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5 May, 2014

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| <u>Article 1.</u> | The Washington Post <u>After Kerry's failure, time for a more pragmatic approach to the Middle East</u> Editorial |
| <u>Article 2.</u> | The Financial Times <u>Uncertainty, not China, is replacing US power</u> Edward Luce |
| <u>Article 3.</u> | Foreign Affairs <u>What Iran Really Wants</u> <u>Iranian Foreign Policy in the Rouhani Era</u> Mohammad Javad Zarif |
| <u>Article 4.</u> | The National Interest <u>Is Washington Prepared for an Iran Nuclear Deal?</u> <u>Jamal Abdi</u> , <u>Tyler Cullis</u> |
| <u>Article 5.</u> | Project Syndicate <u>India's Next Foreign Policy</u> |

Article 1.

The Washington Post

After Kerry's failure, time for a more pragmatic approach to the Middle East

Editorial

5 May, 2014 -- Secretary Of State John F. Kerry's quixotic attempt to broker a final peace accord between Israelis and Palestinians stumbled to an end last week — or at least “a pause,” as Mr. Kerry put it. The secretary's intense focus on trying to wring compromise from Israeli and Palestinian leaders well known for their recalcitrance never made much sense; his energies would be much better spent developing workable strategies for the civil war in Syria, the growing threat of al-Qaeda in the region and Egypt's reversion to dictatorship, not to mention troubles in other parts of the world.

The failure of the latest “peace process” nevertheless raises questions about what will follow it — and there are plenty of bad options. Heading them off and finding ways to lay the groundwork for an eventual Palestinian state is a necessary

sequel to Mr. Kerry's surrender.

One challenge comes from Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, who has launched yet another reconciliation initiative with the Islamic Hamas movement. In theory a Palestinian accord that overcomes the split between the West Bank and Gaza Strip while providing for democratic elections could be a positive development, but the numerous "unity" plans announced in the past have foundered because of Hamas's refusal to recognize Israel or renounce terrorism.

Since Hamas is unlikely to fundamentally change its stance, a Palestinian agreement might lead to the termination of Israeli and U.S. funding for the West Bank-based Palestinian Authority and for security forces whose close cooperation with Israel has helped keep the peace. Already, members of Congress, including Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.), are proposing to cut or eliminate U.S. aid to the Palestinians, a step that could hurt Israel's security more than it punishes Mr. Abbas and his cronies.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been trying to pressure Mr. Abbas not to go forward with Hamas, but his public jawboning probably doesn't help. Israeli politicians are meanwhile proposing ideas such as the unilateral annexation of parts of the West Bank, a move that would be as provocative as it is insubstantial. For his part, Mr. Kerry has hinted at embracing one of Washington's hoariest bad ideas, the issuance of a detailed U.S. plan for Palestinian statehood. That, too, would satisfy some partisans but lead nowhere.

Low-profile but practical measures by both Israel and the United States would be far more helpful. There is much Israel could do

to free up movement in the West Bank and stimulate the Palestinian economy through the removal of checkpoints, loosening of controls on exports, and facilitation of new housing and businesses. Mr. Kerry once spoke of launching an economic development plan for the West Bank; now would be the time to see that through.

The United States should also seek to reverse the deterioration of Palestinian government that has occurred since the 79-year-old Mr. Abbas — whose term as elected president expired more than five years ago — forced out a reformist prime minister. Corruption has steadily increased, as have human rights abuses. New elections should be held, with the proviso that groups advocating violence are excluded. Palestinian statehood must be built on the foundation of working democratic institutions. The Obama administration should place that principle at the center of a new, more pragmatic policy.

[Article 2.](#)

The Financial Times

Uncertainty, not China, is replacing US power

Edward Luce

May 4, 2014 -- First things first. China is not about to replace the US as the world's superpower. Last week's news that

China's economy was close to overtaking that of the US on a purchasing-power basis marked a statistical milestone. But little more.

China is neither able nor ambitious to step into America's shoes. It will be a decade or so before it overtakes the US in dollar terms. The story of our age is that the US is increasingly unwilling – and in crucial respects, unable – to continue in the role it has played for the past 70 years. After America comes multipolarity – not China. The question is, what type? Will it be based on a system of US-framed global rules? Or will it be “après moi, le déluge”?

