

Rouhani Foreign Policy and International Crisis Management (JCPOA and U.S Domestic Factors)

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Abstract:

To describe and articulate Iranian foreign policy, one must acquire an understanding of the theoretical approaches and its discourses that are appropriate to the identity and essence of the Islamic Republic as an Islamic state. Outside of this approach, a simplistic take towards the Iranian foreign policy will complicate the ability to correctly analyze this issue based on standard approaches in international relations. The main question that this paper seeks to find an answer to revolves around the Rouhani administration's general foreign policy strategy and its specific policy towards managing the made-up international crisis of Iran's nuclear program. Furthermore, the paper will look into the opportunities and challenges that exist which can impact that policy roadmap. To that end, in addition to analyzing the conceptual frameworks within which typical Iranian foreign policy approaches fit, elements that have had an impact on the type and direction of President Rouhani's foreign policy, on both the national and international level, will be studied. By the same token, the values and priorities upon which this foreign policy was built along with its strategy will be reviewed and contrasted with prior administrations approaches, and possible impediments that they created for this administration will be explained. In reviewing these elements, this paper will take note of domestic U.S. campaigns including Congress's treatment of the JCPOA, and the subsequent approach of President Trump towards this deal as one of the fundamental and impactful variables in the process of this paper.

Keywords: Crisis management, Rouhani administration, Foreign policy, Nuclear deal, Obama administration, Trump administration, US Congress

Introduction

Statement of the Problem

In addition to international variables, domestic variables and unique characteristics of the Rouhani government play an important role in policy-making and orientation in examining the causes and factors affecting the behavior of governments in foreign policy. In this regard, it is possible to use a combination of theories related to the Islamic state and the ordinary state at the international level. On the one hand, the main motivator of decisions, actions, reactions and behavior of the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran is motivated by "fulfillment of duties based on expediency". (Dehghani Firoozabadi, 2010, p. 10). On the other hand, according to the realist approach, there are other conventional analytical concepts such as benefit, power, security and wealth, values that are given special attention worldwide. According to theories of foreign policy decision-making, the change in the political behavior of governments depends on a set of factors, including decision-making personality, the role and position of decision-makers, government structure, and other domestic and international variables¹.

Since the issue of nuclear program is considered as one of the most important and controversial issues in the foreign policy of Iran during the last two decades, the arena of competition of different discourses has emerged mainly in this field. In other words, the synchronization of a particular discourse in Iran's foreign policy, the diplomacy of a particular core in accordance with that discourse in the country's foreign policy has emerged. (Dehghani Firoozabadi and Ataei, 2014, p.87). Therefore, diplomacy as a "management technique of interaction with the outside world by governments is the most important feature of foreign policy of

countries. The capacity that throughout the history of the emergence of governments have experienced various changes in its form, content and structure." (Hassan Khani, 2005, p. 136)

The interference of political factors and the change of state actors, such as the rise to power of Trump and his staunch supporters and their view of Iran and regional issues, caused the United States to undermine this international achievement by making new demands and not fulfilling US commitments. And eventually withdraw from it and reinstate previous sanctions and impose new ones and threaten to punish other countries if they do not comply with US policies to gradually strike a major blow to the agreement and make Iran to react proportionally by reducing its nuclear commitments gradually.

Thus, despite the ups and downs of Iran's nuclear program and activities in previous administrations, the Rouhani government has sought to address and manage the nuclear crisis and the challenges it faces in a realistic and moderate approach based on constructive interaction with the world to advance the peaceful rights and goals of the nuclear program through diplomacy and negotiation. He finally succeeded to reach a nuclear agreement called the "Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)" with the approval of the UN Security Council in the form of Resolution 2231, and gained some legitimacy to this agreement and put an end to this "unnecessary crisis". (Zarif, 2013, p. 2)

Main Question:

Given the priorities and orientation of the Rouhani government's foreign policy program, what are the opportunities and chal-

1- Refers to James Rosenau, an American political scientist and international affairs scholar.

lenges of the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran?

The Main Hypothesis

Resolving the nuclear issue, lifting sanctions, and improving relations with the West have been priorities in the foreign policy agenda, and the capacity and effectiveness of diplomacy have been significantly emphasized to achieve this goal. Iran's active role in the regional and international arenas, especially the conduct of several rounds of political negotiations to reach a nuclear agreement within the framework of the win-win approach, was a unique opportunity. At the same time, Trump's effectiveness in the United States and his decision to leave the UN Security Council and adopt an approach of maximum pressure against Iran has been a major challenge in this direction.

Variables

In this study, the moderate discourse in the foreign policy of Rouhani's government is considered as an independent variable and the effects of this discourse on resolving the nuclear issue that led to JCPOA is considered as dependent variable.

Importance and Necessity of Research

Considering the importance of Rouhani's discourse in the foreign policy in comparison with the discourse of previous governments and the need for its pathology to advance the national goals and interests of the country and also considering the economic life and livelihood of the people. On the subject of JCPOA and the economic and trade benefits that have come to the fore since the withdrawal of the United States from the agreement, and the unilateral sanctions imposed by the United States in spite of UNSCR 2231, an analysis of how to manage

foreign policy by finding diplomatic solutions and going through the difficult process of gaining consensus in the domestic arena and also preventing the collapse of this international achievement, these are some successful examples of domestic and international political management in this period. Such initiative and lessons from its flaws could be used as a valuable experience when necessary and appropriate in resolving other complex issues related to the country's foreign policy.

