

The Israeli- Iranian Rivalry and its Impact on the Iran Nuclear Deal

أثر التنافس الإسرائيلي الإيراني على اتفاق إيران النووي

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Abstract:

Under the regime of the Shah, Iran and Israel had enjoyed a strong partnership in several fields. However, their relationship deteriorated after the Islamic Revolution that denied the Jewish state's legitimacy. Moreover, the end of the Cold War and the Iraqi defeat had profoundly affected the geopolitical order of the Middle East, in which Iran and Israel emerged as rivals. Their diplomatic and political relations have worsened recently, heightening the risk of military confrontation. Israel perceives Iran as a threat to the Jewish state's existence while Iranian leaders perceive Israel as a threat to their regional aspirations. Several factors have contributed to the stalemate between both states, including the Iranian nuclear programme. Israel has been concerned with Iran's acquisition of a nuclear weapon. Furthermore, the 2015 nuclear agreement reached and signed between major world powers and Tehran to resolve the nuclear impasse has further intensified Israel's security concerns. This article provides an overview of the historical background of the Iranian-Israeli partnership. It provides a brief overview of the important factors that have shaped the Israeli-Iranian rivalry. This study explores the roots and origins of the long history of hostility between Iran and Israel. It also assesses Israel's attitude to Iran's nuclear ambitions and the nuclear agreement reached between Iran and major world powers in 2015.

Keywords: Relations; Rivalry; Israel; Iran;nuclear deal; Israel's opposition.

ملخص:

كانت الشراكة بين إيران وإسرائيل قوية في عدة مجالات في ظل نظام الشاه ولكن الثورة الإسلامية أثرت سلباً على العلاقات الإيرانية الإسرائيلية لدرجة أنها أنكرت شرعية الدولة اليهودية علاوة على ذلك، فإن نهاية الحرب الباردة وهزيمة العراق زادوا من حدة التوتر وأثرت بشكل كبير على النظام الجيوسياسي للشرق الأوسط، حيث برزت كل من إيران وإسرائيل كمتنافسين. هذا وقد ساءت علاقاتهما الدبلوماسية والسياسية مؤخراً، مما زاد من خطر المواجهة العسكرية حيث إن إسرائيل تعتبر إيران تهديد لوجود الدولة اليهودية بينما يعتبر القادة الإيرانيون إسرائيل تهديد لتطلعاتهم الإقليمية. لقد ساهمت عدة عوامل في التوتر بين الدولتين، أبرزها البرنامج النووي الإيراني حيث عبرت إسرائيل عن قلقها الشديد من حيازة إيران على السلاح النووي كما إن نجاح القوى العالمية الكبرى في التوصل إلى اتفاق لحل المأزق النووي

في عام 2015 زاد من مخاوف الدولة اليهودية. يحتوي هذا المقال على لمحة عامة عن الخلفية التاريخية للشراكة الإيرانية الإسرائيلية وكذلك لمحة موجزة عن العوامل المهمة التي ساهمت في تشكل و حدة التنافس الإسرائيلي الإيراني كما ويستكشف هذا المقال جذور وأصول تاريخ العداء الطويل بين إيران وإسرائيل و يقيّم موقف إسرائيل من طموحات إيران النووية والاتفاق النووي الذي تم التوصل إليه بين إيران والقوى العالمية الكبرى في عام 2015. الكلمات المفتاحية: العلاقات؛ التنافس ؛ إسرائيل؛ إيران؛ الاتفاق النووي؛ معارضة إسرائيل.

Introduction:

During the reign of the Shah, Israel and Iran had cultivated strong political, economic, and military partnership. Prevalent interests and perceived threats had formed the basis of their relationship. However, the Islamic Revolution was the watershed event in the Israeli-Iranian partnership. Both competitors have conflicting interests and ambitions. They have adopted variant approaches and policies to pursue their respective interests. However, the revelation of Tehran's nuclear programme has intensified the rivalry. The Jewish State is concerned with a nuclear-armed Iran and its hostile policies and destabilizing activities in the region. Furthermore, Iran has sought to extend its influence in the region and play the role of a regional superpower. Therefore, Israel has endeavoured to curb the nuclear programme at all costs. Moreover, Israel has strongly condemned the nuclear deal signed between Iran and major World Powers in 2015 since it does not cope with Israel's major security concerns. The main point of this article is to examine Israel's contradiction to the nuclear deal reached in 2015 and analyse the drive behind Israel's eadeavours to halt the agreement. It addresses Israel's concerns with the effectiveness of the deal and its impact on its national security interests. This study endeavours to assess the current state of hostility between Israel and Iran and their conflicting interests and policies to each other.

1. The Israeli-Iranian Relationship in the Context of History

During the Cold War, the Shah aligned with the Western camp, seeking economic and military assistance that would deter the Soviet expansion in the Persian Gulf. Israel's alignment with the West urged Iran to seek rapprochement with Israel. In 1951, the Mossadeq government in Iran gave Israel a de facto recognition. Indeed, choosing the Western alignment did not end Israel's security dilemma since it was isolated within hostile Arab state neighbours. Israel believed that developing ties with these hostile states was impossible. Thus, it sought to interact with non- Arab States of the region, including Iran.¹ Furthermore, Iran felt that its national security was threatened by its Arab State adversaries, some of which were allies of the Soviet Union. Therefore, similar security threats, including the Soviet expansion in the region, the threat of radical pro-Soviet Arab States, and the Pan-Arabism² prompted a close partnership between both states.³ Throughout the 1950s, the Israeli-Iranian cooperation further strengthened due to the emergence of Nasser as the leader of the Arab masses after the 1956 Suez War. Besides, the Soviet expansion and Pan-Arab ideology under the support of the Soviet Union represented a serious security challenge for Iran and Israel and increased Iran's need for the Israeli military assistance⁴.

Although Israel had never been officially recognised by the shah of Iran, both states had enjoyed a cooperative partnership based on mutual geopolitical interests. Before the 1979 Islamic Revolution, it had been said that "*Iran was the jewel in the crown of the alliance of*

¹Parsi, Trita. Treacherous alliance: the secret dealings of Israel, Iran, and the United States, yale university press , London, 2007. pp 20-21.

