

## **Analysis on Obama Administration's Policy Adjustment of Iranian Nuclear Issue**

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***Abstract:** From the realistic dilemma of US policy on the Iranian nuclear issue and the international debate concerning the policy, we can see that Obama administration is restructuring the Iranian nuclear policy: objectives have a reasoning downward modulation which is possible for the US to approve Iranian limited and supervised nuclear fuel production; some policy instruments will be further strengthened, while others may be more flexible; the US strategically abnegates the idea of overthrowing the Iranian regime and mainly focuses on the nuclear issue to achieve the separation of political power and the nuclear issue; a greater tolerance is demonstrated in building a multilateral mechanism. The Iranian nuclear issue is expected to shift from the current impasse to the stage of substantive negotiations.*

***Key Words:** Iranian Nuclear Issue; Multilateral Mechanism; Obama Administration; US-Iran Relationship*

Delegates from the United States, Russia, Britain, France, China and Germany held a conference in Frankfurt, Germany on September 2, 2009, to coordinate standpoints on the Iranian nuclear issue. Iranian Foreign Minister Mottaki met diplomatic representatives from the six

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countries in Tehran on September 9, and presented them a package of Iranian proposals on international issues. On October 1, the representatives had an Iranian nuclear issue talks in Geneva with Saeed Jalili, the Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council and Iran's chief nuclear negotiator. The series of diplomatic activities shows that the Iranian nuclear issue has been fully launched a new round of games. The United States and the international community have changed the wait-and-see attitude during the election campaign and the Iranian nuclear issue is on the agenda again. After having maintained the domestic stability, Iran has to accept the diplomatic challenges from the nuclear issue.

As a main party in Iranian nuclear issue, the US choice will be directly related to the development process of the Iranian nuclear issue, therefore the discussion concerning with the Iranian nuclear policy of Obama administration has a great significance. During the election campaign and the formal presidency, Obama and his administration repeatedly expressed that US will adjust the predecessor's Iranian nuclear policy. Therefore, is there any difference between the nuclear policy of George Bush and Barack Obama? What is the range of the policy adjustment? From the analysis of the Iranian nuclear dilemma in the Bush administration and national discussions on this topic, especially Obama's remarks as well as specific diplomatic actions in late 2009 and 2010, this paper attempts to analyze the content and range of Obama administration's adjustments on the Iranian nuclear policy in order to understand and judge policy direction of the Obama administration.

## **I.A Reasoning Downward Modulation on Policy Objectives**

With extremely complicated reasons, the Iranian nuclear issue was deadlocked. Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has repeatedly issued radical rhetoric. He not only refused to honor the obligations of the relevant resolutions from the Security Council, but

also rejected the international call to suspend uranium enrichment activities. Those are all the reasons that the international community has little outcome. However, the reasons of the standoff from the United States should not be overlooked. If the US has objectives which adapt its own strategic policy, then it may not be deemed a passive situation on this issue and the leeway of the Iranian nuclear issue would increase greatly. In this sense, the Bush Administration's policy is also an important reason for the Iranian nuclear impasse.

The aim of US policy was mainly embodied in the 2005 Iranian nuclear issue package proposals proposed by three EU countries, the 2006 improved version (Perthes, 2008: 81-82) and the resumed talks plan on Iranian nuclear program in June 2008 which was raised in the name of the six countries by Javier Solana, the EU Foreign and Security Policy High Representative. On the one hand, the Bush administration defaulted or agreed to give Iran the political, economic and technical preferential terms; on the other hand, they are trying to force Iran to abandon its nuclear fuel production.

For the United States, the Iranian nuclear issue concerns security, so the essence of its policy objectives is to achieve maximum security interests by constraining Iran's possibility and capacity of creating nuclear weapons at the zero level, which reflect that the US against Iran is far from trust. However, the excessive high goals might lose time of making more realistic targets. First of all, wars in Afghanistan and Iraq not only consume a large number of US political, economic, diplomatic and military resources, but also hit the war wills. Attempting to resolve the Iranian nuclear issue is not beyond all doubt.

