

**ISTANBUL KÜLTÜR UNIVERSITY  
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**THE ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PUBLIC OPINION AND POLITICAL  
ELITES ON RELATIONS BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE  
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN**

**Master of Arts Thesis by**

**Chato SHAKER HAMID**

**(1310031004)**

**Department: International Relations  
Programme: International Relations**

**Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Özge ZİHNİOĞLU**

**September 2016**

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**Supervisor and Chairperson: Asst. Prof. Dr. Özge ZİHNİOĞLU  
Members of Examining Committee: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Burcu YAVUZ TİFTİKÇİGİL  
: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Yunus EMRE**

**September 2016**

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AEOI	:	Atomic Energy Organization of Iran
BBC	:	The British Broadcasting Corporation
CNN	:	The Cable News Network
EC	:	European Commission
ECHR	:	European convention on Human Rights
ECSC	:	European Coal and Steel Community
EP	:	European Parliament
EU	:	European Union
FCNM	:	Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities
IAEA	:	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICCPR	:	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
IRI	:	Islamic Republic of Iran
ITU	:	International Telecommunications Union
KDPI	:	Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran
NATO	:	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	:	Non-Governmental Organization
NPT	:	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty
PLO	:	Palestine Liberation Organization
TNRC	:	Tehran Nuclear Researches Center
UN	:	United Nations
USA	:	United States of American
USSR	:	The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

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## ABSTRACT

THE ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PUBLIC OPINION AND POLITICAL ELITES ON  
RELATIONS BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

Chato Shaker Hamid

The influence of public opinions and the political elite on leaders and decision-makers within a country and in domestic affairs is obvious. However, with the advancement of technology and tools, their impact on issues of foreign policy and international relations has become highlighted.

In this study, while investigating the problems and differences that exist between the EU and Iran in the international scene, it is attempted to identify the attitude of people and political elite towards Iran according to the measures taken by European Parliament against Iran and based on polls available.

This study examines the active role of Europe's political elites and public opinion in shaping foreign policy and decision-making related to issues of international reserves. It has introduced their negative attitude towards the behavior of the Islamic Republic of Iran at the international level as an obstacle to the development of relations between Iran and Europe.

**Key words:** public opinion, the political elite, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the European Union, European Parliament, polls, foreign policy, international relations, leaders and decision-making bodies.

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

Although, past and present, the impact of political elite on foreign and domestic policy of countries has not been a secret, the role of public opinion in shaping domestic policy and decisions in a country or political units has been more highlighted. Today, unlike the past, the highlighted and undisputed role of public opinions in international relations and calculations is clearly visible. It is considered as a major factor in evaluating national strength of the governments in the international arena as well. At present age, in addition to the constituent of the power of a state such as geographical, political, military, and economic elements and military in the international arena, its popular legitimacy is also mentioned. Accompanying and support of public opinion has contributed greatly to the legitimacy and political stability of a government, and ultimately, it is a major factor in the assessment of national power. According to some experts in international relations, we are witnessing the emergence of a new superpower in international relations and it is "public opinion" and its impact on international policy and decisions.

In fact, in the contemporary world, lack of consistency of public opinion with a political system means the crisis of legitimacy of that regime, and if the legitimacy of a political unit is threatened, that unit will face crises both internally and in international relations. Today, those governments are stable on the international stage that with a high degree of political legitimacy have been able to get the support of public opinion, and the people have been able to maintain their stability and survival in international relations. Now, those governments that have no strong popular base have tried to show a popular figure of their political system by recognizing the growing importance of public opinion in political relations. Understanding public opinion, which is one of the characteristics of democratic societies and the support for political power and sovereignty, has a high position. The main objective of this thesis is to discuss the potential impact of public opinion on foreign policy and international relations. For this, I examine how European public opinion affects the EU's policies regarding the Islamic Republic of Iran.



## 1.1 Research Questions

The research question in this thesis is related to the role of public opinions and the political elite in Europe on the European Union (EU) foreign policy. In the process of decision-making in foreign policy and international relations, public thought pressure and political elite is one of the influential and irrefutable factors on authority in adopting certain policies towards other actors in international relations. Accordingly, the aim of this study is relating the negative attitudes of people and the political elite of Europe towards the IRI as one of the reasons for and barriers to the development of relations between Europe and the Islamic Republic of Iran. In this regard, the main research question is: "Is negative attitude of the people and the political elite in Europe an obstacle to the development of relations between Iran and the European Union?" According to the main question discussed two puzzles (riddles) related and interdependent have been defined. These two puzzles are formulated in the form of minor questions to participate in the talks of this thesis.

Accordingly, the first sub-question is, "What factors cause excitation of European public opinion and the political elite toward Iran?" This question seeks to clarify the most important and effective factors causing divergence and challenge in relations between Iran and Europe: the issues that hurt and discomfort European public opinion and its leaders in relation to Iran. This means that the answer to this question will lead to detect and address issues that have caused the people of Europe not to feel secure about the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The second sub-question is "What is the public opinion in Europe and the political elite towards Iran?" The purpose of this question is tracking and following studies and surveys conducted by reputable and famous institutions and organizations in this field in the world in order to explain and reveal the ideas and thoughts of the people of Europe and Europe's political leaders about the Islamic Republic of Iran. The polls want to show whether Iran is a favorable state in Europeans' idea, or vice versa. Moreover, it explains the contribution of each factor in the development of these attitudes.

