

GLOBAL DIALOGUE

nuclear perils

Contents

	iii
<i>Editor's Note</i>	
<i>Prospects for Preventing Nuclear Proliferation</i>	1
DAVID KRIEGER	
<i>Bush and the Bomb: Undermining Non-Proliferation</i>	11
NATALIE J. GOLDRING	
<i>Navigating the Second Nuclear Age: Proliferation and Deterrence in the Twenty-First Century</i>	22
C. DALE WALTON	
<i>A Cloak for Proliferators? The Suspicions That Impede a Nuclear Weapons Convention</i>	32
TANYA OGILVIE-WHITE	
<i>Understanding and Stopping Nuclear and Radiological Terrorism</i>	44
CHARLES D. FERGUSON AND JOEL O. LUBENAU	
<i>Terrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction: How to Prevent the Deadly Nexus</i>	59
ALISTAIR MILLAR	
<i>Iran and the West: The Path to Nuclear Deadlock</i>	69
SEYYED HOSSEIN MOUSAVIAN	
<i>Rhetoric for War: First Iraq, Then Iran?</i>	80
CYRUS SAFDARI	
<i>The Korean Conundrum: A Regional Answer to the Nuclear Crisis</i>	93
WADE L. HUNTLEY	
<i>Israel's Open Secret: Time to Confront the Taboo</i>	103
AKIVA ORR	
<i>Nuclear Favouritism: Bush, India, and Pakistan</i>	111
RAJU G. C. THOMAS	
<i>Britain's Trusty Trident? Neither Independent nor a Deterrent</i>	121
KATE HUDSON	
<i>A. Q. Khan's Nuclear Hubris</i>	130
CHRISTOPHER CLARY	

to an exclusively academic audience. Articles approximately five thousand words in length in a readable, non-technical style. Footnotes kept to a minimum. Articles may be sent by e-mail to the editor at the following address: dialogue.org

Articles may be sent on IBM-compatible disk with accompanying printout to the editor, Box above. Manuscripts will not be returned.

Dialogue is abstracted or indexed in the *Journal of Bibliography of the Social Sciences*, *PAIS*, *Sociological Abstracts*, *Social Services and Linguistic & Language Behavior Abstracts*.

Centre for World Dialogue
10-0590

Dr. Moussalli, Associate Professor of Political Science, American University of Beirut

Dr. ... Professor of Sociology and ... of the Department of Sociology, ... University of Padova, Italy

Dr. ... former French ambassador to Turkey ... *Le Monde Diplomatique*

Dr. ... Professor of Political Science and Director ... Centre for Middle Eastern and Central Asian ... Australian National University

Dr. ... Senior Member of the ... Institute for ... Research, Tehran

Dr. ... Professor of Economics at the University of ... and Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State ... University, US

Iran and the West: The Path to Nuclear Deadlock

SEYYED HOSSEIN MOUSAVIAN

Iran's present situation regarding its nuclear policies is subject to the relative influence of the Islamic Republic's relationships with Europe and with the United States. Since the days of Iran's difficulties with the West in the 1990s, Europe and the United States have taken markedly different stands. In the immediate aftermath of the Iran-Iraq War, aggressively launched by Iraq, Iran made active efforts to cultivate better relations with Europe. Iran in particular attempted to develop its relationship with Britain, France and (West) Germany, the three states which currently constitute the European Union troika, the EU-3, which has been negotiating with Iran on nuclear issues. France and Britain are both recognised nuclear-weapon states, while Germany was the country Iran turned to for nuclear technology to complete its nuclear reactor at Bushehr after the severance of its relations with the United States. Iran's relations with Germany, where the present author was privileged to serve as the Islamic Republic's ambassador from 1990 to 1997, were based on a long mutual history of trade and cultural exchange. These ties contrasted with the difficulty of Iran's relations with the United States, which began with the Islamic Revolution.

Seyyed Hossein Mousavian is adviser to the secretary of Iran's National Security Council, and deputy for international issues at the Center for Strategic Research in Tehran. He was previously the senior nuclear negotiator for Iran in talks with the European Union and general director for western Europe in the Iranian foreign ministry.

Europe's 'Critical Dialogue'

Iran's relations with Europe faltered, however, during the course of the 1990s, for a number of reasons. The European Union and its member states had long viewed with some concern Iranian attitudes in the field of human rights. Britain was particularly concerned because of the *fatwa*, or religious decree, issued by Ayatollah Khomeini in February 1989, declaring it legitimate to seek the death of the British writer Salman Rushdie because of the content of his book, *The Satanic Verses*. This led to a brief break in diplomatic relations between Britain and Iran.

In addition, there was a wave of terrorist attacks on opponents of the Islamic Republic abroad, especially in Europe. In the case of Germany, relations were strained in September 1992 when four Kurdish-Iranian dissidents were murdered in the "Mykonos" restaurant in Berlin. An attempt was made to resolve these difficulties by instituting the so-called "critical dialogue" at the EU summit in Edinburgh in December 1992, when the European Union expressed the view that Iran's importance in the Middle East justified the maintenance of a dialogue with Tehran, but one that reflected concern about Iranian behaviour.