The shift in geopolitics is already well under way at both ends of the Eurasian land mass. Last week Barack Obama returned from a four-nation Asian tour of China's neighbours, all of whom fear an expanding regional hegemon. The US president spends much of the rest of his time trying to shore up unity among those living in Russia's vicinity, from Ukraine westwards. They too fear an increasingly predatory regional power. Two generations ago George Kennan framed America's famous “containment” strategy for the Soviet Union. Today, the US is stumbling into dual containment of China and Russia.

The demand for US leadership remains strong. But America's ability to sustain a dual containment strategy is an open question.

The return of great power rivalry in Asia and Europe finds a close parallel in global economic shifts. The US remains much the top dog in dollar terms – the only measure that counts. Its per capita income remains five times that of China. It may take

40 years or more for China's living standards to catch up. But the speed with which it is catching up is breathtaking. At the start of the century China accounted for barely 4 per cent of the global economy in dollar terms. Today it is about 12 per cent. The US has fallen from just under a third, to barely 20 per cent.

China will overtake the US sometime in the next decade. But it can never replace it. Therein lies the danger. The US will no longer have the capacity to uphold the global order, while China will always lack the legitimacy. In addition to being an autocracy, China is not built on immigration and has never sought to project universal values.

We are already in the early stages of a multipolar economic world. The postwar US global order was built around the international institutions that it launched – the UN, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and Nato. It was also founded on the successive world trade agreements that culminated in the Uruguay Round of 1994.

America is behaving like a declining hegemon: unwilling to share power, yet unable to impose outcomes

Since then the US has lacked the capacity to finish a new round. The Doha trade round is all but dead. Mr Obama's big trade initiatives in Europe and the Pacific are foundering. Both were launched for defensive reasons – China was not included in the Transpacific Partnership and Russia is not part of the transatlantic talks. But the US lacks the clout to see them through.

The same applies to reform of the IMF. It is absurd that China's voting share of the world's top economic body is just 4 per cent

– barely a third of its dollar weighting in the global economy.

Countries such as India, Mexico and Brazil are also woefully under-represented: Belgium still has a greater voting weight than either. Understandably they are beginning to drift away from the institutions the US built. To his credit, Mr Obama concluded the IMF governance negotiations that were begun under George W Bush and reached a deal to increase the emerging world's representation. But even this marginal reweighting has been blocked by Congress, which is also blocking Mr Obama's leeway to pursue his trade initiatives. The US is behaving like a declining hegemon: unwilling to share power, yet unable to impose outcomes.

The same influences are visible in America's approach to tackling climate change. As the world's richest country, the US cut a deal to subsidise carbon emission reductions in the emerging world. But the so-called "cash for cuts" strategy is missing a vital ingredient – cash.

Neither the US nor its partners will come up with anything like the \$100bn a year in climate aid promised in the Copenhagen talks in 2009. Again, Congress is blocking America's leadership. Mr Obama is powerless to do much about it. Thankfully, China, India and others are beginning to see that energy efficiency is in their own interests. But they are making changes on their own initiative.

The die has not yet been cast. The US holds more cards than any other in shaping what the multipolar world will look like. It has more legitimacy than any potential rival – China in particular. But America's ability to address these vast challenges is stymied

by domestic paralysis. Central to this is the declining fortunes of America's middle class – the foundation of its postwar global strength. Growing economic inequality across the US, and the political fallout in Washington, have killed the spirit of magnanimity that defined cold war American leadership. This loss is impossible to quantify. It is no less real for that.

America still has the power to set the tone of global engagement and negotiate outcomes that benefit both itself and the world. But it will require the US to retrieve the spirit of enlightened self-interest that once defined the nation. We must all hope that spirit is dormant rather than extinct.

[Article 3.](#)

Foreign Affairs

What Iran Really Wants

Iranian Foreign Policy in the Rouhani Era

Mohammad Javad Zarif

May/June 2014 -- Foreign policy is a critical component in the lives, conduct, and governance of all nation-states. But it has become even more significant in recent years as interstate relations have grown ever more complex. The inexorable rise in the number of international players -- including multilateral organizations, nonstate actors, and even individuals -- has further complicated policymaking. Meanwhile, the ongoing process of globalization -- however conceived and defined,

whether lauded or despised -- has brought its inescapable weight to bear on the foreign policies of all states, whether large or small, developed or developing.