The similarity of this thesis with previous studies is that most of them have tried to clarify factors and challenges involved in the divergence between the Islamic

Republic of Iran and the European Union: among them are Kharqany (2009), Abbasi (2012), Bozorgmehri (2012), Amiri (2004), Golshanpajouh (2013), Khalozadeh (2011), Ahmadi Lafuraki (2013), Mousavizadeh (2011) and Izadi (2013). One of the differences between this study and previous studies by these people is that they have usually tackled only one of the factors affecting the relations between the parties. Amiri, Khalozadeh and Bozorgmehri have explained positions and performance of the EU towards Iran's nuclear program, Golshanpajouh has explained human rights and its status in the European Union policy toward Iran. Or they have dealt with the relationship between Islamic Republic of Iran with one or several member states in the EU. Ahmadi Lafuraki by examining the relationship between Iran and Germany, Mousavizadeh by writing a discussion of the relationship between Iran and Great Britain, and Izadi in the analysis of political relations between Iran and France are among these people. Among other differences of this thesis is that in addition to investigating the factors affecting the European Union's relations with Iran and analyzing European people's reasons to feel unsecure towards the Islamic Republic of Iran is examining the role of public opinion and the political elites in decisions concerning the Union's relations with Iran. Moreover, I have tried to refer to the surveys conducted in this regard so that it becomes clear if the image of the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI) in the opinion of people and leaders of Europe is positive or negative.

## **1.2. The main argument**

Think tanks strengthen public culture of citizens in matters of foreign policy and international relations by offering products of thought in the society. The rapid pace of globalization has made the operation of think tanks more important than ever. By fostering the process of global integration and convergence of events and international forces, citizens of different countries, especially the developed countries are deeply affected. That is why attention to global issues and recognizing these issues has received more importance for public opinion. Therefore, today it is impossible that leaders and political elites ignore public opinion in drawing the country's foreign policy and international relations. Therefore, in this thesis, the goal is to find how much the EU's countries pay attention to thoughts and attitudes of their people in their foreign policy towards the Islamic Republic of Iran. Therefore, this study examines the causes and factors that lead to negative attitudes of European

public opinion towards functions of Islamic Republic of Iran at the international level.

Meanwhile, in the framework of the main research question, the main argument of this thesis is that the pressures applied by the people and political elites in European societies over those in power and decision-making in Europe Union countries against the Islamic Republic of Iran is one of the obstacles to the development of relations between Iran and Europe. With guidance from secondary research questions, this study has tried to sum up the stimulating factors of public and the political elites' opinion in four factors. First, Iran nuclear program, second the issue of human rights violations by the Islamic Republic of Iran, third the Islamic Republic of Iran's support of terrorist groups, and the last Middle East peace process.

Research shows that the mentioned factors listed above are different in making the image of the Islamic Republic of Iran's negative in the eyes of the people of Europe and the European policy makers. In the polls conducted in this case, more than other factors, they have demonstrated their sensitivity to Iran's nuclear program and talked of the consequences and risks of these programs developing, which would create serious form of insecurity and concern for them.

### **1.3 Methodology**

Although there have been many articles about the history of relations between Iran and Europe, there has been no regular and detailed studies regarding the impact of public opinion and the political elites in decision-making in the European Union on Iran. Thus, in order to investigate the effect of public and Europe's political elites' opinions about the relationship with Iran, I prepared a questionnaire and sent to a number of political parties in Europe via e-mail. For this purpose, I delivered a questionnaire consisting of 11 questions on February 10, 2016 to the ruling party in Germany (Christian Democratic Union) and the ruling party in France (Socialist Party) via email and despite their promises, I received no answer. Thus, I relied on the secondary sources. To investigate the research, I was forced to refer to the following centers: 1) Contemporary Research Institute of Abrar Tehran, to reviews articles on the topic in Europe books that have been published in the institute, 2) Imam Sadiq University Press (PBUH) in Tehran, 3) Central Library and

Documentation Center of Tehran University, 4) analytical reports of Iran's Islamic Republic News Agency, 5) reviewing documents and papers Journal of foreign policy that was prepared at the Foreign Ministry's Institute for Political and International Studies, 6) various newspapers, and 7) Internet resources. As the information and data presented in this study have statistical aspects and we need to refer to analytical method for analyzing and processing the data, so this research, based on the nature and methods is descriptive-analytic.

#### **1.4. Research organizations**

This thesis includes four chapters and a conclusion. The first chapter in accordance with the principles of research method in international relations is dedicated to all the studies that include introduction, research questions, basic argument, research methodology, and research organization. Humanities, especially international relations, are full of various theories of theorists in history. Definitely, it is the existence and continuity of these theories that have led to the growth and dynamics of this complex field, so the second chapter has dealt with this subject that is studying theoretical views, theoretical issues.