Second, Iran's policy objectives have certain rigidity. For Iran, its nuclear program may have security considerations, but there are more purposes on technological progress, economic development and improving people's livelihood which is an important part of economic modernization strategy. According to a 20-year economic development plan set by the Khatami government in 2003, Iran will

finish the buildings of 15-20 nuclear power plants by 2024 and the power generation capacity will reach 20,000 megawatts (Perthes, 2005: 52). Iran takes a reliable and stable supply of nuclear fuel as the goal and seeks to master enrichment technology and production capacity. In September 2005, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad delivered a speech at the UN General Assembly : "Without possession of nuclear fuel cycle.....nuclear power plants can indeed lead to total dependence of countries and peoples." (Ahmadinejad, 2005: September 17). In the same speech, he also suggested Iran's version of the nuclear solution which was to establish a company participated in by multinational private and public sections (Ahmadinejad, 2005: September 17). Of course, Iran's real purpose is unknown.

Although there are some outstanding problems on the Iran nuclear issue, the concerns and requests on stable supply of nuclear fuel are not entirely unreasonable. The energy crisis in the 1970s and the recent gas dispute between Russia and Ukraine indicated that interruption of the key resources supply is still an important means of international political struggle. Historically, Iran had been under strong pressure from the Arab Sunnis for a long time and suffered the invasions of Mongolia and Ottoman Empire. It was reduced to a Russian and British colony in the modern times and has been under the threat of the United States for a long period. Its unique historical process makes Iran too sensitive to the external threats. Whether conservatives or reformists, they are not easily able to make concessions on nuclear fuel supply.

Third, the Iranian nuclear issue remaining unsettled could make the United States in a more passive situation. The UN Security Council adopted a number of resolutions to implement sanctions against Iran which also got pressure from the United States, but Iran refused to suspend and cease uranium enrichment activities. The Iranian nuclear impasse is not advantageous for the US "Time is not on our (the US) side" (Luers, et al, 2008). In theory, even if Iran has mastered the nuclear weapons manufacturing technology, the United States could

also force it to renounce it. However, in practice, the United States will have more difficulty to achieve the goal; the cost will be the problem.

American academics and politicians have long recognized the awkward position of the United States and demanded the US government to adjust its policy objectives. In fact, William Ruhlfs, the President of the United Nations Association of the United States and Thomas Pickering, the former ambassador to the UN endorsed the plan of Ahmadinejad. In March 2008, they jointly published an article calling for "Iran's production of enriched uranium and other related nuclear activities can be conducted in a multilateral framework, that is to say, many countries including Iran set up companies to manage and co-operate in the territory of Iran (Luers, et al).

Richard Hass, Chairman of the Council on Foreign Relations of America, and other scholars and former officials, who have a pivotal influence on American foreign policies, also hold similar views. In an article in *Foreign Affairs*, Hass argued that Washington should discuss the Iranian right of enriching uranium. If Iran finally agreed to limit its uranium enrichment program and placed it under more strict supervision, its right should be recognized by the United States. Roger Cohen, columnist of *New York Times*, also pointed out that it was inevitable to stop Iran from mastering the nuclear fuel cycle. Cohen argues that the Obama Administration needs to admit it under a verifiable condition that Iran's nuclear fuel production will never be used in producing nuclear weapons (Cohen, 2009: February 19).

In brief, the goals gap between Iraq and US has become a realistic bottleneck of the Iranian nuclear deadlock. Due to the limitation of the US Strategic capability, the certain rigidity of Iranian requests and the urgency of the Iranian nuclear issue, some people in American academics have accepted the fact that Iran has mastered a certain capacity of enriching uranium. The Obama Administration had to change Bush's policy which refused to declare the American attitude to Iran's right of peaceful utilization of nuclear energy and promised to recognize Iran's right (Obama, 2009: October 1). It means that the

US has made a concession. In the future, the focus of Iranian nuclear issue will shift from the possibility of Iran nuclear fuel production to the extent of nuclear fuel production capability and the condition of these activities processing. Of course, no country can declare its bottom line of the policy. Obama has no exception. They will not admit it until a ripe opportunity develops.

## **II. More Flexible Methods for Solving the Iranian Nuclear Problem**

In the 30 years after the Islamic revolution and the United States hostage crisis, diplomatic isolation, economic sanctions, military threats have been the United States' three main policies toward Iran. In different periods, intensity and their extent were different. Since the Iran nuclear issue in 2003, the intensity of three policies has been strengthened: in the global and regional levels, the United States has positively undertaken steps to isolate Iran, implemented multilateral and unilateral sanctions policies against Iran, and repeatedly emphasized the military force as the final resort to resolve the Iranian nuclear issue.