Since its establishment by a popular revolution in 1979, the Islamic Republic of Iran has grappled with these challenges. The postrevolutionary foreign policy of Iran has been based on a number of cherished ideals and objectives embedded in the country's constitution. These include the preservation of Iran's independence, territorial integrity, and national security and the achievement of long-term, sustainable national development. Beyond its borders, Iran seeks to enhance its regional and global stature; to promote its ideals, including Islamic democracy; to expand its bilateral and multilateral relations, particularly with neighboring Muslim-majority countries and nonaligned states; to reduce tensions and manage disagreements with other states; to foster peace and security at both the regional and the international levels through positive engagement; and to promote international understanding through dialogue and cultural interaction.

IRAN IN THE MULTILATERAL ERA

Since the end of the Cold War and the demise of the bipolar world in the early 1990s, the global order has undergone a major structural transformation. But a firm new order has not yet emerged. As was the case during other transitions in the past, the fluid, complex, and uncertain state of international affairs today is extremely perilous and challenging. Previous transitions were usually complicated by military rivalries and even outright war

among the dominant powers of the time. Today's rivalries are similarly quite intense. However, due to a number of factors -- the substantially changed global environment, changes in the nature of power, and the diversity and multiplicity of state and nonstate actors -- competition these days mostly takes a nonmilitary form.

The concept of power itself, traditionally measured in terms of military might, has changed substantially. New forms of influence -- economic, technological, and cultural -- have emerged. Concurrently, changes at the conceptual level have brought the cultural, normative, and ideational components of power to the fore, making power more accessible to a larger pool of actors. Moreover, the gradual rise of multilateralism in the wake of World War II has elevated the importance of international norms and consensus.

Despite such substantial changes in the architecture of the world order, remnants and beneficiaries of the old order have tried to salvage the wreckage of the past. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, the emergence in the United States of apocalyptic theories declaring "the end of history" or a "clash of civilizations" represented a hasty reaction to the enemy vacuum created by the end of the Cold War and to the rising status of Muslims on the global stage. Through a series of subsequent Islamophobic campaigns -- sometimes promoted as official state policy and perpetuated systematically in various forms and guises -- some in the West tried to depict the Islamic community as a new ideological enemy on a global scale.

But rather than experiencing a divergence, the world is now moving toward a state of mutual interdependence. Contrary to

the situation in the past, the pursuit of go-it-alone policies by former hegemons or current powers has led to a state of impasse and paralysis. Today, most nation-states, regardless of their size, power, influence, or other attributes, have come to realize that isolationism, whether voluntary or imposed, is neither a virtue nor an advantage. Collective action and cooperation have become the hallmarks of the era.

Multilateralism, the collective search for common solutions to common problems, has proved its desirability and practical efficacy at both the regional and the global levels. Even major world powers have learned the hard way that they can no longer pursue their interests or achieve their particular goals unilaterally. The gradual yet growing trend of coalition-making, at the regional and global levels, both for short-term purposes and for more enduring enterprises, bears witness to the inescapability of collective action. Willful cooperation has gradually developed as a new working pattern of interaction among states; it has come to replace the once predominant and now discredited pattern of confrontation, unconditional subservience, and perpetual rivalry.

As an inevitable consequence of globalization and the ensuing rise of collective action and cooperative approaches, the idea of seeking or imposing zero-sum games has lost its luster. Still, some actors cling to their old habits and habitually pursue their own interests at the expense of others. The insistence of some major powers on playing zero-sum games with win-lose outcomes has usually led to lose-lose outcomes for all the players involved.

The much-challenged position of the United States in the world

today, notwithstanding its preponderance of military power, is a glaring case in point. The actual situation in various parts of the world where the United States is directly involved, most notably in the greater Middle East and in Iran's immediate neighborhood, points to Washington's reluctant but unmistakable turn to the path of coalition building with other global powers and even regional actors. China, India, and Russia are engaged in intense competition, primarily with the Western bloc, in a concerted effort to secure more prominent global roles. However, major powers and emerging powers alike are now loath to use military means to resolve rivalries, differences, or even disputes.

This has led to the gradual rise of a revisionist approach to foreign policy. Nation-states, regardless of their current position and power, now seek to enhance their stature and achieve their goals through a carefully balanced combination of cooperation and competition. The deadly rivalries of the past, a function of brute force and hard power, have gradually given way to cultural, normative, and ideational forms of competition. The uncertainty produced by the current transition in global norms and behavior also has a downside. If states miscalculate their own power or misperceive the capabilities and intentions of others, it could prove extremely costly to all involved. The intrinsic riskiness of this state of affairs calls for governments to rely on more objective analysis and to make careful assessments of their own positions and capabilities as well as of the intentions and possible conduct of others.

