

IRANIAN WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION:

DOCTRINE, POLICY AND COMMAND

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Introduction

Iran presents many challenges in analyzing its efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction. One is that a nation that denies it is acquiring such weapons does not have a public strategy or doctrine for using them, much less clear plans to acquire them. The second is that Iran has an extremely complex national command authority, where many key elements virtually bypass its president – as well as other national decision-making apparatuses – and report to its Supreme Leader. It also seems to place its missile systems, and much of its military industry under its Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) and it is this force that seems to be responsible for the development and control of any programs to develop, manufacture, and deploy weapons of mass destruction. Making this situation all the more complex and volatile is the growing influence of the IRGC – especially hard-line members – in the Iranian political arena.

Iran's Policy and Doctrine

Iran's only public policy towards weapons of mass destruction is one that claims Iran is pursuing the path towards arms control and does not intend to deploy such weapons. Unlike its capabilities in asymmetric warfare, where Iran's political and military leaders make many public statements about Iran's intentions and policies, Iran consistently denies it has nuclear weapons, states that it no longer has chemical weapons and states that it has rejected the option of developing biological weapons. In case after case affecting Iran's efforts to develop weapons of mass destruction, there is no clear data on its intentions as well as no reliable or unambiguous data on its actions and capabilities.

At the same time, Iran's leaders do make extreme statements about many security issues. If these statements are taken at face value, they can be interpreted to show that Iran may be hard or impossible to deter, might be reckless in escalating in a crisis, and might use weapons of mass destruction against Israel. It is more likely that such statements are designed to deter or intimidate outside powers, reassure Iranians, and for domestic political consumption, but this is no certainty. The fact that leaders use extremely language is no historical guarantee that they do not mean what they say.

Iran's Rhetoric of Denial

As will be discussed in detail in the later chapters, Iranian leaders have been so consistent in denying that Iran has or would use weapons of mass destruction since the end of the Iran-Iraq War that it is almost redundant to present a range of such statements. At the same time, it is equally possible to trade an almost endless list of extreme statements regarding what Iran would do in war, and threats to Israel and the US.

Nuclear Weapons

Ayatollah Khamenei, President Ahmadinejad, and other ranking Iranian decision-makers, continue to deny that Iran has, or intends to create, a nuclear weapons program. At the same time, they advocate advocating the destruction of Israel and its supporters – and make other extreme and threatening statements – making it difficult to decipher what Iran's true intentions and policy are in regards to its nuclear ambitions.

Some of these efforts by Iranian officials to publicly clarify their religious and political views on nuclear weapons have, however, been issues in ways that create confusion

about Tehran's actual intentions. In a 10 August 2005 statement to an emergency IAEA meeting, then Iranian nuclear negotiator Sirus Naseri read a statement to the IAEA Board of Governors from the Islamic Republic; which asserted that:¹

The Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has issued the fatwa that the production, stockpiling, and use of nuclear weapons are forbidden under Islam and that the Islamic Republic of Iran shall never acquire these weapons. President Mahmud Ahmadinejad, who took office just recently, in his inaugural address reiterated that his government is against weapons of mass destruction and will only pursue nuclear activities in the peaceful domain.

The reported fatwa seems to have been issued by Ayatollah Khamenei in September 2004 at Friday prayers. Yet, one month later, in November of 2004, Iranian legislator Hojatoleslam Mohammad Taqi Rahbar asserted that the bill to ban nuclear weapons was "not expedient," because Iran is in a region of proliferators. He and went on to say that "there are no Shari'a or legal restrictions on having such [nuclear] weapons as a deterrent."²

More recently, Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei asserted on June 3, 2008, that "no wise nation" would pursue nuclear weapons, but also stated that Iran would continue to develop a nuclear program for peaceful purposes.³

Ayatollah Khamenei, President Ahmadinejad, and other ranking Iranian decision-makers, continue to deny that Iran has, or intends to create, a nuclear weapons program. At the same time, they advocate advocating the destruction of Israel and its supporters – and make other extreme and threatening statements – making it difficult to decipher what Iran's true intentions and policy are in regards to its nuclear ambitions.

Chemical and Biological Weapons

Statements and actions by ranking Iranian officials have made it equally difficult to assess Iran's intentions regarding its chemical weapons programs and any analysis of Iran's biological weapons effort must be even more speculative than an analysis of its chemical and nuclear weapons efforts, and the details of its missile programs.

As might be expected, Iran has continually denied that it has active chemical or biological weapons programs, and is a party to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and Biological Weapons Convention (BWC).

Iranian decision-makers have often made statements that condemn the use of chemical weapons, while at the same time advocating the strategic and tactical advantages of possessing such weapons, as well as Iran's right to possess this "defensive" capability – to an extent echoing their public stance on nuclear weapons policy.

In 1988, Ayatollah Ali Akbar Rafsanjani was quoted as saying that, "chemical and biological weapons are a poor man's atomic bombs and can easily be produced. We should at least consider them at least for our defense; although the use of such weapons is inhumane, the [Iran-Iraq] war taught us that international laws are only scraps of paper."⁴

Ayatollah Rafsanjani made many statements to this affect. Another such statement that gets at the heart of the Iranian perspective of the need for a CBW program is that;

"With regard to chemical, bacteriological, and radiological weapons training, it was made very clear perhaps during the [Iran-Iraq] war that these weapons are very decisive. It was also made clear that the moral teachings of the world are not very effective when war reaches a serious stage

and the world does not respect its own resolutions and closes its eyes to the violations and the aggressions which are committed on the battlefield. We should fully equip ourselves both in the offensive and defensive use of chemical, bacteriological, and radiological weapons. From now on you should make use of the opportunity and perform the task.”⁵

Iran’s Ambassador to the 3rd Conference of States Parties (CSP) to the CWC in The Hague -- which was held in November 1998 -- stated that Iran had worked on chemical weapons during the Iran-Iraq war, but that, "Following the establishment of the cease fire (in July 1998), the decision to develop chemical weapons capabilities was reversed and the process was terminated.."

H.E. Dr. G. Ali Khoshro, then Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister of Legal and International Affairs made a similar statement to the CWC Review Conference, held April and May 2003;

“I have to recall the fact that due to the lack of reaction by the international community against Iraqi chemical weapons attack during the 8 year imposed war, in the last phase we got the chemical capabilities, but we did not use it, and following the cease fire we decided to dismantle. We did destroy the facilities under the supervision of the OPCW inspectors and we got the certificate of the destruction of CWPF.”⁶

Some official statements have contradicted their previous statements or other official’s statements, regarding Iran’s CW program. One such example of this is comments made by Iranian nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalil to the UN, which contradict statements made by Ambassador Mohammad R. Alborzi, director general of the Iranian Foreign Ministry, to the OPCW regarding Iran’s chemical weapons history.

On 23 January 2008, speaking in Brussels Iranian nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalil states that: "I assure you that the (chemical) weapons have no place in our defense doctrine." The context is made in the context of a discussion about Iranian actions during the Iran-Iraq war of 1980-1988 and is intended to support the proposition that Iran made no use of chemical weapons during that conflict. [This assertion may contradict a statement made at the OPCW in 1998 that Iran possessed CW in the latter stages of the war.]⁷

But previously, on 18 November 1998, Ambassador Mohammad R. Alborzi, director general of the Iranian Foreign Ministry, delivered Iran's CW declaration during a session of the Conference of the States Parties (CSP) to the CWC in The Hague, Netherlands. In his statement, he admitted for the first time that Iran had once possessed CW, in the waning years of the Iran-Iraq War. But he claims that, "...following the establishment of cease fire, the decision to develop chemical weapons capabilities was reversed and the process was terminated.”⁸

Iran’s Rhetoric of Extremism

One can find many examples of extreme rhetoric from Iran’s leaders and senior officers. It should be noted, however, that they do not make explicit threats to use weapons of mass destruction, and that much of its most extreme rhetoric is issue in a context where it has little operational meaning and poses little risk to Iran. But just the same this extreme and threatening rhetoric amid Iran’s progressing nuclear and missiles programs creates greater insecurity in a region plagued by ongoing violent conflicts. The most extreme of these statements have been directed toward Israel and its supports.

