



SECURITY COUNCIL

“The situation in Iran”

Study Guide

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1. Welcoming Letter

Honorable delegates,

We are more than honored to welcome you all to this year's annual ARCMUN, and more specifically to the Security Council, one of the most interesting committees. As members of the Board, we are really excited to work with you and have some fruitful debates during the conference.

First of all, we want to congratulate you for participating in this conference, as MUNS are a great opportunity to be informed about intergovernmental issues, provide solutions, practice your public-speaking skills and make new friends! The topic for this year's Council is the Situation in Iran. As the topic is currently at the forefront of the world timeline, it requires careful and detailed manipulation for mutually satisfying agreements to be reached, as this issue, does not only impact a few countries, but humankind as a whole.

This study guide acts as a starting point for your research, but you also need to conduct your own thorough investigations too, to find out more about your delegation's views on the matter. Please be reminded that this topic is one of the most crucial around the world right now, and every day something new might happen! This means that you have to be aware of possible updates.

Do not forget to take a look at the Security Council Rules of Procedure, which can be found in the official site of the conference.

Should you have any questions concerning the topic, the rules of procedure or the Security Council as a Committee, do not hesitate to contact us.

Looking forward to a great conference!

The Board of the Security Council,
Giorgos Zachariadis
Dimitris Dimoulis
Alexandros Ballis

2. Introduction to the Committee

The Security Council (SC), is one of the six main organs of the United Nations, and its purpose is to maintain international peace and security. It has held its first session on the 17th of January 1947. The Security Council has the responsibility and right to take immediate and drastic actions. It is also responsible to determine when and where a UN peace operation should be deployed. It responds to crisis around the world and it has a range of options at its disposal.

The Security Council, consists of 15 members, with ten of them being non-permanent members with a two-year term starting on 1 January, with five replaced each year. The remaining five countries of the council, namely China, France, Russian Federation, United Kingdom and the United States of America, are its permanent members, also known as P5. Under Article 27 of the UN Charter, all the permanent members of the council have the well-known “veto power”. This means, that the 5 permanent members have the right to cancel the decisions being made, when they decide to use this privilege. The current non-permanent members are: Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia and last but not least, Vietnam.¹ “The presidency of the council is held by each and every member in turn for one month, in a rotating way which follows the English alphabetical order of the Members States names.”² According to Articles 31 and 32 of Chapter V of the UN Charter, additional States whose interests are directly affected by a dispute under consideration by the Security Council can participate in the discussion relating to the dispute. These Observer States are not entitled to a vote.³

Under Article 25 of the UN Charter, the decisions of the Security Council are legally binding for all UN Member States. Chapter V of the UN Charter presents in detail the basic structure of the council, the rules of it and the rights that Member States have. It, therefore, becomes evident that the Security Council plays a crucial role in preserving international peace and actively promoting it, not only through intervening in instances of high international friction, but also by establishing a lasting rapport between various nations of the world.⁴

¹ Un.org. (2019). *What is the Security Council?* / *United Nations Security Council*. [online] Available at: <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/what-security-council> [Accessed 26 Sep. 2019].

² Un.org. (2019). *Security Council Presidency* / *United Nations Security Council*. [online] Available at: <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/presidency> [Accessed 26 Sep. 2019].

³ Encyclopedia Britannica. (2019). *United Nations Security Council* / *History & Members*. [online] Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/United-Nations-Security-Council> [Accessed 26 Sep. 2019].

⁴ Forum, J. (2019). *UN Security Council*. [online] Globalpolicy.org. Available at: <https://www.globalpolicy.org/security-council.html> [Accessed 26 Sep. 2019].

3. Introduction to the Topic

The Situation in Iran is a topic which is constantly involving, and it can be found at the forefront of the World News Timeline. Back on the 14th of July 2014, Iran and six world powers, known as P5 + 1 (China, France, Germany, Russian Federation, UK & USA), reached a historic nuclear deal, that limited Iran's nuclear program and enhanced monitoring in exchange for relief from nuclear actions. Prior to that, Iran was trying to acquire the capability to build nuclear weapons for more than two decades.⁵



Figure 1: P5 + 1 states

The U.S President Donald Trump had attacked the Iran Deal numerous times during his campaign, and in May 2018 he withdrew the U.S from the deal. This decision caused a lot of reactions from the other P5+1 nations, who continue to support the denuclearization of Iran.⁶

Although the council has adopted six resolutions in the last decade concerning this topic, many of the members have expressed their concerns about nuclear weapons and uranium enrichment in the Iranian peninsula.⁷

⁵ Fas.org. (2019). *Iran's Nuclear Program: Status*. [online] Available at: <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/nuke/RL34544.pdf> [Accessed 9 Oct. 2019].

