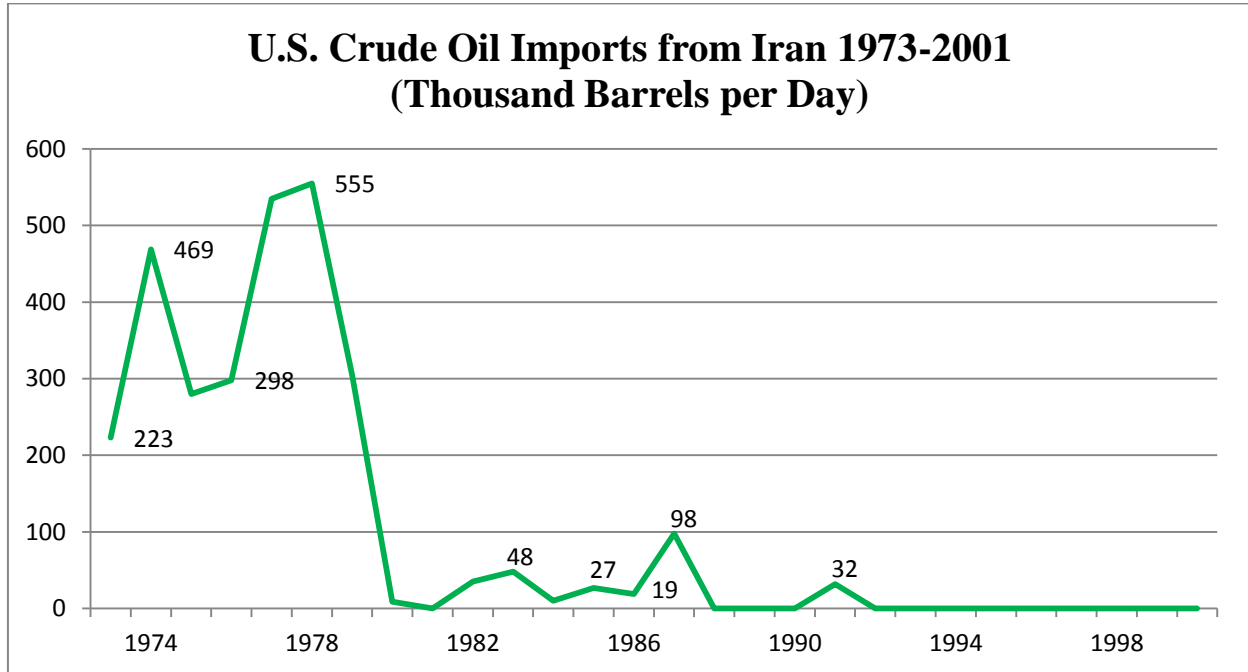
(B) **PROHIBITION ON SERVICE AS A REPOSITORY OF GOVERNMENT FUNDS.**—Such financial institution may not serve as agent of the United States Government or serve as repository for United States Government funds.

The imposition of either sanction under subparagraph (A) or (B) shall be treated as 1 sanction for purposes of section 5, and the imposition of both such sanctions shall be treated as 2 sanctions for purposes of section 5.

(5) **PROCUREMENT SANCTION.**—The United States Government may not procure, or enter into any contract for the procurement of, any goods or services from a sanctioned person.

(6) **ADDITIONAL SANCTIONS.** — The President may impose sanctions, as appropriate, to restrict imports with respect to a sanctioned person, in accordance with the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 and following).

Annex 17: U.S. Crude Oil Imports from Iran 1973-2001



Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration. Available at: http://www.eia.gov/dnav/pet/hist/LeafHandler.ashx?n=PET&s=MTTIM_NUS-NIR_2&f=A (accessed 4 May 2013).

