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Contents

- Decision Analysis Report: *Egypt*..... 4
 - Objective..... 6
 - Context 6
 - Leadership..... 6
 - Interests 7
 - Decision Calculus 10
 - Summary..... 13
 - References 13
- Decision Analysis Report: *Iran* 17
 - Objective..... 18
 - Context 18
 - Leadership..... 20
 - Interests 21
 - Decision Calculus 23
 - Summary..... 25
 - References 25
- Decision Analysis Report: *Iraq* 27
 - Objective..... 28
 - Context 29
 - Leadership..... 30
 - Interests 32
 - Decision Calculus 34
 - Summary..... 37
 - References 38
- Decision Analysis Report: *Russia* 41
 - Objective..... 43
 - Context 43
 - Leadership..... 44
 - Interests 45
 - Decision Calculus 49
 - Summary..... 51

References	51
Decision Analysis Report: <i>Saudi Arabia</i>	54
Objective.....	56
Context	56
Leadership.....	57
Interests	58
Decision Calculus	59
Summary.....	62
References	63
Decision Analysis Report: <i>Syria</i>	65
Objective.....	67
Context	67
Leadership.....	68
Interests	68
Decision Calculus	70
Summary.....	73
References	73
Appendix A:.....	76

Decision Analysis Report: *Egypt*

Overview and Full Report

Interests

- Regional Stability
- Regional Influence
- Domestic Stability
- Economic Stability

Decision Calculus

Options Available to Egypt

- Option 1: Pursue own nuclear military capability
- Option 2: Diplomatically oppose Iran
- Option 3: Back channel encouragement of a preemptive military strike on Iran
- Option 4: Cooperate with Israel and press for a diplomatic solution to the Palestinian issue

Options Available to the United States

- Option 1: Military strike against Iran
- Option 2: Status-quo
- Option 3: Engage Iran
- Option 4: Support Egypt's decisions by providing financial assistance
- Option 5: Provide diplomatic support to Egypt
- Option 6: Provide diplomatic and financial support to Egypt
- Option 7: Reduce financial support to Egypt
- Option 8: Refuse to engage in military action against Iran
- Option 9: Diplomatic neutrality in regards to Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, but still pursue non-diplomatic deterrence methods against Iran

Status-Quo Environment

Best Two Scenarios from Egypt's Perspective:

- Scenario 1: Cooperate with Israel and press for a diplomatic solution to the Palestinian issues with the U.S. providing diplomatic and financial support
- Scenario 2: Cooperate with Israel and press for a diplomatic solution to the Palestinian issues with the U.S. engaging Iran

Worst Two Scenarios from Egypt's Perspective:

- Scenario 1: Egypt to pursue their own nuclear military capability and for the U.S. to continue the status-quo option in regard to Iran
- Scenario 2: Egypt to pursue their own nuclear military capability and for the U.S. to actively try to deter Egypt by reducing financial support.

Confirmed Environment

Best Scenarios from Egypt's Perspective:

- Scenario 1: Cooperate with Israel and press for a diplomatic solution to the Palestinian issues with the U.S. providing diplomatic and financial support
- Scenario 2: Egypt to diplomatically oppose Iran and have the U.S. support their decision by providing financial assistance and a credible security guarantee

Worst Scenario from Egypt's Perspective:

Scenario 1: Pursue own nuclear military capability and have the United States attempt to deter them by reducing financial support.

Egypt: Full Report

Objective

Within the context of deterring Iran from developing their own military capability this paper explores the options available to Egypt and the subsequent impact of those options on Egypt's strategic national security interests. The paper will provide the context to support a decision analysis matrix, located in Appendix A.

Context

Egypt is geographically located on the North Eastern quadrant of the African continent and is bordered by the Mediterranean Sea to the North, the Gaza Strip to the North East, Libya to the West, Sudan to the South, and the Red Sea to the East. Although Egypt is not geographically positioned near, what is traditionally referred to as the Middle East, Egypt is very much an active player in Middle East politics. Cairo is home to the headquarters of the Arab League¹: an organization of primarily Arabic speaking nations with a stated purpose of strengthening ties among the member states, coordination of their policies, and the overall promotion of their common interests. Egypt is a predominantly Muslim nation, with 90% of the population self-identifying as Sunni Muslim².



http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/africa/egypt_pol97.pdf

The United States and Egypt have enjoyed a strong alliance for the last 50 years, but that relationship was tested under the prior US administration. Prior to the Obama Administration taking office Egyptian officials had begun to raise questions about the value of the relationship through statements indicating a belief that the US has shown a lack of concern for Egyptian interests through its invasion of Iraq in 2003, its failure to advance the peace process until very recently, and continued insistence on democratic reform in Egypt³.

Leadership

The outcomes contained in the decision analysis matrix were identified via a subjective decision analysis generated around President Mohamed Hosni Mubarak (National Democratic Party) as the primary Egyptian decision maker. Power is ostensibly organized under a multi-party semi-presidential system,

¹ For more information on the Arab League please see their website: <http://www.arab.de/arabinfo/league.htm>

² CIA World factbook, accessed March 17, 2009.

³ National Intelligence Council (2008). *Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Jordan: Policies on regional issues and support for US goals in the Middle East*. Washington, DC.

whereby the executive power is theoretically divided between the President and the Prime Minister Dr. Ahmed Nazif, in reality it rests almost solely with the President for the last 50 years. The current President, Hosni Mubarak has been in office since October, 14 1981, following the assassination of former-President Mohammed Anwar El-Sadat. He is currently serving his fifth term in office and recently celebrated his 81st birthday. Given President Mubarak's advanced age it is important to point out that Egypt's political landscape may change once his son, who has been suggested as the natural replacement, steps into place.

Interests

The subjective decision analysis assumes that the Egyptian decision maker, outlined above, acts in accordance with their identified strategic national interests, as they pertain to the situation. It is only through first identifying and refining these situation-specific interests that an analyst can attempt to understand the decision making process. It is important to note that in this particular subjective decision analysis two additional assumptions are made:

- The first assumption is that while Egypt believes that every country has a right to protect itself it ultimately does not want Iran to have a military WMD capability⁴.
- The second assumption is that Egypt is primarily concerned with working out an Arab-Israeli peace settlement⁵.

Regional Stability

As mentioned earlier Egypt is geographically on the outer edge of the Middle East, yet due to the large population of Sunni Muslims, a shared border with the Gaza Strip, and relations with both Israel and Hamas make Egypt almost an indispensable mediator in the current situation. Given the close proximity to Israel, Egypt's primary concern for establishing regional stability hinges upon the ability to reach a peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian issue⁶. According to Yoram Meital, an Egyptian expert at Ben-Gurion University's Chaim Herzog Center for Middle East Studies and Diplomacy, "For President Mubarak and his government, what is happening in Gaza constitutes a significant threat to Egypt's national security...The war is being waged on their border, and they fear it could spill over. Worse, it is inflaming segments of Egyptian public opinion, which puts tremendous pressure on the regime. And the upshot is that they see themselves paying a price for Israel's assault on Gaza."⁷

Of secondary concern are the threats posed to regional stability by the governments of Sudan and Iran. In the case of Sudan, the International Criminal Court issued a recent arrest warrant for the Sudanese President Omar Al Bashir. According to leading Egyptian scholars "this decision is harmful to Egypt's

⁴ CSIS, 2007; El Deeb, S. (2009, May 11). Mubarak to Israel: Progress before recognition. *The Associated Press*. Retrieved May 11, 2009 from <http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5hoBq7KxD9riRshsFTX9z-rVpGuAgD984V7I00> ; Associated Foreign Press, "Egypt against Iran developing nuclear weapons", accessed April 28, 2009, from <http://www.spacewar.com/2006/081203122157.bykfdv9g.html>

⁵ CSIS, 2007. An interview with Imad Gad, Egyptian scholar, on *Inside Story*, "Assessing the Israel-Egypt Alliance" [News broadcast clip] (2009, May 12). *Aljazeera.net*.; Egypt State Information Service (n.d.). *Egypt and Palestinian Question*. Retrieved April 6, 2009, from, <http://www.sis.gov.eg/En/Politics/Foreign/issues/PIssue/040308030000000001.htm>

⁶ An interview with Imad Gad, Egyptian scholar, on *Inside Story*, "Assessing the Israel-Egypt Alliance" [News broadcast clip] (2009, May 12). *Aljazeera.net*.; Egypt State Information Service (n.d.). *Egypt and Palestinian Question*. Retrieved April 6, 2009, from, <http://www.sis.gov.eg/En/Politics/Foreign/issues/PIssue/040308030000000001.htm>

⁷ Susser, L. (2009, January 14). Fighting stirs up problems for Egypt, benefits Iran. *The Jewish Journal*. Retrieved April 5, 2009, from http://www.jewishjournal.com/israel/article/fighting_stirs_up_problems_for_egypt_benefits_iran_20090114/

national security as it will most likely trigger chaos in Egypt's southern neighbor (Sudan)".⁸ The subsequent chaos has the potential to result in the disintegration of Sudan and consequently affect Egypt's access to the vital waters of the River Nile.

In the case of Iran, over the past decade the Egyptian regime has viewed the Iranian threat as continuing to increase without any sign of stopping. Some in Egypt consider Iran's efforts to obtain a military nuclear capability as a serious threat⁹. There is a commonly held belief among Egyptians that if Iran were to successfully develop a nuclear capability that it would strengthen Iran's position both as a leading regional power and as the cornerstone of the radical camp. According to leading scholar Ephraim Kam this "would encourage Iran to follow aggressive policies, increase the pressure on Arab states to follow the Iranian line, and would lead Egypt to a problematic junction with regard to the nuclear issue and would further damage its regional standing."¹⁰

Regional Influence

Due to Egypt's location, sizeable military, largely Arab population and historically close alliance with the United States, it has always been regarded as the "core" of the Middle Eastern state system.¹¹ Although according to a 2008 National Intelligence Council report their regional influence has been slowly weakening over time with the role of regional leader shifting from Egypt to Saudi Arabia. It is hypothesized that Egypt is experiencing a decline in regional influence due to the fact (1) that President Mubarak is getting older and simply lacks the energy to provide the leadership he once did; (2) Egypt does not enjoy the economic comparative advantage it once did; and (3) Egypt no longer has either an attractive political or economic model to offer the rest of the region. Furthermore, according to Kareem Kamel, an Egyptian scholar, "Egyptian foreign policy lacks a clearly defined strategic doctrine capable of explicitly and clearly identifying Egypt's security interests, which has steadily eroded Egypt's capacity to react to regional crises. Egypt no longer influences events in ways that would enhance its security standing and regional clout. Consequently, Egypt has steadily lost its strategic significance and historical ability to influence events beyond its border—the yardstick through which foreign policy success or failure could be measured."¹²

Domestic Stability

According to a 2003 Institute for National Security Studies report "the possibility of unrest [within Egypt] is real; with the correct confluence of domestic, regional, and international events, Egypt can quickly be added to the list of failed states".¹³ In particular, domestically Egypt has in place a constitutional ban against religious-based parties and political activity. Yet the, technically illegal, Muslim Brotherhood

⁸ Hani Raslin as quoted in Al Sherbini, R. (2009, March 8). Al Bashin warrant may affect Egypt's security. Retrieved April 2, 2009 from <http://archive.gulfnews.com/articles/09/03/08/10292559.html>

⁹ See the Egyptian interviews contained in the appendix of the 2007 CSIS report for an interesting discussion on the various viewpoints surrounding the nuclear Iran issue. While the majority of Egyptian feel that a nuclear Iran poses a significant threat some scholars in Egypt believe that Iran has the right to develop the capability and furthermore, should as a way to counter the Israeli threat.

¹⁰ Kam, E. (2009). Egypt's view of the threat: Iran – Hizbollah – Hamas. *Institute for National Security Studies Insight*, 101, April 20, 2009.

¹¹ Kamel, K. M. (2009, January 29). Egypt's policy in Gaza. *IslamOnline.net*. Retrieved April 2, 2009, http://www.islamonline.net/servlet/Satellite?c=Article_C&cid=1231926520278&pagename=Zone-English-Muslim_Affairs%2FMAELayout

¹² Kamel, K. M. (2009, January 29). Egypt's policy in Gaza. *IslamOnline.net*. Retrieved April 2, 2009, http://www.islamonline.net/servlet/Satellite?c=Article_C&cid=1231926520278&pagename=Zone-English-Muslim_Affairs%2FMAELayout

¹³ Beitler R.M. & Jebb, C.R. (2003). *Egypt as a failing state: Implications for US national security* (INSS Occasional Paper 51). Colorado, USAF Academy, USAF Institute for National Security Studies.

constitutes President Mubarak's most significant political opposition. According to a 2008 Congressional Research Study while "despite a growing chorus of regime critics, particularly over the Internet, the Muslim Brotherhood remains the only serious organized opposition movement in Egypt today."¹⁴ Over the past 20 years President Mubarak has alternated between tolerating limited political activity by the Brotherhood (e.g., in 2005, 88 members ran as independents and now hold seats in the People's Assembly¹⁵) and blocking its influence (e.g., the April 2008 sentencing of extended jail time for 25 members¹⁶).

While the Muslim Brotherhood remains the main opposition group in Egypt, recently, the Egyptian government has grown increasingly concerned with the groups Hamas and Hezbollah gaining ground within the growing disgruntled populace. In particular, Hamas has historic links to the Islamist Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and both have very close ties with Iran, which according to some scholars represents a significant threat to Cairo.¹⁷ In addition, it has been reported that Iran is using Hamas in particular to smuggle arms across (or rather under through tunnels) the Egyptian border into Gaza.¹⁸

Economic Stability

The global economic slowdown has compounded the economic underperformance of the Mubarak government. According to recent statistics unemployment is rising, wages are falling, and poverty is hovering around 40 percent.¹⁹ In addition, Egypt's has seen a drop of almost 25% in its third largest source of income, after tourism and remittances from expatriate workers. Revenue generated from the Suez Canal fell in 2008 from \$408 million USD to \$302 million USD.²⁰ This current state of economic underperformance has an increased number of protests and general social unrest. For example a 2008 news report indicates that the number of spontaneous protests have "erupted with alarming regularity, ranging from factory strikes to land disputes to urban riots over food prices that have risen even faster than the current, unnerving overall inflation rate of 23%."²¹

¹⁴ Congressional Research Service (2008) *Egypt: Background and U.S. Relations*. Washington, DC: Jeremy Sharp, p. 11.

¹⁵ Congressional Research Service (2008) *Egypt: Background and U.S. Relations*. Washington, DC: Jeremy Sharp.

¹⁶ Egyptians Jail 25 Brotherhood men, *BBC News*, accessed online, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/7348772.stm

¹⁷ Schenker, D. (2009, January 14). Gaza tunnels: No path to peace. *Boston Globe*. Retrieved April 1, 2009, from <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/print.php?template=C06&CID=1210>

¹⁸ Schenker, D. (2009, January 14). Gaza tunnels: No path to peace. *Boston Globe*. Retrieved April 1, 2009, from <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/print.php?template=C06&CID=1210>; Associated Press, "Egypt uncovers 13 Gaza smuggling tunnels", accessed April 2, 2009, from <http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5jQiyhoxoNJaW47qgrCkZcHC3tLJg>

¹⁸ Associated Press, "Egypt uncovers 13 Gaza smuggling tunnels", accessed April 2, 2009, from <http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5jQiyhoxoNJaW47qgrCkZcHC3tLJg>

¹⁹ Egyptian Ministry of Finance (2008). *Egypt Economic Outlook*. Egypt, Nasr City: Macro: Fiscal Policy Unit.; CIA World factbook.

²⁰ "Suez Canal revenue drops." (2009, March 23). *The Strait Times*. Accessed online April 5, 2009, from http://www.straitstimes.com/print/Breaking%2BNews/World/Story/STISStory_353615.html

²¹ Will the dam burst (2008, September 11). *The Economist* [Electronic version]. Retrieved April 16, 2009, from http://www.economist.com/world/mideast-africa/displaystory.cfm?story_id=12202321

Decision Calculus

Options Available to Egypt

- Option 1: Pursue own nuclear military capability²²
- Option 2: Diplomatically oppose Iran
- Option 3: Back channel encouragement of a preemptive military strike on Iran
- Option 4: Cooperate with Israel and press for a diplomatic solution to the Palestinian issue²³

Options Available to the United States

In keeping the ultimate goal of deterring Iran in mind the United States can either take action directly against Iran (options 1 thru 3) or utilize the possible second order effects of action taken against Egypt on Iran (options 4 thru 9). Explanations are provided when needed.

- Option 1: Military strike against Iran
- Option 2: Status-quo
 - Western diplomatic efforts to halt Iranian program, United Nation Security Council attempts to impose more sanctions, possibility of high level talks, international diplomatic pressure, & careful intelligence scrutiny of Iranian sites and efforts.
- Option 3: Engage Iran
 - Direct high-level talks between Iran and United States & discussion of lifting of economic sanctions.
- Option 4: Support Egypt's decisions by providing financial assistance
- Option 5: Provide diplomatic support to Egypt
- Option 6: Provide diplomatic and financial support to Egypt
- Option 7: Reduce financial support to Egypt
- Option 8: Refuse to engage in military action against Iran
- Option 9: Diplomatic neutrality in regards to Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, but still pursue non-diplomatic deterrence methods against Iran
 - United States allows Egypt to continue with their course of action, but still pursues efforts to deter Iran independent of Egypt. In other words, actions taken by the United States will have limited first- or second-order effects on Egypt's national interests.

²² Center for Strategic and International Studies (2007). Strategic Implications of a Proliferated World: A Study for the National Intelligence Council: Volume II: Implications of a Nuclear-Armed Iran for the Middle East; Salama, S & Hilal, K. (2006, November); Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood presses government for nuclear weapons. WMD Insights. Monterey Institute Center for Nonproliferation Studies. Retrieved April 5, 2009, from http://www.wmdinsights.com/I10/I10_ME3_EgyptianMuslim.htm ; National Intelligence Council (2008). *Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Jordan: Policies on regional issues and support for US goals in the Middle East*. Washington, DC; Gonn, A. (2009, May 13). Egypt refusing to sign WMD treaties. *AHN*. Retrieved May 18, 2009 from <http://www.allheadlinesnews.com/articles/7015123356>.

²³ Mubarak, M. H. (2009, February 4). Address by President Mohammad Hosni Mubarak on the occasion of police day celebration. An interview with Imad Gad, Egyptian scholar, on *Inside Story*, "Assessing the Israel-Egypt Alliance" [News broadcast clip] (2009, May 12). *Aljazeera.net.*; Egypt State Information Service (n.d.). *Egypt and Palestinian Question*. Retrieved April 6, 2009, from <http://www.sis.gov.eg/En/Politics/Foreign/issues/PIssue/040308030000000001.htm>. National Intelligence Council (2008). *Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Jordan: Policies on regional issues and support for US goals in the Middle East*. Washington, DC; Fahmy, Ambassador (2001). "Ambassador Fahmy: Egypt needs the U.S.". Retrieved online April 28, 2009, from <http://www.internationalreports.net/middleeast/egypt/2001/ambassadorfahmy.html>.