The United States did not associate itself with this move, not only expressing dissatisfaction with Iran's human rights record, but also voicing allegations over Iran's attitude to the development of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and its stance on the Middle East

peace process. The critical dialogue faltered in 1997, when the verdict of the Berlin court investigation into the Mykonos affair asserted that senior Iranian officials were implicated in planning the attack and had implicitly approved its execution. However, diplomatic efforts on both sides resulted in the restoration of the diplomatic process.

Iran's Need for Nuclear Power

Broadly, it could be said that the differences of opinion over Iran between Europe and the United States in the 1990s have contributed directly to their differences of approach to Iran's nuclear programme. The United States, in attempting to justify its opposition to Iran's peaceful nuclear programme, asks why Iran seeks to develop nuclear power for civil use, when its exports of oil and gas show that it already has plentiful energy resources. US government spokesmen have repeatedly raised this issue. On 24 June 2004, US under-secretary of state John R. Bolton, addressing the House International Relations Committee on the Middle East and Central Asia, said of Iran's nuclear programme that

No comparable oil-rich nation has ever engaged, or would be engaged, in this set of activities—or would pursue them for nearly two decades behind a continuing cloud of secrecy and lies to IAEA [International Atomic Energy Agency] inspectors and the international community—unless it was dead set on building nuclear weapons.

It might be noted that the United States does not challenge the right of other oil-rich countries to develop their nuclear resources. It should be stressed, however, that Iran's search

for nuclear power is nothing new, and that it is being undertaken for very good reasons, developed below.

It must be repeated that Iran also emphasises a number of basic issues in relation to its membership of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and its nuclear activities. Prime among these is that Iran, like all other parties to the NPT, has an inalienable right to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, and has a right to access nuclear material, equipment and information. No further or special justification is required by any state to pursue an inalienable right conferred by the NPT. Iran cannot accept that its membership of the NPT places it in a different position from that of other members. Iran wishes to exercise its right to employ nuclear technology in the fields of medicine, industry and agricultural science, as do other states. Most crucially, however, Iran's principal concern is its need to develop nuclear technology for use in generating energy.

Iran has sought to diversify into nuclear power since the era of the late shah, at a time when the policy enjoyed American endorsement. The NPT was ratified by Iran in March 1970, after which Iran embarked legitimately on civil nuclear research as provided for under Article IV of the treaty. In the early 1970s, an American study concluded that Iran would require by 1990 an electrical capacity of twenty thousand megawatts and recommended that steps should be embarked upon to achieve this goal. At the time, it appeared that, despite Iran's energy capacity, this target could be reached only by utilising nuclear power. In the early 1970s, according to declassified US government documents, the United States encouraged the shah to acquire a number of nuclear reactors. Only seven months before the Islamic Revolution, the

final draft of a United States agreement was signed, which promote and regulate co-operation in nuclear technology. After the course, American assistance forthcoming.

Iran's nuclear programme entirely concerned with the power. Its current rationale is production for export in order to ability to earn foreign exchange; energy requirements necessitate consumption of more than half a million tonnes of oil per year. Meanwhile, Iran's domestic production continues to grow, in proportion to the implementation of the country's development plans. At its current rate, Iran will need at least an additional 10,000 megawatts of electricity in fact urgently seeks a nuclear generation capacity of a further 10,000 megawatts. If it fails to identify resources within its borders, energy consumption will eventually absorb the country's entire oil production assuming that production remains at its present level. This would have a mental economic consequence: the main revenue is Iran's principal source of foreign exchange, a situation unlikely to change in the near future. Indeed, in the worst case, Iran could become an importer of oil.

A further consideration is the energy processed by Iran's developing industry, offering the possibility of a potentially greater added value than the export of oil. In the shorter term, it is possible for Iran to exploit its abundant fossil-fuel resource, natural gas, at a lower cost of development and operation than required for full exploitation. It is clear: the generation of energy

nothing new, and that it is for very good reasons,

ted that Iran also emphasized nuclear activities. Prime Iran, like all other parties, has an inalienable right to nuclear purposes, and has a right to nuclear material, equipment and other or special justifications for any state to pursue an activity not referred by the NPT. Iran's membership of the NPT has put it in a different position from that of other states which wish to exercise its nuclear technology in the industrial and agricultural sectors. Most crucially, the principal concern is its need to develop nuclear technology for use in gener-

to diversify into nuclear energy. At the end of the late shah, at a time when he had enjoyed American endorsement, the NPT was ratified by Iran in March 1970. Iran then embarked legitimately on a nuclear program as provided for under the NPT. In the early 1970s, an analysis concluded that Iran would need an electrical capacity of 10,000 megawatts, and recommended that it should be embarked upon immediately. At the time, it appeared that to meet this energy capacity, this target could be met only by utilising nuclear energy. In the 1970s, according to declassified documents, the United States advised the shah to acquire a number of nuclear reactors. Only seven years after the Islamic Revolution, the

final draft of a United States–Iran nuclear agreement was signed, which was intended to promote and regulate co-operation on civil nuclear technology. After the revolution, of course, American assistance was no longer forthcoming.