² In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, increased literacy led to a cultural and literary renaissance among Arabs of the Middle East. This contributed to political agitation and led to the independence of most Arab states from the Ottoman Empire and from the European powers.

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/878838/Pan-Arabism> .

³Gamal Abdel Nasser,(1918-1970, Cairo), army officer, prime minister (1954-56), and then president (1956-70) of Egypt. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/404045/Gamal-Abdel-Nasser> .

⁴ Parsi, Trita, Op.cit. pp. 43-45.



the periphery". In the 1950s, the periphery doctrine was founded by the Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion¹, on the basis that Israel had to develop close relations with non-Arab countries to moderate hostile Arab neighbours. Iran informally recognised Israel in 1950. This period witnessed the emergence of Pan-Arabism and the Palestinian liberation under the leadership of Gamal Abdel Nasser. He strongly opposed the creation of the Jewish state within the region. However, the threat of Nasser's Pan-Arabism shared by Israel and Iran reinforced Ben-Gurion's perception and largely shaped the so-called "*periphery of the periphery*".² David Ben Gurion explained in his alliance of periphery principle Israel's desperate need for developing alliances with non-Arab states to counterbalance Arab opposition and strengthen its position in the region.³ However, Iran underscored keeping its collaboration and dealings with Israel secret to avoid Arab criticism. Therefore, Tehran interacted with Israel through Iran's secret police, "*the Savak*".⁴ Still, the Iranian officials kept their travels to Israel secret. They traveled via Turkey and even the deployment of Iranian diplomats in Israel was kept secret. During the 1970s, Iranian diplomats who worked in the Iranian secret mission in Israel were indicated as being served in "*Bern, Switzerland*", in their records. Moreover, The Iranian secret embassy in Israel was known as "*Bern 2*" in Iranian foreign Ministry documents.⁵

In 1958, the Mussed⁶ created a formal trilateral intelligent alliance with Iran and Turkey. Moreover, there were exchanged intelligence and joint counterintelligence operations between them.⁷ In 1957, the Shah cultivated closer ties between the Iranian Intelligence Service and the Israeli Intelligence Agency in order to manage Iran's dealings with the Jewish state. Furthermore, Israeli intelligence officers "*trained Iranian military, secret police operatives, Iranian pilots and paratroopers in both Iran and Israel, and assisted Iran with military equipment*".⁸

Israel and Iran had experienced unprecedented economic and energy cooperation. They found new companies in Panama and Switzerland under a central legal entity known as Trans-Asiatic Oil, which was the "*top-secret partnership*" between Israel and the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) in the late 1970s. The Eilat-Ashkelon pipeline company was a supplement to the Trans-Asiatic Oil. Furthermore, in 1977, Israel and Iran jointly cooperated under the "*Project Flower*", seeking the development of advanced missile systems. It was "*one among six-oil-for arms contracts signed in the late 1970s between countries*".⁹

¹David Ben-Gurion (1886-1973), Zionist statesman and political leader, the first prime minister and defence minister of Israel. It was the "Father of the Nation", who on May 14, 1948, delivered Israel's declaration of independence. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/60297/David-Ben-Gurion> .

² Dalia, Dassa. Kaye, N, Alireza. ,Parisa .R. Israel and Iran: A Dangerous Rivalry. Rand.Santa Monica.2012.p10.

³Jalil, Roshandel. Chapman L ,Op. cit. .p36.

⁴SAVAK (Organization of National Security and Information), the Iranian secret police and intelligence service, protected the regime of the shah. After the shah's government fell, SAVAK and other intelligence services were eliminated. <http://www.britannica.com/topic/SAVAK>

⁵ Parsi, Trita. Op. cit..pp.25-27.

⁶ The Mussed is the national intelligence agency of Israel formed on December 13, 1949, as the "Central Institute for Coordination" at the recommendation of Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion to Reuven Shiloah. In March 1951, it was reorganized and made a part of the prime minister's office, reporting directly to the prime minister. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mossad> .

⁷Dalia, Dassa K. N, Alireza, Parisa .R. Op.cit. p 11.

⁸ Parsi, Trita. Op. Cit. p25.

⁹ Dalia, Kaye Dassa. N, Alireza, Parisa .R. Op.cit. p12.



Subsequently, Iran was the leading financier for several Israeli-led research and development projects. Iran's construction of missile assembly and test facilities began whereas Israel led the development on the basis that both countries' armies would acquire the new defence systems.¹ Moreover, Iran sought an exchange of advanced Israeli technology for its economic growth. Gradually, Israel and Iran cooperated in the field of agriculture. Nonetheless, Israel did not assist Iran with the required know-how and expertise and trained only ten thousand Iranian agricultural experts.²

The Arab-Israeli conflict, particularly, the 1967 War, caused a radical reorientation in Iran's foreign policy toward Israel. As Israel defeated its Arab neighbours and occupied Egyptian, Jordanian, and Syrian territories, Iran had to reconsider its regional relationships. However, the Shah was concerned that Israel would seek regional leadership and challenge Iran's quest for supremacy. Instead of prompting the Shah to recognise the Jewish state de jure, Israel's victory made the Shah stall all his cooperative projects with Israel. Thus, Tel Aviv became suspicious of the Shah's intentions.³ As Egypt changed its stance towards the Western camp under Anwar Sadat, Iran overcame its difficulties with Egypt. The relationship between Iran and Egypt strongly undermined the Israeli-Iranian entente. Therefore, Israel was concerned with the improvement of the Iranian-Arabs relations and its implication on the Israeli-Iranian partnership.⁴ The Shah sought Arab acceptance for his political aspirations, hence, becoming more sensitive toward Arab criticism. For instance, Iran's increasing sensitivity to Arab's perception of the Israeli-Iranian cooperation limited their military cooperation.⁵

During the Yom Kippur War,⁶ Iran's stance during the war was disappointing for Israel since it remained neutral. Yet, at the same time, Iran had not taken part in the Arab oil embargo against Israel and it was an important source of oil for Israel throughout the conflict.⁷ Iraq-Iran War was also another urge for the Israeli-Iranian cooperation. To preserve its national security, Israel assisted Iran in its war with Iraq. Moreover, by 1960, Israel and Iran's intelligent organisations supported the Kurds⁸ in their struggle against the central government.⁹

However, the return of Ayatollah Khomeini to Iran on 1 February 1979, brought a shift in Iran's international relations. Moreover, Iran has supported Islamic fundamentalist groups,

¹ Ibid.