According to some statements of Obama and articles by US think-tanks, the Obama administration will not fundamentally change the previous government's basic policy framework, but will have some appropriate adjustments. Obama believed that the hawkish diplomacy based on the political, economic and military strength can effectively deal with long-term rivals, such as Iran and Syria (Obama, 2007: July/August). Specifically, concerning the problem of the Iran nuclear issue, Obama believed that the goal of US foreign policy was implementing more severe sanctions against Iran and increased pressure on its main trading partners, thus raising the cost of Iran nuclear plan (Obama, 2007).

Diplomatic isolation will still be the basic policy of the Obama administration. Obama promised that he would rebuild the necessary

alliance, partnership and relevant mechanism in order to cope with the common threats and enhance the common security (Obama, 2007). In the global level, the United States will continue to strengthen the relationship with Britain, France, Germany, and other traditional allies and strive for gaining the support of China, Russia and other countries. Compared with the Bush administration, Obama might pay more attention on opinions of other allies and powers. He could make big concessions on other major issues for exchanging their support. In February 2009, Obama personally wrote a letter to the Russian President, and pointed out that, if Russia helps US to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons, the US government will give up deploying its proposed missile defense system in the Central Europe and Eastern Europe region (*New York Times*, 2009: March 3; Ignatius, 2009: February 26). On September 23, 2009, Medvedyev visited the United States and made it clear that: "the effectiveness of sanctions is difficult to produce, but it is inevitable in some cases." (Burns, 2009: September 23). That means that Russia has accepted that the previous trade and the policy adjustment has achieved initial results.

In the regional level, Obama administration has consolidated the relationship with Egypt, Gulf states, Jordan and other traditional pro-American countries while the US might improve the relationship with Syria as the further strategic measures for isolating Iran. Although the Obama administration still considered Syria as one of the counties like Iran, but he still was inclined to implement the policy of cooperating with Syria. He thought that diplomatic pressure might facilitate Syria to shift from radical attitude to a moderate one, which will be favorable toward isolating Iran (Obama, 2007: July/August). On April 18, 2008, former US President Carter, viewing Syria as an important point of his Middle East tour, paid a visit to the Middle East. In February 2009, John Kerry, the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the US Senate and US delegations visited Syria. In mid-June and late July 2009, the US special envoy of the Middle East affair, George Mitchell visited Syria twice. In addition, in late July 2009,

Obama administration lifted a part of the sanctions against Syria. These major diplomatic actions mean that the US probably will change its policy toward Syria.

Economic sanctions are the main form of the US "big stick" policy, and it is also a method to compel Iran to quit its plan. But in the actual implementation process, the US policy may be more flexible. Richard Hass believed that if Iran indeed suspend uranium enrichment program in the negotiations process, the UN sanctions should be suspended accordingly; if Iran continues it, the UN sanctions and the multilateral sanctions should be strengthened (Hass, & Indyk, 2009: January/February). Similarly, in the foreseeable future the United States will not tolerate Iran mastering the nuclear weapons technology and will not change the policy that the military solution is the ultimate means to solve the Iranian nuclear issue. Therefore, Obama pointed out that if it is concerned with the necessary protection of American people or vital interests, such as attacks on the United States or threats of other emergent conditions, he would not hesitate to use military force (Obama, 2007: July/August). In particular, he stressed that he would not put aside the military means in dealing with the proliferation of nuclear weapon (Obama, 2007: July/August).

While insisting on implementing isolation, sanctions and threats policies, Obama administration would be likely to break through the policy bottleneck that US successive administrations have refused to contact Iran directly for more than 30 years. For the United States, direct contact is not only an obstruction of breaking through the Iran nuclear problem, but also the need for cooperation of Iran in Iraq and Afghanistan (Sadjadpour, 2008: 2-3). In the early 2006, the Iraq problem panel, consisting of senior politicians from Republican Party and Democratic Party, recommended that the US government should cooperate with Iraq neighboring countries including Iran to stabilize the situation of Iraq. When the Iran nuclear issue reached an impasse, US scholars asked the US government to have dialogues with Iran. Richard Haas advocated that Bush administration should have a



dialogue with the enemies (Haas, 2006: September 23). Kissinger criticized that the Bush Administration was overcautious on the Iranian issue and the US government should be courageous to have dialogue with Iran (Ignatius, 2006: June 23). Even Robert Kagan, one representative of the neo-conservatism, argued that the United States should seize the opportunity to dialogue with Tehran directly in the case of taking nonmilitary actions (Kagan, 2007: December 5).