Iran's nuclear programme has been and is entirely concerned with the generation of power. Its current rationale is to free oil production for export in order to enhance Iran's ability to earn foreign exchange. Iran's present energy requirements necessitate the domestic consumption of more than half its oil production. Meanwhile, Iran's domestic needs continue to grow, in proportion to the progressive implementation of the country's economic development plans. At its current growth rate, Iran will need at least an additional two thousand megawatts of electricity each year. Iran in fact urgently seeks a nuclear-power generation capacity of a further seven thousand megawatts. If it fails to identify new oil resources within its borders, Iran's domestic energy consumption will within a few years absorb the country's entire oil production, assuming that production remains constant at its present level. This would have highly detrimental economic consequences, since oil revenue is Iran's principal source of foreign exchange, a situation unlikely to alter in the near future. Indeed, in the worst-case scenario, Iran could become an importer of oil.

A further consideration is that oil can be processed by Iran's developing petrochemical industry, offering the possibility of substantially greater added value than from the simple export of oil. In the shorter term, it is not feasible for Iran to exploit its abundant alternative fossil-fuel resource, natural gas, because of the costs of development and the timescale required for full exploitation. The conclusion is clear: the generation of energy from nuclear

power plants makes good economic sense. It should be borne in mind that Iran has been investing in nuclear development for thirty years, and that it is of the greatest importance to carry this investment through to fruition, thus realising the desired objective of providing Iran with the larger and more consistent foreign income resulting from the ability to sell a greater portion of its oil supply on the foreign market over a longer period.

Uranium Enrichment

As to why Iran is developing the technology of uranium enrichment, at the project based at its nuclear facility at Natanz, south of Tehran, the reasons lie in the inadvisability for Iran of allowing its nuclear programme to remain at the level of building only light-water reactors, such as that at Bushehr, and of continuing to rely excessively on international assistance. Iran's experience of international co-operation in the construction of nuclear power plants has not been a happy one. The construction of the one thousand-megawatt reactor at Bushehr has taken the international community—first the United States, then Germany, and now Russia—some thirty years. In the light of Iran's historical experience, therefore, there are strong reasons why Iran should rely on its own indigenous nuclear technology to produce the nuclear fuel it needs for its own legitimate purposes, especially since this technology and this field of nuclear activity are entirely permissible under the terms of the NPT. Iran's enrichment programme for the production of fuel is conducted under the stringent regime of safeguards and additional inspections laid down by the Additional Protocol prescribed by the IAEA and signed by Iran in December 2003. Iran is also prepared to provide any further assurances which may be required that its

activities in this field will continue to be restricted to peaceful purposes, precisely as is the case with other states which conduct active fuel-enrichment programmes.

It should be noted that the heavy-water nuclear reactor Iran plans at Arak, which is only a forty-megawatt research reactor, is at a very early stage of design. The criticism has been made that heavy-water reactors are too costly for power generation, but can be used to produce plutonium for nuclear weapons. However, Tehran reaffirms the civilian nature of this project and stresses its role in legitimate research. When Iran first embarked on its research projects in the field of nuclear technology, it was initially uncertain whether either its uranium-enrichment programme or the production of heavy water would be successful. In the event, both were successful, and Iran now has the technology to produce heavy water. Consequently, Iran has taken the decision to construct this forty-megawatt research reactor, which is specifically designed to produce radioisotopes for research purposes. Many non-nuclear-weapon states legitimately possess such heavy-water reactors, which are generally easier to construct and operate compared to other types of reactor. In addition, Iran sees no legal constraints under the NPT against peaceful applications of nuclear technology such as this project, which moreover is being carried out under the full safeguards provided for by the Additional Protocol. Iran puts greater priority on self-sufficiency in producing the radioisotopes it may need for research purposes than on the manner in which they are produced, whether by light-water or heavy-water technology.

Iran, the IAEA, and the EU-3

The present deadlock over Iran's nuclear programme arose following a number of prior

developments. After the revelation in early 2003 of the level of Iran's existing capability in the development of the nuclear fuel-cycle, the issue was referred to the IAEA's Board of Governors. The latter's imposition of additional controls immediately transformed Iran's fuel-cycle capability into an international issue. Iran was requested to co-operate actively with the demands of the IAEA in addressing and clarifying questions about its nuclear activities and to sign the Additional Protocol, with the effect of subjecting Iran to measures of control and surveillance not applied to other NPT parties. Iran was also required to suspend its uranium-enrichment and related activities. Iran rejected these demands, which aroused a level of concern, both in Iran and among the international community, since a regional and indeed an international crisis could have arisen had the issue been referred, as threatened, to the United Nations Security Council in November 2003.

