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

Rigorózní práce

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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 íránské 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, bezpečnostní politika.

Abstract

The long term relations between the United States and Iran are complicated, tense and hostile. This diploma thesis analyzes American foreign policy towards Iran between 2006 and 2010. This time period was critical for American-Iranian relations for several reasons.

First, the American rhetoric towards Iran became significantly more intense during the George W. Bush administration. This started with the Bush's "Axis of Evil" speech and peaked with the National Security Strategy of 2006, according to which the goal of the United States was a complete change of Iranian internal and external political behavior, and the American leadership was ready to use all means necessary to achieve its objective. The highest level Iranian leaders consequently became more paranoid and under the fear of losing power took Iran into an even more defensive position, although the United States sought the direct opposite.

Second, in February 2006, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) turned over the issue of the Iranian nuclear program to the UN Security Council. There the United States took the opportunity to push for multilateral sanctions on Iran. Third, in 2009, the United States had a change of leadership at the White House. President Obama repeatedly offered Iran a new beginning, but it was his administration which enforced the toughest sanctions to date.

Finally, because the situation in 2010 was absolutely the same as four years earlier, it can be 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 to improve the foreign policy strategy in the future.

Keywords

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

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V Praze dne 14. února 2014

Daniel Soukop

Poděkování

Na tomto místě bych zejména rád poděkoval svému vedoucímu práce, Doc. Francisi Raškovi, za veškerou podporu při tvorbě této diplomové práce. Rovněž bych rád vyjádřil díky dalším lidem, kteří mi nějakým způsobem pomohli, jmenovitě Dr. Janu Bečkovi, Dr. Normě Hervey, Dr. Serife Ilgu Ozler, Dr. Lewisu Brownsteinovi, Ing. Jiřímu Slavíkovi, Ing. Pavlíně Šrámkové a Ing. Michalu Střechovi.

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Introduction

The contemporary relations between the United States and Iran can be easily defined by three words – complicated, tense and hostile. The United States has been the most vocal critic of the activities of the theocratic regime. The list of issues is summarized for instance in the National Security Strategy (NSS) of 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, opens up its political system, and afford freedom to its people.

Although the United States is a much larger country with a stronger military and economy,² Iran has been 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 situation 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 and security policy towards Iran between 2006 and 2010. 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 some tough rhetoric in the NSS06. The document declared that, in addition to other goals, 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 to see if there will be another war in the Middle East.

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

¹ National Security Strategy of 2006, published 16 March 2006, <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/nsc/nss/2006/index.html>

² See Appendix 1.

Security Council (UNSC). Since, the UNSC sanctioned Iran for its misbehavior and lack of cooperation with the IAEA inspectors. The United States has been the most active proponent of new resolutions directed against the theocratic regime.

The United States waited 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 a 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 toughest sanctions on Iran to date. The Obama administration used Executive Orders, the Congress and the UN Security Council to put more pressure on the theocratic regime.

The American foreign policy between 2006 and 2010 conclusively failed to bring the American-Iranian Relations out of a dead end. So the situation in 2010 was absolutely the same as four years ago, thus Iran still remains a security threat to the American interests in the Middle East. It is crucial to understand the reasons behind this failure in this time period in order to improve foreign policy strategy towards Iran for the future.

This thesis has 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 hostile ways. The second is to analyze the American foreign policy between 2006 and 2010 to determine the reasons for its failure. That will be achieved by dividing the overall American foreign policy into a number of strategies and analyzing each. This procedure will also lead to the final objective, which is to discover any means which the United States could use to improve American-Iranian relations.

This thesis consists of four main chapters. The first is dedicated to the American perception of the situation and to explore the topics which the United States repeatedly criticizes about Iran. American representatives, on numerous occasions, especially blamed Iran for a destabilizing influence on the Middle East, for its controversial nuclear program, for supporting various terrorist organizations, and for human rights violations in Iran. This chapter is important in order to understand the repeated criticism in many American official documents and public statements, and to comprehend why the United States considers Iran as a security threat.

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

nuclear technology. Although the author doesn't speak the Persian language, this chapter was built on a historical analysis and on many vital sources, particularly secondary sources and dialogues of 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 some reasons for the U.S. foreign policy failures.

The third chapter focuses on the American foreign policy establishment. This chapter is particularly dedicated to analyzing legal documents, especially Congressional bills and UNSC resolutions, enacted between 2006 and 2010. Also numerous speeches by George W. Bush and Barack Obama, as a candidate and the president, were incorporated in this chapter. A large portion of attention focused on the National Security Strategies of 2006 and 2010. Both include the basic policy guidelines and the ultimate objectives in dealing with the Islamic Republic. Comparing these policies demonstrates whether or not the foreign policy approach from 2006 to 2010 did make a difference.

The final chapter analyses the effectiveness of the American foreign policy towards Iran in the time period. In particular, the foreign policy of the United States is divided into eight basic policy tactics, each examined separately. This method makes it possible to learn which foreign policy strategies against Iran were efficient, which were not, and which have the potential to improve the American-Iranian relations.

Due to the nature of the topic and the wide and depth of the researched problematic which is related to the fields of international relations, the foreign and security policy of the United States, and modern history of the United States, Iran and the Middle Eastern region, an inter-disciplinary research approach was applied. The author uses qualitative and historical methodological approaches in this thesis.

Available primary sources are the cornerstone of this thesis, especially both the National Security Strategies of 2006 and 2010. 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 on Iran which were enacted during the same time period. All State of the Union Addresses, 2006-2010, were studied as well. This thesis also uses many quotes and speeches by President George W. Bush, President Barack Obama and other

important political figures from the United States and Iran, which appeared mostly in available official documents and newspaper articles.

While working with these primary sources, the author uses the methodology of qualitative analysis. The author studies the content of the documents and speeches into the depth, the context of when, how and why were they created, and their effect on the U.S. foreign and security policy towards Iran, the American-Iranian relations, and other relevant topics. Using this methodology, the author was able to fully understand and interpret the political motivation of the United States and Iran which decisively affect the foreign- and security-planning of both countries.

The author also uses the method of interviews with various experts on relevant issues. 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. During his internship in fall 2013, the author discussed contemporary Middle Eastern affairs with experts from the Middle Eastern Department at the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs, particularly with Ing. Jiří Slavík, CSc. and Ing. Pavlína Šrámková. This thesis additionally 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.

The author also works with numerous periodic and non-periodic secondary sources, especially in the first two chapters. Some of them deal with the contemporary history of the United States, Iran, the Middle East, and the American foreign and security policy towards Iran and other countries in the region. The author used historical analysis while working with the majority of the secondary sources. The historical analysis was utilized for describing and explaining the development of American-Iranian relations in recent history, which was needed to fully comprehend the social, political, and economic context of the U.S. foreign and security policy towards Iran and the Middle Eastern region.

None of the secondary sources were dominant or crucial for the whole thesis. However, some sources were vital for particular chapters or subchapters. An example *A History of Iran: Empire of the Mind* by Michael Axworthy³ provides vital information on ancient and medieval Persian history. This book perfectly describes Persian culture and presents a fantastic insight into

³ The author used a Czech version of this book. The Czech name is *Dějiny Íránu: Říše ducha: Od Zarathuštry po současnost* and it was translated into Czech by Zuzana Křihová and Jan Marek.

Persian ways of thinking. The only flaw of this publication for this work is the concentration on pre-1979 events. The development after the revolution is mentioned, although only vaguely. Michael Axworthy is a well-known British academic. He also used to be the head of the Iran section at the British Foreign & Commonwealth Office from 1998 to 2000.

Another important secondary source is *Target Iran: The Truth about the White House's Plans for Regime Change* by Scott Ritter,⁴ 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 specific findings of the IAEA, Iranian defending arguments and vindications, and numerous accusations of the United States, allegedly trying to influence the IAEA inspectors. Unfortunately, Ritter published this book in September 2007, thus the UNSC resolutions and later findings were not included.

Additionally *Nuclear Weapons: The Highest Form of Killing* by Vladimír Pitschmann⁵ is useful and is recommended for all topics regarding nuclear technology. This book concentrates mostly on the history of nuclear weapons development. It includes a chapter dedicated to the Iranian nuclear program and its history. Furthermore, this book explains the basic technical background of nuclear technology, which needs to be understood to analyze the development of any nuclear program. For instance, the publication clarifies the process of enrichment, the essential differences between nuclear and thermonuclear weapons, or when a nuclear program stops being civilian and becomes military. Mr. Pitschmann also wrote a book on chemical weapons and teaches at the Czech Technical University in Prague.

Another important publication is *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States* by Raymond Hinnebusch and Anoushiravan Ehteshami. This book explains inter-state relations in the Middle East, including thereof Iran. This publication is vital to comprehend the rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia, the historic ties between Iran and Turkey, and the overall influence of the Iranian government in Middle Eastern affairs. Mr. Hinnebusch works as Professor of International Relations and Middle East Studies at the University of St. Andrews and is also the director of the Centre for Syrian Studies. Mr. Ehteshami is the director of the Al-Sabah Programme and also

⁴ The author used a Czech version of this book. The Czech name is *Cíl Írán: Pravda o plánech Bílého domu na změnu iránského režimu* and it was translated into Czech by Rani Tolimat.

⁵ The author used the original Czech version of this book. The Czech name is *Jaderné zbraně: Nejvyšší forma zabíjení*. The author is not aware whether or not this book is also available in English.

serves as a special advisor to the Islamic Criminal Justice Project in the Centre for Criminal Law & Justice at Durham University.

The November/December 2010 issue of the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* was an essential source for the fourth chapter. This issue included a special discussion topic, named “The Iranian Quagmire: How to Move Forward”. It contained six different articles by six authors. Every author chose one foreign policy strategy and defended it. These six papers were used in this thesis to analyze various tactics of overall American foreign policy. These strategies were confronted with author’s findings from previous chapters, i.e. political motivations of Americans and Iranians, and with the social, political and economic context of the American-Iranian relations. Using this method, it was possible to tell which strategies were effective and which were not. On the basis of this analysis, the author then offers several alternatives which could have the potential to bring the American-Iranian relations out of the dead end.

1. The American Perspective

During recent years, the approach of the United States to Iran might be compared to a lion slowly walking around a scorpion. There is no doubt that the lion can crush its opponent and decisively win any confrontation. However, such a victory would result in at least several venomous stings. Neither America nor Iran seeks conflict, but their deeply rooted disputes prevent them from peacefully walking away.

The United States clearly believes the Islamic Republic of Iran to be a threat to its security interests. These interests are summarized into four basic categories. The United States seeks stability in the Middle Eastern region, while Iran wants to transform it. Then, Washington fears the Iranian nuclear program. Iran supports numerous extremist groups which the United States considers to be terrorists. Finally, the United States is one of the long-term critics of civil and human rights issues in Iran. These four security concerns shape the foreign policy of the United States towards Iran.

1.1. Stability of the Middle East

Since World War Two, the United States has been an important player in the Middle East. The United States used its global superpower status to influence regional affairs on numerous occasions. For instance, Washington used political pressure to stop the British-French-Israeli offensive against Egypt in 1956. Also, the White House supplied Iraq with enough weapons to guarantee Saddam Hussein would not lose the war against Iran in the 1980s.

Then there are numerous examples when the United States intervened into internal affairs of sovereign states in the Middle East, for example Iran 1953, Lebanon 1958, Iraq 1959. Furthermore, since 1967, the United States is the most influential supporter of Israel, serving as its protector. These activities provoked the rise of anti-Americanism across the region.⁶ However, the United States wasn't too concerned about this development, as it was limited to the outer circle of the Middle East.

That changed soon after the Cold War ended when American troops established bases in Saudi Arabia and docked its naval ships in the Persian Gulf to suppress Saddam Hussein in his further expansion. Since then, the permanent military presence of the United States makes it a major and internal force in the Middle Eastern region. The U.S. 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. Prior of the administration of President George W. Bush, policy focused on protecting 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. However, Washington now is concerned in almost all political, economic and military problems in the Middle East. The United States needs to be more active because any unfavorable development in this unstable region can become a serious security threat for American citizens stationed or working in the Middle Eastern region, 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 contemporary administrations, regardless of whether the White House is controlled by a Democrat or Republican.

⁶ Paul Hollander. *Understanding Anti-Americanism: Its Origins and Impact at Home and Abroad* (Chicago: Library of Congress Cataloging, 2004), 91.

Iran does not share the same objectives. On the contrary, Iran wishes to challenge the status quo, rebuild the glory of the former Persian Empire, and once again become a regional hegemon.⁷ This incompatibility of long-term objectives brought both nations to indirect confrontations in 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 role, especially during the 1960s and 1970s. Saudi Arabia exploits its hold of Mecca and Medina, the two Holy cities of Islam, and presents itself as the leader of the entire Muslim world.⁸ Turkey's role the Middle East is developing. 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 continues to deny it a full membership status.⁹ However, the United States is at this point the only nation in the Middle East which could truly be called the regional hegemon.

America has political, military, economic and technological advantage above all the other countries combined. The second most influential country in the region today is Saudi Arabia, an ally and a close business partner of the United States. The status quo in the Middle East is more than preferable towards Washington. It would be difficult to believe the United States wouldn't object to Iran as a regional superpower, 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.¹⁰ As a result, Iran attempts to strengthen its influence in the neighboring countries in order to end the American geopolitical clutch, especially in Afghanistan.

The United States accuses Iran of 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

⁷ See pages 29-31.

⁸ Interview with Ing. Jiří Slavík, CSc. in December 2013. He is an expert on politics and modern history of Egypt and Libya, deputy director of the Middle Eastern Department at the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

⁹ Aslı Aydıntaşbaş, "Ankara Looks East", *The Cairo Review of Global Affairs*, accessed 10 February 2014, <http://www.aucegypt.edu/gapp/cairoreview/pages/articleDetails.aspx?aid=155>

¹⁰ See page 48.

campaign against the Taliban and Al Qaeda in fall 2001.¹¹ However, as 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.

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 provided training for new Taliban recruits. Even though Teheran has always denied these charges, it is not a secret that Iran doesn't want the United States to easily win the Afghan conflict.

Teheran prefers Washington to focus 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. It is widely believed that the Iranian regime or Iranian non-state actors, possibly with Ayatollah's secret approval, assists their old adversary, although the support is quite limited.¹² Regardless of the Iranian actions, the United States is furious at the theocratic regime for supporting the American adversary in the Afghan War.

In the Iraqi case, the situation calmed down after the American "Surge" in 2008 and the number of suicide attacks dropped rapidly. However, this trend ended at the beginning of 2013 and last year was the deadliest since 2008.¹³ Iraq poses a possible major security threat for the American interests in the future as some fear the significant ethno-religious internal division in Iraq.¹⁴ They believe that Iraq will eventually collapse from within and dissolve into three separate states. This theory was first expressed 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.

¹¹ See page 42.

¹² Mohsen Milani, "Iran's Ties to the Taliban", *The Iran Primer*, 10 August 2011, <http://iranprimer.usip.org/blog/2011/aug/10/iran's-ties-taliban>

¹³ See Appendixes 2-3.

¹⁴ According to the CIA Factbook, Iraq's ethno-religious division is: 60% Shia Arabs, 17% Sunni Arabs, 18% Kurds (mostly Sunni), and 5% other.

CIA. "Iraq", *CIA World Factbook*, accessed 9 February 2014. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/iz.html>

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 increasing the overall Iranian influence in the Middle East. President George W. H. Bush described this to be one of the major reasons why the American forces didn't overthrow Saddam Hussein in 1991.¹⁵ This scenario is a possible threat today as extremist groups, for instance the Iraqi branch of Al Qaeda, are evoking sectarian violence between the Sunni and Shia using 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 won both parliamentary elections in 2005 and 2010¹⁶ and control the central government in Baghdad. So far, The Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri Kamal al-Maliki established quite friendly relations with Iran. Experts predict the Iranian influence on Iraqi internal affairs will only increase.¹⁷

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 are not happy with this result.

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 U.S. military forces.¹⁸ Thus, the Iraqi Shia serve as a deterrent against war as the Pentagon would have to deal with a much wider conflict in a war with Iran.

Furthermore, America attempts to deal with the intense Israeli-Iranian relations. The United States has functioned as a protector of the Jewish state for many decades and the pro-Israeli lobby in Washington D.C. has always been capable of gaining bipartisan support for Israeli security interests. It is therefore very difficult for the American political leadership to make friendly gestures towards Teheran as long as Tel Aviv considers Iran to be its main external foe. At

¹⁵ George W. H. Bush and Brent Scowcroft, *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), 450-488.

¹⁶ See Appendixes 4-5.

¹⁷ Emma Sky. "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>

¹⁸ Andrew Gilligan. "The Case for not Attacking Iran", *The Spectator*, 27 November 2004, <http://www.spectator.co.uk/features/12868/the-case-for-not-attacking-iran>

present, the greatest source of tensions between Israel and the Islamic Republic is the controversial Iranian nuclear program.

1.2. The Iranian Nuclear Program

Iran's interest in nuclear technology stems from the early 1970s when Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi sought means 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 a supporter of 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.¹⁹

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 accepted by the Clinton administration, even though Israel opposed.²⁰

However, in December 2002, David Albright of the Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS) exhibited satellite images of nuclear facilities in Natanz and Arak on CNN. As a result, the United States accused Iran of working on a covert nuclear program.²¹ 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 ensued.

Since 2002, the inspectors of the IAEA repeatedly visited Iran's facilities and found several items of concern. 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 activity in the surrounding area.

¹⁹ Nuclear Threat Initiative, The. "Iran", *The Nuclear Threat Initiative*, accessed 11 February 2014, <http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/iran>

²⁰ Scott Ritter, *Cil Írán: Pravda o plánech Bílého domu na změnu íránského režimu*, tran. Rani Tolimat (Prague: Mladá fronta, 2008), 55.

²¹ *Ibidem*, 86-87.

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 the previous owner which was later proven to be true by additional testing by the IAEA.

Another object of concern, the IAEA discovered Iran was missing 1.9kg of uranium 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 did not explain 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 proved that the exact shipment was also sent to Iran. The IAEA compared official Iranian statements with this cargo. Iran didn't confess to receiving a blueprint of an implosion device, which 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 as a gift.²²

Although Iran always eventually answered all additional questions and removed doubts, its cooperation with the IAEA wasn't satisfactory. The whole Iranian nuclear program seemed to be very mysterious and the IAEA never lost the suspicion that Iran is trying to hide something. In addition, the IAEA couldn't have passed over other certain aspects of the Iranian public diplomacy. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad used very aggressive rhetoric against the United States and Israel, and 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 those North Korean, which evoked speculations about military cooperation between Teheran and Pyongyang.²³ This didn't improve the Iranian image in front of the international community. It is understandable that Washington believed that Iran was secretly developing a nuclear warhead and was prepared to use it against America or its allies.

²² Ibidem, 142, 221.

²³ Vladimír Pitschmann, *Jaderné zbraně: Nejvyšší forma zabíjení* (Prague: Naše vojsko, 2005), 228-231.

Even though Teheran denied the American accusations, the United States pushed the IAEA to hand over the case to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). That happened on 4 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 – Cuba, Venezuela and Syria – voted against the motion, 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 have expanded the investigative powers of the IAEA inspectors.

Since then, the Security Council has imposed 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 promoted by the United States – five by the George W. Bush administration and one by Barack Obama's staff.²⁴

Constant obstructions, lack of transparency and evasive answers from Tehran led to the widely accepted belief that Iran is hiding something from the international community. However, there may be other possible explanations for Iranian mysterious behavior regarding its nuclear program. It is possible that Iran is strongly paranoid since the United States used false 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.²⁵ Furthermore, the United States also denies Iran's motivation from trying to acquire nuclear technology at the first place.²⁶

Iran 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 a peaceful nuclear program. In fact, the NPT encourages the member states to exchange nuclear technology with each other.²⁷ This has been Iran's argument

²⁴ See pages 55-56, 61.

²⁵ Interview with Dr. Serife Ilgu Ozler in April 2012. She is a Professor of international relations at SUNY New Paltz.

²⁶ See page 35-36.

²⁷ Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), entered into force on 5 March 1970, accessed 9 February 2014, <http://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2010/npttext.shtml>

for a very long time: “The Americans themselves know well that Iran doesn’t have an intention to build nuclear weapons; IAEA should do its task toward member-states and instead of non-cooperation, should help them technically.”²⁸ However, the distance between a civilian and a military nuclear program is very narrow.

Basically, uranium found in 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 to generate electricity, around 20% for medical purposes, and above 90% for a nuclear weapon. However, the higher the percentage is, the faster the process of enrichment. Thus the jump from 20% to 90% is much quicker than 1% to 5%.²⁹ Also, the U-238 byproduct can be transformed into plutonium, which is also usable for nuclear weapons.³⁰ Therefore, the Iranian argument that it enriches uranium only for peaceful purposes is a balancing act on very thin ice, which makes the international community very uncomfortable.