Status-Quo Environment

Best Two Scenarios from Egypt's Perspective:

Overall (using a normative/rational choice rule) cooperating with U.S. opposition to an Iranian capability is the best strategy for Egypt. Yet, while Egypt recognizes a need for a solution to the Iranian situation, their national interests point more directly towards pressing for a solution to the Arab-Israeli issue. Egypt views reaching a settlement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as the regional priority and acknowledge that a peaceful settlement may also diminish some of Iran's regional power/influence.

Scenario 1: Cooperate with Israel and press for a diplomatic solution to the Palestinian issues with the U.S. providing diplomatic and financial support.

Overall, the subject decision analysis indicates that it is in Egypt's best interest to cooperate with Israel and press for a diplomatic solution to the Palestinian issues. Egypt is incentivized to align their policy more closely with the U.S./Israel with regard to Iran if diplomatic and in particular financial support are received in return. In this scenario, both nations agree with the course of action and the U.S. provides financial incentives to aid the processes towards reaching settlement and provides a credible security guarantee to Egypt. Egypt is able to increase their attention to other national security issues (e.g., Sudan) given that they have a greater influx of financial support. Northern borders become secure. With backing of U.S. Egypt is able to reassert itself as regional leader and experiences an increase in regional influence. While Egypt receives diplomatic and financial support from the U.S. is able to work on internal issues, they are still concerned with economic crisis and social unrest due to economic crisis. The possibility for improvement in domestic stability is greater with peace established in the North.

Scenario 2: Cooperate with Israel and press for a diplomatic solution to the Palestinian issues with the U.S. engaging Iran.

Egypt also experiences a positive outcome if they are to cooperate with Israel and press for a diplomatic solution to the Palestinian issue and the U.S. engages Iran. In this scenario, if U.S. were to engage in direct high-level talks with Iran, Egypt would be able to focus on the stated "main issue" of settling the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. In addition, with increased discussions between the U.S. and Iran and Israel and the Palestinian Authority the region experiences a brief period of increased stability. It is also possible that Egypt would experience an increase in regional influence due to the increased dialogue between nations in the region. Although Egypt benefits from increased dialogue with Israel and does not necessarily need to address the Iranian situation due to the US policy of engaging directly with Iran, Egypt is still concerned with economic crisis and rising social unrest due to economic crisis.

Worst Two Scenarios from Egypt's Perspective:

In the status quo environment under no circumstances is Egypt incentivized to pursue its own nuclear military capability. From their perspective, nuclear perspective would negatively impact economy, further exacerbate tensions with Israel and other regional nations and would likely tarnish relations with (and imperil aid) from the U.S.

Scenario 1: Egypt to pursue their own nuclear military capability and for the U.S. to continue the status-quo option in regard to Iran.

According to the subjective decision analysis in the status-quo environment, Egypt would experience their most negative outcomes if they are to take steps towards developing their own military capability and the U.S. were to continue their diplomatic efforts to halt Iran, to continue their careful intelligence scrutiny of Iranian and, now Egyptian, development sites and efforts. In this scenario, Egypt would most likely lose their immediate credible security guarantee from U.S., their borders would remain porous as funds are being diverted into development and away from homeland protection. Egypt would also

experience a decrease in regional influence as they would most likely distance themselves from their closest ally, the U.S., and they would lose credibility as they struggle with adjusting their fiscal budget to account for funds being diverted towards the development of their own capability. Furthermore, the economic crisis would deepen and social unrest would inevitably continue to rise.

Scenario 2: Egypt to pursue their own nuclear military capability and for the U.S. to actively try to deter Egypt by reducing financial support.

Egypt would also experience a negative outcome if they were to pursue the development of their own military capability and the U.S. were to attempt to deter Egypt from pursuing their own nuclear weapon by reducing financial assistance. Without the U.S. as a financial backer and ally, Egypt would lose more ground in their ability to protect the Gaza border. In addition, tensions with Israel would inevitably increase due to the fact that the U.S. would continue to supply Israel with financial aid and arms. Egypt would also experience a decrease in regional influence as they would struggle with adjusting budget to accommodate the loss of U.S. financial support and the redirection of funds into development. Consequently, the economic crisis would deepen and social unrest would continue to rise.

Confirmed Environment

Best Scenarios from Egypt's Perspective:

Under circumstances where it is confirmed that Iran possesses a military capability the strategy of pressing for a diplomatic solution to the Palestinian issue is no longer as robust an outcome as in the status-quo situation. In the confirmed situation the following two scenarios are rated as equal in the subjective decision calculus.

Scenario 1: Cooperate with Israel and press for a diplomatic solution to the Palestinian issues with the U.S. providing diplomatic and financial support .

In the confirmed situation Egypt experiences a positive outcome on their national interests if they continue to press for a diplomatic solution to the Palestinian issue and the U.S. agrees with the Egyptian course of action and provides financial incentives for the nations to reach settlement. With an influx of financial support Egypt is able to turn attention towards other national security issues (e.g., Sudan). Given the increased dialogue on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and support from the U.S. Egypt experiences an increase in regional influence. With increased Israeli-Palestinian dialogue Egypt experiences an increase in domestic stability. Even though Egypt experiences an influx of financial support from the U.S. Egypt and are able to work on domestic stability issues (improving the economy), Egypt is still concerned with the economic crisis and social unrest. There is a possibility for improvement in domestic issues increases with reaching a peace settlement in the North.

Scenario 2: Egypt to diplomatically oppose Iran and have the U.S. support their decision by providing financial assistance and a credible security guarantee.

Another positive scenario for Egypt is if the Egypt diplomatically opposes Iran and the US provides financial support to Egypt and assures Egypt a credible security guarantee, but still continues to urge Egypt to move towards democracy. With the increased financial support from the US Egypt is able to focus on increasing domestic stability through shoring up their borders with Gaza and Sudan and strengthen military presence on the Nile to dissuade piracy. In addition, Egypt experiences an increase in regional influence due to the credible security guarantee and increased financial assistance. While Egypt is able to focus internally and spend the US funds to assist the economic situation keeping social unrest down, there is a possibility for insurgent & political groups to gain ground inside Egypt. Social unrest

among the general population does not rise do to influx of foreign assistance going towards stabilizing the national economy.

Worst Scenario from Egypt's Perspective:

Scenario 1: Pursue own nuclear military capability and have the United States attempt to deter them by reducing financial support.

In a confirmed situation the worst outcome from Egypt would occur if Egypt were to take steps to pursue their own nuclear military capability and the US responds by attempting to deter Egypt from developing by reducing financial assistance. Without the US as a financial backer and ally, Egypt loses more ground in their ability to protect the Gaza border, to fight piracy along the Nile, and sinks deeper into an economic crisis. In addition, tensions with Israel increase due to the fact that the US still continues to supply Israel with financial aid and arms. Egypt also experiences a large decrease in regional influence as they lose credibility as they struggle with adjusting budget. With funds being put towards development they are diverted from social programs (food ration program and aid assistance) which deepens the economic crisis and social unrest rises.

Summary

Given a suspected, but not publicly confirmed Iranian nuclear weapons program, the Egyptian subjective decision analysis indicates that from the Egyptian perspective, Egypt's best outcome is to align itself with the US position if the US increases financial and diplomatic support to Egypt. That is, analysis indicates that Egypt is currently incentivized to align its policy more closely with that of the US and Israel with regard to the situation with Iran if diplomatic and in particular financial support are received in return.

Suspected Iranian nuclear weapons program: US Course of Action v. Egypt

While the Egyptian government recognizes the need for a solution to the Iranian situation, their interests point more directly to taking a central role in settling the Israeli-Palestinian issue. They view reaching a settlement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as the regional priority and acknowledge that a peaceful settlement may also diminish some of Iran's power/influence, and reduce the threat from Israel. **Aligning with Egypt to address the Palestinian issue (rather than primarily Israel) may be a way to counter the Iranian argument that the US is the enemy of all Muslims and only interested in exploiting ME oil.**

Egypt's *worst* overall pay-off would result from a decision to pursue its own nuclear military capability and a US effort to deter them. The Egyptian government has stated that if forced by a nuclearized region, it would consider developing its own nuclear military capability. However, this also has been deemed to be a sub-optimal strategy as it would negatively impact Egypt's economy, further exacerbate tensions with Israel and others and likely tarnish relations with (and imperil aid from) the United States. Thus, given the disincentives arising from Egypt's own interests/priorities, **a clearly communicated declaratory policy that the US would support no independent Egyptian nuclear weapon program should be sufficient to deter Egypt from such an action.**

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Decision Analysis Report: *Iran*

Overview and Full Report

Interests

- National Security
- Internal Politics: Actor A & Actor B
- Prestige: Regional and International
- Economic Growth

Decision Calculus

Options Available to Iran

- Option 1: Cessation of all nuclear activity
- Option 2: Continuation of all nuclear activity
- Option 3: Cessation of military focus, continuation of energy focus
- Option 4: Covert continuation of military focus

Options Available to United States

- Option 1: Open dialogue leading to cessation of sanctions
- Option 2: Continue sanctions and other diplomatic opposition (status quo)
- Option 3: Possible physical attack – conventional or nuclear

Best Two Scenarios from the Iranian Perspective

- Scenario 1: Continue its current (military/civilian) nuclear program, especially if Iran believes the US will open diplomatic talks and quickly and significantly reduce sanctions on Iran
- Scenario 2: Continue its current (military/civilian) nuclear program if the US is anticipated continuing to hold the status quo policy

Worst Two Scenarios from the Iranian Perspective

- Scenario 1: Cease all nuclear activity and have there be no change in the status quo in regard to sanctions and diplomatic discussion
- Scenario 2: Cessation of nuclear activity and continuing with a covert military program, resulting in a possible limited attack by the United States

Objective

Iran²⁴ is the focus of multinational attention for its ongoing efforts to attain nuclear capability and the status inherent with being a member of the nuclear community. This report and subjective decision analysis explores Iran's strategic interests from the point of view of its decision maker. The Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Khomeini, makes all major decisions for Iran regarding Foreign Policy and National Security. The Ayatollah is also the commander in chief of the armed forces in Iran. This report will provide the context to support a decision analysis matrix, located in Appendix A.

Context

Iran would like to solidify itself as a leader and power player in the predominantly Sunni Muslim and Arab Middle East. "Iran is a non-Arab, non-Arabic speaking country coming from a religious-minority position, being Shia instead of Sunni."²⁵ Iran is a large country that lies at the easternmost edge of the

²⁴ Islamic Republic of Iran is the conventional long form, formerly known as Persia. It is a theocratic republic.

²⁵ "Iran's Strategic Concerns and U.S. Interests." Edited Transcript from symposium convened by the Middle East Policy Council. January, 18, 2008. P1, Gary Sick.

Middle East. It borders Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan, as well as the Caspian Sea, the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman. These geographical characteristics would automatically seem to place Iran as a key regional influence. “Iran sees itself as a legitimate regional player due to the country’s size, history and resources.”²⁶ As a sovereign nation, and a signatory on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Iran has a legal right to “enrich uranium for civilian uses.”²⁷ Iran also sees the nuclear program “as something that shows its scientific advancement. It’s a matter of prestige. If India can have it, if Pakistan can have it....”²⁸ Nuclear capability within Iran has become entwined with Iranian nationalism.²⁹ There is broad support across the political spectrum - among the public and within government - to continue the nuclear process.

Power and respect, along with territorial security issues, have become synonymous with nuclear capability in the eyes of the Iranian government and people.³⁰ “...Nothing enhances a country’s international standing like the acquisition or threatened acquisition of nuclear weapons.”³¹ Iran began its nuclear program during the 1980s and its intense war with Iraq, “at the time, Tehran’s determination to develop a nuclear deterrent was unquestionably a reaction to the Iraqi threat.”³² The recent invasions and subsequent regime changes in Afghanistan and Iraq, along with continuing US and Western presence in the region, has the Iranian government feeling surrounded and uneasy.³³ Currently Iran sees the acquisition of nuclear weapons as an equalizing factor internationally and as a deterrent to any form of Western invasion.³⁴ “Iran is clearly driven to establish its nuclear



²⁶ Iran expert, Unpublished interview for the Deterrence project conducted by Institute for Defense Analysis (IDA), Telephone Interview, 11 May 2009.

²⁷ “Iran: Where we are today.” A report to the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate. May 4, 2009. P.4. www.gpoaccess.gov/congress/index.html

²⁸ Slavin, Barbara. “Symposium: Iran’s Strategic Concerns and U.S. Interests.” *Middle East Policy* Vol XV, No. 1, Spring 2008. p 13.

²⁹ “...by insisting that its nuclear project is essential for the country’s domestic energy needs and scientific development, Tehran has effectively turned U.S. opposition to its program into a nationalist cause, pointing to it as proof that Washington intends to hold Iran back.” Milani, Mohsen. “Tehran’s Take: Understanding Iran’s U.S. Policy.” *Foreign Affairs*. July/August 2009 p.51.

³⁰ There are ongoing territorial disputes in Baluchistan, SE Iran. The Revolutionary Guard has recently been sent to the region to help security. Iran expert, Unpublished interview for the Deterrence project conducted by Institute for Defense Analysis (IDA), Telephone Interview, 11 May 2009.

³¹ Rothkopf, David. “North Korea Nuke Test.” http://rothkopf.foreignpolicy.com/north_korea-nuclear-test. 26 May 2009.

³² “Iran: Where we are today – A report to the Committee on foreign relations, United States Senate.” May 4, 2009. P8. www.gpoaccess.gov/congress/index.html

³³ “Khamenei sees the U.S. as isolating Iran, strangling it with economic sanctions, sabotaging its nuclear program and beating the drums of preemptive war.” Milani, Mohsen. “Tehran’s Take: Understanding Iran’s U.S. Policy.” *Foreign Affairs*. July/August 2009 p.49.

credentials as part of its determination to assume what it views as its rightful place as a regional power.”³⁵

It is important to note that Iranian culture and religion cannot and should not be separated from any analysis of decision making in Iran. Relationships in Iran, especially political, follow a complicated and convoluted system of favors and patronage. For example, bonyads, (charitable trusts with great economic power) “finance an immense patronage system that gives it enormous clout within – and sometimes over – the regime.”³⁶ The Revolutionary Guard is another group with widespread clout and control within the Iranian government.³⁷

Leadership

After the overthrow of the Shah in 1979 the Islamic Revolution established a “parliamentary democracy with a theocratic overlay.”³⁸ The public votes for 290 representatives to the Majlis (Iranian parliament) and for the president, all of whom are elected to four year terms. In addition, 86 clerics are also elected by the people to the Expert Assembly (EA) for eight year terms. The EA then selects the Supreme Leader of Iran; they also monitor his performance as Supreme Leader. Another group, the Guardian Council, made up of twelve members, evaluates the compatibility of legislative acts with the laws of Islam. In addition, the 38 member Expediency Council, all of whom are appointed by the SL, breaks stalemates between the Guardian Council and the Majlis, advises the SL and proposes guidelines for overall policy of the Islamic Republic. Finally, the High Council on National Security (HCNS), formulates the foreign, military and security policies of Iran. The HCNS consists of (a) two reps from the supreme leadership (b) heads of the three branches of gov’t (speaker of parliament, head of judiciary, president) (c) ministers of foreign affairs, interior, intelligence, defense , and (d) commanders of the regular and revolutionary military sections. The president is the head of the HCNS.

The convoluted structure and opacity of the decision making process in Iran contributes to the uncertainty and confusion in understanding not only its governmental processes, but who is influencing the Ayatollah. The extreme rhetoric espoused by President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad creates additional concern and distraction within the global community. It is the Supreme Leader, Grand Ayatollah Khomeini, who makes the decisions regarding Foreign Policy and National Security for Iran. Discerning the greatest influence on the Ayatollah is difficult.³⁹ There are two predominant ideologies – noted as Actor A and Actor B in the decision matrix – which will be further explained in the “Interests” section of

³⁴ Iran expert, Unpublished interview for the Deterrence project conducted by Institute for Defense Analysis (IDA), Telephone Interview, 11 May 2009.

³⁵ “Iran: Where we are today – A report to the Committee on foreign relations, United States Senate.” May 4, 2009. P8. www.gpoaccess.gov/congress/index.html

³⁶ Glain, Stephen. “Iran protesters may have last laugh on ageing regime.” www.thenational.ae/article/20090628/BUSINESS/706289948/1002

³⁷ The IRGC (Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corp) is tasked by the Iranian Constitution to “guard the Revolution itself...the [IRGC] was intended to guard the Revolution and to assist the ruling clerics in the day to day enforcement of the government’s Islamic codes and morality.” www.fas.org/irp/world/iran/qods/index.html

³⁸ Maleki, Abbas. “Decision Making in Iran’s Foreign Policy: A Heuristic Approach.” *Journal of Social Affairs*. 73:39-52. Spring 2002. Also called a theocratic republic. (CIA Factbook.)

³⁹ “...I compare the Iranian system to an American square dance. You’ve got the supreme leader in the middle and maybe 10,20 people around him in a circle. They come in and out in a sort of do-si-do and go back out again. Sometimes, one group is in favor, and sometimes another....” Slavin, Barbara. “Symposium: Iran’s Strategic Concerns and U.S. Interests.” *Middle East Policy* Vol XV, No. 1, Spring 2008. P. 12

this report. Also confusing the issue is the fact that the day-to-day decision making in regard to running a country is under the purview of President Ahmadinejad.⁴⁰

Adding to the complexity is the theocratic overlay and the role of the clerics and religious ideology. The decision maker is the Supreme Leader, a cleric. Concern has been voiced over whether the regime in Tehran acts according to rational calculations or to theological and ideological ones.⁴¹ “Looking at the decisions Iran has made since the Iranian revolution, its leadership looks more than rational – it appears to be quite savvy and pragmatic, even willing to change course when confronted with over-whelming force.”⁴² Despite the often inflammatory public rhetoric, the decisions regarding foreign policy and national security are practical.⁴³

Interests

National Security

In regard to key security interests in the region, Iran is interested in a combination of “power, acceptance of status in the region and acceptance of legitimacy as a regional player,”⁴⁴ as well as territorial security.⁴⁵ “...Tehran’s foreign policy has its own strategic logic. Formulated not by mad mullahs but by calculating ayatollahs, it is based on Iran’s ambitions and Tehran’s perception of what threatens them. Tehran’s top priority is the survival of the Islamic Republic as it exists now. Tehran views the United States as an existential threat and to counter it has devised a strategy that rests on both deterrence and competition in the Middle East.”⁴⁶

The largest regional territorial concern is southeastern Iran. “Iran has a serious conflict in the southeastern part of the country, Baluchistan. The regime is worried about instability in that region and whether or not it will spill over into Iran.” The IRGC has recently been sent to confront the terrorist issues in the area.⁴⁷

Internal Politics: Actor A & Actor B

The internal politics of Iran are dependent upon which ideology is predominant. There are multiple interests within the governmental structure; the two defined as Actor A and Actor B are simply the most

⁴⁰ The Iranian elections were June 12, 2009. Ahmadinejad faced serious opposition from Mir Hossein Mousavi, a reformist candidate. The elections were contentious and there have been ongoing protests from Mousavi, his supporters and others regarding the validity of the election.

⁴¹ Logan, Justin. “The Bottom Line on Iran: The Costs and Benefits of Preventive War versus Deterrence.” *Policy Analysis* No 583. 4 December 2006. p 13.

⁴² Ibid. p 14.