The visit to Iran on 21 October 2003 of the troika of the foreign ministers of France, Germany and Britain, the EU-3, resulted in the Tehran Declaration, raising hopes that a peaceful resolution to the crisis could be agreed. In this declaration, Iran agreed to extend its full co-operation to the IAEA, to present the latter with a full report of its past and present nuclear activities, whether previously declared or not, and to sign and implement on a provisional basis the Additional Protocol. Iran notified the IAEA of its willingness to sign the Additional Protocol on 10 November 2003, informing it on the same date of its agreement voluntarily to suspend its uranium-enrichment activities, and inviting the IAEA to verify for itself that the suspension had indeed taken place. In return for Iran's commitments, the EU-3 agreed to help Iran resolve its special difficulties within the

IAEA, to initiate a programme of practical co-operation with Iran to eliminate WMD from the region.

In Iran's view, the reappointment of the former director-general, Mohamed ElBaradei, in November 2003 took an optimistic tone, implying that the breach of the NPT. However, the statement of 20 November 2003, in its objective position, reflected the fact that there was no link between the NPT and undeclared nuclear activities. The statement established a number of agreed facts relating to Iran's nuclear programme. Among the facts were the following:

- Iran conceded that some of the research had been undertaken at a level that could be used for converting uranium oxide to a gaseous compound required for enrichment. Much of this research, however, had been in the public domain, having been published in university dissertations and theses.
- Iran agreed that it had imported several hundred tonnes of imported uranium, but had, however, been under the obligation to declare and only fifty kilograms of uranium had been enriched.
- Iran had in fact provided details of its plans for a uranium enrichment facility, which was still not operational. As regards the laser enrichment contract had been signed with the Islamic Revolution with a US company, the contract technique, but only laboratory-scale work had been undertaken.
- Regarding centrifuge uranium enrichment, existing activity was much less than claimed. Only 10 machines had

the revelation in early Iran's existing capability of the nuclear fuel-cycle, I to the IAEA's Board of r's imposition of addi- mediately transformed ability into an interna- requested to co-operate mands of the IAEA in ying questions about its l to sign the Additional ect of subjecting Iran to l and surveillance not T parties. Iran was also its uranium-enrichment s. Iran rejected these sed a level of concern, g the international com- nal and indeed an inter- ave arisen had the issue reatened, to the United ncil in November 2003. n 21 October 2003 of the nisters of France, Ger- ie EU-3, resulted in the raising hopes that a to the crisis could be eration, Iran agreed to eration to the IAEA, to h a full report of its past activities, whether previ- ;, and to sign and imple- al basis the Additional ed the IAEA of its will- dditional Protocol on 10 rming it on the same t voluntarily to suspend nt activities, and inviting or itself that the suspen- en place. In return for the EU-3 agreed to help al difficulties within the

IAEA, to initiate a programme of technological co-operation with Iran, and to work with it to eliminate WMD from the region.

In Iran's view, the report of the IAEA's director-general, Mohamed ElBaradei, of 10 November 2003 took an unnecessarily negative tone, implying that Iran had been in breach of the NPT. However, his further statement of 20 November 2003 took a more objective position, reflecting more clearly the fact that there was no link between Iran's hitherto undeclared nuclear activities and any kind of nuclear-weapons programme. The statement established a number of mutually agreed facts relating to Iran's uranium-enrichment programme. Among Iran's hitherto undeclared, but nonetheless legitimate, activities were the following:

- Iran conceded that substantial research had been undertaken at laboratory level in converting uranium oxides to UF₆, the compound required for enrichment by centrifuge. Much of this research, however, was in the public domain, having been published as university dissertations and theses.

- Iran agreed that it held some five hundred tonnes of imported uranium oxide. This had, however, been under IAEA safeguard, and only fifty kilograms of it had so far been enriched.

- Iran had in fact provided the IAEA with details of its plans for a uranium-enrichment facility, which was still not functional in 2003. As regards the laser enrichment of uranium, a contract had been signed before the Islamic Revolution with a US company to provide this technique, but only laboratory activities had been undertaken.

- Regarding centrifuge enrichment, Iran's existing activity was much below operational level. Only 10 machines had been installed

and tested, and not even a single cascade of 164 machines had yet been installed. It should be noted that a very large array of such centrifuges is necessary to fulfil the requirements of a single nuclear power plant. Moreover, the maximum enrichment potential of Iran's projected installation would be 3.5 per cent, while weapons-grade uranium requires greater capacity.

- Finally, plutonium separation had taken place only in the laboratory, and had in any case ceased in 1992.