⁶ Harvard Gazette. (2019). *Harvard analysts assess the Iran deal pullout*. [online] Available at: <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2018/05/harvard-analysts-assess-the-iran-deal-pullout/> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2019].

⁷ BBC News. (2019). *Iran nuclear deal: Key details*. [online] Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-33521655> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2019].

Countries are trying to achieve Iran's denuclearization by signing treaties with the aim of completely banning the use, development, deployment, testing and acquisition of nuclear weapons. One of those treaties is the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which mandates a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East (Article 7). Nevertheless, the geopolitical interests many military strong nations have in this area, such as but not limited to the United States of America, Russian Federation and China, among other factors, lead to non-compliance with the idea of a nuclear-free-weapon zone.⁸

4. Definition of Key Terms

Nuclear Weapons: "Nuclear weapon, device designed to release energy in an explosive manner as a result of nuclear fission, nuclear fusion, or a combination of the two processes. Fission weapons are commonly referred to as atomic bombs. Nuclear weapons produce enormous explosive energy."⁹

Nuclear Weapon Free Zone: In 1975 the United Nations General Assembly issued Resolution 3472 B which notes that a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone is "Any zone recognized as such by the General Assembly of the United Nations..." where States have decided by virtue of a treaty or convention the total absence of nuclear weapons and the procedure for the matter which has to follow an international system of verification and control.¹⁰

Nuclear Winter: "Nuclear winter, the environmental devastation that certain scientists contend would probably result from the hundreds of nuclear explosions in a nuclear war. The damaging effects of light, heat, blast, and radiation caused by nuclear explosions had long been known to scientists, but such explosions' indirect effects on the environment remained largely ignored for decades."¹¹

⁸ Alcaro, R. and Tocci, N. (2019). *How Europe can save the Iran deal*. [online] POLITICO. Available at: <https://www.politico.eu/article/europe-can-save-the-iran-nuclear-deal-donald-trump/> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2019].

⁹ Encyclopedia Britannica. (2019). *nuclear weapon / History, Facts, Types, & Effects*. [online] Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/technology/nuclear-weapon> [Accessed 5 Oct. 2019].

¹⁰ Un.org. (2019). *Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones – UNODA*. [online] Available at: <https://www.un.org/disarmament/wmd/nuclear/nwzf/> [Accessed 25 Oct. 2019].

¹¹ Encyclopedia Britannica. (2019). *Nuclear winter*. [online] Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/science/nuclear-winter> [Accessed 5 Oct. 2019].

IAEA: The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was established in 29 of July 1957 by the Statute of the IAEA¹² and it is an international organisation with the purpose of promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and to inhibit its use for any military purpose, including nuclear weapons. Furthermore, the IAEA is as an autonomous organisation established independently of the United Nations and it reports to both the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council.¹³

JCPOA: The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) is an long-term deal reached between Iran and the P5+1 (China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States) on July 14, 2015. Its purpose is to give an end to Iran's nuclear program, setting out detailed measures on the limit of uranium enrichment and the way that the deal is going to be monitored by the IAEA, which will give an end to sanctions imposed to Iran if Iran complies and commits to it.¹⁴

5. History of the Topic

Revolution in Iran

The Iranian Revolution, also known as the Islamic Revolution was a series of events that involved the overthrow of the last monarch of Iran, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi and the replacement of his government with an Islamic republic under Ayatollah Khomeini who was one of the revolutions leaders'.

Demonstrations against the Shah dynasty started in October 1977 and became a campaign of civil resistance that also included religious elements. Between August and December 1978, demonstrations paralyzed the country. The Shah left Iran for exile on 16 January 1979, as the last Persian monarch.¹⁵

Nuclear Deal

14 July 2015; Iran and six countries reached a historic agreement in Geneva called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), popularly known as the Iran nuclear deal, which entered into force on 16 January 2016. The six major

¹² Iaea.org. (2019). *The Statute of the IAEA / IAEA*. [online] Available at: <https://www.iaea.org/about/statute> [Accessed 25 Oct. 2019].

