

Chapter 2

A Nuclear Iran: Implications for Arms Control in the Nuclear Realm

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Introduction

The essay that follows examines the implications of Iran's achievement of a nuclear weapons capability for arms control and non-proliferation efforts and initiatives in the nuclear realm.

If Iran becomes a nuclear weapons state, it will of course not be the first to have done so since the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) came into force. Still, the case of Iran is unique in several respects, and the negative implications for the non-proliferation regime will be more severe than was the case with extra-NPT proliferators, such as India and Pakistan. As a party to the NPT, Iran's acquired nuclear status would be in direct violation of its commitments, and thus a more serious challenge. Even if Iran acted in accordance with Article X and withdrew from the treaty, it would be clear that it had cheated and lied for years. A nuclear Iran would thus highlight the inadequacy of the NPT, due to its inability to function as an effective non-proliferation tool. While geared to stopping the spread of nuclear weapons, the NPT would be exposed as incapable of directly confronting the nuclear ambitions of a specific state party to the treaty.

Even when compared with North Korea, the other nuclear state that set out on a nuclear path while a party to the NPT, the ramifications of Iran going nuclear would be harsher. Iran is situated in a potentially more explosive region, and has been positioned at the center of international concern as a perceived threat to an array of regional and extra-regional states with different sets of interests – including Israel, the Persian Gulf states, Europe, and the US. The reality of a nuclear Iran is also widely viewed as a development that would very likely spark additional attempts

at proliferation in the Middle East. The fact that many Middle East states have given notice since autumn 2006 that they intend to develop civilian nuclear programs as a solution to their energy problems has raised the level of concern considerably.¹ These civilian programs could then be used as a cover for future military applications, as occurred in the case of Iran itself. The scenario of more nuclear states in the Middle East would mean not only further breaches of the NPT, but the potential for serious deterioration of regional security.²

The particular manner by which the Iranian nuclear file has unfolded since August 2002 will significantly enhance the assessment that non-proliferation efforts have been dealt a serious blow. Losing the Iran campaign after several years of intensive negotiations – carried out primarily by the IAEA and EU-3 (France, Germany, and Britain) – and decisions on sanctions by the US, Europe, and UN Security Council would render this failure especially severe.³ It would demonstrate in the starkest terms not only the worrisome limitations of the global arms control regime itself, but also the constraints that the international community faces when strong states and relevant international organs attempt to apply different means of statecraft in order to convince and/or compel a determined proliferator to reverse course. Overall, the frustration – if not the helplessness – of the international community in the face of nuclear proliferation would be that much more pronounced.

So while not the only nuclear proliferation concern, Iran is probably highest on the list in terms of international preoccupation and perceived threat. As such, it is likely to be regarded as a watershed for dealing with suspected proliferation, and the way this case ultimately plays out will have a significant impact on the future direction of non-proliferation efforts.

With this in mind, implications of the nuclear Iran scenario are considered below from three main perspectives. The first involves the implications for the current non-proliferation regime: both the effectiveness of the NPT as a non-proliferation tool and its normative value. The second perspective considers the implications as to the ability of individual states to step in and compensate for the weaknesses of the non-proliferation regime, by holding proliferating states to their commitment to remain non-nuclear. Third are the more general implications for the future direction of non-proliferation efforts and the impetus for forging new arms control strategies.

The first two sets of implications are retrospective, assessing the implementation of arms control efforts (whether treaty-based or state-assisted), and the manner and degree to which they would be affected by the failure to stem Iran's nuclear ambitions. The final question looks more to the future and to the prospects of controlling and limiting the destructive potential of nuclear weapons down the road. Assuming that the current non-proliferation regime will be exposed and criticized as basically impotent as far as stopping a determined proliferator, new strategies for controlling the spread of nuclear weapons will be needed.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty and Regime

Entering into force over thirty-five years ago, the NPT is the centerpiece of the non-proliferation regime. When considering the NPT, at issue are both its effectiveness as a specific policy tool – to stop proliferation – and its normative value as an instrument that has helped entrench the idea that nuclear weapons are a negative phenomenon in the international sphere.⁴ The question, therefore, is what will happen to both dimensions. In other words, at stake is not only the credibility of the NPT as a non-proliferation tool, but also whether states continue to regard non-proliferation as a worthy endeavor. The difficulties involved in actually achieving the goal could begin to erode its perceived value as well, particularly if states (and analysts) begin to accept the new reality of additional nuclear states as more or less inevitable.