Some 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 be depleted. Also, if oil is not used to produce electricity, Iran could to increase its oil exports and improve its budgetary revenues.³¹ Because there are strong arguments for both sides and the program lacks transparency, it is impossible to tell, whether the Iranian nuclear program is only civilian or also military.

However, regardless of whether or not the Iranian nuclear program is only civilian, the U.S. policies treat Iran as if Teheran was actually developing an atomic bomb. Although many experts expressed the opinion that the Iranian bomb would be used only as a defensive tool and a deterrent,³² the United States builds its security policy on the presumption that Iran would immediately use an A-Bomb on its foes once its developed, namely on Israel, Saudi Arabia or American military personnel in the Middle East. According to this American view, Iran would do that either by directly deploying the bomb with a ballistic missile, or by giving the nuclear

²⁸ Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. “UN should not heed powers’ positions on nuke disarmament“, 2 September 2012, <http://www.mfa.gov.ir/index.aspx?siteid=3&pageid=2012&newsview=23939>

²⁹ Ritter, *Cíl Írán*, 67-68.

³⁰ Pitschmann, *Jaderné zbraně*, 50-58.

³¹ Interview with a representative of the Iranian mission at the UN in March 2012.

³² See pages 15-16.

warhead to a third party, a proxy organization such as Hamas or Hezbollah.³³ This fear is 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.³⁴

On the other hand, it needs to be said Iran is not the only nation which has a controversial nuclear program. To name a few, also Syria and Myanmar have been repeatedly criticized by the IAEA.³⁵ One might also recall the United States wasn't that strict with 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.³⁶

This bias against Iran also infected the western media. One example was the situation of February 2012. Numerous respected newspapers, including *The New York Times*,³⁷ *The Washington Post*,³⁸ or *The Daily Telegraph*,³⁹ 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 approval of Iranian authorities. Although the NPT allows the IAEA to enter any nuclear sites without a permission, that does not apply on military sites. That would be possible only if Iran had ratified the Additional Protocol, which it did not. Nevertheless Iran was willing to let the inspectors in if the United States agreed to resume negotiations. The United States nonetheless refused this proposal, so the Iranians had no reason to give the IAEA the approval to enter the site.⁴⁰

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 will try to destroy the Iranian research sites if it is proven that Iran is really

³³ Interview with Dr. Lewis Brownstein in February 2012. He is a Professor of modern history and Middle Eastern affairs at SUNY New Paltz.

³⁴ Jan Eichler, *Terorismus a války na počátku 21. století* (Praha: Karolinum, 2007), 253-256.

³⁵ See page 44-45.

³⁶ Interview with a representative of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) in March 2012.

³⁷ David E. Sanger and Allan Cowell, "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

³⁸ Joby Warrick and Thomas Erdbrink, "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

³⁹ Daily Telegraph, The. "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>

⁴⁰ Interview with a representative of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in February 2012.

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 require more than one hundred airplanes over Iranian airspace at the same moment if Tel Aviv wanted to attack the Iranian nuclear sites.⁴¹ Furthermore, Israel might need to repeat these strikes for several times for maximum impact.⁴² 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.

Second, there are concerns that development of the first Iranian bomb might immediately start a regional arms race and eventually open 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.⁴³ However, an arms race in the Middle East, combining nuclear technology, other WMDs and conventional arsenal, would definitely bring many problems for the United States and the world in the long run.

Third, the United States is concerned that Iran might use its knowledge of nuclear technology 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 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 and North Korea, just to name a few.⁴⁴

Finally, the United States needs to make sure that a state shall not violate the NPT once it has been 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 that could bring the overall international legal system to the brink of

⁴¹ Elisabeth Bumiller, "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

⁴² Dana H. Allin and Steven Simon, *The Sixth Crisis: Iran, Israel, America and the Rumors of War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 53.

⁴³ Interview with a representative of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in February 2012.

⁴⁴ Pitschmann, *Jaderné zbraně*, 210-212.

collapse. The United States serves as a protector of the international treaty system and it would transform in complete chaos if the Americans failed in this.⁴⁵

1.3. Iran: A Sponsor of Terrorism?

One of points of dispute with the United States is Iran's support of some radical Islamic groups which Washington considers to be 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 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.⁴⁶ However, it needs to be remembered that Iran doesn't consider these movements to be terrorist and perceives its assistance to these groups as another way to link itself with people of the Middle East through Islam.⁴⁷ The United States rejects 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 a few hours after this shocking news, many experts on the Middle East and Iran denied this information. For instance, Reza Sayah, a CNN international correspondent for Egypt, summarized the events with a hint of sarcasm:⁴⁸

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?

⁴⁵ Interview with a representative of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) in March 2012.

⁴⁶ Raymond Hinnebusch and Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002), 287.

⁴⁷ See pages 36.

⁴⁸ Reza Sayah, "Some analysts skeptical of alleged Iranian plot", *CNN News*, 17 October 2011, <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/10/12/us/analysis-iran-saudi-plot>

In Mr. Sayah's opinion, it would be totally illogical if Iran attempted something like that, because Teheran would definitely lose more than it would gain. Additionally, Iran had never done anything like this so there is no precedent for this behavior.⁴⁹

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 on 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".⁵⁰ 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."⁵¹

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 prove 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 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.⁵²

Iran has also been a target of several cyber-attacks during the recent years. The Iranian nuclear facilities were first 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

⁴⁹ Ibidem.

⁵⁰ Robert Mackey, "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>

⁵¹ Ibidem.

⁵² Interview with a representative of the Iranian mission at the UN in March 2012.
Interview with a representative of the Israeli mission at the UN in March 2012.

was eventually traced to the United States and Israel.⁵³ Therefore it is believable that the attacks in Georgia, India and Thailand in February 2012 were in fact acts 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 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*, supports allegations 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.”⁵⁴ 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 unimaginable.

First, both sides are theologically 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.⁵⁵ This was one of the holiest sites in Shia Islam.

Although Usama bin Laden later apologized for Al Qaeda's attacks on Shia civilian targets and publicly criticized his deputy Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the damage was already done.⁵⁶ The Sunni-Shia split in Iraq is on the rise even today.

Second, Iran and Al Qaeda are the exact opposites 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 states and of borders between them, which were imposed on

⁵³ David E. Sanger, “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>

⁵⁴ Jennifer Rubin, “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

⁵⁵ Jason Burke and Paddy Allen, “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>

⁵⁶ Fawaz A. Gerges, *The Rise and Fall of Al-Qaeda* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 41.

the Muslim world by “Western infidels”. The Salafi acknowledge only the universal realm of all Muslims.⁵⁷

The Salafi Muslims believe that the best political system ever created was the original Islamic state under the rule of Prophet Mohammad. It was maintained by the legal code created by God, *sharia*. The Salafi reject the idea that a human can create anything better than God. Everything which differs from *sharia* is innovation (*bid'a*), therefore heresy.⁵⁸ On the other hand, Iran is a modern national state and it's not governed by *sharia*, in spite of the theological foundation of the Islamic Republic.

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 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.⁵⁹

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 the Taliban to establish rule over Afghanistan but 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 the 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 described this action to be inhumane and cowardly.⁶⁰ This terrorist attack was executed by Al-Jamaa Islamiya which merged with Al Qaeda in 2006.⁶¹ Iran also denounced numerous attacks executed by Al Qaeda, for

⁵⁷ John Keegan, *Válka v Iráku*, tran. by Lubomír Kotačka (Prague: BETA-Dobrovský, 2005), 82-83.

⁵⁸ Michael R. Dillon, *Wahhabism: Is It a Factor in the Spread of Global Terrorism?* (Monterey, CA: Naval Postgraduate School, 2009), 33-39.

⁵⁹ Interview with Dr. Lewis Brownstein in February 2012.

⁶⁰ Thomas R. Mockaitis and Paul B. Rich [eds.], *Grand Strategy in the War against Terrorism* (Portland, Oregon: Frank Cass & Co., 2003), 45

⁶¹ “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).

instance 9/11, the London 7/7 bombings or the 2009 terrorist attack in Jakarta.⁶² Most recently, Iran also officially condemned the Boston bombings in April 2013.⁶³

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.⁶⁴ 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 different 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 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

⁶² Interview with a representative of the Iranian mission at the UN in March 2012.

⁶³ Max Fischer, “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>

⁶⁴ See page 38.

and Zoroastrians.⁶⁵ 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 restrictions, Iran is, in theory, quite close to a western-style democracy. However, problems remain in practice. Most notably, the presidential elections in 2005 and 2009 were subjected to wide international criticism of fraud and manipulation. In 2005, Ahmadinejad gained three times more votes in the second round than in the first.⁶⁶ 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.⁶⁷

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 by 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:⁶⁸

[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.⁶⁹ This time the Guardian Council approved only four male candidates of 476 men and women who had registered for the vote.⁷⁰

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,

⁶⁵ Michael Axworthy, *Dějiny Íránu: Říše ducha: Od Zarathuštry po současnost* (Prague: Lidové noviny, 2007), 195-196.

⁶⁶ Psephos, "Islamic Republic of Iran: Presidential Election of June 2005", *Psephos: Adam Carr's Election Archive*, accessed 9 February 2014, <http://psephos.adam-carr.net/countries/i/iran/iran2005.txt>

⁶⁷ Axworthy, *Dějiny Íránu*, 210-211.

⁶⁸ CNN News. "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

⁶⁹ Psephos. "Islamic Republic of Iran: Presidential Election of 12 June 2009", *Psephos: Adam Carr's Election Archive*, accessed 9 February 2014, <http://psephos.adam-carr.net/countries/i/iran/iran2009.txt>

⁷⁰ Aresu Eqbali, "Iranian Women Need More Rights: Candidate's Wife", *Google News*, 29 May 2009, <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jDD9Q1xNs5VIqwgzYINkyU2y5Upg>

who helped Mousavi with his campaign. No one officially claimed responsibility for any of these incidents nor was anyone arrested.⁷¹ 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.⁷²

In the aftermath many students protested in streets of Teheran and many countries around the world expressed concerns about the elections.⁷³ 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.⁷⁴ 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.”⁷⁵

For a long time, Iran attempted 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.⁷⁶

The fairness of the most recent presidential elections in 2013 was not an object of allegations and accusations by the international community as often as the previous two. Probably it has to do with the fact that the elections were won by a moderate candidate Hassan Rouhani who often speaks of rapprochement with the West. Nonetheless, the Iranian political system recently received some criticism after all. Particularly, Amnesty International highlighted the fact that

⁷¹ Jerusalem Post, The. “Violence Mars Iranian Election Campaign”, *The Jerusalem Post*, 2 June 2009, <http://www.jpost.com/Iranian-Threat/News/Violence-mars-Iranian-election-campaign>

⁷² Gulf News, The. “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>

⁷³ Al Jazeera. “Timeline: Iran after the election”, *Al Jazeera*, 11 February 2010, <http://www.aljazeera.com/focus/iran/2009/11/200911411259869709.html>

⁷⁴ BBC News. “End Iran violence, UN chief urges”, *BBC News*, 23 June 2009, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/8114085.stm

⁷⁵ White House. “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-Pres-Secretary-Robert-Gibbs-on-the-Iranian-Election

⁷⁶ Ray Takeyh, “Why Iran’s Mullahs Cannot Rest Easy”, *The International Herald Tribune*, 19 April 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/19/opinion/why-irans-mullahs-cannot-rest-easy.html?smid=pl-share>

“thousands of prospective candidates for parliamentary election in March [2013] were disqualified.”⁷⁷

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 2011, 2012 and 2013 Annual Reports, the three most recent document covering Iran. The 2011 Annual Report:⁷⁸

The authorities maintained severe restrictions on freedom of expression, association and assembly. Sweeping controls on domestic and international media aimed at reducing Iranians’ contact with the outside world were imposed. Individuals and groups risked arrest, torture and imprisonment if perceived as co-operating with human rights and foreign-based Persian-language media organizations. Political dissidents, women’s and minority rights activists and other human rights defenders, lawyers, journalists and students were rounded up in mass and other arrests and hundreds were imprisoned. Torture and other ill-treatment of detainees were routine and committed with impunity. Women continued to face discrimination under the law and in practice. The authorities acknowledged 252 executions, but there were credible reports of more than 300 other executions. The true total could be even higher. At least one juvenile offender was executed. Sentences of death by stoning continued to be passed, but no stonings were known to have been carried out. Floggings and an increased number of amputations were carried out.

The 2012 Annual Report:⁷⁹

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.

The 2013 Annual Report:⁸⁰

The authorities maintained severe restrictions on freedoms of expression, association and assembly. Dissidents and human rights defenders, including minority rights and women’s rights activists, were arbitrarily arrested, detained incommunicado, imprisoned after unfair trials and banned from travelling abroad. There were scores of prisoners of conscience and political prisoners. Torture and other ill-treatment were common and committed with impunity. Women, religious and ethnic minorities, and members of the LGBTI community were subject to discrimination in law and practice. The cruel judicial punishments of flogging and

⁷⁷ Amnesty International, “Annual Report 2013: Iran”, accessed 9 February 2014, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/iran/report-2013>

⁷⁸ Amnesty International, “Annual Report 2011: Iran”, accessed 9 February 2014, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/iran/report-2011>

⁷⁹ Amnesty International, “Annual Report 2012: Iran”, accessed 9 February 2014, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/iran/report-2012>

⁸⁰ Amnesty International, “Annual Report 2013: Iran”.

amputation continued to be used. Official sources acknowledged 314 executions, but a total of 544 were recorded. The true figure may be considerably higher.

Furthermore, all these AI reports state 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 difficult to achieve. Foreign television and radio broadcasts are occasionally 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 also 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 reports, many minorities within Iran face discrimination on a daily basis. For instance, use of minority languages in governmental offices and schools remained prohibited. As 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, many not mentioned in official sources. In 2013, Iran acknowledged 314 death sentences and Amnesty International has knowledge of 230 other. Up to 71% of 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.⁸¹

⁸¹ Amnesty International, “Annual Report 2011: Iran”.
Amnesty International, “Annual Report 2012: Iran”.

The Human Rights Watch (HRW), another proponent of civil rights, 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.⁸²

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, won foul and unfair elections. Furthermore, the Human Rights Reports list all misconducts done by the Iranian state.

For instance, the Department of State spoke 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.⁸³

Amnesty International, "Annual Report 2013: Iran".

⁸² Human Rights Watch, "Human Rights Issues Regarding the Islamic Republic of Iran", accessed 9 February 2014. <http://www.hrw.org/news/2011/08/29/human-rights-issues-regarding-islamic-republic-iran>

⁸³ 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>

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>

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>

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>

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>

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 hasn't had official diplomatic relations with Iran since 1979, i.e. an open embassy in Teheran, the Department of State derives its information only from open sources, like newspaper articles, reports and commentaries, and reports by NGOs or other states.⁸⁴

One slightly different report was the one from 2009. Besides the criticism of traditional misconducts, this report included information in the fraudulent presidential elections of 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."⁸⁵

The United States also often uses the issue of human rights violations as a cover for imposing new sanctions on Iran, prepared usually with political motivation rather than ideological or humanitarian.⁸⁶ Since 2006, the U.S. Congress discussed numerous bills forcing unilateral economic sanctions on Iran, which were very similar – 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.

⁸⁴ Ibidem.

⁸⁵ 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>

⁸⁶ Interview with Dr. Lewis Brownstein in February 2012.

2. Understanding Iran

2.1. *Iran's Worldview*

Iran, formerly the Persian Empire, is one of 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 during different historical periods. This history full of fame and glory is an eternal source of pride for the contemporary Iranian nation.

The Persian Empire existed here almost continuously since the recorded history. It was the Persians who fought the Greeks at Thermopyles and Marathon more than two thousand years ago. Even though Persia was conquered for a short time by Alexander the Great, it has remained its strength. The Persians was one of the few nations who successfully resisted the pressure of the Roman legions. Even some of the most experienced Roman generals, i.e. Marcus Licinius Crassus or Marcus Antonius, who tried to conquer Persia in order to imitate Caesar's victorious campaign in Gallia and to gain immortal fame, were eventually defeated. Persia became the main adversary of the Byzantine Empire after the fall of Rome.⁸⁷

During the Middle-Ages, Persia faced many challenges, but still retained its identity. After Persia converted to Islam, it used the religion to its advantage to become the leading Muslim power. Later, Persia was invaded repeatedly by various barbarian tribes and nations from Asia, most notably by the Mongols and the Turks, but Persia always regained its sovereignty and strength. Persia waged many wars with the Ottoman Empire for regional dominance, at the time when the Ottomans crushed European armies in the Balkans. During the eighteenth century, Persia reached its modern-era peak when Shah Nader united most of the Middle East under the rule of a single emperor.

The might of a nation is also demonstrated by expansion of its language beyond the 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.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ Axworthy. *Dějiny Íránu*, 35-39.

⁸⁸ *Ibidem*, p 109.

However, empires rise and fall and Persia was overwhelmed by the trained and modernized European forces in the nineteenth century. Persia soon became a weak nation, an object of disputes between the Europeans in their hunt for dominance in Asia. This proud nation faced a similar humiliation to that of other great non-European powers, such as China, Japan and 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 for an inferior status. One can only imagine the frustration of these once-great nations, their rulers and their peoples.

Persia, first, became a disputed country during the Napoleonic Wars between the British and Russian side and the French. Afterwards, Persia with Afghanistan and Tibet became a frontier of the so-called Great Game between the British Empire and the Tsarist Russia.⁸⁹ The Germans joined this struggle at the beginning of the twentieth century and remained an influential power until the end of the Second World War. At this time, the European interest in Persia increased because of its newly-discovered oil reserves.⁹⁰

During this era, Persia didn't even have control of its own 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 the Germans overtook control of the government in Iraq. The British appointed Mohammed Reza Pahlavi as the Shah, who worked as a reliable 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 it as a buffer state. When Persia, officially renamed Iran in 1935, regained its sovereignty after the Second World War, its infrastructure was a disaster. Iran had few usable roads and railways, outdated industries, a few telegraph lines, and almost no access to electricity.⁹¹ Iran was now a weak fraction of the former Persian Empire.

After the Second World War, Iran focused on a single goal – to rebuild the power and glory of the former Persian Empire. In other words, Iran wanted to become a hegemon in the Middle

⁸⁹ Jan Marek, *Dějiny Afghánistánu* (Prague: Lidové noviny, 2006), 194-226.

⁹⁰ The Persian oil was discovered in 1908. During the same year, the Anglo-Persian Oil Company was founded and the United Kingdom became the majority shareholder in 1914.

Axworthy, *Dějiny Íránu*, 158-161.

⁹¹ Axworthy. *Dějiny Íránu*, 130-165.

East and a globally respected power. This objective was pursued by both the Shah during his monarchy and by the theocratic ayatollahs since 1979. Iranians today sincerely believe their nation has a significant place in the world and is predestined to greatness.⁹²

Since the Islamic Revolution of 1979, Iran tried to achieve its objective mainly through religion. Persia identified Shia Islam as the state religion in 1501 and, since then, is the advocate and protector of all Shias in the world.⁹³ Today, Iran is trying to redefine its position to be the leader of all Muslims, both rhetorically and by supporting various Muslim causes.

However, as some polls tell us,⁹⁴ religion doesn't actually influence the Iranian population as much as it does other nations in the Middle East. Thus one might conclude that Iran's exploitation of its religious authority is a pragmatic tactic rather than an 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 accepted by many Sunnis as the leader of the Muslim world. This rivalry was most visible during the Iraqi-Iranian War during the 1980s, when Saudi Arabia openly supported Saddam Hussein, reacting to Ayatollah Khomeini who encouraged the Shias in Saudi Arabia to start an open revolt, because, in his opinion, monarchies are un-Islamic.⁹⁵ 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 necessary.⁹⁶ Tense animosity between the two rivals escalated even more in the fall 2011 when an alleged Iranian agent tried to assassinate the Saudi ambassador in Washington D.C., although any connection with Teheran was never fully proven.⁹⁷

The contemporary rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran could also be characterized as a new chapter of the never-ending struggle between the Sunni and Shia Muslims and the Shia quest for justice.⁹⁸

⁹² Hinnebusch and Ehteshami, *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, 303-306.

⁹³ Ibidem, 297-303.

⁹⁴ See Appendixes 6-8.

⁹⁵ Hinnebusch and Ehteshami, *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, 197-199.

⁹⁶ Ian Black and Simon Tisdall, "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>

⁹⁷ See pages 18-19.

⁹⁸ John L. Esposito, *What Everyone Needs to Know about Islam: Second Edition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 50.

The Sunni can claim a golden age when they were a great world power and civilization, which they believe is evidence of God's favor upon them and a historic validation of Muslim beliefs, the Shia see in these same developments the illegitimate usurpation of power by Sunni rulers at the expense of a just society.