Research Application

Despite the existence of numerous discourses and various intellectual political tendencies and historical pessimism in Iran towards the performance of the Western world and the international system under their domination or influence, as well as the prolongation of the Iranian nuclear issue for other actors, including power and the sense of need and priority to resolve this crisis, it can be concluded that resolving the challenging issues of governments at the international level requires a realistic approach based on agility, the art of persuasion and the ability to negotiate in both domestic and international arenas through interaction with international organizations and other countries. These are the basic principles and tools of work from a professional perspective in the field of foreign policy, which need to be agreed upon in domestic political games in each country.

Therefore, the application of this research is useful when due to the existence and continuation of Iran's numerous challenges with the Western world, including regional issues and security arrangements, as well as the spread of terrorism and extremism or other common threats, the experience of JCPOA as a model success can be supported by oth-

er actors as a basis for developing frameworks for more cooperation and participation in other areas. This view will be achievable when other actors show their political will to strengthen multilateralism, commit to international mechanisms, and reject unilateralism by taking confidence-building measures to fulfill their commitments.

Conceptual and theoretical frameworks

In fact, presenting a comprehensive conceptual framework to the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran and its analysis requires attention to three conceptual packages to Iran's foreign policy with a focus on socio-political phenomena, generalization in international relations and specialization in international relations. (Sajjadpour, 2018, p. 62)

Among the various approaches and theoretical frameworks in international relations, most analyses on the foreign policy of Iran have been influenced by two dominant approaches of neoclassical realism and social constructivist theory, based on the assumption that these theories have the ability to explain more appropriate about the motives, goals, decision-making process and behaviors of the Islamic Republic of Iran. From the perspective of foreign policy analysis, the discourse of Rouhani government has been a combination of a realistic and idealistic approach, based on a moderate orientation and constructive interaction with the world.

A) Analysis based on the theory of neoclassical realism

The dominant theoretical framework in the analysis of the Iranian foreign policy is the paradigm of realism, and many of these relevant analyses and studies are organized on the basis of two theories of realism and neo-realism. But, due to their reductionist nature,

these two theories do not have the power to present and fully explain the dimensions of the foreign policy of the country. Realism due to the focus on the single level and neo-realism due to the focus on the structure of the international system, follow a one-dimensional approach and therefore, classical neo-realism, which is a combination of classical realism and neo-realism, due to the possibility of combining internal and external levels and considering domestic and foreign variables provides more opportunities to explain the impact of different variables on Iran's foreign policy, although the same theory has shortcomings in analyzing all aspects and generality of Iran's foreign policy. (Dehghani Firoozabadi, 2011, p. 276)

The neoclassical realism approach combines the elements and assumptions of classical realism and neo-realism. On the one hand, like neo-realism, it acknowledges the impact and importance of anarchy on the behavior of countries and it accepts the assumption that the anarchic international system restricts their foreign policy choices, and the effect of relative material power on the goals. On the other hand, it analyzes like classical realism, the influence of country characteristics and single-level variables. This theory examines and shapes the central role of government and explains how the domestic characteristics of countries on their decision-makers estimate of international threats and opportunities and their foreign policy.

According to this theory, the most important goal in Iran's foreign policy is to ensure the survival and security against the anarchic and self-serving international system. Anarchy, the self-help and insecurity drives the state to seek power to ensure its security. Although security is the first priority, it is not the only goal. If possible, Iran will try to

use its power to shape the desired regional and global order. In addition to these goals, economic development and prosperity are also pursued. Based on rationalist theory, Iran formulates and implements its foreign policy on the basis of a mixture of power and interests. In analyzing the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic, some variables need to be explained, including explaining the mediating role of government, society and decision-makers' perceptions, dynamics and competition in domestic politics, and bureaucratic and elite structures in shaping the foreign policy of Iran. (Dehghani Firoozabadi, 2011, p. 276).

B) Analysis based on social constructivism approach:

Since constructivist theory, among other theories, pays special attention to the issue of identity of actors and how to construct it socially, it has a high explanatory power regarding the Iranian and Islamic identity of the foreign policy. In this view, the most important factor in shaping the identity of states in the international arena is the consistent semantic resources at the domestic level. Therefore, in the case of Iran, the existing norms in religious and Islamic culture with emphasis on the Shiite element is considered one of the most important inter-subjective sources of consolidation that creates a kind of Islamic revolutionary identity for the country. An identity that, by creating and defining specific roles for the state, creates specific behaviors, orientations, and prescriptions for foreign policy in interaction with other states now and in the future.

Iran is not only influenced by its own value and normative considerations and motivations in the design and implementation of its foreign policy, but also, inspired by Islamic, revolutionary and Iranian compo-

nents and its crystallization in the constitution over 4 past decades and its foreign policy has shown that behavior has an impact on the external environment.

Three categories of norms play a role in shaping the identity of the Islamic Republic of Iran: Islamic discourse, constitutional discourse norms, and international norms. Normative structures play a role in determining the interests of countries, and on the other hand, the practice of countries also plays a decisive role in maintaining, continuing and changing structures. Institutional norms give meaning to the identity of countries and define patterns of behavior; but at the same time, it is the overall interaction of countries that creates and maintains social structures. (Dehghani Firoozabadi, 2018, pp. 3-4)

Criteria for evaluating the foreign policy of Iran as a normative actor are its success rate in disseminating norms, power and rate of using normative reasoning and justification, persuasion and satisfaction of other international actors, behavioral changes, normative consensus and discourse hegemony and modeling In International Relations. Therefore, the most appropriate approach in studying the issue of the relationship between the foreign policy of Iran and international norms is the norm-based approach. According to this approach, Iran is a norm-setting player in the international system that plays a founding role in this regard and has willingly or unwillingly contributed to the establishment of international norms.