² Parsi, Trita. Op.cit .p23.

³ Ibid. pp.30-31.

⁴ Ibid. pp.32-34.

⁵ Ibid. pp.40-44.

⁶ The Yom Kippur War, Ramadan War, or October War, also known as the 1973 Arab–Israeli War, was a war fought by the coalition of Arab states led by Egypt and Syria against Israel from October 6 to 25, 1973. It began when the Arab coalition launched a joint surprise attack on Israeli positions in the Israeli-occupied territories on Yom Kippur. Both the United States and the Soviet Union initiated massive resupply efforts to their respective allies during the war. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yom_Kippur_War .

⁷ Parsi, Trita.Op.cit..pp.48-52.

⁸ The Kurdish people are an ethnic group whose origins are in the Middle East.They are one of the largest ethnic groups in the world that do not have a state of their own. The region of Kurdistan, the original geographic region of the Kurdish people and the home to the majority of Kurds today, covers contemporary Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kurds_in_Iraq .

⁹Dalia, Dassa K. N, Alireza.,Parisa .R. Op.cit .p11.



including Hamas¹ and Hezbollah² to overpower the U.S and Israel. Consequently, Iran's support for these proxies has provoked serious concerns of many within the international community due to its support for insurgent groups, nuclear ambitions, and alleged corrupt government.³ The campaign led by Ayatollah Khomeini in 1979 to overthrow the Shah had sharply damaged relations between Iran and Israel. After the second phase of the Iranian Revolution, ties between both states ended as Iran adopted an anti-Zionist policy. More than 30 years later, that relationship has not improved and over the past three decades, their relationship was characterised by rhetorical battles and proxy- led conflicts. Thus, by the coming of 1979, Iran and Israel have entered a decade-long period of hostility. Furthermore, the gridlock and stalemate in their relationship became apparent as they emerged as competing powers in the Middle East.⁴

However, despite Iran's ideological antagonism to Israel, their cooperation reanimated again under geopolitical factors. Only months after the revolution, Iran accepted Israel's offer to send back a "*number of American-built Iranian tanks that were shipped by the Shah to Israel to be refurbished*"⁵. Indeed, this cooperation meant in practice that the balance between Iran's ideological goals and its security interests shifted in favour of its security interests. Nonetheless, this did not end Iran's rhetoric against Israel.⁶ Since 1979, trying to restore close cooperation that ended with the fall of the Shah's regime was a vital Israeli concern. Iran was critical for Israel's security.⁷

Iran's post-revolution foreign policy was fueled by enthusiasm and ideology. Furthermore, the revolutionaries' major aim endeavours to liberate the Middle East from the domination of the U.S as well as the U.S. Arab allies in the Persian Gulf. The major focus of the Islamic Republic was prompting the Shi'a population in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq. In 1981, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) was formed by the Persian Gulf States that were frightened of the Revolutionary Iran. Moreover, they supported Saddam Hussein⁸ in his military conflict with Iran. However, like the Shah, the Islamic Republic appreciated the Israeli counterweight against the Iraqi threat. Iran's War with Saddam Hussein revived the Israeli-Iranian cooperation. Moreover, Iran sought Israel's assistance in order to counter the Iraqi expansion and to release it from isolation. The Iraqi threat was a security challenge for Iran as much as it was for Israel. During the Iran-Iraq War, Iraq was supported by both the U.S and the Soviet Union, leaving Iran isolated and in desperate need for military equipment. Therefore, Iran sought to revive its military cooperation with Israel in order to gain military

¹Hamās, acronym of Ḥarakat al-Muqāwamah al-Islāmiyyah, founded in 1987. It is a militant Palestinian Islamic movement in the West Bank and Gaza Strip that is dedicated to the destruction of Israel and the creation of an Islamic state in Palestine. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/253202/Hamas> .

²Hezbollah, Arabic Ḥizb Allāh ("Party of God"), also spelled Hezbollah or Hizbullah, militia group and political party that first emerged as a faction in Lebanon following the Israeli invasion of that country in 1982. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/264741/Hezbollah> .

³Jalil, Roshandel. Chapman L , Nathan. p11.

⁴ Ibid. p40

⁵ Parsi, Trita. p.9

⁶ Ibid. pp.93-95.

⁷ Richard. H . U.S. Cautious in Dealing with Iran Turbulence. Vo XIII. September 3, 1999. P 23.

⁸Ṣaddām Ḥussein, in full Ṣaddām Ḥussein al-Tikrītī (1937-2006), president of Iraq (1979–2003), whose brutal rule was marked by costly and unsuccessful wars against neighbouring countries. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/277539/Saddam-Hussein> .



support. In early 1980, Israel provided military support to the Iranian Army, though this operation violated the U.S. policy that banned selling arms to Iran before the release of the American hostages held at the U.S embassy in Tehran.¹ Consequently, Israel's support made Khomeini permit many Iranian Jews to leave for the U.S or Israel. During the Iran-Iraq War, a collaboration between Iran and Israel on defence issues continued despite Iran's anti-Israeli rhetoric in public. The Iran- Iraq War was perceived as an effort to liberate occupied lands in Palestine. Iran also contributed to the creation of Hezbollah after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982.² As Sadat broke with the Soviet Union, Moscow underscored on Iraq, therefore, Iraq emerged as Iran's main Arab foe instead of Egypt as well as for Israel. The U.S expanded its military assistance to Iran primarily against the imminent threat from Iraq.³ Although the Arab-Iranian rapprochement eroded the relationship between Tehran and Tel Aviv, the emerging Iraqi threat granted a solid geopolitical basis for the continuation of the clandestine Israeli-Iranian entente. As the relationship between the U.S and the Soviet Union shifted from containment to détente, the dynamics changed in the superpowers' reconsideration of their alliances. Moreover, along with the rise of the Iraqi threat for both Iran and Israel, the uncertainty to count on American support to counter Soviet and Arabs influence in the region reinforced and prompted the Israeli-Iranian cooperation.⁴

During the early years of the War, Israel made different attempts at persuading Washington to change its stance on arms sales to Tehran in the middle of the hostage crisis, taking into consideration Tel Aviv's concerns with the implications of an Iraqi victory. Though the Carter's administration refused Israel's proposal, claiming that such an action would breach the U.S. embargo, Israel was willing to provide Iran with assistance.⁵ In the period from 1980 to 1983, Iran's purchases were estimated at \$500 million of arms from Israel. The Reagan's administration permitted the Israeli-Iranian transactions. Israel sought to publicise its dealings with Iran, which would in turn increase Iran's isolation, hence, increase Iran's dependence on Israel. While Israel was seeking to revive the periphery doctrine and restore the U. S.-Iranian relations the Iran-Contra operation emerged.