A number of related issues of detail were raised by the IAEA in 2004. Further suspensions of Iran's uranium-enrichment activities were requested, and Tehran was required to provide more details. These included a request to explain the presence of traces of highly enriched uranium found in Iran's facilities, and the use of advanced P-2 centrifuges, which facilitate the enrichment of uranium to weapons grade. However, the IAEA has accepted that major progress has been made on resolving how Iran's facilities came to be contaminated with high-grade uranium. It was thus accepted that the traces found did not indicate contamination occurring in Iran, but derived from previous use of the equipment in another country. This is a key conclusion, from which it follows that Iran's statements on this issue have been accurate and that Iran is not conducting a military nuclear programme. In order finally to determine the issue of contamination, all imported centrifuge components obtained through intermediaries would need to be traced back to their origins, establishing where such components were manufactured, used and stored. Iran does not at present have access to this information, but is co-operating with the IAEA and with third countries to establish the relevant facts.

its back on legitimate
t have emerged in the
ry of struggle, which
mposed upon it by the
wers since the Islamic

the demand is being
le its inalienable rights
rehest of foreign states
olitical considerations
tively to Iran and not to
ave achieved a com-
le. For a multiplicity of
ptable to Iran. It has,
the EU-3 to provide
elating to the peaceful
ent programme. More
Iran's acceptance of the
ocol, Iran continues to
ssurances that its pro-
al nature.

say that Iran's nuclear
response to perceived
other states, such as
threat arising from the
and Afghanistan. It is
ct to adduce the exist-
s evidence that Iran is
-weapons programme.
cerned by the fact that
stantial nuclear arsenal,
of nuclear weapons
ars on this score. Simi-
regarding the US mili-
gion would in no way be
ssess nuclear weapons.
ear weapons would nei-
security nor in reality
of security enjoyed by
has been suggested that

the nuclear-weapons capacity of India and Pakistan constitutes a reason why Iran might also wish to become a de facto nuclear-weapon state. Neither, India nor Pakistan, however, presents any strategic threat to Iran, nor are their weapons liable in any conceivable circumstances to be deployed against the Islamic Republic.

In terms of the broader security issues, Iran is the only country in the Middle East which has signed not only the NPT but also the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention. Iran has accepted the maximum level of commitment not to develop WMD. Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention have expressed their satisfaction with the level of Iran's compliance.

Iran agreed to the IAEA's request for inspections to the extent of some one thousand person-days of onsite inspection in 2004. It has opened civilian sites to inspection on request, as well as providing access to military installations. This level of access is unique in the history of the IAEA, and has previously neither been requested nor granted in the case of any other state that is party to the NPT. These considerations are themselves a telling response to the accusation levelled primarily by the United States that Iran seeks to develop non-conventional weapons, including nuclear weapons, and especially to the wildest accusations that Iran is seeking to marry nuclear warheads to long-range missiles.

The United States should also bear in mind that the best way to ensure full international compliance with the NPT is not to request the IAEA to exceed its provisions regarding the activities of any member state. Any such imposition of supplementary requirements serves only to weaken the NPT in the long run. Full commitment by both Iran and the United States to the provisions of the

NPT would in itself be a route towards a reduction of tensions and the resolution of nuclear differences between the two countries. If such differences remain unresolved, the bilateral, regional and international situations can only become more difficult.

Finally, Iran does not intend at any stage to declare itself a nuclear-weapon state, nor could this become the policy of the Islamic Republic. Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, pronounced a *fatwa* as long ago as 1996 against the development, production or use of nuclear weapons, expressing a reservation only over Iran's right to continue its efforts in the field of peaceful nuclear technology. On 13 September 2004, an Iranian foreign ministry spokesman drew attention to the continuing validity of this *fatwa*, ahead of the IAEA Board of Governors meeting of that date, and Ayatollah Khamenei made a point of publicly reaffirming his stand against nuclear weapons in a sermon delivered in Tehran on 5 November 2004. Public opinion is of course a factor in this matter, and it is clear that some Iranians believe Iran should develop nuclear weapons as a safeguard against regional threats against the country. However, it should be understood that the pronouncement of such a *fatwa* by the Supreme Leader already carries more weight with the Iranian people than any international agreement. Iran is in fact prepared to shoulder the responsibility for leading a movement to ban WMD from the Middle East and to eliminate nuclear weapons from the region, since it believes that this is the best way to obtain security for itself. Iran says "yes" to peaceful nuclear technology, but "no" to nuclear weapons. Iran has no difficulty now or in the future over declaring its commitment to transparency, co-operation, commitment and engagement in this entire field.

IAEA reports already indicate that many aspects of these issues have been resolved, but the agency continues to request minor clarifications, particularly regarding Iran's use of the newer P-2 centrifuges. It should be pointed out that Iran's work with P-2 centrifuges has not gone beyond the preliminary stages.