The Iranian nuclear crisis and the management of internal challenges in the United States and Iran

A) Domestic factors in the U.S (Congress)

How the nuclear deal with Iran is going in the US domestic policy process is one of the

issues that can be considered in terms of its effects on how quickly the US commitments are fulfilled. In fact, despite the international responsibilities and commitments of the US government, the contribution of domestic processes in this country has been decisive in the speed of formation and implementation of the UN Security Council. Because JCPOA was a product of the Obama administration's domestic policy and the support of a majority of Democratic senators through Filibuster's legitimacy, this is crucial to the regional environment for Republicans who prioritize Israel's security concerns, have not been easily accepted.

The JCPOA took place at a time when the United States was ruled by a divided government. In other words, in a divided government, control of the legislature and the executive is not in the hands of one party, and rivalry among parties overshadows the integrity of JCPOA and other issues. In fact, in 2015, the executive branch was in the hands of the Democrats and the control of the House and Senate was in the hands of the Republicans. By that definition, there was a single government between 2009 and 2010, and both powers were held by Democrats. Therefore, the existence of this fact and the component of the rule of a single state or a divided state in the United States at the time of interaction with this country influence how it fulfills its obligations. According to JCPOA, the Obama administration pledged, in accordance with its legal authority, to take action within the United States to fulfill the US government's commitments. (Kameli, 2017, pp. 8-9)

One of these measures was the Obama administration resorting to the "Filibuster"¹ in the legislative process. Filibuster means to delay or prevent a bill from being drafted, a Dutch word literally meaning Pirate or "theft

or illegal use", which was first authorized in the US Congress (Senate and House of Representatives) in 1806. Because of Republican opposition, resorting to filibuster was the only possible legal option for Democrats and the Obama administration. According to this basic rule, the senators of the filibuster could continue to speak until the time of the meeting ended and the bill was not put to a vote. Or continue lecturing until time runs out.

Given the fluidity of political developments in the United States and the 2016 presidential election, of course, because of the Republican opposition to JCPOA, the prospect of implementing JCPOA faced new challenges within the United States. Thus, recognizing Trump's position as the main Republican candidate for JCPOA in the run-up to the 2016 presidential election could shed some light on the prospects for the deal. Some inside the United States analyze Trump's approach to Obama's foreign policy gains, including JCPOA, more in terms of internal competition between two conflicting perspectives.

Prior to his election victory, Trump had two critical views on Iran Deal. The primary position was based on tearing down JCPOA and the secondary and complementary position was to renegotiate Iran Deal. He did not react seriously to the issue immediately after the victory, despite the action and reaction between the Iranian government and Obama over the extension of the ISA act. Perhaps one of the main reasons for this was the assurance that the law would be finalized by a relative consensus in Congress and the Senate and that there would be no need to challenge President Obama.

During the transitions of power, with the issuance of the Security Council resolution condemning settlement policy in occupied

1- A tactic used by a minority group of members of the U.S. Senate who oppose and prevent the passage of a bill. The original meaning of the word referred to a situation according to which, if a bill (or resolution) is introduced in Congress and senators and representative continue to speak about it in public, the vote on that bill will be refused and that the bill does not become law.

Palestine, Trump, as President-elect, made his first (indirect) position on JCPOA. In fact, the Obama administration's decision to abstain from voting on the Security Council resolution prompted Trump to step out of his silence and, in line with Israeli officials, question many of the government actors, the United Nations, and again, expresses his dissatisfaction with JCPOA as Obama's achievement and legacy.

Trump's assertion that "JCPOA was the beginning of the end of American friendship with Israel" or describing the Deal as a "terrible Deal" indicates that he continues to have a negative view of the agreement, and that the president himself does not know how to deal with JCPOA. He has seen it only in the "national interest" of the United States, but also in its influence on "America's friendship with Israel" and the need to satisfy them. Trump's tweet on February 2, 2017, showed that his administration, while being highly critical of the Deal, sees the agreement as a concession from the Obama administration to Iran, and believes that while Iran was in a state of suffocation and collapse, JCPOA was able to inject \$ 150 billion to the Iranian economy and give it a new lease of life.

The role of Congress in relation to the ups and downs of JCPOA

The traditional role of the Congress in relation to the type and form of determining policies towards Iran is one of the important and influential elements on JCPOA. Basically, it is difficult to understand the context in this legislature, which is heavily influenced by lobbies, without understanding the evidence and historical record of the congressional general approach to Iran. Since the victory of the Islamic Revolution, Congress has always been at the forefront of shaping

the anti-Iranian discourse in American politics and has had an effective and strong function. And it has acted in the interests of foreign lobbies and US regional allies.

