



Research Article

THE MAIN IDEAS AND DIRECTIONS IN THE FORMATION OF THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

Submission Date: January 20, 2023, **Accepted Date:** January 25, 2023,

Published Date: January 30, 2023 |

Crossref doi: <https://doi.org/10.37547/tajpslc/Volume05Issue01-04>

Journal Website:
<https://theamericanjournals.com/index.php/tajpslc>

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ABSTRACT

We all know that the sharp changes that took place during the transition from competition to conflict in recent years affected the structure of the world order and its governance standards, the behavior of states, and their interactions within the international system. In the article, the author discussed the main ideas and trends in the formation of the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the current modern international relations, its position towards the countries in the region, in particular, the relations with the state of Israel, the unilateral actions of the United States, current trends in foreign policy, as well as the priorities of Iran's foreign policy.

KEYWORDS

Iranian revolution, "Neither East nor West" doctrine, "Look East" policy, term "Exporting the Revolution", nuclear agreement, sanctions.

INTRODUCTION

The Islamic Republic of Iran is the largest country in the Middle East region and occupies an important place in international and interregional relations. Iran, which has large reserves of natural resources and, first of all, energy resources, sees becoming a regional power

center as a priority of its foreign policy in the coming years. Faced with economic difficulties due to US sanctions, Iran is effectively using its existing potential to strengthen its interests in the international arena and fight against US hegemony.

Iran's foreign policy strategy in the Middle East determines the country's relations with international and regional powers. Iran's role in the Middle East region is one of the key issues of the state's policy in relations with Western countries, which hinders the improvement of Iran's relations, primarily with the United States and with NATO countries, in particular with Turkey and a number of Arab countries, such as, for example, Saudi Arabia. Nevertheless, the fact that the Middle East region is included in the number of important directions of Iran's foreign policy has its consequences - it increases Iran's authority both in the regional and international arena, is a certain guarantee of maintaining the country's national security, and contributes to the expansion of ties with large states, such as like Russia and China.

The key elements in Iran's policy towards the United States which must be taken into consideration to determine rationality and constitutionality are the way in which they interact and the time in which that interaction took place. Iran's policy towards the United States is confusingly historical while also not being rooted in history. First, it should be noted that Iran's policy towards the United States is its policy towards the United States, not towards any one administration. Therefore, Iran does not rest its policy in any sort of historical differences between Democratic and Republican administrations. However, this also turns a blind eye to the fact that different administrations have tried more than others to restore friendly relations, meaning that Iran's policy towards the United States has been unwavering despite there being opportunity for it to change.

In order to understand the evolution of relations between Iran and Israel, we must consider what relations between the two looked like prior to the 1979 revolution and how they changed in the aftermath of

the revolution. During the time of the Pahlavi dynasty, there was a friendly relationship between the two nations, with Iran even being the second Muslim-majority country to recognize Israel as a sovereign state in 1950. In the aftermath of the 1979 Iranian Revolution, Iran severed all diplomatic and commercial ties with Israel, although military cooperation continued as Israel supported Iran during the Iraq-Iran War. In the early days of the war, it was estimated that Israel sold Iran \$500 million-worth of arms, paid for primarily in Iranian oil.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The article uses such methods as historicity, logicity, analysis and synthesis, comparative analysis, forecasting, as well as systematic and functional approaches.

Research results and their analysis

Many scholars have focused on studying Iran's place and role in world economy and world politics in their works. Researcher Ezgi Uzun analyzed Iran's foreign policy in 1979-2018 in his work "Axis of Resistance: The Role of Religion in Iran's Foreign Policy". The work is distinguished from others by the fact that it has systematically established all levels of the state's foreign policy of the period chosen by the author, as well as the analysis of regional policy [1]. Modern aspects of international political and economic sanctions by I.N. Timofeev [2], N.M. Mamedova [3], the definition of the concept of "sanction", the mechanism of analysis of international sanctions on the example of sanctions against Iran and Russia, and the economic sanctions introduced by the United States against Iran policy has been studied. In the research works of K. Katsman and M. Varnar, after the Iranian revolution, the ideology of Iran is considered as one of the main factors on the way to unify the nation. Also, in their

research work, Iran's national interests, religious ideology, tools of national security strategy, nuclear and defense program, Iran's foreign relations with Iraq, Syria and Turkey, Iran's cooperation with Central and South, East Asia and international relations with other countries of the world are widely covered. In the research work authored by G. Yuldasheva, the geopolitical foundations of the US and Iran's strategies and their approaches to the Central Asian region from 1990 to 2017, the definition and essence of the relations of these countries with the leading regional actors, as well as the political and economic (energy and transport) of the US-Iranian relations in Central Asia and transit corridors) have been studied [4]. However, local scholars have not paid enough attention to the foreign policy of Iran located in the neighboring region as a foreign political mechanism, the sanctions applied by the leading countries against Iran in the current world politics, their goals, direction and consequences.

In this regard, the study of Iran's foreign policy and the geopolitical situation in the international arena allows to determine the development trends of the situation in the Middle East.

In order to understand the main directions of Iran's foreign policy, it is necessary to first understand the idea of the 1979 Iranian revolution. In short, the Iranian revolution was a revolt against domestic dictatorship as well as an international world system that the revolutionaries considered "unjust". Thus, the Islamic Republic was built on the assumption that justice and security should be ensured for all peoples of the world, a bipolar world system divided between Eastern and Western blocs. Iran then became an active member of the Non-Aligned Movement during the Cold War, strongly opposing US and Soviet interests in the Middle East.