Saudi Arabia is arguably the closest Muslim ally of the United States, the world superpower, and together they have built a system in the Middle Eastern region which benefits both of them. On the other hand, Iran has the role of the oppressed minority and wants to challenge the rule of Saudi Arabia and the United States.

This Sunni-Shia aspect also creates tensions between Iran and many countries in its neighborhood, especially with Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan. Soon after Khomeini took power during the Islamic Revolution, he called on 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 led to a war which, in the end, devastated both countries.⁹⁹ 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.¹⁰⁰

Iran always played 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 suppressed all opposition, including the Hazara. Iran never stopped supporting the Shia minority and increased its assistance to the Northern Alliance after the Taliban control of Afghanistan. That brought mutual relations to ground zero, almost an open conflict.

In late 1998, Taliban forces seized the Iranian consulate in Mazar-i-Sharif, a city located in north Afghanistan, and executed nine diplomats. In response, a quarter of a million Iranian soldiers were mobilized on the Afghan borders. The UN Security Council intervened to prevent war.¹⁰¹ About three years later, the United States invaded Afghanistan and overthrew the Taliban while pursuing Osama bin Laden. Iran welcomed the development and offered to cooperate.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ Keegan. *Válka v Iráku*, 58-60.

¹⁰⁰ See page 11.

¹⁰¹ Barnett R. Rubin, "Women and Pipelines: Afghanistan's Proxy Wars", *International Affairs* 73, no. 2 (1997), 291.

¹⁰² See page 42.

However, the American military presence in Afghanistan became to be seen as a new security threat for Iran after President Bush presented his “Axis of Evil” speech in January 2002.¹⁰³

The situation in Afghanistan is one of the three basic elements which influence contemporary relations between Iran and Pakistan, formally an American ally. Teheran and Islamabad have different objectives in Afghanistan. Basically, Iran seeks two goals, which are an Afghani government which will protect the Hazara, i.e. not a Taliban government, and no American military presence on Afghan soil.¹⁰⁴ Pakistan, on the other hand, is still committed to its “strategic depth” doctrine, meaning that Pakistan will work to disrupt any possibility of any alliance between India and a stable Afghanistan, a threat to Pakistan on two fronts in case of a conflict.¹⁰⁵

The same Pakistani doctrine applies to the relations between Iran and Pakistan. The triangle of Iran-Pakistan-India has one basic rule. If relations between Iran and India improve, Pakistani-Iranian relations deteriorate equally. And relations between Teheran and New Delhi today seem to be positive, especially their economic cooperation. Imports of crude oil from Iran to India increased rapidly during the last ten years in spite of American political pressure, and Iran became the third largest oil supplier to India in 2012.¹⁰⁶ Furthermore, a number of Indian companies announced plans to invest heavily in the Iranian oil industry in 2009.¹⁰⁷ India also sought a treaty to build a direct deep-sea oil pipeline from Iran to India to bypass Pakistan. This project was eventually discarded and replaced with a new terrestrial pipeline leading through Pakistan. This pipeline has the potential of improving Iranian relations with both India and Pakistan.¹⁰⁸

Unfortunately for Pakistan, its security policy works to unite Iran and India closer to each other. Both Iran and India fear the Pakistani nuclear program. In the Iranian case, Teheran is

¹⁰³ See page 48.

¹⁰⁴ Harsh V. Pant, “Pakistan and Iran’s Dysfunctional Relationship”, *Middle East Quarterly* (Spring 2009), 43-50.

¹⁰⁵ Qandeel Siddique, “Pakistan's future policy towards Afghanistan”, *Danish Institute for International Studies* (August 2011), 18-21. http://www.diis.dk/graphics/Publications/Reports2011/RP2011-08-Pakistans-future-policy_web.pdf

¹⁰⁶ See Appendixes 9-10.

¹⁰⁷ The Times of India, “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?>

¹⁰⁸ Asif Ezdi, “Politics and the Pipeline”, *The International News*, 18 March 2013, <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-165923-Politics-and-the-pipeline>

extremely anxious about the possibility that the Pakistani state could collapse and be replaced by a radical Sunni regime with access to nuclear weapons.¹⁰⁹

Furthermore, the Iranian position complicates its relations with Israel. The Palestinian issue is of great concern for all Muslims. Thus when Iran presented itself as the leader of the Muslim world, Teheran started supporting the Palestinian cause openly. That was a very unpleasant change for Israel as the Shah had been a close Israeli friend.¹¹⁰ The Iranian contemporary criticism of Israel can be summed up by these words by Ayatollah Khamenei:¹¹¹

All Western governments, as well as both the world's rival political blocs, support it. The region's puppet regimes, such as Pahlavi Iran and some others, betray Islam and Arab identity to place themselves at its service. Money, arms, science and technology are put at its disposal from all sides. The United States acts as its patron, attorney and steward. (...) UN resolutions, despite their weak and cautious tone, are totally ignored by the fake and lawless Zionist regime.

Encouraged by US and European support, it launches military attacks on Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon and invades their territories with the intent of permanent occupation. It raves recklessly and threatens with assassination, murder and pillage. Notorious terrorists attain to high office one after another. (...) For several decades, the usurper regime maintains its violent, intransigent, extortionate and irrepressible face on the Palestinian scene.

Since Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was appointed as the Iranian president in 2005, the pro-Palestinian and anti-Israeli rhetoric intensified. Many Israelis 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. Later it was discovered that Ahmadinejad actually never said such words. His remarks were 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.”¹¹²

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 by a righteous

¹⁰⁹ Colin Dueck and Ray Takeyh, “Iran’s Nuclear Challenge”, *Political Science Quarterly* 122, No. 2 (Summer 2007), p 194.

¹¹⁰ See page 37.

¹¹¹ Sayyid Ali Khamenei. “Palestinian issue, the focal point”, The Office of the Supreme Leader, 14 April 2006. <http://www.leader.ir/langs/en/?p= bayanat&id=3516>

¹¹² Joshua Teitelbaum, “What Iranian Leaders Really Say About Doing away with Israel”, *Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs*, 2008, accessed 11 February 2014. <http://www.jcpa.org/text/ahmadinejad2-words.pdf>

regime that would equally represent all religious groups in Israel – Muslims, Christians and Jews.¹¹³

Moreover, experts point out that Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is more of a populist in whatever 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, the second largest Jewish community in the Middle East.¹¹⁴ And that isn't happening. According to critics, Ahmadinejad's other statements, such as support for democracy in Iran, anti-Imperialism and the claims that his administration especially protects the poor, are also nothing else but pure populism.¹¹⁵ Nevertheless, Ahmadinejad's quotes are often used out of context by the Israeli and American policy makers and media as a cornerstone of the anti-Iranian rhetoric.

Iran also wants to be a regional leader in technology development. That is especially visible in the military research. Iran has repeatedly informed 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, such as 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 quite suspicious, threatening and not defensive.¹¹⁶

After military purposes, there are two other motivations, which are generally being overlooked – nationalism and the everlasting lust for knowledge. The Iranians are very proud of their history and every newly developed technology increases the nation's international prestige. That applies especially in the Middle Eastern realm, where the Iranians always wanted to distance themselves from “backward” Arabs.¹¹⁷ The Iranians also very often present Persia as the cradle of knowledge and science.¹¹⁸ Centuries ago, Prophet Mohammed acknowledged this phenomenon: “Men from the land of Persia will attain scientific knowledge even if it is as far as the

¹¹³ Glen Kessler, “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/gIQABJIKML_blog.html

¹¹⁴ Axworthy, *Dějiny Íránu*, 206.

¹¹⁵ Saeed Rahnema, “Ahmadinejad: Anti-Imperialist Or Deceptive Populist?”, *ZCommunications*, 28 December 2010, <http://www.zcommunications.org/ahmadinejad-anti-imperialist-or-deceptive-populist-by-saeed-rahnema>

¹¹⁶ See page 14-15.

¹¹⁷ Axworthy, *Dějiny Íránu*, 58-96.

¹¹⁸ Interview with Dr. Lewis Brownstein in February 2012.

Pleiades.”¹¹⁹ Since 2007, this quote is also present on the fifty-thousand rial note, just next to an atomic symbol overlaying a map of Iran.¹²⁰

And finally, Iran is labeled as 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 well-known radical organizations supported by Iran are Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in the Palestine. However, Iran doesn't perceive these groups to be terrorists and repeatedly refutes the American accusations.¹²¹ The United States also labeled the Iranian Quds Force, the elite branch of the Revolutionary Guards, as a terrorist organization.¹²²

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 governments. Iran has good relations with Bashar al-Assad's Syria, Omar al-Bashir's Sudan and Ali Abdullah Saleh, the former president of Yemen, to name just a few.¹²³ Needless to say, such acts by the Iranian Muslim leadership lead to intensively deteriorating relations especially with the United States, the European Union and Israel.

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

¹¹⁹ The Pleiades is a very distant cluster of stars. The quote was recorded by Sahih Muslim in his Hadith collection. Book 031, Chapter 59: The Merits of the People of Persia, number 6177.

<http://www.hadithcollection.com/sahihmuslim.html>

¹²⁰ BBC News, “Iran defiant with atomic banknote“, *BBC News*, 12 March 2007, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/6441777.stm

¹²¹ Hinnebusch and Ehteshami. *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, 287.

¹²² See pages 18-19.

¹²³ Interview with a representative of the Israeli mission at the UN in March 2012.

2.2. Relations with the United States

2.2.1 Before 2002

When Persia was a subject of European colonialism, 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 would be natural friends, perhaps even allies. The Shah invited several American experts to help him modernize his country in the early twentieth century.¹²⁴ For instance, William Morgan Shuster served as a respected manager of state finances in Persia. Unfortunately, the United States failed to make Iran a stable ally.

The positive image that Americans are not like the Europeans was severely shaken in 1953, when Premier Mohammed Mossadeq was overthrown with a push by the CIA. President Dwight Eisenhower and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill claimed that Mossadeq would take Iran into the sphere of Soviet influence despite his open disgust with socialism.¹²⁵

Many historians today argue the actual reason behind the coup was oil. The Anglo-Persian Oil Company paid hitherto only 20% of their profits to Iran, far less than the usual cost in the region. The Iranians tried to negotiate more favorable terms (50% to each), but the British oil company refused. Premier Mossadeq responded by nationalizing the oil resources in 1951. It was speculated the British pushed the White House to intervene in Iranian internal affairs not because of the communist threat, but because of the United Kingdom's economic interests.¹²⁶

After the fall of Mossadeq, Iran became a close ally of 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.¹²⁷

¹²⁴ Axworthy. *Dějiny Íránu*, 137-142.

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

¹²⁶ Axworthy. *Dějiny Íránu*, 196.

¹²⁷ Uri Bialer, "Fuel Bridge across the Middle East: Israel, Iran, and the Eilat-Ashkelon Oil Pipeline", *Israel Studies* 12, no 3 (Fall 2007), 29-67.

However, Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlavi was not only a western ally, but also a strong autocrat and an oppressor of civil and human rights. Freedom of expression and of the press was a mere dream during the Shah's era. He also irritated the public with his lavish lifestyle while the poor suffered from hunger and lack of medical aid. The Shah almost never came in public, he lived in his luxurious mansions, had his meals delivered daily by air from France, and his 1971 opulent 2,500 year celebration of the Persian Empire had cost the national budget up to \$200 million.¹²⁸ The Iranian people turned not only against the Shah, but also against the United States, his ally and patron.

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. The Iranians remembered their own history and the contemporary tyranny under the Shah while admiring the Vietnamese fight for their freedom.¹²⁹

Additionally, many Americans came to Teheran to work for international oil companies and many often behaved badly and uncultivated. Opposite of to local values, the Americans were often drunk, loud, and failed to respect the local authorities, or the Iranian culture. Every American was also granted diplomatic immunity, thus nearly all violations of the Iranian law was ignored.¹³⁰ The Iranians were angry at both the Shah and his American allies. It was not surprising 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, who had just been overthrown, to enter the United States for medical treatment. The Iranians called for the Shah to return to his homeland and face trial for his poor governing of the country. The American decision was seen to be an insult and consequently an angry crowd overran the U.S. Embassy in Teheran.¹³¹ The American diplomats were held hostage for 444 days and were not released until 20 January 1981, just moments after of Ronald Reagan's presidential inauguration.

Another disaster for mutual trust was the American involvement during the war between Iraq and Iran. Because of the significant anti-American sentiment during the 1979 Revolution, the

¹²⁸ Axworthy. *Dějiny Íránu*, 185-186.

¹²⁹ Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran: The Failure of American Foreign Policy and the Next Great Conflict in the Middle East* (New York: Basic Books, 2006), 74.

¹³⁰ Axworthy. *Dějiny Íránu*, 185.

¹³¹ Ansari. *Confronting Iran*, 87-88.

United States considered Iran to be a bigger threat for regional security than Saddam Hussein. As a result, the American government and other Western countries supplied Iraq with weapons and other material aid. There are also claims that Saddam Hussein received equipment, technology and expertise for developing chemical and biological weapons from the West, including the United States.¹³² It is estimated that more than 50,000 Iranians died as a result of Iraqi chemical weapons.¹³³ The generation which fought the Iraqis in 1980s and faced their chemical weapons now runs the Iranian state.

Additionally Iraq and Iran began in 1984 attacking tankers of each country in international waters. 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 290 passengers. Afterwards, not only did Ronald Reagan not apologize, but refused to accept any responsibility.¹³⁴ The issue was later resolved by the International Court of Justice. The court closed the case 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 was internationally isolated. Nevertheless he was still in power, furious and prepared to punish everyone who betrayed him. This included the Kurds in the north and the Shia in the south of Iraq, who had answered 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 using his Republican Guards and some even by chemical weapons.¹³⁵ Iran, the advocate and protector of all Shia Muslims in the world, was more than appalled by the American refusal to protect those who helped them during the war.

¹³² Glenn Frankel, "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>

¹³³ CIA. "Iraq Chemical Weapons", *Central Intelligence Agency*, 20 February 1991. https://www.fas.org/irp/gulf/cia/960702/73922_01.htm

¹³⁴ International Court of Justice. "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. 8-15. <http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/files/79/6629.pdf>

¹³⁵ Keegan. *Válka v Iráku*, 66-77.

The next major issue between Iran and the United States was 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. 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,"¹³⁶ the President argued in his speech. Although this statement was not totally untrue, George W. Bush had overlooked 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 with Iraq. After eight long years of intense conflict Iran's economy was weak and unstable. Iran suffered from extreme economic problems, very high inflation, and 14% people lived in poverty.¹³⁷ Furthermore the infrastructure suffered severe damage during the war, especially in the western parts of the country. It took several years for the oil industry to resume its pre-war production.

The morale of the military personnel and generally of the people was significantly shaken. Iran now needed to focus on domestic affairs and rebuild the country. Otherwise the regime might not survive very long. In order to do so, Iran had to change its foreign policy. Thus, the previously expansionist regime opened itself to the world once again and soon rejoined the international community and sought regional cooperation.¹³⁸

In the early 1990s Iran reestablished 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.

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 relations, 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

¹³⁶ George W. Bush, "State of the Union Address", 29 January 2002. <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/01/print/20020129-11.html>

¹³⁷ See Appendixes 11-13.

¹³⁸ Hinnebusch and Ehteshami. *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, 297-303.

condemned both terrorism and anti-Western rhetoric. Nonetheless, Bush faced presidential elections ahead of himself and his political advisors suggested that any connections with Iran might hurt his chance for reelection. Bush allegedly waited to start the rapprochement process with Iran until after his reelection, which didn't happen.¹³⁹

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 had been involved with Iranian issues off and on 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 1996. Iran was mentioned in the final report, but a lack of evidence prohibited the continuation of denigrating of Iran by American officials.¹⁴⁰

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.¹⁴¹ Yet, surprisingly, there was one country in the region which didn't share this opinion on the 9/11 attacks. In spite of the complicated history between Iran and Washington over the previous 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.¹⁴² That pleasantly surprised many people in the White House.

¹³⁹ Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, 131-132.

¹⁴⁰ Donette Murray, *US Foreign Policy and Iran: American-Iranian Relations since the Islamic Revolution* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 119.

¹⁴¹ Hollander, *Understanding Anti-Americanism*, 126-130.

¹⁴² Murray, *US Foreign Policy and Iran*, 120.

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 seemed to be irrelevant, including those with the Islamic Republic of Iran. Therefore President George W. Bush then 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.¹⁴³ In September 2001, Americans and Iranians held several meetings, of low-level 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 fly 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 its members to adopt democratic principles to establish a new Afghan government. Such cooperation between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United States was unprecedented.

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 sought a tougher rhetoric. They decided to use the classic narrative of good versus evil, used successfully by many of his predecessors in the White House. It is a theme in which the United States is the protector 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" was clearly trying to create a connection between the Second World War 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 members of the Bush's "Axis" were: Iraq, a non-

¹⁴³ See pages 32-33.

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 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 is absurd. States usually don't become close allies only fifteen years after they fought a total war against each. Furthermore, George W. Bush used three basic arguments – the Iranian nuclear program, sponsoring terrorism and human rights.¹⁴⁴

According to Bush, Iran was aggressively pursuing weapons of mass destruction. The American president was obviously intended to focus on Iran's controversial nuclear program. However, today all major American intelligence agencies doubt Iran is in the process of developing a nuclear weapon.¹⁴⁵ The same opinion was later supported by top Israeli military officers. For instance, a statement by Lt. Gen. Benny Gantz from April 2012:¹⁴⁶

[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.

Even if Iran decided to build the nuclear warhead, many experts seriously doubt that Iran would use it offensively. Iran has no rational cause to do that. It would be suicide if Teheran bombed any nation or if it gave an A-Bomb to a third party, e.g. Hezbollah, Hamas or another proxy group. The Americans, and possibly also the Israelis, would retaliate immediately, and there is no way that the Iranian regime could survive such a confrontation.

Although Iran often uses aggressive, propagandistic rhetoric, it has always been rational and 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

¹⁴⁴ George W. Bush, “State of the Union Address”, 29 January 2002. <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/01/print/20020129-11.html>

¹⁴⁵ James Risen, “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

¹⁴⁶ Amos Harel, “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>

unprovoked aggression against it, so we have no actual basis to doubt that we could live with a nuclear Iran.”¹⁴⁷

Because the theocratic regime in Teheran is paranoid and wants to survive, experts estimate the Iranian nuclear bomb would actually serve only in self-defense and a deterrent. Since the end of the Cold War, the United States 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, and Yemen numerous times since 9/11. None of these countries possessed a nuclear warhead at the time of the military intervention. On the other hand, the North Korea’s communist regime, arguably the largest threat for international security today, remains intact as Pyongyang has strong deterrent capabilities, including a nuclear weapon since 2006. This American approach suggests that a state needs to have strong deterrent like a nuclear warhead in order to avoid aggression by the United States.¹⁴⁸ Thus it is absurd to paint the Iranian nuclear program as means to strengthen Ayatollah’s offensive arsenal.

The Iranian Supreme Leader Sayyid Ali Khamenei repeatedly responded to the U.S. accusations by reminding Washington that there was only one nation in history which used nuclear weapons against civilians: “Although several countries have produced and stockpiled nuclear weapons that could lead to commission of a major nuclear crime and have seriously threatened world peace, only one government has committed the ultimate nuclear offence, the United States of America.”¹⁴⁹

Additionally, the Iranian nuclear program is the focus of propaganda and bias. 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). There are others, for example Syria built a nuclear reactor at Al-Kibar without the permission of the IAEA,¹⁵⁰ Libya dismantled its advanced nuclear program in December 2003, i.e. almost two years after the “Axis

¹⁴⁷ Robert Pape, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 246-247.

¹⁴⁸ Interview with a representative of the Turkish mission at the UN in March 2012.

Interview with a representative of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom in March 2012.