As a major non-proliferation tool, the NPT has successfully weathered challenges in the past, when states outside the NPT went nuclear. But failure in the case of Iran – a state party to the NPT that sits in a very dangerous neighborhood – might constitute a devastating blow to the treaty. The NPT would not cease to exist, but it could be undermined to a degree that it would no longer be regarded as having any real clout as far as stopping a state from attaining nuclear weapons capabilities. This scenario would make it imperative to address disturbing questions about the basic bargain upon which the NPT rests: primarily, the enshrined right of non-nuclear states parties to enrich uranium and to otherwise engage in peaceful nuclear activities, as long as they remain non-military. The soundness of this provision will be strongly discredited in light of what will be firmly established as long term and cynical abuse on the part of

Iran. From what seemed a firm pillar of a fair bargain between nuclear and non-nuclear states parties to the treaty, the protection of this right will be reduced to a naive aspiration that opened a gaping loophole for states to abuse.

The limitations of the NPT began to be exposed in 2003 when the EU-3 and the US intervened and assumed a more prominent role in the effort to curb Iran's ambitions. But in fact, the treaty's provisions have been structurally handicapped from the start. The NPT was not designed with a proliferator like Iran in mind; its provisions are not geared to seeking out and stopping suspected defectors, as can be inferred from its lack of precise criteria for dealing with these suspicions when they arise. Instead, the NPT depends to a large extent on the *de facto* acceptance by states parties of the idea that nuclear weapons are an inherent cause of insecurity in the international arena. Relying on the assumption that non-nuclear states will basically concur that it is in their interest to maintain their non-nuclear status, little attention was devoted to the prospect that a state may nevertheless develop a strong interest to go nuclear. If it did, the assumption seems to have been that it would have had legitimate (i.e., security) reasons for doing so, and would withdraw from the treaty. Generally speaking, when an arms control instrument focuses exclusively on the denial of capabilities, a state that decides that it *does* want nuclear weapons will invariably find a crack to slip through. And because the NPT wasn't at all focused on minimizing the *motivation* to proliferate, the loopholes in the NPT were tempting for such states. In this sense, more than weakening the NPT, the case of Iran starkly exposes its inherent weaknesses.⁵

Nevertheless, for many years it has been widely accepted not only that nuclear proliferation is inherently dangerous and destabilizing, but that the NPT itself registered a fair degree of success in upholding this principle, by limiting the extent of additional proliferation that took place over the years beyond the five recognized nuclear states. Though it is not clear what role the NPT actually played in keeping the numbers down, the fact that very few states went nuclear deflected attention from the treaty's inherent deficiencies, which will now be very much in focus.

Can the NPT be strengthened and improved? Probably, but it is difficult to envision improvements that will successfully address and repair the basic weakness in its logic that enabled Iran to abuse it.⁶ More important,

perhaps, is that time is of the essence, and at this point commitment to the goal of treaty improvement does not seem to be particularly strong or widespread.

As far as the normative value of non-proliferation, the limited degree of proliferation over the years helped to strengthen the norm against nuclear weapons. And while the case of Iran demonstrates the deficiencies of the NPT as a non-proliferation tool, it is at the same time likely to strengthen the normative dimension of the treaty, even as the practical difficulties of ensuring non-proliferation are exposed.⁷ This is because the very real dangers associated with the particular case of a nuclear Iran will be most pronounced.⁸

Individual State Efforts: EU-3 and US

Assuming that the motivation to stop the spread of nuclear weapons remains strong – due to the continued importance attached to the norm – a primary challenge for arms control in the nuclear realm will be how to carve out alternatives or at least supplementary arms control approaches to prop up the NPT. To this end, the strong powers on the global scene are destined to play a central role. Therefore, it is important to examine how their role is likely to be affected by their failure to stop Iran.