After Israel had invaded Lebanon on 6 June 1980, Iran was granted the opportunity to export its revolution to the Arab world by assisting the Shias in fighting the Israeli occupation. However, over time and with the help and assistance of Iran, these armed groups became what is now known as the Lebanese Hezbollah. Moreover, these groups targeted the marines sent by the U.S. to release the hostages.⁶ On 4 November 1979, however, a group of Iranian students seized the American embassy in Tehran and held 52 American diplomats hostage for 444 days.⁷ The students held the hostages as a bargaining chip for the sake of compelling the Shah's return who fled the country in January 1979.⁸

¹ Dalia, Dassa K. N, Alireza.,Parisa .R. Israel and Iran: A Dangerous Rivalry.p14.

² Ibid. p15.

³ Jalil, Roshandel. Chapman L , Nathan. p55.

⁴ Ibid .p56.

⁵ Parsi, Trita. pp.96-106.

⁶ Kristel Halter. The Iranian-U.S. Relationship. Washington Report on Middle East Affairs. Vo 21. January/February 2002. P 86.

⁷ Iran hostage crisis. The Columbia Encyclopedia, 6th ed.The Columbia University Press.2014.

⁸ Patrick. Houghton D. US Foreign Policy and the Iran Hostage Crisis.Cambridge University Press.Cambridge, England, 2001. P52.



While the Americans marked 4 November 1979, as the beginning of the crisis, Iranians insisted that the crisis started on 23 October 1979, the day on which the American President allowed the deposed Shah of Iran. This meant that the crisis was only a defensive action to protect the Iranian Revolution from American interference.¹ However, President Reagan was unable to save the American hostages held by Hezbollah in Lebanon. Furthermore, the Israelis told their American counterparts that the Iranians would interfere to release the hostages in exchange for arms. Although Washington imposed an arms embargo on Iran, it accepted to send arms through Israel in 1985.²³ The revelation of the Israeli-Iranian contacts dramatically damaged Iran's relations with the Arab and the Islamic world, causing more denunciation of Israel within the Islamic Republic. Indeed, Tehran relied on Israel only for obtaining American arms, and despite this fact, Israel continued its efforts to restore ties with its only non-Arab, peripheral ally.⁴

2. The Origins and Nature of the Israeli-Iranian Rivalry:

The confrontational policies between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Jewish state trace back to the early days of the Islamic revolution. As Ayatollah Khomeini has contradicted the political legitimacy of the Jewish state, Israel has deemed Tehran a regional rival.⁵ The prevalent threats and mutual interests that were the backbone of the Israeli-Iranian partnership significantly declined by the 1990s, particularly after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Iraqi defeat.⁶ However, after the Persian Gulf War, Iran defined the Persian Gulf region as its sphere of influence. The Jewish state was a constraint to Iran's regional ambitions.⁷ Furthermore, Israel was perceived as an outpost of Western colonialism among Iranian leaders.⁸

Iranian elites' opposition to Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi and his Western supporters under the 1979 Islamic Revolution included the Jewish state as well for its close ties with the Shah regime. The Iranian leadership's state of hostility toward both, the U.S. and Israel, is deeply rooted in the involvement of Washington and Israel in Iranian internal affairs and its impacts.⁹ After the Islamic revolution, Iran has hardened its stance against Israel by supporting proxy groups. Moreover, Iran has played a facto role in the Middle East peace process by assisting non-state actors fighting Israel to thwart any rapprochement between Israel and the Arabs.¹⁰ Iran's support for insurgent groups is driven by fighting the U.S. and

¹ David Farber. *Taken Hostage: The Iran Hostage Crisis and America's First Encounter with Radical Islam*. Princeton University Press. Princeton, NJ. 2006. p13.

² Robert O. Freedman. *The Middle East from the Iran-Contra Affair to the Intifada*. Syracuse University Press. Syracuse, NY. 1991. p75.

³ Ibid. pp.74-75

⁴ Parsi, Trita. Op. cit. pp.124-126.

⁵ Jalil, Roshandel, and Chapman Lean Nathan. P83.

⁶ Parsi Trita, P139.

⁷ Ibid, p145.

⁸ Dalia Dassa, Kaye, Nader Alireza, and Roshan Parisa. P66.

⁹ Alexander T. J. Lennon. *Camille EISS. Reshaping Rogue States PREEMPTION, REGIME CHANGE, AND U.S. POLICY TOWARD IRAN, IRAQ, AND NORTH KOREA*. THE MIT PRESS Cambridge, Massachusetts. London. 2004. P 286

¹⁰ Benjamin M. Greenblum. *The Iranian Nuclear Threat: Israel's Options under International Law*. Houston Journal of International Law, Fall 2006.



Israeli imperialism and extending its Islamic revolution's principles in the region.¹ Since the early 1980s, Iran has provided military, political, and religious assistance for the Lebanese Shi'a group, Hezbollah, which is deemed Iran's reliable partner in the Arab world.² The Jewish state has sought to gain legitimacy within the new Middle East order in which Iran has emerged as a strategic competitor to the Jewish state instead of Arabs. Israel has been concerned that the balance of power would shift in favour of Iran, particularly after the Iraqi decline.³ The Israeli-Iranian rivalry became apparent after the defeat of the Taliban and Saddam Hussein, Iran's major enemies.⁴ Mohsen Rezai, Secretary of the Expediency Council described the Iranian elites' perception of the emerging security dynamics:

"America destroyed all our enemies in the region, it did all this in order to confront us face to face, and in order to place us under siege. But the American teeth got so stuck in the soil of Iraq and Afghanistan that if they manage to drag themselves back to Washington in one piece, they will need our help. America, therefore, presents us with an opportunity rather than a threat - not because it intended to, but because its estimates were wrong and made many mistakes⁵."