With this in mind, the Republican-dominated Congress has emphasized its continued role-playing and oversight to ensure a strong and multifaceted anti-Iranian policy in the Obama and Trump administrations, and a lot of time and energy to intensify pressure and increase the cost of Iranian policy and action. For congress, dealing with issues like addressing the shortcomings of Obama's policy in the Middle East by seeking programs and actions to implement an effective and active policy in the region, especially for those challenges posed by the Middle East crisis centers and try to ensure of US strategic partnership with Israel, as well as to build an alliance between Israel and the Arab states of the Persian Gulf, was on top priority. Congressional Republicans used the maximum possible capacity to prove this role under Obama, and held numerous, regular hearings.

In Congress, the prevailing view has been that the approach of pressure and sanctions on Iran in other areas is effective and efficient in weakening the position of the government and the political system, and ensuring its continuation can lead to changes in the policies and behavior of Iranian official. This spectrum has gradually shifted its instrumental view of sanctions to the establishment of a strategic goal. So, the JCPOA caused the path of sanctions was mainly closed. (Kameli, 2017, pp. 10-12)

One of the clearest examples of the anti-Iranian approach of the Congress is the way it deals with Iran Deal. JCPOA became a partisan issue in the United States from the beginning. The Republicans, who had pre-

viously opposed any engagement or negotiation with Iran, opposed it from the outset. Democrats, on the other hand, supported the Obama administration's initiative to engage with the "American opposition." The majority of the 114th and 115th congresses found that the government had exceeded its legal authority and was in a hurry to reach this agreement and leave a legacy. On the contrary, the Obama administration, aware of the difficulty of the road ahead, based on the legal and supportive capacities of Democrats, followed the tactic of bypassing Congress or minimizing its role by passing a Security Council resolution. The feeling of the majority of the Congress that the government was unwilling to satisfy the Republicans and to unilaterally advance the JCPOA initiative, which was releasing Iran's previously sanctioned and limited capacities, led the institution to take a negative stance.

Given this fact, as well as the limited possibility of congressional maneuvers to advance nuclear sanctions, there was a double incentive to put pressure on other sectors to Iran among senators and members of Congress. The prevailing perception was that Iran's defense and foreign policy had become more aggressive after JCPOA, and that various actors in Iran were helping to advance these policies with different approaches and perspectives, as well as using a variety of methods and tools.

The Process of Formation of JCPOA in the 114th Congress

The Republicans, who had previously opposed any engagement or negotiation with Iran, opposed it from the outset. Democrats, on the other hand, supported the Obama administration's initiative to engage with the "America's adversaries." The majority view of Congress 114 and 115 was that the gov-

ernment had exceeded its legal authority and was in a hurry to reach this agreement and leave a legacy. On the contrary, the Obama administration, aware of the difficulty of the road ahead, based on the legal and supportive capacities of Democrats, followed the tactic of bypassing Congress or minimizing its role by passing a Security Council resolution.

Iran Nuclear Agreement Review act 2015 (INARA)¹

The Congress has had a significant impact on the process of formation and implementation of Iran Deal in five forms in the three stages before, during and after the implementation of JCPOA. These activities are mainly in the field of legislation, representation of lobbies and influential groups, monitoring, assisting constituencies in securing the interests of state and local companies and groups, and finally holding hearings and educating and informing the public, as well as bargaining has been crystallized with the government.

Traditionally, there have been three types of agreements under US domestic law. First, Treaties signed by the President with the recommendation and consent of the Senate. Second, an exclusively executive agreement reached by the President within the framework of his legal authority. Third, Executive Final Agreement - A legislation that requires the approval of Congress and is reached before or after the agreement is reached and the President is given sufficient authority to conclude this agreement. Sometimes the president enters into non-binding political agreements. (Mardani, 2017, p.96-98)

In connection with the IAEA, in order to monitor the text of the final agreement of this agreement, the Congress passed the law on the supervision of the Congress on Iran

1- H.R.1191.Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015

nuclear program which is called the Iran Nuclear Deal Review Act (INARA), it is an amendment to the 1954 U.S. Atomic Energy Act, which amends it by adding Article 135. Article 135 deals with the issue of Iran's agreement with the United States on the nuclear issue, which deals with issues such as definitions related to nuclear agreements and their substantive issues. The bill effectively eliminates the ability of the Senate to block JCPOA because it provides for an executive agreement unless both houses pass resolutions opposing the agreement and a two-thirds majority passes it. The law addresses important issues, including the need to send side nuclear agreements with Iran to Congress, review verification of such congressional oversight agreements, and Iran's compliance with the agreement, including responding to any action or omission. In the event that Iran violates the Agreement, or is inconsistent with the provisions of the Agreement, and any delay of more than one week by Iran in providing inspectors with access to facilities, persons and documents in Iran as provided in the Agreement, Any action taken by Iran to address the International Atomic Energy Agency's concerns regarding the possible military dimensions of Iran's nuclear program, and any material that could or could significantly violate the agreement by Iran. Evaluate Iran's ability to acquire nuclear weapons, evaluate any research and development of centrifuges that does not comply with the agreement, or if expanding it may substantially reduce the maximum time for Iran to acquire a nuclear weapon. As to Iran's financial obligations Whether or not it engages in money laundering or terrorist financing activities; and Iran's progress on the ballistic missile program, including advances in long-range and intercontinental ballistic missile programs;

Whether or not it has carried out terrorist acts against the United States or one of its allies anywhere in the world, and whether or not Iran has violated the fundamental rights of the agreement, and if so, has indicated that it has acted or amended it. This law is considered as a reason for examining the substance of the text of JCPOA in the domestic law system of the United States of America. (www.US Congress. Gov).