¹³ Iaea.org. (2019). *Overview / IAEA*. [online] Available at: <https://www.iaea.org/about/overview> [Accessed 25 Oct. 2019].

¹⁴ Armscontrol.org. (2019). *The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) at a Glance / Arms Control Association*. [online] Available at: <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/JCPOA-at-a-glance> [Accessed 5 Oct. 2019].

¹⁵ Encyclopedia Britannica. (2019). *Iranian Revolution / Causes, Effects, & Facts*. [online] Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/event/Iranian-Revolution> [Accessed 25 Oct. 2019].

powers involved in these negotiations were Iran, the US, France, the UK, China, Russia and Germany. The deal aimed to limit Iran's ability to develop nuclear weapons in exchange for lifting economic sanctions against Tehran. More specifically, Iran agreed to restrictions that would allow it to have enough enriched uranium to maintain the country's energy needs, without having the ability to build a nuclear bomb. On top of this, Iran agreed to give access to inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), to its nuclear facilities, among other facilities. The IAEA has repeatedly found Iran to be complying with the terms of the pact.¹⁶

January 2016; when the IAEA declared Iran was living up to its commitments, all nuclear-related international sanctions against Iran were lifted.¹⁷

January 15, 2017; IAEA verifies that Tehran has taken certain further steps so as to provide confidence that Iran is not developing a nuclear weapon and maintain at least a one year breakout time.¹⁸

February 9, 2017; The EU's High Representative/Vice President for Foreign Affairs Federica Mogherini travels to Washington to meet the Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, the former National Security Advisor Michael Flynn, and members of Congress. Mogherini notes that the JCPOA is key for the security of Europe given its geographic proximity to Iran.¹⁹

April 18, 2017; Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, certifies to Congress that Iran is compliant in meeting its obligations under the JCPOA.²⁰

May 2018; US President Donald Trump announced the withdrawal of the United States from the international agreement of 2015 and the re-imposition of sanctions on Iran, causing international reactions, even though according to the

¹⁶ Business Insider. (2019). *Here's what's in the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran that Trump withdrew from, sparking a crisis that's led to the brink of war.* [online] Available at: <https://www.businessinsider.com/iran-nuclear-deal-explained> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2019].

¹⁷ BBC News. (2019). *Iran nuclear deal: Key details.* [online] Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-33521655> [Accessed 25 Oct. 2019].

¹⁸ Iaea.org. (2019). *IAEA and Iran: Chronology of Key Events / IAEA.* [online] Available at: <https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/focus/iran/chronology-of-key-events> [Accessed 25 Oct. 2019].

¹⁹ EEAS - European External Action Service - European Commission. (2019). *High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini travels to Washington, D.C..* [online] Available at: https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/haiti/20161/high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-travels-washington-dc_en [Accessed 25 Oct. 2019].

²⁰ Armscontrol.org. (2019). *Timeline of Nuclear Diplomacy With Iran / Arms Control Association.* [online] Available at: <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheet/Timeline-of-Nuclear-Diplomacy-With-Iran#2017> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2019].

International Atomic Energy Agency, the US intelligence services and the UN Security Council, Iran has fully complied with its obligations.²¹

Statements of countries after the oil attack, September 14 2019

Houthi rebels admitted their responsibility for the attacks but US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo accused Iran. Saudi Arabia, meanwhile, promised to "confront and deal with this terrorist aggression," while US President Donald Trump hinted at possible military action. Furthermore, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said that Ankara would continue to buy oil and natural gas from Iran despite US sanctions. At UNGA 2019, the Saudi foreign minister blamed Iran for the missile and drone attack on Saudi Arabia's oil facilities and supported the cutting of its financial resources in order to limit Teheran. In response to the countries who accused Iran of carrying out the attack on a Saudi Arabian oil facility, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani asked those to provide the world community with evidence. Last but not least, the European Union repeats its call for maximum restraint and de-escalation.²²

6. Legal Framework

Charter of the United Nations

As Iran is a member of the United Nations, Iran is binded by the Charter of the United Nations²³ as well by the decisions of the Security Council. More specifically, Iran is bound to oblige in good faith with the commitments and principles that derive from the Charter. The most important ones are the fulfillment in good faith of the commitments that derive from the Charter, refraining from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state in their international relations and the peaceful settlement of disputes coming from Article 2 of the Charter.

²¹ The White House. (2019). *President Donald J. Trump is Ending United States Participation in an Unacceptable Iran Deal* / The White House. [online] Available at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/president-donald-j-trump-ending-united-states-participation-unacceptable-iran-deal/> [Accessed 25 Oct. 2019].

