

# **ASSESSMENT OF THE IRANIAN NUCLEAR DEAL AND EXCLUSIVITY OF HASSAN ROUHANI'S LEADERSHIP**

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## **Abstract**

Iran and the world's most powerful countries signed comprehensive agreement draft on Iran's nuclear program. It also includes a treaty on economic sanctions imposed by the United States, the UN and the European Union on Iran. That marks the beginning of the end of the twelve-year conflict between the United States and Iran. But what was behind these negotiations and what did this agreement mean for Iran? The framework of the agreement covers fifteen years. In this period, Iran's nuclear program would be brought down to the bottom even though all its accessories were to remain close. The United States would have "unprecedented surveillance powers" over Iran's various nuclear facilities through UN. In return Iran was going to start the new journey of political and economic relations with west and world. All that was not easy in Iran, as people were not ready to accept humiliating deal and a good deal was made possible by Hassan Rouhani with his leading role. His personality as reformist leader emerged during the nuclear deal.

**Key Words;** Iran, Nuclear Program P5 Plus, USA, Nuclear deal, Hassan Rouhani

## **Introduction**

When Federica Mogherini and Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammed Jawad Zarif reached a conclusion about Iran's nuclear program in Switzerland on April 2, 2015, a wave of satisfaction came in the EU, including the World Powers P5 + 1. Addressing a press conference with Jawad Zarif, Federica Mogherini said, "Today we have come to an agreement after a fruitful dialogue about Iran's nuclear program, which will be officially announced by June 30." World Powers P5+1, a permanent member of the UN Security Council (US, Russia, France, the UK, China + Germany and the European Union) expressed satisfaction with the deal. That the issue had been hanging around for a long time and in November 2013 there had been talks on the issue which led to the "Joint Plan of Action" proposal, and Federica cited eight parties (permanent members of the European Union) And Iran) to announce the agreement and the framework deal. <sup>1</sup>This deal is acknowledged as diplomatic successes of Iranian President Hassan Rouhani in the field of foreign policy of Iran. Mr Hassan Rouhani who started the negotiating process with three member states of European Union, France, Germany and the Britain for the opening of the Iran and skillfully created mechanism in 2003 that could operate outside of the framework of the United Nations Security Council. These negotiations after twelve years of ups and downs involved the High Representatives of European Union powers to build agreement for other EU member nations and institutions. They also succeeded to engage as the ambassadorial go-between for the Germany and five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. 1

Hassan Rouhani had been serving as secretary of Supreme National Security Council of Iran for 16 years. Sharq newspaper in November 2003 due to Hassan Rouhani leading role in the nuclear negotiations brought him the nickname of "Diplomat Sheikh" and before this he was given the nick name of "nascent". These nick name was popularized by foreign and domestic Persian-speaking print and electronic media. 2Hassan Rouhani as secretary to supreme National Security council of Iran started his career during the President Hashemi Rafsanjani and continued his career under Muhammad Khatami who succeeded Hashemi as president of Iran. Hassan Rouhani as peace negotiator helped the Iran to buy time to advance the nuclear program by talks with the western powers. With the replacement of reformist Muhammad Khatami to hard liner president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, he stepped down as secretary to Supreme National Security council. After it the new era began relating to the Iran nuclear program when openly international community alleged Iran to developing the nuclear arms under the cover of the nuclear energy program as IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) published a report on Iran Nuclear

program and alleged with the intentions of uranium enrichment for military weapons at the Atomic nuclear center of Netenz. Three years after the report published board of the IAEA's supervision committee appointed by the United Nations Organization in 2006 presented Iran's nuclear issue in the Security Council. The Security Council condemned Iran for Nuclear program on the persuasion of the United States of America.<sup>3</sup>

Hassan Rouhani was the person who was tasked to lead the team of technically, politically and legally expert's negotiators on nuclear program of Iran to start talks with the western powers to decreased the tension between IAEA body and foreign ministry of Iran on reports published by the IAEA and adoption of the UN Security Council resolution condemning Iran. He was Hassan Rouhani who started the peace talks and set up the mechanism of talks with western powers for the solution of the nuclear issue peacefully and Iran started talks with the three main powers of European Union, France Germany and Italy that led to the P5 plus one talks and after a long and uneasy afflict discussion, the final agreement with Iran and the P5 + 1 global powers have found a final agreement regarding the nuclear issue of the Iran. According to negotiators related to the six countries, the aim of the talks was to limit Iran's nuclear program to a specific extent so that the possibility of nuclear weapons development for Iran made impossible.<sup>4</sup>