¹⁴⁹ Sayyid Ali Khamenei, “Only US has committed nuclear offence”, The Office of the Supreme Leader, 17 April 2010. <http://www.leader.ir/langs/en/?p=contentShow&id=6676>

¹⁵⁰ Nuclear Threat Initiative, The. “Syria”, *The Nuclear Threat Initiative*, accessed 11 February 2014, <http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/syria>

of Evil” speech,¹⁵¹ and many experts recently expressed concern about Myanmar’s missile activities, possible interest in a nuclear program, and close ties with North Korea.¹⁵² It also needs to be remembered that the United States never truly challenged India and Pakistan, both of which actually developed nuclear weapons, or Israel, which is widely believed to have nuclear capabilities but never actually confirmed it. Iran repeatedly accused the United States and the UN of these double standards, especially in regard to Israel: “The Islamic Republic of Iran wants a Middle East free from nuclear weapons and expects that the UN would do its best in removal of the Zionist regime's nuclear weapons which are a big danger for the regional countries.”¹⁵³

Bush’s second argument was related to the sponsorship of terrorism. Iran actually does support many extremist groups, which are perceived as terrorist organizations by the United States and other Western countries.¹⁵⁴ Nevertheless, Iran was by all means not the only nation to support Hamas or Hezbollah. As previously stated, 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.¹⁵⁵ Otherwise, the governments might lose support of their citizens.¹⁵⁶

There were also occasional allegations that Iran is secretly cooperating with Al Qaeda, the primary enemy of the United States. However, there was never conclusive evidence of any connection and there are numerous reasons why Iran and Al Qaeda can never have a friendly relationship, not to mention an alliance.¹⁵⁷ 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 and Yemen had numerous Al Qaeda training camps on their soil, regular members were recruited mostly in Saudi Arabia and Yemen, the leadership consisted mostly of Saudis and Egyptians, the most generous financial sponsors of the terrorist organization

¹⁵¹ Nuclear Threat Initiative, The. “Libya”, *The Nuclear Threat Initiative*, accessed 11 February 2014, <http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/libya>

¹⁵² Nuclear Threat Initiative, The. “Myanmar”, *The Nuclear Threat Initiative*, accessed 11 February 2014, <http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/myanmar>

¹⁵³ Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. “UN should not heed powers' positions on nuke disarmament“, 2 September 2012. <http://www.mfa.gov.ir/index.aspx?siteid=3&pageid=2012&newsview=23939> (accessed 9 February 2013).

¹⁵⁴ See pages 18.

¹⁵⁵ Interview with Dr. Lewis Brownstein in February 2012.

¹⁵⁶ Interview with Dr. Serife Ilgu Ozler in April 2012.

¹⁵⁷ See pages 20-22.

can be traced to Jordan or Saudi Arabia, and Al Qaeda affiliates could have been found across the whole region of the Middle East and Northern Africa.¹⁵⁸

George W. Bush's third 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 from 1997 to 2012 and the European Union from 2002 to 2009.¹⁵⁹ Iran also reminds the United States its hypocritical position on every convenient occasion, most recently while condemning the Boston bombings in April 2013.¹⁶⁰

The third and final argument of President Bush was about the lack of democracy and liberty in Iran. There is not a doubt that Iran has serious issues concerning civil and human rights and that the Iranian state could be by any standard characterized as a police state. Nonetheless the vast majority of the world can be criticized by civil society on these issues. It would be a bit 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.¹⁶¹

As demonstrated, the "Axis of Evil" concept is full of logical flaws. Although George W. Bush was technically correct with his accusations, Iran is by far not the only or the worst regime in the world. Iran can be painted as a sponsor of terrorism, but so can be the vast majority of Middle Eastern nations. 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 raised: Why Iran?

¹⁵⁸ Gerges, *The Rise and Fall of Al-Qaeda*, 29-69.

Ramzy Mardini [ed.], *The Battle for Yemen: Al Qaeda and the Struggle for Stability* (Washington D.C.: The Jamestown Foundation, 2010), 22-23.

Martin Meredith, *The Fate of Africa: A History of the Continent since Independence* (New York: Public Affairs, 2011), 588-601.

¹⁵⁹ Amy Goodman, "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

¹⁶⁰ Max Fischer, "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>

¹⁶¹ See pages 22-23.

According to several interpretations a desire for 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 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 to add legitimacy in eyes of the American public.¹⁶²

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 the Bush’s speech invented a catch-phrase and needed a third member of this axis, preferably a third-world country.¹⁶³

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 anything to do 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 choice for George W. Bush and his advisors.¹⁶⁴

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 didn’t challenge Bush’s rhetoric and accepted the Iraq Invasion of 2003. The “Axis of Evil” concept served its purpose well in spite of its absurdities.

After a promising start in a new century in American-Iranian relations, the 2002 State of the Union Address shocked the government in Teheran. After two decades of first-class hostility, recent months seemed to promise a breakthrough. However, the “Axis of Evil” speech eliminated

¹⁶² Murray, *US Foreign Policy and Iran*, 123.

¹⁶³ Kenneth M. Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle: The Conflict between Iran and America* (New York: Random House, 2005), 352.

¹⁶⁴ Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, 186-187.

all previous gains and hopes. In response, Teheran boycotted the next scheduled Geneva meeting concerning Afghan affairs.¹⁶⁵

After George W. Bush presented his “Axis of Evil” speech and invaded Iraq a year later, Teheran feared that it could become the next country on the Pentagon’s “to do” list. From the geopolitical perspective, Iran couldn’t be in a more difficult situation. In the west was Iraq, now occupied by American armed forces. Turkey, in the north-west, refused to allow the Americans permission to build a northern access to Iraq during the 2003 invasion but remained a solid NATO member. American battleships and carriers controlled the Persian Gulf to the south, and the nearby Saudi airbases could be used by the American forces if desired. 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 desired. Israeli fighters, bombers and ballistic missiles were also within range. To summarize, in case of war, Iran faced hostile forces from almost every direction.

In order to prevent war, Iran tried numerous times to normalize relations with the United States during the next years. The first gesture came in February 2002, when Iran responded to the American demand and released Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, an Afghan mujahedeen commander. Teheran also froze his assets a year later, as Washington desired.¹⁶⁶

The most significant offer came in 2003. Teheran offered to cease its support to Hezbollah and Palestinian militant groups, to make its nuclear program more transparent, and to help the United States to stabilize the newly occupied Iraq. In return, Iran wanted Washington to end its hostility and 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 Vice-President Dick Chaney:¹⁶⁷

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

¹⁶⁵ Axworthy, *Dějiny Íránu*, 209-215.

¹⁶⁶ Muhammad Tahir, “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

¹⁶⁷ BBC Newsnight, “Washington 'snubbed Iran offer’”, *BBC News*, 18 January 2007, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/6274147.stm

wanted in return America to ease the sanctions. The United States refused as it wanted to end all enrichment. Iranians also suggested a switch from multilateral talks to bilateral with the United States. Washington showed no interest in that offer.

Furthermore, Iran suggested several times to set up a nuclear swap deal. The most notable offer was presented in May 2010, with an open support of Turkey and Brazil. At that time, both were non-permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. This proposal had Iran shipping 1,200kg of low-enriched uranium to Turkey and receiving 120kg of nuclear fuel from the Vienna group, i.e. the United States, Russia, France and the IAEA.¹⁶⁸

This effort was blocked by the United States which refused to believe that Iran was serious about this bargain,¹⁶⁹ and instead the United States successfully pushed for new economic sanctions in the UN Security Council a few weeks later.¹⁷⁰ Both Turkey and Brazil voted against the resolution and Lebanon abstained. But the other twelve members approved it and the resolution came into effect. Iran then abandoned the proposal. The resolution also was a major blow to all Turkish-, Brazilian- and Iranian-American relations.

In recent years, Iran repeatedly expressed the desire to engage bilateral talks with the United States, offers made to both George W. Bush¹⁷¹ and Barack Obama.¹⁷² Such talks also received some international support, most notably from the Iraqi Shia leaders.¹⁷³ The United States didn't agree to hold official bilateral negotiations with Iran up to date. During one of the presidential debates with Mitt Romney, Barack Obama said that his administration is open to such a possibility in the future.¹⁷⁴ The diplomatic meetings with Iran remain in the multilateral format of the P5+1 group or on the unofficial level.

There is some evidence which suggests that the American and Iranian negotiating teams met repeatedly in Oman just before the Geneva P5+1 talks which happened in November 2013 and

¹⁶⁸ BBC News, "Iran signs nuclear fuel-swap deal with Turkey", *BBC News*, 17 May 2010, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8685846.stm>

¹⁶⁹ See page 60.

¹⁷⁰ United Nations Security Council, Resolution S/RES/1929, enacted on 9 June 2010.

¹⁷¹ Sebnem Arsu, "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

¹⁷² BBC News, "Iran seeks 'authentic' bilateral US nuclear talks", *BBC News*, 3 February 2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-21313384>

¹⁷³ Nazila Fathi, "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>

¹⁷⁴ Julian Borger, "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>

which produced the current nuclear deal.¹⁷⁵ Although this information has been dismissed by the Iranians,¹⁷⁶ the spokesman of the U.S. Department of State confirmed it.¹⁷⁷

A major source of tensions between Iran and the United States are the numerous economic sanctions, authorized by both recent American presidents.¹⁷⁸ 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.

3. U.S. Foreign Policy 2006-2010

3.1. National Security Strategy of 2006

The complicated relationship with Iran presents the American diplomats and security forces very difficult tasks. There are only few other issues which are as challenging as the U.S. relations with Iran. The ultimate goal for the period between 2006 and 2010 was described in the National Security Strategy (NSS), published in March 2006.

Iran is included in three chapters of the NSS 2006. First, the Iranian regime was portrayed as a tyranny among 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.¹⁷⁹

Iran was included in the chapter on 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

¹⁷⁵ The Telegraph “Secret US-Iran talks cleared way for historic nuclear deal”, *The Telegraph*, 24 November 2013, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iran/10471030/Secret-US-Iran-talks-cleared-way-for-historic-nuclear-deal.html>

¹⁷⁶ Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. “Iran dismisses AP speculation on bilateral talks with US“, 24 November 2013. <http://www.mfa.gov.ir/index.aspx?siteid=3&pageid=2024&newsview=267987>

¹⁷⁷ U.S. Department of State. “Daily Press Briefing”, 26 November 2013. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2013/11/218086.htm>

¹⁷⁸ See pages 54-55, 61-62.

¹⁷⁹ National Security Strategy of 2006.

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:¹⁸⁰

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. 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 will not make 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 focused on uniting 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,

¹⁸⁰ Ibidem.

and, according to the White House, supported terror and were a threat to the international security. Among these countries was Afghanistan under rule of the Taliban, Saddam Hussein's Iraq, communist North Korea, Bashar al-Assad's Syria, and 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.¹⁸¹ In his 2001 State of the Union Address, George W. Bush didn't mention Iraq, Iran, or North Korea at all. 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.¹⁸²

In 2002, Afghanistan was referred to most frequently, obviously because of the hunt for bin Laden. In the following years, 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 increasing attention since 2006.

In his 2006 Address, President Bush pointed out the same three problems regarding to Iran used in his 2002 State of the Union/Axis of Evil speech¹⁸³ – 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:¹⁸⁴

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 a later 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. But the President dedicated a large portion of his speech to the problem of terrorism. The Palestinian organizations and Hezbollah were mentioned, but Bush focused on Sunni and Shia extremism which brought blood and suffering to Iraq. He stressed the terrorist attack on the Golden Mosque in Samarra, Iraq, one of the holiest monuments of Shia Islam:¹⁸⁵

¹⁸¹ See Appendix 14.

¹⁸² George W. Bush, "State of the Union Address", 27 February 2001, <http://www.infoplease.com/t/hist/state-of-the-union/214.html>

¹⁸³ See pages 40, 42-43.

¹⁸⁴ George W. Bush, "State of the Union Address", 31 January 2006, <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/stateoftheunion/2006/>

¹⁸⁵ George W. Bush, "State of the Union Address", 23 January 2007, <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2007/01/20070123-2.html>

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 wishes more liberty and freedom for Iranians. However, according to Bush, the theocratic regime in Teheran opposes and counters any democratic changes wherever freedom advances in the Middle East.¹⁸⁶

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 that the United States has 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:¹⁸⁷

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 on Iran was his statement of 17 October 2007. The American president warned that a nuclear-armed Iran could be the trigger for a Third World War. 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.¹⁸⁸ Bush continues: “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.”¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁶ George W. Bush, “State of the Union Address”, 28 January 2008, <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2008/01/20080128-13.html>

¹⁸⁷ George W. Bush, “Speech at the United Nations”, 19 September 2006, <http://edition.cnn.com/2006/POLITICS/09/19/bush.transcript>

¹⁸⁸ See pages 34-35.

¹⁸⁹ Sheryl Gay Stolberg, “Nuclear-Armed Iran Risks World War, Bush Says”, *The New York Times*, 18 October 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/18/washington/18prexy.html>

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.¹⁹⁰

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.

During the same period, the Congress passed one bill regarding Iran. The bill was enacted on 30 September 2006 as the 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 President Clinton’s Executive Orders, which terminated almost all trade with Iran, and made 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 sanctions¹⁹¹ 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.¹⁹²

In 2006, there was an attempt to pass a second bill regarding Iran, this time unsuccessfully. The document was named Iran Human Rights Act and sponsored by Sam Brownback, a Republican Senator from Kansas. Had this act passed the State Department would have had to 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

¹⁹⁰ Steven Lee Myers, “Bush Urges Unity against Iran”, *The New York Times*, 14 January 2008, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/14/world/middleeast/14prexy.html>

¹⁹¹ See Appendix 16.

¹⁹² Iran Freedom Support Act of 2006, H.R.6198, enacted on 30 September 2006, accessed 9 February 2014, <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-109publ293/pdf/PLAW-109publ293.pdf>

pro-American broadcast to the Iranian people.¹⁹³ This document didn't get past the committee stage.

The George W. Bush administration was also very active in 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 opposed it. This resolution included the Chapter VII clause, thus all listed regulations were legally binding and enforceable by sanctions.¹⁹⁴ The Security Council demanded that Iran suspended all enrichment activities, including research and development. 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.¹⁹⁵

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 work 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 used in the enrichment process and extended this provision on all heavy water-related projects. States 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.¹⁹⁶

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

¹⁹³ Iran Human Rights Act of 2006, S.3870.IS, introduced on 7 September 2006, not enacted, accessed 9 February 2014, <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-109s3870is/pdf/BILLS-109s3870is.pdf>

¹⁹⁴ Interview with a member of the UN Security Council supporting staff in February 2012.

¹⁹⁵ United Nations Security Council, Resolution S/RES/1696, enacted on 31 July 2006.

¹⁹⁶ United Nations Security Council, Resolution S/RES/1737, enacted on 23 December 2006.

upon all States and financial institutions not to enter into new deals with Iran, except for humanitarian and development purposes.¹⁹⁷

Resolution 1803 was enacted on 3 March 2008. Indonesia abstained, although its delegation 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 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 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).¹⁹⁸

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 omitted the Chapter VII clause. Therefore one might say this resolution served only as a warning, not as a source of further sanctions. Resolution 1835 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.¹⁹⁹

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 in soft power, called the "freedom agenda". In the first years of the Bush presidency, the White House spent only \$11 million annually for this program. These expenditures skyrocketed in 2006 up to \$75 million and continued to rise in the following 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.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁷ United Nations Security Council, Resolution S/RES/1747, enacted on 24 March 2007.

¹⁹⁸ United Nations Security Council, Resolution S/RES/1803, enacted on 3 March 2008.

¹⁹⁹ United Nations Security Council, Resolution S/RES/1835, enacted on 27 September 2008.

²⁰⁰ Negar Azimi, "Hard Realities of Soft Power", *The New York Times Magazine*, 24 June 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/24/magazine/24ngo-t.html>

However, numerous experts on the Middle East accused the Bush administration for spending vast resources in the “freedom agenda” without ever understanding Iran. As a result, these public diplomacy programs usually had the directly opposite impact in Iran than the White House desired.²⁰¹

Other tools of the U.S. soft power are 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 available in Persian language. These stations are managed by the U.S. Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG), which budget continued to grow slightly during the last two years of the Bush administration.²⁰²

The next tool of the Bush administration was the ballistic missile shield, which was to have incorporated military bases in Poland and the Czech Republic. The program was called Missile Defense Agency and it was aimed at limited ballistic missile attacks, focused on Iran. Although this defense would be worthless against a massive ballistic missile attack from Russia or China, the governments of these two countries expressed deep concern about the American plans.²⁰³

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. Almost all states in the close perimeter to Iran had the opportunity to buy weapons from the United States.²⁰⁴

²⁰¹ See pages 72-73.

²⁰² See Appendix 15.

²⁰³ Johnatan Masters, “U.S. Ballistic Missile Defense”, *Council on Foreign Relations*, 1 May 2013, <http://www.cfr.org/defensehomeland-security/us-ballistic-missile-defense/p30607>

²⁰⁴ Ross Sherwood, “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>

3.3. *Barack Obama*

Iran is a challenging issue for President Obama, as was also for him during the presidential elections of 2008. 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. He expressed a 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 Iranian 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 said that Iran could be rewarded, for instance by a World Trade Organization (WTO) membership, if it became more cooperative. He continued:²⁰⁵

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 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 would also face more serious sanctions if refused to fulfill their NPT obligations.²⁰⁶

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 speech a month later. He focused rather on domestic affairs. However, Obama didn't neglect the Iranian issues 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.

²⁰⁵ Michael R. Gordon and Jeff Zeleny, "Obama Envisions New Iran Approach", *The New York Times*, 2 November 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/02/us/politics/02obama.html>

²⁰⁶ Barack Obama, "Speech in Sderot, Israel", 23 July 2008. <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/23/us/politics/23text-obama.html>

In this three and a half minutes long video, Obama at first highlighted how the Iranian nation benefited 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 all, giving opportunities to children, protecting families, supporting the progress of the community, and building peace between nations. Obama then turned to the Iranian leaders.²⁰⁷

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. This 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 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 spoke of 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, this goal united the international community and isolated the Iranian theocratic regime. Obama afterwards promised the Iranian leaders that sanctions will expand if Teheran continued to ignore its international obligations. Obama also gave support to the people in Iran who were fighting for their individual rights.²⁰⁸

The diplomatic approaches of George W. Bush and Barack Obama are quite different. Bush preferred an uncompromising stance and was prepared to ease the embargo only after Iran changed its policies both internally and externally. Bush had almost no space to maneuver in his foreign policy. And from the Iranian perspective, it was almost a mission impossible for Teheran to succeed in 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 a complicated relationship. Obama’s approach could be labeled as Tit for Tat diplomacy. In practice, when the other side makes a positive gesture it will be also answered with a positive act

²⁰⁷ Barack Obama, “The President’s Message to the Iranian People”, *The White House*, 19 March 2009. http://youtu.be/HY_utC-hrjI

²⁰⁸ Barack Obama, “State of the Union Address”, 27 January 2010. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-state-union-address>

of a similar scale. Nonetheless, when Iran doesn't play by the rules and doesn't cooperate the White House will respond with extending of the sanctions and Iran will be even more isolated from the international community. However, the differences were the strongest only in rhetoric. In practice, there were no changes in the White House. 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 his rules of Tit for Tat the United States would respond with a positive step. Even if Washington decided against this deal, Obama could have rewarded Iran for the gesture, for instance by partly lifting the embargo or any other minor action.

However, the United States instead 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 offer Iran would give up only one half of its uranium deposits, not everything as in the previous offer. Third, Iran already said it would continue enriching the uranium and retain it, which would have been a direct breach of the previous UNSC resolutions. Finally, this proposal came during the negotiations about this new resolution, so the United States accused Iran of only playing for time.²⁰⁹ In short, the Obama's Tit for Tat diplomacy didn't work as he simply didn't believe Iran was sincere.

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 failed to meet its obligations to the IAEA Board of Governors and of the previous UNSC resolutions. The Security

²⁰⁹ David E. Sanger and Michael Slackman, "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>

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.²¹⁰

During the first two years of the Obama administration, 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.²¹¹ This bill was, however, not enacted by the Congress as it didn't pass the committee phase.

However, the 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 Executive Order, 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.²¹²

The second document was successful in Congress. The bill, the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act, was sponsored was Howard L. Bergman, who was, at that time, a member of the Democratic Party and a Representative from California. The document had a major bipartisan support as 343 Congressmen and Congresswomen cosponsored

²¹⁰ United Nations Security Council, Resolution S/RES/1929, enacted on 9 June 2010.

²¹¹ Iran Human Rights Act of 2010. H.R. 4647, introduced on 23 February 2010, not enacted, accessed 9 February 2014, <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-111hr4647ih/pdf/BILLS-111hr4647ih.pdf>

²¹² Obama, Barack. Executive Order 13553, enacted on 28 September 2010, accessed 9 February 2014, <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2010-10-01/pdf/2010-24839.pdf>

it. The bill was introduced in the House on 30 April 2009. The final version was eventually passed on 24 June 2010 by an overwhelming majority, 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 the 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 1996.²¹³ The President now had to impose three or more of these sanctions. The same measure was now applied to 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 effective until 31 December 2016.

This bill then authorizes states or local governments to enforce measures to divest its assets from or prohibit the investment of assets it controls in any person who has invested in the Iranian energy sector. This act also banned all imports of Iranian goods. This provision, however, had only little impact as the United States hasn't imported any Iranian crude oil since 1991.²¹⁴ Only American consumers were affected as this measure included Iranian luxury goods, for instance carpets, pistachios, and caviar.

Finally, the law 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.²¹⁵

Like Bush, Barack Obama used additional means in dealing 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.

²¹³ See Appendix 16.

²¹⁴ See Appendix 17.

