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Chair: Daniel Boehmer

Vice Chair: Virginia Wei

Crisis Director: Michael Shea

UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL
GWCIA XIV

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Dear Delegates,

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you all to GWCIA XIV. I am delighted to be chairing The United Nations Security Council this year. The UN Security Council is arguably the most powerful international political body in existence and the issues it faces are among the most challenging. Taking on the responsibility of such committee has been important to my staff, which has worked hard these past months to ensure we have organized everything appropriately to provide for some excellent debate on this weighty topic over the next few days.

Currently, I am in my final year here at George Washington's Elliott School of International Affairs majoring in International Affairs and concentrating on International Politics, security studies, and the Middle East region. I also study Arabic and am minoring in linguistics. I first got involved in Model UN my freshman year of high school and have been involved in it ever since.

Apart from serving as treasurer of GW's International Affairs Society, the organization which annually hosts this conference, I am also involved in the student government here at GW through the Student Association. In my spare time I enjoy playing the pipe organ, reading history, and traveling to places off the beaten track. I originally hail from Marblehead, Massachusetts on Boston's North Shore.

Our topic is Iran's nuclear ambitions in the first decade of the 21st century. Because the news with regard to this international issue changes daily, the exact time period in which this debate will be taking place will be somewhat flexible. The materials in this packet will give the delegates a good sense of the direction of the debate until around 2006, after which point US policies toward Iran especially have become less defined. Since the Obama Administration's policies toward Iran have not fully been given time to be tested and because of the recent political upheavals in Iran, it will be left to the delegates further to decide what policies they want to bring to the table at the conference and you will be measured by your abiding by the policies written in your positions papers, whether that means direct diplomatic engagement with Iran, "back channel" negotiations, in favor of Iran's right to have nuclear weapons, or against it because of security risks or politics.

As I will reiterate upon your arrival here, my staff and I will be evaluating you all with respect to awards heavily on the basis of your adherence to your country's policy as we understand it to be. We expect this debate to be as realistic as possible. Position papers should include a country's policy on the topic of Iran in its totality. Also remember while writing your papers that the Security Council is not only a recommending body, but can be brought to mandate action by member states.

My staff and I are more than willing to answer any and all questions you may have about The George Washington University, Washington, DC, and anything else you can think of. Also feel free to contact me via email for any questions pertaining to our committee. I look forward to seeing you all at the conference for this international political battle of battles, and best of luck!

Sincerely,

Daniel A. Boehmer

Chair, UNSC

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United Nations Security Council

Iran's Nuclear Ambitions

The issue of Iran's nuclear ambitions has been one of significant concern for the United States in the Middle East since President Ahmadinejad authorized the resumption of uranium enrichment in August of 2005. Iran maintains that a nuclear program is necessary component of its long-term energy needs, while the United States questions whether Iran's ambitions are entirely nonviolent—suspecting that Iran aims to develop a nuclear weapons program using the nuclear facilities it has already constructed. Negotiations between Iran and European nations on the issue have been going on (although with interruptions) for years, with little to show for it in sustained progress. Iran has expelled International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors and maintains that its sovereignty has been infringed upon. Meanwhile, the United States continues to ask how a nuclear capable Iran would affect the War on Terror in the Middle East.

The issue of Iran's nuclear ambitions has the potential to result in a conflict of unprecedented scale in the Middle East. Few nations would deny Iran the right to enrich uranium if it could be guaranteed to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes; however, while many countries continue to believe that an Iran having nuclear weapons capability would be disastrous, others recognize the need to establish a precedent of according Iran the sovereign right to develop its energy independence in any way it deems fit. Detractors of Iran's nuclear ambitious emphasize the consequences could range from a disruption of the power structure in the Middle East, to the threat of a nuclear attack on Israel, or the transference, willing or unwilling, of nuclear weapons to terrorist organizations. It is because of these wide ranging potential

consequences that there are many players who have a unique interest in the conflict. Among these are the United States, Iraq, Israel, several Arab nations in the region, and the European Union Three [EU-3] (comprised of Great Britain, France, and Germany, three European nations who have significant trade relations with Iran). China, and Russia also have great interest in the result of Iran gaining a nuclear weapons arsenal; the latter two nations' unique trade relations with Iran and possible interest in refocusing the balance of power away from the United States and the EU make the conflict all the more complex.