**Hypothesis;** Nuclear deal between Iran and P5 plus powers was very important deal of the 1<sup>st</sup> century and an important sign of hope for peace in the region, Hassan Rouhani role in this deal will be remember for his role to face hardliner at home and international critics abroad to reach the deal.

### **Research Methodology;**

The secondary sources of data are used in this study and descriptive model of research is used to describe the facts and figures about the talks and process for nuclear deal and discuss the role of Hassan Rouhani as key leader who played important role in reaching the deal. This research paper is based on the produced data that is analyzed to highlight the leadership role of Hassan Rouhani of Iran in Nuclear deal, as the said deal raised his status in the international community. Help in this regards is taken from the articles, newspapers and online martial in this study.

### **Objectives;**

1. To analyze the importance of nuclear deal of Iran.

2. To explain the important role of Hassan Rouhani in the nuclear deal of Iran with western powers.

### **Background**

Iran's nuclear program was started in the era of Raza Shah Pahlavi before the Islamic Revolution. It was no other than America who providing nuclear technology to Iran. It was also United States of America that, in 1947, fascinated Iran for the fact that it could get nuclear power and to get an alternative source of energy and at that time assured all possible cooperation for the purpose. After all the important issues were fixed, the construction process of Bushehr city nuclear plant was started. To further strengthen and finalize the comprehensive nuclear deal between Iran and the US, Jimmy Carter, also the US President, visited Tehran in 1978. In fact, the leadership movement led by Imam Khomeini was on the rise in those days. Clearly, before Iran's Islamic Revolution, Iran was same like as to the United States, like the present Arab countries. Because in the Middle East, the biggest defender of US and Israeli interests in the region was Iran, but in 1979 the Islamic Revolution changed the position of Iran at 360 degree opposite to all US interests and plans. Imam Khomeini declared freedom of Palestine as the heart of the Islamic revolution. Raza Shah Iran was being criticized by Imam Khomeini and his supporters in the Iran because of his pro American and Israel policies. That is why in the era of shah of Iran United States and Israel wanted to see Iran stronger and prosperous and they were keen to support Iran, but after the Islamic revolution it became a matter of destruction of Iran for both USA and Israel. The same nuclear plants that had been considering peaceful nuclear energy necessity by US and allies before Islamic revolution turned dangerous as foundation to achieve atom bomb.<sup>5</sup>

### **Rouhani and change in Iran**

The process of change in human society is gradual, historians say that it is not easy to change society's culture and tradition, if it is imperative to end them or change them, there is a strong reaction from the society, While the gradual changes in accordance with social needs are necessary, but these changes are so slow that people do not even asses them. Sometimes it may happen that a huge change in the society arises suddenly. Such a change usually comes as a reaction to big problem that has been preparing for a long time and democratic revolution is one of such changes in which people come on streets to express their grievances.

The first change in Iran came to see when Imam Khomeini overthrew the government of Raza Shah Pahlavi with the help of people's revolution in 1979, and Shah of Iran was forced to be lived in exile. Imam Khomeini did not come into power suddenly, but his arrival was result of long preparations, Imam Khomeini and his colleagues struggled for a long time to bring changes in the people of Iran through their speeches and writings, during that time Imam Khomeini had to live exile for fifteen years. The people were also tired of the governance system, so the majority of the people came out of the streets, despite the extra use of power against the people by Shah of Iran; he had to leave the office. As Imam Khomeini came into power the all the nations started to monitor the revolution. Iran's new rulers interacted with other nations without any hesitation, with great deal of integrity and freedom. America was also hopeful to work with new leadership of Iran but some sudden incidents created a gap between two nations that was tried to fill by Hassan Rouhani after decades of hostilities in relations. 6