²¹⁵ Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010, H.R.2194, enacted on 1 July 2010, accessed 9 February 2014. <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-111publ195/pdf/PLAW-111publ195.pdf>

The most known soft power activity of Barack Obama was his YouTube message from March 2009. In addition, Barack Obama continued to use other traditional soft power tools, particularly student exchanges and projects of the U.S. Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG), responsible for broadcasting the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe. Obama was a bit more generous than his predecessor, although the change was minimal.²¹⁶

One of the first actions of President Obama was to change the Bush's ballistic missile project. Barack Obama didn't terminate it, but 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 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 2021.²¹⁷

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 gain 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.²¹⁸

Finally, the Obama administration was the first to order 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.²¹⁹ The first virus was detected in 2010 and received the name Stuxnet.²²⁰

²¹⁶ See Appendix 15.

²¹⁷ Tom Z. Collina, "The European Phased Adaptive Approach at a Glance", *Arms Control Association*, February 2013, <http://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/Phasedadaptiveapproach>

²¹⁸ Loren Thompson, "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).

²¹⁹ See page 19-20.

²²⁰ David E. Sanger, "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>

3.4. National Security Strategy of 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, and climate change.²²¹

The NSS10 also criticized Iran, but 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. Obama’s Tit for Tat approach was noticeable in the NSS10:²²²

[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 for the U.S. foreign policy towards Iran. The ultimate goal shortly characterized as “Promote a Reasonable Iran”. In a longer version, the United States wanted to help Iran rejoin the international community if Teheran showed desire to cooperate:²²³

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 of 2010 was much gentler. And Obama’s Tit for Tat diplomacy definitely gives more space to negotiations than the George W.

²²¹ See Appendix 18.

²²² National Security Strategy of 2010, published 27 May 2010,

http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/national_security_strategy.pdf

²²³ Ibidem.

Bush's "all or nothing" approach. Nevertheless, even this fancier language clearly draws the same conclusions. That is great discontent with Iran and its activities, and little willingness to change politics if Teheran doesn't meet its international obligations.

Furthermore, even if Iran decides to make cooperative gestures, 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 offers, like it happened just before UN Security Council passed the resolution 1929 in June 2010. Mutual trust is crucial for Tit for Tat diplomacy to work in practice. However, the list of historic and contemporary issues between Washington and Teheran is very long.

4. Reasons behind the Failure

With the negligible exception of language, there is basically no difference between National Security Strategies of 2006 and 2010 in dealing with Iran. Both criticized the theocratic regime for the same misconducts, ordered the White House to follow uncompromising policy, and presented the same ultimate goals. NSS10 didn't mention any major development after 2006. Only one conclusion remains: American foreign policy towards Iran between 2006 and 2010, of both George W. Bush and Barack Obama, was, in the end, a complete failure. 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 of U.S. foreign policy, and analyze them separately. An exemplary list of approaches was published in the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* in its November/December 2010 issue. In the magazine's regular discussion section, numerous experts on American foreign policy chose a strategy, defined it, and defended why their tactic as 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. The possibility of rapprochement and promoting soft power were also widely discussed by 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.²²⁴

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 which suggest that all these sanctions had almost no effect on the Iran economy.

From the economic perspective,²²⁵ Iran's revenues from oil exports continued to rise even after 2006, when the sanctions intensified. The only exception was a downfall in 2009. Nonetheless, the same decline 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 increase again. This drop was more likely caused by the start of the global economic depression 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 recent years. Moreover, according to the graphs, sanctions didn't prevent the expansion of technology in Iran. If sanctions worked and hit the governmental revenues, Teheran would have simply less money to spend on discretionary expenditures. Resulting budget cuts would have then most likely prevented the spread of the internet and cell phone coverage, which did not happen. However, some statistics do indicate that sanctions could have had at least a 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 decrease some of its mandatory expenditures. This 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 sanctions. It needs to be remembered that the goal of the United States was to cripple the Iranian economy, not just to slow it down.

²²⁴ Lawrence J. Korb, "Position: Containment and Deterrence", *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* 66, no. 6 (November/December 2010), 99-100.

²²⁵ See Appendixes 19-24.

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 against every authoritarian rule. When a regime is controlled by a single person, sanctions tend to significantly weaken his position, which inevitably leads to a coup. Such regimes usually have 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 in single-party or military regimes, because these political systems control the armed forces and are able to mobilize funds in the case of a crisis.²²⁶ 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 do not 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.”²²⁷

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 do not promote the diplomatic efforts, 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.²²⁸ This document was supported by Zbigniew Brzezinski, Brig Gen Stephen A. Cheney, Senator Timothy A. Wirth, and others.

There is another reason why economic sanctions didn't work as desired – the isolation is too far from perfect. That is because the United States is by all means not the most important trading

²²⁶ Abel E. Folch and Joseph Wright, “Dealing with Tyranny: International Sanctions and the Survival of Authoritarian Rulers”, *International Studies Quarterly* 54 (2010), 355.

²²⁷ Stephan M. Walt, “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

²²⁸ The Iran Project, “Strategic Options for Iran: Balancing Pressure with Diplomacy”, *The Iran Project*, April 2013. <http://www.scribd.com/doc/136389836/Strategic-Options-for-Iran-Balancing-Pressure-with-Diplomacy>

partner of Iran. The Islamic Republic imports from and exports to only a limited number of countries.²²⁹ That means Iran is highly dependent only on a handful of states, especially in trade 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 all of countries to join the embargo. A truly multilateral approach would also go hand-in-hand with the efforts of the UN Security Council.

Nonetheless, unilateral sanctions had at least some impact on the Iranian economy. The American sanctions are targeted, among else, at individuals, companies and governments which invest in the Iranian oil industry.²³⁰ That includes insurance companies which insured oil tankers exporting from Iran. As a result, Iran was forced to invest its own funds and insure those ships as no shipping company would export the Iranian oil without insurance. Iran also cannot buy new drilling and refining technologies for its oil industry while the sanctions are active. Finally, the sanctions are aimed at banking transactions connected to the Iranian oil industry and export. That means Iran often doesn't receive its money from oil export as fast as desired which has impact on governmental spending.²³¹ In conclusion, the unilateral sanctions issued by the United States bite, but do not cripple the Iranian economy.

Although the targeted UNSC sanctions didn't fail in 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 had already imported enough material and knowledge before the sanctions were enacted. The Iranian nuclear program has also been developed mostly domestically by Iranian scientists who have been researching the technology now for several decades.²³²

The second foreign policy strategy was tough bargaining. It was promoted by Emily B. Landau, a journalist writing for various Israeli newspapers. Mrs. Landau recommended that "Iran

²²⁹ See Appendixes 25-28.

²³⁰ Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010, H.R.2194.

²³¹ Interview with Ing. Pavlína Šrámková in December 2013. She is an expert on politics and modern history of Iran and the kingdoms in the Persian Gulf, working at the Middle Eastern Department at the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

²³² Interview with a representative of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in February 2012.

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.”²³³ 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.²³⁴ In other words, the United States established 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 included 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 was surrounded by the military forces of the United States and its allies from almost all directions.²³⁵ In addition, the Iraq Invasion of 2003 had an intense psychological effect on the Iranian regime. Since then, the Iranian leadership became extremely paranoid fearing that it could become the next target. Thus one might say that the policy of deterrence was executed perfectly as Iran was significantly pressured by the United States and its regional allies. But 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 one 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 was 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.

²³³ Emily B. Landau, “Position: Tough bargaining tactics”, *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* 66, no. 6 (November/December 2010), 118.

²³⁴ See pages 53-54.

²³⁵ See pages 48.

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.²³⁶ These particular provisions seem perhaps a bit too ambitious. Nevertheless, the principle is clearly defined.

Another possible starter for the 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 explains why he proposed particularly this kind of a bargain: “The nuclear swap deal was literally the one and only document Iran ever signed over the many years since the debate on its nuclear program began to dominate international political discourse.”²³⁷

This style of foreign policy was followed by Barack Obama only to a certain extent. The Obama administration repeatedly offered the Iranians the chance to rejoin the international community if Teheran cooperated.²³⁸ However, the Obama’s policy was effectively only a passive form of Tit for Tat diplomacy, because the United States waited for Iran to take the first positive gesture.

That didn’t come because Teheran was significantly pressured by Obama’s predecessor. That took longer for Iran to gather confidence to seriously begin negotiating again. Iran eventually responded with the nuclear-swap deal in May 2010, but that effort was not accepted by the White House. Simply said, Obama and Iran never met in the middle for Tit for Tat diplomacy to work in

²³⁶ Kayhan Barzegar, “Position: Tit-for-Tat Diplomacy”, *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* 66, no. 6 (November/December 2010), 113-114.

²³⁷ Mustafa Kibaroglu, “Position: Resuscitate the Nuclear Swap Deal”, *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* 66, no. 6 (November/December 2010), 105.

²³⁸ See pages 58-60.

practice. Thus Obama was active only in the second part of the Tit for Tat approach – increasing the sanctions and international pressure when Iran misbehaved 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 eventually lost its interest in cooperating. The Iranians must have 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 served as a U.S. Ambassador to Russia, India, Israel, Jordan, Nigeria, and the United Nations in the 1980s and 1990s. In his opinion, both the United States and Iran will lose too much if they ignore diplomacy as any mutual conflict would have severe consequences for both nations. According to Mr. Pickering, they still have some time to repair the relationship but 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.²³⁹

Because the United States has so far refused to engage into bilateral talks with Iran, which the Iranians repeatedly called for,²⁴⁰ the main burden of diplomatic negotiations has been on the so-called P5+1 group.²⁴¹ Its activity began with the UN Security Council resolution 1803 from March 2008. However, during the analyzed period of from 2006 to 2010, the greatest achievements of this group were 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 acknowledge that the Iranians will not give up its nuclear program and its aspirations to become a regional hegemon. The world powers acknowledged this fact only recently.

In November 2013, the P5+1 group and Iran negotiated a promising deal in Geneva. Iran pledged, among else, to enrich uranium only up to 5%, to convert one half of its 20% uranium back to 5%, to transform the second half of the 20% uranium into nuclear fuel, and to stop the construction of the controversial heavy-water reactor in Arak. The world powers promised to

²³⁹ Thomas R. Pickering, "Position: Confident Diplomacy", *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* 66, no. 6 (November/December 2010), 105.

²⁴⁰ See page 49.

²⁴¹ Five permanent members of the UN Security Council, i.e. the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia and the People's Republic of China, with Germany as the sixth member of the negotiating group. The Europeans prefer calling it the E3+3 group.

deactivate some of the sanctions, e.g. regarding Iran's oil export, car industry, and export of gold and other precious minerals. The P5+1 group also stated that they won't seek any new sanctions against the Iran, both unilateral and multilateral. It needs to be said that this deal is not legally binding and depends only on mutual trust. It will be active for six months and then might be followed by a new one.²⁴² Because this agreement still needs to be fully implemented and because it's build on a fairly weak foundation, it is very early to comment whether or not this deal is a success. However, one conclusion can be made already: This agreement finally acknowledged that Iran has the right to enrich uranium for peaceful purposes.

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, Suzanne Maloney, a former member of the policy-planning staff at the Department of State, was one of the very few of staff members at the Department who spoke the Persian language and had actually visited Iran. At this time, 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:²⁴³

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.

²⁴² Reuters, "Full Text of Interim Nuclear Deal between Iran and Six Powers", *Haaretz*, 24 November 2013. <http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/1.559922>

²⁴³ Negar Azimi, "Hard Realities of Soft Power", *The New York Times Magazine*, 24 June 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/24/magazine/24ngo-t.html>

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 programs which have the greatest potential to benefit the United States in the long run. Some even claim that Iran is better than the United States in this discipline.²⁴⁴

According to some experts, the American soft power is generally very weak in the Middle East. For instance, the United States is unable to effectively explain to the Muslims why it supports Israel, why it fights radical Islamists, or why it overthrew Saddam Hussein.²⁴⁵ Soft power has a strong potential in the Iranian case, because the younger generation of Iranians generally has a pro-Western²⁴⁶ and pro-reformist²⁴⁷ attitude.

There are two other foreign policy alternatives, which weren't actually used by either Bush or Obama, but which offer the United States a means of dealing 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.²⁴⁸

The Osirak-style model refers to Israeli bombardment of a nuclear facility in Iraq in 1981, later repeated in Syria in 2007. It needs to be remembered that Iran is a larger country and much further from Israel than Iraq or Syria. As previously mentioned, the United States or Israel would need at least one hundred airplanes in the Iranian airspace at the same moment to succeed and perhaps even one air campaign wouldn't deal enough damage.²⁴⁹ Furthermore, according to a recently published study of the CRS, an Osirak-style attack would probably only delay the

²⁴⁴ Michael Rubin, "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>

²⁴⁵ Hollander, *Understanding Anti-Americanism*, 137-143.

²⁴⁶ Anoushiravan Ehteshami. "Iran's International Posture after the Fall of Baghdad", *Middle East Journal* 58, no.2 (Spring 2004), 179-194.

²⁴⁷ J.A. Cohen and Abbas Milani, "The Passive Revolution", *Hoover Digest*, no. 3 (Fall 2005). <http://www.hoover.org/publications/hoover-digest/article/7447>

²⁴⁸ Bennett Ramberg, "Position: The Military Option", *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* 66, no. 6 (November/December 2010), 127.

²⁴⁹ See page 17.

Iranian nuclear program from several months to one year.²⁵⁰ Thus this type of a strike alone would most probably not achieve the sought achievement.

Mr. Ramberg wants 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 resources and energy on occupation and rebuilding the Iraqi state. However, Mr. Ramberg describes only the positive implications of this model and fails 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 as with Iraq in the 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 seek his revenge. However, these provisions also supported the spread of anti-Americanism across the Middle Eastern region. If the United States did the same to Iran after the limited invasion the spread of anti-Americanism might become a serious problem for the U.S. interests in the Middle East, especially in the long run.

Furthermore, the isolation of Iraq led to severe consequences which the policy planners from Washington didn't think of. The Middle East became united against the American aggressive foreign policy, which benefited one particular enemy of the United States, i.e. 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, secondary to American support of Israel and the presence of "crusader" armies in the holy land of the Arabian Peninsula.²⁵¹

Al Qaeda also claims that America's War on Terror is in fact War on Islam and bolsters this by pointing at the American aggressive rhetoric and uncompromising foreign policy against Iran and its people. It is easily imaginable how much more effective Al Qaeda's propaganda will become if the United States switched from offensive words to actual military strikes.²⁵² It is surely not in the interest of the United States to support Al Qaeda's hears-and-minds campaign by any means.

²⁵⁰ Jim Zanotti et al., "Israel: Possible Military Strike Against Iran's Nuclear Facilities", *Congressional Research Service*, accessed 9 February 2014. <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/R42443.pdf>

²⁵¹ Osama bin Laden, "Al Qaeda's Second Fatwa", 23 February 1998.

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/updates/military/jan-june98/fatwa_1998.html

²⁵² Mockaitis and Rich, *Grand Strategy in the War against Terrorism*, 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 cost. 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. Further, 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 any interests and positions which they have in common. The problematic issues are discussed 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 must use every opportunity. Mr. Shoamanesh then recommends the United States to seek 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.²⁵³ However, rapprochement is easily said than done.

The Sino-American rapprochement was motivated largely by a common Soviet threat. Therefore one question is 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 and mutual trust even possible. That would inevitably lead to a general change in the whole Middle Eastern power structure. There is also 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.

²⁵³ Sam Sasan Shoamanesh, "How and Why to Promote US-Iran Rapprochement", *MIT International Review*, 1 June 2009, <http://web.mit.edu/mitir/2009/online/us-iran.html>

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, contributing to the instability of the Middle East. This thesis analyzes the American foreign policy towards Iran between 2006 and 2010 and is divided into four main chapters.

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

The United States needs the Middle East to become 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 domestic affairs in Iraq and Afghanistan, and, since the Arab Spring 2011, also the Iranian support of Bashar Assad in the ongoing 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 recent years. The UNSC especially criticizes Iran for not fully cooperating with the IAEA, for lack of transparency and for continuing with the prohibited enrichment.

The United States is also furious at the Iranian support to numerous extremist groups, out of which many 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. Finally, the United States is a vocal critic 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 perspective. Iran, previously known as Persia, is one of the oldest civilizations in the world. The Persians conquered many other nations and controlled the area from 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 the Second World War, when Iran regained its real independence, Iran has tried 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 especially uses 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 connections by behaving as the protector of all Shia Muslims, which brought Iran to war against Iraq and which causes deep problems with Saudi Arabia and the Taliban. Furthermore, Teheran seeks modern technologies including advanced aircraft and a nuclear program, because technological superiority always distanced Iran from the “backward” Arab and other Asian nations in the region.

Iran and the United States were close friends during the Shah era. However, the Iranian people perceived the Shah more as a cruel autocrat and, when he was overthrown in 1979, his connections with the United States led to burning American flags in the streets of Teheran. Since then, the American-Iranian relations have been tense and complex, with both sides sharing the responsibility. For instance Iran took the embassy staff as hostages and rhetorically attacked 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 as Iran helped the United States after 9/11 with the Afghan Invasion, but that all vanished 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 policies, and the United States will continue with containment and deterrence until this happens. During the last years of the Bush administration, 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 in developing the Central European ballistic missile shield and selling weapons to Middle Eastern allies.

Barack Obama was rhetorically very different as he used the Tit for Tat style of 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 to sanction Iran. During his first years in the White House, the economic pressure intensified by the Executive Order 13553 of 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 in 2010, which included the most powerful multilateral sanctions to date. 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 to follow 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 used by George W. Bush and Barack Obama, although without major success. After understanding why certain tactics failed, the United States should 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 to a new beginning.

First, the United States could improve its policy of containment. The current form is not as effective as the United States desired, because the American economy has only little effect on the Iranian. And, at the same time, Iran's most important trading partners ignore the American call and continue 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 might 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 only a passive role waiting for Iran to make the first gesture. And because Iran didn't, Obama continued to expand the sanctions. Since President Obama pushed Iran into a deeper isolation, it is now very unlikely that Teheran could start making significant gestures on its own. The Geneva agreement of November 2013 could become a breakthrough, but the White House still needs to show much more initiative to succeed and definitely bring the American-Iranian relations out of the dead end.

Third, a more sophisticated soft power could help achieve American objectives. So far, the United States invested billions of dollars into soft power, but without achieving anything. As many experts remarked, Washington usually just pumps money into 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 understand Iranian internal politics, economics, culture and religion. If American soft power was effective the Iranian people would move closer to the United States, making it much more difficult, perhaps impossible, for the theocratic regime to continue its anti-American position. The potential of soft power lies especially in the fact that the young Iranians have generally pro-Western inclination.

Finally, the United States could seek to deal with Iran as it did with China in the 1970s – by rapprochement. That strategy would require the United States acknowledge the Iranian aspirations of becoming 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 Palestine. Washington would have to make the first step to build 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 nejkomplicovanější 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 nejhlásitější 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.

Zprvė, Spojenė 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 Spojenė státy byly aktivnější a udělaly ústupek jako první, mohlo by to znamenat průlom v americko-iránských vztazích.

Zatřetí, Spojenė státy by mohly lépe využívat *soft power*, tj. propagaci americké kultury a myšlenek, podporu rozvojových programů, výměnných studijních programů atp. Do této doby Spojenė 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 Spojenė státy musely učinit první krok, aby byla obnova vzájemné důvěry vůbec možná. Zároveň by tento přístup vyžadoval, aby Spojenė 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 Spojenė státy byly připraveny transformovat celé mezinárodní vztahy na Blízkém východě kvůli sblížení s Íránem.