However, due to the specific sensitivity of relations between the US and Iran, the two governments are not willing to take the risk of failure in contact. Most recently, a number of American experts suggested that the Obama administration should establish private diplomatic channels to contact Iran. A report from Carnegie Peace Foundation said that politicians from both sides might feel that it is necessary to express harsh words and there are certain difficulties in establish the trust relationship. Therefore, "secret" or "private" discussions avoiding public concerns have a higher chance of success (Sadjadpour, 2008: 9). Former US Congressman Lee Hamilton believed that the United States needs to establish a lower-level behind-the-screen contact channels authorized by the President (Ignatius, 2009: February 26). James Dobbins, the first envoy for Afghanistan issues under the Bush administration, believed that the US needs to establish and maintain a behind-the-screen and authorized channels between Washington and Tehran. He also said that negotiations could not achieve any results if both sides need to hold a press conference after their talks (Dobbins, 2009: March 3). Dobbins used to work with Iranian officials to form a new government in Afghanistan at the end of 2001.

Obama stressed that: "the United States cannot abandon the military force, but should not refuse to contact Iran directly." (Obama, 2009: July/August). Although this commitment may come out of his personal knowledge, it reflects the US academic and political demands for direct talks with Iran.

### **III. The Nuclear Issue and the Strategic Separation of State Power Issues**

“No one believes the Iranian mullahs’ statement that their nuclear program only uses for peaceful purposes” (Podhoretz, 2008: 11). Therefore, “President Bush connected ‘the Iranian nuclear issue’ with Iranian regime change, and he convinced that the best solution to Iranian nuclear issue was changing the Iranian regime” (Li, 2006: 49). The deadlock of the Iranian nuclear issue, in a large part, was caused by the Bush Administration’s confusion of two issues. The solution binding two different issues together increased Iran’s sense of insecurity and alertness and worsen the atmosphere to resolve the Iranian nuclear issue.

In other words, the Iranian decision-makers considered that the American aim is overthrowing their regime, or at least isolating Iran at the global level, which is one of the important reasons why Iran implemented the uncompromising policy (Sariolghalam, 2003: 70). In 2009, Western countries interfered in the Iranian presidential election, and the United States overthrew the Saddam regime under the mask of preventing Iraq from developing weapons of mass destruction in 2003. With the previous two events, Iran further was convinced that the contradiction between the United States, Europe and Iran is a fundamental one for regime struggle.

In recent years, a growing number of scholars have recognized, whether the Iranian nuclear issue can be resolved by negotiation, and one of the crucial factors is whether the United States and Europe have the ability and willingness to convince the Iran that the Iranian nuclear issue is a nuclear problem, rather than a regime problem (Perthes, 2008: 40). More and more domestic voices in the United States advocate of separating the two issues. Hamilton pointed out that the starting point for US-Iran dialogue should be “showing our respect for the Iranian people and abandoning the US policy of changing Iranian regime” (Ignatius, 2009: February 26). The Carnegie Peace Foundation

reported that the United States must assure Khamenei that Washington is prepared to recognize and respect the legitimacy of the Islamic Republic, and the US must correct its regime changing policy (Sadjadpour, 2008: 8). Cohen believes that Obama must convince Khamenei that the United States not only gives up its goal of regime change, but also regards Iran as a vital role for the regional stability (Cohen, 2007: December 26).

The idea of separating the power issues from the nuclear issue is the United States second-best approach, which is the consequence balancing the short-term benefits and the long-term threat and reflecting the shortage of available resources. That does not mean that the US policy makes a fresh start. In fact, the US politicians, academics and people, whether Democrat or Republican, have a strong consensus that "The United States should help other countries to achieve rights of life, liberty and pursuing the happiness, because they are universal, self-evident and inalienable rights, rather than the values which US output as a deserved lifestyle." (Gao, 2005: 213). In the long run, there is low possibility to abandon the attempt of changing the Iranian regime.

Obama has regarded restoring America's leadership as his duty, and has promised to strengthen common security by consolidation of the common humanity and argued that citizens of the world "should be able to select their leaders away from an atmosphere of fear". The US interest aims to ensure that people, who live in fear and poverty, can live a life with dignity and opportunities in the future (Obama, 2007: July/August). He believed, the era when the United States regains its perseverance has come. The United States should behold the valuable rights conferred by history; uphold the noble idea from generation to generation: all men are born free and equal, and everyone makes every effort to pursue opportunities of the happiness (Obama, 2007: July/August). Brzezinski, who has decisive influence on the Obama administration's foreign policy, strongly opposes abandonment of the concepts and principles. He stressed that the "a

great power will inevitably be weakened if it stop serve a certain concept.” (Brzezinski, 2008: 142). So, when taking office, Obama said that he was willing to dialogue with Iran without any preconditions, and went further in proposing to conduct face to face contact. But Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad still seriously expressed his hope that the United States should change its policies strategically rather than tactically, and demanded that the United States should fairly and equally treat other countries.