Through the global conspiracy, Iran was pushed in the war with Iraq, perhaps due to failure of the diplomatic approach of the Iranian government; otherwise in such circumstances the demand for diplomacy was to save the war and to work for success of the revolution in the country. Only the power of revolution should be used in the construction and development of the nation and state institutions, but all the strength was put into war against Iraq. At the same time, sanctions were imposed on it to further weaken the Iran. Iran's war ended, but sanctions on Iran had increased. On the other hand, the intentions of the elected governments in Iran had remained stiff and aggressive. Especially Iran's former president Mahmood Ahmadinejad has been issue harsh statements to express his tough stance on the international issues; sometimes he openly criticized US as colonial power in Middle East. Iran also blamed America as a power that dominated the world because of its military power and a state those punishing small nations, Iran also used to target Israel for the same reasons. The statements that no had roots in the Middle East about Israel, like the will to destroy it, labeling Israel as a cancer that was consuming throughout the world, and Statements of Iran in which it boosted that Israel must be removed from the map of the world.7

When any country statement came against Iran the answer was harsh and in shape of warning to those who work against Iran, will be destructed. Iran's always stand firm on the nuclear program. Iran remains tough on it as it never allowed any type of inspection of the sites. Whenever the

international community had suggested any kind of pressure on Iran to get permission for the inspection, the Iranian statements were always harsh. The intense advantage of inspection of sites, which could be found helpful to reduce sanctions has been rejecting by leadership of Iran. A surprising aspect of this phenomenon is that the Iranian government has always been steadily supported by the people of Iran, like wise such statements have remained popular not only in the Iranian people but other people of the Muslim world. But the posture of the Iranian government has always been noted as a hard liner state.<sup>8</sup>

### **Hassan Rouhani a success of Reformists and change**

Under the shadows of this environment the Iranian elections results were projected that the former government with conservative thinking will win the elections in Iran with same candidate, but the results came with opposite to the studies. There were six candidates participating in the presidential election, Hassan Rouhani, Mohammad Baqir Qalibaf, Saeed Jalali, Mohsen Raiai, Ali Akbar Awityi and Muhammad Ghaddi when Rouhani manage to win elections as more than one hundred and eighty six million votes was received by Hassan Rohani, and the candidate on second position Muhammad Baqar Qallabaf obtained 60 million, Seven thousand votes. While getting a vote more than half of the votes, Muhammad Baqir Qababaf, who had conservative thinking, got only sixteen percent votes.<sup>9</sup>

Moderate Hassan Rohani was also expressed through new beginnings in his statements when he declared his victory and declare his victory a success of reformists in a statement after the election, he thanked God that once again the extremism of Iran has fallen; it is the victory of moderate Iran against extremism. In one of his statements, he said that one reason for his victory in the President's selection was the change in the country's foreign policy, but it does not mean Iran will be able to deal with its principles, Referring to the commitment to serious negotiations to reduce the ongoing tension, he said that he was not going to tail his predecessor's strict lines.<sup>10</sup>

### **Hassan Rouhani and Iranian Foreign Policy**

Iran's foreign policy will not be affected by the slogans, but we will safely defend our national interests was first statement of new president of Iran. He said Iran's nuclear program was crucial for peaceful negotiations, the problems of both sides could be overcome, this matter could be

resolved with dialogue not with threats, and Iran demonstrates more transparency on its nuclear program but would not stop the enrichment of uranium as it was declared an international standard in this regard. He quoted Iran's sanctions that if you want a satisfactory reaction, you should not speak in the language of sanctions, but you should address us with respect. Similarly, despite the threat of the American attack on Syria, the Iranian authorities moderated their attitude and said that the US attack on Syria would have negative impact on the region and the global security. There is a comparative difference between the foreign policy of Post Rouhani era and the current era, as talks about Iran's nuclear program were being discussed and where there was a time no chance for open talks. Yes, the threat of attack on Syria has been positively expressed; threatening attitude is no longer visible, meaning Iranian behavior has changed. Hassan Rouhani just after his elections appealed to the global community on a "serious and meaningful" dialogue with the global community. In his first press conference after victory, President Rouhani said he believed that the international community's reservations could be removed shortly. He added that this matter can not only be resolved with 'threats'. In response to the Hassan Rouhani the United States of America explained that in the era of President Rouhani, Iran has got the opportunity to "solve the deep concern of the world." <sup>11</sup>President Barack Obama had started improving the relations with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani when sanctions on Iran's nuclear program were already imposed, and the revival of US economic sanctions was in consideration. These sanctions were labeled by the Iran's president as hurdle in talks. President of Iran Hassan Rouhani during his visit to UN in 2013 spoke to the United Nations General Council saying Tehran was ready for "meaningful" talks on its nuclear program. He said that sanctions on Iran were wrong due to nuclear program. He also discussed the Syrian issue and role of Iran in Syria. President Hassan Rohani criticized the US on its statement that 'Iran was a threat. He said Iran was not a threat to the world or any country.' "There is no place in Iran's security and defense doctrine of nuclear weapons or mass destruction weapons." Iranian President said that, therefore, Iran was ready to take immediate talks so that it can move toward confidence and eliminate mistrust.<sup>12</sup>

