



SC: Security Council

Student Officer: Hakan Yaşar

Issue: Ensuring the continuation of the ideas presented in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action





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## I. Introduction

On 1 July 1968, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was signed by 190 nations. The treaty gives the right for only the Permanent 5 (P5) countries —China, France, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, United States— to possess an arsenal of nuclear weapons. However, four countries have not signed this treaty —India, Israel, Pakistan, South Sudan— while North Korea withdrew from the treaty in 2003. The main focus of this report will be Iran and their deal regarding nuclear weaponry with P5 members and the European Union. Although Iran signed and ratified NPT and other treaties regarding the matter such as the Biological Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) together with other nations came to the conclusion that Iran has enough uranium to build an arsenal of nuclear weapons which goes against NPT. Regarding these findings, a deal called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) was signed between the aforementioned parties. The follow-up of this plan will be elaborated on in the upcoming sections of the report.

## II. Involved Countries and Organizations

### The Islamic Republic of Iran

As previously stated Iran has signed and ratified the NPT, meaning that they have agreed not to possess any nuclear weapons and cease any production that they previously might have had. Following their findings, IAEA reported that they were not abiding by the restrictions set in the treaty and they reported this illegal activity to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), and the Council, called upon the cessation of any and all nuclear activity by the Islamic State. However, Iran refused to do so, and therefore, the UNSC imposed sanctions, a move that was highly criticized by Mahmoud Ahmedinejad, the Iranian president at the time, circa 2010. The Iranian government has stated numerous times that their nuclear program is solely for energy reasons (Such positive aspects of nuclear energy will be further elaborated throughout the report). On 3 December 2004, former Iranian president, Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani stated: “God willing, we expect to soon join the club of the countries that have a nuclear industry, with all its branches, except the



military one, in which we are not interested. We want to get what we're entitled to. I say unequivocally that for no price will we be willing to relinquish our legal and international rights. I also say unequivocally to those who make false claims: Iran is not pursuing nuclear weapons, but it will not give up its rights. Your provocation will not make us pursue nuclear weapons. We hope that you come to your senses soon and do not get the world involved in disputes and crises." (Rafsanjani, 2004) Furthermore, numerous fatwas have been released by Iranian Supreme Leaders condemning the usage of nuclear weapons and stating that such weaponry is against the ideals of Islamic law.

Iranian officials have stated the fact that growing economies and highly industrializing nations such as Iran need to benefit from nuclear power as it is very cost-efficient and environmentally friendly.

Since the signing of the JCPOA, Iran has been in compliance with the plan, a fact supported by the IAEA as they have notified that Iran has not been exercising any activities for nuclear weaponry after 2009. Following the United States' withdrawal from the JCPOA in 2018 under the Trump administration, Iran has notified other signatories of the plan that they would continue their uranium enrichment program if the US did not comply with the rules of the original agreement and sanctions were not lifted. Following these harsh sanctions by the US, the Islamic State started to disobey the regulations of the JCPOA, a move that was criticized by Russia and other European signatories. After the signatories' call for Iran to go back to the regulations set in the JCPOA, Iran stated that they are open to further negotiations upon the matter if the US lifts their sanctions once again.

### United States of America

The JCPOA was originally signed during the Obama administration. Prior to the agreement, the US had strict sanctions on Iran, especially regarding their oil trade. One of the most important regulations in the JCPOA was that most sanctions on Iran would be lifted in order to give Iran a chance to recover its economy, a term that was originally approved by the then US administration.

However, since the beginning of his campaign, Donald Trump publicly criticized the JCPOA, stating that it was one of the worst deals that the US has ever made: "The fact is this was a horrible, one-sided deal that should have never, ever been made. It didn't bring calm, it didn't bring peace, and it never will." (Trump, 2018). After being in office for around two and a half years, Donald Trump finally withdrew the US from the JCPOA on 8 May 2018, an action that was highly criticized by Iran and many other nations as previously mentioned.

The JCPOA stated that every 90 days, the president of the US would receive a report from the IAEA regarding the state of Iran's compliance with the treaty. Following Trump's withdrawal, IAEA announced that Iran has been committed to the deal and no irregularities were observed. However, Trump still decided to



nullify the agreement for his country. Because there was no proof supporting Trump's claims regarding Iran's non-compliance, many domestic and international figures started to wonder what Trump's real agenda is.