#### **IV. Multilateral Mechanism**

A multilateral mechanism is an indispensable negotiation platform for resolving international disputes, an important channel for disputing parties to communicate and exchange information. It also plays a pivotal role in the international dispute settlement process. The six-party mechanism of the Iranian nuclear issue consisting of the United States, Britain, France, Germany, China and Russia, has experienced the process of formation and development, and reflected the international political reality arising from the Iranian nuclear issue. To a certain extent, the fact whether Iranian nuclear standoff can break or not, depends on whether the United States take practical actions to actively improve the multilateral mechanism, and on what kind of attitude the Iranian take to the multilateral mechanism.

As the prototype of the six-party-Mechanism, three-country-mechanism in 2003 was consisted of Britain, France and Germany. “It has begun with the European discontents to the US which carried out the unilateralism and used military means to change the situation in the Middle East.” Europe has to prove that they could change a means to deal with foreign and security policy challenges.” (Perthes, 2008). The attitude of the United States towards three-country-mechanism has been experienced three stages: suspicion, recognition and finally participation. The United States believes, that despite European countries which have a “close

coordinated relation with the United States have partly become an agent of the United States" (Kissinger, 2006: May 16) but "on such an issue directly bearing on the safety, no matter how close the alliance is, the United States should not negotiate through agent." (Kissinger, 2006: May 16) .The reason of the participation of China and Russia to the coordination mechanism is the United States and Europe concern that "if China and Russia do not participate in this mechanism, Iran would have the chance to stir up tensions among various nuclear powers." (Kissinger, 2006: May 16). Certainly, China and Russia's participation also reflected that they have vital interests and corresponding roles and responsibilities in the Iranian nuclear issues.

No matter whether the mechanism was for three or six countries, they both played a positive role in the Iranian nuclear issue. From 2003 to July 2005, the coordination mechanism of the European troika once facilitated Khatami government to sign the Additional Protocol of NPT on December 18, 2003, and pushed Iran to sign the "Paris Agreement" of suspension of uranium enrichment activities with Britain, France and Germany on November 22, 2004. Since six countries' representatives met in London to discuss the Iranian nuclear issue on January 16, 2006, the six countries have formed a certain consensus on Iranian nuclear issue, such as stressing to maintain the authority of the non-proliferation system and advocating a diplomatic way to solve the Iranian nuclear issue.

Although the mechanism of the six countries played a positive role in the Iranian nuclear issue, the problems of the lack of legitimacy, obvious defects and the limited role still exist. Owing to the absence of Iran, the disputing party in the mechanism, it is essentially a coordination mechanism for big power standings, rather than a mechanism for a settlement of Iranian issue. To a certain extent, as an embodiment of the Bush Administration's policy repelling Iran, this mechanism is a tool for the US to impose diplomatic isolation on Iran at the global level. The exclusive mechanism cannot reflect the interests of Iran, and makes Iran's awareness to power politics and

intensify confrontations between Iran and the international community which leads to more complexities on resolving the Iranian nuclear issue.

In the view of the urgency and the real danger of the Iranian nuclear issue, the Obama administration is likely to further improve the mechanism to give it a full play. The US Under Secretary of State for the Iranian nuclear issue participated in the six-party talks between the six nations and Iran on July 2008. However, owing to being not authorized, Burns had no direct contact with representatives of Iran. Burns received a clear mandate in Geneva talks on October 1, 2009 and directly conduct a separate meeting with the Iranian representative. The major change suggests that Obama has changed the policy of repelling Iran.