In the third chapter, it is tried to explain and describe the factors affecting the relations between Europe and the Islamic Republic of Iran. At the same time, four factors including Iran's nuclear program, the subject of human rights violations in Iran, support for terrorist organizations and the Middle East peace process have been discussed. The fourth and final chapter has expressed the view and attitude of the elite and the people of Europe to the Islamic Republic of Iran. This research relies on polls conducted by organizations in this regard to explain the elite and ordinary people's views, and the end, the conclusion is presented.

## **CHAPTER 2: PUBLIC OPINION AND POLITICAL ELITES**

### **2.1. Public Opinion**

Amongst collective mental phenomena, public opinion is the most widespread and evident. This phenomenon with its powerful dynamo that determines the destiny of communities is like an engine which revolves the wheels of the society machine, a machine that constructs, destroys, speeds, slows, makes, a noise and falls into silence. Public opinion is nothing more than “people’s voice”. This voice always and everywhere has echoed in the receptive ears of rulers differently and has attracted the attention of addressees willingly or unwillingly (Lazar.p.11). Public opinion forms a portion of internal power of a nation. But it is not always the same, and like any other phenomena it changes and evolves. This evolution on the basis of social conditions of human beings is not the same every time. Also, the consequences and results arising from the divulgence of public opinion are different among different groups and communities (Shirazi.p.113).

In other words the public opinion of every society is made on the basis of cultural, social and valued forms of that society. In other words, every society has its own special collective reactions for different events that differ from time to time and a community to the other. (Lazar.p.12)

For directing public opinion the neutral part of people’s mind should be targeted. In other words public opinion doesn’t follow certain trends on some issues and the new thought can easily be inspired to the addressee because there is no previous mentality and sensitivity about new subjects. So these new messages are more effective than those which are against rooted beliefs of addressees and sensitive to them (Shirazi.p.120). There is a halo of obscurity and ambiguity on the emergence of public opinion. Opinions will be discussed when they have a clear and objective appearance and it is in after stages that discussions about the leadership and conducting of public opinion will begin. There is constantly this question in the

minds of public opinion experts that in what basis and mental backgrounds, the early seeds start to grow? And how by visible or invisible Intellectual leaders with intervention of pressure groups combine in a country and broadcast through communicative channels and based on people's judgment in the society has a clear and hidden appearance.

Some believe that, public opinion exists only in democratic governments and this is a symbol of democracy per se. While this is not true because public opinion also exists in lots of countries with totalitarian regimes and the only distinction is, public opinion in democratic countries is obvious but it is almost hidden in totalitarian countries and government and whispered among people. In fact public opinion shows itself when a society resists to an important social issue. So the advent and divulgence of public opinion in a society with one accord and complete unanimity is not something to be taken into consideration. (Dadgaran.p.28-29)

#### 2.1.1. The definition of public opinion and its characteristics

The term of public opinion is one of the basic concepts in sciences like social psychology, sociology, political science and communication. Various scholars based on their specialty have defined it differently. Almost all scholars apart from what definition they have for public opinion agree that the presences of four factors are essential regarding public opinion; there should be a subject that attracts people; there should be some people with common interests so that the subject is in connection with their interests; some measures should be taken to propagate the subject among people and lots of them have the same understanding of the subject; and this understanding exert its influence directly or indirectly. (Zareian.p.14)

On this basis we will point to some of the most important definitions that have been presented; Leonard W. Doob in his book under the name of "Public Opinion and Propaganda" says: "public opinion refers to people's attitudes on an issue when they are members of the same social group". (C. Hennessy.p.97) while Arthur Kornhauser says that "it is better to consider public opinion for existent aims as opinion and beliefs that are widespread among a certain population and within a special time that targets the national interests." (Dadgaran.p.26-27)

Gabriel Tarde -The French scholar of late nineteenth century: "The belief for people is like the soul in the body. in other words, public opinion is a set of people's judgments about current events that is acceptable to lots of people in the society." (Clark.p.54). As well as James Young-The professor of political science from US- defines public opinion as:"Social judgment of a self conscious group about important issues which have been discussed in that society before. James Bryce American sociologist defines public opinion as an obvious belief which is the most powerful one." (Shirazi.p.111-112)

On the other hand, Seán MacBride in his book "Many voices, one world" has defined public opinion as: we might profitably define public opinion by what it is not. It is not innate, but it is rooted in social and cultural structures. It is not simply the expression of the will of a people and, though it is closely linked with the public, it is not identical to it. Since it is not learned or imposed as a block by some recognized authority, it is not the same as an ideology. Finally, it is not equivalent to a body of knowledge, although it cannot exist without data and concepts generated by experience. Such data are used to judge whether the public approves or rejects a subject under consideration. For public opinion is considered to be that of people outside the decision-making process, external to the power centers, and differs from that of people who, because of their specific position, knowledge and skills, are responsible for decisions. (MacBride.p.196)

Jean-Jacques Rousseau The famous philosopher and writer and one of the founders of French revolution and the first political thinker of 18th century have presented a widespread analysis about public opinion. He believed that all rules have been established on the basis of public opinion. This doesn't necessarily weaken the government's force. Russo believed that someone whose responsibility is making law for people should be aware, how influence people's attitudes and control their feeling through these. (Zareian.p.14-15)

According to aforementioned definitions we can say that public opinion is a social –mental phenomenon with a collective characteristic and a reflection of social life of human beings that can be defined as: Public opinion is a kind of people's judgment on a public and differential issue at a specific time. Thus it is not the sum of individual thoughts but a result of individual or group interaction within special

cultural, social and economical context that can be called a kind of social production in total. In lots of cases it is a determinant factor and can impose itself on decision – makers. In other words public opinion is a kind of social awareness that emerges among those who have common interests and it has sentimental aspect with prejudice. When it is over generalized it can change to a general consensus.