²² Aljazeera.com. (2019). *Saudi oil attack: All the latest updates*. [online] Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/09/saudi-oil-attacks-latest-updates-190916102800973.html> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2019].

²³ Un.org. (2019). *Charter of the United Nations*. [online] Available at: <https://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations/> [Accessed 25 Oct. 2019].

Security Council Resolutions

Furthermore, concerning the Security Council, Iran according to Article 24, is obligated to commit to the decisions taken with the UNSC Resolutions²⁴. The Security Council has issued nine Resolutions in total regarding Iran starting in 2006²⁵, when Iran was asked to suspend all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities and threatened sanctions, with the last resolution being issued in 2015 which lifted all sanctions imposed to Iran all previous years with the condition of following the JCPOA.

International Agreements / Treaties

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action²⁶ is an international agreement signed by Iran and the P5 + 1 (China, Russia, the US, France, the UK and Germany) along with the European Union in 2015. The deal gave a solution to the many years of conflict regarding Iran's nuclear program. The Agreement included to limit uranium enrichment at 3%-4% and to uninstall almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of its centrifuges. Moreover, the deal allowed the IAEA to monitor the abundance with the deals terms and the lift of almost all economic sanctions.

7. Discussion of the Topic

Timeline - Recent Events that took place

On July 14, 2015 Iran and the P5+1 reached a Nuclear Deal, namely JCPOA²⁷. This deal was endorsed by the UN Security Council, a few days later, on July 20, 2015, in

²⁴ Securitycouncilreport.org. (2019). *UN Documents for Iran: Security Council Resolutions*. [online] Available at:

https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un_documents_type/security-council-resolutions/?ctype=Iran&cbtype=iran [Accessed 25 Oct. 2019].

²⁵ Unscr.com. (2019). *Security Council Resolution 1696 - UNSCR*. [online] Available at: <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/1696> [Accessed 25 Oct. 2019].

²⁶ BBC News. (2019). *Iran nuclear deal: Key details*. [online] Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-33521655> [Accessed 7 Oct. 2019].

²⁷ Armscontrol.org. (2019). *The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) at a Glance / Arms Control Association*. [online] Available at: <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/JCPOA-at-a-glance> [Accessed 25 Oct. 2019].

the SC's Resolution 2231²⁸. Although this treaty was signed and adopted by the Security Council, the Nuclear Problem did not stop. On November 2016, Donald Trump, the President of the U.S, during his presidential campaign, stated that the JCPOA is one of the worst deals ever negotiated and he promised to renegotiate it.²⁹

On May 2018, Trump announced America's withdrawal from the deal, and he signed a Presidential Memorandum, in order to impose the "highest level" of economic sanctions on Iran. After Trump's announcement, the Iranian President stated that Iran will continue the negotiations with the other states in the agreement, so as to continue the deal without the U.S.³⁰ After the withdrawal of the U.S. and Iran's Statement, the The EU's High Representative/Vice President for Foreign Affairs stated that the EU is going to support Iran and the JCPOA deal, as long as Iran continues to implement its nuclear related commitments³¹. On the 5th of November, 2018, the U.S decided to impose a series of some new sanctions against Iran³². The sanctions were aiming to weaken Iran and to reduce its demanding roll in the Middle East by supporting other states such as Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Libya.

On August 15, 2019 an Iranian Tanker called Andrian Darya, which was held for 2 months in Gibraltar, was free to float again.³³ It was held due to the violation of the European Union Sanctions. American officials asked that the ship be turned over to them, but the request was rejected by the government of Gibraltar. The U.S. considered that the 2.1 million barrels of oil, which were on board the Iranian ship, were supposed to be delivered to Syria, something that Iran has claimed false. After the U.S threats, many countries decided not to help the Iranian tanker, such

²⁸ Un.org. (2019). *Resolution 2231 (2015) on Iran Nuclear Issue | United Nations Security Council*. [online] Available at: <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/2231/background> [Accessed 25 Oct. 2019].

²⁹ The White House. (2019). *President Donald J. Trump is Ending United States Participation in an Unacceptable Iran Deal | The White House*. [online] Available at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/president-donald-j-trump-ending-united-states-participation-unacceptable-iran-deal/> [Accessed 25 Oct. 2019].