⁴³ “Policy has been consistent over the years partly because it is determined by the supreme leader, who is also the commander of the security and armed forces and serves for life.” Milani, Mohsen. “Tehran’s Take: Understanding Iran’s U.S. Policy.” *Foreign Affairs*. July/August 2009. Pg 47

⁴⁴ Iran expert, Unpublished interview for the Deterrence project conducted by Institute for Defense Analysis (IDA), Telephone Interview, 11 May 2009. p 11.

⁴⁵ Ibid, p2. “Iran has a serious conflict in the southeastern part of the country, Baluchistan. The regime is worried about instability in that region and whether or not it will spill over into Iran.” The IRGC has recently been sent to the region to confront the terrorist issues.

⁴⁶ Milani, Mohsen. “Tehran’s Take: Understanding Iran’s U.S. Policy.” *Foreign Affairs*. July/August 2009. Pg 46.

⁴⁷ “He thinks Washington is pursuing regime change in Tehran by funding his opponents, inciting strife among Iran’s ethnic minorities and supporting separatist organizations such as the Baluchistan-based Sunni insurgent group Jundallah, which has killed scores of Revolutionary Guards.” Milani, Mohsen. “Tehran’s Take: Understanding Iran’s U.S. Policy.” *Foreign Affairs*. July/August 2009 p.49.

general.⁴⁸ Also notable is the fact that 70% of the Iranian population is under the age of thirty.⁴⁹ The older generation, who participated in the revolution and establishment of the current Iranian government, are out-numbered by the younger generation. The conflict between the generations is a relevant issue within Iran.⁵⁰

The first group, noted as Actor A in the matrix – puts Islamic identity first. Also called hardliners, conservatives or principalists⁵¹, Actor A is focused on keeping the main identity and priorities of the Islamic Revolution intact. This includes a hardcore return to Islamic values and the rejection of outside influences. In order to accomplish these goals Actor A wants to (a) keep Muslim masses as "faithful allies" (b) create close relationships with other Islamic countries [c] is very anti-US - "no rapprochement...most responsible for humiliations" to Islam.⁵² The United States continues to be the "Great Satan" and any kind of rapprochement with pre-conditions would be unlikely. "The conservatives have always seen the United States and the West at large as a source of cultural contamination and cultural imperialism. Therefore, to have a significant American presence or intimacy between the United States and Iran...is still inconceivable to them."⁵³ President Ahmadinejad falls into this category.

The second group, noted as Actor B in the matrix, prefers that Iran focus on the ideals of a Nation-State. They are also known as reformists⁵⁴ or pragmatic conservatives.⁵⁵ Recent Iranian presidential candidate Mir Hossein Mousavi is a reformist. They are not negating the role of Islam in government but would prefer playing a key role in international events to be the priority. In order to stay involved in the international ["court"] community and raise the power and prestige of Iran, the Nation State actors believe "international trade and political ties are major tools in safeguarding Iranian national interests."⁵⁶ Both groups support the pursuit of nuclear capabilities as a sovereign right. Mousavi did say that he would "pursue a foreign policy of détente with the West and would be willing to meet with President Obama if it would help advance Iran's national interests."⁵⁷

Prestige – Regional and International

Iran wants a role as a regional leader and to be acknowledged as a relevant participant in international process and politics. "Iran is clearly driven to establish its nuclear credentials as part of its determination to assume what it views as its rightful place as a regional power."⁵⁸ The U.S. campaigns in Afghanistan

⁴⁸ "The interests are so complicated that we can't talk about these groups as unitary actors. One has to look at specific issues." Iran expert, (F.F.) Unpublished interview for the Deterrence project conducted by Institute for Defense Analysis (IDA), Telephone Interview, 11 May 2009.

⁴⁹ "Women's rights under Iran Revolution." 12 February 2009 http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/7879797.stm

⁵⁰ This dichotomy was especially noted during the 2009 Iranian elections.

⁵¹ Principalist is an Iranian translation of the word "fundamentalist". CFR Transcript: "Iran and policy options for the next Administration, Session 1 – Iran's Domestic Politics." 5 September 2008. www.cfr.org/publication/17107

⁵² Maleki, Abbas. "Decision Making in Iran's Foreign Policy: A Heuristic Approach." *Journal of Social Affairs*. 73:39-52. Spring 2002. p5.

⁵³ Takeyh, Ray. "Symposium: Iran's Strategic Concerns and U.S. Interests." *Middle East Policy* Vol XV, No. 1, Spring 2008. p 11.

⁵⁴ "Reformists...seek an easing of social and political restrictions at home and better ties with the West, see a strong opportunity to unseat Ahmadinejad, who has become increasingly unpopular because of Iran's economic woes." "Rival raps Iran president on economy." Associated Press. www.msnbc.msn.com/id/30644318/ 8 May 2009.

⁵⁵ Campbell, Kelly. "Analyzing Iran's Domestic Political Landscape" www.usip.org. May 2008.

⁵⁶ Maleki, Abbas. "Decision Making in Iran's Foreign Policy: A Heuristic Approach." *Journal of Social Affairs*. 73:39-52. Spring 2002. p5.

⁵⁷ Gerges, Fawaz. "Iran's nuclear work will go on." 11 June 2009.

www.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/meast/06/11/gerges.iran.nuclear/index.html

⁵⁸ "Iran: Where we are today." A report to the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate. May 4, 2009 p 8. www.gpoaccess.gov/congress/index.html

and Iraq have removed two of Iran's distractions – the Taliban and Saddam Hussein. "Iran's sphere of influence now extends from Kabul to Baghdad, from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean, in Lebanon and in Gaza."⁵⁹

Economic Growth

Iran's economy is not very diverse and the state controls the majority of economic activity. Iran is reliant on the oil sector for the majority of its revenue and the steep drop in oil prices, along with the general global economic downturn, has contributed to difficulties in economic development. Also compounding problems are "price controls, subsidies and other rigidities weigh[ing] down the potential for private-sector-led growth."⁶⁰ President Ahmadinejad promised subsidy reform when elected in 2005 but the attempts did not succeed. Inflation was 28% in 2008⁶¹ and unemployment reports vary anywhere from 12.5%⁶² to 20-30%.⁶³ Unemployment is particularly high among educated youth which has resulted in "brain drain" as many find jobs overseas.

After the Iran-Iraq war Iran an economic restructuring plan focused on the "expansion of economic and trade relations with its neighbors to the south (the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC]) and with Central Asia.⁶⁴ China, Russia and the EU⁶⁵ continue to be large trading partners for Iran.⁶⁶ Due to "chronic underinvestment in the country's energy fields" which provides 60% of Iran's revenue,⁶⁷ the government is facing severe shortfalls. The ongoing economic underperformance has led to dissatisfaction with the leadership and general social unrest.⁶⁸

Decision Calculus

Options Available to Iran

- Option 1: Cease all nuclear activity.
- Option 2: Continue all nuclear activity.
- Option 3: Cessation of military nuclear activity.
- Option 4: Pretend to stop all nuclear activity while continuing covert military focus.

Options Available to the United States

- Option 1: Open dialogue leading to cessation of sanctions and resumption of diplomatic relations.
- Option 2: Continue sanctions and other diplomatic opposition. (Status quo)
- Option 3: Possible limited physical attack; either conventional or nuclear.

⁵⁹ Slavín, Barbara. "Iran's Strategic Concerns and U.S. Interests." Edited Transcript from symposium convened by the Middle East Policy Council. January, 18, 2008. P 9.

⁶⁰ Iran, CIA Factbook. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/IR.html> Accessed 2 July 2009

⁶¹ Iran, CIA Factbook. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/IR.html> Accessed 2 July 2009

⁶² Iran, CIA Factbook. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/IR.html> Accessed 2 July 2009

⁶³ Campbell, Kelly. "Analyzing Iran's Domestic Political Landscape" www.usip.org. May 2008.

⁶⁴ Hunter, Shireen. "Iran's Pragmatic Regional Policy." *Journal of International Affairs*, Spring 2003, vol.56, no.2. p 142.

⁶⁵ "The EU remains Iran's leading trading partner, accounting for about 24 percent of Iran's total international trade...Iran has signed major economic and military agreements with China and Russia." Milani, Mohsen. "Tehran's Take: Understanding Iran's U.S. Policy." *Foreign Affairs*. July/August 2009 p.52.

⁶⁶ Moore, Matt. "Iran remains key trade partner for Europe." Associated Press. www.boston.com/news/world/europe/articles/2009/06/23/iran.html

⁶⁷ Glain, Stephen. "Iran protesters may have last laugh on ageing regime." www.thenational.ae/article/20090628/BUSINESS/706289948/1002

⁶⁸ Again, the recent elections and the ongoing protests demonstrate the level of frustration within the public sector.

Best Two Scenarios from Iran's Perspective

Iran's ultimate goal is to "establish its nuclear credentials as part of its determination to assume what it views as its rightful place as a regional power."⁶⁹ Therefore, any of its best options include maintaining their nuclear program in spite of sanctions or other diplomatic limitations.

Most desirable scenario:

Iran's dominant strategy would be to continue its current (military/civilian) nuclear program, especially if Iran believes the US will open diplomatic talks and quickly and significantly reduce sanctions on Iran. "...[Ahmadinejad and Ali Larijani⁷⁰] made clear in the interviews that they had no objections to talking to the United States, provided that the United States would approach the talks from a position of mutual respect and would not be arrogant and put demands on Iran up front."⁷¹ Doing so would add greatly to their regional and international prestige in most quarters by demonstrating Iran's ability to resolve long-standing diplomatic issues. The change could then be reflected not only with a surge in outside investment and economic growth, but a guaranteed place for Iran as an established power both regionally and internationally.

Second most desirable scenario:

The second most desirable option would be to continue its current (military/civilian) nuclear program if the US is anticipated continuing to hold the status quo policy. Holding the United States to an impasse diplomatically would be perceived, in some quarters, as a demonstration of strength. Territorial integrity would be maintained through the continuation of the nuclear program. Economically the status quo would be maintained, although there may be some increase in investment by nations opposed to the sanctions.

Worst Two Scenarios from Iran's Perspective

Least desirable scenario:

The least desirable option for Iran would be to cease all nuclear activity and be victim of a physical attack by the United States and/or Israel. Iran's territorial security will be impacted by the lack of a potential nuclear threat. Economically if the oil fields are hit government revenue will be limited. Iran could be seen as the victim of an unprovoked act which could resonate into support from the Arab world, China and Russia, however, the loss of prestige would be a blow to their desire for regional and international leadership.

Second least desirable scenario:

The second least desirable option would be to cease all nuclear activity and have there be no change in the status quo in regard to sanctions and diplomatic discussion. Cessation of nuclear activity with no reciprocal change in the status quo would diminish Iran in the eyes of the region. There is the possibility that this could impact Iran's national security issues by being unable to facilitate a change in the impasse. No change to the status quo would necessitate the focus on ongoing trade with EU, Russian, China, Central Asia and the Middle East, with the continued hope of expansion.

⁶⁹ "Iran: Where we are today." A report to the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate. May 4, 2009 p 8. www.gpoaccess.gov/congress/index.html

⁷⁰ Ali Larijani is Iran's national security advisor.

⁷¹ Slavin, Barbara. "Iran's Strategic Concerns and U.S. Interests." Edited Transcript from symposium convened by the Middle East Policy Council. January, 18, 2008. P 8.

Summary

“Iran’s goals remain largely the same; they’ve been consistent throughout, even back during the monarchical years – namely, that Iran has a right by virtue of size, demography and civilization to become the predeominant power in the Gulf and a preeminent power in the Middle East. These goals remain largely unaltered; it was the way they were expressed that changed.”⁷²

According to the multi-attribute subjective decision analysis, continuing its current nuclear program is Iran’s dominant strategy. That is, Iran’s overall best strategy is to continue its current (military/civilian) nuclear program if – as unlikely as it may be -- it believes the US will open diplomatic talks and quickly and significantly reduce sanctions on Iran (best), or more likely, if the US is anticipated to continue to hold to the status quo policy (second best). In fact, even if Iran anticipates a US/IS strike, its having continued its program returns the best pay off. **Thus, the threat of a US/IS strike is not an effective deterrent to Iran’s current nuclear plans.**

Iran is incentivized to cheat. Given the interplay of its interests and the expected pay-offs, maintaining a covert weapons program is better than ceasing only the military aspects of its nuclear program regardless of what action the US takes.

COA for Encouraging Iran to Cease all Nuclear Activity. For Iran, ceasing all nuclear activity is a risky strategy as it produces an acceptable outcome if the US opens a dialogue/removes sanctions. Thus the multi-attribute analysis suggests that **the best possibility for incentivizing Iran to cease nuclear activity is US unilateral suspension of sanctions and sincere dialogue – on a probationary basis, i.e., a policy of engagement that draws Iran into the international community while being careful to allow Iran to represent itself as acting for the benefit of Muslim nations.** In addition, any effort to encourage Iran to cease nuclear activity would need to mitigate perceived risks of a) a US return to the status quo, eg., by reinstating sanctions; b) the possibility of US or IS attack.

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⁷² Ibid, p 6. Ray Takeyh.

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Decision Analysis Report: *Iraq*

Overview and Full Report

Interests

- Political Stability
- Protect Iraq's Independence
- Economic Security
- Domestic Security
 - Constraining Iran's Power

Decision Calculus

Options Available to Iraq

- Option 1: Provide diplomatic support to Iran
- Option 2: Do not take any action
- Option 3: Distance themselves from Iran (politically and economically)

Options Available to the United States

- Option 1: Military Action Against Iran
- Option 2: Status Quo
- Option 3: Engage Iran
- Option 4: Withdraw Capabilities Support
- Option 5: Status-quo
- Option 6: Extend Military Presence in Iraq
- Option 7: Provide diplomatic support to Iraq

Status-Quo Environment

Best Scenario from Iraq's Perspective:

- Scenario 1: U.S. military strike against Iran / Iraq does not take any action against Iran

Worst Two Scenarios from Iraq's Perspective:

- Scenario 1: U.S. engages Iran / Iraq provides diplomatic support to Iran
- Scenario 2: U.S. withdraws capabilities support/ Iraq provides diplomatic support to Iran

Confirmed Environment

Best Scenario from Iraq's Perspective:

- Scenario 1: U.S. continues with status quo/ Iraq does not take any action against Iran

Worst Scenario from Iraq's Perspective:

- Scenario 1: U.S. withdraws capabilities support/ Iraq provides diplomatic support to Iran

Objective

This paper summarizes the background and results from three subjective decision calculus analyses conducted for Iraq. The ultimate goal of these analyses is to provide a methodological proof of concept that details how leveraging Iraq's decision matrix might assist in deterring Iran from developing a WMD capability. Supporting decision calculus analyses are enclosed in Appendix A.

Context

The region now known as the country of Iraq, considered the cradle of civilization, has its origins in ancient Mesopotamia. Iraq is centrally located in the Middle East, sharing borders with several other Middle Eastern countries. Throughout its lengthy history, this region has passed through many periods of change and turmoil, seeing the influence of various factions, from the Islamic Caliphate, Mongolian Conquest, and Ottoman Empire, to its rule under Saddam Hussein. Iraq is a predominantly Muslim nation, with approximately 60-65% Shia and 32-37% Sunni.⁷³ Arabs make up the majority (75-80%) of the population, with Kurds as the second most populous group (15-20%).

After Hussein was deposed in 2003, a power vacuum ensued; varying individuals and factions have since been vying for political power. U.S. forces occupied and remained in Iraq from 2003-2008, under the auspices of a U.N. Security Council mandate and, later, a bilateral Security Agreement. Iraq continues to have a tenuous relationship with the U.S., both wanting its independence and needing U.S. assistance. Domestic stability thus has been tenuous, further exacerbated by Iraq's overall fragmentation across religious, political, and other lines.



In early 2005, a 275-member transitional National Assembly was elected to replace the US-installed Interim Government.⁷⁴ Within a few months, a formal government was established and tasked with the creation of a state constitution. As defined by Iraq's current Constitution, Iraq is an Islamic, democratic, federal parliamentary republic with 18 governorates (known as *muhafadhat*). Late in 2005, a nationwide election was held to vote for a more permanent National Assembly. Nouri al-Maliki was then elected Prime Minister in the spring of 2006, followed by a parliamentary vote for a 36-member Cabinet.⁷⁵

In recent years, the groups that appeared to hold power in Iraq are the Shi'ite Muslims and the (largely Sunni) Kurds. This arose in part from the widespread de-Baathification that occurred in Iraq after the deposition of Hussein and the subsequent loss of Sunni power, as well as from the geographic location of these groups primarily in oil-rich areas in the north and south of the country.

That said, the results of the recent provincial elections (conducted in 14 out of 18 governorates) seem to indicate a shift of power away from separatist groups, such as the Kurds, and toward more nationalistic, secular parties, as well as some gains for the Sunnis (e.g., Sunni political party, Al Hadba).⁷⁶ The political parties that currently hold the most power are the Islamic Da'wa Party (headed up by Nouri al Maliki) and the Iraqi Islamic Party (IIP, headed up by Tariq al Hashimi). The IIP is a Sunni party, which broke the 2005 boycott to put members up for election. Da'wa's historical roots were as a militant Shi'ite group; it

⁷³ CIA World Factbook, accessed on July 2, 2009

⁷⁴ <http://www.globalpolicy.org/iraq/political-issues-in-iraq/iraqs-government-.html>

⁷⁵ <http://www.globalpolicy.org/iraq/political-issues-in-iraq/iraqs-government-.html>

⁷⁶ <http://www.thenation.com/blogs/dreyfuss/404195/print?rel=nofollow>

was originally created to promote Islamic values and ethics, political awareness, combat secularism, and create an Islamic state in Iraq. Da'wa is now a conservative political party. However, it should be noted that the IIP, a Sunni Arab party that emphasizes an Islamist platform, lost a significant number of votes compared to the 2005 elections.⁷⁷ This outcome may be in part due to the perception that the IIP did not accomplish significant goals during their period in power.⁷⁸ In contrast, the Supreme Iraqi Islamic Council (SIIC or ISCI, formerly SCIRI) suffered great losses in the provincial elections, coming in far behind the Da'wa Party, which ran on a nonsectarian, secular platform emphasizing Iraqi nationalism.⁷⁹ The SIIC, headed up by Abd Al-Aziz Al-Hakim, receives support from Iran and follows the ideology laid out by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.⁸⁰ Thus, a loss for SIIC represents a loss in support for sympathizers of Iran in Iraq.⁸¹ Interestingly, the elections also represent a gain in Sunni power within provincial governments, a development that may offset Sunni ire at the 2005 elections and their loss of power after the fall of Hussein.⁸²

Leadership

The subjective decision calculus matrices were centered around Prime Minister, Nuri al Maliki (Da'wa Party) as the primary decision-maker. Because the power vacuum left after Hussein's deposition yields some degree of uncertainty regarding the true decision-maker(s) in Iraq, this determination requires additional analysis, as detailed below.