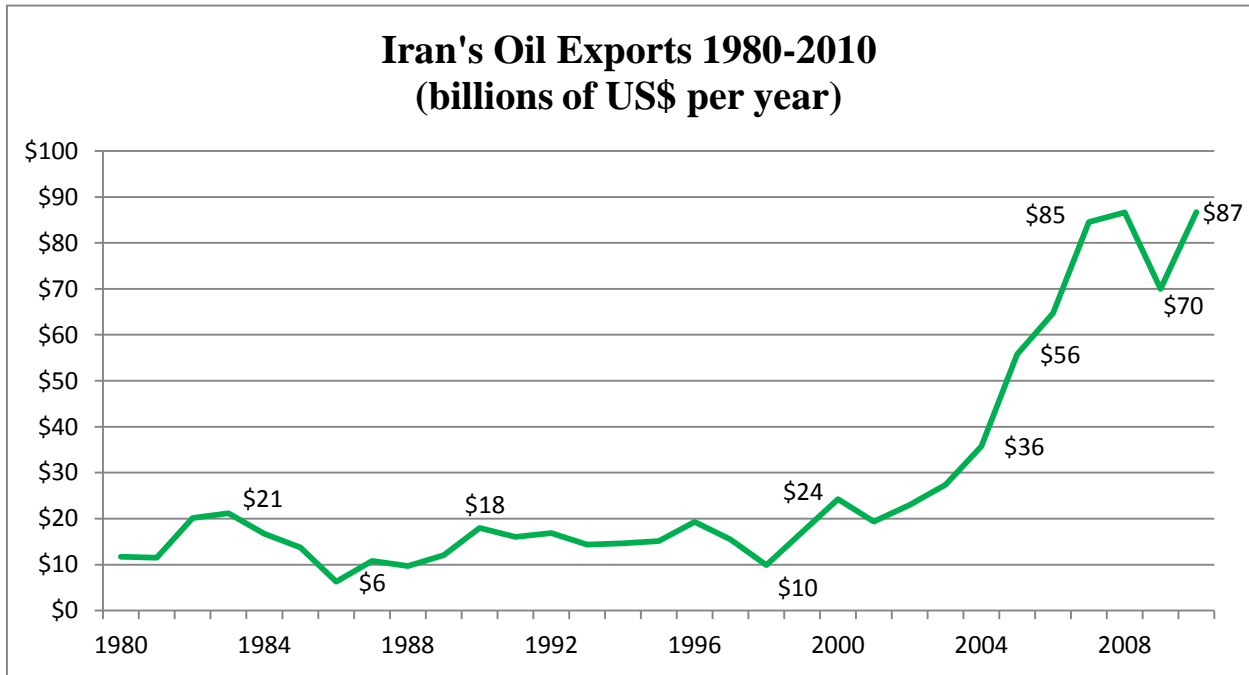
Annex 18: Used words/phrases in the National Security Strategies 2002, 2006 and 2010

	NSS 2002	NSS 2006	NSS 2010
Afghanistan	6	18	24
Africa	18	23	19
China	20	30	10
Europe	15	11	15
Iran	1	16	14
Iraq	1	57	33
North Korea	1	10	3
Pakistan	5	9	14
Taiwan	4	3	1
democracy	31	125	54
development	69	71	110
environment/climate change	6	4	38
freedom	46	81	11
human rights	7	22	63
Islam/Muslim	2	14	8
terrorism	92	122	57

Methodology: Including similar words, e.g. development = develop, developed, development, under-developed...