Over the past several years, Iranian leaders – most prominently, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad – have made numerous statements calling for the destruction of Israel and the Jewish people. Examples of such extreme rhetoric include:

In a Friday sermon on 15 December 2000 (shown on Iranian TV), Ahmadinejad declared that, “Iran’s position, which was first expressed by the Imam [Khomeini] and stated several times by those responsible, is that the cancerous tumor called Israel must be uprooted from the region.”⁹

A little over a year later on 15 January 2001, at a meeting with organizers of the International Conference for Support of the Intifada, Ahmadinejad stated: “The foundation of the Islamic regime is opposition to Israel and the perpetual subject of Iran is the elimination of Israel from the region.”¹⁰ Iranian journalist Kasra Naji translated this sentence from the original Farsi as follows: “It is the mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to erase Israel from the map of the region.”¹¹

It is important to note that these statements were made prior to Ahmadinejad’s election to second highest office behind the Supreme Leader – and the highest democratically elected office – in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The election of such a hard line candidate, whose extremist rhetoric was widely known throughout Iran, can thus be seen as having similar extremist opinions as the electorate of Iran.

In an address to the “World without Zionism” Conference held in Tehran on October 26, 2005, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad stated that, “our dear Imam [Khomeini] ordered that this Jerusalem occupying regime [Israel] must be erased from the page of time. This was a very wise statement.”¹²

In a February 2008 message to Hassan Nasrallah, Secretary General of Hizbullah, the Commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, General Mohammad-Ali Jafari, wrote: “In the near future, we will witness the destruction of the cancerous microbe Israel by the strong and capable hands of the nation of Hezbollah.”¹³

Ayatollah Ahmad Janati, a member of President Ahmadinejad’s inner circle and Chairman of the Guardian Council of the Constitution, told reporters during the 22 of Bahman parade (marking the anniversary of the Islamic revolution) that, “every year there is a bigger crowd, the slogans are more enthusiastic, and the Islamic regime’s situation is getting better and better.” He then added that, “the blind enemies should see that the wish of these people is the death of America and Israel.”¹⁴

Yahya Rahim Safavi, one of the “hard-core” founders of the IRGC and its former commander in chief, is now senior advisor to Supreme Leader Khamenei. In a speech in February 2008, he declared that, “with God’s help the time has come for the Zionist regime’s death sentence.”¹⁵

Safavi has also continually referred to Israel as impure, unhygienic and contaminated. In remarks at a memorial ceremony for assassinated terrorist Imad Mughniyeh held in the city of Hamadan on February 23, 2008, he stated that the “death of this unclean regime [Israel] will arrive soon following the revolt of Muslims.”¹⁶

There is, however, another side to Iranian rhetoric that is more cautious and balanced. Examples include:

In 2005, Khamenei began a concerted effort to limit the damage done to Iran by Ahmedinejad’s rhetoric, by insisting that Iran did not seek the military destruction of Israel and in a senior adviser to Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei warns that provocative Iranian statements could hurt the country’s cause in its nuclear dispute.¹⁷

But this did not stop Hossein Shariatmadari, a close confidant of Khamenei who serves as one of his major mouthpieces, who wrote an editorial in the Iranian daily *Kayhan* on October 30, 2005, in which he argued, “We declare explicitly that we will not be satisfied with anything less than the complete obliteration of the Zionist regime from the political map of the world.”¹⁸

In a more recent speech, Shariatmadari stated on 4 October 2007: “‘Death to America’ and ‘Death to Israel’ are not only words written on paper but rather a symbolic approach that reflects the desire of all the Muslim nations.”¹⁹

It may be that Khamenei has toned down his own rhetoric, but nonetheless he has allowed his handpicked editor-in-chief of *Kayhan* to maintain his original ideological position on the destruction of Israel to the Iranian public.

Still Khamenei seems to leave the possibility for future relation with the West open while at the same time preaching against the state of Israel and its allies including the “morally corrupt” United States. In a 3 January 2008 address to students in Yazd, Ayatollah Khamenei said that;

“Cutting ties with America is among our basic policies. However, we have never said that the relations will remain severed forever ... the conditions of the American government are such that any relations would prove harmful to the nation and thereby we are not pursuing them ... any relations would provide the possibility to the Americans to infiltrate Iran and would pave the way for their intelligence and spy agents ... relations with America has no benefit for the Iranian nation for now. Undoubtedly, the day the relations with America prove beneficial for the Iranian nation I will be the first one to approve of that.”²⁰

In a speech at the University of Gilan on May 3, 2008, former president Khatami addressed not whether the Islamic Republic should export revolution, but how. He asked, “What did the Imam [Khomeini] want, and what was his purpose of exporting the revolution? [Did he wish that] we should export revolution by means of gunpowder or groups sabotaging other countries? ... He [Khomeini] meant to establish a role model here, which means people should see that in this society, the economy, science, and dignity of man are respected ... This was the most important way of exporting the revolution.”²¹ By proposing that Tehran should expand its influence more by soft power than by insurgency, Khatami tacitly acknowledged that the sponsorship of militias, insurgency, and terrorism enjoys state sanction and does not constitute rogue behavior.

Iranian officials disapproved of Khatami's acknowledgment of these activities, and seventy-seven members of the Majlis called for the MOIS to investigate Khatami, in an attempt to maintain plausible deniability. Tehran might use proxy groups to strike at enemies and dissidents, but it does not wish to be held accountable for such actions on the international stage.²²

In balance, the actions of Iran's leaders have implied that they are far more cautious than some of their words imply. Most seem to be fully aware of the risks of hard line rhetoric, and their actions generally seem cautious and pragmatic. This scarcely means that it is possible to predict how they will behave once they have significant numbers of nuclear weapons and missiles. It is also clear that actors dare conduct operations without at least tacit approval of the senior leadership. Individuals hesitate to make decisions without authorization from above. This emphasis on consensus makes “rogue operations” by security officials highly unlikely.

The Impact of Iran's National Command Structure

It is equally difficult to be certain of the way Iran's leaders approach the development of missiles and weapons of mass destruction, and Iran's national command structure presents significant uncertainties. Much depends on interpersonal dynamics, and access to the Supreme Leader. More formally, Iran's command and control structure is one of overlapping and parallel structures that confuse Iranians and foreign observers alike.

Decision-making in Iran

Identifying the key decision-makers in Iran is desirable in assessing risks, in trying to establish lines of accountability, and in seeking to ensure that any Western diplomatic outreach is targeted at those who have the power to affect regime behavior. Unfortunately, it often is not clear where power really resides and the exact role of hard-line elements is hard to determine. So is how Iran's leadership structure actually functions, how it views any specific approach to acquiring weapons of mass destruction, and how various elements compete for power..

Major policies – such as confrontation with the US and Israel, or support for radicals abroad – seem to require consensus among the regime's leadership, but the implementations of agreed policies may vary widely due to the intertwining of Iran's formal and informal decision-making processes, as well as the disconnect this creates in the implementation of policies.