All states can take advantage of this transitional stage to advance their positions and further their interests. Governments must make realistic calculations about their own relative advantages

and vulnerabilities and, most important, articulate clear sets of objectives and plans. Over the past few decades, especially since the end of the Cold War, states that have pursued clearly articulated foreign policies have been the most successful in advancing their regional and global positions; those that have lacked an understanding of the global environment and pursued policies based on miscalculations and misjudgments have either lost their previous positions or become marginalized.

FULFILLING IRAN'S POTENTIAL

As a solid regional power in this era of intense transition in global politics, Iran stands in a unique position. Given its large landmass and unique geographic position along the east–west transit route, Iran, since antiquity, has enjoyed a preeminent position in its region and beyond. Although Iran's civilization and cultural heritage have remained intact, its political and economic fortunes have fluctuated periodically, depending on, among other things, its governance at home and its relations with the outside world. The victory of the 1979 revolution, a popular, nationwide, antimonarchical uprising with a mixture of republican and Islamic traits, contributed to the establishment of a new revolutionary order in the country. The repercussions were drastic, and the revolution deeply affected the country's foreign relations, not only in its immediate neighborhood but also throughout the greater Middle East and in the rest of the world.

Any objective analysis of Iran's unique attributes within the larger context of its tumultuous region would reveal the country's significant potential for a prominent regional and global role. The Islamic Republic can actively contribute to the

restoration of regional peace, security, and stability and play a catalytic role during this current transitional stage in international relations. In light of the increasing importance of normative and ideational factors in global politics, the Islamic Republic is well suited to draw on the rich millennial heritage of Iranian society and culture and the significant heritage of the Islamic Revolution, particularly its indigenously derived and sustained participatory model of governance. Iran can use such strengths to help realize the deeply cherished national aspirations of the Iranian people, including the achievement of long-term development and regional ascendance commensurate with the country's inherent capacities and stature.

Iran also benefits from a number of historical characteristics that could be considered unique sources of opportunity, many of which have not been properly or fully leveraged in the past. For example, Iran has remained independent from outside powers and practiced genuine nonalignment, lending it a particular freedom of action within the existing global order. Iran can also leverage its political traditions. It has successfully established an indigenous democratic model of governance, developing and maintaining a rare religious democracy in the modern world. It has an unmatched cultural identity emanating from its dynamic blend of Iranian and Islamic culture, which it can use to promote its mission and message throughout the entire Islamic world. As an ancient society with a plurality of ethnic, religious, and linguistic minorities, Iran also offers a model for political inclusion. And the country has achieved all of this at the center of a vital geostrategic region that has witnessed a long history of major-power rivalries, interventions of all sorts, and protracted military conflicts. Finally, Iran has also demonstrated its potent

ideational capabilities and universal reach through such initiatives as President Muhammad Khatami's "Dialogue Among Civilizations" and President Hassan Rouhani's recent proposal for a "world against violence and extremism," which was adopted as a resolution by the UN General Assembly last December.

Governance in the modern world is challenging for every state, regardless of its size, demographics, form of government, geographic position, level of development, or relations with the world. Iran has been an organized state since antiquity, albeit with some periods of interruption. It has thus had extensive relations throughout history, in war and in peace, with its numerous neighbors and with other contending powers. It has accumulated a rich, layered collective memory and a deep reservoir of experiences. Iran borders seven countries and shares access to either the Caspian Sea or the Persian Gulf with 11 countries; both bodies of water are of interest to the littoral states as well as to a host of outside powers. Thus, Iran inevitably has a full plate to deal with when it comes to its national security and foreign relations.

Iran also finds itself in a fundamentally crisis-ridden region. The decades-long occupation of Palestine and the ongoing conflict there has taken a destructive toll on the well-being and development of the entire Middle East. The chronic turmoil, instability, and violence in the region have grown worse in recent years due to a series of protracted external military interventions, most notably in Afghanistan and Iraq. Since early 2011, political upheavals in the Arab world and their generally bloody aftermaths -- dubbed by some during their initial stages as "the Arab Spring" and by others as "the Islamic Awakening" --

have introduced another destabilizing factor to the region. The trend appears likely to continue for quite some time, even though the direction of the process remains extremely uncertain.