### **Towards the Talks**

US and EU officials after the Iranian president press release got courage that they would start talks with Iran's foreign minister to discuss Iran's nuclear program with six key global powers in

the United Nations. After it the US Secretary of State John Kerry announced to join the meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister Jawad Zarif. This meeting held and was the first meeting of the two countries in the last 30 years. Six international powers, including the United States, started discussing Iran's nuclear program, and the Foreign Ministers of these countries were gathered in Switzerland to negotiate and reach a potential nuclear deal. Iranian President Hassan Rouhani had written a letter to the heads of all six world powers in the UK, while talking to the heads of the UK, France, Russia and China. In which President Rouhani had urged the global leaders to not let go of this unique opportunity, which could be beneficial for the region and the world. When process started Hassan Rouhani was asked for a nuclear deal settlement mechanism and he said that the only solution to moving forward was to determine a period in which talks might become less duration. The duration of talk period was wished to made as less as the benefit of everyone. If it was three months, it would be a favorite for Iran. If six months still fine. This was not a matter of years but month explained by the Iranian president. The Iranian President also wished to meet his US counterpart and said that if he and the US president meet, the theme of meeting would be 'future'. Rouhani said that the letters were exchange between President Obama and him, and had been in the same direction and that journey would continue. Hassan Rouhani also explained his position and said that the talks needed a point of focus and according to him that point was this nuclear issue. On the other side the President of America welcomed the moderate attitude of President Rouhani. He said that America wanted a peaceful solution to the nuclear issue, but it was also committed to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons. 13

### **Towards the agreement**

On the defined mechanism talks started in Geneva Switzerland and on November 2013, the agreement was signed with the world's six powers and Iran on Iran's nuclear weapons program. US, UK, Russia, China, France and Germany were trying to keep Iran from pursuing nuclear weapons. Under this agreement, where Iran would limit its nuclear activities, the sanctions imposed on it would be softened. After the agreement in Geneva between Iran and the world powers, United Nations inspectors examined Iran's nuclear installations on 8<sup>th</sup> of December 2013. On the basis of the report of the IAEA the UN watchdog said Iran had eradicated all its uranium reserves and have brought them to a lesser level of nuclear weapons. In 2014 The IAEA's latest report stated that Iran was following all its commitments. After the hopeful signs

from Rouhani government the diplomats involved in negotiations between Iran and the Western powers regarding Iran nuclear program were agreed to expand the four months in the initial agreement. 14 On the other hand the US said that if Iran continues to change its own Uranium reserves in fuel, then US could return \$ 8 billion in the frozen assets of Iran. According to reporters, reducing Iran's own uranium reserves by 20 percent was a happy sign and it showed that Iran did not want to harm the diplomatic process. After it when talks again started in Geneva and just before one week of the dead line the major countries involved in the talks on Iran's nuclear program had warned that there were many hurdles between Iran and the international powers.