³⁰ Ft.com. (2019). *Iran's Rouhani says path open for nuclear talks | Financial Times*. [online] Available at: <https://www.ft.com/content/2e5b2a0c-e4f2-11e9-9743-db5a370481bc> [Accessed 25 Oct. 2019].

³¹ EEAS - European External Action Service - European Commission. (2019). *Remarks by HR/VP Mogherini on the statement by US President Trump regarding the Iran nuclear deal (JCPOA)*. [online] Available at: https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/44238/remarks-hrvp-mogherini-statement-us-president-trump-regarding-iran-nuclear-deal-jcpoa_en [Accessed 25 Oct. 2019].

³² United States Department of State. (2019). *Iran Sanctions - United States Department of State*. [online] Available at: <https://www.state.gov/iran-sanctions/> [Accessed 25 Oct. 2019].

³³ Beirut, B. (2019). *Gibraltar Releases Iranian Tanker Despite U.S. Intervention*. [online] WSJ. Available at: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-asks-gibraltar-to-stop-release-of-iranian-tanker-11565861907> [Accessed 25 Oct. 2019].

as Greece. The U.S. have included Andrian Darya 1 in the U.S. blacklist, during the whole situation.³⁴ On September 8, 2019 the vessel was detected in Tartus Port, Syria.³⁵ There is not any information about the oil, which was being carried, but Iran stated that it was sold and the purchaser was responsible for the destination of the 2.1 million oil barrels.

On July 19, 2019 a British vessel, named Stena Impero, was seized in the Strait of Hormuz for breaking the maritime rules.³⁶ The incident happened 2 weeks after the detention of Andrian Darya 1 in Gibraltar by the UK Royal Marines. The British vessel was on route to Dubai, UAE. In September, Iran announced that the ship has sold his cargo and on September 23, 2019, the ship continued its route.³⁷



Figure 2: Map of Arabian Peninsula and Iran. In the middle you can find the Strait of Hormuz, where this crisis between Iran and the U.K. occurred.

³⁴ Home.treasury.gov. (2019). *Treasury Targets Oil Tanker Adrian Darya 1 and its Captain* / U.S. Department of the Treasury. [online] Available at: <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sm765> [Accessed 25 Oct. 2019].

³⁵ Staff, O. (2019). *Disputed Iranian tanker Adrian Darya 1 photographed off Syrian port*. [online] The Telegraph. Available at: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/09/07/disputed-iranian-tanker-adrian-darya-1-photographed-syrian-port/> [Accessed 25 Oct. 2019].

³⁶ Borger, J., Wintour, P. and Rawlinson, K. (2019). *Iran stokes Gulf tensions by seizing two British-linked oil tankers*. [online] the Guardian. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jul/19/british-tanker-iran-capture-fears-stena-impero-uk-ship-latest> [Accessed 25 Oct. 2019].

³⁷ Safi, M. (2019). *Iran says UK-flagged tanker seized in July is free to leave*. [online] the Guardian. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/sep/23/iran-says-uk-flagged-tanker-seized-in-july-is-free-to-leave> [Accessed 25 Oct. 2019].

The proximity of war with Iran

Recently, tensions between Iran and the United States have escalated to the point of being at the brink of war as stated by both sides.³⁸ The tensions began last May when the US deployed military assets to the Middle East and some time after that, attacks on oil tankers took place for Iran was blamed by the US. In June, a US navy drone was shot down by Iranian forces for which the US prompted a military response which was called off by President Trump at the last minute. The steps that Iran has taken away from the JCPOA along with the recent attacks on oil tankers in Saudi Arabia has made both make statements about the proximity of engaging in war. This is the result of a long history for both adversaries which most thought ended after the JCPOA. Moreover, Iran is further destabilising the Middle East region by supporting terrorist groups and rebel groups in many countries like Syria, Libya and Yemen.³⁹ Finally, the result of a war between Iran and the US would be an enormous disaster and it is important to take immediate action against it. The consequences of such a scenario would be felt way further than the Middle East and it would jeopardize attempts of bringing stability in the region and between states which took years to form.