The formal decision-makers in the national security arena in Iraq are the President, Jalal Talabani and the Prime Minister, Nouri al Maliki. As the Prime Minister, al Maliki is the commander in chief of the armed forces of Iraq and has direct executive authority over the general policy of the Iraqi state.⁸³ However, these actors do not appear to hold the most sway over public opinion. Until recently, Shi'a cleric, Moqtada al Sadr appeared to have a significant influence in the political and religious arenas.⁸⁴ He commands a militia, known as the Mahdi Army, which has been associated with attacks on Sunni insurgents, coalition forces, and rival militias (e.g., the Badr Brigade).⁸⁵ However, his influence recently has come into question, in part due to the decisive defeat of his Mahdi Army by Iraqi forces and U.S. troops in 2008.⁸⁶ al Sadr advocates against the United States, linking the U.S. to Israel and was opposed to the U.S. occupation of Iraq.⁸⁷ According to one source, he has gone so far as to say that the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York were, "a miracle and blessing from God."⁸⁸ He has also advocated for an Islamic Iraqi state, which would replace the current parliamentary democracy. His vision for Iraq includes a Shi'a-led government, resembling that of Iran. Indeed, in meeting Khamenei,

⁷⁷ <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Iraq/wm2281.cfm>

⁷⁸ <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Iraq/wm2281.cfm>

⁷⁹ <http://www.memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=countries&Area=iraq&ID=IA49709>

⁸⁰ <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Iraq/wm2281.cfm>

⁸¹ <http://www.memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=countries&Area=iraq&ID=IA49709>

⁸² <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Iraq/wm2281.cfm>

⁸³ http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/files/20704/11332732681iraqi_constitution_en.pdf/iraqi_constitution_en.pdf

⁸⁴ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/iz.html>;

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Iraq/wm2281.cfm>

⁸⁵ <http://www.cfr.org/publication/11787/>

⁸⁶ <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Iraq/wm2281.cfm>;

<http://www.thenation.com/blogs/dreyfuss/404195/print?rel=nofollow> ;

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/27/world/middleeast/27mahdi.html?_

⁸⁷ <http://www.counterpunch.org/patrick02152007.html>;

<http://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/239/36329.html>

⁸⁸ <http://www.counterpunch.org/patrick02152007.html>

he conveyed that he shared the same ideology, though he emphasized Iraq's distinction from Iran.⁸⁹ However, this view is not unequivocal; at least one al Sadr representative indicated that Sadrist would not vote in the 2009 provincial elections for parties campaigning on religious or ethnic platforms.⁹⁰ Nonetheless, tentative support for a democratic state is suggested by the number of candidates who came out during the recent provincial elections.⁹¹ Moreover, the provincial election win for parties such as former Prime Minister Iyad Alawi's *Iraqiya*, seems to indicate a disillusionment with religious parties that have failed to provide promised services and support for a secular government.^{92 93} In the words of Iraqi former electricity minister (2003-2005), Aiham Alsammarae, "...our analysis is that over the last four years the religious parties tried everything and proved that they are not successful leaders. They couldn't deliver what they promised. They could not do anything right."⁹⁴



Figure 1: Nouri al Maliki.
Source: thegonzobinktaok.files.wordpress.com/2009/02

While al Maliki does not enjoy unequivocal power, he nonetheless has made recent gains in public support. Early 2009 polling suggested that he had the most favorable ratings of any politician in Iraq; in provincial elections (early February), his *Da'wa* Party emerged as the clear winner.⁹⁵ Initial election results indicate that the *Da'wa* Party in fact won pluralities in nine of the 14 provinces where voting occurred on Jan. 31, 2009.⁹⁶ It should be noted, however, that *Da'wa* appeared to fare well in Shi'ite regions specifically (e.g., Basra). While some reports seem to indicate that al Maliki has a weak grasp on the country,⁹⁷ he is thought by some to be partially responsible for bringing peace to Iraq; violence in Iraq is at its lowest level since 2003.⁹⁸ Nonetheless, the

power-sharing arrangement that characterizes his political position limits his authority. For example, the Iraqi Constitution requires a strong majority of Parliament to support article amendment.⁹⁹ There is in fact tension between al Maliki and the Council of Representatives. Some believe that al Maliki's power is in fact dependent on the political support of al Sadr and other members of his religious and conservative base.¹⁰⁰ Still other reports reference al Maliki's spring 2008 move against the Mahdi Army in Baghdad and a number of southern Iraq cities as a sign of al Sadr's weakening support and the rise of support for al Maliki.¹⁰¹ The rift between these two actors may have begun in part because of al Maliki's different stance on the presence of U.S. troops. He did not demand their immediate withdrawal, Sadr's favored position.¹⁰²

⁸⁹http://www.memritv.org/clip_transcript/en/1726.htm, as cited in http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muqtada_al-Sadr, accessed on 4/17/09

⁹⁰ <http://www.merip.org/mero/mero013009.html>

⁹¹ <http://www.memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=countries&Area=iraq&ID=IA49709>

⁹² <http://www.thenation.com/blogs/dreyfuss/404195/print?rel=nofollow>

⁹³ <http://www.thenation.com/blogs/dreyfuss/403310/print?rel=nofollow>

⁹⁴ <http://www.thenation.com/blogs/dreyfuss/403310/print?rel=nofollow>

⁹⁵ http://topics.nytimes.com/topics/reference/timestopics/people/m/nuri_kamal_al-maliki/index.html?inline=nyt-per, *New York Times*, online edition, accessed on 2/6/09.; <http://www.thenation.com/blogs/dreyfuss/404195/print?rel=nofollow>; <http://www.historiae.org/allocation.asp>

⁹⁶ <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=100297561>

⁹⁷ <http://www.globalpolicy.org/iraq/political-issues-in-iraq/iraqs-government-.html>; <http://www.cfr.org/publication/11787/>

⁹⁸ <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=100297561>

⁹⁹ http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/files/20704/11332732681iraqi_constitution_en.pdf; [iraqi_constitution_en.pdf](http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/files/20704/11332732681iraqi_constitution_en.pdf)

¹⁰⁰ <http://www.cfr.org/publication/11787/>

¹⁰¹ http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/27/world/middleeast/27mahdi.html?_...

¹⁰² <http://www.time.com/time/printout/0,8816,1735034,00.html>;

<http://www.memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=countries&Area=iraq&ID=...>

Despite his recent increase in popularity, many still view al Maliki with distrust and question his stated secularist and non-sectarian intentions, since he is a former member of the Iraqi National Congress (INC) set up by the U.S. (CIA) and headed up by Ahmed Chalabi. During his time with the INC, al Maliki acted to extend the U.S. occupation and approved the establishment of permanent U.S. bases in Iraq.¹⁰³ Many Iraqis feel betrayed that Maliki and other former INC members (e.g., Talabani) are seemingly working against their interests. This echoes the findings from a 2006 survey conducted by the Iraq Centre for Research and Strategic Studies.¹⁰⁴ The sample for this study was composed as follows: 82% of their sample coming from the Baghdad region, 9% from Najaf, and 9% from Al-Anbar. 47.8% of the sample indicated that they would not vote again for the same entity or political party (cf. 25.8% who indicated that they would). In fact, as recently as 2008, the Iraqis appeared to be calling for new elections, with the likely winner being Moqtada al Sadr. Moreover, to some, al Maliki and the Da'wa Party are seen as being too sympathetic to Iran,¹⁰⁵ a position gaining some power based in al Maliki's assertion in 2008 that, "We will not allow Iraq to become a platform for harming the security of Iran and neighbors."¹⁰⁶ This may not only be true historically (e.g., Da'wa supported the Islamic Revolution in Iran), but also in the present day (as in al Maliki's 2008 comment). Alsammarae once again comments, claiming that, "most of [Da'wa and ISCI's] money comes from Iran."¹⁰⁷ Alawi also asserts that the country is headed for change, stating that "Iraqis have been angry at the way the sectarian forces have handled the situation."¹⁰⁸ At least part of this distrust may come from the ties that are perceived between Iran and sectarian forces in Iraq. Indeed, commenting on the results of the recent provincial elections, Alawi accused Iran of "support[ing] the sectarian forces in Iraq... the majority of the sectarian forces grew up in Iran."¹⁰⁹

Given that al Maliki's power is limited by the Constitution and his public support seems tenuous, and that al Sadr has seen major recent losses in popularity, it appears that there is presently no truly dominant power figure within Iraq. The upcoming general elections should help shed some light on the direction of power holding within the Iraqi state. In the meantime, al Maliki's influence remains contingent upon his ability to continue forming helpful political coalitions. *Nonetheless, al Maliki maintains power over the armed forces and thus may be the most likely decision-maker with respect to Iraqi national security.*

Interests

Political Stability

Iraq was ranked as the world's fifth most unstable country in the 2008 Failed States Index, receiving poor scores for delegitimization of the state, group grievance, and factionalized elites.¹¹⁰ Iraq is so fragmented, that some even argue that there *are* no Iraqi politics.¹¹¹ It is in this context that political stability emerges as a clear concern for Iraq. Indeed, the Islamic Da'wa Party website includes in its

¹⁰³ <http://www.merip.org/mero/mero013009.html>; <http://www.thenation.com/blogs/dreyfuss/404195/print?rel=nofollow>

¹⁰⁴ <http://www.irqcrss.org/paper.php?source=akbar&page=96>

¹⁰⁵ <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/227/story/35146.html>;

<http://www.thenation.com/blogs/dreyfuss/403310/print?rel=nofollow>

¹⁰⁶ <http://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/168/36327.html>

¹⁰⁷ <http://www.thenation.com/blogs/dreyfuss/403310/print?rel=nofollow>

¹⁰⁸ <http://www.thenation.com/blogs/dreyfuss/403310/print?rel=nofollow>

¹⁰⁹ <http://www.memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=countries&Area=iraq&ID=IA49709>

¹¹⁰ Fund for Peace and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace;

http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story_id=4350

¹¹¹ SME -- Iraqi Scholar at Middle East Institute and Professor at GMU, unpublished interview for the Deterrence Project conducted by the Institute for Defense Analysis (IDA), 5/4/09

stated Political Programme¹¹² an emphasis on regional power, united by a strong central government (federalism). The aim is to establish federal regions in the south and center. Thus, party members are to work toward a cohesive central government, which can harmonize the needs of the separate regions and respond to national challenges. Regions are to be based on geography, instead of ethnicity or sect. Accordingly, the party rejects calls for the country to be divided into three separate regions (Kurdish, Shi'ite and Sunni), which it feels would undermine the unity of the Iraqi people. Some analyses suggest that al Maliki in fact received a mandate for a strong central government, and was rewarded in the provincial elections for his nationalist and non-sectarian platform.¹¹³ Overall, Iraqi nationalism remains quite strong, with 2008 non-partisan polls indicating that nearly 70% of respondents identified themselves as Iraqis.¹¹⁴

Protect Iraq's Independence

The Da'wa Party emphasizes in their Political Programme the protection of Iraq's independence (i.e., ensure national sovereignty) and the maintenance of international relations. One method for pursuing the latter, the Da'wa Party website details, is to, "play an effective role in multi-national organizations and institutes such as the Arab League, the Islamic Conference Organization, and the United Nations to serve the interest of the Iraqi people, Arab and Muslim nations, and the World at large." While this goal no doubt is of interest, Iraq's tenuous position as an unstable state makes it unlikely to seek these outcomes in the near-term. First must come the stated emphasis on foreign policies designed to protect Iraqi independence.

Economic Security

Iraq has several sources of consideration for economic security. First, a long-standing issue has been the repudiation or downsizing of odious foreign debt accrued in part during Hussein's regime and the war waged against Iran from 1980-1988 (with a debt total of approximately 200 billion)¹¹⁵. This belief is echoed among the Iraqi people, who believe that the debt was accrued without their consent, under the oppressive regime of Saddam Hussein. Economic recovery may be difficult or impossible if this step is not taken. To accomplish this goal, arbitration would be necessary to determine which debt is odious, to negotiate with the creditor nations, and to determine the terms of repayment for outstanding debt.

A second component of Iraqi economic security calls for greater development and protection of the energy sector -- Iraq's greatest potential source of revenue (being the state with the second largest proven oil reserves in the Middle East and with plentiful gas reserves)¹¹⁶. Related and sharply debated legislation¹¹⁷ includes a hydrocarbon law designed to create a modern legal framework that would enable Iraq to develop its resources. Similarly, a revenue-sharing law aims to equitably distribute oil revenues across the nation. Other initiatives are aimed at development across various sectors. The first of these is an expansion of Iraq's electrical energy supply. Second is a focus on expanding the natural gas industry, with an emphasis on local distribution and then growth into a strong export industry. Third is the preparation of technical/engineering knowledge in the petrochemical arena. Finally, there is an overarching emphasis on a new approach to oil policies that will focus on meeting the needs of the Iraqi people.

¹¹² <http://www.islamicdawaparty.com/?module=home&fname=programe.php&show=5>

¹¹³ <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Iraq/wm2281.cfm>

¹¹⁴ <http://www.merip.org/mero/mero013009.html>

¹¹⁵ Jubilee Iraq: <http://www.jubileeiraq.org/blog/>

¹¹⁶ <http://www.globalpolicy.org/iraq/political-issues-in-iraq/oil-in-iraq.html>

¹¹⁷ CIA World Factbook, accessed on April 20, 2009;

<http://www.islamicdawaparty.com/?module=home&fname=programe.php&show=5>

Finally, for greater economic stability, Iraq needs to focus on creating and strengthening a solid infrastructure.¹¹⁸ This includes the improvement of the health and education systems, as well as a focus on other measures for ensuring a “prosperous and booming Iraq.”¹¹⁹ Other than those measures taken specifically to develop and strengthen the energy sector, these might include an emphasis on free enterprise and a free-market economy, the provision of employment opportunities, the development and sustenance of a self-sustaining agricultural sector, and the opening of Islamic and national banks.¹²⁰

Domestic Security

Goals within this domain are two-fold: 1) to ensure *domestic stability*, such as safety within communities; and 2) to work with neighboring countries to secure Iraqi borders against any form of terrorism (i.e., *border issues*).¹²¹ Iraq remains subject to threat from various factions (e.g., militia and insurgent activity). More specifically, Iraq is open to influence from insurgents funded by Syria, Iran, and Saudi Arabia. Iran in particular has exploited Iraq’s weakness by introducing divisive factions such as Special Group surrogates.

Constraining Iran’s Power

While Iran has close ties with Iraq, there also is recognition of the potential danger of Iranian influence.¹²² As one Iraqi political scientist notes, Iranian influence may result in large part from the U.S. failure to secure Iraqi borders, enabling activities such as smuggling.¹²³ There is some variation among Iraqi actors with regard to Iraq’s preferred approach to Iran, with some actors taking a harder-line stance (e.g., Allawi). While the overarching view among strong elements in Iraq seems to be that Iran’s power must be curtailed,¹²⁴ at least one Middle East policy expert appears to disagree, arguing that Iran is best described as an irritant.¹²⁵ The expert continues by noting that Iranian influence in Iraq will decrease as Iraq becomes more stable, a notion that suggests that Iraq’s interest in curtailing Iranian power overlaps with other Iraqi interests.

Decision Calculus

Options Available to Iraq

- Option 1: Provide diplomatic support to Iran
 - Verbally support Iran by arguing for its right to develop a WMD capability; do not support sanctions against Iran.
- Option 2: Do not take any action
 - Do not increase support or opposition against Iran and its WMD capability.
- Option 3: Distance themselves from Iran (politically and economically)

¹¹⁸ <http://www.islamicdawaparty.com/?module=home&fname=programe.php&show=5>

¹¹⁹ <http://www.islamicdawaparty.com/?module=home&fname=programe.php&show=5>

¹²⁰ <http://www.islamicdawaparty.com/?module=home&fname=programe.php&show=5>

¹²¹ <http://www.islamicdawaparty.com/?module=home&fname=programe.php&show=5>

¹²² SME Iraqi political scientist, unpublished interview for the Deterrence Project for the Institute for Defense Analysis (IDA), 5/4/09

¹²³ SME Iraqi political scientist, unpublished interview for the Deterrence Project for the Institute for Defense Analysis (IDA), 5/4/09

¹²⁴ SME Iraqi political scientist, unpublished interview for the Deterrence Project for the Institute for Defense Analysis (IDA), 5/4/09

¹²⁵ SME Middle East policy expert, unpublished interview for the Deterrence Project for the Institute for Defense Analysis, 5/20/09

- Decrease reliance on Iranian funding (via trade, tourism, and energy connections) and begin severing political ties (e.g., via religious tourism).

Options Available to the United States

With the ultimate goal of deterring Iran, the United States can either act directly against Iran (options 1 through 3) or use Iraq's presumed decision calculus to identify potential levers that can compel or deter Iraqi action in ways that will satisfactorily impact the Iranian situation (options 5 through 10).

Option 1: Military Action Against Iran

- Military strike against some or all of Iran's suspected WMD production and storage sites.

Option 2: Status Quo

- Western efforts to stop WMD program (threat of additional sanctions, possibility of high level talks, international diplomatic pressure, Iranian WMD development intelligence).

Option 3: Engage Iran

- High-level talks between Iran and US; removal of sanctions.

Option 4: Withdraw Capabilities Support

- U.S. cuts off support to Iraq in terms of logistic capabilities, fire support, and intelligence, thereby forcing Iraq's increased reliance on Iran.

Option 5: Status-quo

- Remain in Iraq through 2011 planned withdrawal; near-term removal of military from cities.

Option 6: Extend Military Presence in Iraq

- U.S. extends military presence in Iraq past projected 2011 troop withdrawal date.

Option 7: Provide diplomatic support to Iraq

- Verbal support for Iraq's economic and political distancing from Iran, intended both as a form of reward and pressure and as a subtle message to other countries.

Status-Quo Environment

Best Scenario from Iraq's Perspective:

In the status quo environment, the scenario that maximizes Iraq's interests is as follows:

Scenario 1 : U.S. military strike against Iran / Iraq does not take any action against Iran

A U.S. military strike in the context of no Iraqi action has a net positive impact on Iraq's primary state interests, based on the subjective decision analysis. While such a strike would harm Iraq's political stability by decreasing Iranian support against neighboring Sunni countries unfavorable to the current Shi'ite-led Iraqi government, declining Iranian influence would serve Iraq's interest in protecting its independence as well as decreasing Iran's power. Further, domestic security will be increased with a neutralized Iranian WMD threat. All other things equal, a strike on Iran plus continued U.S. presence in Iraq would serve to strengthen borders.

Worst Two Scenarios from Iraq's Perspective:

In the status quo environment, the scenarios that yield poor net outcomes for Iraq's interests are as follows:

Scenario 1: U.S. engages Iran / Iraq provides diplomatic support to Iran

In the context of the U.S. engaging Iran, Iraqi diplomatic support for Iran would have a highly negative impact on Iraqi independence, with Iraq viewed both domestically and otherwise as maintaining too-close ties to Iran. This impact would be somewhat mitigated by a bolstering of political stability as Iran's covert influence attempts decrease. However, while political security may be positively impacted, economic security is likely to suffer under this scenario. Specifically, Iraqi diplomatic support for Iran may alienate creditor and investor nations, including other Arab nations, which may reduce economic assistance and willingness to repudiate odious debt. Net impacts on domestic security and constraint of Iran's power are likely to be small. While likely decreases in Iranian subversive forces should improve overall internal stability, direct Iraqi support for Iran may also draw opposition from pro-Arab groups, once again fracturing domestic security.