The names of officials who hold formal positions in Iran's power structure are clear. In early 2009, for example, the names of the senior officials in overt decision-making positions were the figures listed in Figure 3.1 below:

Figure 3.1: Key Iranian Decision-making Figures

- **Chief of State:** Supreme Leader (Faqih) Ayatollah Ali Hoseini Khamenei
- **Head of Government:** President Mahmoud Ahmedinejad²³
- **Speaker of the Majlis (parliament):** Ali Larijani²⁴
- **Head of the Expediency Council:** Hashemi Rafsanjani²⁵
- **First Vice President:** Parviz Davudi
- **Chairman of the Guardian Council of the Constitution:** Ayatollah Ahmad Janati
- **Iran's Chief Nuclear Negotiator:** Saeed Jalili²⁶
- **Spokesman for Iran's SNSC:** Ahmad Khademolmelleh
- **Supreme Leaders representative to IRGC:** Mullah Saeedi (dep. Mullah Mojtaba Zolnouri)
- **Head of the IRGC's Political Bureau:** Brigadier General Yadollah Javani
- **Iranian Foreign Minister:** Manouchehr Mottaki
- **Deputy Interior Minister:** Mohammad-Baqer Zolqadr²⁷
- **Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces:** Major General Hassan Firouzabadi
- **Special Military Advisor to Khamenei:** Yahya Rahim Safavi²⁸

The National Command Authority and Formal Decision-making Institutions

At least on paper, Iran seems to have a coherent formal structure for security decision-making. Iran's institutional structure also reinforces oversight, or at least knowledge, of security operations. The Iranian constitution endows the Supreme Leader with tremendous authority over all major state institutions, and Khamenei has found many other ways to further increase his influence.

In practice, the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government all operate under the authority of the Supreme Leader. He seems to be the final decision maker in all major national security decisions, and this seems to include the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction, and doctrine and plans for using them, and the authorization of their use in war.

Khamenei's Growing Authority

Khamenei is the head of state, the commander in chief, and the Islamic Republic's top cleric. Indeed Article 57 of the Iranian constitution grants the supreme leader absolute power, stating that the "powers of government in the Islamic Republic are vested in the legislature, the judiciary, and the executive powers, functioning under the supervision of the absolute religious leader." Moreover, the Council of Guardians, the constitution's official interpreter, has ruled that this clause defines only the supreme leader's minimum prerogatives.²⁹

Despite the theocratic basis of the state of Iran, it does have some democratic characteristics. At the same time, elections have little meaning if the opposition is not allowed to run, and the elected have little power. Iranian Democracy is severely constrained by authoritarian aspects of Islamic rule. Under the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the system of Velayat-e-Faqih on which it is based, ultimate power in Iran resides in the religious authority, the Faqih and his office; which rely on the IRGC to enforce their will.³⁰ This relationship between Iran's clerical leadership and the IRGC has become increasingly important to help it stave off internal pressure for political and economic reform as well as external pressure resulting from international concern over Iran's nuclear program.

Khamenei has used his broad mandate to exercise control not only over all three branches of government but also economic, religious, and cultural affairs through a range of government councils and representatives, such as the IRGC – whose commander in chief is appointed by the Supreme Leader – and the political guides he imbeds in the IRGC headquarters.³¹

Khamenei considers himself not only the leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran but also the highest authority on Islamic ideology in the Muslim world. In the event that the Iran fails to meet its economic, cultural, and social promises; Khamenei has made anti-Americanism the cornerstone of his Islamic ideology to fall back on and rally the Muslim world behind and retain his legitimacy as the Supreme Leader.

Although many Iranians may disapprove of Khamenei as a leader, he has succeeded in expanding his power throughout the Islamic world, especially in the Arab Middle East;

and According to a study by Karim Sadjadpour at Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, several factors have helped Khamenei consolidate power domestically.³²

- A vast network of commissars stationed in strategic posts throughout government bureaucracies, dedicated to enforcing his authority;
- The weak, conservative-dominated parliament, headed by Khamenei loyalist GholamAli Haddad-Adel (whose daughter is married to the Leader's son);
- The rapidly rising political and economic influence of the Revolutionary Guards, whose top leaders are directly appointed by Khamenei and have always been publicly deferential to him;
- The political disengagement of Iran's young population, prompted by the unfulfilled expectations of the reformist era; and
- Most significant, the 2005 presidential election, which saw hardliner Ahmadinejad trounce Khamenei's chief rival Hashemi Rafsanjani in a second round run-off.

Ayatollah Khamenei continues to find ways to extend of the powers bestowed upon his position in the Islamic Republics Constitution, through both formal and informal networks. Thus far he has been quite effectively able to block any attempt at serious dialogue between the Washington and Tehran, even as some ranking Iranian diplomats and popular presidents, whether radicals or reformists, have been interested in opening dialogue with the US.

The Relative role of the President and Supreme Leader

On paper, the President would seem to exercise tremendous oversight. The Supreme Leader has influence in both the formal governmental security organizations as well as in the IRGC and its subordinate entities. The President exercises only indirect influence over the IRGC and its subordinate entities through the Ministry of Defense.

The President of Iran does exercise considerable day-to-day authority and has formal controls budget planning, but the Supreme Leader's power make him a far more important official in shaping both Iran's security policies and its civil society. Under article 110 of the 1979 constitution, the Supreme Leader retains the constitutional right to declare war and call for general troop mobilization. He is also the supreme commander of both the IRGC and the regular army (Artesh).³³

The Supreme Leader has the power to override any decision that the elected government makes, including the president. The religious authority also vets all candidates for any public office, and those deemed insufficiently Islamic or insufficiently supportive of the regime are barred from running.³⁴

Presidential and parliamentary candidates must pledge in writing that they are committed, in theory and in practice, to the Iranian constitution, Islam, the absolute sovereignty of the supreme leader, and the late Khomeini.³⁵ This process gives the Supreme Leader control over who is selected to run for office, while still giving legitimacy to the governing bodies through an electoral process. A major lever of power is the supreme leader's ability to appoint and dismiss senior government officials.

The Iranian president appoints the cabinets but they remain subservient to the Council of Guardians and the Expediency Discernment Council. The Council of Guardians also has the authority to veto any law approved by the Majlis – a power which the president

doesn't even possess. But despite these authoritarian characteristics, most Iranians perceive the regime as legitimate.³⁶

The Supreme Leader receives advice on national security and defense matters from two military officers in his office, and he receives reports on foreign affairs from a foreign affairs advisor. Although the Faqih is the commander in chief of the armed forces, he disposes of his responsibilities toward the defense establishment not through any direct chain of command. According to the formal system, the Faqih works through other bodies in exercising his control.

The SCNS, which is chaired by the president, is the key national defense and security assessment body. Representatives of the Artesh, the IRGC, other security agencies, and the Faqih sit on the council.

Informal Decision-making Mechanisms

More broadly, almost every aspect of Iran's formal decision making process it is often ignored or bypassed in favor of personal relationships and interactions. Family, kinship, educational affiliations, and support from various clerical personalities and factions play a central role in military politics in general, for both the IRGC and the Artesh. Personal networks are almost always stronger than institutional power.³⁷

Revolutionary organizations, which together may control more than half the state budget, operate outside the purview of Iran's executive structure.³⁸ The judiciary is also a power center, able to wield immense influence beyond even the confines of the court system.

Iran may develop better structured approaches to defining its national command authority if it acquires significant nuclear forces. Today, however, Iran's institutions overlap both on paper and in reality. The IRGC and the Artesh have duplicate services, further confused by overlap with Iran's intelligence and clerical bodies.

Iran's security organizations are numerous, often overlapping and have an uncertain command and control structure. Iranian decision-making is misleading and confusing on paper, and the reality is far more complex. The many informal mechanisms, and the importance of individual ties, make it difficult to give transparency to Iranian command, control and decision-making apparatuses.

It is hard to tell whether the advantages of this system outweigh the liabilities. Multiple security institutions do make a successful coup or takeover far more difficult. The problem is that the overlapping nature of the security institutions also makes a coherent security policy far more difficult., and can create serious problems in a crisis or war.³⁹

The Growing Role of IRGC

It is the IRGC that seems most likely to control the critical aspects of Iran's efforts to develop and deploy weapons of mass destruction, and to establish the chain of command to the Supreme Leader for control over the storage, use, and release of such weapons. The IRGC has always had an informal role in Iran's decision-making apparatus, but the IRGC has become a leading political force with influence over Tehran's policy-making bodies.