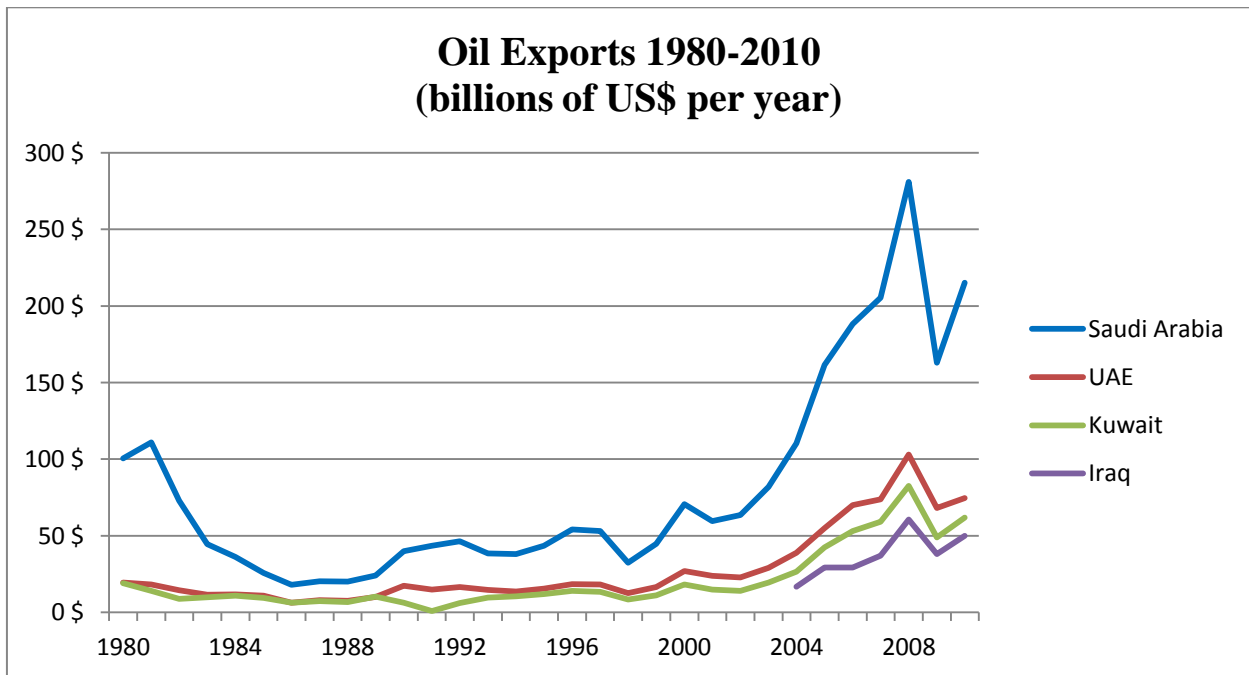
Source: Original research.

Annex 19: Iran's Oil Exports 1980-2010



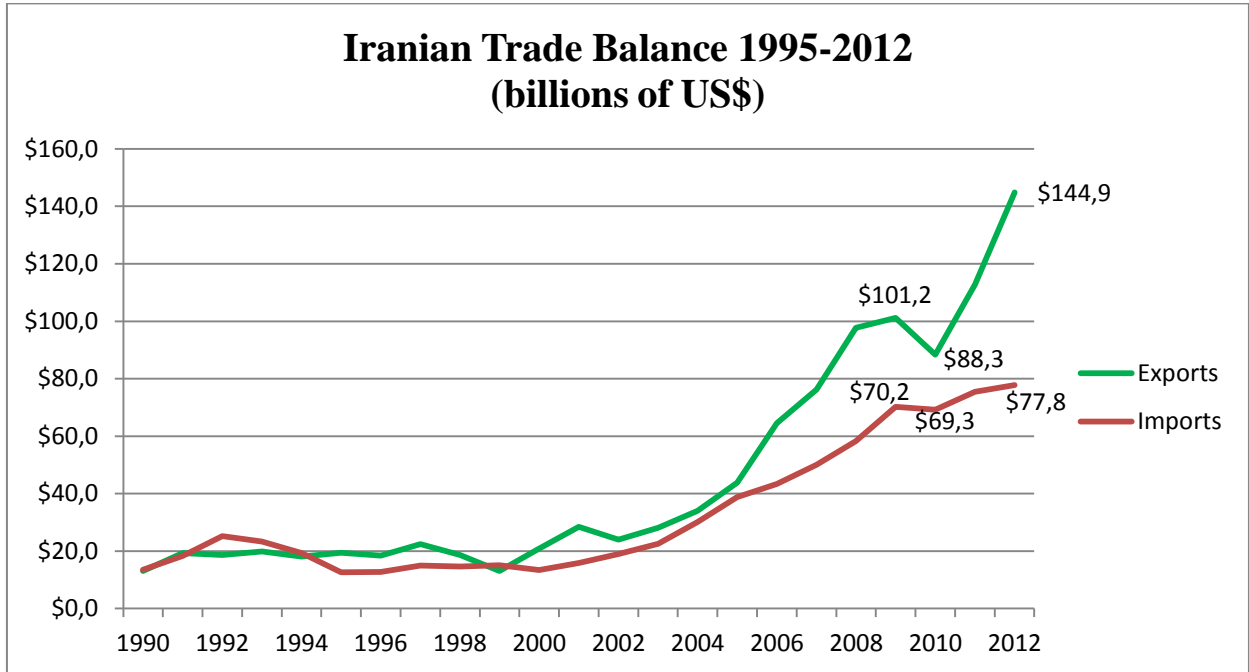
Source: IMF, October 2012 WEO. Available at: http://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=k3s92bru78li6_ (accessed 4 May 2013).