Scenario 2: U.S. withdraws capabilities support/ Iraq provides diplomatic support to Iran

In the status quo environment, the worst scenario from the Iraqi perspective is to have its diplomatic support for Iran met with U.S. withdrawal of its capabilities support. U.S. removal of its logistic capabilities, fire support, and intelligence would increase Iraq's reliance upon and vulnerability to Iranian influence (e.g., border issues). To the extent that Iraqi forces would remain unprepared in the face of reduced supplies and support, political stability and ability to preserve Iraqi independence would be dealt a harsh blow. While short-term economic security would be preserved with the maintenance of ties with Iran, longer-term economic security might be compromised, with the likely withdrawal of support from creditor and investor nations. Finally, domestic security would take a large hit, with increased factionalization, decreased ability to protect against militia and insurgent activity. This vulnerability would leave Iraq open to Syrian, Saudi Arabian, and Iranian influence.

Confirmed Environment

Best Scenario from Iraq's Perspective:

In the WMD confirmed environment, the scenario that maximizes Iraq's interests is as follows:

Scenario 1: U.S. continues with status quo/ Iraq does not take any action against Iran

In the best case scenario in response to the confirmation that Iran has WMDs, Iraq does not take any action against Iran and the United States similarly continues with the status quo (i.e., near-term removal of military from cities, remain in Iraq through 2011 withdrawal). Even in the face of no change, Iraq very well may falter as a state, given overall instability and the necessity for still-fragile institutions such as the military to be prepared for U.S. withdrawal. Long-term independence thus may falter, with increased Iranian, Saudi Arabian, and Syrian intervention in Iraqi affairs. In the short-term, however, Iraq's best outcomes nonetheless come from an absence of both U.S. and Iraqi action. In this case, initial movement toward greater investment in Iraq, as well as gains in domestic security and political stability can be preserved.

Worst Scenario from Iraq's Perspective:

In the WMD confirmed environment, the scenario that yields poor net outcomes for Iraq's interests is as follows:

Scenario 1: U.S. withdraws capabilities support/ Iraq provides diplomatic support to Iran

The worst case scenario for Iraq in the context of confirmed Iranian WMDs would result from Iraq providing diplomatic support to Iran and the United States withdrawing its capabilities support. In this scenario, Iraqi diplomatic support for Iran would damage its relationship with the U.S., which would in turn negatively impact several Iraqi interests. First, political stability would likely suffer as a result of the further decreased ability of the Iraqi military to maintain peace with reduced intelligence, as well as logistic and fire support. A weakened military in turn would result in decrements to Iraqi independence and domestic security, with decreased ability to protect against militia and insurgent activity in the face of increasing factionalization. Iraq would thus become more susceptible to Syrian, Saudi Arabian, and Iranian influence (though Iran's covert influence attempts may decrease somewhat with Iraqi diplomatic support). Finally, long-term economic security would likely be negatively impacted, since Iraqi dependence on Iranian investment would increase, possibly alienating investor/creditor nations (both Arab and non-Arab).

Summary

Given a suspected but not publicly confirmed Iranian nuclear weapons program, the Iraqi subjective decision analysis indicates that from the Iraqi perspective, *Iraq's best outcome is to refrain from action for or against Iran if the U.S. chooses to engage in military action against Iran*. In other words, Iraq is incentivized to do nothing and wait for the U.S. to take action that will have a net positive impact on Iraqi interests, ranging from political stability to constraint of Iranian power.

If Iranian pursuit of WMDs is confirmed, *Iraq is incentivized to pursue the same path (i.e., no action against or for Iran), as long as the U.S. also refrains from action*.

Suspected Iranian nuclear weapons program: U.S. Course of Action v. Iraq

The multi-attribute subjective decision analysis as a whole implies that Iraq may do best by playing the U.S. and Iran off of one another, rather than taking sides. Given the interplay among its interests and expected payoffs, Iraq's first and second best outcomes are associated with it taking no new action vis a vis Iran (i.e., maintaining the status quo). This is the case regardless of whether its interest in containing Iranian influence is included or omitted from its calculus. Interestingly, when its interest in containing Iranian influence is considered, the analysis indicates a better pay-off for Iraq when the U.S. takes military action against Iran. If containing Iranian influence is not a major concern, Iraq still benefits most from taking no new action but prefers that the U.S. also maintain the status quo. *Thus, in order to garner Iraqi support for U.S. military action against Iran, the US should work to emphasize Iraq's interest in reducing Iranian influence.*

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Decision Analysis Report: *Russia*

Overview and Full Report

Interests

- Sphere of Influence
- International Prestige
- Energy Superpower (Economic Interests)

Decision Calculus

Options available to Russia

- Option 1: Provide diplomatic support to Iran:
- Option 2: Look the other way/turn a blind eye
- Option 3: Provide diplomatic opposition to Iran

Options available to the US

- Option 1: Military action against Iran
- Option 2: Diplomatic opposition/pressure
- Option 3: Status Quo
- Option 4: Diplomatic engagement

Status Quo Environment

Best Scenario from Russia's Perspective:

Scenario 1: Look the other way/Turn a blind eyes and for the United States to continue status quo

Worst Scenario from Russia's Perspective:

Scenario 1: Russia provides diplomatic opposition to Iran and the United continues status quo

Confirmed Environment

Best Scenario from Russia's Perspective:

Scenario 1: Look the other way/Turn a blind eyes and for the United States to continue status quo

Worst Scenario from Russia's Perspective:

Scenario 1: Russia provides diplomatic opposition to Iran and the United continues status quo

Objective

Within the context of deterring Iran from developing a WMD capability, this paper explores the options available to Russia and the subsequent impact of those options on Russia's strategic national security interests. The paper will provide the context to support a decision analysis matrix, located in Appendix A.

Context

Russia-Iran Relations

While Russia straddles the European and Asian continents, it has an abiding interest economically, strategically, and politically in the Middle East and Central Asia. Russia has a long standing history of



cooperation and colonization of Persia reaching back to the 17th century.¹²⁶ Those ties and tensions are just as apparent now as they were in previous centuries.

Today, Russia cannot afford to alienate Iran due to economic and political interests. Iran's location along the southern portion of the Caspian Sea makes it a key player in energy exploitation and transportation. Iran is also one of Russia's best arms sales customers.¹²⁷ Additionally, Russia supplies Iran with technology, training, and equipment for its civilian nuclear energy program, which brings much needed currency into the country. So while Russia does not want Iran to acquire a

WMD capability,¹²⁸ it is politically and economically untenable for Russia to oppose Iran's WMD program.¹²⁹

¹²⁶ Iran Expert. Interview by Institute for Defense Analysis, Joint Advanced Warfighting Division, 6 May 2009; "Attendance at Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory Russia Workshop." Memorandum to the Global Strategy Innovation Center, United States Strategic Command, 15 May 2007; Alexei Arbatov, Vladimir Dvorkin. *Beyond Nuclear Deterrence: Transforming the U.S.-Russian Equation*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006; and Stephen J. Blank. *Russia and Arms Control: Are There Opportunities for the Obama Administration?* *Strategic Studies Institute*. March 2009, pg 54.

¹²⁷ Russia Expert. Interview by Institute for Defense Analysis, Joint Advanced Warfighting Division, 27 April 2009.

¹²⁸ Alexei Arbatov, Vladimir Dvorkin. *Beyond Nuclear Deterrence: Transforming the U.S.-Russian Equation*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

Russia-US Relations

Russia also has a complex relationship with the United States ranging from old Cold War tensions to new efforts to “reset” bilateral relations. Russia wants the United States to recognize it as a major power and give it the respect it feels it deserves based on its historical, cultural, and technological achievements. Russia’s ties to both the United States and Iran places it in the center of the effort to stall Iran’s WMD program. With much to lose from cooperating with either side, the Russian decision calculus is relatively narrow.

Arms Sales

Iran is one of Russia’s major arms customers. In addition to selling conventional weapons, Russia has allegedly provided significant direct and indirect technical support to Iran’s missile and space program including the longer-range Shahab-5 missile.¹³⁰ The sales do not have any ideological significance; it is simply another reliable source of revenue for Russia.

The pending sale of the S-300 air defense system to Iran is a source of controversy between Russia and Israel.¹³¹ While Russia has hedged on whether it will actually sell the system to Iran, the US and Israel have drawn a line in the sand regarding the sale, which would allow Iran to protect its WMD facilities from an Israeli attack. This would effectively prevent Israel from launching a pre-emptive strike against Iranian WMD facilities.¹³² If Russia decides to sell Iran the S-300 air defense system, the US may drop its opposition of a pre-emptive Israeli air strike.¹³³ Russia is not likely to sell the S-300 system to Iran until relations improve. However, Russia may reassess its position if Iran seeks to buy a similar system (based on Russian technology) from China.¹³⁴

Leadership

Russian leadership is effectively a diarchy led officially by President Dmitri Medvedev and actually by Prime Minister Vladimir Putin. While Medvedev is the head of state and retains the powers granted to him by the constitution, Putin, as prime minister and the leader of the ruling United Russia party, controls the country’s finances, regional elites,¹³⁵ and two-thirds of Duma, which gives him almost as much power as being president.¹³⁶ There are few distinguishing differences in policy between the two men particularly in regard to foreign policy and national security.¹³⁷ Middle East policy, in particular, falls under Putin’s purview. Russia’s centralized, hierarchical political system leaves little room for ministers, department heads, and other political figures to influence foreign policy and national security decision making.¹³⁸

¹³⁰ Ariel Cohen. “The Russian Handicap to U.S. Iran Policy.” *The Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs*. Vol. 8, No. 28 22 April 2009.

¹³¹ Eugene Habiger, William Schneider, and Nancy Soderberg. Preventing a Cascade of Instability: U.S. Engagement to Check Iranian Nuclear Progress. The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 9 March 2009, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/print.php?template=C05&CID=3021> (accessed 17 March 2009).

¹³² “Iran to procure Chinese defense system.” *Jerusalem Post*, 10 May 2009, <http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?cid=1241773221488&pagename=JPost%2FJPArticle%2FShowFull> (accessed 11 May 2009).

¹³³ Middle East expert. Interview by Institute for Defense Analysis, Joint Advanced Warfighting Division. 13 May 2009.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ “A Double Headed Eagle.” *The Economist*, 17 April 2008,

http://www.economist.com/world/europe/displaystory.cfm?story_id=11062067 (accessed 9 April 2009).

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Middle East and Arms Control Expert. Interview by Institute for Defense Analysis, Joint Advanced Warfighting Division, 13 May 2009.

¹³⁸ Russia Expert. Interview by Institute for Defense Analysis, Joint Advanced Warfighting Division, 27 April 2009.

While there has been some speculation that Medvedev is consolidating power in his own right,¹³⁹ there are no indications that he is seeking to take sole control of the country's decision making apparatus. Both men are careful to maintain a single voice in regard to major decision making, which is often done behind closed doors.¹⁴⁰ Subject matter experts suggest that a true split is unsustainable until and unless Medvedev builds up his own powerbase.¹⁴¹

Interests

The decision analysis is predicated on Russia acting within its own strategic national interests, which will be clearly defined in this section. These interests are the lenses through which analysts can understand the Russian decision making process. These lenses are based on two assumptions.

The first assumption is that Russia does not want Iran to have a WMD capability.¹⁴² Despite Russia's refusal to impose new sanctions and Russia's support for Iran's domestic (and arguably dual purpose) nuclear energy sector, it does not benefit from the introduction of another WMD armed country in its perceived sphere of influence. While Russia does not believe that a WMD armed Iran would be as devastating as is believed by Israel or the US, Russian territory would be within radius of an attack.¹⁴³

The second assumption is that despite Russia's preference that Iran does not develop WMD, it will take no action to prevent its development or in any way harm its relationship with Iran. Iran is Russia's most important ally in the Middle East.¹⁴⁴ Russia has too much to gain economically and politically from its relationship with Iran to damage that by drawing a line in the sand regarding WMDs.¹⁴⁵ Additionally, domestic politics demands that Russia's foreign and defense policies embrace partnerships with China

¹³⁹ US Policy towards Russia Seminar. Transcript. Council of Foreign Relations, 9 April 2009 http://www.cfr.org/publication/19078/us_policy_toward_russia.html?breadcrumb=%2Fregion%2F323%2Ffeurope/ussia (accessed 9 April 2009); Ethan Burger and Mary Holland. "Medvedev Makes his Move." *Foreign Policy*. March 2009, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story_id=4773 (accessed 16 April 2009); Nazrin Mehdieva. "New Man in the Kremlin: What Future for Russian Foreign Policy?" *The International Spectator*, Vol. 43, No. 2, June 2008, 21–34; "A Double Headed Eagle." *The Economist*, 17 April 2008, http://www.economist.com/world/europe/displaystory.cfm?story_id=11062067 (accessed 9 April 2009); and Vladislav Inozemtsev. "The 'Resource Curse' and Russia's Economic Crisis." Roundtable Summary, Chatham House, 10 March 2009, http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/files/13649_100309inozemtsev.pdf (accessed 21 April 2009).

¹⁴⁰ US Policy towards Russia Seminar. Transcript. Council of Foreign Relations, 9 April 2009 http://www.cfr.org/publication/19078/us_policy_toward_russia.html?breadcrumb=%2Fregion%2F323%2Ffeurope/ussia (accessed 9 April 2009); and Nazrin Mehdieva. "New Man in the Kremlin: What Future for Russian Foreign Policy?" *The International Spectator*, Vol. 43, No. 2, June 2008, 21–34.

¹⁴¹ Vladislav Inozemtsev. "The 'Resource Curse' and Russia's Economic Crisis." Roundtable Summary, Chatham House, 10 March 2009, http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/files/13649_100309inozemtsev.pdf (accessed 21 April 2009).

¹⁴² Jason Zaboriski. "Deterring a Nuclear Iran." *The Washington Quarterly*, 28:3, summer 2005, pp 153-167, http://www.twq.com/05summer/docs/05summer_zaboriski.pdf (accessed 17 March 2009); and Stephen Blank, "Russia's Proliferation Pathways." Center for Contemporary Conflict. December 2008; and US Policy towards Russia Seminar. Transcript. Council of Foreign Relations, 9 April 2009 http://www.cfr.org/publication/19078/us_policy_toward_russia.html?breadcrumb=%2Fregion%2F323%2Ffeurope/ussia (accessed 9 April 2009).

¹⁴³ US Policy towards Russia Seminar. Transcript. Council of Foreign Relations, 9 April 2009 http://www.cfr.org/publication/19078/us_policy_toward_russia.html?breadcrumb=%2Fregion%2F323%2Ffeurope/ussia (accessed 9 April 2009).

¹⁴⁴ Freedman, Robert. "Russia, Iran and the Nuclear Question: The Putin Record." *Strategic Studies Institute*. November 2006.

¹⁴⁵ Ariel Cohen. "The Russian Handicap to U.S. Iran Policy." *The Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs*. Vol. 8, No. 28 22 April 2009.

and Iran.¹⁴⁶ And while a WMD-armed Iran would not benefit Russia in any way, it views the possibility of an Iranian WMD as a “suboptimal outcome rather than existential threat.”¹⁴⁷

Sphere of Influence

While any claim that Iran is in Russia’s sphere of influence is tenuous,¹⁴⁸ Russia wants to seek stronger ties for three reasons: (1) to combat US influence in the region, (2) to maximize profits from its energy sector, and (3) maintain Iran’s stabilizing force in Chechnya.

In a multipolar world, Russian leadership hopes to see the reduction or balancing of American power, the revision of current international financial institutions, the containment or reduction of NATO and the OSCE, and the general balancing of Russian power against the Euro-Atlantic alliance.¹⁴⁹

Former Soviet Republics

A leaked version of Russia’s updated military doctrine states that conventional great power alliances (i.e., NATO) pose one of the greatest strategic threats to Russia.¹⁵⁰ Russia is particularly concerned about losing its influence over former Soviet republics to encroaching western institutions and ideologies. Russia sees NATO expansion as a zero sum game, where any gains made by the West erode Russia’s national power and international standing.¹⁵¹ One way Moscow works to prevent western encroachment on its sphere of influence is to leverage European dependence on Russian gas to slow the spread of NATO and missile defense efforts.¹⁵² Engagement and lifting of sanctions with Iran would reduce Russia’s ability to exert control along its periphery.

Russia is also very concerned by the US efforts to move forward with strategic missile defense, especially with plans for placing missiles in Poland and the Czech Republic.¹⁵³ Further, the military establishment in Moscow believes the US intends to arm the defense system with nuclear arms because they do not believe that non-nuclear defensive missiles are a legitimate defense against a WMD armed Iran.¹⁵⁴ And if missiles are set up in Poland, the US could achieve first strike capability by launching nuclear warheads at Moscow before Russia could respond.

Middle East

The conflict between Iran and the US regarding WMDs plays into Russia’s hand. Russia fears reconciliation between the US and Iran would weaken its ties with Iran and would reduce Iranian dependence on Russia oil. It would give the US a stronger foothold in the Middle East while edging out

¹⁴⁶ Stephen J. Blank. Russia and Arms Control: Are There Opportunities for the Obama Administration? *Strategic Studies Institute*. March 2009, pg 54.

¹⁴⁷ Russia Expert. Interview by Institute for Defense Analysis, Joint Advanced Warfighting Division, 27 April 2009.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ariel Cohen. “The Russian Handicap to U.S. Iran Policy.” *The Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs*. Vol. 8, No. 28 22 April 2009.

¹⁵⁰ Russia Expert. Interview by Institute for Defense Analysis, Joint Advanced Warfighting Division, 27 April 2009.

¹⁵¹ Russia Expert. Interview by Institute for Defense Analysis, Joint Advanced Warfighting Division, 14 May 2009; and Russia Expert. Interview by Institute for Defense Analysis, Joint Advanced Warfighting Division, 27 April 2009; “Russians See U.S. Missile Defense in Poland Posing Nuclear Threat “ Interview of Pavel Felgenhauer (Novaya Gazeta) by Bernard Gwertzman (Council on Foreign Relations). 18 March 2009.

¹⁵² Ariel Cohen, Ph.D., and Owen Graham. “European Security and Russia’s Natural Gas Supply Disruption, Heritage Foundation Web Memo, No 2194, 8 January 2009; and “The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia.” A Report from The Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, The Nixon Center and the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Washington, D.C., March 2009.

¹⁵³ “Russians See U.S. Missile Defense in Poland Posing Nuclear Threat “ Interview of Pavel Felgenhauer (Novaya Gazeta) by Bernard Gwertzman (Council on Foreign Relations). 18 March 2009.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

Russian influence.¹⁵⁵ So while Russia does not want to see a WMD Iran, it will continue to leverage Iran as a strategic ally as an effort to counterbalance US influence in the Middle East.¹⁵⁶ The waning of US influence and Russia's interest in maximizing its economic interests in the Persian Gulf/Middle East outweighs any Russian concerns about Iran's WMD development program.¹⁵⁷

Chechnya

Iran also has the potential to stir up conflict in Chechnya against Russia forces.¹⁵⁸ There has been some suggestion Iranian leadership has not intervened in Russia's conflict in Chechnya in exchange for tolerance of their WMD program and foreign policy agenda. A hostile, WMD Iran would inflame the separatist movement in the North Caucasus region of Russia.