The IRGC routinely exploits its access to the Supreme Leader's office, volunteers advice on national and foreign policy matters to the Leader and his key staff, and actively aims

to influence policy and debate on security issues. The IRGC also exercises its influence through contact with conservative-leaning clergy in Qom, who have considerable influence in the judiciary, the Interior Ministry, the Expediency Council, and the Council of Guardians.⁴⁰

The White House and State Department, under the Clinton and Bush administrations, have sometimes treated the IRGC as a rogue element of the Iranian system. However, the IRGC's evolution and role suggest that the group has seldom engaged in activities not sanctioned by the Iranian leadership. In reality the IRGC represents the core of the Iranian state, and Iran's reformists are those who, by acting on their own without either state support or any ability to deliver on promises are, in the Iranian context, the true rogue elements.

A Broadening Role in Politics and Government

The IRGC became a major political force in the 2004 parliamentary elections, when a number of ex-servicemen were allowed to run for elections by the conservative Guardian Council. Ahmadinejad's victory in the 2005 presidential elections seems to have expanded this political role, although there often do seem to be tensions between the president and Supreme Leader.

Ahadinejad is an ex-member of the IRGC, and has surrounded himself with a number of other ex-IRGC officers as well as has developed ties to some active IRGC commanders. The IRGC further expanded its political role in the 2008 parliamentary, and the subsequent appointment of active and retired IRGC elites into key decision-making positions and bodies has strengthen the formal and active role of the IRGC in Iranian politics.

A look at the structure and personnel of the Iranian government and its history of involvement in terrorism and insurgency demonstrate that the IRGC and Qods Force are in fact the opposite of rogues—they are deliberate creations of the Islamic Republic's government, are tightly controlled by the government, and exist to serve the government's policy objectives in Iran and abroad.

Many of the Islamic Republic's current leadership—at least the non-clerical portion—spent their formative years at the front serving with the Revolutionary Guards.⁴¹ As they enter politics, these IRGC members operate not only according to the official hierarchy, but also according to the extensive networks they developed during their IRGC service.

Khamenei's Control Over the IRGC

Supreme Leader Khamenei uses two kinds of leverage to impose his control over the IRGC. First, as the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, he appoints the IRGC's commander-in-chief and chief officers. Second, as the Islamic Republics Supreme Leader, he controls a vast web of representative offices imbedded in the IRGC provincial commands.

This network of Khamenei's representatives in offices at the various IRGC headquarters operates parallel to the IRGC's command structure. These representative offices form an extensive organization with tens of thousands of members, who control the IRGC and

align it to Khamenei's guidelines. These appointed representatives report directly to Khamenei.

The purpose of these "political guides" is to maintain a high level control over and oversight of the IRGC's more senior officers and commanders. Their task is to control and ensure adherence among IRGC ranks to the political and ideological guidelines of the regime's Supreme Leader. They are also responsible for selecting and training suicide bombers, and overseeing IRGC personnel in order to ensure that they comply with the Khamenei's guidelines and policies.

In 2008, Khamenei's chief representative at the IRGC was Mullah Saeedi, who during a recent restructuring appointed Mullah Mojtaba Zolnouri as his deputy. He also created a commanding unit for the Supreme Leader division. During the restructuring of the IRGC Mullah Saeedi appointed a provincial "political guide" for each province of the 31 province to work alongside the provincial IRGC commander. These provincial representatives report to the Supreme Leader's office in Tehran. Each of the representatives stationed at a provincial brigade has a distinct headquarters, which includes the departments of "supervision," "political and ideological guidance," "public relations," "administrative and finance," along with a "political bureau." The political bureau is responsible for fundamentalist ideological training, and reviewing the files of IRGC personnel to evaluate their credentials for promotion.⁴²

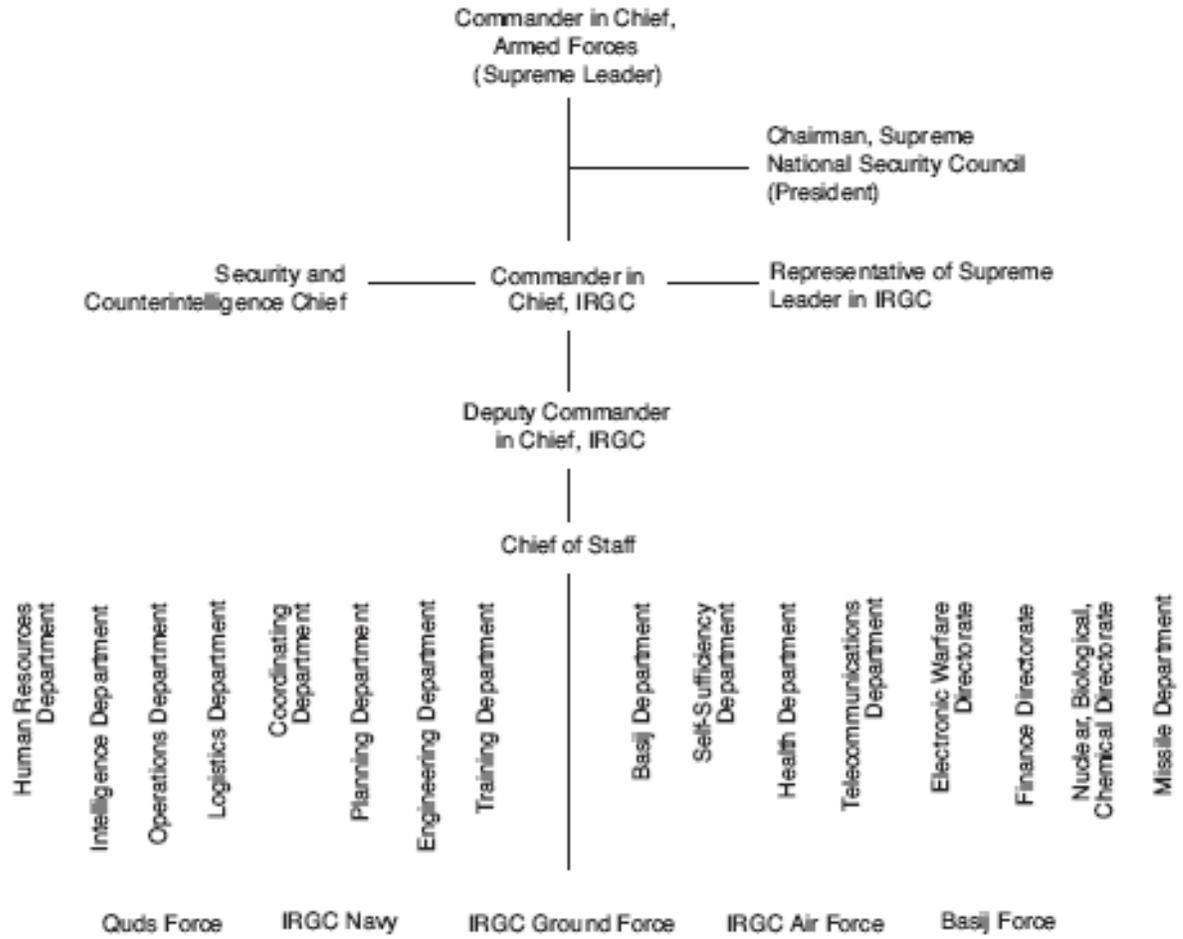
Mullah Saeedi told Iran's official IRNA news agency that "the purpose of creating these political guides in the Pasdaran was to perform an effective role in increasing the participation of the public in the elections."⁴³

These "political guides" are comprised of mullahs and IRGC personnel at the political bureau. They can also be seen as lying on the already blurred line of Iran's formal and informal decision making apparatuses within the IRGC and the Iranian government.

The IRGC Command Structure

The growing influence of the IRGC in nearly all aspects of Iranian society has made careful analysis of the IRGC's command structure a key to understanding Iran's posture and decision-making process. An illustration of the IRGC decision-making apparatus is represented in Figure 3.2 below.