The reality of a nuclear Iran will no doubt be a serious blow to the abilities of strong international powers to step in and patch emergent holes when weaknesses in international treaties surface full force. The US and the EU-3 made significant attempts to bring Iran into line: together with the IAEA, these self-appointed powers assumed the (virtually unopposed) role of primary executors of the NPT, using negotiations and sanctions to convince and compel Iran to reverse course and uphold its commitments. Their abilities were put to the test – and will be exposed as having failed.

Negotiations between the EU-3 and Iran have been dealt with at length;⁹ what is important for the present analysis is the fact that for two years (from the summer of 2003 until the summer of 2005), the EU-3 carried out focused negotiations with Iran in the attempt to devise a package of incentives that would be acceptable to Iran and sufficient to convince it to back down from the nuclear route. The role of the EU-3 was predicated on the fact that there was no other effective instrument available: the NPT cannot enforce itself, and while Iran could have been referred to the UN

Security Council back in 2003, the IAEA at that time was not fully up to the challenge of the inevitable political ramifications of presenting potentially controversial evidence of Iran's deception, and was quite happy to allow the EU-3 to step in and begin negotiating with Iran.

The EU was highly invested in the diplomatic process, which it viewed as affording it a relative advantage over the US as far as strategies for confronting proliferation challenges. Indeed, beyond its belief in the value of diplomacy for its own sake, advocating and practicing diplomacy was a way for Europe to concretize its independent mode of international influence vis-à-vis the US. Moreover, the case of Iran was an important test case for the EU for its new Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, which it adopted in 2003,¹⁰ and for the notion of "effective multilateralism."¹¹

Significantly, the efforts of the EU-3 focused on securing Iran's commitment to a suspension of uranium enrichment in order to demonstrate to the international community its benign intentions in the nuclear realm. While two such agreements were reached over the course of the two years, negotiations were fatally hampered by a gap that was temporarily glossed over, but that in reality could not be spanned: the different meaning that each side attached to "suspension." The EU-3 understood suspension to mean "termination"; Iran viewed it to mean a "temporary confidence-building measure." Iran in fact was absolutely steadfast in its message that it had no intention of permanently ceasing uranium enrichment, and the strength of its conviction was such that nothing offered was considered an acceptable incentive or compensation.

Some responsibility for the failure of the EU-3/Iran negotiations was attributed to the particular difficulties of dealing with Iran, especially once Ahmadinejad was elected and began to display his hard-line approach characterized by defiance of the West.¹² However, the problems encountered were to a significant degree a function of the structure of the negotiations, and the inherent difficulty of negotiating with a determined and skillful proliferator who proves adept at exploiting long and dragged out negotiations with a not wholly united and similarly determined international community. Indeed, Iran was able to maximize its relative advantage in the negotiations situation due to the fact that it was a single state, highly motivated and determined, and very careful not to push the

situation too far, in a way that would “force” the international community to take action against it. In fact, Ahmadinejad’s approach in a sense helped the EU-3 by undermining the previously established sophisticated Iranian maneuvering. By assuming such extreme positions, the new president made it crystal clear that he was not interested in a deal, and negotiations quickly reached a dead end. Otherwise, the ultimate failure of negotiations would have been more stinging for the EU-3. This is because it would not have been able to blame Iran for the fact that European negotiators clung to a dynamic that was leading nowhere, while at the same time (unintentionally) enabling Iran to slowly but surely acquire the means to achieve military capability.

While a strong case can be made for concluding that the efforts of the EU-3 were exposed as deficient – reflecting on both the approach to negotiations that was adopted, and perhaps on the EU-3 itself – because of Europe’s strong commitment to negotiations and diplomacy as the only option, Europeans were quick to place the blame on others, rather than recognize or admit the shortcomings of their own approach. Beyond Ahmadinejad, Europe blamed the US for not putting its full weight behind efforts to engage Iran, thereby undermining the effectiveness of negotiations.¹³ Furthermore, in the face of Iran actually becoming a nuclear state, we can ultimately expect to hear voices claiming that *all* nuclear states are to a degree accountable for this outcome for not having lived up to their own NPT commitments to disarm.¹⁴