International Prestige

One of Russia's major foreign policy objectives is to be and be acknowledged as a major power.¹⁵⁹ Russia yearns to be acknowledged and respected as a peer among great powers when the reality is that Russia today is a regional power not a global one.¹⁶⁰ Russia wishes to be respected commensurate with its educated citizenry, long and noble history, its great scientific and technological accomplishments, its nuclear stockpile, and political leadership. While Russian elites distinguish themselves from the West, they also believe that Russia is one of the three pillars of Western civilization along with the United States and Europe. Russia has rejected the idea of following Poland and other countries in embracing Western institutions and reforms. With regard to the Middle East, Russia wants a seat at the table within the international community, with a voice and the ability to veto decisions, especially when the issues relate to Iran, Iranian WMD, the use of force (as in Iraq), and Israel-Palestine policies.¹⁶¹

Russia believes that the West has failed to treat it like a peer in the post Cold War era.¹⁶² One expert stated that the more the US and other world powers treat Russia like a full-fledged peer, the more accommodating it will be. Treating Russia like a peer diplomatically and politically is a significant leverage point that should not be discounted due to the diplomatic nature of the approach.¹⁶³ The more the US isolates and admonished Russia, the more incentive it has to act out on its own leading to a

¹⁵⁵ Middle East and arms expert. Interview by Institute for Defense Analysis, Joint Advanced Warfighting Division, 13 May 2009; and Schake, Korin and Judith Yaphe. *The Strategic Implications of a Nuclear-Armed Iran.* Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, McNair paper 64, 2001.

¹⁵⁶ Middle East Expert. Interview by Institute for Defense Analysis, Joint Advanced Warfighting Division, 20 May 2009.

¹⁵⁷ Ariel Cohen. "The Russian Handicap to U.S. Iran Policy." *The Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs*. Vol. 8, No. 28 22 April 2009.

¹⁵⁸ Jason Zaborski. "Deterring a Nuclear Iran." *The Washington Quarterly*, 28:3, summer 2005, pp 153-167, http://www.twq.com/05summer/docs/05summer_zaborski.pdf (accessed 17 March 2009); and Stephen Blank, "Russia's Proliferation Pathways." Center for Contemporary Conflict. December 2008.

¹⁵⁹ Russia Expert. Interview by Institute for Defense Analysis, Joint Advanced Warfighting Division, 27 April 2009; and Russia Expert. Interview by Institute for Defense Analysis, Joint Advanced Warfighting Division, 14 May 2009.

¹⁶⁰ "Attendance at Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory "Russia Workshop." Memorandum to the Global Strategy Innovation Center, United States Strategic Command, 15 May 2007.

¹⁶¹ Russia Expert. Interview by Institute for Defense Analysis, Joint Advanced Warfighting Division, 14 May 2009.

¹⁶² US Policy towards Russia Seminar. Transcript. Council of Foreign Relations, 9 April 2009 http://www.cfr.org/publication/19078/us_policy_toward_russia.html?breadcrumb=%2Fregion%2F323%2Feuoperussia (accessed 9 April 2009); and "Attendance at Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory "Russia Workshop." Memorandum to the Global Strategy Innovation Center, United States Strategic Command, 15 May 2007; and Interview with Sergey Kislyak, Russian Ambassador to the United States. Arms Control Association. http://www.armscontrol.org/20081114_Kisylak (accessed 19 March 2009).

¹⁶³ Interview with Sergey Kislyak, Russian Ambassador to the United States. Arms Control Association. http://www.armscontrol.org/20081114_Kisylak (accessed 19 March 2009).

cyclical deterioration in relations. Russia wants to be part of any decision making process in dealing with Iran and not told after the fact what the decision is (as might have been the case with UN sanctions).¹⁶⁴

Compounding the problem in recent years, Russia views US support for strategic missile defense¹⁶⁵ and the expansion of NATO as an effort to further erode Russia's status. The global financial crisis, which is seen to have been started in the US, has greatly impacted Russia, reducing its domestic stability and international might.

Energy Superpower (Economic Interests)

One of Russia's foremost economic interests is its oil, gas, and energy industry. Russia has some of the world's largest reserves of energy resources including oil, natural gas, coal and other raw materials.¹⁶⁶ Iran has the second largest reserves of natural gas after Russia and the second largest reserves of petroleum after Saudi Arabia.¹⁶⁷ These resources underlie Russia's desire to be an energy superpower. Iran plays a large role in Russia's plans to control gas and energy exports to Europe as both countries vie for Caspian mineral rights and transportation routes to Europe.

The financial crisis hit Russia particularly hard. Experts estimated that Russia will not be able to recover until 9-15 months after the world economy has begun to grow again.¹⁶⁸ Its main sources of revenue are oil and the arms sales,¹⁶⁹ which makes it difficult to damage ties to Iran even if it had the political desire to do so. Russia finds it easier to cooperate than compete with Iran for the "immense geo-economic clout" that its energy wealth provides.¹⁷⁰ Russia seeks to use good relations with Iran as a foothold into the Middle East and Persian Gulf region for economic development.¹⁷¹

It is Russia's economy, not its military might, which Putin sees as the critical key for Russia to assume its leading role on the international stage.¹⁷² And central to Russia's economic policy is the development and export of energy resources to energy dependent states in Europe and the Middle East.

Caspian Sea

Iran and Russia are competing for territorial control over the Caspian Sea, which is rich in mineral and petroleum resources as well as a vital transit route for gas and oil pipelines. The Caspian Sea is the

¹⁶⁴ US Policy towards Russia Seminar. Transcript. Council of Foreign Relations, 9 April 2009
http://www.cfr.org/publication/19078/us_policy_toward_russia.html?breadcrumb=%2Fregion%2F323%2Feuoperussia
(accessed 9 April 2009).

¹⁶⁵ "The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia." A Report from The Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, The Nixon Center and the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Washington, D.C., March 2009.

¹⁶⁶ Vladislav Inozemtsev. "The 'Resource Curse' and Russia's Economic Crisis." Roundtable Summary, Chatham House, 10 March 2009, http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/files/13649_100309inozemtsev.pdf (accessed 21 April 2009).

¹⁶⁷ Ariel Cohen. "OPEC Redux: Responding to the Russian-Iranian Gas Cartel." *The Heritage Foundation*, Web Memo, No. 2118, 28 October 2008.

¹⁶⁸ Vladislav Inozemtsev. "The 'Resource Curse' and Russia's Economic Crisis." Roundtable Summary, Chatham House, 10 March 2009, http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/files/13649_100309inozemtsev.pdf (accessed 21 April 2009).

¹⁶⁹ US Policy towards Russia Seminar. Transcript. Council of Foreign Relations, 9 April 2009
http://www.cfr.org/publication/19078/us_policy_toward_russia.html?breadcrumb=%2Fregion%2F323%2Feuoperussia
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¹⁷⁰ Ariel Cohen. "OPEC Redux: Responding to the Russian-Iranian Gas Cartel." *The Heritage Foundation*, Web Memo, No. 2118, 28 October 2008.

¹⁷¹ Pierre Goldschmidt. U.S.-Russia Strategic Partnership against Nuclear Proliferation. CSIS, July 2008,
<http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/080627-goldschmidt-usrussiastratpart.pdf> (accessed 19 March 2009).

¹⁷² Russia's Economic Meltdown: Consequences and Prospects for the Future Symposium. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 28 January 2009.

lynchpin to gas commerce from Eurasia to the Middle East, Persian Gulf, and Europe. Whoever controls Caspian Sea resources, shipping, and gas lines gains a substantial role in all three regions. While Russia has major stakes in the division of the Caspian Sea, Iran also has staked large claims as well.¹⁷³

A WMD Iran might minimize Russia's influence in the Caspian region and give Iran greater control over energy resources using them to manipulate oil and gas prices.¹⁷⁴ However, having a working relationship with Iran may allow Russia to come to an agreement regarding Caspian resources and transport routes. Therefore, Russia will generally take no action that will jeopardize its relationship with Iran – including pressuring Iran to halt its WMD program. Defining itself as one of the world's energy superpowers is a core tenet of Russian leadership.¹⁷⁵

Sanctions

Russia directly benefits from UNSC sanctions that prevent Europe from buying gas from Iran. While Russia greatly benefits from increased consumer demand in Europe for its gas supplies, it will take no action to support further UNSC sanctions due to other considerations including seeking Caspian Sea rights, building up its sphere of influence in the Middle East, and maintaining stability in Chechnya.

Russia fears reconciliation between the US and Iran could reduce Iranian dependence on Russia oil and could result in a resumption of tense bilateral relations with Iran, who has the potential to cause unrest in Chechnya.¹⁷⁶

Europe

With sanctions preventing the sale of Iranian energy to Europe the demand and price for Russian energy supplies has increased.¹⁷⁷ Russia uses this reliance on its energy exports to pressure European nations to stop democratic expansion into former Soviet republics.¹⁷⁸

Decision Calculus

Russian Interests

International prestige

- Ability to act according to its national interest independent of the actions of other nations and free from outside interference into its national affairs
- Wants to be “respected” by West commensurate with its size, history, educated population, and natural resources

Energy superpower

- It is in Russia's interest that the conflict with Iran continues (sanctions means Russia has near monopoly on gas supplies to Europe)

¹⁷³ Pierre Goldschmidt. U.S.-Russia Strategic Partnership against Nuclear Proliferation. CSIS, July 2008, <http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/080627-goldschmidt-usrussiastratpart.pdf> (accessed 19 March 2009).

¹⁷⁴ Jason Zaboriski. “Deterring a Nuclear Iran.” *The Washington Quarterly*, 28:3, summer 2005, pp 153-167, http://www.twq.com/05summer/docs/05summer_zaboriski.pdf (accessed 17 March 2009); and Stephen Blank, “Russia's Proliferation Pathways.” Center for Contemporary Conflict. December 2008.

¹⁷⁵ Vladislav Inozemtsev. “The ‘Resource Curse’ and Russia's Economic Crisis.” Roundtable Summary, Chatham House, 10 March 2009, http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/files/13649_100309inozemtsev.pdf (accessed 21 April 2009).

¹⁷⁶ Middle East and arms expert. Interview by Institute for Defense Analysis, Joint Advanced Warfighting Division, 13 May 2009.

¹⁷⁷ Iran Expert. Interview by Institute for Defense Analysis, Joint Advanced Warfighting Division, 6 May 2009.

¹⁷⁸ Ariel Cohen, Ph.D., and Owen Graham. “European Security and Russia's Natural Gas Supply Disruption, Heritage Foundation Web Memo, No 2194, 8 January 2009.

Maintain sphere of influence

- Prevent former Soviet republics from joining NATO and participating in strategic missile defense; also prevent radical extremism to take route in predominantly Muslim areas of country and region

Options Available to Russia

- Option 1: Provide diplomatic support to Iran: verbally support Iran's right to WMD capability, refuse to support sanctions against Iran, continue arms sales to Iran including air defense systems
- Option 2: Look the other way/turn a blind eye: support Iran's right to civil nuclear energy industry, refuse to support or come out against sanctions on Iran, continue arms sales
- Option 3: Provide diplomatic opposition to Iran: cease arms sales, pressure Iran to cease its WMD program, support sanctions against Iran

Options Available to the US

- Option 1: Military action against Iran: conduct or support air strike of some or all suspected WMD production/storage sites in Iran
- Option 2: Diplomatic opposition/pressure: increase pressure on Russia to cease support for Iran's WMD program
- Option 3: Status Quo: continue to gently pressure Russia to support UNSC sanctions or otherwise take a public stance against Iran's WMD program but not willing to sacrifice relationship with Russia over Iran
- Option 4: Diplomatic engagement: US enters talks with Russia on halting the expansion of NATO, pushing for democratic reforms in periphery nations, and halting or including Russia on European missile defense efforts

Status Quo Environment

Best Scenarios from Russia's Perspective

Russia: Look the Other Way/Turn a Blind Eye

US: Status quo

In the status quo environment, the best case solution is for Russia to do nothing and for the United States to do nothing. Russia benefits the most from the current situation where it can sit the fence and reap benefits from not taking a side. By maintaining good relations with Iran, Russia can continue to extend its sphere of influence and counter US influence in the Middle East; maximize cooperation with Iran on energy resources in the Caspian; draw in revenue from high energy prices; and benefit from Iran's stabilizing influence in Chechnya. By maintaining good relations with the US, Russia can improve its international prestige.

Worst Scenarios from Russia's Perspective

Russia: Provide Diplomatic Opposition to Iran

US: Status Quo

In the status quo environment, the worst case solution for Russia is to take a stance against Iran while the US does nothing. In this scenario, Russia would sever all ties with Iran for little tangible benefit. Russia may benefit from a boost in international prestige (as viewed from the West), but would gain no tangible incentives such as a halt in the expansion of NATO, strategic missile defense, and the spread of

western institutions in Russia's periphery. At the same time, Russia's relationship with Iran would suffer perhaps leading to unrest in Chechnya and face an uphill battle for energy and transportation rights through the Caspian region.

Confirmed Environment

Best Scenarios from Russia's Perspective

Russia: Look the Other Way/Turn a Blind Eye

US: Status quo

In the best case scenario in response to the confirmation that Iran has WMDs, Russia does nothing and the United States does nothing. Russia benefits the most from the situation where it can continue not to take sides and hence maintain good relations with both Tehran and Washington. This situation may allow Russia to continue to extend its sphere of influence and counter US influence in the Middle East; maximize cooperation with Iran on energy resources in the Caspian; draw in revenue from high energy prices; and benefit from Iran's stabilizing influence in Chechnya.

Worst Scenarios from Russia's Perspective

Russia: Provide Diplomatic Opposition to Iran

US: Status Quo

In the worst case scenario, in response to the confirmation that Iran has WMDs, Russia openly opposes the program while the United States does nothing. In this scenario, Russian opposition would have no effect since the WMDs had already been developed and it jeopardized its relationship with Iran which could potentially result in the destabilization of Chechnya and increased difficulties in obtaining energy and transportation rights through the Caspian region. Compounding the case is that Russia capitulated without any undue pressure from the United States doing nothing to bolster its international prestige. This is a case of closing the barn door once the cows have gotten out.

Summary

Regardless of scenario, the best thing for Russia to do is to maintain the status quo environment in which it does not have to choose sides. Russia benefits from maintaining the status quo environment because it (1) benefits from energy sanctions on Iran, (2) exerts its independence and sovereignty in the face of both Iranian and US pressure to pick a side, (3) faces a no-win situation in regard to its sphere of influence if it chooses a side. While Russia does not gain significant advantages by maintaining the status quo, it would face serious disadvantages if it chooses one side over another including loss of international prestige, destabilization of Chechnya, loss of energy and arms revenue, and the expansion of NATO. Russia will be very careful to maintain a careful balance between pursuing its strategic national interests and maintaining good relations with both the US and Iran.

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Decision Analysis Report: *Saudi Arabia*

Overview and Full Report

Interests

- Maintain Relationship with U.S.
- Regional Leadership
- Become Major Industrial Power
- Spread Wahhabist version of Islam
- Domestic Security

Decision Calculus

Options Available to Saudi Arabia

- Option 1: Pre-emptive strike on Iran
- Option 2: Do not take any action
- Option 3: Diplomatic Opposition
- Option 4: Broker Arab-Israeli Settlement to Counter Radical Influence in Region

Options Available to the United States

- Option 1: Military Action Against Iran
- Option 2: Status Quo
- Option 3: Engage Iran
- Option 4: Provide diplomatic support to Saudi Arabia
- Option 5: Economic Support
- Option 6: Status Quo
- Option 7: Provide both Diplomatic and Economic Support
- Option 8: Give Specific Security Guarantee

Status-Quo Environment

Best Two Scenarios from Saudi Arabia's Perspective:

- Scenario 1: U.S. military strike against Iran / Saudi Arabian diplomatic opposition to Iran
- Scenario 2: U.S. military strike against Iran / Saudi Arabian refrains from action

Worst Two Scenarios from Saudi Arabia's Perspective:

- Scenario 1: U.S. provides economic support to SA/ SA engages in a pre-emptive strike against Iran
- Scenario 2: U.S. continues with status quo toward Iran/ Saudi Arabia works toward brokering an Arab-Israeli settlement

Confirmed Environment

Best Scenario from Saudi Arabia's Perspective:

- Scenario 1: U.S. diplomatic (and possible economic) support to Saudi Arabia/ Saudi Arabian diplomatic opposition to Iran

Worst Scenario from Saudi Arabia's Perspective:

- Scenario 1: U.S. provides diplomatic and economic support to Saudi Arabia / Saudi Arabia works toward brokering an Arab-Israeli settlement

Objective

This paper summarizes the background and results from three subjective decision calculus analyses conducted for Saudi Arabia. The ultimate goal of these analyses is to provide a methodological proof of concept that details how leveraging Saudi Arabia's decision matrix might assist in deterring Iran from developing a WMD capability. Supporting decision calculus analyses are enclosed in Appendix A.

Context

Saudi Arabia is a Muslim nation and the birthplace of Islam, within which can be found two of Islam's holiest shrines, Medina and Mecca¹⁷⁹. The King's official title is in fact, "Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques."¹⁸⁰

Moreover, the country follows a highly conservative and strict interpretation of Islamic religious law, called Wahhabism.¹⁸¹ Arabs make up the majority (90%) of the population, with Afro-Asians representing a minority group (10%).¹⁸²

The country is the leading oil and natural gas producer, with more than 20% of the world's proven oil reserves.¹⁸³ The United States is the third oil export market for Saudi Arabia, following Asia and Europe.¹⁸⁴

Saudi Arabia aims to increase private sector involvement and growth, for example, by actively seeking to mobilize private capital and create mixed companies.¹⁸⁵ The focus is on industries such as power generation, natural gas exploration, and petrochemicals. This represents a change in the country's approach, since foreign companies were limited to a 49% share of joint ventures with Saudi domestic partners until the year 2000.¹⁸⁶ In 2000, a new law was established that loosened the restrictions on full foreign ownership of Saudi property and licensed projects, with the goal of attracting additional foreign investment within the energy sector. Despite this loosening of restrictions, however, Saudi Arabia maintains the exclusive right of full ownership in sectors including telecommunications, health services, and insurance.¹⁸⁷

Currently, the country is experiencing a youth bulge, with almost 40% of the population under 15 years of age,¹⁸⁸ which is placing increasing pressure on the welfare state. Unemployment is high, and the religiously-educated youth are largely unprepared for the educational and technical demands required



¹⁷⁹ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sa.html>; <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3584.htm>

¹⁸⁰ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sa.html>

¹⁸¹ <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3584.htm>

¹⁸² <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sa.html>; <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3584.htm>

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¹⁸⁴ <http://www.medeia.be/index.html?page=2&lang=en&doc=18>

¹⁸⁵ Jean-Francois Sez nec, Lecture Slides, 1/9/08, "The Gulf States: a Short Overview"

¹⁸⁶ <http://www.medeia.be/index.html?page=2&lang=en&doc=18>

¹⁸⁷ <http://www.medeia.be/index.html?page=2&lang=en&doc=18>

¹⁸⁸ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sa.html>

in the private sector.¹⁸⁹ In order to spur continued growth and economic diversification, the capital of Riyadh has announced that six "economic cities" are being developed across the country.¹⁹⁰ These cities are proposed to generate approximately 150 billion toward Saudi Arabia's GDP.¹⁹¹ Saudi Arabia's Eighth Economic Plan (covering the period 2005-2009) specifically emphasizes economic diversification and education.¹⁹² Despite its economic burdens following from the support of Iraq (e.g., during armed conflict) and domestic economic responsibilities, Saudi Arabia is one of the lead world donors, spending approximately 1.44% of its GNP on development aid.¹⁹³

Saudi Arabia emphasizes the protection of its national security and is well-poised to defend both Arab and Islamic interests.¹⁹⁴ Saudi Arabia has emerged as a leader in the Middle East, taking on the role previously performed by Egypt.¹⁹⁵ The Saudi government has taken on a mediator-like role, intervening in regional crises and indicating its support both for Islamic governmental solidarity and for the Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations.¹⁹⁶ Given Saudi Arabia's unique political role in the Middle East and its role as oil supplier to (and thus financial beneficiary of) the U.S., the U.S.-Saudi relationship is an important one. Furthermore, the U.S. and Saudi Arabia share many similar concerns, with one major emphasis being Middle East regional security.¹⁹⁷ The economic and security-based alliance between the two countries has been a long-standing one.