### European Union

The role of the EU was pretty slim in the JCPOA until the US withdrawal. Their main role was to lift some of the sanctions that they have implemented on Iran. However, after the withdrawal of the US, their involvement increased drastically. Although the US is the EU's biggest ally, the signatories have openly voiced their concerns regarding the US' withdrawal from the JCPOA.

### International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

IAEA was acting as the moderator in this issue. They were the main factor in terms of reporting Iran's nuclear actions. Their reports to the signatories regarding the compliance of Iran were some of the most important documents used for the continuation of the JCPOA. However, they were mostly overlooked by the Trump administration as he decided to withdraw from the deal even though the IAEA stated numerous times that Iran was abiding by the regulation of the agreement.

### Israel

The position of Israel has always been controversial regarding this issue. They have voiced their strong opposition to the Iranian government regarding their stance on nuclear weaponry and have stated that they believe the Islamic State does actually possess an arsenal. They have even threatened to take military action against Iran. The controversial part of Israel's stance on this issue is the fact that they are one of the five nations who are not signatories to the NPT and are believed to be one of the nations in the Middle East with an arsenal of nuclear weapons even though they have denied this accusation numerous times. This claim has been supported by an article published in the Guardian in 2010. The article included South African government documents which alleged that meetings between Israel and South Africa took place regarding nuclear weapons and Israel providing an arsenal for the South African government. According to these documents, the alleged meetings took place in 1975. The information was revealed by former South African naval commander Dieter Gerhardt, who was later imprisoned on the grounds for being a Soviet spy. Furthermore, it is stated that Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu was one of the key factors that led Trump to leave the JCPOA.

## III. Focused Overview of the Issue



## 1. Pros and Cons of Nuclear Energy

The usage of nuclear energy has always been a controversial matter. For the most part, it has been alienated by the public and governments. Hiroshima and Nagasaki —two Japanese cities— were attacked by nuclear weapons by the US in WW2 still come to people's minds when someone mentions the word "nuclear". However, when used for the right reasons, nuclear energy can actually be quite beneficial.

When used as an energy source it is much more environmentally-friendly compared to other alternatives such as fossil fuels. It also has one of the smallest carbon footprints amongst energy sources. Countries' economies will also greatly benefit from a switch from fossil fuels to nuclear energy.

However, there are also negative aspects of this energy type. Perhaps, one of the biggest is the possibility of a mishap and the concern of the public because of it. There are two well-known examples of this which are Fukushima, Japan in 2011, and Chernobyl, USSR in 1986. These are two examples of mishaps that have occurred in nuclear reactors. Although a very rare occurrence, such a disaster is one of the main reasons why nuclear energy is not as widely used as fossil fuels today. Furthermore, although the usage of nuclear energy is cost-efficient, obtaining it is quite the opposite. Building a nuclear reactor is a time and money consuming process, one that not every nation might be able to go through. Furthermore, nuclear energy might be environmentally-friendly, especially compared to fossil fuels; however, it is not a renewable energy source and therefore it is finite. Because of this, renewable energy sources like wind and solar energy are used more widely.

## 2. Why Need a Nuclear Deal?

As previously stated in the report, Iran is a signatory to the NPT, therefore they recognize that they do not have the right to possess an arsenal of nuclear weapons. However, following reports in the early 2010s, it was clear that Iran had enough resources and technology to build a nuclear weapon in less than a year. This finding was a shock to the international stage and the realization that a deal was needed to be made soon followed, hence the JCPOA.

At first, the deal seemed perfect. The world was saved by a nuclear weapons state in the Middle East, and Iran finally had most of its sanctions, which damaged their economy greatly for years, lifted. However, as the stage changed on the other side of the Atlantic, the deal started to lose its strength.

In conclusion, to answer the question in the title, JCPOA was signed because no country outside the P5 can have nuclear weapons according to the NPT. Even the possibility of doing so is enough to alert the international stage and demand an agreement to be reached.