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Appendixes

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

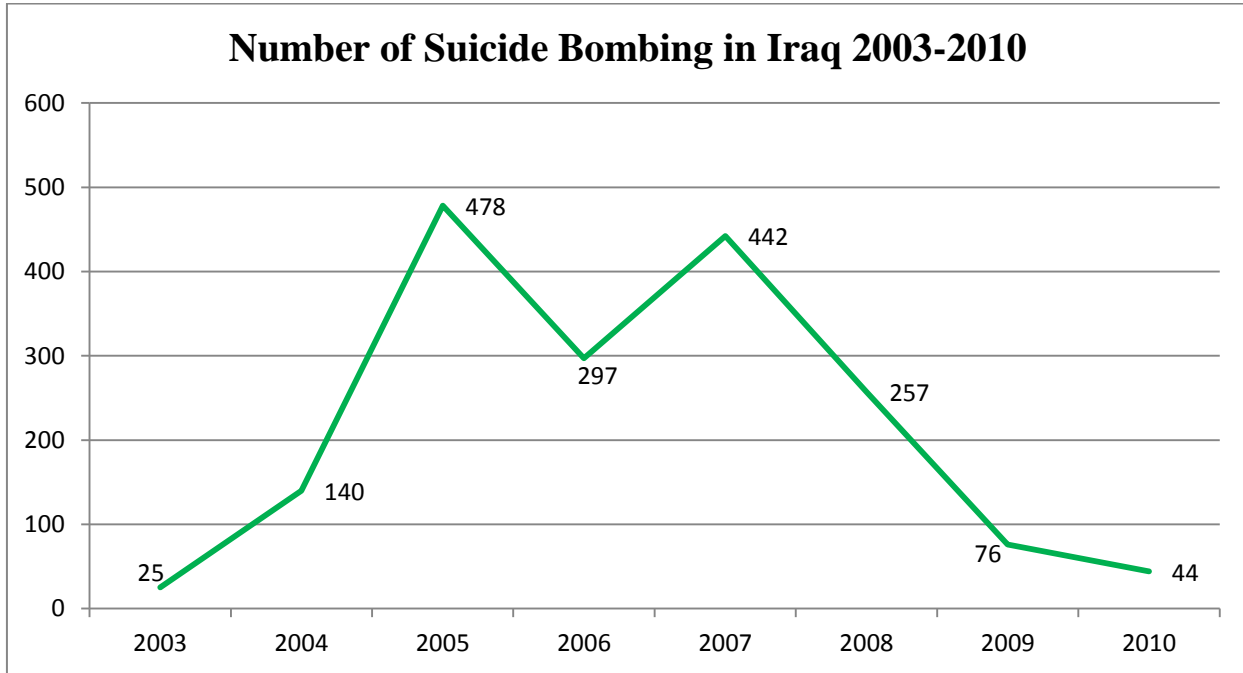
	United States of America	Islamic Republic of Iran
Area:	9.8m km ² (#3 in the world)	1.6m km ² (#18 in the world)
Population:	316.7m (#3)	79.8m (#18)
Population growth rate:	0.9% (#124)	1.247% (#94)
Net migration rate:	+3.62 migrants/1k population	-0.11 migrants/1k population
Ethnic groups:	white 65%, 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 10 February 2014).

Source 2: “Iran”, *CIA World Factbook*. Available at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ir.html> (accessed 10 February 2014).

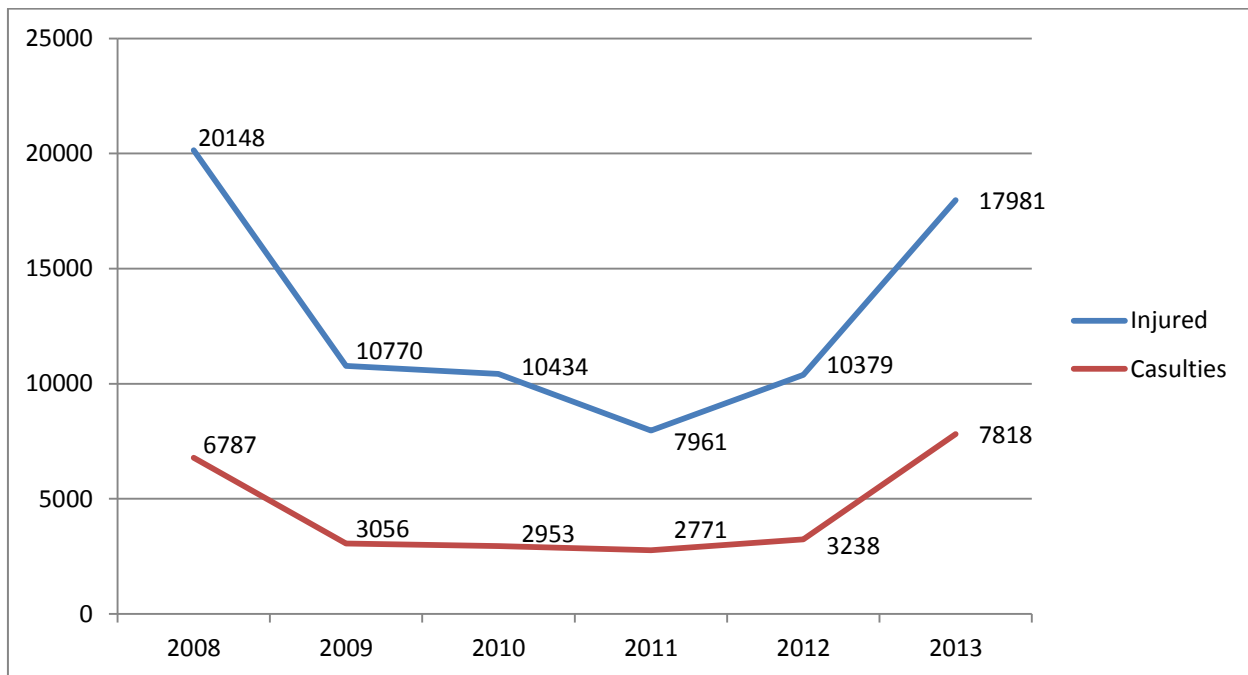
Source 3: Hackett, James [ed.]. *International Institute for Strategic Studies: The Military Balance 2010* (London: Routledge, 2010), p 31, 251-253.

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



Source: Author’s own research.

Appendix 3: Civilian Casualties in Iraq 2008-2013



Source: United Nations Iraq. “Resources: Civilian Casualties”. Available at: http://www.uniraq.org/index.php?option=com_k2&view=itemlist&layout=category&task=category&id=159&Itemid=633&lang=en (accessed 12 February 2014).

Appendix 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 10 February 2014).

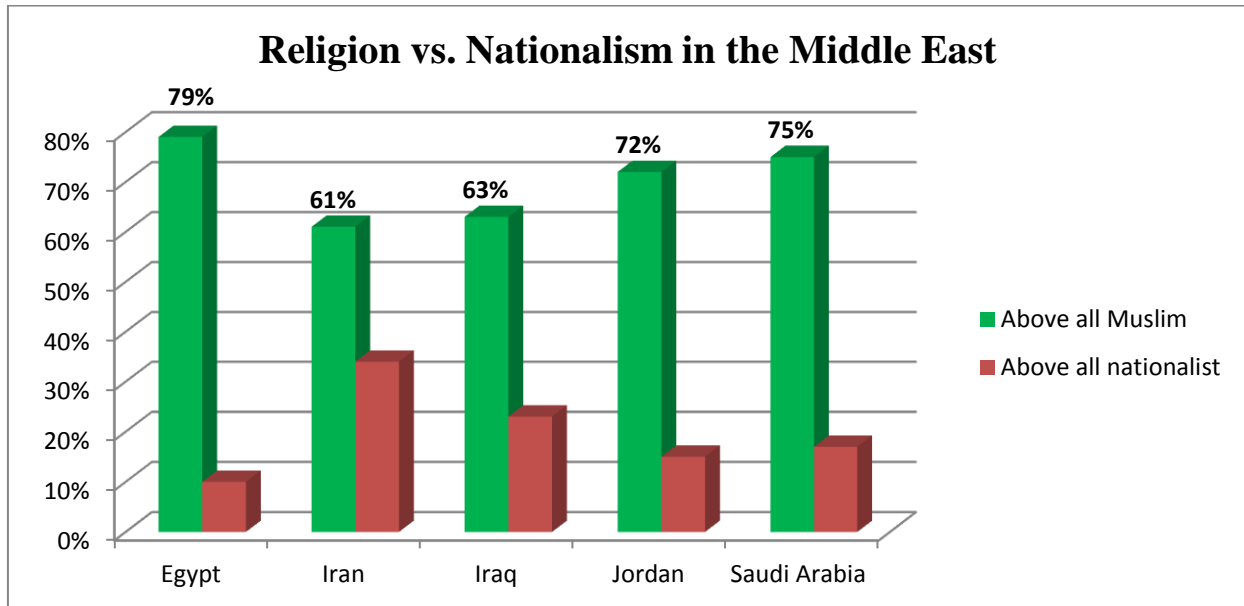
Appendix 5: Iraq Parliamentary Elections, March 2010

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	

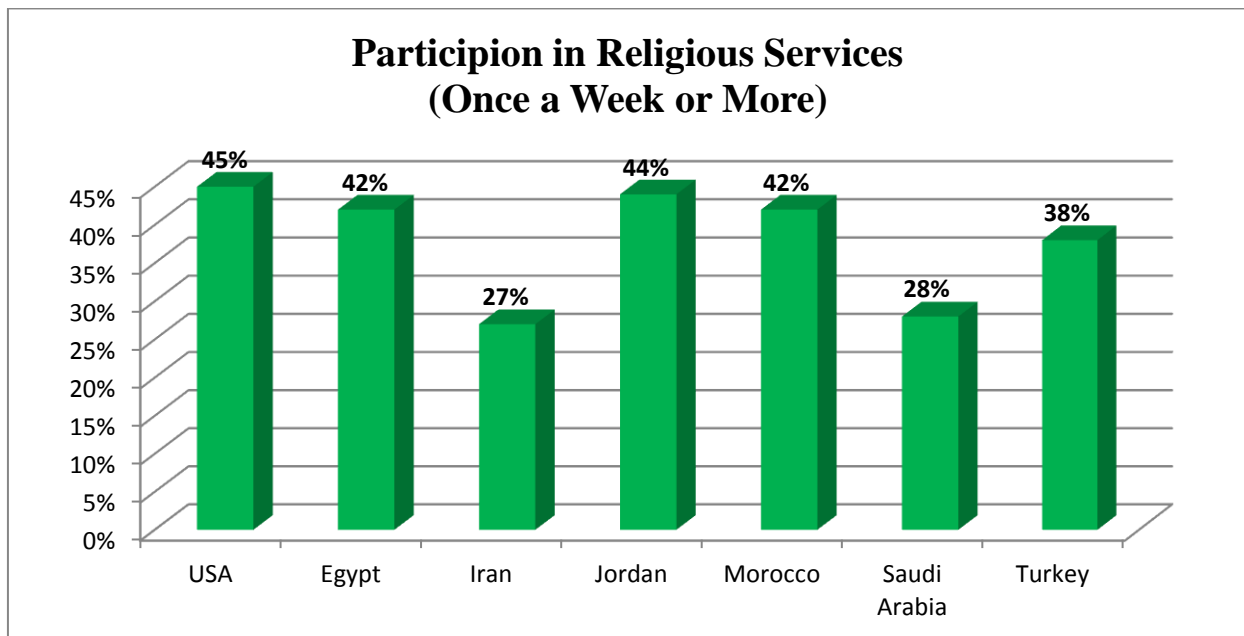
Source: Fairfield, Hannah and Tse, Archie. “The 2010 Iraqi Parliamentary Elections”, *The New York Times*, 7 March 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/03/11/world/middleeast/20100311-iraq-election.html> (accessed 10 February 2014).

Appendix 6: Religion vs. Nationalism in the Middle East



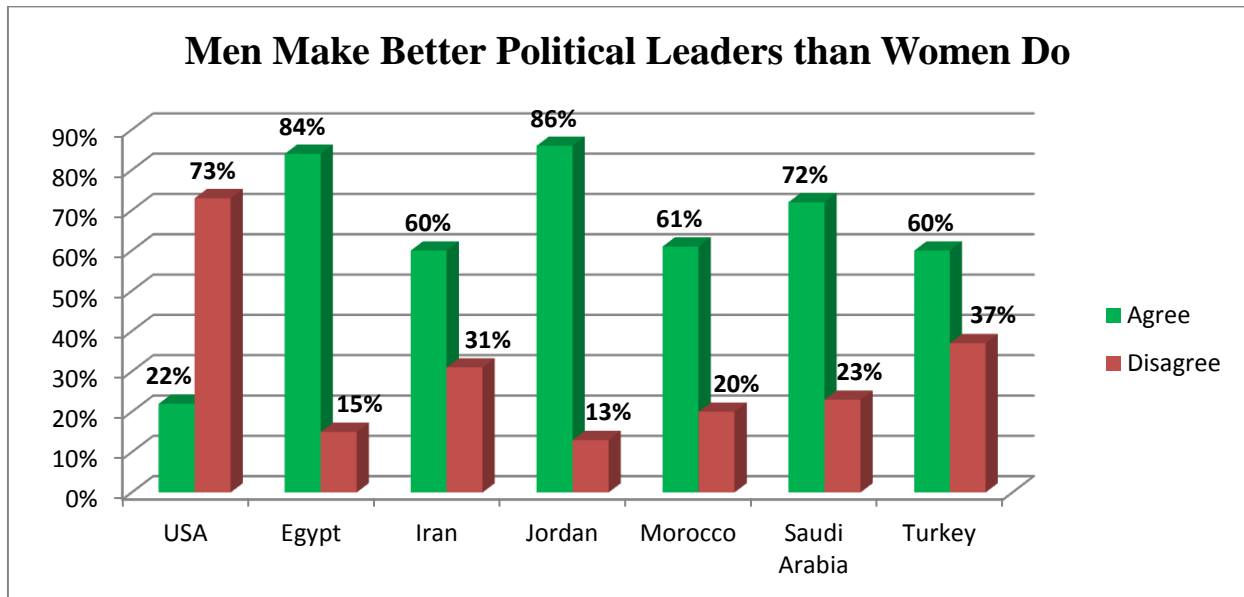
Source: Axworthy, *Dějiny Íránu*, p 209.

Appendix 7: Participation in Religious Services



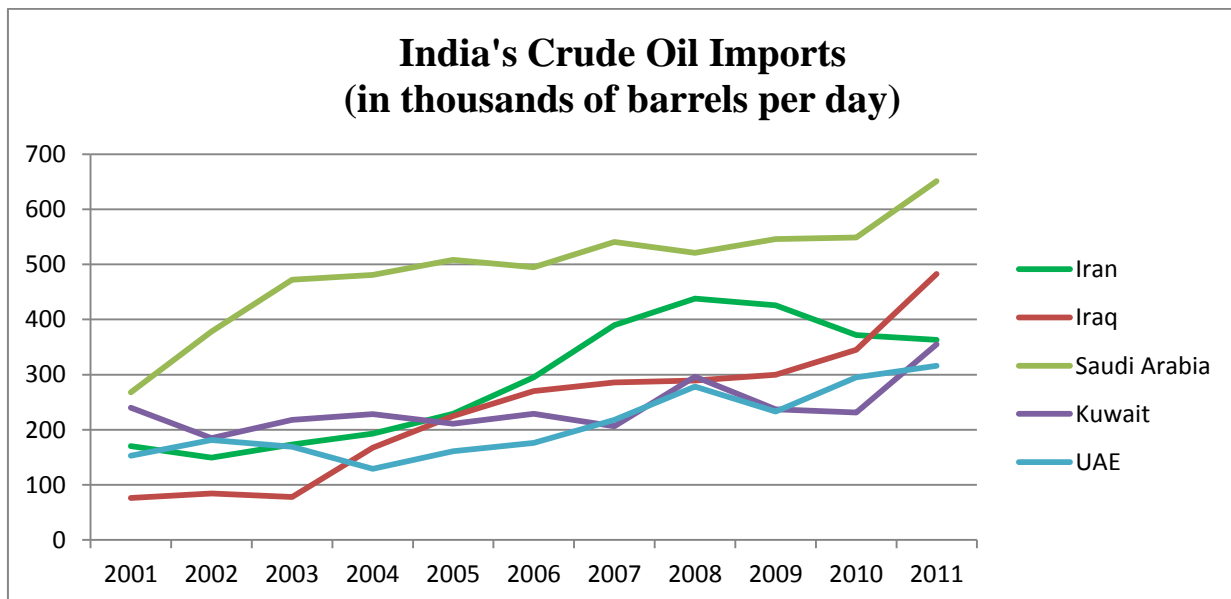
Source: Mansoor Moaddel, "The Worldviews of Saudi Citizens vs. Other Islamic Countries and Americans: Findings from Values Surveys", *Population Studies Center*, May 2004, http://www.psc.isr.umich.edu/research/tmp/moaddel_capitol-hill-may04.pdf (accessed 10 February 2014).

Appendix 8: Gender and Political Leadership in the Middle East



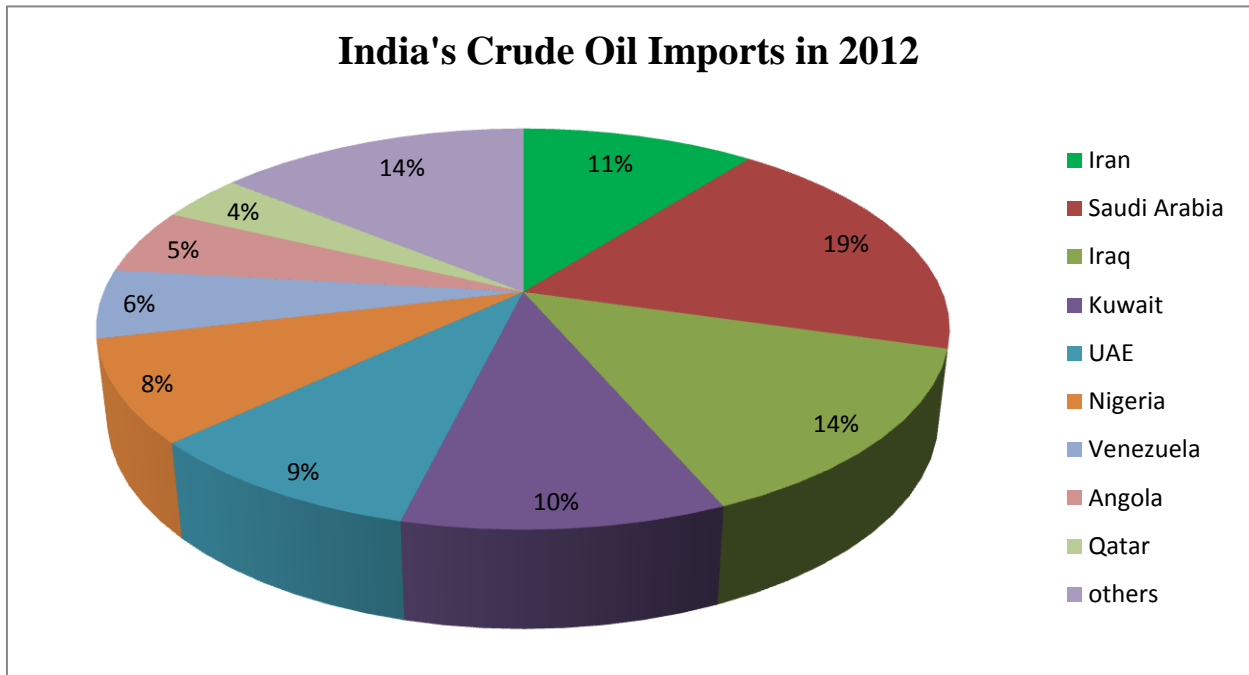
Source: Mansoor Moaddel, “The Worldviews of Saudi Citizens vs. Other Islamic Countries and Americans: Findings from Values Surveys”, *Population Studies Center*, May 2004, http://www.psc.isr.umich.edu/research/tmp/moaddel_capitol-hill-may04.pdf (accessed 10 February 2014).

Appendix 9: India's Crude Oil Imports



Source: Reuters. Available at: <http://in.reuters.com/article/2012/08/06/india-crude-import-idINL4E8IU4HI20120806> (accessed 10 February 2014).

Appendix 10: India's Crude Oil Imports in 2012



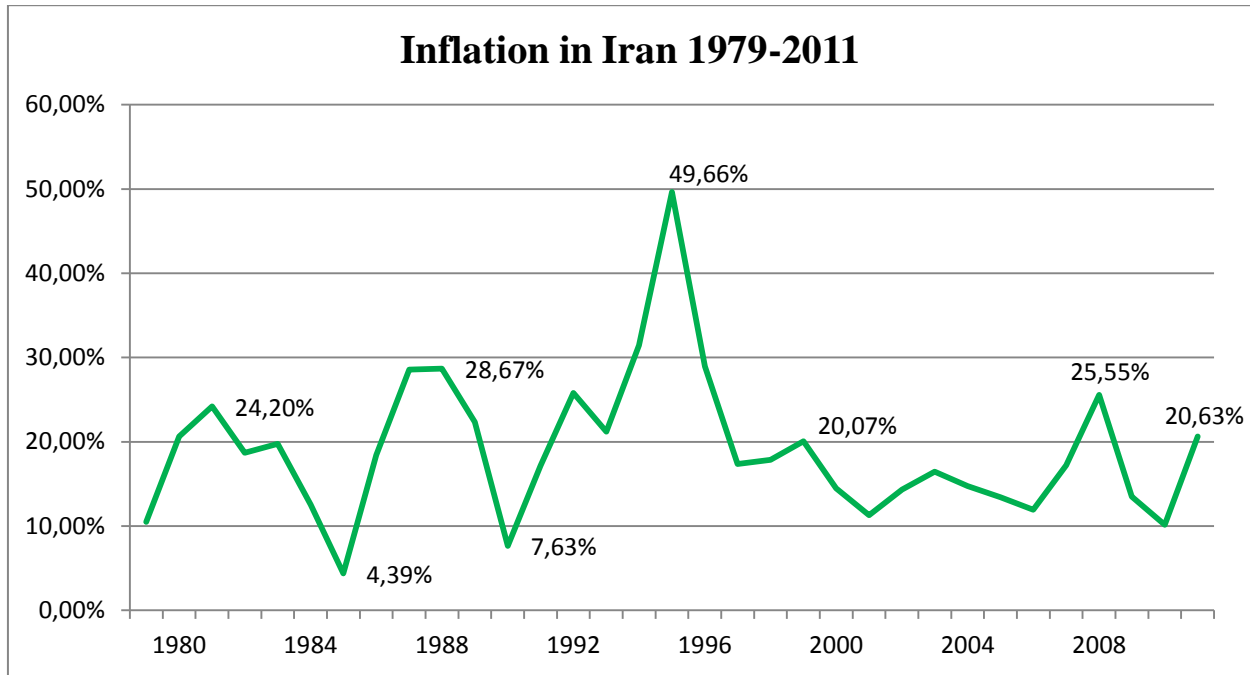
Source: Reuters. Available at: <http://in.reuters.com/article/2012/08/06/india-crude-import-idINL4E8IU4HI20120806> (accessed 10 February 2014).

