The Iranian Nuclear Non – Proliferation Agreement: Implications on International Politics

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ABSTRACT
On 14 July 2015, the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, (namely, United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, China) and Germany, whimsically dubbed, P5+1, and the EU reached an agreement with Iran over its nuclear program. Under the terms of the deal, Iran’s nuclear program is to be used for purely peaceful purposes, in exchange for a broad suspension of U.S., European Union (EU), and United Nations sanctions. Iran agreed to refrain from any further advances of its activities at the Natanz commercial-scale facility, Fordow facility, and Arak reactor. Tehran is also required to provide the IAEA with additional information about its nuclear program, as well as access to some nuclear-related facilities to which Iran’s IAEA safeguards agreement does not require access. To understand the nature and scope of the Iranian deal and its implication on contemporary international politics, the present study examined the secondary sources to ascertain the following questions: What are the origins and development of the Iranian nuclear programme? How have states in the international system, particularly the US and other members of the UN Security Council, reacted to the Iranian nuclear programme? To what extent has US and its negotiating allies employed diplomacy in the resolution of the issues emanating from the Iranian nuclear crises. What are the economic, political and diplomatic implications of the Iranian deal for contemporary international politics? The paper combines a theoretical approach with historical and contemporary perspectives in nuclear diplomacy in order to comprehensively depict the evolution of the Iranian nuclear deal and its implications on international politics. The paper finds that the deal is expected to have implications for Middle East regional stability and political economy; US – Iran rapprochement, rivalry with Saudi Arabia, economic effect on sale of crude oil of other oil exporting states such as Nigeria and a decline in relations between Iran and Israel, while bolstering relations with the US. Using power theory to explain why power and national interest is paramount in the calculations of the negotiating parties as well as situating the winners and losers in the process of diplomatic bargaining within the game theory, the paper concludes that the deal is sound diplomacy but a product of international politics that further legitimizes the possession of weapons in the hands of nuclear power states and their allies in perpetuity.

Keywords: nuclear weapon, Iran, international politics, nuclear diplomacy

INTRODUCTION
The nuclear weapon is the most consequential innovation in military technology of the twentieth century. The United States used it to end the Second World War (1939 – 45) when it bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan in 1945. With its monopoly of nuclear weapons, the US emerged as the sole
superpower in the world after World War II (Calvocoressi, 2009: 11). Consequently, the US global nuclear superiority enabled her to deter or compel other states to do her bidding in international diplomacy until 1949 when nuclear parity between the US and the Soviet Union led to the phenomenon of arms race; itself characterized by proliferation – vertical and horizontal – of nuclear weapons. The spread of nuclear know-how to other states other than the two superpowers during bipolarity came to be known as horizontal proliferation of nuclear arms.

For analytical purpose, the world can therefore be bifurcated into “nuclear weapon states” and “non-nuclear weapon states.” States that currently possess nuclear weapons include, the US (1945), Russia (1949), Britain (1952), France (1960), China (1964), India (1974), Pakistan (1998), North Korea (2006), Israel is also believed to possess nuclear weapons. The world also witnessed the concomitant development of the nuclear carrying capabilities and delivery systems of high precision, such as the Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs), Air-launched Cruise missiles (ALCMs), Sea-Launched Cruise Missiles (SLCMs), Sea-Launched Ballistic missiles (SLBMs), Submarines Ballistic Missiles (SMBMs), Anti-Ballistic Missiles (ABMs) etc (Purkit, 1998: 233).

On account of its sheer destructive potential, the introduction and spread of nuclear weapons into the world since 1945 has created great concern for international security. It is believed that the presence of such weapon heighten international tensions (Claude, 1960: 262-263). Crucially too, increase in number of nuclear weapon states could likely increase the chance of the outbreak of nuclear warfare. For all its potential horror, nuclear war is within the realm of possibility. The question of when do nations go to war or resort to diplomacy in their relations does not arise in the case of a nuclear warfare because of its dire consequences. As a quote often attributed to the former Soviet Union Premier, Nikita Khrushev puts it, “after a nuclear war, the survivors would envy the dead” (Zuckerman, 1979: 36). Furthermore, the thesis of Robert’s (1945) analysis is in the News of the World is that the atomic bomb means end of war or the end of the human race.

The forgoing analysis clearly demonstrates that a global nuclear warfare will be too devastating and may lead to human annihilation. Little wonder then that deterrence theories such as Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) dissuade states from fighting a nuclear war. Unlike war, diplomacy focuses on achieving policy goals of a state by peaceful means, or through negotiation (Ifidon, 2002: 15). As corroborated by Harold Nicolson (1969: 3-4), diplomacy is the art of negotiating agreements between sovereign states. Since the adoption of the Kellogg-Brandt Pact in 1928, which renounced war as an instrument of state policy; the emergence of the United Nations in 1945 with its abhorrence of aggression; as well as the development of incredibly destructive war arsenals in a nuclear age, diplomacy has apparently emerged as a more preferred approach to resolution of international questions.

Consequently, non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, as well as other weapons of mass destruction (WMD), has become a major focus of international preventive diplomacy. The genre of preventive diplomacy relating to the prevention of nuclear proliferation and nuclear war is termed nuclear diplomacy (Boutros-Ghali, 1993: 324; Wikipedia, 2015). It is concerned with the series of negotiation on nuclear arms limitation and control.