Yitzhak Rabin⁶ and Shimon Peres⁷, who once supported rapprochement between the U.S. president Ronald Reagan and the leader of the Islamic republic Khomeini, perceived the key peripheral state, Iran, as a security challenge to the Jewish state. In the new Middle East order, Israel and Iran were deemed rivals, especially when Israel started seeking regional leadership at the expense of Iran. Furthermore, Israel tried to persuade Washington and the EU about the threat posed by Iran to global security. After the 1992 U.S. presidential elections, the Rabin government endeavoured to convince the Bill Clinton administration to emphasise the growing security challenge that emanated from Iran instead of Iraq. Although the Israeli campaign did not succeed to convince the Clinton administration about the Iranian threat⁸ since Tehran was very weak at this time, its strategy was defensive in itself, and its military power was a deterrent, the campaign served as a means for enhancing Israel's ties to Washington. During the Cold War, Israel was vital to the U.S., particularly to counter the Soviet aggression, but now it would serve to deter Iran's regional ambitions⁹.

Indeed, ideological shifts were the drives behind the Israeli-Iranian conflict rather than geopolitical considerations. The Shah's failure to gain legitimacy for his regional ambitions among the Arabs, mainly because of his relations with Israel, impelled the revolutionaries to

¹Nader Alireza. Iran after the Bomb: How Would a Nuclear-Armed Tehran Behave?. Rand. Santa Monica, CA. 2013. P25.

² Steven Simon and Ray Takeyh. Cautious Iran ; Tehran May Want to 'Wipe Israel off the Map,' but It Won't Do It with Nukes. The Christian Science Monitor, May 3, 2006.

³Parsi Trita. Op, Cit, P158.

⁴Dalia Dassa Kaye; Nader Alireza et al. Op, Cit. Pp,16-17.

⁵Arnaud de Borchgrave, "Iraq Exit via Iran?" Washington Times, December 1, 2006.).

⁶ Yitzhak Rabin, an Israeli general and statesman. The first native born prime minister of Israel (1974-77, 1992-95). In 1974, he became prime minister. He resigned in 1977. The Columbia Encyclopedia, 6th ed.2012.

⁷Shimon Peres, 1923, Israeli politician. Peres was minister of defense from 1974 to 1977, when he was elected party chairman. He was later foreign minister 1986. The Columbia Encyclopedia, 6th ed.2012.

⁸Parsi Trita, Op, 161-164

⁹ Ibid, pp. 68-170.



adopt a more assertive foreign policy to the Jewish state. Although Iranian leaders have sought their ideological objectives, geopolitical considerations remain the leading force behind Iran's foreign policy. Even the Israelis are aware that the Iranians pursue their ambitions regardless of the Islamist nature of their regime.¹ Iran perceives Israel as a geopolitical and military threat to the interests of the Islamic Republic.² In January 1993, while the Israelis and Palestinians had been discussing to reach a peace agreement, Iran heightened its rhetoric against Israel, claiming that it would reject the Oslo agreement.³ Israel sought peace with its Arab neighbours for the sake of keeping Iran isolated and thus, preventing the regional balance of power from shifting in favour of the Islamic Republic. Tehran highlighted its opposition to the U.S. as well as to Israel to enhance its position within hostile Arab states. Moreover, it relied on the Arab street seeking to weaken pro-Western Arab governments, thus, preventing any deal with the Jewish state.

The nature of the Islamic regime, including the rise of the Revolutionary Guards, Iran's foreign policy, and the authoritarian principlists⁴ are the determining factors of the Islamic Republic's policy toward Israel. Since the 1979 Islamic revolution, Iranian foreign policy has been a fluctuation between pragmatism and ideology. Under President Ayatollah Hashemi Rafsanjani⁵ (1989-1997), Iranian foreign policy was characterised by its pragmatic trends. Furthermore, Rafsanjani sought to improve the Iranian economy and its relations with its Arab neighbours, Europe, and the U.S in the 1990s. Moreover, according to Rafsanjani and his pragmatic supporters, Israel was not perceived as a security threat. He believed that preventing further disagreement with Israel could have enhanced Iran's relations with the U.S. Under President Mohammad Khatami⁶ (1997-2005), foreign policy was also motivated by reforming economic and political systems. This period witnessed improved relations with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states and Europe. In addition, the reformists moderated Iran's approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict.⁷

After the election of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad⁸, the Israeli-Iranian rivalry had further intensified due to Ahmadinejad's rhetoric against the Jewish state and his interference in the Arab-Israeli peace process. Nevertheless, Ahmadinejad preferred initiating diplomatic

¹Parsi Trita. Op, Cit. p263.

²Dalia Dassa Kaye. Op.Cit.p3

³ The Oslo agreements between the government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) marked the start of the Oslo process, a peace process that is aimed at achieving a peace-treaty based on the United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 and 338, and to fulfill the "right of the Palestinian people to self-determination". https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oslo_Accords .

⁴Principlists or Iranian Conservatives: are one of two main political camps inside post-revolutionary Iran. Aprinciplist refers to the conservative supporters of the Supreme Leader of Iran and advocates for protecting the ideological principles of the Islamic Revolution's early days. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iranian_Principlists .

⁵Hashemi Rafsanjani (Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani),1934, Iranian religious and political leader. From 1988 to 1989 he was also acting commander. In 1989, Rafsanjani was elected president.The Columbia Encyclopedia, 6th ed.2012.

⁶Mohammad Khatami 1943,Iranian religious and political leader.After the shah'sfall (1979), he returned to Iran. He was elected Iran's president in 1997.The Columbia Encyclopedia, 6th ed.2012.