It should be recognized that part of the failure was actually due to the fact that the states were, oddly enough, constrained by the provisions of the NPT itself. Because they had to deal with Iran in relation to its treaty obligations, much of their initial energy was spent trying to find clear-cut evidence of non-compliance, the so-called smoking gun. This proved a very difficult endeavor, because while ostensibly focused on a purely technical issue, in practice, there were no precise criteria for making this call, and decisions were very much dependent on interpretations of evidence. This left much room for the ongoing dynamics of “giving Iran one more chance to prove itself” – especially as Iran itself well understood the dynamics, and was doing everything in its power to present a reasonable stance (at least up until the election of Ahmadinejad) and display a cooperative attitude when it could afford to do so. And after a two year hiatus, evidence over the

summer of 2007 began to surface that Iran was returning to this approach, highlighted by its willingness to cooperate with the IAEA in answering the “outstanding questions” relating to its past nuclear activities.

If Iran becomes a nuclear state, it will mean that the sanctions route failed as well. At the time of this writing, three UN Security Council resolutions have been imposed on Iran to no avail, and the US has taken the lead in imposing financial sanctions outside the framework of the UN. There are different views on the effectiveness of sanctions in persuading a proliferator to change course, as well as on the question of whether sanctions would work in the specific case of Iran. Moreover, there are questions that relate to the ability of the international community to even decide on the kind of sanctions that could conceivably stop Iran, due to conflicting interests among them. At this point it is difficult to speculate how the failure of the sanctions route would be interpreted, and whether it would invite an economic or political/diplomatic explanation.

Ultimately, there is good reason to believe that although “diplomacy” (ranging from negotiations to sanctions) will have failed, the US and the EU-3, and probably Russia as well, will continue to view themselves as the natural candidates for continuing efforts to stem nuclear proliferation among additional states. Unfortunately, there are no signs that serious consideration will be given to the reasons why diplomacy failed, and how it might be improved in the future. At best these states may have cause to review their strategies realizing the importance of formulating a more united front,¹⁵ but interpretations of the failure are likely to be selective, differential, and politically motivated. Still, these states will undoubtedly continue to lead non-proliferation efforts down the road, and – in the absence of a good alternative – the international community will most likely continue to acquiesce.

New Arms Control Strategies

The final issue for consideration is the future focus and content of nuclear arms control efforts and strategies.

A central question in this regard, especially in light of a nuclear Iran, is the continued relevance of the arms control logic embedded in the NPT, namely, that all states should be equal in the non-conventional realm and no state allowed to possess nuclear weapons. The debate on this issue turns

on the distinction between treating this as an arms control *aspiration* and treating it as a *prescript* for concrete immediate action.

According to current international practices, different states *are* treated differently in the nuclear realm. This applies not only to the five recognized nuclear states, but can be discerned in the different attitude displayed toward Israel and India, for example, as compared with Iran. On the one hand, one could claim that this is precisely the reason why the NPT is so important. In other words, the fact that Iran is a party to the NPT is what makes it legitimate to focus on its violations, and to demand compliance. It is much more difficult to present demands to states that remain outside the treaty, like India and Israel. Clearly, however, the issue goes well beyond the question of “party or not” to the NPT. In fact, in practice states are judged in the nuclear realm in terms that go past the narrow issue of nuclear capabilities and extend instead to their overall profile as international actors, focusing on their rhetoric; reputation; and bilateral, regional, and international behavior.¹⁶

If states are in any case accorded differential treatment in the nuclear realm, perhaps arms control efforts also need to relate to states not only per their nuclear activities, but in terms of their security concerns, overall record of international behavior, and, especially, relations with other states. Significantly, as far as Iran is concerned, not only did the NPT not help the international community to confront Iran’s nuclear ambitions, but it seems even to have interfered at times with that effort – for example, by elevating the importance of finding a smoking gun, which ended up legitimizing an ongoing search for such clear cut evidence and thereby delaying the process of firmly confronting Iran with its history of deception. More important, perhaps, is the fact that the provisions of the NPT itself enshrined what Iran referred to as its legitimate right to enrich uranium, enabling it to then abuse this right for military purposes.