Much of activities in nuclear diplomacy have focused on denuclearization of the world through series of negotiated non-proliferation agreements at the bilateral and multilateral level. The earliest effort at non-proliferation of nuclear arsenals dates back to 1946, when the US (the only nuclear weapon state at the time) proposed the Baruch Plan. The Baruch Plan was designed to dismantle and destroy the US nuclear arsenal after certain conditions have been satisfied with creation of the International Atomic Development Agency (IADA) (Chandra, 2004: 272). The General Assembly of the United Nations on 24 January 1946 adopted a resolution, which created the Atomic Energy Commission, which was inter alia urgently to make specific proposal for the elimination of national armaments of atomic weapons. Subsequently, by 1957, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was established as an organ of the UN, charged with encouraging the peaceful development of nuclear technology while providing international safeguards against nuclear proliferation (Chandra, 2004: 272).
The Cuban Missile Crises of 1962 provided an added impetus to the nuclear diplomacy of the 1960s and 1970s. For instance, in February 1967, the United States and the Soviet Union signed a deal to prevent a ‘Third Power’ from getting nuclear weapons and to prevent or dissuade the non-nuclear powers from acquiring or accepting nuclear technology. Other efforts included The Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT I), which limited the number and types of US and USSR strategic weapons, and lasted for five years. SALT I expired in 1977 and was not renewed until 1979, with the signing of SALT II; later on, the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I) of 1991/92, which reduced strategic nuclear arms and (Nzemeke, 2008). The most important of these agreements is the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), signed in 1968 and came into force in 1970, which demanded cessation of the arms race and nuclear armament, more importantly it banned transfer of any form of nuclear weaponry from nuclear weapon states to other states.

Pursuant to the provisions of the NPT, the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, (namely, United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, China) and Germany, whimsically dubbed, P5+1, reached an agreement with Iran over its nuclear program on 14 July 2015. The deal includes an agreement for Iran to disable two-thirds of its centrifuges used to enrich Uranium, which can be used as fuel for nuclear energy or weapons. In addition, Iran is to reduce its stockpile of enriched uranium in Arak, Natanz and Fordow, as well as allow unfettered IAEA verification access. Although the finalization of the Iranian nuclear deal has attracted commentary in a few academic journal articles, newspaper reports, opinion papers and news broadcasts, there is still a dearth of sufficient scholarship and understanding of its nature and implications on international politics.

A critical examination of the chronology of the Iranian nuclear diplomacy, the nature, and factors that culminated into the Iranian Nuclear Deal as well as its implications on international politics is the subject of our seminar paper. Particularly, it focuses on the implication on selected key states in the politics of the Middle Eastern, such as Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Iran itself. Also, the implication on the US and Nigeria is examined. To understand the nature and scope of the Iranian deal and its implication on contemporary international politics, the present study will seek to answer the following questions: What are the origins and development of the Iranian nuclear crises? How have states in the international system, particularly the US and other members of the UN Security Council, reacted to the Iranian nuclear programme? To what extent has US and its negotiating allies employed diplomacy in the resolution of the issues emanating from the Iranian nuclear crises. What are the economic, political and diplomatic implications of the Iranian deal for contemporary international politics?

Theoretical Framework

Nuclear diplomacy is a variant of preventive diplomacy that deals with the prevention of proliferation of nuclear weapons and nuclear war based essentially on the NPT. With the notable exception of South Africa, which adhered to the NPT in 1991 by destroying its nuclear weapons (Calvocoressi, 2009: 38), no other “nuclear weapon state” has adhered to the NPT. Why is this so? On what moral ground do states possessing nuclear weapons stand in demanding that the ambitions of non-nuclear weapons states be thwarted? Existing explanations in the literature (Dyson, 1981; 1985; Khan) have focused on liberal internationalism, which highlights the role of global institutions and respect for international law in preventive diplomacy. Nevertheless, the theory has failed to explain why the P5, which are the nuclear weapon states are demanding respect for compliance with the NPT from non-nuclear weapons, when they themselves are yet to comply with its tenets to dismantle their nuclear arsenals. Owing to this theoretical gap, within the two broad theoretical approaches – realism and liberalism – in explaining the dynamics of nuclear diplomacy, particularly between the “nuclear weapon states” and “non-nuclear weapon states,” the power theory is adopted in the present study.

The power theory provides an insightful, explanatory lens for illuminating and understanding the power asymmetry between the negotiating parties and their implications. It also explains why power and national interest is paramount in the calculations of the most affected states in situating the implications of the deal. As Saleh Dauda (2015: 18) has pointed out, the power theory has its intellectual roots in the
realist interpretation of international politics and hence like the realists, it emphasizes the relative power position of states in the international system. The power theory explains that disarmament and arms control are to be understood as strategies in the activity of politics among nations rather than as ideals or imperatives on which to build the structure of international peace. In the same vein, much of the arguments revolving around how to minimize proliferation of nuclear weapons to avert a chance of a nuclear war and the calculus of post-nuclear war survival fall under the dynamics of international politics.

Hans Morgenthau, a leading exponent of the theoretical framework of power defines power as “man’s control over the mind and action of others” (Cited in Dauda, 2015: 18). Apparently, efforts by the nuclear weapon states to control the actions of the non-nuclear weapons states by preventing them from acquiring nuclear weapons are targeted at preserving their military dominance and strategic advantage, thereby further broadening the power gap that exists between them and the rest of the world. Furthermore, the use of economic sanctions clearly depicts the use of coercive strategies in nuclear diplomacy, while maintaining co-optive power inherent in the global institutions of the extant international order. William Nester offers an exploratory analysis of the co-optive power thus:

Co-optive power is the ability of a nation to structure a situation, so that other nations develop preferences or define their interests in ways consistent with one’s own nation...the international institutions that the United States helped to establish have not merely affected the way other states pursue their interests but also how they understand their own behaviour and define their interests (Nester, 1995: 111)

Using power theory, it can be demonstrated that the negotiation of the Iranian nuclear deal is a continuation of the US nuclear containment policy, which extends to the desire of the P5 and their allies to maintain hegemony of nuclear weaponon than a search for global peace and security. Simply put the genesis and revelation of the issue hinges on pursuit of national interest of states.