Iran's allies and foes

Iran, as every single country, has some intergovernmental relationships with other nations. A significant factor in Iran's foreign relations is geography and the location of the country. Iran currently has full diplomatic relations with 97 countries.⁴⁰ Iran biggest allies are Lebanon, Syria, India, Kuwait, Venezuela and Russian Federation. Lebanon supports Iran by providing military personnel and weapons. India helps Iran economically, since it's one of the biggest oil buyers. In 2018, India stated that they'll double Iranian oil imports. Russian Federation is a strong ally, firstly because both Russia and Iran are opposed to the U.S. and also because Iran

³⁸ Un.org. (2019). *Amid Rising Tensions in Persian Gulf, Speakers in Security Council Urge Iran, United States to Maintain Hard-Won Achievements of 2015 Nuclear Deal / Meetings Coverage and Press Releases*. [online] Available at: <https://www.un.org/press/en/2019/sc13862.doc.htm> [Accessed 7 Oct. 2019].

³⁹ Un.org. (2019). *Amid Rising Tensions in Persian Gulf, Speakers in Security Council Urge Iran, United States to Maintain Hard-Won Achievements of 2015 Nuclear Deal / Meetings Coverage and Press Releases*. [online] Available at: <https://www.un.org/press/en/2019/sc13862.doc.htm> [Accessed 7 Oct. 2019].

⁴⁰ Foreign Affairs. (2019). *Iran*. [online] Available at: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/regions/iran> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2019].

has bought military equipment from the Russian Federation. Last, but not least, Iran has a really good relation with Venezuela, which fostered in 2013.⁴¹ Although Iran has some allies, it also has foes. The biggest foe of Iran is the U.S. Iran and the U.S. had a really bad relationship since the Iranian revolution, but especially after the election of Donald Trump, the relationship between those two countries have been worse. Saudi Arabia is also one of the biggest foes of Iran. Both nations are Islamic Theocracies, and both consider themselves being the leader of the Islamic world, which lead them to a dispute. Last, but definitely not least, Israel, is also a big foe of Iran. Since the Iranian Revolution in 1979, Iran has strongly opposed the Jewish state, and it also believes that all of Israel should be returned back to Palestine.⁴²

Iran's nuclear program

Iran's nuclear program started in the 1950's with the support of the USA and other European countries. The participation of those countries in Iran's nuclear program continued until the 1979 Iranian Revolution that overturned the last Shah of Iran. In the 2000s, the revelation of Iran's secret uranium enrichment program raised concerns that it might be intended for non-peaceful uses. The IAEA started an investigation in 2003 after an Iranian disagreeing group revealed undeclared nuclear activities carried out by Iran. Within the next years, Iran continued to develop its nuclear program and facilities. After the deal that has been made, huge steps of progress are accomplished. Iran needed the end of sanctions because of the loss of billions from oil trade, global commerce and lost investments.⁴³

As of February 2019, the IAEA certified that Iran was still abiding by the international Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action of 2015. More specifically, all of the facilities are being watched by the UN and the IAEA. Furthermore, the uranium enrichment has decreased. Uranium enriched to 5 percent is used in nuclear power plants, and at 20 percent it can be used in research reactors or for medical purposes.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Investopedia. (2019). *Who Are Iran's Biggest Allies, and Why?*. [online] Available at: <https://www.investopedia.com/articles/investing/082115/who-are-irans-biggest-allies-and-why.asp> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2019].

⁴² BBC News. (2019). *Iran and Saudi Arabia: Who's siding with whom*. [online] Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-41945860> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2019].

⁴³ En.m.wikipedia.org. (2019). *Nuclear program of Iran*. [online] Available at: https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuclear_program_of_Iran [Accessed 10 Oct. 2019].

⁴⁴ Council on Foreign Relations. (2019). *What Is the Status of the Iran Nuclear Agreement*. [online] Available at: <https://www.cfr.org/background/what-status-iran-nuclear-agreement> [Accessed 10 Oct. 2019].

8. Actions Already Taken

The international community has for long now responded to the threat that Iran poses with a number of sanctions imposed by a number of countries and international organisations as well as meetings of international organs with the most important of all the Security Council of the United Nations which has adopted a number of resolutions concerning Iran.

Starting with the United Nations Security Council, there have been a number of economic sanctions imposed by the Security Council with its resolutions starting in 2006 with resolution 1696 which demanded Iran to cancel its nuclear program. The next eight UNSC Resolutions only extend the sanctions against Iran until July 2015 when the UNSC after the Iran Nuclear deal lifted all sanctions provided that it would comply with the deal.