In relation to the demand by the EU-3 that Iran suspend its uranium-enrichment programme, Iran's position was that it had fulfilled its part of the Tehran agreement of October 2003, voluntarily suspending its enrichment activities on a temporary basis in order to enhance international confidence in the peaceful nature of the programme. Iran took this agreement as meaning that it could continue to construct centrifuges, but would not begin to use them for uranium enrichment. The temporary cessation of the production of centrifuges was the subject of a further understanding reached with the EU-3 in Brussels on 23 February 2004. Iran believed the EU-3 undertook in return to bring to bear their best efforts to achieve by June 2004 the termination of the extraordinary investigation of Iran initiated by the IAEA's Board of Governors. However, it later appeared that an understanding on the fulfilment or otherwise of the terms of the Brussels agreement had not yet been reached.

In the personal view of this author, the mutual recrimination which has characterised certain exchanges between Iran and the EU-3 has not been constructive. It is important to stress the degree of sacrifice Iran is being asked to make. To comply fully with the European stipulations, and a fortiori with US requirements, it is in effect being asked to scrap its enrichment programme, which is not in breach of the NPT, and also to write off the significant financial and human investment it has hitherto made in this programme. Iran is

also being asked to turn its back on legitimate national ambitions that have emerged in the past quarter of a century of struggle, which was at least partially imposed upon it by the attitudes of foreign powers since the Islamic Revolution.

More importantly, the demand is being made that Iran set aside its inalienable rights under the NPT at the behest of foreign states and in pursuance of political considerations which are applied selectively to Iran and not to other nations which have achieved a completed nuclear fuel-cycle. For a multiplicity of reasons, this is unacceptable to Iran. It has, however, worked with the EU-3 to provide objective assurances relating to the peaceful nature of its enrichment programme. More than two years after Tehran's acceptance of the IAEA's Additional Protocol, Iran continues to offer and to repeat assurances that its programme is of a peaceful nature.

Iranian Good Faith

It is incorrect to say that Iran's nuclear activities constitute a response to perceived nuclear threats from other states, such as Israel, or to a strategic threat arising from the US presence in Iraq and Afghanistan. It is therefore also incorrect to adduce the existence of this threat as evidence that Iran is aiming at a nuclear-weapons programme. Naturally, Iran is concerned by the fact that Israel possesses a substantial nuclear arsenal, but Iran's possession of nuclear weapons would not reduce its fears on this score. Similarly, Iranian concerns regarding the US military presence in the region would in no way be allayed were Iran to possess nuclear weapons. The possession of nuclear weapons would neither conduce to Iran's security nor in reality enhance the perception of security enjoyed by the Iranian people. It has been suggested that

the nuclear-weapons capability of Pakistan constitutes a reason why Iran and Pakistan also wish to become a nuclear-weapon state. Neither Iran nor Pakistan, however, presents any strategic threat, nor are their weapons liable to be used under any circumstances to be detrimental to the Islamic Republic.

In terms of the broader context, Iran is the only country in the world which has signed not only the Chemical Weapons Convention, but also the Biological Weapons Convention. Iran has accepted the maximum level of restrictions not to develop WMD. Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention have expressed dissatisfaction with the level of Iran's compliance.

Iran agreed to the IAEA inspections to the extent of 10,000 man-days of onsite inspections. It has opened civilian sites to inspection on request, as well as providing access to military installations. This level of access is the highest in the history of the IAEA, and has neither been requested nor granted by any other state that is a party to the Convention. These considerations are the basis of Iran's response to the accusation by the United States that Iran is developing non-conventional weapons, biological weapons, and especially to the extent of the allegations that Iran is seeking to develop nuclear warheads to long-range missiles.

The United States should bear in mind that the best way to ensure Iranian compliance with the Convention is to request the IAEA to exceed its current requirements regarding the activities of Iran. Any such imposition of additional requirements serves only to undermine the Convention in the long run. Full commitment to the Convention and the United States to the

The IAEA's Rash Move

Early in 2006, the crisis over Iran's nuclear programme intensified. In January, the EU-3 declared an end to their negotiations with Iran and pledged to bring the Islamic Republic before the UN Security Council. In February, Iran announced that it had resumed small-scale uranium enrichment at Natanz, ending the voluntary moratorium it had observed on such activity since the Paris agreement of October 2004. And in March, the IAEA formally referred Iran's case to the Security Council.

The IAEA's resort to the Security Council was an unfortunate development which could potentially escalate the situation disproportionately and unnecessarily.

There is enough blame in terms of lack of vision and shortsighted arm-twisting to go around. But let me return to the process of negotiations.

In the first round of Iran-EU-3 negotiations, which took place after the IAEA Board of Governors resolution of September 2003, the Iranian negotiators gave a clear and honest message to their European counterparts: that Iran would never accept a total cessation or a long-term suspension of its fuel-cycle activities, but it might accept a temporary suspension to build confidence about the peaceful nature of these activities. Such was the basis of the agreement signed in October 2003 in Tehran.