Also incorporated in this study is the game theory, which developed with the works of John von Neumann (Myerson, 1991). The game theory is a dynamic model that is important for its predictive and explanatory power about the winners and losers in diplomatic bargaining. In the present study, if the gain of Iran equals the net loss of P5 + 1, and vice versa, then it is considered a zero-sum game, and tantamount to appeasement. A condition of equilibrium implies that cooperative behaviour. In linking the two approaches, the core of the analysis will revolve around the fact that the strategies adopted by the bargaining parties and their pay offs are the outcome of an asymmetric game. In this case, the pay-off for the P5 + 1 is likely to be higher as – despite the latter’s possession of nuclear weapons, it achieved significant restriction of Iran’s nuclear programme – such that Iran’s strategies was confined to non-nuclear proliferation.

Origin and Development of the Iran Nuclear Crisis

Iranian nuclear programme dates back to 1957 with the signing of a nuclear cooperation agreement between the United States and Iran, as part of the United States Atoms for Peace programme. The agreement provided for US technical assistance and the lease of enriched Uranium to Iran for peaceful nuclear energy uses (Ibrahim and Yahya, 2014: 234). Hence, Iran began the fuelling of the Tehran University’s 5MW nuclear research reactor in 1967 with highly enriched uranium (Ibrahim and Yahya, 2014: 234). In demonstration of its willingness to pursue peaceful nuclear ambitions, Iran signed the non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968 and ratified it in 1970 (Ibrahim and Yahya, 2014: 234). By 1974, Iran established the Iran Atomic Energy Organization (IAEO), hoping to build several nuclear power reactors, with the support of the United States and other Western countries like France and Germany (Spector, 1990: 206). The US however opposed its aspirations to purchase a plutonium separation plant for domestic use (Mousavian, 2012: 25-27). It is important to note that plutonium, which is the alternative radioactive element to Uranium, implicated in the nuclear fission can be used as a nuclear fuel or
processed for the development of nuclear weapons. At this point, it became apparent that although the Shah insisted on the peaceful use of nuclear technology, as his Minister of Court recounted, he had “a great vision for the future of this country, which . . . probably included manufacturing a nuclear deterrent” (Alam, 1993: 353).

The most consequential event that put a wedge on the Iranian nuclear program was the Iranian Revolution of 1979 that ousted the Shah – the US ally – and the subsequent rupture in US – Iran relations in the years that followed. The new regime under Ayatollah Khomeini was to end Iran’s nuclear programme altogether; which Iran however resumed in 1987 following the Iran – Iraq war (Albright, 2007:1). The Iranian nuclear programme was apparently resumed as a response to the destruction of the Bushehr by the Iraqis in 1984 (Ibrahim and Yahya, 2014: 234). This time, Tehran began a research and development of full nuclear cycle, in pursuit of uranium conversion and enrichment. According to IAEA report, a surreptitious supply of uranium hexafluoride (UF6) from China at the Isfahan was not reported to IAEA until 1991 while in 1995, a bilateral agreement with Russia for the completion of Bushehr complex to be monitored and supervised by IAEA was signed. (Ibrahim and Yahya, 2014: 234).

By 1998, the US under Bill Clinton became uncomfortable and began to challenge the Iranian nuclear ambition, because Iran had sufficient oil and gas options for power, seeking to halt progress on its enrichment capacity (Ibrahim and Yahya, 2014: 234). It is worthy of note that it is the percentage of the radioactive element that determines whether it is fuel grade, reactor grade or weapon grade. Hence, the US tried to, and successfully, halted Russia from providing Iran a with centrifuge enrichment facility which was the part of their agreement (Fiore, 2011:3). By the year 2000, President Bill Clinton signed the Iran Non-proliferation Act and the US began to impose sanctions on Iran, which exacerbated in the subsequent years particularly in the early 2000s (Ibrahim and Yahya, 2014: 235). The early 2000s witnessed a protracted crises and periods of diplomatic negotiation following revelations of ongoing activities in Arak and Natanz enrichment facilities with the satellite images of Natanz.

**Diplomatic Negotiations on the Iranian Nuclear Crises, 2004 – 2015**

The signing of the Iranian Nuclear deal, otherwise called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), signed between the P5 + 1 and the EU is a watershed in the history of nuclear diplomacy, since the resolution of the Cuban Missile Crises of 1962. Multilateral negotiations regarding Iran’s nuclear program date back to 2003 after the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) reported on the existence of clandestine nuclear facilities at Natanz (Ibrahim and Yahya, 2014: 235). By 2004 however, three (3) European states Britain, France and Germany, which are also known as, EU-3, lunched diplomatic negotiations with Iran. Both Parties met and on November 15, 2004, EU-3 with the support of High representatives of European Union and Iran reached an agreement, which is called Paris Agreement under which Iran was supposed to suspend its program on a temporary basis, and the negotiations were to be conducted on long-term arrangements. The intervening years was characterized by series of engagements between the IAEA and Iran and diplomatic activities of the EU-3 (ISIS Report, 2005: 3).