### 3. Why did the US Withdraw?

Although this topic was mentioned in the US section of the report, further elaboration is needed as it is one of the most important milestones for the JCPOA. Trump's resentment towards the JCPOA was nothing new when he announced that the US would be withdrawing from the deal in 2018. He made changing the JCPOA drastically one of his main foreign affairs goals during his campaign. However, if the deal was seen to be beneficial by every other signatory, and the IAEA reported that Iran was abiding by the terms of the deal, then why did Trump make such a decision? This is a valid question that we need to ask and there can be multiple answers, mostly speculations and theories. First of all, it could very well be a typical Democrat-Republican battle as the deal was originally signed by the Obama administration. Discontinuing the actions of their predecessors from the other side of the aisle is nothing new for American politicians. A great example would be Trump's decision to stop the Affordable Care Act. Another reason for Trump's decision with the JCPOA could be outside influences. The US has strong alliances in the region, most notably Israel and Saudi Arabia, and these nations influenced Trump in order to damage Iran's economy. Obviously, these allegations were denied by Israel and Saudi Arabia, and regarding the issue, they just stated that they are in support of the Trump administration with their decision regarding the nuclear deal.

### 4. Following the US Withdrawal

The peaceful conditions that the deal created were damaged. For the first time ever since the deal was made, Iran went offensive and stated that if the conditions of the deal were not met once again, then they would also withdraw from the deal and continue their uranium enrichment program. In order to save the deal and prevent Iran from continuing its nuclear program, the other signatories expressed their devotion to the deal and stated that they still need Iran's full cooperation in order to achieve success with the deal. The EU stated that the JCPOA is a complete deal that does not require further talks at its current stage. Furthermore, following the threats by Iran, Israel stated that they feel a threat to their safety and underlined the fact that they will be willing to take military action against Iran if needed.

### 5. The Current Stage of the Deal

As of 2020, the US is still not a signatory to the JCPOA. Two years after the withdrawal of the US, on January 5, 2020, Iran officially stated that they will no longer be in compliance with the JCPOA. The final nail in the coffin for Iran was US troops killing Iranian Major General Qasem Soleimani. Tensions between Iran and the US are once again extremely high. During the early days of 2020, there was even a matter of threat and a possible war between the two nations. EU nations have stated their support for the JCPOA



before; however, because of the US' actions, they couldn't control the deal from breaking apart.

Furthermore, the preservation of this deal has always been a complicated subject for the EU as the US is one of their biggest allies. It is unclear if the deal will ever go back to its original form.

#### IV. Key Vocabulary

**Nuclear Energy:** The energy released during nuclear fission or fusion, especially when used to generate electricity. This report's main topic is the JCPOA which was created to solve the issue of nuclear energy in Iran. Therefore, all delegates must have a strong understanding of how nuclear energy is created, where it can be used, and what the pros and the cons are.

**Uranium:** The chemical element of atomic number 92, a dense grey radioactive metal used as a fuel in nuclear reactors. Uranium is one of the most commonly used elements for nuclear energy. In order to create a nuclear weapon, an isotope of uranium (uranium-235) is used.

**Sanction:** A threatened penalty for disobeying a law or rule. Sanctions were widely used against Iran and countries that trade with Iran especially by the US and UNSC in order to persuade Iran to cease any possible nuclear weapons arsenal they might have.

**Non-Proliferation:** The prevention of an increase or spread of something, especially the number of countries possessing nuclear weapons.

**P5:** The five permanent members of the United Nations (France, China, Russia, United Kingdom, United States)

**Enrichment:** The act of improving the quality of something, often by adding something to it. The enrichment that is mentioned throughout the report is uranium enrichment which is done by using uranium-235. The element is enriched by going through a process of isotope separation.