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



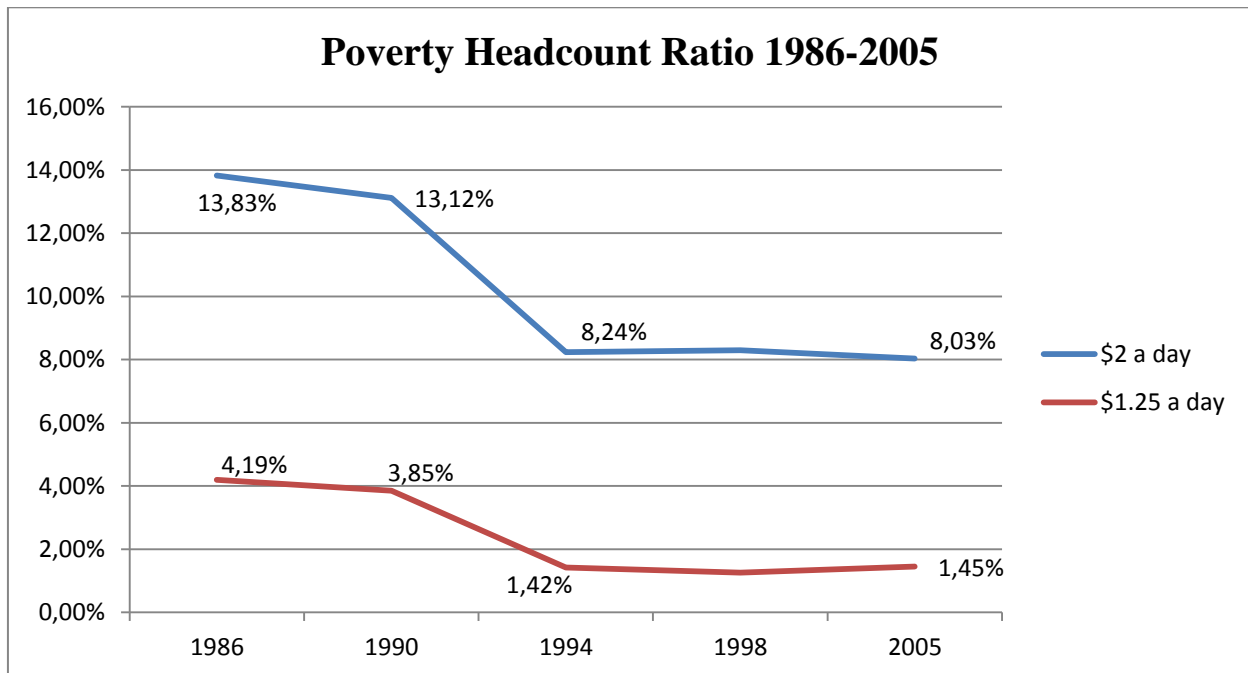
Source: World Bank. Available at: http://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=d5bncppjof8f9_ (accessed 10 February 2014).

Appendix 12: Inflation in Iran 1979-2011



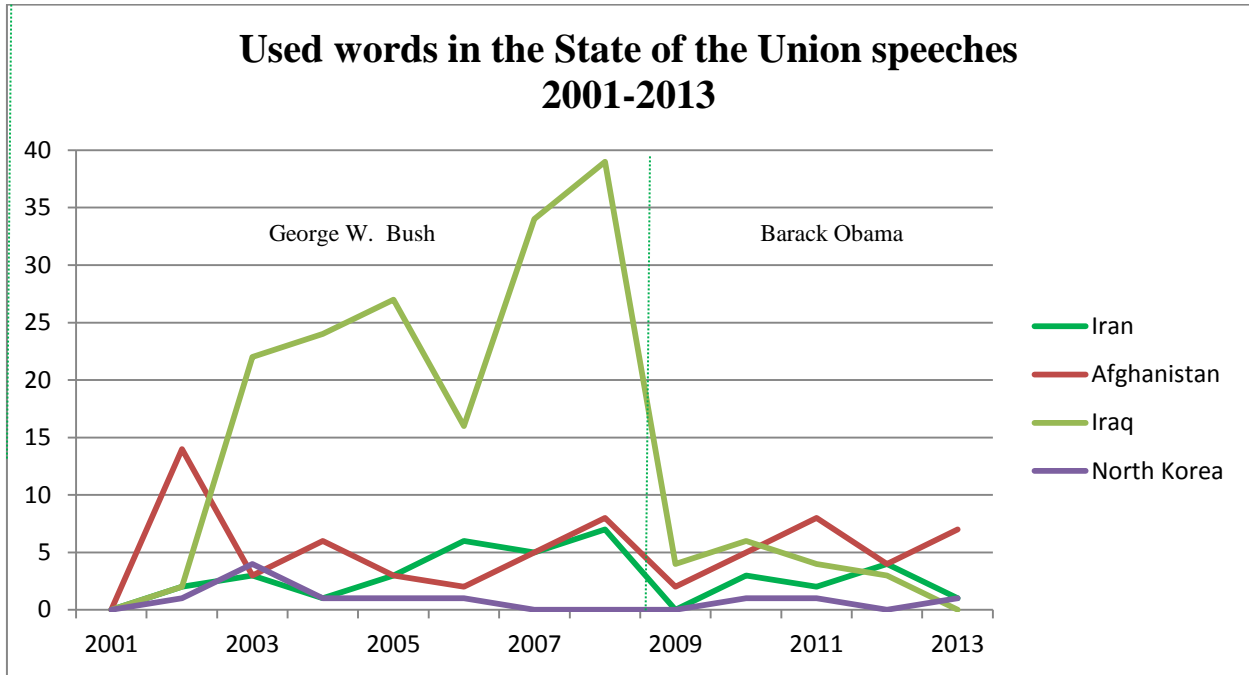
Source: World Bank. Available at: http://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=d5bnppjof8f9_ (accessed 10 February 2014).

Appendix 13: Poverty Headcount Ratio 1986-2005



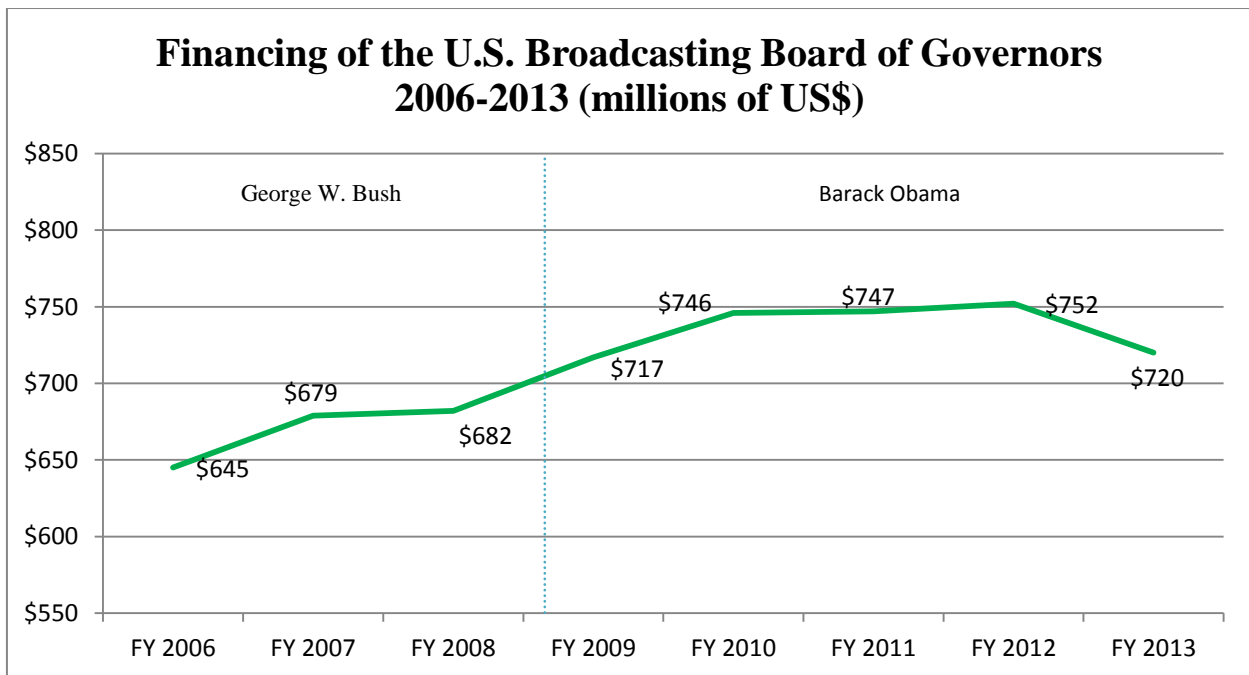
Source: World Bank. Available at: http://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=d5bnppjof8f9_ (accessed 10 February 2014).

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



Source: Author's own research.

Appendix 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 10 February 2014).

Appendix 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.

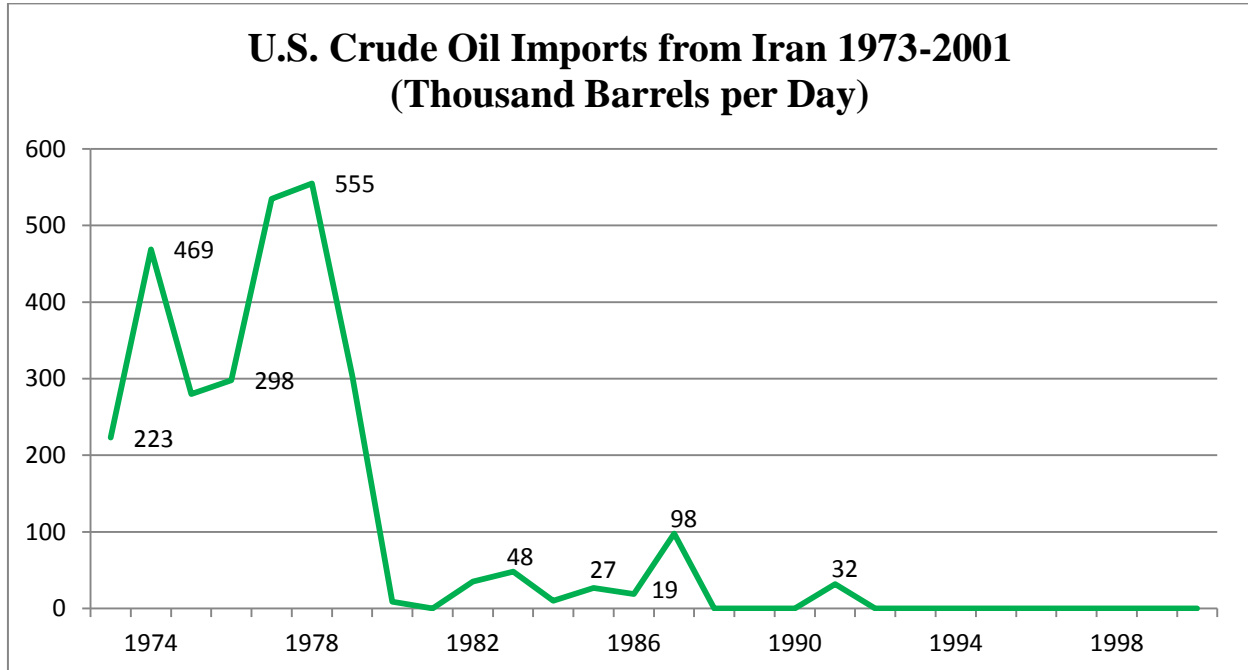
(B) **PROHIBITION ON SERVICE AS A REPOSITORY OF GOVERNMENT FUNDS.**—Such financial institution may not serve as agent of the United States Government or serve as repository for United States Government funds.

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).

Appendix 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 10 February 2014).

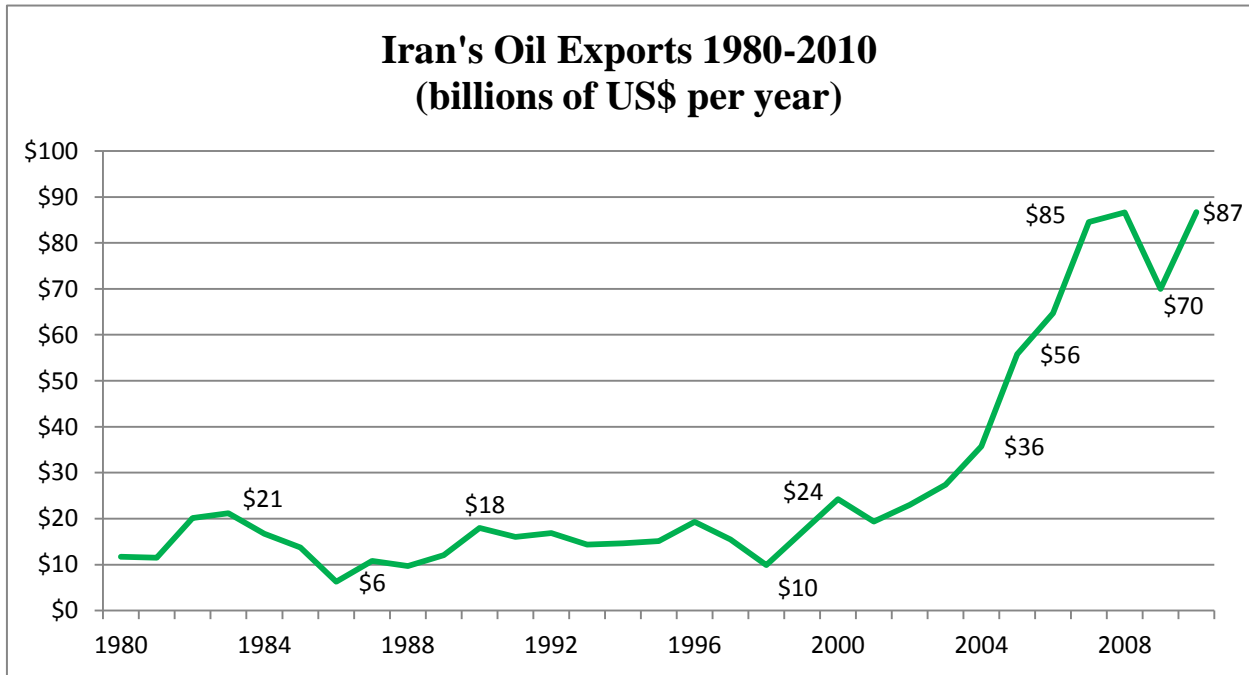
Appendix 18: Used words/phrases in the National Security Strategies 2002, 2006 and 2010

	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...

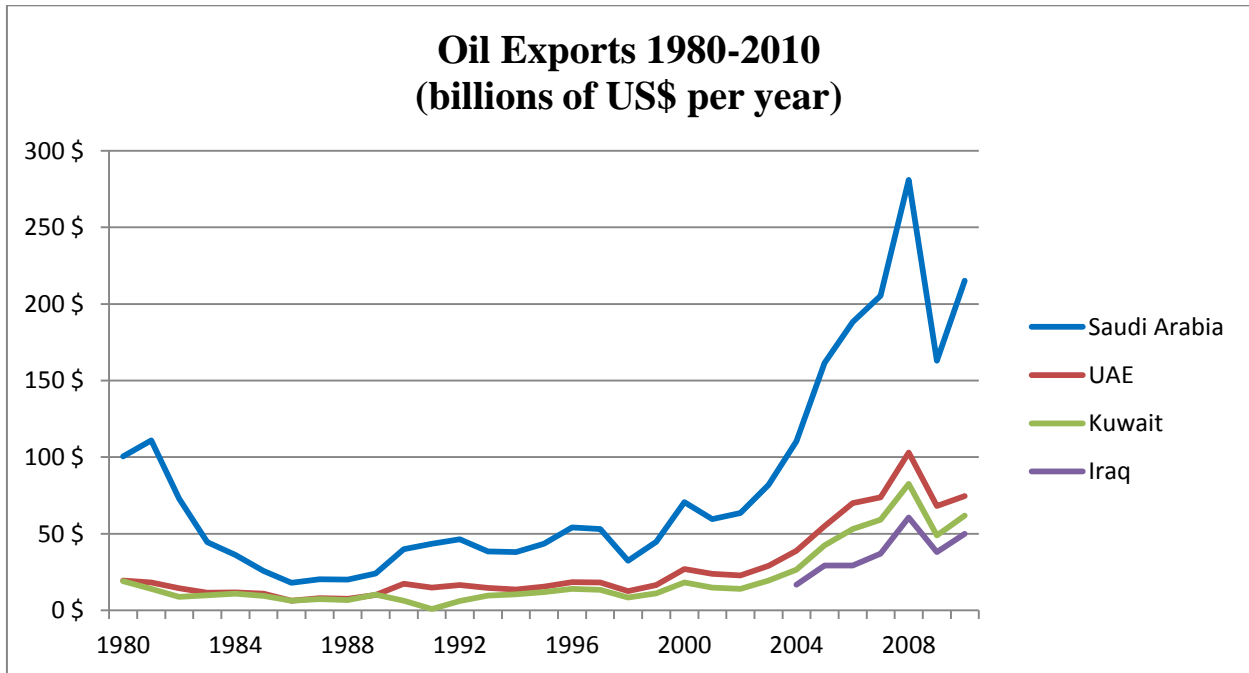
Source: Author's own research.

Appendix 19: Iran's Oil Exports 1980-2010



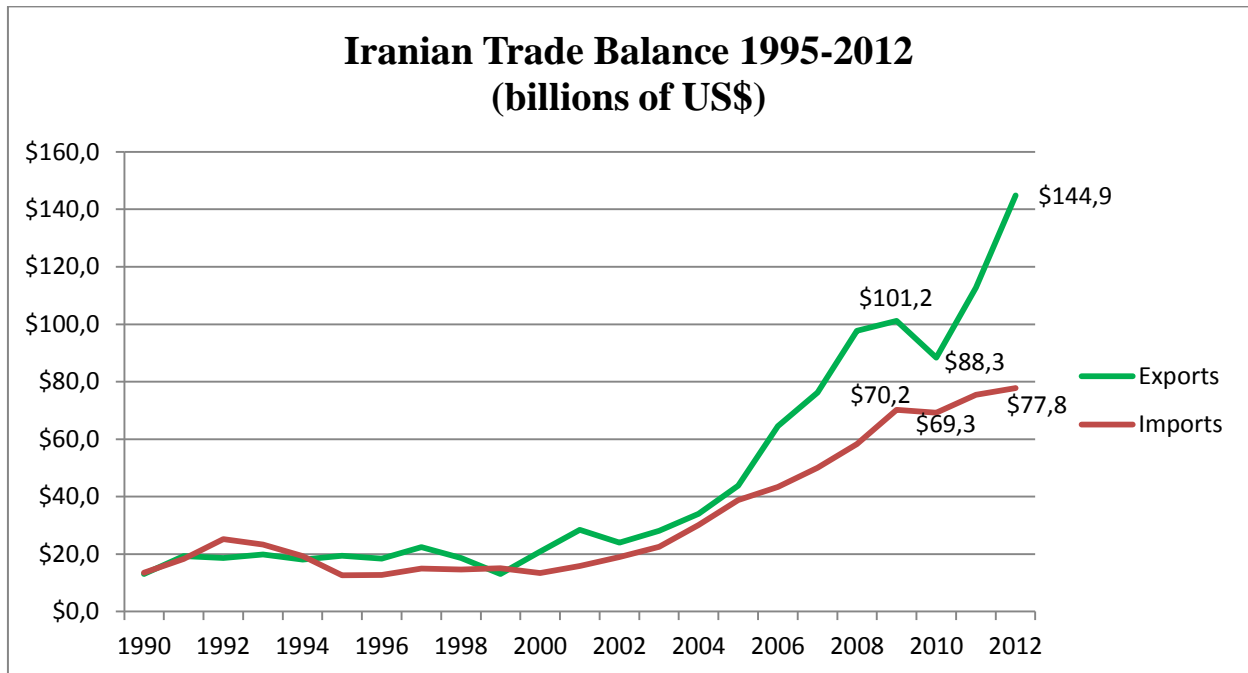
Source: IMF, October 2012 WEO. Available at: http://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=k3s92bru78li6_ (accessed 10 February 2014).