While the work related to the enrichment of the uranium remained suspended for two years, Iran kept on research, development and construction of centrifuges and in 2005, the state restarted the uranium conversion at the Esfahan facility under former Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (ISIS Report, 2005: 1-3). In fact, by 2005, Iran restarted the Arak heavy water plant and Esfahan Nuclear Technology Centre, while criticising the US policy towards Iranian nuclear programme. Ahmadinejad’s confrontational posture throughout his presidency stifled diplomacy and attracted more sanctions with consequences on the Iranian economy.

However, by October 2005, Iran was able to conclude an agreement with France, Germany, and Britain (EU-3), that contained provisions designed to alleviate international concerns regarding Iran’s uranium enrichment and heavy water reactor programs. Iran temporarily halted aspects of its nuclear program and signed an Additional Protocol to its IAEA safeguards agreement, while asserting its rights to develop nuclear technology under the NPT. It was therefore not surprising that by January 2006, the hand of the diplomatic clock was reversed when Tehran announced that it would resume research and development
on its centrifuges at Natanz (Ibrahim and Yahya, 2014: 236). It was during this period that the US China and Russia joined the EU 3.to form the EU – 3 + 3 or P5 + 1.

The period between 2006 and 2010, witnessed a flurry of sanctions, which indicates the willingness of the P5 + 1 to adopt arm twisting tactics and coercive diplomacy in bringing Iran back to the diplomatic table. For instance, as at 9 June 2010, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted Resolution 1929, which imposed a fourth round of sanctions against Iran that included tighter financial measures and an expanded embargo; the EU passed sanctions banning technical assistance to Iran’s oil and gas industry (Ibrahim and Yahaya, 2014: 238). Within a few weeks, several states, including the United States announced additional unilateral measures (Ibrahim and Yahya, 2014: 238). By July 6, Iran announced that talks with the UN Security Council and Germany or P5 + 1 countries could begin in September (Ibrahim and Yahaya, 2014: 238).

Series of engagements produced negotiated temporary deals with Iran over regulation of its nuclear programme by P5 + 1 countries. This feat could not have been possible without the more moderate and conciliatory Iranian President Hassan Rouhani who was elected in 2013. Hence, by 24 November 2013, an interim agreement (the Joint Plan of Action) between the P5 +1 countries and Iran was reached in Geneva, Switzerland (Arms Control Association, 2015). The Joint Plan of Action set out an approach toward reaching a long-term comprehensive solution to international concerns regarding Iran’s nuclear program (Arms Control Association, 2015). The two sides began implementing the JPA on January 20, 2014. Between 2013 and 2014, negotiations continued leading to the development of the framework agreement in April 2014 (Arms Control Association, 2015).

The P5+1 and Iran reached a framework of a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on April 2, 2015, and the JCPOA was finalized by all parties on July 14, 2015. This ended the more than a decade of diplomatic efforts to prevent Tehran from developing nuclear weapons and was aimed at upholding the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) of 1968, of which the three pillars of the NPT allows for non-proliferation of nuclear weapons as well as proliferation of nuclear technology for peaceful use by all states. The series of major negotiations that gave rise to the Iranian Nuclear Non-proliferation Agreement on the 14th of July 2014 can be summarized as follows:

1. EU-3 – Iran Negotiation (Paris Agreement) , 2004
2. The (P5+1) – Iran Negotiation, 2006
3. The Joint Plan of Action, November 2013
4. The First Framework Agreement, April 2014
5. The Second Framework Agreement, April 2015

NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE IRANIAN NUCLEAR DEAL
What is the Iranian nuclear deal all about? Essentially, the Iranian nuclear deal is about preventive (nuclear) diplomacy, anchored on negotiations, compromise and agreement between Iran and six countries dubbed the P5 + 1 (i.e. the five permanent members of the UN Security Council and Germany) and the EU on 14 July 2015. The following subsections will examine the nature and scope of the Iranian deal.

The Nature of the Iranian Nuclear Deal
First, the Iranian nuclear deal is nuclear diplomacy per excellence. The Iranian nuclear deal is a by-product of bargaining and negotiation. Thus, the series of negotiations about the Iranian nuclear program between a US-led international party on one hand and the Islamic Republic of Iran on the other hand is an archetypal case study of the role of preventive diplomacy in international relations. Preventive diplomacy, as a term in the discourse of IR is attributed to the former Secretary-General of the United Nations, Dag Hammarskjold, whose name is associated with preventive diplomacy much in the same way as Woodrow Wilson’s is associated with collective security, the simple goal of preventive diplomacy was to keep local conflicts from being entangled in superpower rivalry. (Knight and Yamashita, 1993:284).
According to Boutros Boutros-Ghali, preventive diplomacy can be defined as “action to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur.” (Boutros-Ghali, 1992:5).

The negotiation process is the turf of the diplomat (Shively, 2005: 405). Their role, according to Berridge (2002:27), in his work, “Diplomacy: Theory and Practice,” is determined “what goes to who and what should be given up to maintain peace and understanding in the international system.” For instance, the position of the Iranian negotiating team is its insistent demand of its “rights” under the NPT Article III to build nuclear facilities for peaceful purpose (Ibrahim and Yahya, 2014: 236; Abrahamian, 2008:195; Adib-Moghaddam, 2008: 76 -77). The US-led international party on the other hand negotiates on limitations to acceptable level of uranium enrichment that will banish the fears of nuclear weapons proliferation in the age of terrorism and suicide bombing.