Leadership

The subjective decision calculus matrices were centered around Abdallah bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud (King and Prime Minister), since the central institution of Saudi Arabian Government is the monarchy, which is ruled by the sons and grandsons of King Abd Al Aziz Al Saud. The monarch is both the chief of state and the official head of government and decision-maker. While the King is indeed the primary decision-maker, the power of the monarchy is limited in multiple ways. First, the monarch must obey Islamic Law (Shari'a), which details strict rules to be followed regarding public *and* private spheres of life (e.g., politics, business, family, sexuality, social issues, etc.). According to Basic Law (1992), the Holy Qur'an is the constitution of the country, which again is governed on the basis of Shari'a. Second, the Monarchy (House of Saud) in theory shares power with the religious elite. Specifically, the monarch must obtain agreement not only from the Saudi royal family and important members of Saudi society, but also from religious leaders (ulema). Despite these restrictions, the King has pursued a relatively progressive/activist foreign policy agenda, supporting the Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations and an Interfaith Dialogue Initiative aimed at promoting global-level religious tolerance (actions that have not been met unequivocally).¹⁹⁸ There are no political parties or national elections in Saudi Arabia, though the first municipal elections were held in 2005. Saudi Arabia is divided into 13 administrative divisions or provinces (called *mintaqah*).¹⁹⁹ These provinces are overseen by princes or close relatives of the royal family.²⁰⁰

¹⁸⁹ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sa.html>

¹⁹⁰ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sa.html>

¹⁹¹ <http://www.saudi-us-relations.org/articles/2007/ioi/070927p-new-cities.html>

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¹⁹⁵ National Intelligence Council (2008). Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Jordan: Policies on regional issues and support for U.S. goals in the Middle East. Washington, D.C.

¹⁹⁶ <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3584.htm>

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¹⁹⁹ http://www.saudia-online.com/saudi_arabia.htm

²⁰⁰ <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3584.htm>

Interests

Maintain Relationship with U.S.

Given Saudi Arabia's important economic and security-based ties to the U.S., it has a major interest in maintaining positive U.S. relations.²⁰¹ Nonetheless, it also is important for Saudi Arabia to appear to maintain some distance from the U.S. This is necessary in order to avoid tension following from resistance among the many religious conservatives to a close partnership with the non-Muslim and comparatively liberal United States, which is thought to be a corrupting influence.

Regional Leadership

Saudi Arabia aims to be and in fact is currently considered a regional leader, both economically²⁰² and politically.²⁰³ A large component of Saudi Arabia's role in this domain is its role in keeping Iran at bay.²⁰⁴ Iran is considered to be Saudi's main rival, threatening its influence and primary within organizations such as OPEC. Moreover, Saudi's espousal of Wahhabism, which is hostile to Shi'a communities (as in Iran) have created a built-in hostility between the two countries that increased with the establishment of the Iranian theocracy.²⁰⁵

Become Major Industrial Power

As stated in its Eighth Economic Plan (2005-2009)²⁰⁶, Saudi Arabia aims to develop and diversify its economy, which will in turn better enable it to become a major industrial power (e.g., as encouraged by the Saudi Arabian General Investment Authority – SAGIA). This goal is to be accomplished in part by the formation of six new economic cities and through efforts to increase foreign investment. These efforts include a move toward privatization, accession to the World Trade Organization, improving the investment environment, and providing investment incentives. Saudi Arabia does well as an oil-rich nation, but has remaining debt from support for Iran-Iraq War, etc. and a recent population boom that puts pressure on the welfare state (though the birth rate is finally dropping). Thus, a continued emphasis on economic growth and leadership is necessary.

Spread Wahhabist version of Islam

Saudi Arabia has been very successful in promoting its dedicated and strict interpretation of Islam, Wahhabism. A continuing aim is to spread Wahhabism further, by teaching its tenets within madrassas and elsewhere. This interest is somewhat in tension with the Saudi interest in maintaining U.S. ties, and more specifically, the economic and security benefits obtained from an alliance with an 'infidel' country.

Domestic Security

Saudi Arabia maintains a strong interest in domestic security. This includes an emphasis on constraining and resolving residual border issues revolving around the smuggling of drugs, weapons, and illegal immigrants, as well as militant infiltration.²⁰⁷ For example, borders remain somewhat porous, with

²⁰¹ <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3584.htm>; <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2008/may/104961.htm>

²⁰² <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sa.html>

²⁰³ National Intelligence Council (2008). Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Jordan: Policies on regional issues and support for U.S. goals in the Middle East. Washington, D.C.

²⁰⁴ SME – Professor of History, with specialty on the modern Middle East and Saudi Arabia, unpublished interview for the Deterrence Project conducted by the Institute for Defense Analysis (IDA), 5/7/09

²⁰⁵ SME – Professor of History, with specialty on the modern Middle East and Saudi Arabia, unpublished interview for the Deterrence Project conducted by the Institute for Defense Analysis (IDA), 5/7/09

²⁰⁶ <http://www.zawya.com/printstory.cfm?storyid=ZAWYA20060413112826&l=00000060420>

²⁰⁷ <http://www.yobserver.com/front-page/printer-10013538.html>;

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/iraq/article703758.ece?pri...>

Yemeni and Iraqi borders only partially secured. According to one expert,²⁰⁸ one Saudi Arabian concern centers around a belief in a possible Yemeni attack on a domestic oil facility. Domestic security issues also involve an emphasis on domestic stability, including safer communities. Interestingly, this includes an emphasis on decreasing internal strife caused by anti-regime militant factions within Saudi Arabia (youthful jihadists inspired by radical clerics).

Decision Calculus

Options Available to Saudi Arabia

Option 1: Pre-emptive strike on Iran

- Military strike against some or all of Iran’s suspected WMD production and storage sites.

Option 2: Do not take any action

- Do not increase support or opposition against Iran and its WMD capability. Some scholars²⁰⁹ believe that Saudi Arabia's best course of action is to do nothing, simply focusing on keeping U.S.-Iranian situation from getting out of control, and waiting for Iran to go bankrupt.

Option 3: Diplomatic Opposition

- Engage in diplomatic opposition to Iran by increasing pressure to cease its WMD program and support for sanctions against Iran.

Option 4: Broker Arab-Israeli Settlement to Counter Radical Influence in Region

- Saudi Arabia (along with Egypt) views the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as being beneficial to Iran, since the conflict contributes to destabilization of the region, diverts resources to this problem, etc. Brokering a resolution would increase Saudi Arabian standing and ultimately decrease Iranian influence. However, Saudi Arabia is somewhat less concerned with this issue than are states in the western part of the Middle East.

Options Available to the United States

With the ultimate goal of deterring Iran, the United States can either act directly against Iran (options 1 through 3) or use Saudi Arabia’s presumed decision calculus to identify potential levers that can compel or deter Saudi Arabia’s action in ways that will satisfactorily impact the Iranian situation (options 5 through 10).

Option 1: Military Action Against Iran

- Military strike against some or all of Iran’s suspected WMD production and storage sites.

Option 2: Status Quo

- Western efforts to stop WMD program (threat of additional sanctions, possibility of high level talks, international diplomatic pressure, Iranian WMD development intelligence).

Option 3: Engage Iran

- High-level talks between Iran and US; removal of sanctions.

Option 4: Provide diplomatic support to Saudi Arabia

²⁰⁸ SME – Expert on Saudi Arabia, Middle East, and Islamist movements, unpublished interview for the Deterrence Project conducted by the Institute for Defense Analysis (IDA), 5/14/09

²⁰⁹ Seznec, J. F. (2007)

- Verbal support for Saudi Arabia’s economic and political distancing from Iran, intended both as a form of reward and pressure and as a subtle message to other countries.

Option 5: Economic Support

- In addition to planned 20bn in arms promised to Saudi Arabia over the next decade, allocate additional funds for support in the near-term.

Option 6: Status Quo

- Maintain overall partnership with Saudi Arabia; proceed with deal to provide Saudi Arabia with 20bn in arms over the next decade.

Option 7: Provide both Diplomatic and Economic Support

- See Options 4-5 above.

Option 8: Give Specific Security Guarantee

- Seek to allay Saudi Arabia’s security-based anxieties, thereby avoiding Saudi pacts with other countries (e.g., Pakistan).

Status-Quo Environment

Best Two Scenarios from Saudi Arabia’s Perspective:

In the status quo environment, the scenarios that maximize Saudi Arabia’s interests are as follows:

Scenario 1: U.S. military strike against Iran / Saudi Arabian diplomatic opposition to Iran

A U.S. military strike in the context of Saudi diplomatic opposition to Iran has a net positive impact on Saudi Arabia’s primary state interests, based on the subjective decision analysis. The worst impact, paradoxically, may in fact be on Saudi Arabia’s interest in maintaining U.S. relations *while keeping some distance*. The former component of this interest is easily met by the concordance between U.S. and Saudi actions. However, Saudi Arabia may be perceived by some as acting too much in line with the U.S. (though this is somewhat unlikely). The impact on Saudi’s regional leadership, ability to spread the Wahhabist belief system, ability to become a major industrial power, and domestic security are all strongly positive. For example, a strike on Iran by the U.S. would enable Saudi Arabia to avoid the negative economic impact while decreasing the need to divert resources to dealing with Iran, thereby enabling increased Saudi economic development. Further, a strong blow to the religiously distinct Iran will strengthen the Wahhabist cause.

Scenario 2: U.S. military strike against Iran / Saudi Arabian refrains from action

A U.S. military strike in the context of Saudi inaction also has a net positive impact on Saudi Arabia’s primary state interests, based on the subjective decision analysis. The impacts on economic growth, spreading Wahhabism, domestic security, and maintenance of U.S. ties while keeping its distance are largely the same as in Scenario 1. In the latter case (U.S., relations), Saudi Arabia would maintain its distance, but may be perceived by the U.S. as unsupportive of its goals with respect to Iran, which may place some strain on the alliance. Finally, while the way would be paved for Saudi Arabia to take on a continued regional leadership role, its lack of action against Iran may not provide the same benefits to its perceived leadership as would a stronger stance (such as diplomatic opposition).

Worst Two Scenarios from Saudi Arabia's Perspective:

In the status quo environment, the scenarios that yield poor net outcomes for Saudi Arabia's interests are as follows:

Scenario 1: U.S. provides economic support to SA/ SA engages in a pre-emptive strike against Iran

Despite the additional economic support obtained from the U.S., Saudi Arabia's interests would suffer as a result of its decision to engage in a pre-emptive strike against Iran. The strike itself would be hard to sell to the Saudi population, unless a successful campaign was mounted emphasizing sectarian tensions (a strategy that in itself might backfire). While a strike might boost Saudi's role as a regional leader (e.g., by alleviating worries of many GCC and Arab League members regarding Iran), U.S. economic support for this effort would likely mitigate this impact. U.S. economic support in fact could result in Saudi Arabia appearing as a pawn of the U.S., with negative domestic and other implications. Furthermore, though the economic burden of a strike on Saudi Arabia would be somewhat reduced with additional U.S. support, Saudi Arabia would likely still incur significant financial burdens. Additionally, while domestic security may benefit somewhat from a reduced Iranian threat, U.S. funding support may increase anti-regime militant factions within Saudi Arabia and crossing its borders (with Yemeni and Iraqi borders only partially secured). Finally, while Saudi's interests in spreading Wahhabism and maintaining its relationships with the U.S. would benefit somewhat from this scenario, these benefits are not enough to offset the overall poor net impact on Saudi interests.

Scenario 2: U.S. continues with status quo toward Iran/ Saudi Arabia works toward brokering an Arab-Israeli settlement

In the status quo environment, this scenario yields a net negative impact on Saudi Arabia's varied interests. The impact on its relationship with the U.S. and its role as a regional leader is middling – weakly positive at best. However, the impact on Saudi's goal of becoming a major economic power is negligible, and domestic security and the spreading of Wahhabism may suffer somewhat from this conjunction of U.S.-Saudi actions. The latter two impacts result largely from Saudi being perceived as accepting/aiding other religions that run contrary to Wahhabist belief (which is intolerant of other faiths and other ways of life, including among other Muslims). The seeming acknowledgement of Israel may also do much to harm Saudi Arabia in terms of internal security problems (e.g., youthful jihadists inspired by radical Saudi Arabian clerics).

Confirmed Environment

Best Scenario from Saudi Arabia's Perspective:

In the WMD confirmed environment, the scenario that maximizes Saudi Arabia's interests is as follows:

Scenario 1: U.S. diplomatic (and possible economic) support to Saudi Arabia/ Saudi Arabian diplomatic opposition to Iran

In the best case scenario in response to the confirmation that Iran has WMDs, Saudi Arabia's interests in economic growth, a continued U.S. alliance, and the spreading of Wahhabism will benefit strongly. A confirmed situation is likely to mitigate the backlash otherwise arising from the close U.S.-Saudi Arabian

partnership (e.g., as perceived through U.S. support for Saudi Arabia in its move against Iran). Further, in the confirmed environment, a show of diplomatic opposition to Iran from Saudi Arabia may benefit Saudi's goal of becoming a major industrial power by promoting foreign and private investment in Saudi Arabia.

Worst Scenario from Saudi Arabia's Perspective:

In the WMD confirmed environment, the scenario that yields poor net outcomes for Saudi Arabia's interests is as follows:

Scenario 1: U.S. provides diplomatic and economic support to Saudi Arabia / Saudi Arabia works toward brokering an Arab-Israeli settlement

This scenario yields a net negative impact on Saudi Arabia's varied interests, with the worst outcomes for domestic security, spreading Wahhabist beliefs, and maintaining a semblance of distance from the U.S. For example, there is possible negative impact on Saudi's ability to spread Wahhabist beliefs if Saudi is seen as accepting/aiding other religions that run contrary to this belief system – especially if Saudi is viewed as accepting U.S. support to do so. This may very well be the case, since King Abdallah already has supported an interfaith Dialogue Initiative to encourage religious tolerance on a global level, which was endorsed in November 2008 during a session of the U.N. General Assembly. However, this interest may be de-prioritized in the face of a confirmed Iranian threat. Nonetheless, strong negative outcomes for interests such as domestic security will remain salient. Specifically, this scenario may result in a spike in internal uprisings (e.g., youthful jihadists inspired by radical clerics) and factions sent in retaliation to disrupt Saudi Arabian domestic stability, particularly given U.S. support. A successful brokering of peace might help mitigate these negative impacts on domestic security.

Summary

Given a suspected but not publicly confirmed Iranian nuclear weapons program, the Saudi subjective decision analysis indicates that from Saudi Arabia's perspective, taking diplomatic opposition to Iranian WMD development would produce its best outcome, as long as the U.S. takes military action against Iran with minimal Saudi support (e.g., basing). This outcome would maintain relations with the U.S. while also maintaining some distance from the U.S. action – especially important for domestic and regional dissatisfaction with a U.S. action.

Conversely, a Saudi public and active role in any military action against Iran, along with the provision of financial or military support (e.g., in the form of military sales) would result in Saudi Arabia's *worst* overall outcome. While decrements to Iranian power might increase Saudi's own influence and ability to spread Wahhabist beliefs, these attempts may be undermined by a perception of Saudi's too-close alliance with, and corruption from, the West.

Suspected Iranian nuclear weapons program: U.S. Course of Action v. Saudi Arabia

According to the multi-attribute subjective decision analysis, significant diplomatic opposition to Iran – a desirable outcome for the U.S. – is a clear first choice for Saudi Arabia even if the U.S. moves kinetically against Iran. Consequently, *the U.S. does not need to exercise any particular levers to garner Saudi assent to military action. However, U.S. policy makers should anticipate Saudi unwillingness to publicly support or enable that military action.*

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Decision Analysis Report: *Syria*

Overview and Full Report

Interests

- Protect Syrian Land
- International Prestige
- Economic Security

Decision Calculus

Options Available to Syria

- Option 1: Provide diplomatic support to Iran
- Option 2: Look the other way: Turn a blind eye
- Option 3: Provide diplomatic opposition to Iran

Options Available to the United States

- Option 1: Military strike against Iran
- Option 2: Status-quo
- Option 3: Engage Iran
- Option 4: Diplomatic opposition
- Option 5: Enforce economic sanctions
- Option 6: Diplomatic opposition & enforce economic sanctions
- Option 7: Diplomatic engagement, but stopping short of providing economic relief in the form of relaxing sanctions
- Option 8: Rapidly increase discussions to provide economic and political support

Status-Quo Environment

Best Scenarios from Syria's Perspective:

- Scenario 1: Keep a low profile ("turn the other way") and for the United States to engage Iran
- Scenario 2: Keep a low profile ("turn the other way") and for the United States to continue the status-quo with regard to policy towards Syria

Worst Scenarios from Syria's Perspective:

- Scenario 1: Syria provides diplomatic support to Iran and the United States enforces economic sanctions on Syria
- Scenario 2: Syria provides diplomatic opposition to Iran and the United States enforces economic sanctions on Syria
- Scenario 3: Syria provides diplomatic opposition to Iran and the United States conducts a military strike on Iran
- Scenario 4: Syria provides diplomatic opposition to Iran and the United States engages Iran

Confirmed Environment

Best Scenarios from Syria's Perspective:

- Scenario 1: Keep a low profile ("turn the other way") and for the United States to continue the status-quo with regard to policy towards Syria

Worst Scenario from Syria's Perspective:

- Scenario 1: Pursue diplomatic support to Iran and for the United States to enforce economic sanctions on Syria

Objective

Within the context of Iran developing their military capability this paper explores the options available to Syria and the subsequent impact of those options on Syria’s strategic national security interests. The paper will provide the context to support a decision analysis matrix, located in Appendix A.