Congress after JCPOA

In the Congress, numerous actions and letters were carried out by the opponents of the Deal. One of the most important of these actions was the March 9, 2016 letter from 46 senators, including Sen. Tom Cotton of Kansas, to Iranian leaders. The letter warned that if the agreement was not approved by Congress, Vice President (in the absence of president) could rescind any nuclear deal with the stroke of a pen. Since the INARA agreement, despite efforts to limit Iran's use of JCPOA's benefits, Republicans have effectively considered the integrity of the Deal and the US government's commitments in many of their proposals.

At the same time, preventing the effective implementation of US bilateral commitments, especially facilitating financial exchanges, aircraft sales, the purchase of heavy water reactors, scientific cooperation, and pressuring the Treasury Department to report on financial exchange bans with Iran or licenses to sell aircraft; Also, the ban on financial exchanges of foreign and American financial institutions with Iran regarding the sale of aircraft has been strongly pursued by the opponents of JCPOA. Moreover, actions such as the extension of ISA act until 2026, Adoption of the CAATSA aimed at countering Iran's regional activities, the National Defense Authorization act for the fiscal

years 2018, 2019 and 2020 (Iran sections) , among other congressional actions are to influence the Deal to prevent Iran to enjoy economic benefits of this agreement.

From the beginning of the discussion on the formation of JCPOA, there has not been a single and unified view in the Congress, and in practice, this issue has been influenced by the party agenda and in the bipolar atmosphere of the Congress. Democrats view the Deal as a foreign policy achievement, and Republicans see Iran as a concession. Republicans see the Deal as a factor in strengthening Iran's regional position at the expense of weakening America's regional allies, and Democrats see it as an incentive to change Iran's behavior by joining the international community. Republicans do not believe in JCPOA as a model for occasional cooperation, and see differences with Iran in a large package. After the agreement, the Republicans sought to impose new conditions to facilitate sanctions. These include the release of prisoners, the suspension of sanctions easing until January 2017 - new presidential elections -, and the payment of compensation by Iran to the families of so-called victims of terrorism.

The Policy of the Congress towards JCPOA

The 114th Congress played a different role than the 115th Congress during the Obama administration. Because the formation of the Deal and drawing the path of its implementation has been materialized in this congress. During this period, the movements of the legislative branch included a range of measures such as preventing the formation of Iran deal, maximizing the impact on the content of the Deal, bypassing the deal, and relative cooperation with government programs. The following is the role of congress in the past

and current periods: (Kameli, 2017, pp. 20-24).

1) Assessing the role of the 114th Congress in the Iran- JCPOA debate

The congress has been as the "bad cop" in the pre- JCPOA process with disruptive roles. During the negotiations and after the implementation of JCPOA, congress presented and approved plans, resolutions and conducted direct and direct correspondence with the President and the Secretary of State within the framework of monitoring the agreement. In examining the internal trends in the 114th Congress, three views can be seen in the post- JCPOA period:

1- **Optimistic view:** According to this view, Iran after JCPOA has been able to increase its international contacts and communications to some extent, and these contacts in turn can have a positive and constructive effect on Iran's behavior. JCPOA supporters are in this range.

2. **Pessimistic view:** Proponents of this view believe that with the influx of billions of dollars to Iran, Iran's regional behavior has become more aggressive, and this group believes that the developments in Yemen and Syria are as an example of such activity. The group says that in parallel with the implementation of the UN Security Council and maintaining readiness for the reversibility of sanctions, sanctions need to be implemented more severely in other non-nuclear areas. Opponents of JCPOA are in this group. The emphasis of this spectrum is to extend the Iran sanctions act (ISA) or to amend Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 in this regard.

In addition, given the key role of financial and banking transactions, JCPOA's opponents continue to emphasize the continued introduction of Iran's financial and banking sectors as a

matter of concern, citing laws and restrictions in the areas of missiles and terrorism, as well as human rights.

3- **Third point of view:** It believes that although it is necessary for the Congress to maintain the necessary readiness in line with the clause related to the reversibility of sanctions, but sufficient opportunity should be given for how to implement the UN Security Council. Part of the spectrum in favor of JCPOA can be included in this group. This spectrum was in fact in line with the Obama administration's argument.

According to the above views, the set of goals and actions that have been pursued in various committees of the 114th Congress with the focus on the issue of JCPOA and Iran can be classified into the following forms:

1- Actions and resolutions on "disrupting the implementation of the Obama administration's commitments":

"Ban on Assistance to Iran's Nuclear Program", "Reaffirm US Right to Use All Options, including Use of Force to Prevent Iran from Acquiring a Nuclear Weapon", "End Iran's Nuclear Weapon Program Before Sanctions relief"¹, "US Enforcement act and Visa Waiver Program" and etc.

2- Projects aimed at "showing some cases of lifting of sanctions imposed by JCPOA with the continuation of sanctions in non-nuclear areas"²: "Zero Tolerance act for Terror", "state Sanctions against Iranian Terrorism act", "Iran Terror Financial Transparency act"³, "Review and Implementation of Revolutionary Guards Sanctions act", and several similar actions,

3. Actions like "rely on ambiguities in the UN Security Council and express concern about the possibility of Iran abusing

these ambiguities in the expansion of its nuclear program," including the North Korean Sanctions Act.