Annex 20: Oil Exports of Other Countries 1980-2010



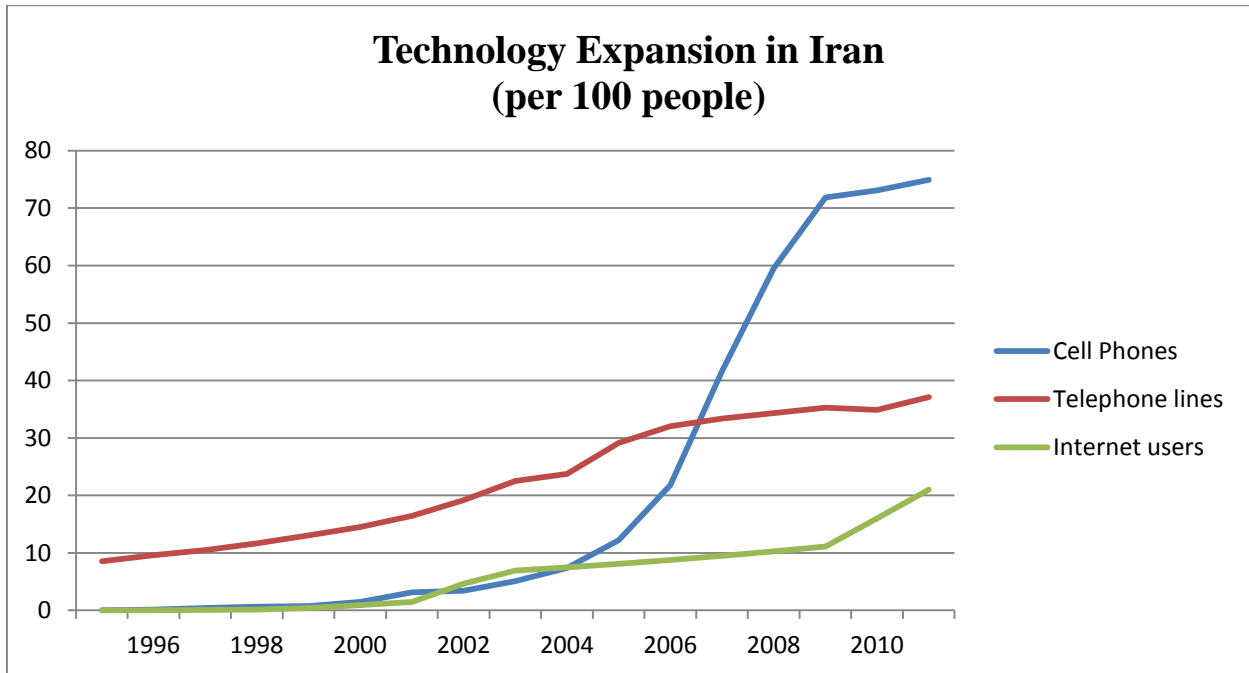
Source: IMF, October 2012 WEO. Available at: http://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=k3s92bru78li6_ (accessed 4 May 2013).