#### 2.1.2. The effective factors and elements of public opinion formation.

Because of complexity, dynamism, being in a state of change and evolution, every phenomenon is under the effect of many factors. As a dynamic phenomenon undoubtedly the public opinion is not an exception and will be affected by factors which are effective in its formation, evolution and stability. Factors such as political systems, traditional customs and ruling culture, pressure groups, leaders and government officials, internal beliefs and the mass media are effective in formation, amendment and probably diversion of public opinion.

##### 2.1.2.1. Political Systems

These systems have a great role in public opinion formation. Therefore the leaders of political systems try to influence beliefs and opinion of their people by means of different facilities that they have. The mutual relationship between ruling political system and public opinion has developed a lot due to radical changes in the communication world. The most important and most efficient tool and communicative channel between these two are propaganda machines and mass media which political systems can use to transmit their programs and policies to people and receive their opinion and ideas. Thus, political systems constantly try to exert great control and supervision on mass media. (Shirazi.p122)

##### 2.1.2.2. Leaders and government officials

In many countries of the world from the far past leaders and government officials have had an important and great role in formation and directing public opinion. Throughout history, there have been different kinds of leadership that have been able to influence people's opinions and beliefs a lot. This influence is more obvious and recognizable in religious societies, because religious leaders usually have been as standard-bearers that have influenced not only their people but lots of



other groups and nations. Scientists of sociology believe that politician's attitudes and diction can be directional and conduct public opinion to a special direction. (Bagheri)

#### 2.1.2.3. Pressure groups

Pressure groups have important role in the formation and spread of public opinion about issues related to their own. These groups may be associated with political, economic and ideological issues; they often try through the mass media to influence their views. The influence of pressure groups to influence public opinion depends on the financial strength and human resources, structure and organization of that group. Pressure groups to dominate public opinion, they use the economic measures (such as bribery, various loans and gifts) Legal measures (applying their own opinion among officials in legal authorities, lawmaking and social rules in their favor) Destructive measures (launched protests and destructive actions directly or indirectly) and promotional measures (using various media). (Zareian.p.40)

#### 2.1.2.4. Faith and Religious Belief

With emergence and spread of divine religions, faith and religious beliefs have had a very sensitive and leading role in formation, directing and amendment of public opinion. In other words beliefs and people's religious dependence determine their attitudes and behaviors. The existence of different places to worship God such as mosques and churches has been very effective in formation and directing public opinion. So the effect of beliefs and religions of people in formation of public opinion is an undeniable fact. (Safavi.p123)

#### 2.1.2.5. The Mass Media

Regarding the meaning and concept of public opinion we can come to the conclusion that it is an internal hidden power and a kind of social power which is dynamic. The role and place of this phenomenon as an important and effective category within all aspects of social, political and economical life of human being has been worthy of consideration constantly in works and writings of authorities and scientists of communication sciences, sociology, social, psychology, politics, philosophy and other experts who study different issues of human societies and their

characteristics. One of the effective factors in fomentation, change, inactivity and frustration of public opinion is mass media. But their effectiveness is different due to their kind and nature. Or the amount and quality of mass media influence on public opinion, and the relationship between them depends on the place which society considers for mass media. We can say this relationship and effectiveness does not have the same state and it changes. However the daily development of mass media and emergence of communication era, the media has an undeniable role in formation and directing public opinion. In modern world everybody faces one or more media every day and will be influenced by it to a different degree.

Walter Lippmann-The famous commentator in the U.S. about the role of the press in public opinion formation writes: our beliefs are due to imaginations that things and issues have created in our minds and the daily press constitutes the big part of this imagination. (Shirazi.p125)

The transformation of traditional world into industrial, and its movement towards global village, the powerful speed of mass media and development of communicative methods have made public opinion not to be limited within geographical borders of a country and become an international issue. It is clear that these developments have provided a vast area for an exchange of ideas and business and services and development of educational and research institutions with international dimensions. So in this condition it is necessary that mass media work beyond the borders of a country to develop public opinion. Therefore written and audio-visual media of different countries especially developed countries try to globalize their activities.