An august understanding of this issue will involve understanding the range of views and policy reactions towards Iran's rationale and defense of its nuclear program in the 21st century, including the study of suggested policy responses to Iran's nuclear program put forward by policymakers, analysts, and members of the international community in response to Iran's justification, which call Iran's supposed motivations into question. The careful analysis of Iran's own justification of its nuclear program, preceded by the context for that justification, will also be examined. All such perspectives will be necessary to propose the means by which to analyze the causes of the conflict and offer up workable and sustainable solutions.

Nuclear Technology Capabilities in 21st Century Iran: An Overview

Iran has in its history had a nuclear program on and off for almost three decades. At present, following the December 2007 National Intelligence Estimate judgment that Iran had discontinued its nuclear *weapons* program in 2003, the issue has continued to remain a heated one. Its civilian nuclear energy program, however, continues and its



one active nuclear power plant, Bushehr I is expected to be in operation this year. This analysis comes as a result of the cotemporaneous judgment that Iran is not completely averse to a decision to develop nuclear weapons, but that a cost-benefit analysis approach to nuclear energy is guiding its decisions regarding acquiring nuclear energy, and possibly later, weapons.

The earlier history of Iran's nuclear program is complex. Originally suspended following the collapse of the Shah's government in 1979, and the subsequent Islamic revolution, the program was restarted in the mid-1980's while Iran was in the midst of the Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988). The issue of nuclear energy rose to international attention in the fall of 2002 when Iran revealed to the International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA], an organization created in the 1950's to promote peaceful use of nuclear technology and to discourage its use in nuclear weapons, that it possessed two previously undisclosed nuclear facilities. Although Iran continually cited its "inalienable right" afforded by Article IV of the Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] "to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes," France, Great Britain, and Germany (the EU-3) negotiated a deal for Iran to temporarily suspend uranium enrichment while resolving Iran's issues with the IAEA in October of 2003.

In December of 2003, Iran agreed to sign on to the Additional Protocol to the NPT, further qualifying the extent to which it could develop its nuclear activities. The Additional Protocol granted IAEA inspectors greater range of operations within Iran in investigating its nuclear program, including greater access to nuclear sites. Regrettably, negotiations and relations with Iran soured in 2004, when Iranian officials

got into conflict with IAEA inspectors over their analysis of Iran's nuclear programs, believing that Iran was unrightfully being incriminated. A year later in 2004, the Paris Agreement was negotiated between Iran and the EU-3, in which agreement Iran agreed to halt nuclear activities. According to Sharam Chubin, director of studies at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy, the agreement looked to address the nuclear problem in a more extensive way that took into consideration the "political, economic, and security context and [implied] U.S. involvement directly or indirectly." The Paris Agreement appeared to be a huge step in negotiations in that it involved the United States and the three key aspects surrounding the causes behind Iran's nuclear ambitions. Unfortunately, it did little more than temporarily improve relations with the West. Iran's approachability in this agreement was contingent only on Tehran's assessment of its diplomatic position at the time. It was only a fear of being reported to the United Nations Security Council [UNSC] that ever kept Iran from resuming enrichment.

According to Dr. Gawdat Bahgat, professor of political science and director of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, discussions of regime change in Iran have resulted in Iran's increasing frustration in negotiations observed by the United States. Iran has resisted engaging to closely in EU negotiations largely as a result of the detached status of the United States, which Iran feels should be engaging with more dedication. The recent signs that Iran will be more involved in discussions surrounding the War in Iraq may lead to more engagement between the United States and Iran.

**Conflicting Priorities: Iran v. US on
Iran's nuclear program**



On February 4, 2006, the IAEA Board of Governors voted 27-3 to refer Iran to the UNSC. In May 2006, Efforts were made by the EU-3 to offer an unprecedented package of incentives including recognition of the Isfahan uranium conversion facility, an international fuel cycle plan with Russia, a new regional political forum to work to assure Iran of its regional security, and most importantly, a declaration of Iran's sovereign freedom to use nuclear technology to peaceful ends. In addition, the U.S.—stepping forward from its normal refusal to participation in negotiations—offered to participate if Iran guaranteed a halt to enrichment at its facilities throughout the country, but Iran refused.