Annex 21: Iranian Trade Balance 1995-2012



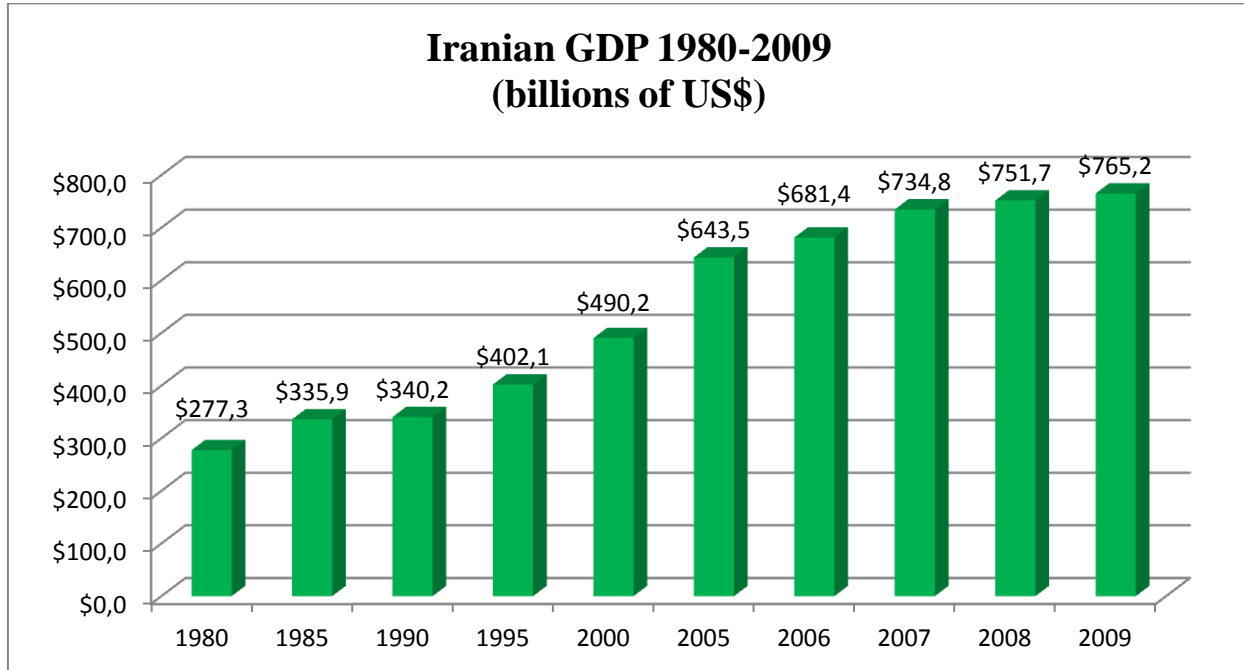
Source: Trading Economics. Available at: <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/iran/indicators> (accessed 4 May 2013).

Annex 22: Technology Expansion in Iran



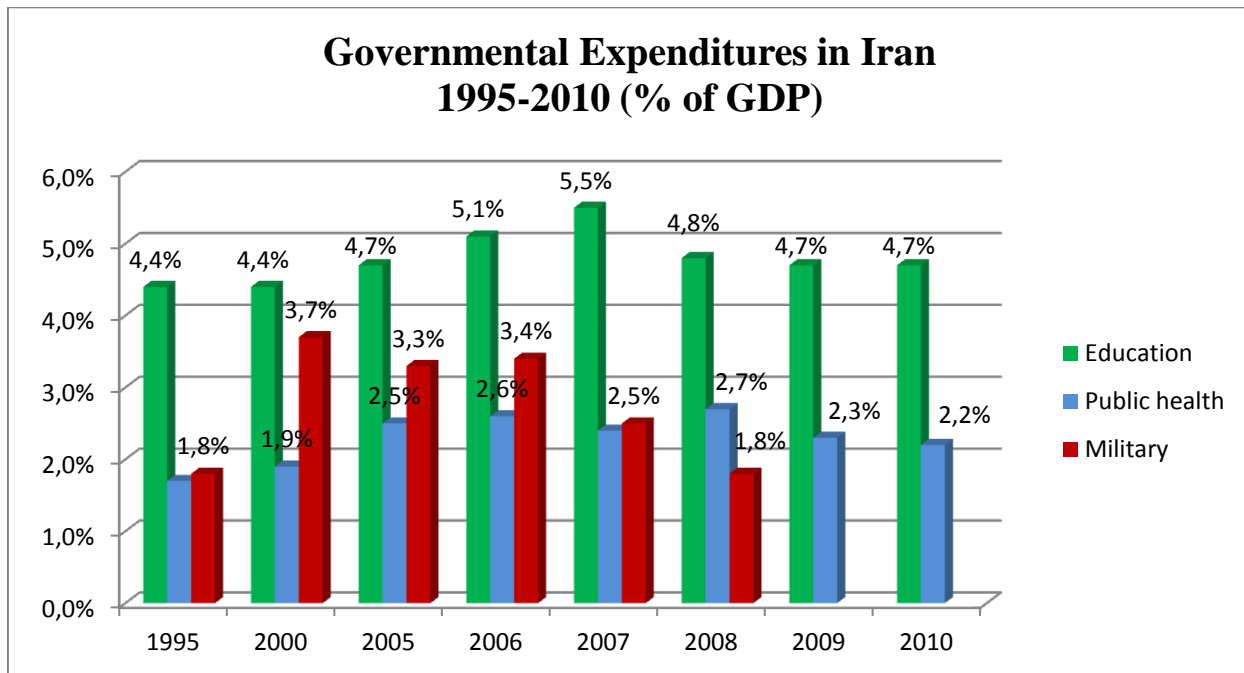
Source: World Bank. Available at: http://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=d5bncppjof8f9_ (accessed 4 May 2013).