Figure 3.2: IRGC Organizational Chart (August 2008)



Adapted from American Enterprise Institute (AEI) for Public Policy Research paper No 7, Ali Alfoneh, "What Do Structural Changes in the Revolutionary Guards Mean?," AEI, September 2008.

New Face of the IRGC

On September 1, 2007, Khamenei promoted Jafari, then coordinator of the IRGC Research and Command Center, to the rank of major general and also appointed him to the post of commander in chief of the IRGC, only the seventh in the organization's history. A list of IRGC commanders is shown in Figure 3.3 below.

Name	Year of Birth	Place of Birth	Educational Background	Tenure
Zamani, Abbas-Agha (Abou-Sharif)	1939	Tehran	Bachelor's degree in Islamic law	1979
Mansouri, Javad	1945	Kashan	N/A	April 22, 1979 – ?
Douz-Douzani, Abbas	1942	Tabriz	Introductory theology, unfinished studies in Arabic literature	1980 – 81
Rezai, Morteza	N/A	N/A	N/A	1981
Rezai, Mohsen	1954	Masjed Soleiman	High school diploma	1981 – 97
Safavi, Yahya Rahim	1958	N/A	High school diploma	1997 – 2007
Jafari, Mohammad Ali	1957	Yazd	IRGC War College	2007 – present

Adapted from American Enterprise Institute (AEI) for Public Policy Research paper No 7, Ali Alfoneh, "What Do Structural Changes in the Revolutionary Guards Mean?," AEI, September 2008.

An article published in *Rooz* on September 3, 2007 stated that Jafari is not as close to the political centers of power as his predecessor Safavi, and that he focuses on military, rather than political, affairs. However, he is closely associated with Expediency Council Secretary-General and former IRGC commander Mohsen Rezai.⁴⁴

In his first official speech as the IRGC commander-in-chief on October 20, 2007, Jafari talked about the new strategy and stated, "Based on the guidelines issued by the Leader of the Islamic Republic, the strategy of the IRGC has been modified. Its main task now is to confront internal threats." He went on to say, "Maintaining internal security normally lies within the purview of the State Security Forces and other security organs. However, if the magnitude of security challenges were to cross a certain threshold, with the permission of the Leader and the Supreme National Security Council, the IRGC would have to take overall charge of the situation."⁴⁵

Jafari set vital objectives for his forces: First, having up-to-date intelligence about the perceived enemy's movements and activities, and second, increasing the regime's missile capabilities. On November 1, 2007, Jafari characterized the 33-day war in Lebanon as the embodiment of the IRGC's new strategy and claimed, "Since the enemy's material and technological capabilities are superior to ours, we must move towards appropriate policies and means, enabling us to fulfill our requirements and ultimately force the enemy to experience defeat as it did during the 33-day war ... One of the Americans' vulnerabilities in the region is that they have established a presence all around Iran. Thus, they cannot keep themselves out of our firing range."⁴⁶

In order to comply with Ayatollah Khamenei's guidelines and cope with the IRGC's changing and expanding mission, Jafari quickly moved toward a reorganization of the Republican Guard and its subordinate entities, as ordered by the Supreme Leader.

IRGC Restructuring

Upon his appointment to commander-in-chief, Jafari immediately implemented a major restructuring to move the IRGC's primary focus from external defense to internal security. The changes are more cosmetic than actual, but they do signal a renewed crackdown on reformism and civil society.

The IRGC has 5 branches consisting of a ground force, an air force, a navy, the paramilitary Bassij Force, and the extraterritorial Qods Force. According to the NCRI some of the changes these branches have undergone in the course of the new strategic shift include:⁴⁷

- Although the Qods Force takes its ongoing and daily operational orders from the IRGC, its strategic policies and executive orders come directly from Khamenei, who is the regime's commander-in-chief of the armed forces.
- During Jafari's tenure, the IRGC relieved the conventional navy of its control over the Persian Gulf operations, and took direct charge of those operations itself.
- The capabilities of the IRGC's air force, which controls the regime's missile development program, has been considerably bolstered. This is because, according to Jafari, the missile program is one of the fundamental tenets of both the regime's defensive and also offensive strategies in the current circumstances.
- The Bassij Force has been the focal point of the changes currently being implemented by Jafari. He set the stage with the slogan of "The IRGC's duties now have an internal focus" (to safeguard the regime's hold on power). Jafari began by removing the then-Bassij Force commander, Mohammad-Hossein Hejazi, from his post, appointing him instead as chief of the IRGC headquarters. He personally took over the command of the Bassij Force, and chose a cleric, Hassan Taeb, as his deputy. Then in June 2008, in the course of the new round of changes, Jafari promoted Taeb to take over the Bassij command, with Hejazi appointed as his deputy.
- The IRGC's ground forces have been restructured into 31 provincial brigades, with the Bassij Force units also reorganized in all provinces and reporting to IRGC provincial command.

This reorganization represents the most significant and unprecedented changes since the 1985 order by Ruhollah Khomeini to equip the IRGC with an air force and a navy in addition to its ground forces. In the course of these extensive changes, the IRGC will shift focus from being a centralized force to having 31 distinct provincial brigades, the commanders of which will be given wide-ranging discretions.

When the restructuring is complete each of the 30 provinces in Iran will have an IRGC brigade. Tehran will be the only province with two brigades (31 brigades in total across the country). The representation of the regime's Supreme Leader at the IRGC has also been given a higher profile. Supreme Leader representation now includes a deputy, a coordinator, and a headquarters in Tehran, as well as representatives – or “political guides” – embedded in each provincial brigade, each with his own headquarters established in the province. Figure 3.4 illustrates the IRGC organizational structure at the Provincial level as of July 2008.

Figure 3.4: IRGC Organizational Structure at Provincial Level (July 2008)						
Province	IRGC Unit	IRGC Commander	Previous Position	IGGC Deputy	Previous Position	
Ardebil	Harzrat-e Abbas	Col. Jalil Baba-Zadeh	Ardebil Hazrat-e Abbas BDE chief	Col. Ghanbar Karim-Nezhad	Ardebil	Basij chief
Azerbaijan, East	Ashoura	Cmdr. Mohammad-Taghi Ossanlou	31st Armored 'Ashoura Div. chief	N/A	N/A	
Azerbaijan, West	Shohada	Brigadier General Mehdi Mo'ini	West Azerbaijan Shohada IRGC	Cmdr. Said Ghorban-Nezhad	West Azerbaijan	Basij chief
Bushehr	Imam Sadegh	Col. Fath-Allah Jamiri	Bushehr Basij chief	Col. Abdol-Reza Mataf	Bushehr	Basij deputy
Chahar-Mahal and Bakhtiari	Ghamar Bani-Hashem	Brigadier General Mohammad-Soleymani	Fars senior IRGC commander	Cmdr. Mehdi Jamshidi	N/A	
Esfahan	Saheb al-Zaman	Brigadier General Gholam-Reza Soleymani	Senior Esfahan IRGC commander, 14th Imam Hossein Div. chief	N/A	N/A	
Fars	Fajr	Brigadier General Gholam-Hossein Gheib-Parvar	25th Karbala Div. chief	Cmdr. Mohammad-Reza Mehdian-Far	Fars Basij chief	
Gilan	Qods	Cmdr. Hamoun Mohammadi	Iran-Iraq War veteran	Cmd. Nazar Alizadeh	Gilan Basij chief	
Golestan	Neynava	Brigadier General Naser Razaghian	Gorgan-based 1st Brigade of 25th Karbala Div. chief	N/A	N/A	