⁷DaliaDassaKaye; Alireza Nader et al. pp, 70-73

⁸Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, 1956, Iranian politician. Hewas a founder of the student union that occupied the U.S. embassy.H e joined in1980 the Revolutionary Guards. He was elected president in 2005,becoming the first noncleric to hold the office since 1981. The Columbia Encyclopedia, 6th ed.2012.



dialogue with the U.S. As the Principlists and Revolutionary Guards monopolised power after the 2009 Iranian presidential election, the Israeli-Iranian rivalry had exacerbated since pragmatic trends were undermined within the Islamic Republic. The rise of the Revolutionary Guards had nurtured antagonism and brought both countries to greater competition. Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei took advantage of his close ties with the Principlists and the Revolutionary Guards as well as his stance against Israel to achieve his political and strategic objectives. Although Khamenei was hostile toward the U.S. and Israel, he was a prudent leader who underscored decisively on the regime's survival. Moreover, he did not strive to accelerate Iran's potential nuclear programme capabilities. In addition, his support for the nuclear programme aimed at securing the regime and increasing Iran's regional influence.¹

Three decades of hostility between Iran and the U.S are driven by three charges against the Islamic Republic: its nuclear programme, support for non-state actors, and opposition to the Arab-Israeli peace process. Washington charged Iran with secretly pursuing a nuclear programme seeking the development of nuclear weapon capabilities.² Although Iranian leaders repeatedly announced the peaceful nature of their nuclear activities and even experts believed in Iran's inability to acquire nuclear weapons at least in the near future, the U.S and Israel have pursued several tough policies to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran. However, Iran refuses to abandon its nuclear programme and defends its right under Article IV the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) that allows a peaceful pursuit of a nuclear energy programme.³

In a press conference in Washington, DC on August 14, 2002, the National Council of Resistance of Iran acknowledged Iran's heavy-water reactor at Arak and its enrichment facilities at Natanz. It was assumed that Iran was on its path toward developing a nuclear weapon.⁴ The revelation of the Natanz nuclear site in 2002 highlighted the Iranian threat of military intelligence and the Israeli public. Therefore, the Israeli Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, sought to halt Iran's nuclear programme.⁵ A nuclear-armed Iran is considered the greatest security challenge to Israel's national security. Iran's possession of nuclear weapons could undermine Israel's conventional superiority by providing its nuclear deterrence to anti-Israel groups, such as Hezbollah.⁶ Indeed, by insisting on the nuclear and missile development programme and keeping the nuclear activities and uranium enrichment secret, Iran had certainly breached international demands.⁷

The Israelis are concerned that Iran's acquisition of a nuclear weapon would increase Iran's leverage over the Arab states and prevent Israel's alliances with these states while others believe that a nuclear-armed Iran would provoke the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states' hostility. Yet even Israeli analysts who oppose this belief are concerned with a future Iranian nuclear attack in the events of escalation. Such assessment assumes that Iran would

¹ Dalia Dassa Kaye; Alireza Nader et al. Op, Cit. pp, 74-7

² Gawdat, Bahgat. United States-Iranian Relations: The Terrorism Challenge. Parameters. Volume: 38. Issue: 4. 2008. 95+.

³ David, Krieger. Iran, International Law and Nuclear Disarmament International Journal of Humanities and Peace, 22.1 (2006): 65.

⁴ Mustafa Kibaroglu. Good for the Shah, Banned for the Mullahs: The West and Iran's Quest for Nuclear Power. The Middle East Journal, Spring 2006.

⁵ Dalia Dassa Kaye; Alireza Nader et al. Op, Cit. P3.

⁶ Alireza Nader. Iran after the Bomb. 2013. P25.

⁷ Jalil Roshandel; Nathan Chapman Lean. P13.



incite Israel and use its nuclear capabilities. In the light of no direct talks between both countries and given the divergence of the Israeli-Iranian deterrence from that of the Cold War, unintended nuclear use could be possible.¹

3. The Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA) and Israel's Opposition

The U.S. and the UN have adopted several policies to prevent Iran's acquisition of nuclear weapons capabilities. The cornerstone of the U.S. foreign policy to the nuclear issue has underscored regime sanctions, military threat, and diplomatic discussions to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran. The U.S. has adopted assertive approaches to Iran to prevent its acquisition of nuclear capabilities, and thus, maintain the national security of its critical ally, Israel. Sanctions imposed on Iran have sharply affected its economy and increased its political isolation. This has influenced Tehran's nuclear policy. However, years of attempts to address the nuclear issue and find a settlement between Iran and major world powers culminated in an agreement. After 18 days of negotiations in Vienna, Iran and six World Powers, the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Russia, and China had finally reached the intended goal in July 2015.² The agreement respects Iran's legitimate right to pursue a peaceful nuclear technology. Under the deal, "Iran accepts to reduce its uranium enrichment to 3.67 percent in the next 15 years, to decrease the current number of its uranium enrichment centrifuges by about two-thirds to 6,104 for 10 years, not to build new enrichment facilities, and to assure that its heavy-water reactor will not be used for military purposes." Iran also promoted further International Atomic Energy Agency's safeguards and inspections of its nuclear facilities.³ In return, the United States and Europe would cancel all economic sanctions imposed on Iran. Furthermore, The U.N. Security Council also would remove its sanctions resolutions. However, they maintained an arms embargo on Iran and restrictions on its ballistic missile development.

The issue of inspections of Iran's military sites was unclear in the deal. Furthermore, the US Congress was influenced by the rhetoric of Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, who believes that the deal is a "historical mistake". Thus, the powerful Israel lobby in the US would endeavour to make Congress prevent the deal that the Presidential veto protected it. Israel claimed that sanctions relief would enable Iran to provide financial support for non-state actors in the region, such as Hezbollah and the Assad government in Syria. According to Mohammad Marandi⁴ of the University of Tehran,

*"The reason Israel is so upset is that this deal lessens tensions in the region, and the Israeli regime thrives on maintaining an unstable region. Israel is an apartheid state, and the only way it can draw attention away from it is to create crises in neighboring countries to deflect attention from its own policies"*⁵

¹Dalia Dassa Kaye; Alireza Nader et al.Op, Cit. p35.

²"Top News Advisory for Tuesday, July 14, 2015." *The Canadian Press* 14 July 2015. *Questia*. Web. 7 Sept. 2015.

³"EDITORIAL: Framework Deal with Iran Is Milestone to Stop Nuclear Weapons Development." *The Daily Yomiuri (Tokyo, Japan)* 5 Apr. 2015. *Questia*. Web. 7 Sept. 2015.

