

# U.S.-RUSSIAN DIALOGUE ON IRANIAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM (1991-2015)

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# STRUCTURE

- Policy Priorities
- Dialogue Timeline



- Background. What shaped the situation?
- Policy Features. A comparative analysis.
- Results. What was done?
- Missed Opportunities. What could have been done?
- Lessons. What can we learn from this?

# POLICY PRIORITIES

	The U.S.	Russia
Primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deterrence of the anti-American regime in Iran (ideally – regime change or its transformation)</li><li>• <b>No WMD in Iran</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stability both in Russia (Chechnya) and nearby (Central Asia, South Caucasus, Caspian Sea)</li><li>• <b>No WMD in Iran</b></li></ul>
Secondary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Good and stable relations with allies in the Middle East</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Economic cooperation</li><li>• Military cooperation</li><li>• Political cooperation in the regional and global contexts</li></ul>



# 1991-2000. U.S. ADJUSTS RUSSIAN POLICY (2)

## Achievements



- In part to U.S. pressure, Russia did not supply Iran with any centrifuges
- With U.S. help, Russia strengthened its export control regime
- Under U.S. pressure, Russia agreed to limit its cooperation with Iran

## Missed opportunities



- If the U.S. had invested more money into the Russian nuclear industry (through CTR), it might have been easier for Russia to abandon its cooperation with Iran (apart from the construction of Bushehr NPP)

## Lessons to learn



- Demanding everything from a counterpart is counterproductive. Instead, one should set feasible goals, focus on the main ones, and be ready to invest time, effort (and money) to achieve them
- Joint efforts are always better. For that, one needs to be ready to slightly adjust one's own approaches in order to accommodate the interests of a counterpart
- Abusing power (through the use of sanctions) against one's own partners delays the resolution of problems that both partners face

# 2001-2010. RUSSIA ADJUSTS U.S. POLICY (I)

Nuclear Crisis (I)

Nuclear Crisis (2)



Policy Features

## United States

- “Axis of evil strategy” strategy towards Iran
- No enrichment should take place (ideally – at all) until it is clear that there is no diversion of nuclear material
- Total distrust in Iran
- Moderate flexibility in bilateral cooperation with Russia
- Reluctant to share information

## Russia

- Elaborated general strategy towards Iran with an effectively coordinated foreign policy
- Enrichment is the right of any NPT Member-State as long as it complies with the Treaty
- Little trust in Iran
- Moderate flexibility in bilateral cooperation with the U.S.
- Ready to share information

# 2001-2010. RUSSIA ADJUSTS U.S. POLICY (2)

## Achievements



- UN SC managed to impose sanctions on Iran
- Due to both its own stance and U.S. pressure, Russia suspended SA-20 delivery to Iran
- Russia helped to convince Iran to sign the Additional Protocol to the IAEA Safeguards Agreement in 2003

## Missed opportunities



- The U.S. could have started negotiations with Iran as early as in 2003
- EU3 could have provided a more feasible plan in 2005 that could be accepted by Iran
- The U.S., Russia, and China should have entered the negotiations earlier

## Lessons to learn



- Stigmatizing one's own counterpart prevents one from beginning negotiations
- Watchful cooperation is the best way to have both reliable information on a counterpart and leverage against them
- Exchange of information is an effective way of influencing one's own counterparts

# 2011-2015. RUSSIA FACILITATES NEGOTIATIONS (I)

Preparation of Negotiations

Negotiations >>>



2011

2012

2013

2015

Policy Features

## United States

- Firmly believes all-out sanctions could bring about desirable results
- Considers both political and military ways of resolving the crisis, but later resorts to negotiations as the main strategy
- Ready to compromise but overly inclined to maximize its gains and minimize responsibilities

## Russia

- Believes tougher sanctions could lead to instability in Iran, might result in regime change and a major crisis in the region
- Regards political resolution of the crisis as the only acceptable one
- Innovative, and motivated to bring about positive results (step-by-step and reciprocity approach)

# 2011-2015. RUSSIA FACILITATES NEGOTIATIONS (2)

## Achievements



- No conflict between the U.S. and Iran took place; the U.S. managed to keep its allies from attacking Iran as well
- Being the only partner of Iran in the nuclear field, Russia was able to maintain Iranian trust and suggested that the negotiations between P5 and Iran take place on the principle of reciprocity
- The JCPOA has been concluded, and the parties mostly adhere to the plan

## Missed opportunities



- No major opportunity was missed.
- The JCPOA was the best deal that the parties (mainly the U.S. and Iran) could agree upon

## Lessons to learn



- Diplomatic means of resolving issues require enormous patience and effort, but they are worth it
- It is more effective to start from small steps, not demanding everything at once

# OVERVIEW

- Russia elaborates its strategy towards Iran. In cooperating with Iran, Russia is not watchful enough and trusts Iran to a greater extent, than it should.
- The U.S. patiently adjusts Russian policy by both offering incentives and imposing sanctions.
- Russia has shaped its strategy towards Iran and is convinced in the necessity of cooperation with Iran. However, the revelations regarding Iran in 2002 disappoint Russia.
- The U.S. and Russia closely cooperate on Iran, and the U.S. accepts the construction of the Bushehr NPP.
- EU3 negotiations with Iran are halted around 2005, which results in the imposition of a series of sanctions against Iran.
- Russia believes UN SC sanctions exhausted their potential, with unilateral sanctions undermining any positive dynamics and threatening to stir a political turmoil and result in a regime change in Iran.
- Together with EU3, Russia closely cooperates with both the U.S. and Iran to establish a bilateral dialogue and help the conclusion of the JCPOA.

1991

2000/2001

2010/2011

2015

# LESSONS TO LEARN. SUMMARY

- Diplomatic means of resolving issues require enormous patience and effort, but they are worth it
- Joint efforts are always better. For that, one needs to be ready to slightly adjust one's own approaches to those of the partner
- Exchange of information is an effective way of influencing one's own counterparts
- Abusing power against one's own partners delays the resolution of the problems that both partners face
- Stigmatizing one's own counterpart prevents one from beginning negotiations
- Demanding from a counterpart everything at once is counterproductive. Instead, one should set feasible goals, focus on the main ones, and be ready to invest time, effort (and money) to achieve them. It is more effective to start from small steps
- Watchful cooperation is the best way to have both reliable information on a counterpart and leverage against them

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!