Hamedan	Ansar al-Hossein	Cmdr. Abdol-Reza Azadi	Hamedan IRGC chief	Cmdr. Mehdi Sedighi	Ansar al-Hossein Div. deputy BDE Quds training camp chief, Mottahari training camp chief
Hormozgan	Imam Sajjad	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Ilam	Amir al'emenin	Brigadier General Seyyed Sadeq Kaki	Hamedan IRGC senior commander, 3rd Ansar al-Hossein Brigade of the 4th Be'sat Div. chief	N/A	N/A
Kerman	Sar-Allah	Cmdr. Rouhollah Nouri	Hamzeh Seyyed al-Shohada base chief	Cmdr. Gholam-Ali Abou-Hamzeh	Kerman Basij chief
Kermanshah	Kermanshah IRGC	Cmdr. Mohammad-Nazar Azimi	4th Be'sat Inf. Div. chief	Cmdr. Bahman Reyhani	N/A
Khorasan, North	Javad al-A'emeh	Cmdr. Ali Mirza-Pour	N/A	Cmdr. Hossein-Ali Yousef-Ali-Zadeh	Khorasan North Basij chief
Khorasan, Razavi	Imam Reza	Cmdr. Ghodrat-Allah Mansouril	5th Nasr Div. chief	Cmdr. Hashem Ghiasi	Khorasan Razavi Basij chief
Khorasan, South	Ansar al-Reza	Brigadier General Gholam-Reza Ahmadi	Khorasan South Basij chief	N/A	N/A
Khuzestan	Vali-ye Asr	Cmdr. Mohammad Kazemeini	7th Vali Asr Div. chief	Cmdr. Mehdi Sa'adati	Khuzestan Basij chief
Kohkilou-yeh / Boyer-Ahmad	Fath	Cmdr. 'Avaz Shahabi-Far	48th Independent BDE chief	Col. Ali-Asghar Habibi	N/A
Kordestan	Beit al-Moghaddas	Allah-Nour Nour-Allahi	Kordestan Basij chief	N/A	N/A
Lorestan	Abol-Fazl al-Abbas	Cmdr. Shahrokh	Independent 57th Hazrat-e Abolfazl BDE chief	Col. Teymour Sepahvand	Lorestan Basij chief
Markazi	Rouh-Allah	Cmdr. Mohammad-Taghi Shah-Cheraghi	Golestan Basij chief	Cmdr. Nour-Khoda Ghasemi	Chief of 1st Rouhollah Inf. BDE of Arak 17th Ali Ibn

						Abi-Taleb Div.
Mazandaran	Karbala	Brigadier General Ali Shalihar	25th Karbala Div. chief	Cmdr. Ali- Garmeh-i		Mazandaran Basij chief
Qazvin	Saheb al- Amr	Brigadier General Salar Abnoush	12th Hazrat-e Qa'em BDE chief	N/A		N/A
Qom	Ali Ibn-e Abi-Taleb	Brigadier General Akbar Nouri	17th Qom Ali-Ibn-e Abi-Taleb Inf. Div. chief	N/A		N/A
Semnan	Hazrat-e Gham'em al- Mohammad	Col. Mohammad- Hossein Babayi	Kerman Basij chief	N/A		N/A
Sistan and Baluchistan	Salman	Brigadier General Rajab-Ali Mohammad-Zadeh	N/A	Col. Habib Lak-Zayi		Sistan and Baluchistan Basij deputy
Tehran	Seyyed al- Shohada	Cmdr. Ali Zazli	Deputy operations chief of IRGC Central Command	Cmdr. Morteza Shaneh-Saz		Tehran Basij chief
Tehran, Greater	Mohammad Rasoul-Allah	Brigadier General Abdollah Eragh	Greater Tehran Basij chief	N/A		N/A
Yazd	Al-Ghadir	Brigadier General Mohammad-Ali Allah Dadi	Independent Al- Ghadir BDE chief	N/A		N/A
Zanjan	N/A	Cmdr. Seyyed Mehdi Mousavi	N/A	N/A		N/A

Note: "Cmdr." is used when the exact rank is unknown.

Adapted from American Enterprise Institute (AEI) for Public Policy Research paper No 7, Ali Alfoneh, "What Do Structural Changes in the Revolutionary Guards Mean?," AEI, September 2008.

Soon after his appointment of Jafari to IRGC Commander in Chief, Ayatollah Khamenei ordered a massive purge of IRGC commanders whose services to the regime date back to the eight-year war with Iraq. Most have been replaced by a next generation of lower ranking "second-tier" commanders (i.e. those who held subordinate posts during the eight-year war with Iraq).

The most important IRGC posts have been filled with prominent hard-line figures such as Mohammad Hejazi, head of Saraallah – a powerful military unit in the IRGC; Jafar Assadi, commander of ground forces; and Hojjatoleslam Hussain Teab, chief of the Baji force.⁴⁸

Militarily, the changes should be viewed as reflecting a tactical shift toward centralization of power in order to reinforce and enhance the control of hard-liner IRGC elites over Iran's military forces. This shift also carries with it the advantage of eliminating the possibility of espionage within the organization of the military.

Politically, the appointment and promotion of hard-liners can be viewed as a way to send a message to opposition within the Iranian civil society and lower/mid-ranking officers in the IRGC who are pro-reform.

IRGC and Iranian Nuclear Program

Jafari's rise to power has been accompanied by shifts in the IRGC that seem likely to have strengthened its role shaping and control Iran's missiles and weapons of mass destruction. On August 21, 2005, Khamenei issued an order for the creation of an IRGC Research and Command Center, with Mohammad Ali Jafari as its coordinator. This was done in the course of crafting the desired strategy effectively conforming to the regime's new strategy. In accordance with Khamenei's orders, Jafari warned that, "If the enemy were to wage an attack against us, we would threaten its interests all over the world".

The IRGC's Growing Role in Weapons Programs

The IRGC is deeply involved in the country's nuclear, missile and other weapons proliferation activities, and maintains a special branch -- the Qods Force -- responsible for providing funds, weapons, improvised-explosive-device technology and training to terrorist groups like Hezbollah and Hamas and insurgents attacking coalition and Iraqi forces in Iraq.⁴⁹

The elections and appointments of current and past members of the IRGC to ranking political decision-making positions has given the Guard Corps even greater influence over Iran's overall defense and nuclear strategy and policy.

The IRGC has several functions including: operating most of Iran's surface-to-surface missiles and is believed to have custody over potentially deployed nuclear weapons, most or all other chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) weapons, and to operate Iran's nuclear-armed missile forces if they are deployed. It operates or controls much of Iran's military industries as well as dual-use and "civil" operations. As a result, the links between the IRGC and Iran's nuclear program have been so close that its leaders were singled out under the UN Security Council Resolutions passed on December 23, 2006, and March 24, 2007, and had their assets frozen.⁵⁰

In a presentation before the National Press Club in Washington DC on 20 March 2006, longtime spokesman for the NCRI Alireza Jafarzadeh⁵¹ stated that "one institution that plays a pivotal role in the regime's nuclear program is Imam Hossein University, which is operated by the IRGC."

He went on to say that "a number of nuclear experts have been transferred to the Imam Hossein University following reorganization in the regime's center for nuclear research. One of the high-level experts in the IRGC by the name of Mohammad Tavalaei is working at the Imam Hossein University's research center."

"The Defense Ministry's nuclear program is also under the control of the IRGC. The highest ranking nuclear officials within the Defense Ministry are commanders and

officers of IRGC.” The details of some of these individuals, as presented by Alireza Jafarzadeh, are as follows:⁵²

Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, has been a member of Scientific Board of the physics college at Imam Hossein University since 1991. He teaches a class, one day per week at this college. He is the director of the nuclear program at the Center for Readiness and New Defense Technology.

Mansour Asgari, is a member of the IRGC. He graduated in 1990 and is a member of Scientific Board at the physics college in IRGC’s Imam Hossein University and he teaches at the university 1 ½ day per week. Currently, he is one of the laser experts at the Center for Readiness and New Defense Technology, and works under the supervision of Fakhrizadeh.

Mohamad Amin Bassam is a member of the IRGC. Currently he is one of the laser experts in the nuclear division of the Defense Ministry. He works under the supervision of Mohsen Fakhrizadeh. He is based and works at Parchin military complex in Tehran, where he conducts research on laser tests.