4 - This spectrum, relying on the new North Korean sanctions act, seeks to magnify the issue of North Korea's relationship with Iran, and believes that given the impossibility of monitoring these relations, Iran may want to pursue its nuclear program in the direction of interaction with North Korea should continue to exchange experiences and technical know-how and participate in nuclear or missile tests in a way that cannot be monitored or verified. (Kameli, 2017, p. 27)

2) Assess the role of the 115th Congress in relation to the Iran debate and outcome

Congress 115 began its work at the same time as the Trump administration, and measures such as confronting Iran in non-nuclear areas, limiting US commitments to implement the Deal, preventing Iran from enjoying JCPOA benefits, circumventing the Deal by tightening sanctions in areas Put the term non-nuclear, etc. on its follow-up agenda. At the same time, some Republicans in the House of Representatives presented acts and resolutions to limit Iran's financial and economic benefits from JCPOA⁴.

In Congress 115, the finalization and implementation of US Counter adversaries through Sanctions act, and the initial passage of six acts in the House of Representatives including the International Sanctions Enforcement and Iran Ballistic Missile act⁵, the amendment to prevent international financing Hezbollah, the Intelligence Authority Act, the Caesar Protection of Syrian Citizens Act, and the North Korean Sanctions and Interception Act, as well as an initial Senate

1-S.2429. Ending Iran's Nuclear Weapon Program Before Sanctions Relief Act of 2015

2-S.3518. Nonnuclear Iran Sanctions Act of 2016

3-H.R.5711. No U.S. Financing for Iran Act

4-H.R.4324. Strengthening Oversight of Iran's Access to Finance Act

5-H.R.1698. Iran Ballistic Missiles and International Sanctions Enforcement Act

resolution and act like “countering Iran's destabilizing activities”¹ are to influence implementation of JCPOA.

Also reviewing more than 30 proposals in various committees of both parliaments on issues of terrorism, missile sanctions, non-nuclear sanctions, IRGC sanctions, strengthening oversight of Iran's access to finance, preventing Hezbollah and Iran from infiltrating the Western Hemisphere, Countering Iran's regional activities, reporting Iran's ballistic missiles, facilitating sanctions on Iran, stopping arms smuggling to terrorists, terrorist sanctions on Iran, protecting the Christian genocide, determining Iran's terrorist list, US and Israeli defense powers, US joint missile defense and Israel, United States-Israel Security Assistance Authorization Act², The National Intelligence Report on Iran's allies Forces, the Cyber Diplomacy act, and the Transparency of Iran's Leadership Assets were followed up.

B) Domestic factors affecting the nuclear policy of Rouhani's government

In this study, an attempt is made to examine each of the influential internal components in the nuclear policy of the government:

Individual:

The background of the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the past has shown that the personality and thought of the president has played an essential role in defining, formulating and continuing the foreign policy of that government. The moderate discourse of the 11th government, before having a specific semantic structure, arises from the thinking and mentality of the president, which has a decisive role in its durability and consistency (Dehghani Firoozabadi, 2014, p. 36). Hassan Rouhani stated in a speech in 2013 that who is the president

or in charge of the negotiating team is very important. Within the framework of political norms in Iran, he was able to reveal the need for a diplomatic solution to the nuclear crisis by using the language structure and method of expression understandable to politicians and public opinion in Iran and the world. This was not an easy task without considering his heavy experiences in different situations and decision centers. Another person who, in his personal capacity, could play a key role alongside the president in advancing negotiations and resolving the crisis diplomatically was Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, as an experienced and internationally recognized diplomat with an academic background in the United States; he took charge of the Iranian negotiating team.

Role

According to Rosenau, the role of the main foreign policy decision makers such as the role of the president, the role of the foreign minister, etc. can be considered as one of the main components at the micro level of decision making process. (Dehghani Firoozabadi, 2010, pp. 76-80). When a person takes on a particular role, his or her behavior changes significantly based on what people expect from him or her.

The formulation and implementation of the policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran is mainly within the authority of the Supreme Leader, the legislature and the executive branch. The Speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly, the Head of the Judiciary, the Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Organization are among the other people who played a role in the nuclear decision after the Supreme Leader and President. The issue of

1-S.722 . Countering Iran's Destabilizing Activities Act of 2017

2-S.2497. United States-Israel Security Assistance Authorization Act of 2018

JCPOA has been controversial in the Islamic Consultative Assembly for some time, and the Assembly passed a resolution supplementing the leadership's views on JCPOA. According to Article 113 of the Constitution, the president is the highest official in the country after the Supreme Leader. Therefore, his programs, policies and decisions play a key role in nuclear diplomacy, and regardless of his psychological personality and personal characteristics, he is forced to make decisions under the influence of legal norms arising from responsibility and executive role. In each period, principles have governed the country's macro-policy, and governments have defined and formulated nuclear diplomacy accordingly based on their discourse. Therefore, Rouhani, as president, is no exception to this rule and has no unlimited freedom of choice in choosing options and implementing policies and executive methods, for example in the nuclear field, and must act within the framework of his role. (Dehghani Firoozabadi and Ataei, 2014, p. 101)

Government structure

This variable refers to those government structures that limit or increase foreign policy options. The impact of the relationship between the executive and the legislature on foreign policy is an example of the operation of the government variable. (Rosenau, 1971, p. 109)

The system of the Islamic Republic of Iran as a semi-presidential and semi-parliamentary system has a special and sometimes unique structure compared to other countries. The role and vote of the people through the presidential elections and the members of the Islamic Consultative Assembly provide the ground for correcting the process of nuclear negotiations or a flex-

ible or tough nuclear position. Due to the multiplicity of decision-making centers and institutions in Iran, the Supreme National Security Council and the Expediency Council are among the effective institutions in decision-making in relation to nuclear policy. Although the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has no legal mandate in nuclear policy and is responsible for foreign affairs and foreign policy decisions, it has become central as the nuclear dossier has shifted from the National Security Council to the ministry of foreign affairs in the Eleventh Government. (Dehghani Firoozabadi, 2014, pp. 102-103).