Given this overall regional picture and the dynamics at work between local and external players -- most prominently the United States -- Iran today has to grapple with a number of major challenges in its external relations. Needless to say, the long shadow of the decades-old and still ongoing tussle between Iran and the United States, which has been much exacerbated as a result of the nuclear imbroglio, has further complicated the state of relations between Iran and a host of its neighbors. Meanwhile, there has been a recent surge in the activities of extremist and violent nonstate actors in countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon, and Syria, with a clear and unmistakable anti-Iran, anti-Shiite platform. A well-orchestrated campaign has promoted Islamophobia, Iranophobia, and Shiite-phobia and depicted Iran as a threat to regional peace and security; extended support to anti-Iran claimants in the region; tarnished Iran's global image and undermined its stature; armed Iran's regional rivals; actively supported anti-Iran forces, including the Taliban and other extremist groups; and fomented disagreements between Iran and its neighbors.

MODERATION AND HOPE

It was within this international context that Rouhani won a decisive victory in the heavily contested Iranian presidential election in June 2013. He won 51 percent of all the votes cast in the first round against five conservative rivals. His political platform of prudent moderation and hope represented a significant turning point in Iranian politics. The fact that voter

turnout reached 73 percent suggests that the public had moved past the lingering divisions of the June 2009 election.

Rouhani's pragmatic positions on foreign and domestic issues proved reassuring to the Iranian electorate. Rouhani distinguished his campaign from the murky platforms of his rivals in several key respects: his clear analysis of Iran's current situation, his lucid and unambiguous articulation of the major challenges facing society and the state, and his honest and straightforward approach to problems and possible solutions. In this way, Rouhani managed to mobilize the disenchanted segments of the population to take an active interest in the final days of the campaign and to participate in the national vote.

Rouhani's foreign policy platform was based on a principled, sober, and wise critique of the conduct of foreign relations during the preceding eight years under the previous administration. Rouhani promised to remedy the unacceptable state of affairs through a major overhaul of the country's foreign policy. The changes he proposed demonstrated a realistic understanding of the contemporary international order, the current external challenges facing the Islamic Republic, and what it will take to restore Iran's relations with the world to a state of normalcy. Rouhani also called for a discourse of "prudent moderation." This vision aims to move Iran away from confrontation and toward dialogue, constructive interaction, and understanding, all with an eye to safeguarding national security, elevating the stature of Iran, and achieving long-term comprehensive development.

Prudent moderation is an approach based on realism, self-confidence, realistic idealism, and constructive engagement.

Realism requires an understanding of the nature, structure, mechanisms, and power dynamics of the international system and of the potential and limits of its institutions. Rouhani's moderation brings together a profound conviction in the cherished ideals of the Islamic Revolution with an objective evaluation of Iran's actual capacities, capabilities, and constraints. It demands a deliberate aversion to actions that are insulting, condescending, or self-aggrandizing. It promotes self-confidence based on an understanding of Iran's material and moral resources, including the collective wisdom of its citizenry. It values accountability, transparency, and honesty in dealing with the populace and implies a willingness to reform and improve existing policies. Rouhani's approach entails a delicate balancing act: between national, regional, and global needs, on the one hand, and the available means, instruments, and policies, on the other; between persistence and flexibility in foreign policy; between goals and means; and among various instruments of power in a dynamically changing world. Finally, Rouhani's commitment to constructive engagement requires dialogue and interaction with other nations on an equal footing, with mutual respect, and in the service of shared interests. It requires that all participants make serious efforts to reduce tensions, build confidence, and achieve détente.

A WAY FORWARD

Guided by this conceptual framework, the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic under the current administration will be based on achieving understanding and consensus at the national level and constructive engagement and effective cooperation with the outside world. Iran's policies will be guided by the principles of dignity, rationality, and prudence. This overall strategy aims to

safeguard and strengthen Iran's national security, diffuse or eliminate external threats, combat Islamophobia and Iranophobia, elevate the country's stature, and achieve comprehensive development.

With the Ministry of Foreign Affairs serving as the central organ for planning and executing Iran's foreign policy, in close coordination with other government bodies, the Islamic Republic will pursue several key goals moving forward. First, Iran will expand and deepen its bilateral and multilateral relations through meaningful engagement with a wide range of states and organizations, including international economic institutions. Multilateralism will play a central role in Iran's external relations. That will involve active contributions to global norm-setting and assertive participation in coalitions of like-minded states to promote peace and stability. A second priority will be to defend the individual and collective rights of Iranian nationals everywhere and to promote Iranian-Islamic culture, the Persian language, Islamic values, and Islamic democracy as a form of governance. Third, Iran will continue to support the cause of oppressed people across the world, especially in Palestine, and will continue its principled rejection of Zionist encroachments in the Muslim world.