Below is a list of the 21 top nuclear physicists of Imam Hossein University who are commanders and cadres of the IRGC, as presented by Alireza Jafarzadeh:⁵³

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Fereydoon Abbasi | Chair, Physics group |
| 2. Mohsen Fakhrizadeh | Member, Scientific Board |
| 3. Abolfazl Behjat-Panah | Member, Scientific Board |
| 4. Mohsen Shayesteh | Member, Scientific Board |
| 5. Ardeshir Bagheri | Member, Scientific Board |
| 6. Amir-Reza Madani | Member, Scientific Board |
| 7. Mohsen Torkaman-Sarabi | Member, Scientific Board |
| 8. Yousef Hatefi | Member, Scientific Board |
| 9. Javad Ahmadi | Member, Scientific Board |
| 10. Massoud Abdollahzadeh | Member, Scientific Board |
| 11. Seyyed Ali Aghajani | Member, Scientific Board |
| 12. Mohammad Ali Torkaman-Motlagh | Member, Scientific Board |
| 13. Tayeb Madani | Member, Scientific Board |
| 14. Ibrahim Hajali | Member, Scientific Board |
| 15. Mahmoud Abbassi | Member, Scientific Board |
| 16. Mansour Asgari | Member, Scientific Board |
| 17. Javad Khalilzadeh | Member, Scientific Board |
| 18. Ismail Ahmadi Azar | Member, Scientific Board |
| 19. Parviz Hossein-Khani | Member, Scientific Board |
| 20. Hamid Kharazmi | Member, Scientific Board |
| 21. Parviz Parvin | Member, Scientific Board |

The growing IRGC control of and influence over Iranian decision-making, the defense industry, economy, and special weapons programs creates growing concerns as to where Iranian foreign and defense policy is heading, and what can the world expect from a nuclear Iran controlled by military hard-liners. This also creates concern as to not only

the international security implications of continued conventional weapons proliferation, but also the possibility of unconventional weapons proliferation.

A Nuclear Iran and Proliferation Issues

A major international security issue that arises from a nuclear Iran is the risk of proliferation of nuclear material, technology, expertise, and possibly weapons. It is important to note that much of the nuclear material, technology, and knowhow Iran now has came from outside assistance, whether it be from state actors – such as equipment, training, and technical expertise from North Korea, Russia, and China – or non-state actors – such as the blueprints and technical expertise provided through the A.Q. Kahn network.

If and when Iran attains self-sufficiency it could very likely provide this same type of assistance to states and non-state actors seeking nuclear technology or material, either through formal or informal networks, knowingly or unknowingly. In fact, Iran has already professed an interest in supplying some kind of aid to nations seeking this type of technology once it reaches self-sufficiency in its program.

On 28 August 2008 Iran indicated that it would be willing to share its nuclear technology with Nigeria to boost electricity production. A deal was signed at the end of three days of talks between the nations.⁵⁴ Both countries stressed that the nuclear program was for peaceful purposes only, but this display of Tehran's willingness to share nuclear technology and knowhow just exacerbates international fears of nuclear proliferation to nations with inadequate and unproven nuclear safeguard programs and procedures.

A few months later on 5 October 2008 Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki indicated that Iran is willing to supply other countries with nuclear fuel after it has reached self-sufficiency.⁵⁵ If these statements do represent Iran's policy on nuclear proliferation once it goes nuclear, this creates serious international security issues that current non-proliferation institutions are ill-prepared to deal with.

Another concern is that Iran could supply NBC materials or weapons to extremist or terrorist organizations, such as Hezbollah or Hamas entities. This fear is made all the more real since at present much of Iran's nuclear and missile programs are under the control of the hard-line-commanded IRGC. The IRGC is known to support extremist movements through its Quds forces – the extent of this relationship will be discussed in more detail the following chapter.

Iran, or entities within Iran, currently supports a number of extremist, insurgent, and terrorist movements both regionally and globally with funding, weapons, and training. Certain key political figures within the Iranian government have acknowledged support for some of these groups on occasion, but are cautious about doing so on other occasions.

Even if Tehran has been forthcoming about its support and nonsupport for certain organizations and activities, the evidence of Iranian weapons being used by many of these groups is undeniable. If Tehran is unaware of entities within the regime training and arming some of these organizations this creates a plethora of safeguard and liability concerns with regard to Iran's nuclear program and the prospect of further nuclear proliferation.

Prospects for Negotiating With Tehran

With a decision making and command structure such as Iran's it is difficult to predict what the prospects for negotiations are. Conflicting statements, complex and unaccountable informal decision making mechanisms, and a severely constrained democratic system make any kind of assessment pertaining to negotiations on Iran's nuclear program guesses at best.

As has already been stated, the ultimate authority in Iran is Ayatollah Khamenei. The Supreme Leaders posturing thus far creates a bleak image in terms of the possibility for negotiations between Tehran and Washington. To the Faqih has been able to block any attempt at serious and meaningful dialogue between Tehran and the rest of the international community regarding Iran's steadily progressing nuclear programs; even while senior decision-making officials have leaned toward, and at times advocated for, dialogue with its neighbors and the West.

The actions and statements by ranking decision-makers in the Iranian government continue to paint a picture of a policy directed at public defiance in the face of the international community at any cost. As Iran has progressed in its nuclear program, defense industry, and overall self-reliance in the face of international threats, pressure and sanctions, their actions and statements have become more defiant and the prospects for meaningful negotiations to deter from their current path have slipped further away. Some statements that illustrate Tehran's defiance and determination toward becoming a nuclear state are listed below.

On 4 May 2008 Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei asserted that Iran will continue with its nuclear program despite Western pressure to halt enrichment saying that, "no threat can hinder the Iranian nation from its path. We will forcefully continue on our path and will not allow the oppressors to step on our rights."⁵⁶

On 3 June 2008 Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei asserted that "no wise nation" would pursue nuclear weapons, but his country will continue to develop its nuclear program for peaceful purposes.⁵⁷

On 1 July 2008 Iran's top diplomat indicated a readiness to negotiate a U.S.-backed proposal to end the nuclear standoff. Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki stated that Iran was "seriously and carefully examining it." Referring to the offer made by the world's P5+1, Mottaki went on to say that, "we believe that talks are a good foundation for continuing our conversation in this field ... We view the position taken by the five-plus-one as a constructive one." In June, Javier Solana delivered the incentives package and proposed a six week "freeze-for-freeze," where Iran would suspend enrichment and the sanctions would be lifted. Tehran initially rejected the incentives offer but did not do so in face-to-face meetings with Solana.⁵⁸

On 5 July 2008 Iran formally responded to the P5 + 1 incentives package without specifically addressing the core issue of uranium enrichment. Instead, the letter indicated that Iran is willing to have comprehensive negotiations with Javier Solana, but insists that it will not suspend enrichment during negotiations. According to Iranian officials, "Iran's stand regarding its peaceful nuclear program has not changed." Some Western officials involved in the negotiations expressed disappointment. "There is nothing new in the response," one stated. Western officials contended that Iran was prolonging the diplomatic back-and-forth to continue its nuclear activities.⁵⁹

On 27 July 2008 President Mahmoud Ahmedinejad claimed that Iran now possesses 6,000 centrifuges at the Natanz enrichment plant and stated that, "the West wanted us to stop. We resisted, and now they want to resume negotiations."⁶⁰

On 31 July 2008, speaking just days before a deadline set by world powers for Iran to reply to proposals to curb its nuclear ambitions, Ayatollah Khamenei, asserted that Iran will "continue with its path" of nuclear development, signaling that Tehran did not intend to meet the deadline to respond to the U.S.-backed incentives package, aimed at achieving a temporary "freeze-for-freeze."⁶¹

On 5 October 2008 Iran stated that it will not halt enrichment in exchange for a guaranteed supply of nuclear fuel. Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki said that, "Iran's uranium enrichment policy remains unchanged. Enrichment will continue until Iran becomes self-sufficient in fuel production for nuclear plants."⁶²

In order to accept any offer for direct negotiation with the United States, Khamenei would first have to accept that his position is limited to the Supreme Leader of Iran and not the leader of a global Islamic community. Such a move would have drastic implications on Iranian foreign policy, especially its influence in the Muslim world.