The United States will also adopt more views of the Gulf countries. The Gulf States are neighbors of Iran. Bahrain, the UAE and other countries had historical and territorial disputes with Iran, so the Iranian nuclear issue involves its core security concerns (Kaye, & Wehrey, 2007: 111-128). Therefore, the interests of the United States and Gulf countries are highly consistent on the Iranian nuclear issue. Absorbing the Gulf States in the mechanism is propitious for the United States taking advantage of pressure from the Gulf countries, thus achieving its policy objectives and enhancing the legitimacy of the mechanism at the same time. When the United Arab Emirates Foreign Minister Al-nahayan met with US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on March 2, 2009, he expressed his worry that the United States may reach an agreement with Iran without negotiations with the Gulf countries. Clinton stated clearly that the US will consult with the leaders of the region, and listen to their views (Kessler, 2009: March 2). The concern of Al-nahayan reflected the common security of the Gulf States, while Clinton's response showed that on the Iranian nuclear issue, the United States may pay more attention to the voice of the Gulf States.

Some think tanks in the US have already made similar suggestions.

Richard Haas pointed out that the first step of the United States to improve US-Iran relations will be a US-Iran negotiation within a multilateral framework whose module should be the six-party talks on Korean nuclear issue. The module in which the regional countries participated provided an umbrella for the US-DPRK direct contacts (Haas, & Indyk, 2009: January/February). Of course, the final one is not necessarily the same with the "6 + 2" mechanism, but consist of other mechanisms guaranteeing the regular participation of Iran and receiving respects from the Gulf countries. Compared with the Bush administration, Obama's new administration would build a mechanism with more tolerance.

The possibility of establishing a more inclusive mechanism lies in another factor that is the position of Iran. Because Iran needs a platform to express its views, Iran is unlikely to refuse the eight-party mechanism. In particular, the mechanism could eventually evolve into a security mechanism in Gulf region; being outside of such mechanism is equally to self-isolation. However, if Iran treated the mechanism as a court of its trial, then the possibility of Iran rejecting to participate in strongly exists.

In addition, the Obama administration might try to build a bilateral mechanism to deal with the Iran nuclear crisis. After all, whether in politics, economy, or culture, Iran has an important role in the Middle East. The United States and Iran have shared common interests in a series of major issues such as the reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan (Sadjadpour, 2008: 2-3). A breakthrough in US-Iran relations and direct contact and negotiations with Iran on the nuclear issue will help the Obama's administration to plan the overall Middle East policy.

## **V. Conclusion**

In all, compared with his predecessor, the Iran's nuclear policy of the Obama administration has pragmatic, inclusive, strategic and

other characteristics which would contribute the nuclear issue to the direction of the rational game. The Iranian nuclear six-party talks in Geneva on October 1, 2009 with Iranian representatives made some progress including agreement to meet again within a month and the cooperation on verification of the newly released uranium enrichment facilities. The Iranian nuclear issue faces an important turning point. As Obama's the first substantive diplomatic action on the Iranian nuclear issue, the US representative participating in and directly talking with Iran directly reflected the above policy adjustment of the new government. At the same time, the US attitude has greatly promoted the success of the talks. The international community has reasons to believe that if the Obama administration overcomes the interfering factors and continued to maintain a mild attitude, the Iranian nuclear impasse is likely to break and enter into the substantive phase of negotiations.

Of course, the solution process of Iranian nuclear issue will last for a long time. Even if the US accepted the Iranian right of limited nuclear fuel production capacity, there are difficulties to identify in scale and to make substantial concessions in supervision measures ensuring the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear. While under the situation of mastering some of the strategic advantages in the present case, Iran will not easily compromise. Because of geo-strategic conflicts and cultural differences as well as the mistakes in mutual understanding for more than 30 years, the US-Iran relation is hard to improve in a short time.

Specifically, in the changing 21st century, factors affecting international politics are extremely diverse and complex. The US Iranian nuclear policy still depends on the interactions of many factors. For example, the Iranian reactions towards the policy adjustment of the US government have a direct bearing on whether the United States continued its mild policy. If Iran changed the attitude of cooperation, the possibility of swing back will increase correspondingly.

Iran's domestic political development also has a direct impact on



the United States' nuclear policy. After release of Iranian election results in 2009, due to electoral frauds, the Iranian reformist Mousavi and other candidates held a massive protest campaign and triggered the most serious political crisis since the Islamic Revolution of Iran. Under the pressure of conservatives in the US as well as his knowledge, Obama once expressed a strong side. In the next few years, Iran's domestic political struggle is still possible to induce the Obama administration to take a tougher policy.

In addition, through the financial crisis, the speed and extent of the US economic recovery and the progress of solving the problems in Iraq and Afghanistan will also affect the Iranian nuclear policy of the United States. If the progress on those issues went well, the United States will be more likely to implement a tough policy against Iran; on the contrary, the possibility of easing tension with Iran would increase.

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