



Center for Strategic & Regional Studies

Kabul

Weekly Analysis-Issue Number 111 (March 28-April 5, 2015)

Weekly Analysis is one of CSRS' publications, which significantly analyses weekly economic and political events in Afghanistan and the region. The prime motive behind this is to provide strategic insights and policy solutions to decision-making institutions and individuals in order to help them to design best policies. Weekly Analysis is published in local languages (Pashto and Dari) and international languages (English and Arabic languages).

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Preface

The world major powers (5+1) reached to a framework of understanding with Iran regarding its nuclear program (April 2). The embargos could not prevent Iran not to enrich uranium, but at least it made it come to negotiations table.

The recent deal will turn the tense relations of United States of America and Iran since 1979 Islamic revolution to ordinary one. The deal has oppositions around the world and inside the United States of America.

The deal will limit Iran's nuclear activity to the Natanz Plant and will reduce the number of centrifuges it operates from 19,000 today, to only over 6,104. The Islamic Republic has been promised an end to years of crippling economic sanctions.

Keeping in mind the strained relations of Iran and USA, what are the challenges in the way of the deal? What are the impacts of the deal on the already destabilized region?

In this week's analysis of CSRS, we are trying to find answers to the above posed questions.

The Iran-US Deal & Its Impacts on the Region



For many decades Iranian nuclear program's news have circulated in international news agencies. The USA and Iran have been busy in talks with each other regarding Iran's nuclear program. But the process has been accelerated since Mohammad Hassan Rouhani reached the power. Now, after 18 months of talks, both sides forge a mutually acceptable agreement.

The deal on Iran's nuclear program has intensely disturbed the balance of power in the region and also it has great impacts on international politics.

A review of Iran's nuclear program

The nuclear program of Iran was launched in the 1950s with the help of the United States as part of the Atoms for Peace program. The cooperation was changed when US gave five megawatt research reactor. During 50s Iran enjoyed friendly relations with the United States and Tehran was attributed as the policeman of US interests in the region.

In 1979 Raza Shah Pahlavi formed Iran's atomic energy organization and he expected to produce 23000 megawatt electricity, but with the Islamic Revolution of 1979, the relations of Iran and US suspended due to few reasons:

1. The Islamic revolutionaries criticized US and the west;
2. The diplomat's hostage crisis;
3. The embargos against Iran.

With the deterioration of the relations, US stopped its Aid to Iran, though it had a peaceful nuclear program. Besides, Iran was dragged in a nine-year-old devastating war with Iraq. Most of the thinkers believe that at this time Iran decided to have nuclear program to safeguard its security.

According to IAEA, Iran received some technical assistance from Abdul Qadir Khan in 1987. In the 90s, the United States imposed some embargos on Iran and it was increased during 2002-2014. In this period, Iran opted for negotiations, but the process faced certain difficulties. However, the two sides could not reach any agreement.

When Hassan Rouhani reached the power in 2013, the negotiations started once again and it was the first time in the last two decades that the two leaders had a telephonic conversation.

Initially, when Rouhani came to power, the United States and Iran forged a six months short-term agreement. According to it, Iran could not enrich uranium for six months and US will not impose any further embargos.

On April 3 Iran and 5+1 reached to and agreed framework in *Lausanneof, Swiss*.

How far the deal is to be successful?

During the history, each president of the United States made efforts to have great achievements. President Obama also wants to make a history and the deal with Iran is not an ordinary development.

Besides, the Iranian economy was crippled due to ex-president Ahamadi Nejad's policies which faced Iran with embargos. Therefore, President Rouhani is determined to materialize the deal so that the sanctions will be lifted.

Another reason which will help the deal to be successful, is the decrees of two high level Iranian clerics (Akhunds) who gave against the atomic bomb. In 1996, the then supreme leader, Ayatullah Khumani gave such a decree. And another decree was released by Mohammad Khatami opposing the atomic bomb. Iranians have also indicated the

decrees as proof that they are not willing to make atomic bomb, rather they just pursue their nuclear program for peaceful purposes.

The Impacts of the Deal on the Region

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Israel are the two major countries of the region who have already opposed any such deal. Israel has accused Iran of supporting Hamas, several times. Moreover, Israel and Iran are regional rivals. Saudi Arabia has also strategic and ideological rivalry with Iran in middle-east. Israel has already expressed its opposition to the deal many times.

It is in the interest of the United States to forge a deal with Iran, because the United States is not going to be part of an agreement which will help Iran build atom bomb. The deal will postpone the hope of Iran to have nuclear weapons.

The lifting of sanctions will make Iran powerful once again and to be more active in regional and international politics. Iran will increase its business with the world and foreign investment will also increase to the large extent in Iran when the sanctions are lifted.

Moreover, the economy of Iran will get back to its ordinary situation which is not acceptable for Saudi and Israel, because, the boost in Iranian economy will mean increase in Iran's influence in middle-east.

Although the deal will have good implications for Pakistan. It will enable the country to start business with Iran and the gas pipeline Iran-Pak-India project will be on the table once again. It is said that Pakistan left the project due to US pressures.