Internal environment variable

The internal variable includes non-governmental aspects and sections, public opinion and value orientation. At this level of analysis, in examining nuclear policy, attention should be paid to the value orientation of the people towards having full nuclear rights, even at the cost of sanctions.

Informal Influential Groups

Informal parties, pressure groups, and institutions play a major role in persuading or criticizing the government about the type of nuclear policy of the Eleventh Government and how it is implemented. The criticism of the negotiations reached such a level that the leadership of the revolution came to manage this policy and declared that no one should consider our group of negotiators as compromising, these are our own children and the children of the revolution, and they have a difficult mission. No one should undermine an official who is working. (Office for the Preservation and Publication of the Works of Ayatollah Khamenei, August 2013). In other occasions, the supreme leader draws the main lines of expectations which were not fully considered.

Environmental and systemic variable:

In expressing different levels in foreign policy analysis, along with micro levels, it needs to look at the role of environmental and external factors in the form of environmental capabilities and restrictions as an effective level of analysis. (Rosenau, 1980, p. 428). The reaction of countries and international institutions as the main players in the nuclear case to Rouhani's victory in the presidential election was welcomed. The actors claimed that it was delaying Iran's acquisition of an atomic bomb, given Hassan Rouhani's announced policy of resuming talks, restricting transparency and resolving concerns in the nuclear field. (AFP, 2013)

Nuclear case management in the tenth and eleventh governments

Hassan Rouhani's victory in the 2013 presidential election caused a change in the discourse in the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran. This shift in discourse, which the president said was central to "a policy of moderation that means neither surrender, nor compromise, nor passivity, nor confrontation," led to a change in nuclear policy. In the interaction-oriented moderate discourse of the Rouhani government, a kind of balance between the two basic elements of realism and idealism was targeted. This discourse believes that the aggressive rival discourse has provided the ground for increasing international sanctions and the country's economic problems, and it is necessary to pursue the new agenda of change, the two elements of eliminating threats and gaining benefit in new programs and orientations. (Dehghani Firoozabadi and Ataei, 2014, p. 103)

In this discourse, the effort is to help domestic and foreign policy to develop the economy instead of serving the economy,

unlike previous periods. Rouhani considered the interpretation of moderation in foreign policy not surrender, conflict and confrontation, but effective and constructive interaction with the world.

The main priority of the Rouhani government was to restore relations with countries and great and strategically important powers. This approach did not negate the approach of maintaining and developing relations with other countries, but to solve the country's problems, paying attention to it had a higher urgency and priority.

In his administration, foreign policy management and the management of the nuclear crisis were designed through negotiation and diplomacy. This required two simultaneous initiatives. One initiative at home was to create a new culture and political belief based on promoting the proposition that the economy rotates simultaneously with the rotation of centrifuges. In this proposition, of course, internal consensus building at different levels and levels of groups, parties and the decision-making system was inevitable. At the same time, he promoted constructive engagement with the world as a key principle in resolving this crisis in foreign policy. (Dehghani Firoozabadi and Ataei, 2014, p. 104)

An interaction that is effective, constructive, based on diplomacy and negotiation and implementation of the will of the people, and at the same time in the international arena based on respect and mutual interests and non-acceptance of coercion. Thus, nuclear diplomacy began with the efforts of mediators. The term was used to describe Kissinger's efforts during the Yom Kippur War to end hostilities. At the same time, the government sought to improve Iran's international image and facilitate foreign investment by holding talks with the

EU High Representative. Rouhani's visit to New York in 2014 and his phone call with Obama marked the beginning of a new round of talks. (Dehghani Firoozabadi and Ataei, 2014, p. 104)

As the secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, President Rouhani at the beginning of his administration formulated a new mechanism in the nuclear negotiations that was in line with his moderate discourse based on the principles of detente and transparency regarding the Islamic Republic of Iran's nuclear program. Based on his experience from 1989 to 2005, when he was secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, Rouhani sought a nuclear position based on the two-year findings of negotiations with the European troika, and to do so, he first undertook some reforms and measures inside Iran. The transfer of the nuclear file from the Supreme National Security Council to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was made with the aim of integrating the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran and avoiding parallel work and streamlining policies. Prior to Dr. Rouhani's phone call with Barack Obama in New York, Dr. Zarif had said that he had long been in charge of the nuclear case and that talks with US Secretary of State John Kerry and members of the P5 + 1 had been approved. (Jamaran News Agency, April 2015).

With the transfer of the nuclear dossier to the ministry of Foreign affairs, in addition to the role of the Minister and its negotiating team, the level of political negotiations was put on the agenda. Rouhani believed that the nuclear issue was not a security issue but a political one. (IRIB News, 2015)

Rouhani focused the diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear issue on a number of principles, including confidence-building measures, transparency, resolution of con-

cerns, mutual cooperation, and the lifting of sanctions, and pursued them within the framework of negotiations and agreements, and this approach eventually led to several agreements led to JCPOA. The agreement, with the withdrawal of the United States from it in May 2018, poses another challenging path for Iran's nuclear program and nuclear policies.