Nuclear diplomacy, as an alternative to military action against Iran’s nuclear facilities, has therefore been shown to be the most desirable option to ensure that Iran cannot obtain a nuclear weapon under its nuclear programme. As Kaufman has opined, in conflict management in the nuclear age, diplomats are expected to manage affairs skillfully enough to avoid the more terrible weapons and still uphold the essential interests (Kaufman, 1956: 262). Consequently, the US President Barack Obama has cast the nuclear diplomacy as an effort to avoid another costly and risky war in the Middle East. To him, even if the US took military action against Iran’s nuclear facilities, it would only partially set back Tehran’s program, not eliminate it (Norman and Solomon, 2015). The implicit inference from Obama’s assertion is the fact that war represents the failure of diplomacy and the history of war is the history of failed diplomacy.

Second, the deal is concerned with the issue nuclear deterrence in the age of terrorism. Nuclear diplomacy is a genre of preventive diplomacy that includes an active pursuit of international safeguards towards the use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes only. It revolves around the issues of arms control and disarmament. As Harry Kissinger has pointed out in his seminal work, “Diplomacy,” arms control is a form of diplomacy, which is the reverse side of the “position-of-strength approach to armament” through political dialogue and deterrence (Kissinger, 1994: 518). The destructive capacity, as reflected in the sheer magnitude of energy emitted by the atomic bomb, also means that the world risked human annihilation if a nuclear war was triggered by states that posses nuclear weapons. The doctrine of Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD), which is based on the theory of deterrence, guaranteed balance of terror provided the nuclear powers remained rational. However, the theoretical gap in the MAD doctrine is that it required rationality and that there is no Window of Vulnerability (WoV). This refers to the chance that a messianic and irrational leader, possessing nuclear weapons, could throw the world into a nuclear conflagration, that may lead to Armageddon had those superpowers to prevent horizontal proliferation of nuclear arms. As Holsti has warned:

No system of deterrence is likely to prove effective against a nation led by a trigger-happy paranoid, or by someone seeking personal or national self-destruction or Martyrdom, or by decision-makers willing to play a form of international Russian roulette, or by leaders whose information about and communication with an adversary are so incomplete that their decision-making process are dominated by guesswork, or by those who regard the loss of their nation’s population and resources as a reasonable cost for the achievement of foreign policy (Cited in Dougherty and Pflatzgraff, 1990: 398).

The bottom line of Holsti’s argument is that in the light of Iran’s hostility and religious indoctrination, which vitiates rationality, the world risks a nuclear world war, if Iran is not diplomatically contained.

Third, the deal represents the triumph of a “Nuclear Haram” and signals the adoption of verification over trust in the management of Iran’s claim towards peaceful use of nuclear weapon. The supreme leader of the Iranian revolution, Ayatollah Khomeini, gave a Fatwa in which he stated, “the use of nuclear weapons and all other types of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) is forbidden or haram constituting a sin,
while being useless, costly, harmful and a serious threat to humanity” (Eisenstaedt, 2011: 11). In Islamic jurisprudence, a fatwa is a legal pronouncement to clarify a specific issue and issued by a jurist or an expert in Sharia law. The Khomeini has been re-echoed by the present supreme leader of Iran, Ali Khamenei, in which he forbade the use and production of WMDs as he stated, “the production, stockpiling, and use of nuclear weapons are forbidden under Islam and that the Islamic Republic of Iran shall never acquire these weapons” (Eisenstaedt, 2011: 1-14). The Iranian authorities have also insisted on nuclear haram. Although the US President Barak Obama, made reference to the “Fatwa” in his speech United Nation’s speech as a pointer to negotiating with Iran (Hashem, 2013: 1), he has however stressed that the deal will be hinged on verification rather than trust (New York Times, 2015). Fourth, the deal addresses the issue of Dual Capability Question which is the major issue driving the negotiation is the of dual-use capability concept. Dual-use capability means that a peaceful nuclear power program can also serve as a pathway for development of a nuclear weapon (Miller and Sagan, 2009). While a low enrichment may be peaceful, medium to high Uranium Enrich of 90% is generally regarded as a weapons grade. Hence, Iran’s insistence that its nuclear program is entirely for peaceful purposes, such as producing electricity and medical isotopes, and its quest for enrichment also means that Iran cannot be trusted. Its supreme leader even issued a fatwa (Eisenstaedt, 2011: 14). The US (and other interested parties to the deal) seeks to ensure that, without prejudice to Iran’s “rights” under the NPT, its nuclear programme is guaranteed to be exclusively peaceful, it has not recognized a right to enrich because it believes the NPT document is silent on the right to enrich. The matter that has been complicated by the rabid behaviour of the Iranian government towards the United States since 1979 and revelations by the IAEA of clandestine uranium enrichment and setting up of plutonium fuel facilities has been exacerbated and the concept of dual-use capability.

The Scope of the Iranian Nuclear Deal: Summary of Key Points

The scope of the Iranian Nuclear deal shows the extent of the constraints on Iran’s enrichment and heavy water reactor programs and includes monitoring provisions designed to detect Iranian efforts to produce either nuclear weapons using declared or covert facilities. On time scope, it deals with the amount of time that Iran would need to produce enough weapons-grade Highly Enrich Uranium (HEU) for one nuclear weapon to a minimum of one year, for duration of at least 10 years. This is often referred to as the “break out time,” or the time required for Iran to develop a nuclear weapon under the prevailing circumstance. In addition to the restrictions on activities related to fissile material production, the JCPOA prohibits Iranian activities, which could contribute to the design and development of a nuclear explosive device, including research, and diagnostic activities. The key provisions of the JCPOA (Gordon and Sanger, 2015) are summarized below:

1. On centrifuge limitation, Tehran is to use no more than 5,060 IR-1 centrifuges to enrich uranium for 10 years, and to install only IR-1 centrifuges in the facility. All excess centrifuges are to be used only as replacements for operating centrifuges and equipment.