In July 2014 the negotiator explained that political goals were important for reaching a deal in front of the side, but it would be very difficult to get rid of the differences on three major issues:

1. Iran's uranium enrichment potential
2. Heavy water reactor in Arak city
3. Potential military dimensions of Iran's nuclear program

To make a break through once again President Hassan Rouhani came at front and warned that Iran could not be deprived from the peaceful means of nuclear program by major power. He suggested that if the world wanted a better relationship with Iran, then it must have to choose the way to safeguard Iran's rights and honor the Iranian state and its scientists. He explained that Iran had never been able to detect a massive destruction of weapons because it had not considered them legal. And in final gesture he said that Iran had nothing to offer during interaction except for transparency. In September 2014, Iran's President Hassan Rouhani warned that a nuclear deal time is passing on the nuclear program should be considered early to negotiate for a permanent deal. He said that negotiations between Iran and the six world powers have not made fast progress as the deadline of November 24 had been set for a permanent deal. He stressed that Iran had shown a lot of flexibility and now it was on the six world powers; America, Britain, China, France, Russia and Germany to move forward. 15

President Rouhani said that Iran would never accept the agreement which had prevented its right to use uranium enrichment for the peaceful means. He explained 'Iran would not be able to withdraw its legal right and continue peace nuclear activities.' However he also told that it was not written by the stones that America and Iran's relations will always be tense. 'One day it will

change'. The biggest obstacle in negotiations between Iran and global powers was that how much Iran could enrich uranium and how long international sanctions were over. Iran insisted that its nuclear program was for peace purposes. Iran had signed an interim agreement with five permanent member countries of Germany and the United Nations Security Council, which was named the Geneva Agreement. Under this agreement, Iran prohibited uranium enrichment somewhat, and the restrictions imposed on it were partially softened. However, under this interim agreement, Iran and six world powers failed to compromise a comprehensive agreement this July 2014, after which the final date for this agreement was scheduled on November 24, 2014. When this deadline was ending, US secretary of state urged to reschedule the date for a comprehensive and final agreement that was accepted by all parties involved in negotiation process including Iran on the direction of Hassan Rouhani. Talks after November 2014 resumed in February 2015 in Geneva to agree on a high-level political agreement in relation to the nuclear deal by March 1, and to complete the nuclear deal with complete technical details by July 1 of the 2015. The US Foreign Minister had said that now these talks were in this stage where most cases had become clear and they were being considered.<sup>16</sup> Talks continued and President Rohani said that although there were still some differences between the parties, there was no such problem that could not be solved. Hassan Rouhani also said that during the present period of negotiations in Switzerland, there had been a consensus in such cases which were previously on disagreement. And this development could help to reach out on an agreement. John Kerry of US said that although 'there were still major differences'; however, there had been 'special progress' in the talks. According to John Kerry, the two sides had kept a joint venture (a fixed contractual agreement in November), and we all had our own responsibilities. He said that the United States wanted to "hold a comprehensive and sustainable agreement based on the basis of implementation, trusting each other, not strictly monitoring. In April 2015 the agreement between the futures of Iran's controversial nuclear program agreed between Iran and six major powers after the alteration of talks in Lausanne in Switzerland. After talks of eight days in Lausanne, Iran and the European Union announced an agreement on the framework, while a comprehensive nuclear deal was announced to be formed till June 30.<sup>17</sup>

According to the US, the terms of this agreement include the following terms:

1. Iran reduces two thirds of its centrifuge and will also reduce its stored enriched uranium.

2. IAEA will check on extra centrifuge of Iran.
3. IAEA will continue to oversee all nuclear installations of Iran.
4. Iran will make changes in the heavy reactor in its Ark that plutonium capable of making weapons there cannot be made.
5. US and EU sanctions will be stepwise overtaken, but if Iran does not fulfill its obligations, they will be re-imposed. 18

### **Hardliners and role of Hassan Rouhani**

After agreeing to this agreement, Iranian and American officials are trying to plead to their hard-lined leaders on their support for this agreement as in US opposition rejected the idea of agreement and lifting the sanctions and in Iran, supreme leader of Iran Ayatollah Khomeini has said that there is no "guarantee" of the final agreement about its nuclear program between Iran and six major powers. Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, said in a statement that Six major powers might wanted to encircled of our country in agreement. He explained that he was never expected to negotiate with the US. He also said that Iran would only eliminate its nuclear installations when economic sanctions imposed upon it would be removed. He also rejected the conditions for preventing research and development in the nuclear program and inspection of military installations for the next ten years.