Conclusion

In the context of neoclassical realism, in the face of systemic requirements and coercion, Iran does not necessarily adopt the same pattern of behavior as other countries in balancing or maximizing power and security. The behavioral pattern of Iran's foreign policy fluctuates depending on the structure and power of the government, the conditions of domestic and international politics within the balance of power, the balance of interests and the expansion of regional influence. Many of Iran's behaviors have been based on balancing introverts and extroverts to counter foreign threats and to ensure security. Proximity to China and Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the events of 9/11, and the achievement of order are examples of extroverted balancing behavior.

On the other hand, in the framework of constructivism, the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran is based on specific epistemological and ideological structures that distinguish it from the foreign policy of other countries. This distinction is mainly due to the nature of the normative functioning of the ideological system at the international level. The Islamic Republic of Iran, through its constructive discourse sources, has opposed some international norms and considered the existing international system as unfavorable due to injustice and domination, and on the contrary, seeks to establish a

favorable international system in the current situation. Despite this idealistic attitude, Mr. Rouhani's government, based on realism and understanding of environmental and international conditions, entered the path of diplomacy and negotiation with the Western world.

JCPOA is an example of the US government's model of negotiations with Iran in a larger text with the presence of other major actors and powers. Numerous challenges between Iran and the United States on the one hand, and the urgency of finding a solution to the nuclear issue, on the other, have led the parties to focus on a tangible and critical issue rather than the prospect of a major deal with Iran. Collaborate and interact to resolve a dispute between the two sides, but the US government's behavior in dealing with the UN Security Council and the challenges posed by the atmosphere of mistrust between the parties, made this international understanding difficult, despite the approval of the Security Council resolution. Nevertheless, JCPOA was able to present new opportunities to Iran and not only thwart Iran's regional and international isolation program, but also show the world a positive image of a responsible government committed to international law and norms. Have a relative deterrent effect on the level and degree of cooperation and convergence between Europe and the United States.

Numerous factors play a role in the analysis of these behaviors and their effects on the fragility of this agreement, which is rooted in Iran-US relations and strong actors on both sides. Considering the variables of internal factors affecting JCPOA, we can point to the effect of the behaviors of these forces in the United States. Accordingly, the formation of Iran's perception of the threat, including injuries, is ahead. The current

problems in US-Iranian relations, especially in the nuclear issue, began from the beginning with the discriminatory approach of the United States and its European allies in the nuclear issue.

One of the characteristics or existing damages in relationship is the institutionalization of animosity between the parties. After revolution 1979, with the occurrence of hostage-taking, the perception of the threat and the resulting hostility was institutionalized in the United States and the United States institutionalized hostile behavior toward Iran after imposing sanctions by various administrations and sanctions acts by Congress. While foreign policy requires the necessary flexibility to seize opportunities, the institutionalization of hostilities in US-Iranian relations has prevented the parties from having the necessary flexibility on their strategic interests. That's why we often miss opportunities.

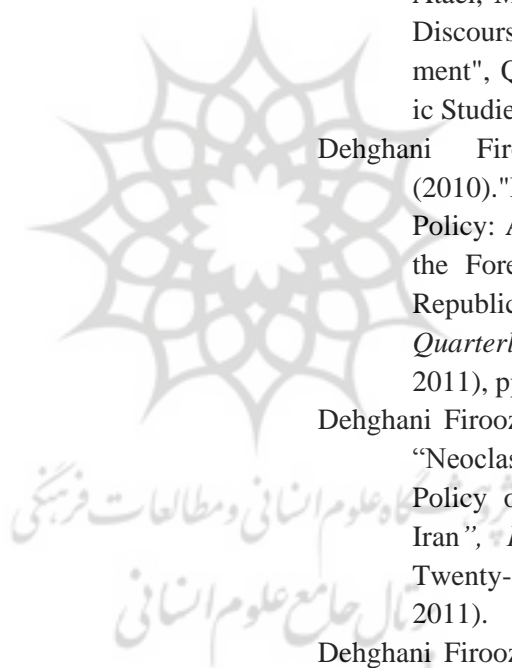
Since then, both Iran and the United States have presented a very negative image of each other and made it public. This unification has hindered serious efforts to resolve the issues between them and thus contributed to the current stalemate. In many cases, the area of common interest is broader and more important than conflicting interests, but they have fallen victim to conflicting interests.

Overall, the 2016 US presidential election changed the course in implementing JCPOA under the influence of dynamism and domestic political conditions in the United States, and US President Donald Trump decision to withdraw the Deal, leaving little room for JCPOA to engage in diplomacy with Iran, and Trump pursued a policy of maximum pressure against Iran. This policy not only gave Iran the opportunity to reduce its commitments and expand its nuc-

lear technical capabilities, citing the JCPOA text, but also caused increasing tensions erupt between Tehran and Washington at the regional level. Now, the efforts to revive the current version of JCPOA or the possibility of defining mutually agreed version and the prospects for its implementation is an issue that requires some sort of consensus at both the domestic level of Iran and the United States. The subject that can be a test case for confidence building measures through verifying.

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