Context

Syria is geographically located in the heart of the Middle East, sharing borders with Lebanon to the West, Iraq to the East, Turkey to the North, and Israel to the South-West. Given Syria’s central location, tumultuous history, shared borders with politically unstable nations, and lack of economic independence Syria has played, and continues to play, an integral role in Middle East politics.²¹⁰



Following the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, France assumed control of Syria and created the nation-state of Lebanon by carving out a portion of Syria’s most arable land along the coast. This action dealt a significant blow to the Syrian economy by cutting off critical access to suitable land needed to develop their agricultural sector. In addition to the negative effects on the Syrian economy, the creation of Lebanon created ripple effects felt deep within the Syrian national identity, as a result Syria maintains a strong feeling of ownership over the land and continues to be actively engaged in Lebanese politics. In the years following the creation of Lebanon, Syria experienced years of political instability, numerous failed coups, the loss of another critical landmass (the Golan Heights to Israel), and a brief failed union with Egypt.²¹¹ It was not until the successful and peaceful coup in 1970 by Hafiz al-Asad, a member of the minority Baath party and father to the current Syrian leader, that the Syrian citizens experienced political stability under the continuous rule of the al-Asad family. Although Syria has experienced over a decade of political stability it remains weakened and backward, frozen in economic and social development. Syria's inertness is extracting a heavier toll on its citizens than ever before. They are falling far behind the modern world in both technology and living standards.

Regional Allies

Iran is Syria’s primary ally in the region; this relationship dates back to the 1980s when the Ayatollah Khomeini consolidated power in Iran. According to leading scholars the collaboration between Tehran and Damascus has grown stronger and more intimate with extensive intelligence and military cooperation, paired with increasing isolation from the international community.²¹² It is also important to note that while there certain “cleavages between Syria and Iran (one is a secular regime, the other a

²¹⁰ Normark, M., Lindblad, A., Norqvist, A., Sandstrom, B., & Waldenstrom, L. (2004). *Syria and WMD Incentives and Capabilities*. Swedish Defense Research Agency.

²¹¹ Syria “surrendered its sovereignty to a pan- Arab state, the 1958-1961 aligning with Nasser’s Egypt in the United Arab Republic (UAR), in the hopes of regaining its perceived greater glory as the Arab heartland.” Corbin, D.E. (2007). Like father, like son – Personalized succession: Bashar Asad and the new challenges to the Ba’thist state. *Al Nakhlah: The Fletcher School Online Journal for Southwest Asia and Islamic Civilization*, Fall 2008.

²¹² Zisser, E. (2008). Where is Bashar al-Assad heading? *Middle East Quarterly*, Winter 2008, 35-40.

theocracy) Syria gets strategic depth from its relationship with Iran” that it will make any attempts to weaken the relationship challenging.²¹³

It is also believed that Syria has ties to North Korea, with reports suggesting the two nations collaborated on the development of a nuclear reactor in Syria.²¹⁴ While this claim is denied by Syria, United States Intelligence reports state that the two were collaborating on development as early as 2005. In 2007, Israel conducted an air strike destroying the reported site.

In addition, Syria maintains strong ties with Hezbollah, the Lebanese Militia. Both Iran and Syria Have historically enjoyed a close relationship Hezbollah, born out of combination of ideological, domestic, and regional factors. Both Iran and Syria found Hezbollah to be a useful proxy to further their own regional objectives. However, according to recent reports there has been a shift in the relationship between Hezbollah, Lebanon and Syria in that Syria is now the weaker link.²¹⁵ Furthermore, as “overt Syrian suzerainty over Lebanon fades and Hezbollah increases its regional role without regard to the Lebanese government, the nature of Hezbollah's relations to Syria has changed. The group has outgrown its subservient relationship to Damascus. Hezbollah is no longer the junior partner in the axis.”²¹⁶

Leadership

The outcomes contained in the decision analysis matrix were identified via a subjective decision analysis generated around President Bashar al-Asad²¹⁷ as the primary Syrian decision maker. President al-Asad was approved as president by popular referendum in July 2000, after the death of his father, and was re-approved in 2007 with 97.62% of the voters. Vice President Farouk al-Shara oversees foreign policy and Vice President Najah al-Attar oversees cultural policy. While Syria is a republic in name, in actuality it is an authoritarian military-dominated regime with the president appointing the vice president, prime minister and deputy prime ministers.²¹⁸ While the Western politicians continue to be surprised at the longevity of Bashar al-Asad’s rule, those within Syria believe that he is an “effective ruler who monopolizes decision-making” and that his “fall might mean the rise of radical Islamist forces or lead to the chaos and insecurity that has plagued post-Saddam Iraq.”²¹⁹

Interests

The subjective decision analysis assumes that the Syrian decision maker, outlined above, acts in accordance with his identified strategic national interests, as they pertain to the situation. It is only through first identifying and refining these situation-specific interests that an analyst can attempt to

²¹³ Middle East Expert (2009, April 30). Unpublished interview for the Deterrence Project conducted by the Institute for Defense Analysis (IDA).

²¹⁴ Bard, M. (2009, February, 20). *Potential Threats to Israel*. Retrieved April 27, 2009, from http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Threats_to_Israel/Syria.html; Background briefing with senior US officials on Syria’s covert nuclear reactor and North Korea’s involvement (2008, April 24).

²¹⁵ Rabil, R. G. (2007) Has Hezbollah’s rise come at Syria’s expense? *The Middle East Quarterly*, Fall 2007, 43-51.

²¹⁶ Ibid, p., 1.

²¹⁷ Due to the death of his brother, the first born to the Al-Asad family and assumed successor to his fathers rule in Syria, Bashar Al-Asad was called back from his studies in a London ophthalmology school to begin his military and political career. Bashar unlike his father, who was a leader both feared and respected by the Syrian people and was a pivotal figure in the Middle East, is a shy and gentle person who many believed would not last beyond one term in office.

²¹⁸ Syria (2009). The World Factbook [online]. Retrieved March 6, 2009, from U.S. Central Intelligence Agency <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/print/sy.html>

²¹⁹ Zisser, E. (2008). Where is Bashar al-Assad heading? *Middle East Quarterly*, Winter 2008, 35-40.

understand the decision making process. It is important to note that in this particular subjective decision analysis two additional assumptions are made:

- The first assumption is that Syria would be willing and able to distance themselves, both politically and economically, from Iran.
- The second assumption is that without Syria's support, and open borders, Iran's regional power would diminish.

Protect "Syrian" Land

The first interest identified within this subject decision analysis is the inherent desire to protect, or reacquire, land believed to rightfully belong to Syria. In the years following the dissolution of the brief union with Egypt, the Syrian populous found themselves engaged in battle, in 1967 and then again in 1973, with Israel over the Golan Heights; a fertile area of land located along the Southern tip of Syria. Israel initially assumed control over the territory in 1967 and still maintains control to this day. According to an interview with Faysal Mekkdad, the deputy Foreign Minister in 2008, "the return of the Golan continues to be the price for Syrian peace. Perceptions of what is rightfully and not rightfully been occupied by Israel throughout the last four decades continues to cloud the waters of a lasting and legitimate peace between Syria and Israel. A 'Syrian Golan has always been the Arab consensus'."²²⁰ In addition, Syrian officials have made it clear the political map of the region (specifically a change in the regional power structure) will only be altered once Israel withdraws from occupied Arab land²²¹ and peace deals are made.²²²

International Prestige

Syria's relationship with the international community is still shaky, but is currently improving with recent talks between the Syrian government and both the French and the United States governments taking place.²²³ Bashar al'Asad's father excelled at attaining a perfect diplomatic balance in regards to pursuing national goals while also being aware of the regional and international political atmosphere. Unfortunately, Bashar al'Asad is not as skilled a diplomat as his father and was not able to overcome the regional situation, the "Palestinian uprising in October 2000 and the occupation of Iraq, and international situation, the more assertive U.S. policy after the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States."²²⁴ According to a leading scholar "he [Bashar] destroyed the balance of axes that his father had established: the Syrian-European axis to counterbalance the Syria-U.S. axis, both of which Hafez al-Assad counterbalanced with his alliances with Saudi Arabia and Egypt."²²⁵

Regardless, Syria still maintains a strong desire to be a political layer in the region, primarily in Lebanese politics, and to garner the respect of the international community.²²⁶ Additionally, according to the

²²⁰ Corbin, D.E. (2007). Like father, like son – Personalized succession: Bashar Asad and the new challenges to the Ba'thist state. *Al Nakhlah: The Fletcher School Online Journal for Southwest Asia and Islamic Civilization, Fall 2008*, p. 12.

²²¹ Oweis, K.Y. (2009, May 5). Syria alliance with Iran a force for stability: Assad. *Reuters*. Retrieved online May 5, 2009, from <http://www.reuters.com/article/politicsNews/idUSTRE5446HZ20090505>.

²²² According to an unnamed Middle East expert, having a peace deal between Israel and Syria would change the calculations of how the people in Iran think. Middle East Expert (2009, April 30). Unpublished interview for the Deterrence Project conducted by the Institute for Defense Analysis (IDA).

²²³ It is important to note that while "it [Syria] has lived in virtual political isolation for decades, Syria remains a vital player in the Middle East." Corbin, D.E. (2007). Like father, like son – Personalized succession: Bashar Asad and the new challenges to the Ba'thist state. *Al Nakhlah: The Fletcher School Online Journal for Southwest Asia and Islamic Civilization, Fall 2008*, p. 2.

²²⁴ Zisser, E. (2008). Where is Bashar al-Assad heading? *Middle East Quarterly, Winter 2008*, 35-40.

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ The Economist Intelligence Unit ViewsWire (2008, January 1). *Economist: Syrian economic outlook 2008-2009*. Retrieved March 2009, Damascus.usembassy.gov/media/pdf/econcommercial-pdf/economist-syrian_economic_outlook_2008-09.pdf

Syrian 5-year plan (published in 2005) they intend to attain the following goals: (1) become a consultant on all issues regarding Lebanon and (2) develop its role as an active and effective regional force in the Arabic system and at the regional and international levels."²²⁷

Economic Security

The Syrian economy is entering a crisis stage made worse by the depletion of the country's oil reserves²²⁸ and limited technology sector.²²⁹ Bashar's efforts to abandon Syria's socialist legacy and promote a free economy, established on multiple resources with highly competitive capacities²³⁰, have had little success in recent years. The Syrian economy remains heavily regulated with most of Bashar's economic initiatives failing. For example, few private banks have opened and those that have see financial activity limited. Indeed, without a breakthrough in relations with the West, no progress in this area can be expected. In order for Syria to improve their economic stability they either need to exploit funds elicited from the terrorist/insurgent groups that set up shop within their borders, increasingly rely upon Iran, or begin to receive a reprieve from the economic sanctions currently imposed upon them by the international community in order to develop their national technology sector.²³¹

Decision Calculus

Options Available to Syria

- Option 1: Provide diplomatic support to Iran
- Option 2: Look the other way: Turn a blind eye
- Option 3: Provide diplomatic opposition to Iran

Options Available to the United States

In keeping the ultimate goal of deterring Iran in mind the United States can either take action directly against Iran (options 1 thru 3) or utilize the possible second order effects of action taken against Syria on Iran (options 4 thru 8). Explanations are provided when needed.

- Option 1: Military strike against Iran
- Option 2: Status-quo
 - Western diplomatic efforts to halt Iranian program, United Nation Security Council attempts to impose more sanctions, possibility of high level talks, international diplomatic pressure, & careful intelligence scrutiny of Iranian sites and efforts.
- Option 3: Engage Iran
 - Direct high-level talks between Iran and United States & discussion of lifting of economic sanctions.
- Option 4: Diplomatic opposition
- Option 5: Enforce economic sanctions

²²⁷ Syrian Arab Republic State Planning Commission (2005). *The Five Year Plan 2006-2010 [online]*. Retrieved March 9, 2009, from <http://www.planning.gov.sy>. Chapter 3, page 1.

²²⁸ Javandanfar, M. & Gurevich, T. (n.d.) *Syria-Economic snapshot*. Retrieved March 6, 2009, from www.meepas.com

²²⁹ "Asad had been unable to transcend Syria's resource deficiencies by way of developing a technology sector because of Syria's continued subjugation to the State Sponsor of Terrorism list by the United States" (Corbin, D.E., 2007, p. 8).

²³⁰ Syrian Arab Republic State Planning Commission (2005). *The Five Year Plan 2006-2010 [online]*. Retrieved March 9, 2009, from <http://www.planning.gov.sy>.

²³¹ Zisser, E. (2008). Where is Bashar al-Assad heading? *Middle East Quarterly*, Winter 2008, 35-40.; Javandanfar, M. & Gurevich, T. (n.d.) *Syria-Economic snapshot*. Retrieved March 6, 2009, from www.meepas.com

Option 6: Diplomatic opposition & enforce economic sanctions

Option 7: Diplomatic engagement, but stopping short of providing economic relief in the form of relaxing sanctions

Option 8: Rapidly increase discussions to provide economic and political support

Status-Quo Environment

Best Scenarios from Syria's Perspective:

The Syrian decision analysis indicates that keeping a low profile and continuing progress on opening dialogue with the United States and the European Union (i.e., the status-quo) is Syria's best option. The US & EU have begun discussions with Syria to attempt to weaken Syria's Iran ties, fiscal dependence on terrorist organizations operating in Syria, and to begin discussions on the Golan Heights.

The status quo option also protects the possibility of eventual WTO membership and any leverage Syria may have regarding reacquiring the Golan Heights. The US and Syria have a shared best interest in the US/West continuing to "court" the Syrian government and repair the diplomatic relationship – with caution. A major stumbling block for Syria is their current financial dependence on Iranian aid. Removing sanctions/increasing economic aid to Syria may be an effective lever to use for Syria to move a bit away from Iran.

Scenario 1: Keep a low profile ("turn the other way") and for the United States to engage Iran.

Overall, the subject decision analysis indicates that it is in Syria's best interest to maintain a low profile and for the United States to engage Iran. As long as Syria keeps a low profile in regards to the current situation the United States will continue to engage Syria in discussions and tensions between Iran and the US would diminish with continued engagement. In terms of positive outcomes for Syria they would not only experience an initial boost in international prestige, but they would also benefit from continuing their relationship with Iran, both economically and militarily.²³² It is possible that if this scenario were to play out Syria would benefit in the following ways: they would feel that they have been recognized as a player in the Middle East; would have more leverage to reacquire Golan Heights with increased recognition and decreased tension; in the long-term they may become less reliant on Iran; and finally the possibility of WTO membership increases.

Scenario 2: Keep a low profile ("turn the other way") and for the United States to continue the status quo with regard to policy towards Syria.

Syria also experiences a positive outcome if they continue to maintain a low profile and if the United States acknowledges that Syria is needed to settle disputes in the Middle East. According to the subjective decision analysis, Syria would have a more leverage to reacquire Golan Heights, would become less reliant on Iran while still benefiting from having a WMD capable neighbor/ally. In addition, the possibility of becoming self-reliant through continued discussions with US & EU increases and therefore chances of WTO membership in the future seems likely.

Worst Scenarios from Syria's Perspective:

In the status quo environment the subjective decision analysis indicates that there are four scenarios that have a negative impact on Syrian's identified national interests.

²³² It is important to note that while Syria would experience an initial boost in international prestige the United States has heavily emphasized that in order to continue discussions Syria must take steps towards distancing themselves from Iran.

Scenario 1: Syria provides diplomatic support to Iran and the United States enforces economic sanctions on Syria.

In this scenario if Syria were to provide diplomatic support to Iran and the United States were to enforce economic sanctions the following impacts on national interest are likely to result. The actions would force Syria to become more reliant upon Iran, Syria would experience a slight boost in their international prestige and improvements in border security with a WMD capable ally. Ultimately with the sanctions being enforced Syria would embark upon a difficult path in their ability to advance their economic independence and desire to join the WTO.

Scenario 2: Syria provides diplomatic opposition to Iran and the United States enforces economic sanctions on Syria.

Without any major change occurring in the dialogue between Iran and the US, Syria benefits from increased communication from the US. They struggle significantly with taking a hard stance against Iran without receiving financial aid from the international community. Over the long-term they take steps towards becoming more self-reliant. If they are received well by the international community there is a possibility for the development of technology sector and WTO membership is now likely. In the short term they experience a backlash from Iran and Iranian supporters that may undermine their economic security and attempts to protect their Syrian land.

Scenario 3: Syria provides diplomatic opposition to Iran and the United States conducts a military strike on Iran

A military strike against Iran would harm Syria economically, but their diplomatic stance increases their international prestige. In the short term they experience a backlash from Iran and Iranian supporters that may undermine their economic security and attempts to protect their Syrian land. In the long-term they take steps towards becoming more self-reliant. If they are received well by the international community there is a possibility for the development of technology sector and WTO membership likely.

Scenario 4: Syria provides diplomatic opposition to Iran and the United States engages Iran.

While Syria would benefit from the US and Iran engaging in diplomatic discussions they would still struggle to attain economic independence. In addition, Syria benefits from the US engaging Iran in terms of increased dialogue with Israel, but experiences a backlash from Iran and terrorist groups residing within borders may undermine their economic security and attempts to protect their Syrian land. In the long-term, if they are able to survive the short-term effects, they take steps towards becoming more self-reliant and if they are received well by the international community there is a possibility for the development of technology sector and WTO membership likely.

Confirmed Environment

Best Scenario from Syria's Perspective:

Scenario 1: Keep a low profile ("turn the other way") and for the United States to continue the status quo with regard to policy towards Syria.

The Syria decision analysis indicates that keeping a low profile and continuing progress on opening dialogue with the US and EU (i.e., the status-quo) is Syria's best option. EU/US have begun discussions with Syria to attempt to weaken Syria's Iran ties, fiscal dependence on terrorist organizations operating in Syria, and to begin discussions on the Golan Heights. The status quo option also protects the

possibility of eventual WTO membership, and any leverage Syria may have regarding reacquiring the Golan Heights.

Worst Scenario from Syria's Perspective:

Scenario 1: Pursue diplomatic support to Iran and for the United States to enforce economic sanctions on Syria.

Syria's worst outcomes are all associated with providing increased diplomatic support to Iran. In particular if the US were to enforce economic sanctions and to cut off all dialogue Syria would experience serious negative effects on their national interests.

Summary

Given a suspected but not publicly confirmed Iranian nuclear weapons program, the Syria subjective decision analysis indicates that keeping a low profile and continuing progress on opening dialogue with the US and EU (i.e., the status-quo) is Syria's **best** strategy. As the result of economic sanctions and, until recently, a refusal from the international community to engage, Syria has become reliant upon Iran for protection and financial assistance. The EU and US have begun discussions with Syria to attempt to weaken Syria's ties with Iran, its fiscal dependency on the terrorist organizations that are allowed to operate within its borders, and to begin discussions on the Golan Heights. From the Syrian perspective attempting to stay out of the fray over Iran could protect the possibility of eventual WTO membership, and any leverage they may have in talks to regain the Golan Heights while not having to distance themselves from Iran – something they are not incentivized to undertake quickly. In fact, Syria's *worst* outcomes are all associated with providing increased diplomatic support to Iran – in particular if the US were to enforce economic sanctions and to cut off all dialogue.

Suspected Iranian nuclear weapons program: US Course of Action v. Syria

The US and Syria have a shared best interest in the US/West continuing to “court” the Syrian government and repair the diplomatic relationship – with caution. A major stumbling block for Syria is its interest in economic stability and independence but current financial dependence on Iranian aid. This suggests that the promise of removing sanctions/increasing international aid to Syria (i.e., to enhance economic stability) may be an effective lever to use in order to help the Syrian government move them farther from the support or facilitation of Iran's threat to the region.

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Appendix A:
Subjective Decision Analysis Results

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