Though the United States demonstrated a willingness to cooperate and participate in negotiations, it agreed to do so only if its goal of ending Iranian enrichment permanently was satisfied. Such a demand from the United States conflicted with Iran's central goal of preserving its sovereignty and continuing its nuclear energy program. If these goals remain fixed, the issue will continue to remain in a dead heat because the goal of ending the nuclear program for the United States and keeping it in place for Iran are in direct conflict.

As the world's sole superpower, however, the United States will need to participate in order for any resolution to be effective. On July 13, 2006, the UNSC passed resolution 1696 giving Iran a deadline of August 31 to discontinue enrichment of uranium. Iran promised a reply by August 22nd, which it delivered, but this reply again reflected Iran's devotion to its central goal of energy self-sufficiency. Iran failed to stop its uranium enrichment and continues to insist that its program is limited to peaceful purposes.

Sovereignty and Nonproliferation: Iran's Defense of its *Right* to a Nuclear Program

Iran has increasingly attempted to justify its nuclear program since its reinitiation in 2005, yet its efforts have been largely counterproductive and have caused more distrust than mutual understanding between Iran and the global community. Despite this, a September 2006 declaration by the Non-Aligned Movement member stated support for Iran's civilian nuclear program for non-weapons purposes. Still, pressure from Western trading partners and allies causes support for Iran's program to continue to be a matter of discussion. Since 2002 when Iran announced it had two previously undeclared nuclear enrichment sites, Iran has increasingly made it a priority to show its rationale for its peaceful nuclear program and frequently emphasizes its commitment to the NPT. President Ahmadinejad himself, in his speech to the UN in September 2006, stated clearly that as a member of the General Conferences of the IAEA and the signatory to the NPT: "All [Iran's] nuclear activities are transparent, peaceful and under the watchful eyes of IAEA inspectors". In his speech, Ahmadinejad portrayed Iran as a cooperative, reasonable, and responsible power dedicated to nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction. He further emphasized Iran's abiding by the IAEA's protocols up to the point when Iran felt its sovereignty in developing a peaceful program was being infringed upon.

Iran has tended to emphasize the good that the nuclear program will do for Iran above all, seeing it as a means to strengthen its economy domestically by reducing its own dependence on refined fossil fuels because of its lack of refineries. Past detractors of Iran's nuclear program, such as the Bush administration, have said, despite



what Iran's true intentions might be—either peaceful or militaristic—an Iran with nuclear technology will have the *potential* to cause an unacceptable disruption in the balance of power in the Middle East.

According to Dr. Bahgat, the reason for the lack of a hegemonic power in the Gulf has largely been due to the geopolitical framework of the Middle East. Iran and Iraq have habitually been the regional actors vying for influence and dominion in the Gulf, and their continual conflict has maintained a balance of power that prevented the emergence of a regional hegemony. The Iran-Iraq conflict explains, to a certain extent, the emergence of nuclear programs prior to its end. Both Iran and Iraq developed or moved towards the development of weapons programs (ranging from chemical and biological to nuclear) during the Iran-Iraq War in the 1990s as a way to defeat an enemy by allowing them to rely less on conventional forces.

Later, after the 2003 U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, which removed Hussein's Iraq as a power in the region, and in 2004, as the domestic situation in Iraq deteriorated, Iran detected that it had the potential to have greater political control of the region and challenge the current distribution of power there. It was because of this, according to Bahgat, that Iran increasingly began to feel that an American presence in Afghanistan (now NATO forces) and Iraq, was unacceptable. From the American perspective, a nuclear-weapons-capable Iran would pose a major threat to the United States by shifting the balance of power in the Middle East towards Iran. Should Iran gain a weapon, it might be able to manipulate the nations surrounding it politically by either threatening them or offering to protect them under its nuclear umbrella. The fact that United States and NATO forces currently occupy two

countries that share borders with Iran is definitely a cause for concern for the current government. Should Iran be able to convince the members of the Security Council that seem less willing to endorse (let alone participate in) the military option, such as Russia and China, that its ambitions are not suspect, Iran might be on the way to avoid a multilateral military threat from the UN. Russia and China see Iran in quite a different light than the United States-EU-3 bloc. As every member of the UNSC has the veto, future negotiations and deals made following the relatively light sanctions imposed in October 2006 may be compromised as has been seen in the past.