Iranian president urged to continue talks and move further despite the mistrust and in response John Kerry said that if the difficult decisions were made in the next few days and were hurried, we would be able to deal with in week. He said that 'correct progress' had been done in a few days. 19But the US was also ready to leave talks, if there was no agreement between us and the main things remain completely stubborn and tender about every progress. 14 July 2015 was a day when Iran had accused world powers of changing its position in long-term talks with its nuclear program Hassan Rouhani said Iran would continue process of talks in that response John Kerry also had said that his country and other world powers were no hurry to reach the deal, but he also warned that the six world powers involved in the negotiations for unlimited time Will not wait. On the same 14 July 2015 the agreement between the Iran and the six world powers to limit Iran's nuclear program had resolved after the difficulties of many years. Iranian President Hassan Rouhani praised the agreement, saying, 'Today we have reached a new place. The nuclear deal is a new beginning of the relationship with the world. We always said that the defeat is not won in

these negotiations. It should be such that everyone is approved. 'President Rouhani said that there had been a rise in economic sanctions and during the negotiations. We tried to bring economic stability. Atomic Energy and Research could be continued to be on the domestic level. The sanctions on Iran would be ended. The 23-month talks were discussed in Iran's negotiators, expert economics and nuclear energy experts. In defense of the deal US president Barack Obama said that if 99% of the world and nuclear majority think that it could stop Iran from pursuing nuclear bomb and you were discussing that it could not happen, and if that was also temporary, then you Should gave alternate of this deal.

## **Conclusion**

Hassan Rouhani After elected as President in 2013, promised that he would work to bring relief in economic sanctions on the country due to which the economy was destroyed and life was difficult for the Iranian people. Iran's hardliner leaders had been opposing any deal and talks on the matter of nuclear program. On the other end reformist groups in the Iran always favored the new ideas and negotiations on nuclear program. When the balance of power turned in favor of President Rouhani as he won the elections in 2013, he gave the green signal to the negotiators. The reformists under the leadership of Hassan Rouhani had supported openly the negotiating team and President had given them more flexibility. Hassan Rouhani started his journey as new elected president of Iran in 2013 and allowed his negotiating team to work out the plan for dialogue with international powers and help them by openly inviting the international community to resolve the issues through dialogues. It was not any easy task as the hardliners were associating it with treachery and against the patriotism spirit. The "Sharq" newspaper wrote during these days that, as we had been discussing the chance of nuclear deal the attacks on the Hassan Rouhani government from the hardliners were increasing. 21

Hassan Rouhani was the man who managed the opposition at home and supported the negotiations and developed the environment abroad in which the powers negotiating could trust the integrity and seriousness of Iran. But Hassan Rouhani remained successful to gather the public support as he won second term of president in 2017 with greater margin than his previous one. During his campaign speeches he criticized the old traditional approaches of defense policies and foreign affairs. In reaction to his speeches the military spokesman of the Iranian army, General Masood, said they would emphasize once again and suggest the presidential

candidates not to give controversial statements about the country's sensitive military and defense issues and to stop from providing invalid information. Rouhani had accused his conservative opponents that he had tried to stir in his way during the ongoing negotiations for the deal. <sup>22</sup>It was Rouhani who had mounted the pressure and during the campaign on all presidential candidates to adopt the pro deal narrative during public rallies and gatherings. Iran after deal became able to press the west by making claim that the process of implementation on nuclear deal was very clear, all the reservations related to the nuclear issue trust could be lifted. Moderate Hassan Rouhani set a nuclear deal with global powers in 2015 and brought his country out of world isolation. After the victory in Iran's Presidential election, moderate Iranian President Hassan Rouhani rightly said in his first address that his re-win in the election shows that voters in Iran had rejected extremism and they wanted to develop the better relations with the world. Hassan Rouhani got 57 percent out of total votes, which was approval of people to continue his policies and continue to work for the improvement of the country's economic conditions. <sup>23</sup>During the presidential election campaign, economic and foreign policy issues were hazardous because the unemployment rate in the country was quite high while external investment had not been reached due to sanctions. So Hassan Rouhani as political leader of the Iran played leadership role in the nuclear deal with international powers and brought changes in narrative of Iranian people inside and outside the country throw a positive gesture towards the international community about the Iran.

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