Given the pressing challenges that it faces today, Iran will also focus on a number of more urgent aims. The top priority is to diffuse and ultimately defeat the international anti-Iranian campaign, spearheaded by Israel and its American benefactors, who seek to "securitize" Iran -- that is, to delegitimize the Islamic Republic by portraying it as a threat to the global order. The main vehicle for this campaign is the "crisis" over Iran's peaceful nuclear program -- a crisis that, in Iran's view, is

wholly manufactured and therefore reversible. That is why Rouhani wasted no time in breaking the impasse and engaging in negotiations with the so-called P5+1 (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, plus Germany) to find common ground and reach an agreement that will ensure nonproliferation, preserve Iran's scientific accomplishments, honor Iran's inalienable national rights under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, and end the unjust sanctions that have been imposed by outside powers.

Iran has no interest in nuclear weapons and is convinced that such weapons would not enhance its security. Iran does not have the means to engage in nuclear deterrence -- directly or through proxies -- against its adversaries. Furthermore, the Iranian government believes that even a perception that Iran is seeking nuclear weapons is detrimental to the country's security and to its regional role, since attempts by Iran to gain strategic superiority in the Persian Gulf would inevitably provoke responses that would diminish Iran's conventional military advantage.

Therefore, the ongoing negotiations over the nuclear issue face no insurmountable barriers. The only requirements are political will and good faith for the negotiators to "get to yes" and achieve the objective established by the Joint Plan of Action adopted in Geneva last November, which states, "The goal for these negotiations is to reach a mutually-agreed long-term comprehensive solution that would ensure Iran's nuclear programme will be exclusively peaceful." The unexpectedly fast pace of progress in the negotiations so far augurs well for a speedy resolution of this unnecessary crisis and for the opening up of new diplomatic horizons.

Iran will also endeavor to diffuse external threats by resolving outstanding issues with the rest of the world, in particular with its immediate neighbors. Confidence building and cooperation will be the cornerstones of Iran's regional policy. That is why last year, Iran proposed the creation of a security and cooperation arrangement in the Persian Gulf area. As a responsible regional power, Iran will actively participate in combating and containing extremism and violence through bilateral, regional, and multilateral cooperation with countries in the region and beyond.

Moreover, Iran will prudently manage its relations with the United States by containing existing disagreements and preventing further tensions from emerging unnecessarily, thereby gradually easing tensions. Iran will also engage with European countries and other Western states with the goal of reinvigorating and further expanding relations. This normalization process must be based on the principles of mutual respect and mutual interest, and it must address issues of legitimate concern to both sides. Iran will also expand and consolidate its amicable ties with other major powers, such as China, India, and Russia. As the chair of the Non-Aligned Movement until 2015, Iran will reach out to emerging powers of the "global South" and will try to responsibly mobilize their enormous potential for contributing to global peace and prosperity.

The Iranian people, with their massive turnout in last year's presidential election and their decisive choice of assertive engagement, have provided a unique window of opportunity for the new Iranian government and for the world to chart a different and much more promising course in our bilateral and

multilateral relations. The Islamic Republic of Iran is determined to vigorously honor its citizens' choice, which will undoubtedly have a tremendous impact on world affairs.

For this endeavor to succeed, it is imperative for other states to accept the reality of Iran's prominent role in the Middle East and beyond and to recognize and respect Iran's legitimate national rights, interests, and security concerns. It is equally important for other states to scrupulously observe the sensitivities of the Iranian nation, particularly regarding its national dignity, independence, and achievements. Westerners, especially Americans, need to modify their understandings of Iran and the Middle East and develop a better grasp of the region's realities, avoiding the analytic and practical mistakes of the past. Courage and leadership are required to seize this historic opportunity, which might not come again. The opportunity must not be lost.

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[Article 4.](#)

The National Interest

Is Washington Prepared for an Iran Nuclear Deal?

Jamal Abdi, Tyler Cullis

May 5, 2014 -- By the time U.S. and Iranian negotiators meet again in May, we may be just two months away from a potential resolution to the decade-long nuclear dispute [4]. While the toughest issues remain on the horizon, many (including none other than David Petraeus) have sounded a note of confidence that there will be a final agreement by July 20.