Iran's Case for Nuclear Power

Iran has long argued for its need for nuclear energy. Muhammad Sahimi, professor of chemical engineering at the University of Southern California, writes that as a result of Iran's huge population increase, which will likely exceed 100 million by 2025, and the resulting increase in domestic demand for oil, Iran could very well become a net *importer* of oil within ten years, "a huge catastrophe for a nation that obtains 80 percent of its total export earnings and 45 percent of its total annual budget from exporting oil". Sahmini points to the growing trend towards nuclear power, not only in Iran, but also in the United States and Western Europe, as a reason that charges against Iran's nascent program are hypocritical.

One of the most important reasons for skepticism about the nature of Iran's "self-sufficient" nuclear program involves the uranium Iran will be using. As Sharon Squassoni, a specialist in national defense and foreign affairs for the Congressional Research Service has noted, in 2003, Iran was chastised for its failure to report to the



IAEA its importation of uranium from China in 1991. Such actions, which Iran was aware could result in international scrutiny, would not likely be undertaken if Iran could make use of its own uranium. The limited productivity of Iran's uranium mines will eventually mean Iran will become energy dependent on imports of uranium from abroad, something the Iranian government has failed to mention in its quest for energy independence, emphasizing only Iran's commitment against nuclear weapons. In his speech to the United Nations on September 20, 2006, President Ahmadinejad chastised nations with weapons of mass destruction [WMD], describing nuclear weapons as "instruments of coercion and threat" and calling upon nuclear states to be "held accountable" for their actions.

Ahmadinejad's language and message portrayed him as the peacemaker and the United States and Western Europe the role of the unjustified aggressor. This type of stance reflects Ahmadinejad's view that Western governments are being hypocritical in their stance toward nuclear proliferation. The fact remains that the predicament of Iran's nuclear ambitions affects so many different players and has such potentially disastrous results that it necessitates a sustainable and forward-thinking diplomatic, military, or organizationally mandated solution. Knowledge of all of the factors in the development of the situation to the current day will be necessary for a holistic resolution to this conflict.

Bloc Positions:

Many of the bloc positions of key actors and groups can be garnered from a careful reading of this background guide section. The United States' position on Iran's development of a nuclear weapons program,

Questions:

and to a lesser extent the development of a civilian energy program has changed historically. From former President Bush's statement: "I am not going to allow it" to President Obama's calls for further engagement with Iran's leaders and an overall change in rhetoric. Israel's status as a close US ally in the vicinity of Iran has significantly affected the United States' analysis of its security priorities in the Middle East region. A nuclear armed Iran has never even been on the table for the U.S. or Israel, and has made diplomatic discussions surrounding the weapons program, peaceful or not, strained with respect to the United States. Rather than focusing on the implications of a nuclear Iran, historically, administrations focused on preventing it before it becomes a dangerous issue for the United States or its allies.

The EU bloc has consistently engaged Iran more, especially because its commercial interests in Iran are greater as these nations don't have an embargo with Iran. With the further imposition or removal of economic sanctions, however, this tide could change either way.

Developing nations are either allied with Western ones on this issue because of security concerns of having a nuclear armed Iran or they sympathize with Iran's desire to control its own destiny any point to the hypocrisy of the United States and the EU for failing to treat India and Pakistan, China and Russia similarly.

China and Russia themselves are the members of the Security Council least proactive in getting Iran to halt its aspirations for nuclear weapons program. Their bilateral dealings with Iran are viewed with suspicion by many Western nations.



1. What is the significance of the NIE report of December 2007 on this issue and how should this influence nations' policy with regards to Iran?
2. Is the issue of Iran's nuclear program, civilian and/or the potential for a restarted weapons program more importantly an issue of state sovereignty or international security?
3. What is the role of Iran's neighbors in this issue? Specifically, how does the United States military presence in Iran's neighbors of Afghanistan and Iraq play a role?
4. What kinds of "carrots and sticks" are the most appropriate for encouraging Iran to not continue its nuclear program on the same path that it is potentially going to follow? Are such incentives and disincentives an appropriate use of this committee's ability to suggest to the Security Council? Are economic sanctions appropriate solutions to this international issue?

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