Yet even in light of these realities, the normative pull of the “equality argument” in the nuclear realm is very strong. The “disarmament prong” of the arms control camp will be pushing for the nuclear states to disarm in order to come into line with the status of the non-nuclear states, along with their own explicit commitments according to the NPT. This tendency was given a serious push forward with the publication in early January 2007 of an article written by four prominent Americans called “A World

Free of Nuclear Weapons,”¹⁷ and it would very likely be reinforced by the reality of Iran becoming a nuclear state. The argument would be that Iran was “lost” because of the double standard inherent in the NPT that makes it impossible to deal effectively with a determined proliferator. According to this line of thinking – which has the unfortunate side effect of relieving the proliferators themselves of full blame for their actions, as well as ignoring important differences among states as far as the threat they pose to others through their rhetoric and actions – the double standard will disappear only when the nuclear states comply with universal disarmament.

Even if one accepts the conceptual logic embedded in this argument, international realities dictate that universal disarmament is a distant goal, whereas dangerous new proliferation challenges need to be dealt with *today*. Thus beyond the dilemmas connected to the NPT and the conceptual and moral arguments that can be raised and debated, new arms control directions might begin to reflect a distancing from the constraints of “universal treatment.” Indeed, some new arms control directions are already underway in light of the recent proliferation challenges. One such initiative – which is multilateral, though not global – is the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) that was announced by President Bush in May 2003. PSI is a multilateral effort to allow the search of planes and ships in order to intercept the transfer of sensitive technologies and materials. This initiative reflects the perceived need for additional proactive and dynamic measures on the part of like-minded states in order to help stem the proliferation of WMD and related technologies.¹⁸ In February 2006, Secretary of State Rice described multilateral efforts centering on the PSI as the major tool for fighting the spread of WMD, and noted the intention to expand such measures. Also noteworthy is the November 2003 US/UK joint statement on “effective multilateralism” as the guide to their approach for confronting common security challenges, including the spread of WMD. These are arms control trends that are likely to be enhanced in the coming years.

Finally, there is a question of the prospects, if any, of moving in the direction of creating new rules of the game for a Middle East that includes a nuclear Iran. Once a nuclear Iran becomes a reality, the major arms control challenge will no doubt become regional stability – taking whatever steps possible to ensure that the situation in the Middle East does not get out of

hand, both with regard to Iran directly and with respect to motivations for further proliferation among states in the region.

States in the Persian Gulf have in the past two years been much more outspoken about their own concerns over the prospect of Iran becoming a nuclear power. An initial indication of this was reflected in research conducted at a prominent think tank in Dubai, which raised the idea of initiating discussion on a Gulf WMDFZ as the first stage in a wider Middle East WMDFZ, and the idea was echoed at the official level by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) secretary-general in late 2005.¹⁹ Following the 2003 Iraq War, additional moderate states in the region added their voices of growing concern with the regional implications of Iran becoming a nuclear state. Indeed, there have been clear signs of a converging mutual interest among moderate states in the Middle East to contain Iran, and in advance of the Annapolis meeting of late 2007, it was reported that the US hoped to use this opportunity to encourage dialogue and cooperation among these states.²⁰

Ideas for initiating regional security dialogue are sometimes interpreted as requiring a demanding form of regional architecture that in order to work would have to replace balance of power politics.²¹ In fact, security dialogue at the regional level does not have to be grounded in a concept of “collective security”; rather, the purpose of such dialogue is to develop new rules of the game in order to conduct inter-state relations under the threshold of hair-trigger alert. In this sense, the options of regional security dialogue and an essentially balance of power approach to international relations are not mutually exclusive paths, and the value of regional dialogue in the Middle East should not be undermined on this basis.²²

Conclusion

The current diplomatic efforts geared to ensuring that Iran upholds its NPT commitment to remain non-nuclear, and stopping it from advancing its nuclear program to a military capability, are not succeeding. As such, Iran could become a nuclear state, with far-reaching implications for the Middle East and perhaps the world. This essay has focused on the implications for the current non-proliferation regime and for arms control efforts in the nuclear realm.