With Iran's nuclear program continuing to progress amid international pressure, sanctions, the threat of military action, internal strife, and economic meltdown, the prospects for meaningful negotiations are becoming all the more unlikely. Some experts have even suggested that the Iranian nuclear program is quickly approaching the point of no return, a breakout capability, and certain "red lines".⁶³ Many experts have also asserted that negotiations and sanctions are no longer viable options for dealing with Tehran, and that a shift in policy and strategy towards one of military deterrence and containment of a nuclear Iran is needed.⁶⁴ These policy options will be discussed in more detail in a later chapter.

Appendix A: Key Acronyms

AAA	- Anti-Aircraft Artillery
AEOI	- Atomic Energy Organization of Iran
APC	-Armored Personnel Carrier
AVLIS	- Atomic Vapor Laser Isotope Separation
BHRC	- Beneficent and Hydrometallurgical Center
BNPP	- Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant
BW	- Biological Weapons/Warfare
CAIC	- Chengdu Aircraft Industrial Corporation
CBRN	- Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear warheads
CBW	- Chemical and Biological Weapons
CEP	- Circular Error Probable
CIA	- U.S. Central Intelligence Agency
CSL	- Comprehensive Separation Laboratory
CSP	- Conference of States Parties
CW	- Chemical Weapons/Warfare
CWC	- Chemical Weapons Convention
CWD	- Chemical Demilitarization Conference
DG	- Director General
DHS	- U.S. Department of Homeland Security
DIA	- U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency
DIV	- Design Information Verification
EBW	- Exploding Bridgewire
EIA	- U.S. Energy Information Agency
EMP	- Electromagnetic Pulse
ERI	- Education Research Institute
FEP	- Fuel Enrichment Plant
FMP	- Fuel Manufacturing Plant
FSU	- Former Soviet Union
GA	- Tabun (Chemical nerve agent)
GB	- Sarin (Chemical nerve agent)
GLONAS	- Global Navigation Satellite System

GPS	- Global Positioning System
IAEA	- International Atomic Energy Agency
IAF	- Iranian Air Force
IAIO	- Iranian Aerospace Industries Organization
IAP	- Institute of Applied Physics
IED	- Improvised Explosive Device
IIS	- International Institute for Strategic Studies
IOC	- Initial Operating Capability
IR-40	- Iran Nuclear Research
IRBM	- Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile
IRGC	- Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps
IRGCAF	- Iranian Revolution Guards Corps Air Force
IS&R	- Intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance
<i>Isp</i>	- Specific Impulse
JHL	- Jabr Ibn Hayan Multipurpose Laboratory
Kgf	- Kilogram-force
KM	- Kimia Maadan Company
LOW	- Launch-on-warning
LRICBM	- Limited Range Intercontinental Ballistic Missile
LSL	- Laser Spectroscopy Laboratory
LUA	- Launch-under attack
MEK	- Mujahedeen-e-Khalq
MIX	- Molybdenum, Iodine, Xenon Radioisotope Production Facility Reactor
MLIS	- Molecular Isotope Separation
MOIS	- Iran's Ministry of Intelligence and Security
MRBM	- Medium Range Ballistic Missile
MTRC	- Missile Technology Control Regime
NATO	- North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NBC	- Nuclear Biological Chemical
NCRI	- National Council of Resistance of Iran
NGO	- Nongovernmental organization
NIOC	- National Iranian Oil Company
NPT	- Non Proliferation Treaty

NTI	- Nuclear Threat Initiative
OB	- Order of Battle
ODNI	- U.S. Office of the Director of National Intelligence
OPCW	- Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
PFEP	- Pilot Fuel Enrichment Plant
PHRC	- Physics Research Center
PIT	- Physical Inventory Taking
PLC	- Programmable Logic Control
PPE	- Personal Protective Equipment
PRC	- Peoples Republic of China
R&D	- Research and Development
SHIG	- Shahid Hemat Industrial Group
SLBM	- Submarine Launched Ballistic Missile
SNSC	- Iran's Supreme National Security Council
SRBM	- Short Range Ballistic Missile
SUT	- Sharif University of Technology
SWU	- Separative Work Units
TEL	- Transporter-Erector-Launcher
TERCOM	- Terrain Contour Matching
TNRC	- Tehran Nuclear Research Center
TRR	- Tehran Research Reactor
UAV	- Unmanned Aerial Vehicles
UCAV	- Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicles
UCF	- Uranium Conversion Facility
UO2	- Uranium Dioxide
UF4	- Uranium Tetrafluoride
UF6	- Uranium Hexafluoride
WHO	- World Health Organization
WME	- Weapons of Mass Expenditure
WMM	- Weapons of Mass Media
WMP	- Weapons of Mass Panic
YRPC	- Yazd Radiation Processing Center
ZKA	- German Customs Office of Criminal Investigations

¹ "Iran's Statement at IAEA Emergency Meeting," *Mehr News Agency*, 10 August 2008, available at: <http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/iran/nuke/mehr080905.html>.

² "IRAN'S MISSING ANTI-NUCLEAR FATWA," *SECURITY NEWS* from the FAS Project on Government Secrecy, Volume 2005, Issue No. 79, 11 August 2005, available at: <http://www.fas.org/sgp/news/secrecy/2005/08/081105.html>.

³ "Ayatollah vows Iran's Nuclear Program will go on," *The Associated Press*, 3 June 2008; "Iranian Supreme Leader Vows to Pursue Nuclear Program," *Voice of America News*, 3 June 2008.

⁴ IRNA, October 19, 1988.

⁵ Quoted in Kori N. Schake and Judith S. Yaphe, "The Strategic Implications of a Nuclear-Armed Iran," McNair Paper 64, Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, Washington, D.C., 2001, p. 3.

⁶ See the analysis in Global Security, "Weapons of Mass Destruction, Chemical Weapons, Iran," <http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/world/iran/cw.htm>.

⁷ Jalili: Chemical weapons have no place in Iran's defense doctrine," IRNA, 23 January 2008, <<http://www2.irna.ir/en/news/view/line-17/0801239430180425.htm>>.

⁸ Itamar Eichner, "Iran Admits to Possessing Chemical Weapons," *Yedi'ot Aharonot*, 20 November 1998; FBIS Document FTS19981120000618, 20 November 1998; "Iran Pledges No Chemical Weapons Production," *Agence France Presse*, 17 November 1998; Mohammad R. Alborzi, "Statement to the Third Session of the Conference of the States Parties of the Chemical Weapons Convention," 16-20 November 2000.

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²³ Former member of the IRGC.

²⁴ Replaced Hojjatoleslam Hasan Rohani as both the Secretary of the SCNS and Chief Nuclear Negotiator in 2005 before being replaced by Saeed Jalili in 2007.

²⁵ Former president of Iran and front runner for Chief of State behind Khamenei.

²⁶ Former member of the IRGC and former Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister for American and European Affairs.

²⁷ Formerly deputy to IRGC Commander-in-Chief Yahaya Rahim Safavi

²⁸ Formerly Commander in Chief of IRGC (1997-2007)

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Persons involved in the ballistic missile programme: Gen Hosein Salimi, Commander of the Air Force, IRGC (Pasdaran)

Persons involved in both the nuclear and ballistic missile programmes: Maj Gen Yahya Rahim Safavi, Commander, IRGC (Pasdaran)

⁵¹ Alireza Jafarzadeh is the president of Strategic Policy Consulting, Inc. and is the longtime Washington spokesman for the National Council of the Resistance of Iran (NCRI), the political wing of the Mujaheddin-e Khalq (MEK).

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