If so, we better prepare for what happens after a deal. As difficult as these negotiations have been and will continue to be in the weeks ahead, things will not get any easier when the parties return home to sell a final agreement to their respective hardliners.

The Sanctions Problem

Here in the United States, the ‘sell’ will be doubly difficult, as it is not just the rhetorical angst of the Iran-hawks on Capitol Hill that will need to be countered, but also the series of laws enacted by Congress that limit the President’s power to provide Iran necessary sanctions relief for a deal.

According to the Joint Plan of Action [5] agreed to in November, the P5+1 will begin lifting all nuclear-related sanctions in a final deal in return for strict limits on Iran’s nuclear program. However, under U.S. law, the President only has discretion to issue time-limited waivers for the sanctions and little power to actually lift the sanctions altogether.

Without an act of Congress, the President will have to issue a waiver every four-to-six months in order to provide sanctions

relief—providing opponents of a deal a regular schedule of opportunities to re-litigate the merits of a deal and sabotage the agreement. While this juggling-act might be sustainable so long as President Obama resides in office, his successor’s willingness to do so is far from certain. Would anybody expect a President Ted Cruz to continue issuing Iran sanctions waivers?

This kind of uncertainty means that U.S. negotiators have less to offer Iran and can thus demand less in return, leading to a weaker deal that will be criticized by hardliners who will bemoan their side’s limited gains and inflate the concessions their negotiators granted.

Furthermore, limiting the President’s power to terminate the sanctions jeopardizes U.S. compliance with a final agreement and, in turn, undermines the United States’ ability to secure Iran’s sustained adherence. If there are questions about U.S. ability to implement sanctions relief under a final deal, Iran will act as any rational actor and hedge its bets. And once both sides start to play this game, the nuclear deal that the parties have worked so hard to forge will erode as the mistrust that has long plagued U.S.-Iranian relations reasserts itself.

What’s the Fix?

U.S. and Iranian negotiators have sought to structure a final deal in such a way as to mitigate the mistrust as far as feasible, which is why a final deal will involve a “reciprocal, step-by-step process”—where a schedule outlines the timeline by which the P5+1 will lift nuclear-related sanctions in return for Iran’s verifiable implementation of limits on its nuclear program.

In order to secure the strongest limits on Iran’s nuclear program

and ensure Iran's sustained compliance, Congress should provide the President with the requisite authorities to lift all nuclear-related sanctions based on this schedule, so long as Iran upholds its own commitments under the deal.

This would balance two competing demands: Presidential flexibility and Congressional oversight. The President would have the flexibility to meet U.S. obligations to trade-in sanctions relief for Iranian nuclear concessions, and Congress would be well situated to take action should Iran be found in material breach of the agreement.

No other solution is so well suited to satisfy inter-branch competition, all the while addressing the ultimate goal: Iran as a non-nuclear-weapon state.

The Politics of Sanctions Relief

For some, the prospect of involving Congress in a final nuclear deal with Iran is an unsavory one. They are reminded that some in the Senate offered a bill, S.1881 [6], which would have violated the interim nuclear deal by imposing new sanctions. While supporters of the measure claimed it would only be triggered by an Iranian violation of the preliminary deal, this was false. A Republican staffer later admitted that the certification requirements embedded in the bill would have led to sanctions being implemented—killing the deal.

However, Congress is likely to take action one way or another if a final deal is inked. Those who prefer a diplomatic agreement to military conflict must take the driver's seat and prepare for success. A legislative vehicle that delegates necessary authority to the President to implement a deal, while retaining a legitimate

oversight role for Congress, has all the merits of a successful political compromise that advances global nonproliferation goals.

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Article 5.

Project Syndicate

India's Next Foreign Policy

Jaswant Singh

Apr 30, 2014 -- New Delhi – Next month, India will complete its marathon election. A new government is expected to assume power at the end of May, and, if the polls prove correct, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which has named Narendra Modi as its prime ministerial candidate, will lead that government.