Berelson and Janwitz, in their book under the name of “Reader in public opinion and Communication” have discussed the influence of mass media on public opinion and have written; the influence of mass media is large and different. These influences can be short term and long term, they can be powerful or weak, also they can be resulted from the content of mass media and can have mental, political, economical or social aspects. And probably they influence beliefs, values, information, skills, attitudes and superficial behaviors. (Berelson & Janwitz.p.379)

### 2.1.3. The position and power of media in public opinion formation

There are different theories about this which are;

#### 2.1.3.1. Hypodermic Theory

On the basis of this theory the message can be prescribed so that it affects the mind and heart of addressee. And the receiver has the same feeling as the sender. The message is like the drug in a syringe which has the desired effect after it has been injected to patient. So the media is the constructor of public opinion completely. (Zareian.p.26)

#### 2.1.3.2. Reinforcement Theory

According to this theory the addressee is active and the main effect of media is in stability and reinforcement of present ideas and believes and they cannot change the attitude of people. For example during the war, the news about war will be accepted sooner. (Habib)

#### 2.1.3.3. The two step flow of communication

On the basis of this theory the message of media reaches to intellectual leaders and transmits through real addressees (people). According to this theory the role of intellectual leaders is not to select the news only. But they also manipulate the news according to their attitudes and send out to addressees. Elihu Katz and Lazarsfeld have presented this theory. If intellectual leaders do not approve the news of media, it will not influence public opinion. Sometimes the media and intellectual leaders highlight a message together and give it to addressees. So on the basis of this theory intellectual leader constructs public opinion and with their silence they stop it. (Mirzaee)

#### 2.1.3.4. Agenda setting Theory

This theory says; in broadcasting messages, the media makes a kind of priority or highlights. This theory limits the effects of media in the scope of behavior. (Hosainkhah)

#### 2.1.3.5. Use and Gratification Theory

Among different kinds of media, based on our needs and demands we choose one which is satisfactory and it becomes our interest or unsatisfying and it does not

become our interest. Here we do not mean the literal meaning of satisfaction. Getting the news is satisfaction and it does not mean the news is negative or positive. The addressee is active, dynamic and explorer. The biggest and most important aim of media is making satisfaction in addressee. (Sirjanian)

#### 2.1.3.6. Dependent audience

According to this theory the message has an addictive effect on people's knowledge and mind. Based on their demands, the addressees are attracted to a special media and continuous need to information makes a kind of dependence for public opinion. The more needs of addresses, the more their dependency and the more dependency, the more effect. (Zareian.p28)

#### 2.1.3.7. The spiral of silence theory

Noelle Neumann argues that three traits of collective communication, it means density, widespread (everywhere) and unison is combined to create more powerful effects on public opinion. Unison means the same pictures of an event which are common among different newspaper, TV channels and other media. Overcome by unison effect, people cannot choose any different messages and it shows that the majority consider the news as presented by the media. Another factor is the spiral of silence. People have guesses about the distribution of public opinion on a disputable matter. They try to determine if they are majority or not. And then they try to determine if public opinion change is agreeable to them or not. If they feel they are minority, they'll be inclined to be silent about subject. The role of the mass media is very important because it is a reference for people to find the distribution of public opinion. (Sirjanian & Nasiri, the effect of soft power over public opinion formation in cyberspace)

#### 2.1.4. The role of public opinion in international relations

In modern world, public opinion has gained a more important role in international relations, so much that it has become an effective tool to defend and attack the others. In the past, powerful countries provided their interests by military occupation of other countries without considering public opinion. England during its military presence in India was looting the wealth of that nation and some other time

there was a reaction to Soviet invasions in the west. Or Americans with their obvious support for Iran's king overthrew the national government of Dr. M. Mosadegh without any kind of reaction from the world. But nowadays with modern technology, the global relations have changed and electronic revolution and information technology has made the world a global village. So much that governments cannot even rule their countries with totalitarian regimes and powerful countries cannot attack other countries to gain more resources and wealth like the past time. (Najafi)

What prevents powerful ones not to be able to violate the rights of other nations easily in this global village is the pressure of public opinion. Today every incident spreads quickly all over the world and other nations and international organizations react to it, even if countries close their doors to domestic and foreign news agency.

The speed of information transition in the world can make a sharp sword from public opinion. It sometime can be the most powerful defense mechanism and retreats the enemies like Mahmud Abbas' efforts in United Nations organization for recognizing Palestine as an independent county. It also some other time can overthrow a government and destroy its wealth and security centers. "The presence of occupying forces in Iraq and Afghanistan was on the basis of public opinion persuasion that Saddam and Al-Qaida and Taliban are not reliable for global security".(Najafi)

So it can be seen in the case of malfunctions of a government or a nation (unconventional to global accepted rules) makes a sword from public opinion. Nowadays superpowers in this global village argue that you cannot do what you want regardless of international laws. In other words you cannot dig a hole in a ship that you are sitting on. So it is reasonable for every country not to be confronted with such a finale.