Annex 23: Iranian GDP 1980-2009



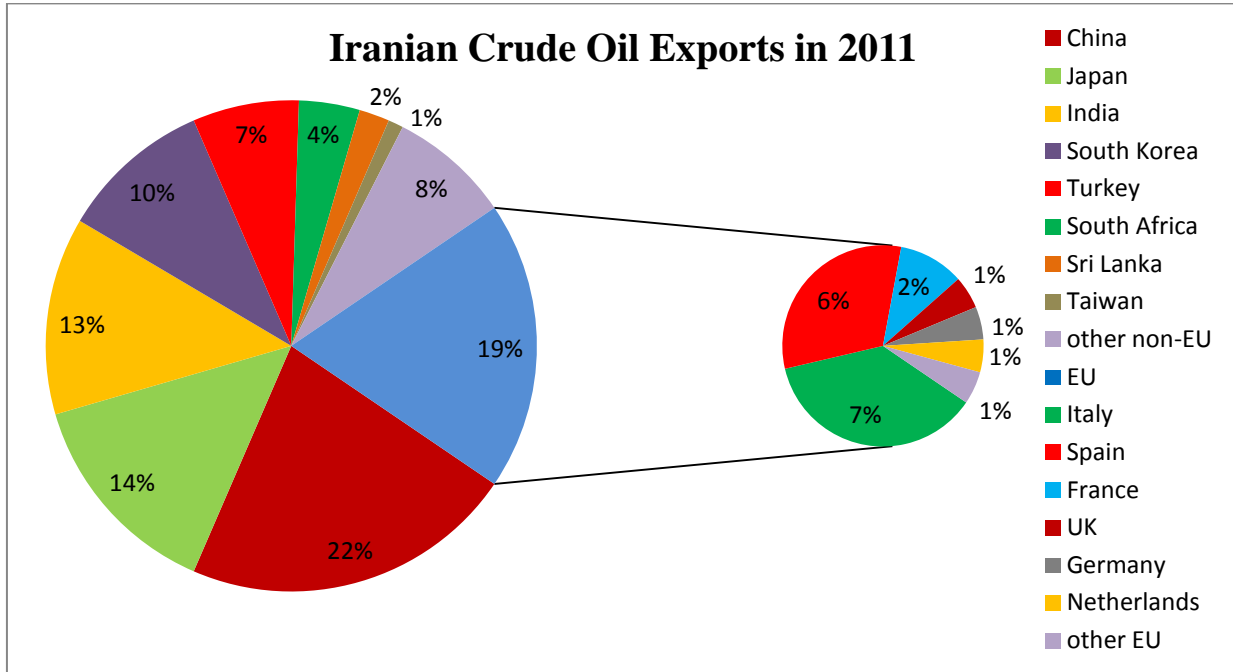
Source: Human Development Report 2013, UN Development Programme. Available at: http://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=kthk374hkr6tr_ (accessed 4 May 2013).