Appendix 20: Oil Exports of Other Countries 1980-2010



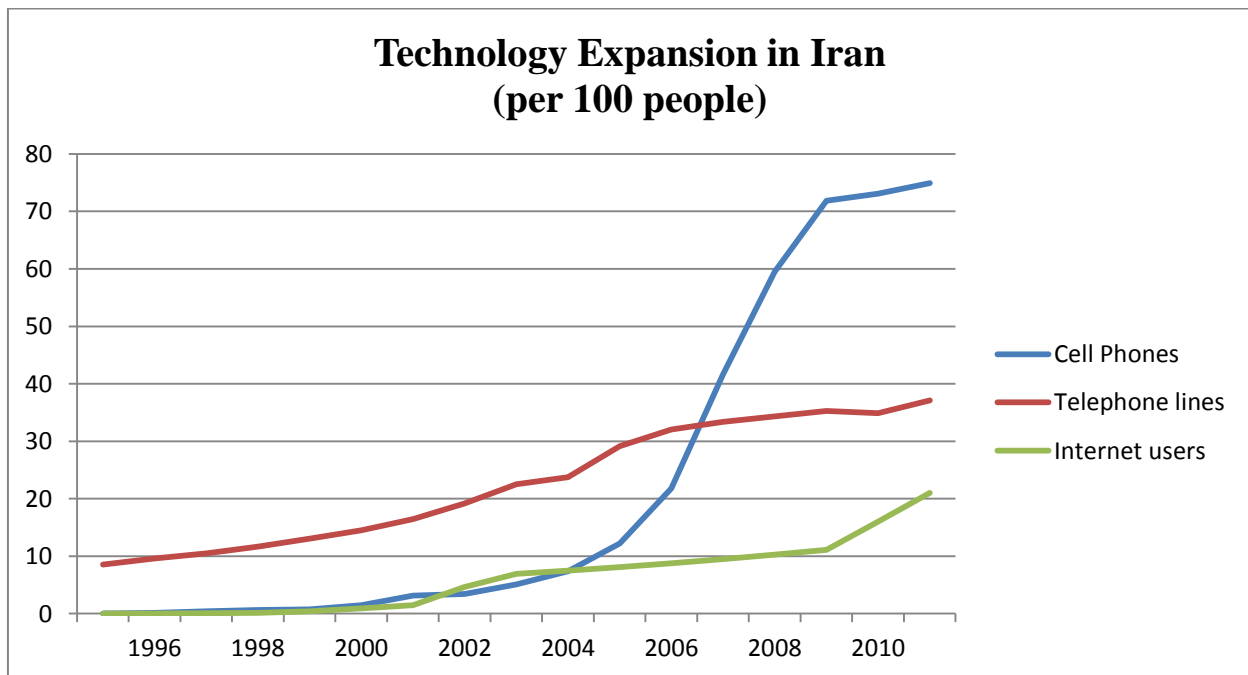
Source: IMF, October 2012 WEO. Available at: http://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=k3s92bru78li6_ (accessed 10 February 2014).

Appendix 21: Iranian Trade Balance 1995-2012



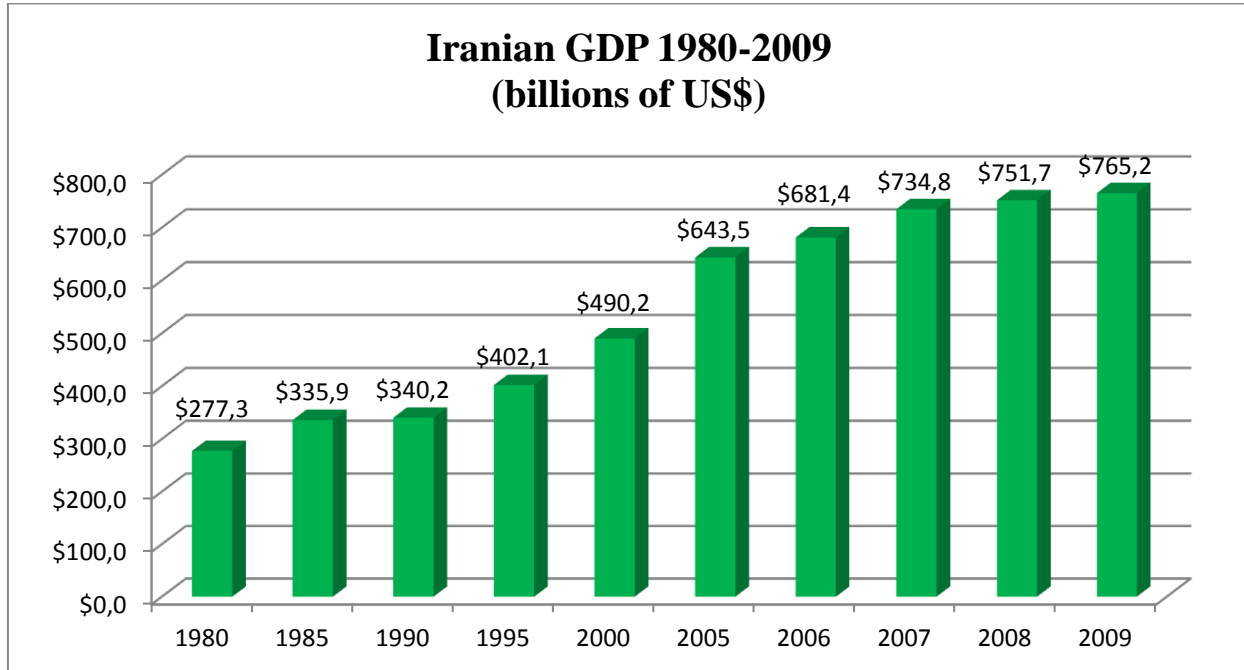
Source: Trading Economics. Available at:
<http://www.tradingeconomics.com/iran/indicators> (accessed 10 February 2014).

Appendix 22: Technology Expansion in Iran



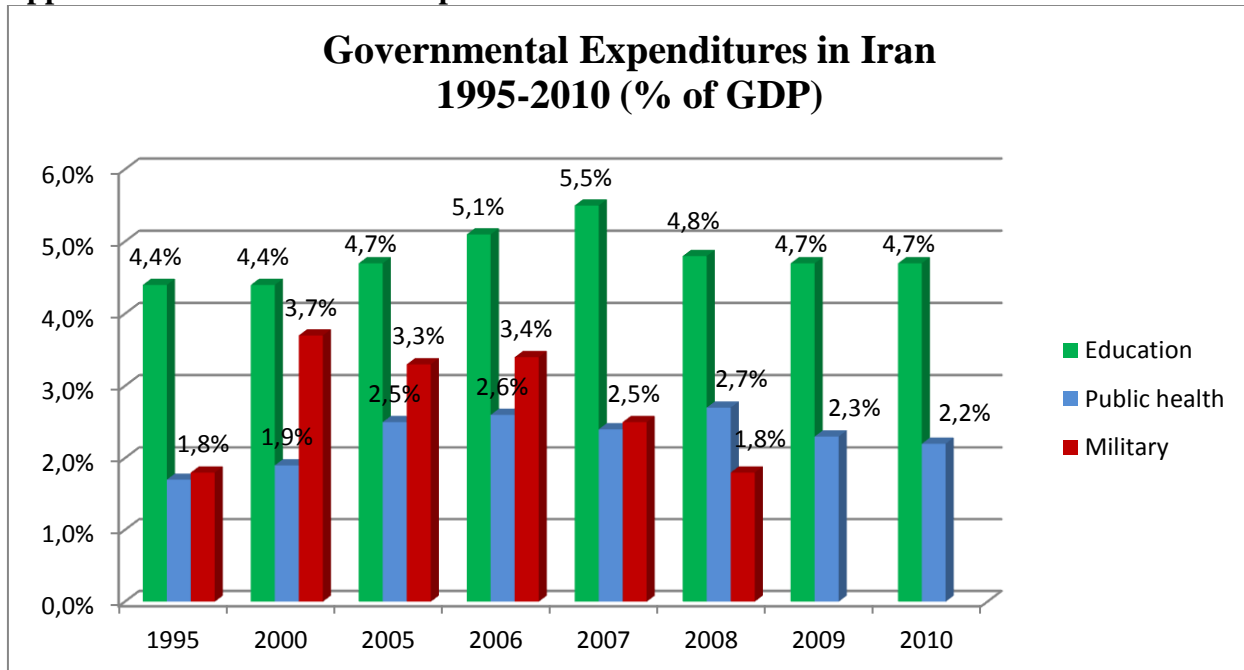
Source: World Bank. Available at:
http://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=d5bncppjof8f9_ (accessed 10 February 2014).

Appendix 23: Iranian GDP 1980-2009



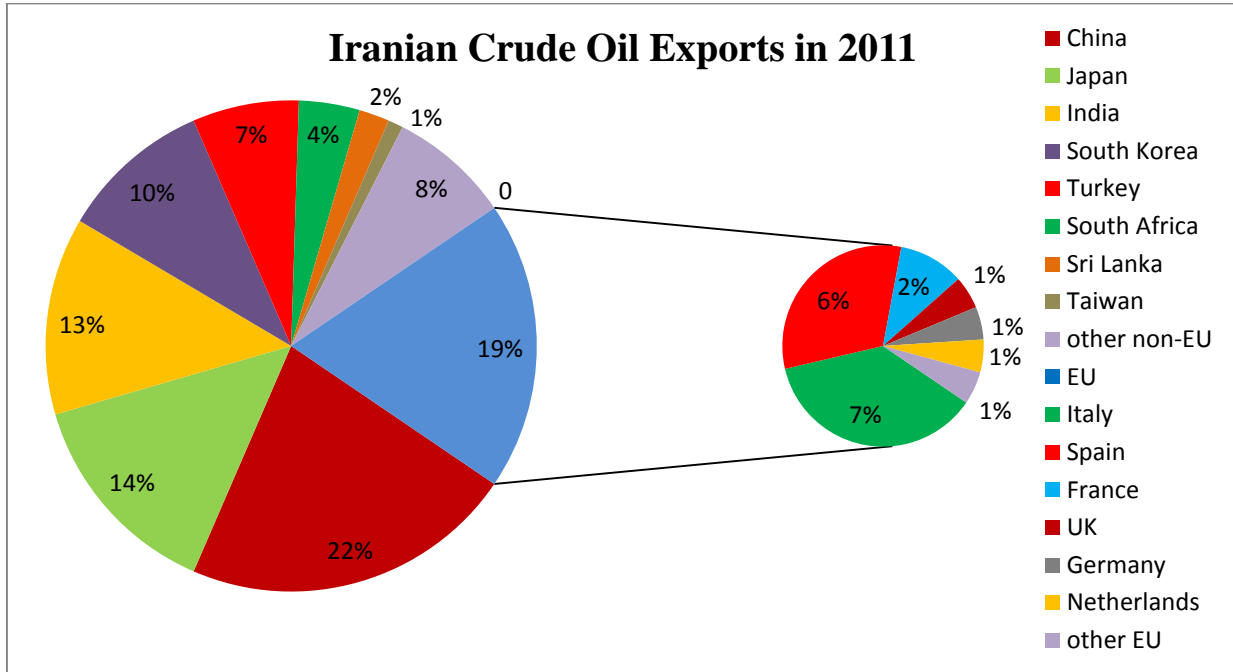
Source: Human Development Report 2013, UN Development Programme. Available at: http://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=kthk374hkr6tr_ (accessed 10 February 2014).

Appendix 24: Governmental Expenditures in Iran 1995-2010



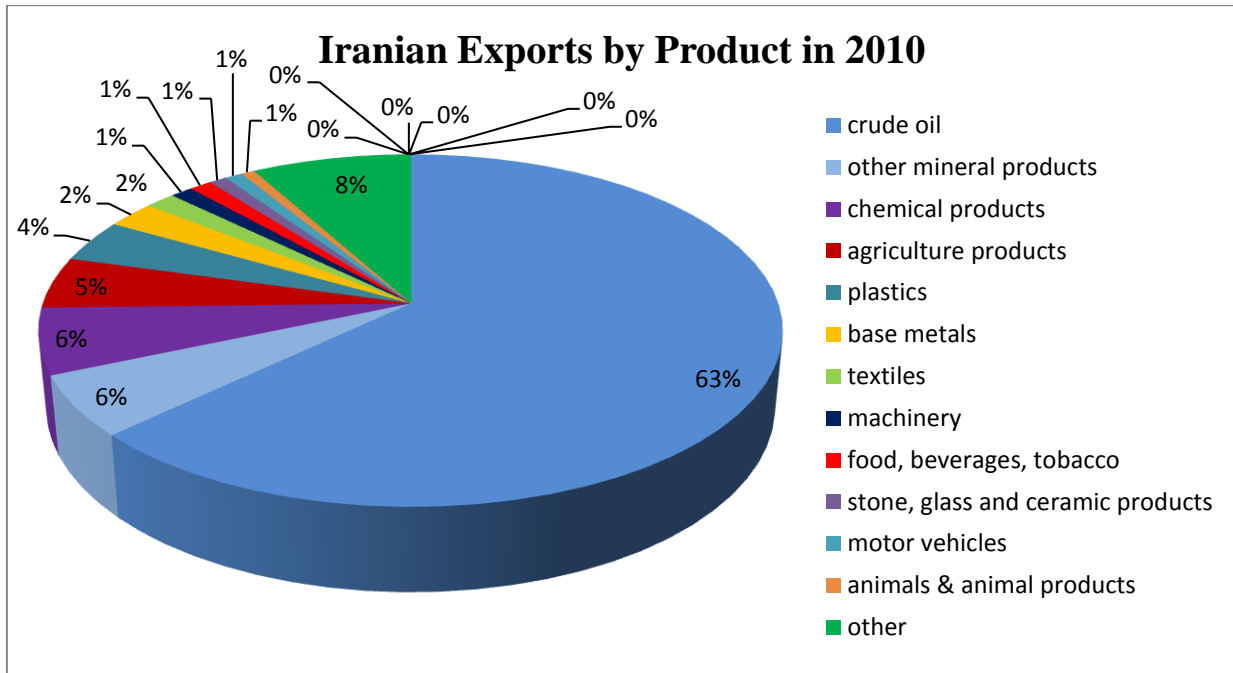
Source: Human Development Report 2013, UN Development Programme. Available at: http://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=kthk374hkr6tr_ (accessed 10 February 2014).

Appendix 25: Iranian Crude Oil Exports in 2011



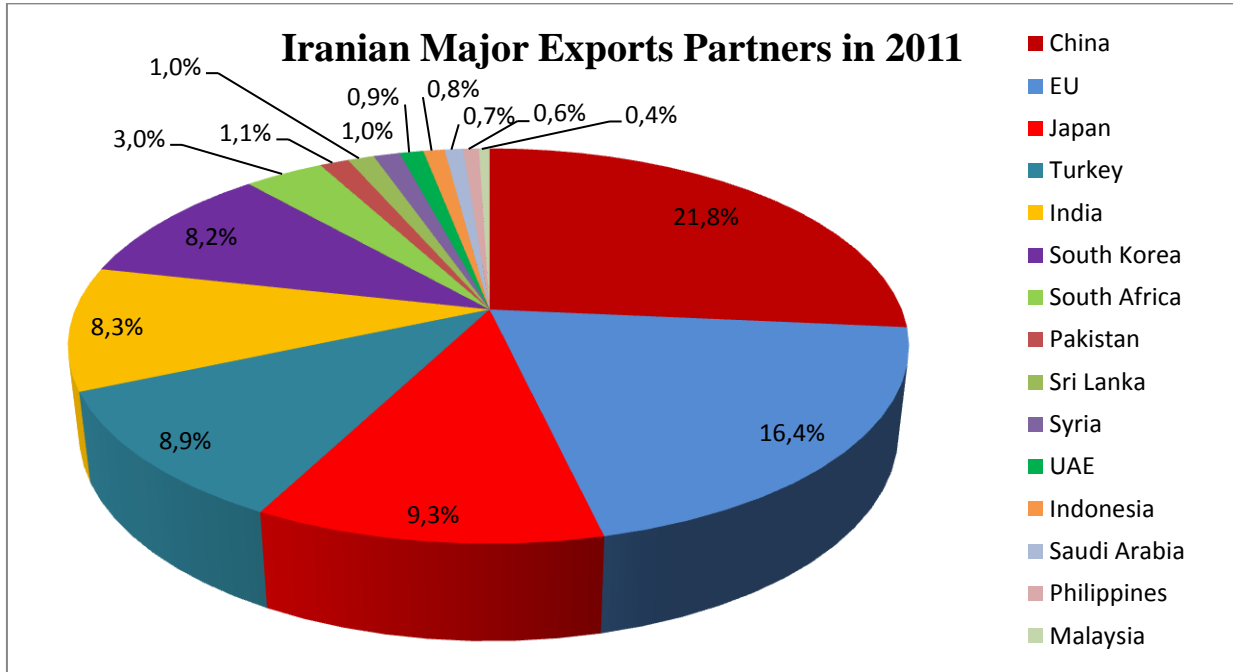
Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration. Available at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2012/feb/06/iran-oil-exports-destination> (accessed 10 February 2014).

Appendix 26: Iranian Exports by Product in 2010



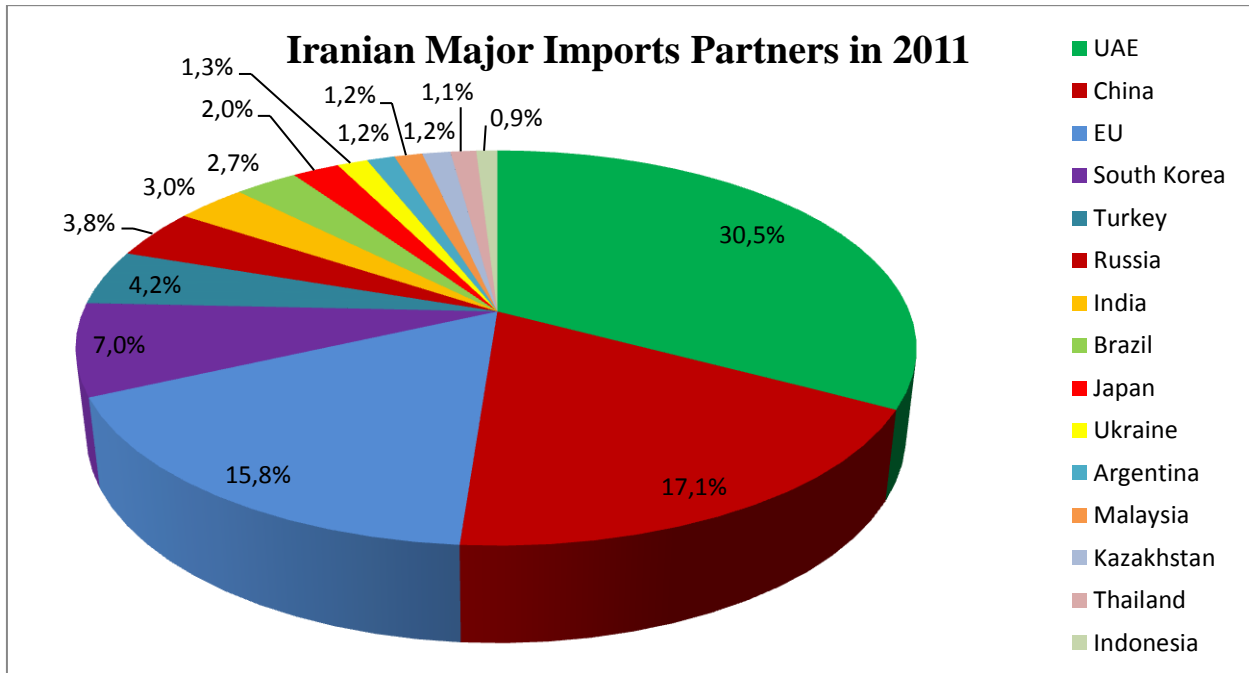
Source: Index Mundi. Available at: <http://www.indexmundi.com/trade/exports/?country=ir> (accessed 10 February 2014).

Appendix 27: Iranian Major Exports Partners in 2011



Source: IMF. Available at: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2006/september/tradoc_113392.pdf (accessed 10 February 2014).

Appendix 28: Iranian Major Imports Partners in 2011



Source: IMF. Available at: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2006/september/tradoc_113392.pdf (accessed 10 February 2014).