2. On scope of enrichment limitation, Iran has agreed to refrain from producing enriched uranium containing more than 3.67% uranium-235 for at least 15 years.

3. On scope facility limitation, Iran has agreed to enrich uranium only at the Natanz commercial-scale facility for 15 years and to refrain during that time from building any new enrichment facilities.

4. Iran is to reduce its LEU stockpile to 300 kilograms of LEU containing 3.67% uranium-235 for a 15-year period. Tehran has three options for disposing of the remaining portion of its current LEU stockpile: diluting the material so that it contains the same levels of uranium-235 found in natural uranium; selling the LEU to another country; or selling it to an international LEU bank recently established by the IAEA.

5. Iran’s LEU containing between 5% and 20% uranium-235 is to be “fabricated into fuel plates for the Tehran Research Reactor or transferred, based on a commercial transaction, outside of Iran or diluted” so that it contains a maximum of 3.67% uranium-235. Iran is to export LEU that cannot
be fabricated into fuel for the Tehran Research Reactor or dilute that LEU so that it contains a maximum of 3.67% uranium-235.

6. Iran is to convert its Fordow enrichment facility into a nuclear, physics, and technology centre. For 15 years, Iran will maintain no more than 1,044 IR-1 centrifuges at the facility, and will not conduct uranium enrichment or related research and development (R&D) there. The facility, which will not contain any nuclear material, may be used to produce stable nuclear isotopes for medical and industrial uses.

7. With regard to centrifuge manufacturing, Iran for 10 years is to use the excess IR-1 centrifuges from the Natanz and Fordow facilities “for the replacement of failed or damaged machines.” Tehran may resume producing IR-1 centrifuges if its stock of replacement centrifuges “falls to 500 or below.” After eight years, Iran can begin to manufacture two types of advanced centrifuges; after 10 years, Iran can produce complete versions of those centrifuges and store them under IAEA monitoring “until they are needed for final assembly.”

8. Iran is to refrain for 10 years from pursuing R&D on any technologies other than gas centrifuge enrichment.

9. Iran is to redesign and rebuild the Arak reactor based on a design agreed to by the P5+1 so that it will not produce weapons-grade plutonium. Iran is to export the spent fuel from this reactor and all other nuclear reactors. Tehran is to render the Arak reactor’s original core inoperable. Iran is required to begin, but not complete, the redesign process to qualify for sanctions relief under the Implementation

10. Iran commits, for 15 years and pledges to indefinitely thereafter, to refrain from reprocessing spent reactor fuel. Furthermore, Tehran has also committed to refrain from accumulating heavy water “beyond Iran’s needs”; Iran is to “sell any remaining heavy water on the international market for 15 years” and to refrain indefinitely from building heavy water-moderated reactors.

11. On Verification, the IAEA will monitor Iranian compliance with the provisions concerning its enrichment program and the Arak program. The IAEA will increase its number of inspectors in Iran and use modern verification technologies. In addition, Tehran has agreed to implement” the Additional Protocol to its safeguards agreement. It is worth noting that Iran’s IAEA safeguards obligations last for an indefinite duration. Potential nuclear related exports to Iran would remain subject to the Nuclear Suppliers Group’s export guidelines. The JCPOA also describes other monitoring and inspections.

12. For 15 years, the IAEA will monitor the stored Iranian centrifuges and related infrastructure. During this time, Iran will also permit the IAEA “daily access” to “relevant buildings” at the Natanz facilities. For 20 years, Tehran will allow the agency to verify Iran’s inventory of certain centrifuge components and the manufacturing facilities for such components. Additionally, Iran is to allow the IAEA to monitor the country’s uranium mills for 25 years and to monitor Iran’s plant for producing heavy water.
### Table 1: Summary of Enrichment Scope

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capability</th>
<th>Before JCPOA</th>
<th>After JCPOA (for 10-year Period)</th>
<th>After 15 Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First-Generation Centrifuges Installed</td>
<td>19, 138</td>
<td>6, 104</td>
<td>Unconstrained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Centrifuges Installed</td>
<td>1, 034</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Unconstrained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centrifuge R &amp; D</td>
<td>Unconstrained</td>
<td>Constrained</td>
<td>Unconstrained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockpile of Low – Enriched Uranium</td>
<td>19, 211 lbs</td>
<td>660 lbs</td>
<td>Unconstrained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockpile of Low – Enriched Uranium</td>
<td>430 lbs</td>
<td>0 lbs</td>
<td>Unconstrained</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


![Major Nuclear Sites in Iran](image)

**Figure 1: Major Nuclear Sites in Iran**


**IMPLICATIONS OF THE IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL ON INTERNATIONAL POLITICS**

The Iranian Nuclear deal is one historic agreement that may have far-reaching implications, both for the regional and international politics. The deal is expected to improve Iran’s relations and greater trade cooperation with the EU states and China, which are the main trading partner of Iran. Particularly, it will affect the Iranian relations with its neighbouring Arab states, regional counterparts and relations with US and Israel. We shall now proceed to examine these implications.
Implications For US – Iran Relations

Iran’s Islamic revolution, featuring the overthrow and hostage of US embassy staff in 1979 has led to rupture in US – Iran relations. It did not only halt the transfer of nuclear technology from the former to the latter but the continuous development of a nuclear program by Iran became a fundamental issue in the US – Iran relations since the 1990s. By the mid-2000s, bilateral relations had reached a boiling point, particularly during the tenure of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (2005–2013). Ahmadinejad’s presidency was characterised by its brinksmanship with international community and aggressive strategy regarding its nuclear programme (Jason J and Milkorie, 2007: 8). This was to change with the election of the more moderate Hassan Rouhani, who was fully aware of the wishes of people and the need for a new policy towards the West and about their nuclear program (Menashri, 2013: 7). The Iranian nuclear deal can be regarded, as a landmark diplomatic détente (i.e. relaxation of adversary) between the US and Iran and one key implication is the gravitation towards cooperation and reduction in strain in their diplomatic relations. From the beginning, President Barack Obama, in his inauguration speech had stretched the olive branch to the Muslim world when he declared thus:

To the Muslim world, we seek a new way forward; based on mutual interest and mutual respect...we will extend a hand, if you are willing to unclench your fist” (Karen, 2009: 3)

The willingness of Iran to cooperate with the US and the international community in the regulation of its nuclear programme represents an acceptance of the olive branch extended by President Barack Obama. Even though it is too early to assess the future, what is likely is the fact that the successful implementation of deal may bring about re-approach, marked by normalization of diplomatic ties and reopening of Missions in Tehran and Washington after nearly thirty-six years of diplomatic row.

Implications for Israel

While in Europe, Iraq and elsewhere, the deal has been hailed as a historic diplomatic success, in Israel it is denounced as a “historic mistake” or “historic surrender” (RT News, 2015). This is because of the historicity of Israel’s quest for survival while existing around its Arab neighbours that declares “death to Israel” and threatens its existence. The sour points of contemporary Arab – Israeli relations are highlighted by the role of Iran in the sponsorship of anti-Israel attack. Israel believes that the possible use of nuclear weapons is the most deadly option available to terrorist groups and their sponsors (RT News, 2015). This brings to the fore the possible supply nuclear weapons to anti-Israeli terrorists groups such as Hezbollah, which has in the past been supplied with Iranian weapons through Syria (Liu, 2001: 24). Evidence also exists that Iran has provided logistic support to the militant groups against Israel in the region (ShahidSaless, 2013: 145-147). In the words of the Israeli Prime Minister, Netanyahu, “the world has become a much more dangerous place because the most dangerous regime in the world has taken a significant step toward attaining the most dangerous weapon in the world.” If Iran surreptitiously develops nuclear arsenals, it will alter the balance of power of the Middle East and may likely lead to a Middle Eastern “Cold War” or “Hot War” with unforeseen dire consequences for global politics. It is therefore not surprising that Israeli does not support the Iranian nuclear deal.

Implications for Saudi Arabia

The implication of the Iranian nuclear deal on Saudi Arabia cannot be divorced from the contemporary history of rivalry in Iran – Saudi Arabia relations. The most important consequence of the Iranian Islamic Revolution of 1979 was the policy of “oneness” of the Muslim world (Khalilzad, 1987:261). Although Ali Shariati is widely regarded as the ideological architect of the Iranian Revolution, the “One Ummar” policy was formulated and pursued by Ayatollah Khomeini, who emerged as the sole leader of the Iranian revolution (Burgess 1988: 6). By the “One Ummar” policy, Khomeini sought to expand the right and duty of his revolution to purify Islam worldwide, foil Western oppression, and bring back justice for the Palestinians along with other oppressed people (Khalilzad, 1987:261). However, the “One Ummar” Policy under Shia leadership and ideology was not well received by the Sunni-controlled states,
particularly, Iran’s immediate neighbours (Khalilzad, 1987: 262). The ‘Sunni states’ perceived it as a policy of internationalization of Shiism with Iran as its epicenter. The direct reaction of ‘Sunni states’ surrounding Iran was to look at the new Iranian leaders with skepticism and distrust. In Saudi Arabia, the “One Ummar” Policy was construed as one that sought to challenge their right to guard the Muslim holy sites in the Arab peninsula or to have an equivalent political weight in the Muslim world. Vali Nasr (2006: 150) avers that in Saudi Arabia, Khomeini’s direct challenge to the Kingdom galvanized a Sunni opposition to the Iranian revolution. For Sunnis in general, Khomeini’s political doctrine of the rule of clerics had neither precedent nor resonance in Sunni tradition and little appeal to contemporary Sunnism (Nasr, 2006: 150).

In response, Khomeini delegitimized the Sunni states around Iran and mobilized the Shia population in these countries. The Islamic Revolution emboldened the Shia all over the world; brought a complete reshaping of the Shia leadership empowered by a new generation of clerics and students educated in Qom (Abou Zahab, 2007: 97). The Revolution awakened the Shias and empowered their demands for rights and representation (Nasr, 2006: 138). As a result of Khomeini’s awakening of the Shia identity, the Shia population in Al-Ahsa in Saudi Arabia decided to perform the Ashura procession in public for the first time (Kostiner, 2011:183). This led to severe clashes between the community and the Saudi policemen, where seventeen persons were killed and the Shia areas were sealed off (Kostiner, 2011: 179).

Ayatollah Khomeini then openly denounced Saudi Arabia for practicing what he called “American Islam” (Hunter, 2001: 434). He argued that Islam and monarchy are incompatible (Helms, 1980: 109-110), thus challenging the religious legitimacy of Saudi Arabia. By early 1980, the Iranians started to broadcast in Arabic to Saudi Arabia in the name of the Islamic Revolution Organization in the Arabian Peninsula (Helms, 1980: 109-110). One broadcast began with the Qur’ani verse: “Kings despoil a country when they enter it and make the noblest of its people meanest” (Helms, 1980: 116). This broadcast was directed against Al Saud in the Kingdom, and Khomeini was using the holy Qur’an a means to delegitimize the rule of the Saud family and mobilize the community against them.