#### V. Important Events & Chronology

Date (Day/Month/Year)	Event
February 9, 2010	Iran begins producing 20% enriched uranium
June 9, 2010	UNSC Resolution 1929 passes, imposing further sanctions on Iran.
June 24, 2010	US Congress imposes further sanctions on Iran.
July 26, 2010	The EU imposes further sanctions on Iran



May 8, 2011	Iranian nuclear power plant, Bushehr starts operating.
January 2012	The EU bans all member states from importing Iranian oil.
January 20, 2014	Implementation of the JCPOA begins.
July 14, 2015	The JCPOA is created.
July 20, 2015	UNSC Resolution 2231 passes, in support of the JCPOA, and nuclear sanctions imposed by the UNSC on Iran are lifted.
January 16, 2016	IAEA confirms that Iran is in compliance with the JCPOA.
March 21, 2016	Candidate Trump states that his “number one priority is to dismantle the disastrous deal with Iran.”
May 8, 2018	President Trump withdraws the US from the JCPOA.
June 17, 2019	Iran states that they will exceed the limit of enriched uranium set in the JCPOA.
January 2, 2020	US troops kill Iranian Major General Qasem Soleimani.
January 5, 2020	Iran states that they will no longer be abiding by the rules set in the JCPOA.

## VI. Past Resolutions and Treaties

- [Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action \(JCPOA\)](#)

This is the main issue of this report. The deal between Iran, P5, and the EU regarding Iran's nuclear proliferation.

- [S/RES/2231 \(2015\)](#)

This is a UNSC resolution that endorses the JCPOA and lifts the nuclear sanctions that the UNSC imposed on Iran. The resolution was passed unanimously.

- [S/RES/1929 \(2010\)](#)

Further sanctions on Iran regarding their uranium enrichment program are imposed by the UNSC in this resolution.

## VII. Failed Solution Attempts



In a sense, one can call the JCPOA itself a failed solution attempt. As of writing this report, it has been five years since the JCPOA was signed and the turmoil regarding Iranian nuclear proliferation is still happening. Although the deal's path at the beginning seemed to be quite successful, especially because of the actions of Trump's US, the deal ended up being a failure. However, this does not mean that there isn't a solution to this issue. Further talks between the signatories, especially Iran and the US will help ease the tension and there should definitely be a revised deal on the issue.

## VIII. Possible Solutions

UNSC delegates' primary idea may be to condemn Iran and/or propose possible sanctions. Although these are viable ideas, they have been tried before and they have failed to solve the issue at hand. Therefore, all delegates are urged to write clauses that have not been proposed before or ones they believe can actually be constructive, not destructive. Such clause ideas are as follows:

Further talks between the JCPOA parties can be suggested after the withdrawal of the US. Seeing that the cooperation of Iran can only be achieved if all parties follow their proposals, having the US's support back on the plan is much needed.

Another idea for a clause would be strengthening the reports and inspections made by third parties, especially the IAEA. This can be achieved by increasing funding and personnel. The creation of a new organization might also be a suitable idea. It would be best for this organization to be a UN organization as this makes the process of recruiting, hiring, and inspecting much easier.

For issues like this where national security and sovereignty may be in danger at any moment, the usage of reports becomes highly important. Therefore, the aforementioned organizations can create reports especially regarding uranium mining in Iran. Furthermore, the usage areas of this uranium and other possibly dangerous substances should be monitored closely and should be reported to the UN directly should there be a discrepancy.

## IX. Useful Links

- An in-depth timeline of nuclear diplomacy with Iran:  
<https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/Timeline-of-Nuclear-Diplomacy-With-Iran#2015>
- This is a timeline stating key moments in the history of nuclear diplomacy with Iran. The timeline spans from 1970 to 2020: [https://www.undocs.org/S/RES/1929%20\(2010\)](https://www.undocs.org/S/RES/1929%20(2010))



- This is a UNSC resolution adopted in 2010; which mentions that Iran has not been in compliance with the NPT and IAEA regulations regarding their nuclear weapons program and points out the steps that need to be taken, especially the implication of further sanctions:  
[https://www.undocs.org/S/RES/2231\(2015\)](https://www.undocs.org/S/RES/2231(2015))
- This is a UNSC resolution that was passed in 2015 regarding the steps that need to be taken in order to fully implement the JCPOA, as well as lifting UNSC sanctions that were previously imposed on Iran: <https://www.undocs.org/S/2015/544>
- This is an article stating the current status of the nuclear deal with Iran as of January 2020:  
<https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/what-status-iran-nuclear-agreement>



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