Nowadays the most important factors which influence public opinion in the world are; racism, terrorism and propagation for Taliban and Al-Qaida beliefs, violation of international treaties and rules, human rights abuse, obtaining weapons of mass destruction and finally not respecting the rights of sovereign nations. So

when a country or society acts regardless of international accepted laws, gives the best opportunity to the other. (Najafi)

Public opinion persuasion and justification of policies are modern functions of international relations. International communications plays an important role in international affairs. By using international, news and communicative media, different countries try to persuade public opinion and justify their foreign policy and follow their national interests and promote their position in international system. Because contrary to past, it is not military power which determines the power of a country but its ability in using the media determines its real power. (Carbasiyan)

#### 2.1.5. Public opinion polls

Opinion poll is an organized effort to show people's beliefs about a topic in a special place and in certain time. Its results show that why people have accepted a certain belief and how they support it. So opinion poll is an activity which in addition to for political activists (in order to take people's votes or lead public opinion) has had usages for others like; planners (for policy – making), sociologists (with the aim of knowing attitudes and behavior of people), the owners of the media (to measure the amount of satisfaction), managers of industries (to promote quality and productions) and economists and businessmen (for sale and marketing). Also considering this fact that a large number of human work force are working in different institutions, organizations, offices, factories, opinion poll can be used by managers of these units to understand public opinion about different things like job satisfaction, cultural needs, rumor and rumor spreading.

One of the most important actions of public relations is paying attention to public opinion in the society, because public relations are a connection ring between the organization and people. It can understand needs, issues, complexities of an organization and with connection to an opinion poll center and getting necessary information about different parts of an organization. Like administrative, scientific, cultural and social sectors attain a practical tool and give the results to their respective officials for improving the situation under the supervision of leader or chairmanship. (Moradpour)

##### 2.1.5.1. The characteristics and usages of opinion poll and its methods

As one of the scientific methods in modern era, opinion poll has an appropriate position among institutions and different economical, political, social and cultural organizations in the world. And it is one of the Important, precise and scientific tools of these organizations to institutionalize their goals and demands. In a multilateral relation among organizations, people and public opinion, officials and managers and finally services and goods, opinion poll can bridge the gap and bring them together. Some total advantages of opinion poll are;

- 1) In economy and business it is a tool for marketing and selling goods and finding customers and job satisfaction.
- 2) Within politic scope it is a means of studying people's attitudes and beliefs about political groups and parties and participation of people in politic and elections.
- 3) Within culture scope to study attitudes and public values of social events like: sport, the cinema, films, the press, religion.
- 4) Within social scope it is a means of research about people's satisfaction from the function of different organizations, how much the employees are interested in working in an organization and to study social events like consultations and social gatherings.

Also there are some partial characteristics foe opinion polls; the highest amount of satisfaction among the personal of an organization through understanding their demands; Reply to people and public opinion about different activities and services; The study of annual function and activities of an organization and its feedback in public opinion and comparison with past years; The study of new changes in organization and its feedback in the society; Opinion poll about different elections; The study of social security and the function of responsible authorities ; The study of people's view points about foreign policy; The study of job satisfaction in organizations; And the kind of goods that people consume and their new demands. So we can say that opinion poll as a scientific method can be useful within all social systems and it helps administrative organizations. At the same time this method is scientific and empirical and it uses different filters and steps with experts' help to study different topics of organizations. These steps include; primary outline, consulting with experts, elementary and theoretical studying of issues and making a

model to work, the tools for gathering information, classification of data, analyzing and finally suggestions.( Kakoyi)

There are different ways and methods to be aware of public opinion; First directly by mean of questionnaires and interviews. Second: indirectly through analyzing the messages of newspapers, radio and television programs, and lectures. (Gazer pour)

## **2.2. Political Elites**

### 2.2.1. The concept of elite

Elite is taken from the word (Eligere) which means selection or choose. It is used to explain the quality of goods and commodities which has some features and comparison with other commodities. Elite in the most general sense is a group of people who hold high positions in any society. (Mobasheri)

According to Pareto (Italian sociologist 1848-1923), elites are who possess exceptional and unique characteristics or has great talent and ability in their respective fields or in some of their activities. (Naqibzadeh.p.35)

### 2.2.2. The theories of elitism school

In general there are four kinds of theories in elitism school which everyone has its own approaches which are;

#### 2.2.2.1. Organizational approach of Mosca and Michels

Both Mosca and Michels believe that the presence of elites and their hegemony over society depends on their organizational abilities and their position. In summary an organized minority always governs disorganized majority in the society. Mosca's theory is basically based on organized minorities' superiority over unorganized majority. This organized minority consists of ruling class, but for Mosca it is not necessarily mean that always interest of ruling class and subject classes are different. To him, in contrast they coincide many times. He saw the future of socialist system by saying that it will be governed by officials. (Delican.p.328) to Michels organizations are the only means for the creation of a collective will and they work



under the Iron Law of Oligarchy. He explicitly points out the indispensability of oligarchy from the organizations by saying that "It is organization which gives birth to the domination of the elected over electors, of the delegates over delegators, who says organization, says oligarchy. (Delican.p.327)

#### 2.2.2.2. Psychological approach of Pareto

To Pareto elites are those people who possess in marked degree qualities of intelligence, character, capacity, of whatever kind. More precisely if we grade every individual regardless of any ethical judgment, according to their branch activity and occupation in the society, we find at each grade level there will be a certain amount of individuals, which consists of a class. In this class hierarchy, people who are in the class which is on the top of the other classes are called, "elite". (Delican.p.323) Pareto in his approach, mainly emphasizes on people's psychology and based on their psychological essence are divided into two groups, elite and the masses. He believes that elites are always in power and will be in power and the history is the cemetery of aristocracies. (Eshaghi)

#### 2.2.2.3. Institutional approach of Charles Wright Mills

Mills, in his book - the power elite - investigates the experimental construction of political power in America and believes that within American society, major national power now resides in the economic, the political, and the military domains. Other institutions seem off to the side of modern history, and, on occasion, duly subordinated to these. Within each of the big three, the typical institutional unit has become enlarged, has become administrative, and, in the power of its decisions, has become centralized.