Annex 24: Governmental Expenditures in Iran 1995-2010



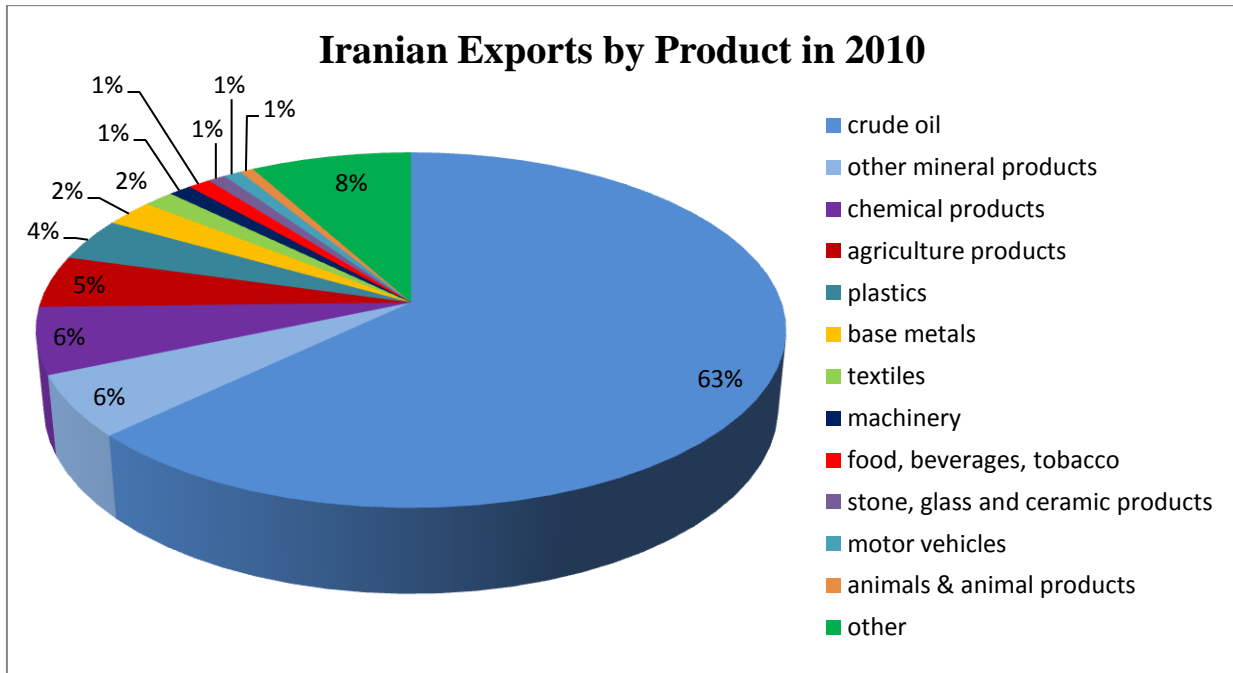
Source: Human Development Report 2013, UN Development Programme. Available at: http://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=kthk374hkr6tr_ (accessed 4 May 2013).

Annex 25: Iranian Crude Oil Exports in 2011



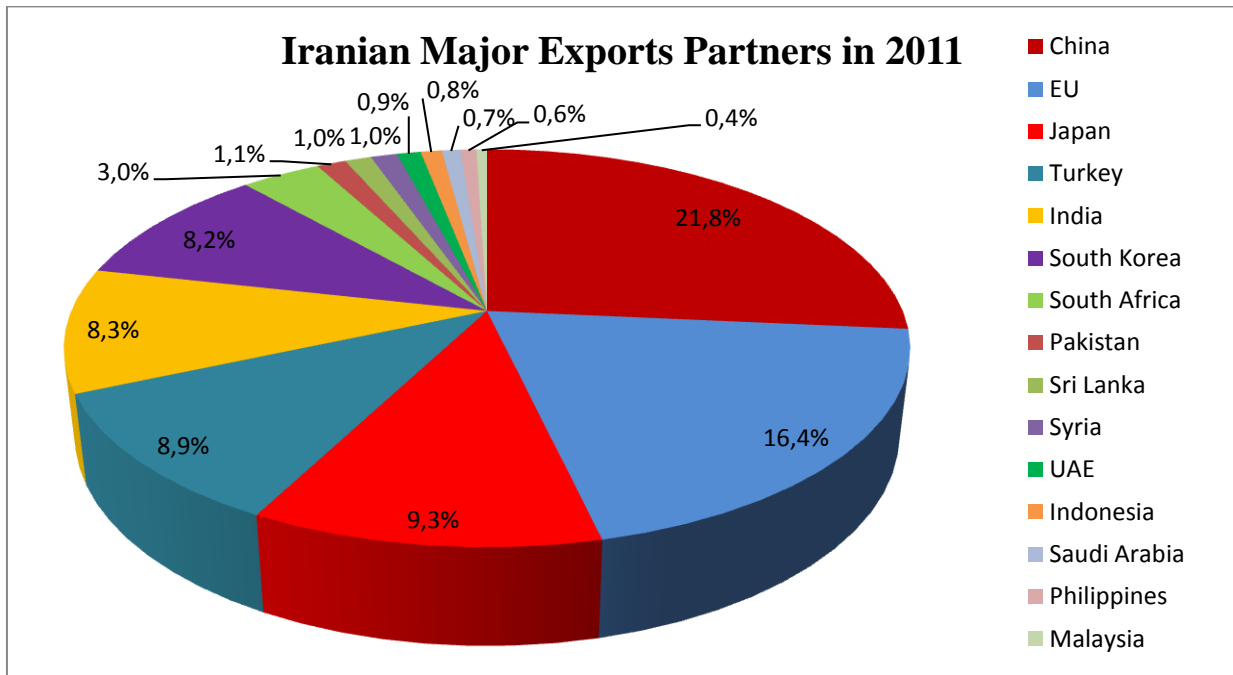
Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration. Available at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2012/feb/06/iran-oil-exports-destination> (accessed 4 May 2013).