However, although having accepted the suspension as a confidence-building measure in the Tehran agreement, the Europeans had in mind the complete cessation of Iran's enrichment activities. On the very day of the agreement, and in the presence of the EU-3 ministers in Tehran, Iran's chief nuclear negotiator, Dr Hassan Rohani, announced formally that the suspension would continue at most for one year. During the negotiations

and through formal statements, the Iranian negotiators made it clear to their European counterparts that a total cessation of enrichment activities was Iran's red line, but that Iran would welcome any suggestion for confidence-building measures on a voluntary and non-binding basis.

The disagreement continued, however. In February 2004, an agreement was reached in Brussels, the main idea of which was that Iran suspend its centrifuge-part production and assembly activities in Natanz in return for the EU-3 working to normalise Iran's case at the IAEA Board of Governors meeting in June 2004. Although Iran suspended its activities in the mentioned areas, its case was not normalised in the June 2004 IAEA resolution. Moreover, the EU-3 proposed in a draft resolution that the suspension of Iran's nuclear activities be expanded to include work on the uranium-conversion facility in Isfahan, too. Although the negotiations were about to fail completely, in October 2004 an agreement was reached in Paris, the main points of which were as follows:

1. Acceptance of the non-discriminatory exercise of Iran's right to peaceful nuclear technology (and the key term here is "exercise").

2. Iran to provide objective guarantees on the non-diversion of its nuclear programme to military ends.

3. Iran to agree to suspension of its nuclear fuel-cycle activities, not as a legal obligation, but only as a confidence-building measure, and only while the negotiations make progress.

4. The EU-3 to provide firm guarantees for comprehensive political, security, economic, technological, and nuclear co-operation with Iran.

Before the Paris text meeting with the EU-3 in Tehran, Dr Rohani asked the EU-3 foreign ministers that they should be based on Iran's adherence to the NPT, which commits Iran as a weapon-state party to the NPT to the acquisition or development of nuclear weapons, and on the EU-3's interpretation of Article IV, which recognises the "right" of all NPT parties "to produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes". He also stated that he should be committed neither to think of a "cessation" nor to think of any "suspension" of his message. He delivered his message to the EU-3 ministers prior to the signing of the agreed text.

During the first meeting with Dr Rohani, the EU-3 foreign ministers, including the European Union's foreign minister, Josep Solana, in December 2004, it was clear to their European counterparts that the latter sought a complete halt to Iran's nuclear fuel-cycle activities. There were to be no negotiations. The EU-3 stated that they were not seeking an assurance on the continuation of Iran's nuclear programme.

To advance the various points of the agreement, three working groups were established, the results of their work were reported after three months. In this period, there was actually no progress in defining a comprehensive economic, security, technological, and nuclear co-operation between the EU-3 and Iran. The EU-3 proposed a scenario for the non-discriminatory exercise of Iran's right to peaceful nuclear energy. And the EU-3 failed to accept Iran's constructive suggestions.

l statements, the Iranian
t clear to their European
total cessation of enrich-
; Iran's red line, but that
e any suggestion for con-
reasures on a voluntary
sis.

nt continued, however. In
greement was reached in
dea of which was that Iran
uge-part production and
in Natanz in return for the
ormalise Iran's case at the
overnors meeting in June
suspended its activities in
us, its case was not nor-
e 2004 IAEA resolution.

proposed in a draft reso-
ension of Iran's nuclear
ed to include work on the
facility in Isfahan, too.
iations were about to fail
ber 2004 an agreement
, the main points of which

of the non-discriminatory
ight to peaceful nuclear
: key term here is "exer-

e objective guarantees on
its nuclear programme to

suspension of its nuclear
not as a legal obligation,
dence-building measure,
the negotiations make

provide firm guarantees
political, security, eco-
l, and nuclear co-opera-

Before the Paris text was signed, in a meeting with the EU-3 ambassadors in Tehran, Dr Rohani asked them to inform their foreign ministers that the agreement would be based on Iran's adherence to Article II of the NPT, which commits each non-nuclear-weapon-state party to the treaty to forswear the acquisition or development of nuclear weapons, and on the EU-3's adherence to Article IV, which recognises "the inalienable right" of all NPT parties "to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes". He also stressed that they should be committed neither to speak nor even think of a "cessation" any more. The ambassadors delivered his message to their foreign ministers prior to the signing of the Paris agreed text.

During the first meeting between Dr Rohani, the EU-3 foreign ministers, and the European Union's foreign-policy chief, Javier Solana, in December 2004, the Iranians made it clear to their European counterparts that if the latter sought a complete termination of Iran's nuclear fuel-cycle activities there would be no negotiations. The Europeans answered that they were not seeking such a termination, only an assurance on the non-diversion of Iran's nuclear programme to military ends.

To advance the various goals of the Paris agreement, three working groups were established, the results of their efforts to be evaluated after three months. But even after this period, there was actually no progress in defining a comprehensive form of political, economic, security, technological, and nuclear co-operation between the EU-3 and Iran. The EU-3 proposed no initiative or scenario for the non-discriminatory exercise of Iran's right to peaceful nuclear technology. And the EU-3 failed to entertain seriously Iran's constructive suggestions on objective

guarantees about the peaceful nature of its nuclear programme. In July 2005, the EU-3 proposed to Iran that it permanently cease its enrichment activities in return for improved relations with the EU-3. So, the EU-3 performance during this period of three months was actually in contrast with the letter and spirit of both the Paris and the Tehran agreements.