Behind these developments there is a fabulous technology, for as institutions, they have incorporated this technology and guide it, even as it shapes and paces their developments. (C.Wright.p.7-8)

#### 2.2.2.4. Bureaucratic approach of James Burnham

James Burnham is in agreement with Marx that those who control production tools have power and admits that after industrial revolution these people were capitalists. In developed and industrial communities the control of production tools

has transmitted to some people like members and bureaucracy that have the specialty. In his opinion these are new elites. In his book - The revolution of managers - He has described the process of ownership segregation and control of production tools as the most important characteristics of modern communities. So in capitalistic communities managers have the real power not landlords and shareholders. The position, role and function of managers do not depend on ownership maintaining and capitalistic economy relations at all. But they depend on technical essence of modern production process. (Rush)

### 2.2.3. The role of elites in decision making process

The role of elites in decision making process in different societies has two forms: directly and through formal mechanisms and indirectly which may be formal or informal.

#### 2.2.3.1. The participation of elites in decision making process through formal mechanisms

Formal mechanisms are those measures which have been designed to administer the country and there are different organization and institution to manage the society. In general, an institution legislates and makes new laws, another upholds the law and the other supervises good management of laws and confronts those who break the laws. In smaller scales some of them have security roles. These different institutions are components of a big system that conduct and manage the society. Lots of activities done by elites in these organizations and institutions have a legal frame. Also the role of elites in decision making often starts in these places. (Qasemi.p.164-165) the participation of elites in decision making processes has different forms like: Accepting the responsibility and making decisions, consultation and giving information to managers, membership in councils.

#### 2.2.3.2. The indirect participation of political elites in decision making process

Participation in decision making is not always direct. In a lot of cases the activities of elites are not related to decision making processes directly, although they work within the framework of a legal and formal organization or institution. Those elites who work in this sector are ruling elites and non-ruling elites that none of them

have participation in decision making process directly but they influence this process indirectly. This influence might have the following forms:

#### 2.2.3.2.1. The personal influence of non ruling elites on decision making process

It maybe sometimes elites influence the decision making process as a person. This is when a person has a high position and social dominance. For example: religious leaders, national characters like national heroes, the revolution fighter and respectable and retired political leaders. These people because of their position and authority over the society and being respectable to all, they have the power to influence the society. (Bigdeli)

#### 2.2.3.2.2. Participation in educational systems specially universities

Some of elites, especially intellectual elites are active in educational systems of universities. Their duties are to teach and educate in different courses. The students who graduate from these centers although have their unique character but will be influenced somehow by their professors. After graduation they use different ways of tackling problems that have leaned from their professors. When these students are employed in administrative institution and organizations, try to use their teachings and theoretical and mental frameworks that have learned to make decisions. So there are not some people in decision making process but their mental and theoretical frameworks are being used by some others in decision making process. (Qasemi.p.169)

#### 2.2.3.2.3. To influence decision making process through the media

The media is controlled by elites. They manage the media and produce different programs. So elites use the media and to express their viewpoints by controlling and producing programs. Using the media has provided a powerful tool for elites to influence the decision making processes because their media deals with different topics and many addressees. (Qasemi.p.171)

#### 2.2.3.2.4. Affecting decisions making process through influential groups

The influential groups are those people who have the same viewpoint and joint interests and try to put in practice their views and provide their interests using

different levers to effect institutions and put in practice their views. Influential groups unlike political parties do not want political power but they constantly try to put pressure on political power and decision making centers to provide their interests. In general influential groups are divided into two groups: Ideological and Occupational groups. (Bigdeli)

#### 2.2.3.2.5. Affecting decision making process through activities of parties

Another form of participation of elites in decision making process is through political parties. Power struggle is one of the main characteristics of political parties. When a political party takes power, its leaders become the ruling elites and will have an opportunity to participate in decision making process directly and through formal mechanisms. But when parties are not in power or lose power after elections, are not ruling elites and become non-ruling elites and they no longer can participate in decision making process directly and through formal mechanisms. (Qasemi.p.174-175)

Because this chapter is dedicated to defining the concepts of public opinion and political elites as well as different definitions have been proposed of these two concepts, I have tried to select a definition that has the most common point among all definitions. In the description of the factors influencing the formation of public opinion, I have noted on many factors, and I have discussed among these factors on the impact of mass media in particular and more detailed. Because many factors are involved in the formation of public opinion in the Europe, such as media and political leaders, etc.