⁴Mohammad Marandi (born 1966 in Richmond, Virginia) is an Iranian academic, political analyst and an expert on [American studies](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mohammad_Marandi) and [postcolonial literature](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mohammad_Marandi). https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mohammad_Marandi

⁵"Iran's Win-Win Deal Not without Compromise on Weapons Front." *Cape Times (South Africa)* 17 July 2015. *Questia*. Web. 7 Sept. 2015.



Since the disclosure of the Iranian nuclear programme, the Israeli foreign policy has endeavoured to dismantle the Iranian nuclear programme. Israel's hardline attitude to Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons revealed its security concerns. For Israel, Iran's regional ambitions and interventions are the major source of security challenge. Israel has always been concerned with Western engagement with Iran in which Israel is not involved. The Jewish State objects a deal that does not serve Israel's security interests. Israeli officials opposed the 2013 nuclear discussions between Iran and the so-called P5+1 (Germany and the five members since it underscored the full cessation of the nuclear programme. Moreover, Israel preferred further political isolations of Tehran from the International community.¹

After more than a year of secret negotiations between the Obama administration and Iran, the final agreement was reached between major World powers and the Islamic Republic. Opponents of the deal, including Israel and Republican leaders in Congress, criticised the failure of the agreement to halt Iran's nuclear programme. However, the nuclear deal was supported by America's negotiating partners in Europe. In a phone conversation, the American leader told the Israeli Prime Minister that the agreement reduced his concerns over Iran. Nevertheless, Netanyahu stressed that an effective deal would revolve around the full cessation of Iran's nuclear programme and its regional aggression.

Sanctions on Iran's nuclear programme would be lifted in exchange for Iran's compliance with the International Atomic Energy Agency measures.² In his speech on Tuesday, the Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, asked the U.S. to reject the deal with Iran over its nuclear programme, claiming that it would enable Iran to acquire a nuclear weapon instead of preventing it.³ The Prime Minister believes that the deal with Iran is the greatest danger to Israel's security as he claimed that:

*"This deal would legitimize Iran's nuclear program, bolster Iran's economy, and increase Iran's aggression and terror throughout the Middle East and beyond," he told President Obama in a phone call after the US president heralded the "historic" deal. "Such a deal would not block Iran's path to the bomb. It would prove it."*⁴

As Iran and major World Powers signed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on July 14, 2015, Israel fiercely denounced the deal. The Israeli Prime Minister deemed the agreement a "*stunning historic mistake*". The foreign minister at the time, the Yisrael Beytenu party chair, Avigdor Lieberman, compared the deal with the Munich Agreement with Nazi Germany. Moshe Yaalon, then Israeli defense minister, said that the agreement was built on "*lies and deceit*" and that it is a "*tragedy for all who aspire to regional stability and fear a nuclear Iran. . . . Instead of fighting terror with all its might, the free world has granted legitimacy to Iran's hateful, murderous ways.*"⁵

¹ Dalia Dassa Kaye. Israel's Iran Policies After the Nuclear Deal. RAND Corporation (2016) Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.com/stable/resrep02428>

² George, Jahn. "World Powers, Iran Seal Breakthrough Deal." *Telegraph - Herald (Dubuque)* 3 Apr. 2015. *Questia*. Web. 7 Sept. 2015.

³ Justin, Wingerter. "Kansas Delegation Views Netanyahu Favorably." *The Topeka Capital-Journal* 4 Mar. 2015. *Questia*. Web. 7 Sept. 2015.

⁴ Christa Case, Bryant. "Iran Nuclear Deal: Israelis Say West Gave Away Too Much." *The Christian Science Monitor* 3 Apr. 2015. *Questia*. Web. 7 Sept. 2015.

⁵ "Israeli Leaders, Some Jewish Groups Condemn Final Iran Nuclear Deal," Jew-ish Telegraphic Agency, July 14, 2015, <http://www.jta.org/2015/07/14/news-opinion/united-states/israeli-leaders-jewish-groups-condemn-final-iran-nuclear-deal-2>.



In a special cabinet meeting Friday to discuss the deal with intelligence and security chiefs, Netanyahu insisted that any deal with Iran had to involve Iran's recognition of the state of Israel. The main concern of the Israelis was that the deal would allow Iran to continue research and development on advanced centrifuges, which could enable it to enrich weapons-grade uranium in the near future. Yuval Steinitz¹, Israel's outgoing Minister of Strategic Affairs from Netanyahu's Likud party, and the head of the Israeli military's Planning Directorate, declared that military action against Iran's nuclear installations was still on the table, which came to mean in practice that Israel might go to war against Iran. Military analysts and former intelligence officials were concerned that an Israeli strike would not only fail to destroy Iran's programme. Rather, it would result in a regional war that would put the US-Israeli relations at stake.

The Obama administration criticised Netanyahu's endeavours to compel Congress to stop the deal.² More than two-thirds of all House Republicans agreed to a resolution that aimed at thwarting the Iran nuclear deal. They believed that the deal does not completely suspend Iran's nuclear programme and failed to deal with Iran's destabilising activities as well as its human rights record.³ However, President Obama had insisted on the presidential veto to prevent anything from blocking the deal that has the approval of the UNSC.⁴ Many Republicans and many Democrats within Congress sharply denounced the deal since it threatens American and Israeli national security interests. Therefore, President Obama had to influence a skeptical Congress. The speaker of the House, John A. Boehner,⁵ asserted that Congress should examine any deal before lifting sanctions on Iran. President Obama responded by giving the choice as either accepting his deal or risking war. However, reaching a comprehensive agreement with Iran seemed the most promising goal left in Obama's foreign policy agenda.

"Obama always saw the Iranian nuclear threat as a major security challenge that would lead to war if not controlled, and further proliferation if not prevented," said Gary Samore, a former top arms control adviser to Mr. Obama, who is now president of the advocacy group United Against Nuclear Iran.

Obama had been eager to put the U. S. -Israeli relations and his presidency at stake on that premise.⁶ Netanyahu was invited by House of Representatives Speaker John Boehner, one of the adversaries of the deal with Iran. Therefore, President Barack Obama did not meet Netanyahu. President Obama had to take the interests of U.S. allies into account and seek a

¹ Yuval Steinitz (born 10 April 1958) is an Israeli politician who currently serves as a member of the Knesset for Likud and as Minister of National Infrastructure, Energy and Water Resources.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yuval_Steinitz .