Thus, Ayatollah Khomeini's doctrine of "Neither East nor West" became the main direction of Iran's foreign policy after the revolution. According to this general doctrine, Iran's priority was to maintain "unity" among the Muslim nations of the world and ultimately all "oppressed" nations against the oppression of the existing world order [5]. For some time, this policy was called "exporting the revolution" abroad. However, this terminology, as well as these actions by Iran, were not supported by the majority of conservative Arab governments, which are trying to maintain cordial relations with each of the two superpowers [6].

Iran's foreign policy strategy has not changed since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. The main goal is to counter the "unilateralism" of the United States in world politics by creating an undeclared alliance among developing countries. Although the term "exporting the revolution" has been officially abandoned, Iran has managed to expand its influence beyond its region and even beyond the Muslim world, particularly in Latin America and Africa.

For nearly two centuries, Iran's core security challenges have not changed. Iranian governments have always felt cheated and humiliated in their dealings with world powers. Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, Iranian governments tried to convince world powers that Iran was a force to be reckoned with.

Iran lost much of its territory to Russia in two major wars in the early 19th century. In 1941, Reza Shah was forced to abdicate due to military operations by Russian, British and American troops [7]. The revolutionary government of Ayatollah Khomeini, supported by the majority of the Iranian people, was defeated during the eight-year war (1980-1988) by the military aggression of Saddam Hussein, who was fully armed and fully supported [8].

Many bitter military experiences in history have affected Iran's political psyche so much that Iran has come to the conclusion that it must maintain its security by itself without relying on anyone's help. Historically and geographically, Iran has felt "alone" in a sea of foreign threats from world powers to its regional neighbors. US military interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as military involvement in the Persian Gulf region and Central Asia, have heightened Iran's security concerns over the past decade.

US administrations, both Democratic and Republican, have similarly talked about "using all options on the table" against Iran. The actions taken by the US, although not justified or understandable by any legal means, have become a commonplace in the recent American debate on Iran, and it deeply worries Iranians.

Israel also poses a regional security threat against Iran. Recently, the animosity between the two sides has reached a boiling point, and there are constant talks about a possible Israeli strike against Iran [9].

On the other hand, although the conflict between Iran and Iraq has long since ended and the new Iraqi government is ready to establish close ties with Iran, Iran-Arab relations have always been uneasy in recent decades, and Iran can never feel completely safe from its Arab neighbors.

Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdullahian described the creation of a strong region in West Asia as one of the priorities of Iran's foreign policy [10].

Today, in a situation where the global community is facing increasing problems at the regional and international levels, the use of illegal sanctions is contrary to the norms of international law and human rights, and the unlimited unilateralism and hegemony

of certain global powers has brought a new era of turmoil and instability to the international community, he said.

The withdrawal of the United States from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action once again showed its disregard for international obligations and a clear violation of the resolution approved by the United Nations Security Council.

He noted that according to all international observers, the Islamic Republic of Iran has remained committed to a peaceful solution to the nuclear issue in recent years, despite the negative actions of the United States and Europe's inaction, and has always kept an open path to negotiations to preserve its agreement. Regrettably, despite the open plea of the international community, despite previous promises and claims, the current administration of the United States continues its hostile actions against the Iranian people and continues the failed policy known as maximum pressure. He added that interference in the internal affairs of independent states continues by the main actors and in new ways [10].

Creating a strong region in West Asia has always been one of the priorities of the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

However, in recent decades, large-scale interference and occupation of the internal affairs of regional states by activists from outside the region, as well as the use of illegal sanctions by them, have seriously hampered the realization of this goal.

The continued actions of Western countries in the region of West Asia, from Afghanistan to Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria and Yemen, have led to the strengthening of terrorist and separatist groups,

endangering regional and international peace and stability.

Ebrahim Raisi took office at a difficult time - under intense external pressure - when Iran was facing an economic crisis and internal conflicts that threatened the legitimacy of the ruling system. Unlike Hassan Rouhani, Ibrahim Raisi does not have good experience in foreign policy, so he relies on the state institutions and figures who helped him take office, in particular, Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, who has the final say in the country's foreign policy. Especially related to the nuclear deal, Iran's relations with the West and the "Look East" policy. Therefore, the Ibrahim Raisi administration did not oppose the diplomacy of the Joe Biden administration to restore the nuclear deal. He expressed his desire to expand regional dialogue to reduce tensions while following red lines related to his vital interests.

Upon taking office, Iranian President Ibrahim Raisi adopted a "Look East" strategy to diversify Iran's relations with foreign powers and counter Western pressure, especially pressure from the United States. Instead of negotiating with the West, the turn to the East emphasized Iran's cooperation with non-Western powers such as China and Russia. China and Russia pursue independent and anti-American foreign policies, and both seek to broker agreements with similar nations [11].

CONCLUSION

In short, Iran's main international goal today is to "protest" regional hegemony and become a world actor. To this end, Iran's foreign policy priorities can be summarized as follows:

maintain good relations with its neighbors and at the same time have an unquestioned regional advantage that requires Israel to be contained;

Building alliances between developing countries from Asia to Latin America;

To create a global opposition group in ways that do not lead to open conflicts against the dominance and unilateralism of the West over world politics and economics.

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