**Role Play: Iran’s Nuclear Program**

**Due: March 18th**

For a number of years, the international community has been deeply concerned that Iran’s nuclear program was not merely aimed at producing nuclear power for civilian uses, but also at producing nuclear weapons. The construction of a nuclear weapons capability by Iran would be in breach of its obligations as a non-nuclear weapons state under the terms of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Iran continues to deny that it is pursuing a military program, and insists that all of its nuclear activities are for peaceful purposes.

A key sticking point has been its construction of increasing numbers of centrifuges for the production of enriched uranium (converting natural uranium ore into uranium 235 which is needed for both nuclear power or weapons), which, if enriched to 90% U235, could be used to fuel a nuclear weapon. As of November 2019, The Institute for Science and International Security reported that Iran has continued to produce enriched uranium above the limit of 3.67%, producing at a level of up to 4.5%. This estimate tells us that Iran had enough existing uranium stocks (enriched at lower levels) and the technology to produce fuel for a nuclear weapon. Iran has been under UN sanctions designed to ‘roll back’ Iran’s nuclear program since 2006. Major outcomes sought to include reductions in the amount of enriched uranium stockpiles Iran possesses, an end to its enrichment of uranium to 20%, and halting and reversing the installation of nuclear centrifuges to end its enrichment activities altogether.

Negotiations with Iran have occurred for many years, with various initiatives offered by a variety of states to Iran, which have been largely rejected by its leadership. See here for a “Timeline of Nuclear Diplomacy with Iran” written by the Arms Control Association: <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheet/Timeline-of-Nuclear-Diplomacy-With-Iran>.

On November 24, 2013 Iran and the P5 +1 (U.S., UK, China, France, Russia plus Germany) agreed on a Joint Plan of Action on Iran’s nuclear program. Under this agreement, Iran agreed to comply with some of the P5+1’s demands, and in return no new sanctions from the UN Security Council, EU and U.S. would be applied - and some sanctions were lifted. This deal was to last for only six months, though it was revisited again in November 2014 to continue negotiations on a comprehensive agreement. In July 2015, Iran and the P5 +1 signed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), which detailed restrictions placed on Iran’s uranium enrichment capacity: <https://media.nti.org/pdfs/iran_deal_text.pdf>. In May 2018, President Trump announced that the U.S. was withdrawing from the JPOCA, reinstating banking and oil sanctions. Even with heightened tensions, there has been significant progress on all sides, though outstanding issues still remain unresolved. Iran continues to escalate their nuclear activities, and the negotiations continue.

On January 3, 2020, Iranian Major General Qassem Soleimani was killed by a U.S. drone strike in Baghdad. Two days later, Iran announced that they would no longer abide by the limits described in the JPOCA.

**Scenario**

A meeting of the Security Council has been called to discuss what action its members might take to support the next round of negotiations with Iran to roll back its potential nuclear weapons capabilities. At the end of the meeting the parties must agree on further action that should be taken by the group. Iran and the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) have been invited to attend to put forward their respective positions.

**Roles**: Iran, United States of America, The E3 (UK, France, & Germany), Russia, China, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Head of the IAEA.

You will be allocated a role to play by the Instructor. Students will be required to construct a policy position from the point of view of the 'actor' they represent in this case study and to negotiate this policy with the other 'actors'.

Your actor’s position on Iran’s nuclear program must take into account the following:

* + Would your actor be opposed or in favour of Iran’s nuclear program? What concerns would they have about the potential for a nuclear-armed Iran? If you are representing Iran – what reasons might you have for pursuing this kind of program?
  + What outcomes would your actor want from these negotiations (e.g. what further specific steps would your country want Iran to take? What demands would your country make of Iran? What demands would Iran make of those opposed to its nuclear program?
  + A "carrot" approach incentivizes good behavior with rewards (e.g. economic diplomacy), while a “stick” approach uses punishment (e.g. sanctions, military action) to push people towards goals. What carrots or sticks could be offered? What might Iran demand or accept?

**Further Details**

Each of you will be given 3-minutes to give an oral statement of your position to the class. The **1-page summary** must be given to your Instructor at the end of your class. This may be presented in bullet point format and should use at least a 12-point font size.

After each student has delivered their position statement, negotiations between you will be opened up to free discussion. There should be a resolution of the meeting followed by a vote on the proposals that are put forward.

The role-play will take place for approximately 60 minutes.