The United States of America were the first to impose sanctions to Iran in 1979⁴⁵ after a group of radical students seized the American Embassy in Tehran and took the people inside hostage. The US continued to commit to the sanctions imposed on Iran by the UNSC until the signing of the JCPOA after which it lifted all sanctions. After President Donald Trump took office, the United States decided to withdraw the JCPOA and in June 2018, the President announced the reimposition of sanctions against Iran which introduces a new era of economic pressure from the United States to Iran. The US further extended its sanctions and increased its economic pressure to Iran through 2018 until November 2018 when the Department of Treasury announced that the US government fully re-imposes sanctions against the Iranian Regime as part of an unprecedented U.S. Economic Pressure Campaign. In 2019 the US increased its pressure by imposing sanctions to people linked with the Iranian Regime and in September 2019 the United States imposed Sanctions on Chinese Companies for Transporting Iranian Oil.

The European Union and most importantly the main three European powers that are part of the JCPOA, Germany, France and the United Kingdom, have faced major pressure for the rest of the global community to uphold the deal and take action to normalise the economic situation in Iran as an approach to remain in the JCPOA.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Un.org. (2019). *Amid Rising Tensions in Persian Gulf, Speakers in Security Council Urge Iran, United States to Maintain Hard-Won Achievements of 2015 Nuclear Deal / Meetings Coverage and Press Releases*. [online] Available at: <https://www.un.org/press/en/2019/sc13862.doc.htm> [Accessed 7 Oct. 2019].

⁴⁶ Un.org. (2019). *Amid Rising Tensions in Persian Gulf, Speakers in Security Council Urge Iran, United States to Maintain Hard-Won Achievements of 2015 Nuclear Deal /*

In May 2018, the High Representative/Vice President for Foreign Affairs announced the EU's position to preserve the agreement and a year later called upon Iran to respect the deal and rejected the Iranian ultimatum.

The opposition to the US decision along with the position of supporting the JCPOA consists of many countries like China, Russia and the United Nations with the Secretary General expressing his concern for the matter.⁴⁷

Finally, after the attacks on two oil tankers in Saudi Arabia, many countries expressed their support of investigation of the attacks, mostly by the US and the UK, while the Security Council met behind closed doors in June 13 to held a briefing regarding the incident.⁴⁸

9. Conclusion

The situation in Iran, is a global issue that has sparked off a heated debate. Iran has developed the last decades a nuclear program capable of concerning many countries for a possible nuclear threat, among them the status quo countries, who have imposed sanctions in order to cripple Iran's economy. The last years efforts have been made in order to set limits to Iran's nuclear program in exchange for Iran's economic flourish, if the sanctions end. Nonetheless, the decision of president Trump for the US withdrawal from the nuclear deal has destabilized the region and also has enforced the uncertainty towards a future conflict. Meanwhile, other countries have taken sides in favor or against Iran and at the same time Iran responses to the threats through the leaders of its regime triggering the atmosphere. On the other hand, the oil ships attacks in the straits of Hormuz and the recent attack in oil facilities in Saudi Arabia have caused serious concerns. As a result, the oil prices increased and some countries from the Gulf and the USA accused Iran for those incidents.

Meetings Coverage and Press Releases. [online] Available at:

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2019/sc13862.doc.htm> [Accessed 7 Oct. 2019].

⁴⁷ Un.org. (2019). *Amid Rising Tensions in Persian Gulf, Speakers in Security Council Urge Iran, United States to Maintain Hard-Won Achievements of 2015 Nuclear Deal / Meetings Coverage and Press Releases*. [online] Available at:

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2019/sc13862.doc.htm> [Accessed 7 Oct. 2019].

⁴⁸ Un.org. (2019). *Amid Rising Tensions in Persian Gulf, Speakers in Security Council Urge Iran, United States to Maintain Hard-Won Achievements of 2015 Nuclear Deal / Meetings Coverage and Press Releases*. [online] Available at:

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The world peace is risked in the Middle East. The challenges vary, but nothing was easy to solve in the international chessboard. The important thing to find is the golden ratio that will prevent a conflict and will ensure peace and security.⁴⁹

10. Points to be Addressed

- What action should the Security Council take to avoid the possibility of a war between Iran and other states like the USA?
- How should the Security Council make sure that the JCPOA will remain and its terms are going to fulfilled by Iran and the other parties?
- How should the Security Council officially react to the decision of the US to withdraw from the JCPOA?
- What action should the Security Council take to avoid further tensions and conflict in the Middle East region implicating Iran and Saudi Arabia?
- Does Iran pose a threat to the world peace and security or can be worth-trusted?

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