As far as prospects for regional stability in the Middle East with a nuclear Iran, Iran's president Ahmadinejad presents a particularly severe challenge due to his extremist positions toward Israel that seemingly lack any semblance of compromise short of Israel ceasing to exist. His hegemonic aspirations are a threat to all moderate states in the Middle East. This seems not to leave much room for a win-win strategy of coexistence, and the prospect of region-wide dialogue is a more distant possibility than ever.

Nevertheless, together with attempts to stop further proliferation, a major challenge for arms control in the years ahead will become how to manage the potential risks involved when new nuclear states appear on the international scene. If a regional framework for dialogue is in fact initiated in the Middle East – among moderate states in the first stage – once understandings begin to be forged, Iran may well have an interest to become involved as well, as it will make more sense for Iran to be part of new regional understandings than to remain outside them. But this is looking very far down the road.

Notes

- 1 See Emily B. Landau, "New Nuclear Programs in the Middle East: What Do they Mean?" *INSS Insight* no. 3, December 11, 2006, and Joseph Cirincione and Uri Leventer, "The Middle East's Nuclear Surge," *International Herald Tribune*, August 13, 2007.
- 2 There is also a danger of cooperation between new nuclear proliferators. In this regard, North Korea is also a major concern due to its willingness to sell missiles and share non-conventional technology. Its cooperation with Iran could have a synergistic effect, as reports on possible North Korean-Syrian nuclear cooperation demonstrate. See *Haaretz*, September 16, 2007.
- 3 At the time of this writing, negotiations and sanctions are the only strategies that have been attempted to stop Iran, and thus this future-oriented projection is limited to them. Of course it is conceivable that Iran might become a nuclear state after military force has been used as well, but as it does not appear on the immediate horizon, I have not included it as a strategy that failed prior to Iran going nuclear.
- 4 For an interesting and comprehensive account of the development of the norm of non-use in the nuclear realm, see Nina Tannenwald, "Stigmatizing the Bomb: Origins of the Nuclear Taboo," *International Security* 29, no. 4 (2005): 5-49.
- 5 See Emily B. Landau, "Approaching a Nuclear Iran: The Challenge for Arms Control," in Zvi Shtaubert and Yiftah S. Shapir (eds.), *The Middle East Strategic Balance 2004-2005* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press and Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, 2006), pp. 59-60.

- 6 For a different view, which advocates that it is not too late to introduce essential improvements to the NPT, see Pierre Goldschmidt, "The Urgent Need to Strengthen the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Regime," *Policy Outlook*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, January 2006.
- 7 For a view that criticizes not only the lack of effectiveness of the non-proliferation regime, but questions the relevance of the non-proliferation norm as well, see Andrew O'Neil, "Nuclear Proliferation and Global Security: Laying the Groundwork for a New Policy Agenda," *Comparative Strategy* 24 (2005): 343-59.
- 8 Of course if Iran were to behave in a non-confrontational manner once it became a nuclear state, this might lend support to the idea (raised also in the India-Pakistan context) that somewhat paradoxically, the very possession of nuclear weapons acts as a restraint, and imposes more responsible behavior on states. This, however, is far from a foregone conclusion and would remain to be seen.
- 9 See for example Gary Samore, *Meeting Iran's Nuclear Challenge*, Paper no. 21, Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission, October 2004; Emily B. Landau and Ram Erez, "WMD Proliferation Trends and Strategies of Control," in Shai Feldman and Yiftah S. Shapir (eds.), *The Middle East Strategic Balance 2003-2004* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press and Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, 2004), pp. 62-67; articles by Gerrard Quille and Rory Keane, "The EU and Iran: Towards a New Political and Security Dialogue," and Shannon N. Kile, "Final Thoughts on Iran, the EU and the Limits of Conditionality," in Shannon N. Kile (ed.), *Europe and Iran: Perspectives on Non-Proliferation*, SIPRI Research Report no. 21 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); and Tom Sauer, *Coercive Diplomacy by the EU: The Case of Iran*, Discussion Papers in Diplomacy, Netherlands Institute of International Relations "Clingendael," 2007, pp. 6-15.
- 10 See Shannon N. Kile, "The Controversy over Iran's Nuclear Programme," in *Europe and Iran: Perspectives on Non-Proliferation*, p. 2.
- 11 Espen Barth Eide (ed.), *"Effective Multilateralism": Europe, Regional Security, and a Revitalised UN* (London: The Foreign Policy Centre and British Council Brussels, December 2004).
- 12 "The collapse of Europe's diplomatic initiative reflects Tehran's calculation that the balance of power has shifted in its direction. In October 2003...when Tehran felt vulnerable to American pressure, Iran reached agreement with the EU-3...But after two years of fruitless discussion...Iran toughened its position with the June 2005 election of President Ahmadinejad and removal from office [of those] who may have been more willing to seek a compromise and avoid a confrontation," Gary Samore, "Stopping the Bomb – Part I," *YaleGlobal*, January 24, 2006.
- 13 Amir Taheri, "The Perils of Engagement," *Wall Street Journal*, May 9, 2006.
- 14 Hints of this argument can already be heard among strong proponents of disarmament.
- 15 See for example George Perkovich, *Toward Transatlantic Cooperation in Meeting the Iranian Nuclear Challenge*, Ifri Proliferation Paper, winter 2005.
- 16 See for example a statement made by Secretary of Defense Robert Gates at a conference in Bahrain in December 2007. When asked why the US adopted a