Annex 26: Iranian Exports by Product in 2010



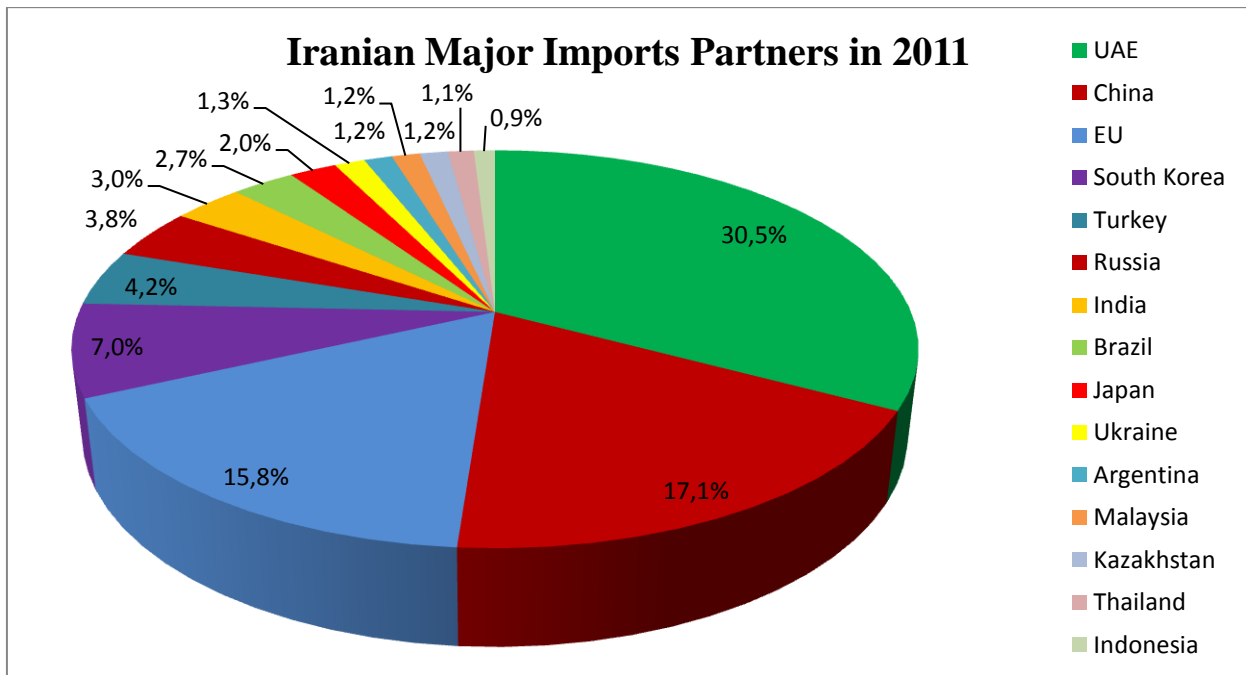
Source: Index Mundi. Available at: <http://www.indexmundi.com/trade/exports/?country=ir> (accessed 12 May 2013).

Annex 27: Iranian Major Exports Partners in 2011



Source: IMF. Available at: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2006/september/tradoc_113392.pdf (accessed 4 May 2013).

Annex 28: Iranian Major Imports Partners in 2011



Source: IMF. Available at: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2006/september/tradoc_113392.pdf (accessed 4 May 2013).