²Christa Case, Bryant. "Iran Nuclear Deal: Israelis Say West Gave Away Too Much." *The Christian Science Monitor* 3 Apr. 2015. *Questia*. Web. 7 Sept. 2015.

³Pete, Kasperowicz. "House Republicans Introduce Resolution to Block Obama's Iran Deal." *Examiner (Washington, D.C.)*, *The* 17 July 2015. *Questia*. Web. 7 Sept. 2015.

⁴Charles, Hoskinson. "House Republicans Take Step to Reject Iran Deal." *Examiner (Washington, D.C.)*, *The* 4 Aug. 2015. *Questia*. Web. 7 Sept. 2015.

⁵ John Andrew Boehner (born November 17, 1949) is the current Speaker of the United States House of Representatives. He is a member of the Republican Party. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Boehner .

⁶Peter, Baker. "With Iran Gamble, Obama Faces a Moment of Truth ; Deal Would Be Triumph for President after Many Foreign Policy Frustrations." *International New York Times* 4 Apr. 2015. *Questia*. Web. 7 Sept. 2015.



deal that prevent the progress of Iran's nuclear programme. The U.S. had to reconsider its relations with Israel to preserve the stability of the Middle East.¹

Israel wants to ensure that Iran would not acquire a nuclear weapon and insists that the nuclear impasse could be addressed by several means to prevent Iran from supporting radical groups, destabilising the region, and ensuring Iran's recognition of the Jewish State's existence. There had to be a comprehensive dialogue between Israel and the American administration. A nuclear-armed Iran does not only threaten Israel's security but the whole world peace and stability. Therefore, the international community should deal with this issue.²

George Mitchell believes that the nuclear deal with Iran affects world stability. Providing Iran with the opportunity to continue its nuclear programme threatens Israel's security and undermines the credibility of the nuclear nonproliferation treaty.³ In fact, Israel's fears are unjustifiable. Although it possesses an arsenal of 200-plus nuclear bombs, Israel concerns about Iran's unproven nuclear bomb. Moreover, Pakistan has at about 100 nuclear bombs, Israel only insists on the Iranian threat. Indeed, Israel is concerned more about Iran's regional influence rather than its nuclear programme. Iran's support for non-state actors, including Hamas and Hezbollah against the Jewish state, is the main security challenge for Israel⁴.

Conclusion:

As observed from the literature review of the Israeli-Iranian ties, this study provides an overview of the Israeli-Iranian partnership and the cornerstone that strengthened their close cooperation. It also examines the dimension and major factors contributing to the deterioration of their partnership. This research enhances the understanding of their long-standing hostilities and policies to each other. The partnership between Iran and Israel under the regime of the Shah was strong to the extent that both states extended their political, economic, and military cooperation. The threat of the Soviet Union, along with the threat of pan-Arabism were the push factors that sustained a strong economic, intelligence, and military cooperation between Iran and Israel. However, one can notice that their relationship was vulnerable to external factors, such as Arabs' hostilities. The Shah sought to gain Arab's acceptance and legitimacy of his regime, therefore, he insisted on keeping ties with Israel secret in spite of Israel's complains.

The current investigation highlights the vital role that the fall of the Shah regime and the Islamic Revolution of 1979 had played in shaping the Israeli-Iranian relations. Since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Iran has pursued a new ideology. Iran severed ties to the Jewish state by the 1990s. These countries have entered into decades of ideological opposition and longstanding hostility. Furthermore, Iran has publically announced its rhetoric and fierce opposition to the Jewish state and its policies toward the Palestinians. Tehran has sought to gain the Arabs' acceptance and legitimacy. Moreover, Iran has assisted non-state actors, such

¹ "EDITORIAL: For Sake of Stability in Middle East, U.S. and Israel Should Patch Up Ties." *The Daily Yomiuri (Toyko, Japan)* 9 Mar. 2015. *Questia*. Web. 7 Sept. 2015.

² Herzog, Isaac. "Dividing the U.S. on Israel." *International New York Times* 28 Feb. 2015. *Questia*. Web. 7 Sept. 2015.

³ "Friday, Aug. 14, 2015: Iran Nuclear Deal Flawed, Develop a Skilled Workforce." *Bangor Daily News (Bangor, ME)* 13 Aug. 2015. *Questia*. Web. 7 Sept. 2015.

⁴ Rachele Marshall. "Kerry Faces Down Israel and Its Lobby to Achieve Agreement with Iran." *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* January/February 2014: 8+. *Questia*. Web. 7 Sept. 2015.



as Hamas and Hizbollah by providing military assistance to emerge as a leading Islamic state and the major supporter of the Palestinian case.

In sum, Israel's major concerns with the Iranian nuclear programme and its opposition to the nuclear agreement do not revolve only around Iran's acquisition of nuclear weapons capabilities. Rather, its growing influence in the region and its provocative actions is deemed a security challenge for the Jewish state. In fact, Israel's fears are unjustifiable since Iran's nuclear programme is intended first to ensure regime survival and secure Iran's national security interests. In addition, The Islamic Republic's quest for nuclear capabilities is used as a means of deterring foreign aggressions particularly, regional rivals, and decreasing its political and economic isolation. Its assistance for non-states actors in the region is an endeavour to further extend its leverage, and thus, ensure its national security. Therefore, Israel and Iran are perceived as rivals for regional dominance and status of superpower and their opposition to each other is manifested in their policies and approaches. In addition, Israel is concerned with Iran's rapprochement with Western powers and the international community through the nuclear deal reached in 2015. From Israel's perception, the nuclear agreement does not cope with Iran's destabilising activities in the region as it does not guarantee the full cessation of its nuclear programme. Israelis believe that the deal enables Iran to maintain its programme and lifting economic sanctions will enhance its economy, and thus, its support for non-state actors against Israel.

Hostilities between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Jewish State are fuelled by ideological and geopolitical factors. This means in practice that if both states overcome these restraints, they will enjoy a stable relationship. However, conflict between Iran and Israel is a key issue that influences several other issues in the region. As a result, adopting a pragmatic approach to address this conflict is required to maintain regional peace and stability.

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