With India's sluggish economic performance having rightly dominated the campaign, the question of what foreign policy the new government should pursue remains unanswered. Whatever the specifics, one imperative is clear: India must move beyond its allegiance to the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

The muddle that NAM diplomacy causes is perhaps best reflected in the Congress-led Indian government's recent quasi-endorsement of Russia's annexation of Crimea. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and his government appear to have overlooked that China covets Indian territory and may thus be pleased that Russia has set a precedent for a powerful country to thumb its nose at international law and seize part of a neighboring country. It is as if Indian foreign policy has been on autopilot since the 1980's, when the government almost always adopted a pro-Russia stance.

The reality is that the NAM was never particularly effective at keeping India out of conflict, as the wars with China and Pakistan in 1962, 1965, and 1971 clearly demonstrated. In 1971, it was the Soviet Union's support, rather than that of the NAM, that helped India to overcome the refugee crisis caused by Pakistan's genocide in Bangladesh. Likewise, in 1999, India relied on American intervention to pressure Pakistan to end its aggression around the Himalayan town of Kargil.

Given this track record, how can old NAM diplomacy be expected to resolve the foreign-policy challenges that India faces, especially at a time when China and Pakistan are uniting to confront India?

The most pressing threat to India's peace lies on its borders, especially the Himalayan border with China, the world's longest disputed frontier – not least because uncertainty there facilitates inflows of terrorist forces bent on undermining India's territorial integrity and sowing seeds of ethnic and religious conflict. While India has fought terrorism longer than any other country, the problem now affects the entire region, including

Afghanistan, China, and Pakistan.

With Islamist terrorism spilling across its borders, India can no longer leave the turmoil in the Arab world to others to manage. Instead, it must take an active role in efforts to contain and ameliorate it – and that means developing new strategic alliances. Just as terrorists have created a kind of multilateral offensive, the countries that they threaten must construct a multilateral defense.

For starters, India should welcome – and foster – the thaw in relations between the US and Iran. Given that both countries are friends of India, and that all three share many strategic interests, a nimble Indian government has an opening to help facilitate a diplomatic rapprochement.

Meanwhile, a strategic alliance that supports peace in the Indian and Pacific Ocean region – for example, among India, the US, Japan, South Korea, Australia, and Vietnam – could be shaped quietly and calmly, without impeding any of the partners' ability to establish economic ties with third parties, including China. India must also work vigorously to renew its relationships in Southeast Asia, where it risks abandoning the field to China.

At the same time, India must develop a strategic understanding with China, Russia, and the US concerning the jihadist explosion in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the Central Asian countries. Such an understanding would, of course, have rough edges, with India, Russia, and China simultaneously competing for influence in Afghanistan. Nonetheless, some sort of accord, whatever its gritty nuances, is both possible and necessary, given that preventing Afghanistan from relapsing into civil war or

again becoming an export base for terrorism is in everyone's interest, including Pakistan's.

India's next government must also nurture the country's partnership with the US. Until recently, the bilateral relationship has tended to be guided by a transatlantic, trans-Eurasian perspective, while ignoring the trans-Pacific option. But India, blocked to its west by Pakistan, is increasingly looking east for trade and strategic partnerships. As it explores these possibilities, it can work with the US to shape a common perspective in Central Asia.

As for Pakistan, India's NAM-driven inaction has given its nemesis the upper hand in isolating India strategically. This is extraordinary, given that Pakistan is the region's principal protector of terrorist forces – and has now, sadly, become the victim of its home-grown militants.

America's withdrawal from Afghanistan will, in the short run, be a setback for the entire region. But, even as the US withdraws its infantry, it cannot ignore the threat that Islamist terror poses to America. That is why the US will increasingly depend on countries like India to ensure the success of its global anti-terror policy.

But the value of the bilateral relationship extends far beyond the war on terror. The US and India must also establish clear channels for technology transfer – military, industrial, and scientific, including with regard to space.

Any forward movement in US-India cooperation must be characterized by care and respect, with objectives that are unambiguous, practical, and achievable. If both governments

devote the necessary time and energy to each other, they can create a partnership between the world's two largest democracies capable of playing a key stabilizing role in South Asia and beyond.

*Jaswant Singh was the first person to have served as India's finance minister (1996, 2002-2004), foreign minister (1998-2004), and defense minister (2000-2001). While in office, he launched the first free-trade agreement (with Sri Lanka) in South Asia's history, initiated India's most daring diplomatic opening to Pakistan, revitalized relations with the US, and reoriented the Indian military, abandoning its Soviet-inspired doctrines and weaponry for close ties with the West. His most recent book is *India at Risk: Mistakes, Misconceptions and Misadventures of Security Policy*.*