The deal will make a good environment for Afghanistan as well, as Iran will get involved in some economic projects with Afghanistan like (China-Afghanistan-Iran gas pipeline). On the other hand, Iran will be involved in a sort of rivalry with Afghanistan, because both countries are interested to be part of the pipelines. The other scenario is, if Iran is not prevented from making nuclear weapons, it will threaten Afghanistan's security as well. In such a case, Afghanistan will be surrounded by nuclear weapons. Its two neighbors already own them.

Lausanne Talks and the Future of Iran's Nuclear Program



The fourth round of talks between Iran and 5+1 group of the world's major powers was scheduled to bear fruit until the 31st of March, but the deadline has been extended twice, because the members' conversation with the media had expressed that the negotiations were having difficulties. Abbas Iraqchi, the deputy foreign minister of Iran in his last short conversation before the final agreement expressed dim prospects of positive talks. Finally, the talks reached to a framework of understanding on April 2nd.

History of Sanctions and the Differences with the US

If we look back to the history of Iran's nuclear program it dates back to "Shah's" era, when for the first time the nuclear program of Iran was established with apparently peaceful means. As Iran was a close ally of west and Israel in that time, there was no pressure for its program.

In that time, Iran's neighbor Iraq had some border dispute with Iran and SadadmHussain also started a nuclear program. As a result, the nuclear technology rivalry started between the two countries.

After the success of Islamic Revolution (1979), Iran involved in a catastrophic war with Iraq. As a result, Iraqi aircrafts targeted the Boshar nuclear power station. From the other side, Israel assumed Iraq more dangerous foe and attacked Iraq's nuclear power station which was completely dismantled.

After the war, Iran resumed its nuclear program covertly. The United States came to know about Iran's nuclear program in 1981. Since then, the pressures increased on Iran to abandon its nuclear program. The most effective ones were sanctions on Iranian bank, which used to handle financial give-and-take with the outside world. The sanction limited the oil selling of Iran.

The Zionist powerful lobby in the United States created big barriers in the way of nuclear program and faced Iran with many sanctions which proved very costly to Iran. Though Iran wanted to make it clear to the world that its nuclear program is for peaceful means, the foes of Iran did not accept the allegation.

The Iranians wanted to get benefit of the emerged opportunities so that the United States will show a green light. The invasion of Afghanistan by the United States in 2001 provided this opportunity to Iran. Iran gave its air to Americans, but instead of gratitude, President Bush called Iran the Axis of Evil.

It was not just Israel that assumed Iran's nuclear program a threat for its security. Gulf countries and Saudi Arabia also opposed the program. It was thought as if Iran once gets nuclear power, then no one can stop it. Having nuclear weapons make a country safe from any sort of foreign invasions.

Internal Differences on the Deal with 5+1

Only supreme leader Ayatullah Khameneae managed the nuclear program of Iran for its sensitivity. With regard to talks with the west, there are two views inside Iranian political elite: a conservative group is of the view that not agreeing is better than a bad agreement. But the reformists think that a bad agreement is better than no agreement. Although the supreme leader is inclined to the conservatives, in this case he invited them for silence to see the outcome of talks.

The Lausanne talks

After 18 months of talks between Iran and 5+1 major powers, two sides forged a framework of understanding finally. The agreement was warmly welcomed by many in Iran. According to the deal, Iran will cut off some of its centrifuges to make sure they will not be able to make a nuclear bomb, The United States and EU will lift their sanctions once the tasks are fulfilled.

The tasks include:

- Removing the core of heavy water reactor at Arak, rendering it inoperable.
- Agreement to the application of an additional protocol, a regime of enhanced inspections carried out by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).
- Cutting Iran's installed centrifuges from about 19,000 to over 6,000, of which slightly more than 5,000 would be used for enrichment. The remaining 13,000 would be disabled and put under IAEA seal.
- Reduction of Iran's stockpile of low-enriched uranium (LEU) from more than eight tonnes to just 300 kg, either by dilution or export.
- Cooperation with an IAEA investigation into the evidence of past work on nuclear weaponisation, specifically the granting access for inspectors to the suspected sites and people.

Once the conditions have been fulfilled, the EU oil embargo and other economic and financial sanctions would be lifted, as well as the block on Iran using the Swift system for international electronic banking. In coordination with the EU, Barack Obama would issue waivers on corresponding US sanctions. US and European sanctions would have to be lifted together because the US measures are extra-territorial, so would punish European companies for dealing with Iran.

Conclusion

Israel and Arab countries are concerned that the agreement on nuclear program will provide Iran more opportunities to intervene into other countries. Now, Arab countries have formed an Arabic association against Iran.

Mansour al-Bogami, a Saudi researcher writes in Al-Jazeera:

“A nuclear deal with Tehran, from the Saudi perspective, means two things: Iran will have the ability to improve its economic standings, and the capability to create a nuclear weapon - since the deal will only take effect for a relatively short period of time of 15 years, and will not destroy Iran's technical capabilities to maintain a nuclear programme. Both results would strengthen Iran and its allies in the region.”

The fear in Israel is that Iran's development of any nuclear technology will move it closer to becoming a nuclear threshold state, capable of developing a bomb at short notice should its interests be threatened.

The End

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