Since the Iranian revolution of 1979, Iran has emerged as a challenger to Saudi Arabia in the Middle East. Hence, the latter is likely not to support the deal. Although both states are Islamic but they follow opposite schools of theology, which put them at logger’s head, to the extent of fighting proxy wars in the region against each other. This deal can lead to greater conflicts between the two states (Aljazeera, 2013: 2-5).

Implications for Iran

The implementation of the Iran Nuclear deal will impact on the dynamics of politics in the Middle East. Economically, it is estimated that the deal will allow Iran’s economy to expand significantly in the coming years, such that the resultant economic windfall could enable Iran to expand its regional influence by boosting funding for proxies in Syria, Lebanon, Yemen and even non-state actors like Hezbollah. Since the Islamic revolution, Iran has pursued a dominant role in the politics of the Middle East. In fact, if Iran cooperates with IAEA by offering it access to complete inspection and complies fully with their obligations under the deal, Iran is likely to emerge as a giant in the regional economy. Thus, sanctions relief will give it much greater means to pursue its goals, including helping minority and majority Shiite populations in neighboring countries, particularly intervening in the politics of Syria by supporting the Assad government. There is also a possibility that Iran may resume its support for terrorist groups such as Hezbollah and Hamas, Shia militias in Iraq etc.

Another key implication of the deal is the Iranian reverse from isolation and descent to pariah in the international system. It will be recalled that Nigeria under Gen. Sani Abacha, South Africa under apartheid rule and are a few examples of states that have experienced the unpleasant effect of isolation. Whereas, states like North Korea are gradually gravitating into international autarky. As noted above, the development of nuclear capabilities and the discovery of clandestine weaponization potential had stirred a number of reactions that saw to a strain in relationship between Iran and other powerful states in the international system. The withdrawal of bilateral and multilateral cooperation as well as the meting out of
sanctions on Iran shrinks her sphere of interaction in the international system. The deal is expected to foster Iran’s relationship with its erstwhile-estranged friends such as the US.

**Implications for Nigeria**

In 2005, a team of experts from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) visited Nigeria and held talks with the Obasanjo government on its intentions to develop about 2000 megawatts of electricity from nuclear power (Ajefu, 2005:4). The Iranian deal could provide a model for Nigeria to develop nuclear power plants. In addition, Iran is one of the major oil exporting countries and clearly, sanctions relief will negatively impact on the demand and sale of Nigeria crude oil in the international market.

**CONCLUSION**

So far, the paper has examined the origins and issues in the nuclear diplomacy that resulted in the signing of the Iranian nuclear deal on July 14, 2015. Under the terms of this deal, Iran’s nuclear program is to be used for purely peaceful purposes, in exchange for a broad suspension of U.S., European Union (EU), and United Nations sanctions. Under the deal, Iran agreed to refrain from any further advances of its activities at the Natanz commercial-scale facility, Fordow facility, and Arak reactor. Tehran was also required to provide the IAEA with additional information about its nuclear program, as well as access to some nuclear-related facilities to which Iran’s IAEA safeguards agreement does not require access.

We find a paradox in which the Iranian nuclear program, which started with the full cooperation of the United States and other Western powers, has emerged a source of threat to these powers. The main issue is the debate as to whether the deal guarantees a nuclear weapon-free Iran or an appeasement that will embolden Iran to clandestinely build nuclear weapons. What has become evident in this study is that it is the extent to which the Iranian nuclear programme should be pushed, whether as adjunct of the integrated energy fuel or as a nuclear capability for deterrence and security that constitutes the cause of disagreement.

We argue that in so far the interest of the P5 + 1 states as well as Iran is satisfied, the Iranian nuclear deal is not a zero sum game and far from appeasement. The failure of British diplomacy towards Germany between 1937 and 1939 has shown the world that appeasement “is more likely to reinforce the rogue leader’s ambitions and strengthen his predisposition to challenge the system” (George, 1990: 50). Diplomacy is about compromise and the deal is, to be considered, in part a victory for nuclear diplomacy. Broadly speaking, the he deal is expect to have implications for Middle East regional stability and political economy; US – Iran rapprochement, rivalry with Saudi Arabia, economic effect on sale of crude oil of other oil exporting states such as Nigeria and a decline in relations between Iran and Israel, while bolstering relations with the US. Using power theory and game theory, the paper argues that the deal is a product of international politics and that further legitimizes, what Chandra calls “the possession of weapons in the hands of five countries (non-expandable Club of Five) in perpetuity”(Chandra, 2004: 275).

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations are made in furtherance of this study:

1. Iran has successfully used diplomacy to its benefit, it is recommended that Iran should apply the same diplomacy in dousing any tension that may arise between itself and other states in the Middle East that may not be happy with the deal such Israel and Saudi Arabia.

2. The issue of dual capability is salient, especially as it was not factored in 1968 when the NPT was signed. Today, non-military nuclear technology without fear of nuclear arsenal proliferation has become an intense subject of scholarly and popular debate and there is no doubt that this will linger on if the NPT is not reviewed in accordance to Article VIII, to accommodate this new reality. The question of extent of radioactive element enrichment and acceptable grade should also be addressed in a reviewed NPT.

3. The P5 + 1 and EU, are threading cautiously on the calculated risk that with IAEA verification, and Iran keeping to its part of the deal, the JCPOA is a good bargain. Yet, proper scrutiny has at
some point in the history of its function, eluded IAEA. It is therefore recommend that a review of the NPT should allow Resident Nuclear Arms Verification Missions (RNAVMs) of the IAEA, with right to sudden inspection in states hoping to develop nuclear capability for peaceful use.

REFERENCES