harsh approach on Iran but not vis-à-vis Israel, Gates answered: "Israel is not training terrorists to subvert its neighbors, it has not shipped weapons to a place like Iraq to kill thousands of civilians, it has not threatened to destroy any of its neighbors, it is not trying to destabilize the government of Lebanon," in "Gates Sees Iran as Still-Serious Threat," *New York Times*, December 9, 2007.

- 17 George P. Shultz, William J. Perry, Henry A. Kissinger, and Sam Nunn, "A World Free of Nuclear Weapons," *Wall Street Journal*, January 4, 2007. This was followed by a second piece by these four authors published in early 2008: "Toward a Nuclear-Free World," *Wall Street Journal*, January 15, 2008. For a longer, previously published analysis, see Selig S. Harrison, "The Forgotten Bargain: Nonproliferation and Nuclear Disarmament," *World Policy Journal* (Fall 2006): 1-13.
- 18 See the website of the US Department of State: www.usinfo.state.gov; and "The Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) At a Glance," Arms Control Association, Fact Sheet, September 2005. The major success attributed to the PSI is the interdiction of the ship *BBC China* that was transferring centrifuge components to Libya in late 2003, which served to expose its illegal nuclear weapons program. Others claim that while this operation was carried out in the spirit of the PSI, it was not a PSI operation per se. See Wade Boese, "Key US Interdiction Initiative Claim Misrepresented," *Arms Control Today*, July/August 2005.
- 19 For the research undertaken, see "Security and Terrorism," Gulf Research Center Bulletin, no. 1, October 2005. For statement of GCC Secretary-General al-Attiyah, see "Gulf Leader Urges Iran to Make Region Nuclear Free," *Agence France-Presse*, December 18, 2005.
- 20 See for example David Brooks, "Present at the Creation," *New York Times*, November 6, 2007.
- 21 See Richard L. Russell, "The Persian Gulf's Collective-Security Mirage," *Middle East Policy* 12, no. 4 (2005).
- 22 At the conceptual level see Charles Lipson, "Are Security Regimes Possible? Historical Cases and Modern Issues," in Ephraim Inbar (ed.), *Regional Security Regimes: Israel and Its Neighbors* (NY: SUNY Press, 1995), pp. 3-32. See also Dalia Dassa Kaye, "Time for Arms Talks? Iran, Israel, and Middle East Arms Control," *Arms Control Today*, November 2004. In fact, some ideas raised by Russell toward the end of the article cited above are exactly the point: the need for reassurance, confidence in intentions, and so on. In contrast, see a commentary that posits that Iran would not agree to take part in such an endeavor: "With the Islamic constitution mandating Iran's solidarity with the liberation movements and struggles against the world's hegemony, the pitfall of media pundits who naively suggest that Iran could actually become a participant in a US-designed regional security apparatus is unmistakable," Kaveh L. Afrasiabi, "The IAEA and the New World Order," *Asia Times Online*, February 3, 2006.