It is also important to note that three months before the EU-3 made their proposal, Dr Rohani met President Jacques Chirac of France to suggest seeking the IAEA's help in formulating the objective guarantees sought on Iran's nuclear programme—an offer President Chirac totally accepted.

Two or three months before that, during our informal negotiations with the EU-3, we had come to some mutual understanding that work on the uranium-conversion facility at Isfahan might be resumed after a two-year suspension, provided that the UF6 produced there was exported. During the talks, we insisted on the formula of resumption of work at Isfahan plus a pilot programme at Natanz. We told our European friends that unless they included this formula in their proposal—let alone ask for a permanent cessation of the enrichment programme—the negotiations would come to a certain end. We made it abundantly clear to them that under such circumstances, Iran would not continue the negotiations or the enrichment suspension any further. But the EU-3 did not accept the honest and realistic suggestions of the Iranian negotiators, and consequently Iran resumed the Isfahan uranium-conversion project as soon as it received the EU-3's July 2005 proposal, which insisted again on the permanent cessation of Iran's enrichment activities.

For several months, Iran had waited for the EU-3's new proposal, after which it eventually resumed research-and-development enrich-

ment activities at Natanz. This policy, I believe, is the one Iran will continue to follow. However, as someone who was an Iranian nuclear negotiator from September 2003 to August 2005 but who is not involved in Iran's nuclear case today, I believe that despite the March 2006 IAEA resolution reporting Iran to the Security Council, the way to a compromise and a negotiated agreement is still open—the issue has not yet come to the point of no return. I suggest that the following considerations be fully explored in resolving the present standoff:

1. Iran's Internal Attitudes

- The nuclear issue has a national character, and all of the factions, groups, parties and officials in Iran, regardless of their very different political views, are unanimous on Iran's right to peaceful nuclear technology, in terms of producing nuclear fuel.

- The nuclear issue has become a particular matter of national pride for Iranians, so any solution to this issue that is contemptuous of the Iranian people is bound to fail and must be avoided.

- The Iranian people should not feel that the Europeans are seeking to deprive Iran of advanced technology, nor that they discriminate between Iran and other parties to the NPT.

If due regard is paid to these three points, it would prepare Iranian public opinion for nuclear negotiations and a compromise with the EU-3.

2. Iranian–EU Distrust

- The distrust between Iran and the European Union is not confined to the nuclear issue, and dispelling it will not solve all the problems between the two sides. The main areas of disagreement should be discussed

with a view to resolving them or at least narrowing the gap. This will enhance mutual confidence and serve as a catalyst for a negotiated solution of the nuclear issue.

3. The Current Standoff

- The Europeans could assure Iran that they have accepted its legitimate right within the NPT to a full nuclear fuel-cycle, i.e., something they have already accepted in the first paragraph of the Paris text. The Europeans could also cease to seek—outside the legal framework of the NPT—the suspension of Iran's nuclear research-and-development activities.

- The three working groups envisioned in the Paris agreed text, including those dealing with co-operation on technology, political–security matters, and nuclear issues, could begin a new round of negotiations for a three-month period.

- The working groups on co-operation on technology and political–security matters could take stock of the achievements of the previous rounds of negotiations in their deliberations. The EU-3's proposal of July 2005 contained some points on EU–Iranian co-operation in such areas which can be developed and built upon in any new round of negotiations.

- The nuclear working group could deal with EU-3–Iranian co-operation on nuclear energy and approve the building of at least one nuclear reactor in Iran within an agreed period of time.

- The negotiations on an EU–Iranian Trade and Co-operation Agreement, launched in Brussels in December 2002 and resumed in January 2005, could be finalised within one year.

- In return, Iran could agree, during the three-month period of the new round of negotiations, to export the UCF produced at

Isfahan to another country in Africa, and to receive the

- Iran could agree to ratify the Additional Protocol when, following the period of the new round of negotiations, a general framework discussion has been completed, agreed, and finalised.

- Iran could voluntarily accept the permanent presence of IAEA inspectors at the enrichment centre.

- Iran would undertake to accept the rights committed to the NPT as long as its legitimate rights to peaceful nuclear technology within the framework of the NPT are respected.

- Iran could accept the industrial fuel production programme if fuel is actually needed, thus removing Europeans' doubts in this regard.

Final Thoughts

I would like to stress the need for serious considerations and suggestions from a member of Iran's Ceramics Research, and do not compare the position of the Iranian government merely as a possible step towards a peaceful resolution of the nuclear programme.

In more general terms, the relations between Iran and the European Union are to be established on the basis of a number of requirements