

Nuclear Iran: Global Threat or Middle Eastern Power Shift?

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Abstract:

Iran's nuclear program is one of the most debated and difficult topics in global politics. People argue about whether it is a serious threat to world peace or mainly a way for Iran to become more powerful in the Middle East.

This research article looks at Iran's current nuclear progress, the reasons why some see it as a global danger, and why others see it as a regional shift in power. It also studies how countries around the world and in the region are reacting. The main goal is to give the clear understanding of this important issue.

1. Introduction

The nuclear program of the Islamic Republic of Iran has been at the center of international concern for over two decades. Iran says its nuclear program is only for peaceful use like energy and medicine. But some countries like US and Isreals don't believe them. They think that iran wants to make nuclear weapons. In 2015, an agreement - the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) - was signed to limit certain activities of Iran's nuclear program in exchange for fewer sanctions against them. But the deal stopped working and no such agreement currently exists.

Discussions about Iran's nuclear program tend to follow two general themes. The first is focused on the consequences of the program as a threat to the world and humanity in general. The second is focused on the possible negative results when Iran is left alone to pursue the dominant military power in the Middle East. To consider this prospect, we will need to analyze: what Iran can do; what Iran wants in the region; how all other countries will react; and what the consequences will be if Iran secures a nuclear weapons capability.

2. Iran's Nuclear Program: Current Status and Strengths

When the US left the nuclear deal in 2018 and reimpose tough sanctions, Iran started slowly breaking the rules of the agreement. By early 2025, Iran had built up a large amount of uranium

enriched to 60% — much more than what is needed for peaceful uses like power or medicine, and very close to the 90% needed to make a nuclear bomb. The UN's nuclear watchdog, the IAEA, said Iran is now making this enriched uranium faster and using more advanced machines. Because of this, experts believe Iran could have enough material for one nuclear weapon in as little as one week if it chooses to.

Even though the IAEA still has some access to Iran's nuclear sites, Iran is not being as open as before. This has made other countries worry that Iran might be hiding parts of its nuclear program or working toward building a bomb. Iran says its nuclear plans are peaceful and claims it has no goal to make weapons. However, some Iranian officials have recently hinted that having nuclear weapons could help protect the country, which has made people even more concerned.

3. Nuclear Iran: A Global Threat?

Concerns about Iran's nuclear weapons program as an international threat are based on numerous key concerns:

If Iran becomes a nuclear power, it weakens the global agreements that prevent the separation of nuclear arms and might lead other Middle Eastern countries to build nuclear arms like Egypt, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and UAE, starting a dangerous nuclear race.

This could make global security worse, as Iran might act more aggressively and support its proxy groups like Hezbollah and the Houthis, raising the risk of conflict with countries like the U.S. and Europe. Iran's missile program adds to the threat, and its lack of transparency sets a bad example, weakening international rules meant to stop the spread of nuclear weapons.

4. Nuclear Iran: A Middle Eastern Power Shift?

Viewing Iran's nuclear program as a regional issue shows how it could greatly shift power in the Middle East. If Iran gets nuclear weapons, countries like Israel may lose their military advantage, forcing other countries to build their defense system stronger. Iran would likely feel more powerful and act more boldly in the region, increasing support for its allies in places like Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Yemen. Quite the security operation between Israel and the Arab States could grow

stronger if Iran became a nuclear power creating big divisions in this region. At home, Iran's government might use nuclear status to boost national pride and increase its control by representing itself as a powerful world actor.

5. International and Regional Responses

In response to Iran's nuclear program, nations have used a combination of diplomatic (talks), military threats, and sanctions (punishments). The United States has attempted to reestablish negotiations with Iran since the 2015 nuclear agreement (JCPOA) collapsed, promising to relax sanctions in exchange for Iran reducing its uranium enrichment. Because they are concerned about Iran's actions, European nations like the UK, France, and Germany may use a special rule known as the "snapback mechanism" to reimpose UN sanctions. Israel may use military force to halt Iran's nuclear program because it views it as a major threat in the Middle East

Countries like Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states are also concerned, but they have recently tried to calm things down by talking with Iran and trying to help improve Iran-U.S. relations. Overall, no one in the region wants a big war because it would cause serious economic and human suffering.

6. Conclusion

Iran's nuclear program is both a global and regional issue. If Iran became a nuclear power it could break the international rules and push other countries to build nuclear weapons, cause a global threat. At the same time it shifts the balance of power and cause the security dilemma in the middle east, making countries like Israel and Saudi Arabia feel insecure and forcing them to adjust their defence strategies.

The world now facing the new challenges like stopping the spread of nuclear weapons and the power change in the middle east. Future conflicts depend upon the success of diplomacy, negotiation, global unity and what Iran's decides.

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