Whatever is related to theories of political elites, several theories have been taken. Because the political elite in the Europe can be individuals, according to Pareto's theory that have a higher power than others in the persuasion and influencing public opinion or that people are organized in the form of parties and groups according to the theory of Mosca and Michels.

## **CHAPTER 3: THE FACTORS EFFECTING ON EUROPEAN PUBLIC OPINION AND ELITES AGAINST IRAN**

### **3.1. The file of Iran's nuclear program**

#### **3.1.1. The history of nuclear activities of Iran**

The first ambitious of Iran to access nuclear technology dates back to 1950s. The Pahlavi regime on the basis of its relations with United States of America became a member of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in 1958. Also on July 1st 1968 Iran accepted (NPT) a Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and national parliament of Iran approved it on March 5th 1970. The center of nuclear researches of Tehran (TNRC) and Atomic Energy organization of Iran (AEOI) were established in 1967 and 1974 respectively. It was responsible for building four power stations in Busher and Darquin, making fresh water installations in Busher, providing fuel and technological support for power plants and a contract of building four other power plants in Esfahan and Markazi province. At the same time Tehran and Shiraz universities began to educate students on nuclear engineering respectively. AEOI had begun negotiations with American, French and German companies in the early 1970s to achieve its above mentioned objectives. And in 1974 (AEOI) signed an agreement with American Stanford Research Institute about producing 20 thousand megawatt electric power until 1995 through installing power stations in Iran.(Bahman)

Within the last years of Pahlavi regime and in 1974 the government contracted German company (Siemens) to build two reactors of light water in Busher with 1300 megawatt power. Also the regime signed an extensible ten year contract of nuclear fuel cycle with America in 1974, West Germany 1976 and France 1977. In 1974 according to NPT, Iran reached an agreement with IAEA and accepted to let inspectors of IAEA to inspect the power stations. In 1975 while Craftwerk Union Company in western Germany was working on Iran's nuclear stations, Iran bought 10% of shares of the Eurodif Uranium enrichment company that was arranged to be

built in Tricastin, France. On the bases of this, Iran could access to enrichment technology and receive a specific amount of enriched uranium that was needed for production of radioisotopes of its reactors and mainly for medical purposes. Iran invested a total of 2 billion dollars in Eurodif installations. (Amir Chaqmaqchi)

In 1975 the US congress passed a law permitting the government to do business with Iran and Iran's nuclear activities was announced normal. Also a 6 billion \$ contract with Iran followed the new law to sell atomic technology to Iran. In 1977 France entered nuclear activities of Iran formally. On October of that year France made an agreement with Iran to build two power stations with the capacity of 900 megawatt in Darquin and near Ahwaz and Framatome company was responsible to do that. The project didn't make much progress and stopped by Iran's revolution practically. This contract with France and attempts of Shah Government to build nuclear substructures, made atomic experts of America to think that Iran has begun researches to make nuclear weapons and nuclear research center in Amir Abad-Tehran is the main center of this program. There was not any document about these suspicions regarding frequent inspection of IAEA. However there have not been confidential documents in this regard and Iran's revolution changed nuclear activities of Iran. (Alikhani)

During the revolution of 1979 one of the reactors of Busher had 85% progress and the construction of other one had 65% physical progress. The development of Darquin power plant was only 3 percent. Since the establishment of Islamic Republic there was a kind of indifference to nuclear program. So that working on above mentioned power stations stopped for two to three years. And during Iran-Iraq war these power plants have come under attack several times. (Alikhani)

### 3.1.2. The stand of political forces of Iran on nuclear program

To understand the stand of political forces of Iran on nuclear program one should differentiate among nuclear energy, nuclear technology and nuclear weapons. Iranian stand on nuclear program can be divided into four main groups:

- 1- Those who are against nuclear energy and believe that considering oil and gas resources of Iran, it isn't economically justified for Iran to invest nuclear energy and rely on foreign technology with its environmental dangers.

2-Those who agree with nuclear energy but they are against nuclear technology specially enrichment of uranium and separation of plutonium. They believe that Iran's attempts to achieve nuclear technology (uranium enrichment and separation of plutonium) would endanger national security.

3-Those who believe that nuclear program should not go beyond the borders of nuclear technology.

4- Those who want nuclear weapons.

It seems that second and third viewpoints have more supports inside the country. Conservative forces in total swing between third and fourth viewpoints and reformist groups fluctuate between second and third stand. The intensification of this crisis can cause more active role of people and opposition forces in this field and maybe it will change the alignment. Among opposition groups outside the country every viewpoint has its supporters. Although in comparison with inside, fourth stand has the least and first stand has the most supporters. It should be noticed that political consideration of opposition groups makes their position on nuclear program very difficult.

With changing the balance of power in Iran's politics, the reformist groups have lost their influence on Iran's nuclear program significantly. Also the Conservatives are several groups. One group demands Iran withdrawal from NPT. While the other wants to continue negotiations with NPT and find suitable ways of uranium enrichment. It is worthy of attention that obtaining nuclear technology is a strategic advance for both groups to protect Islamic Republic. (Zamani)

### 3.1.3. The position of the European Union on Iran's nuclear program

Although European have expressed their worries about Iran's nuclear activities in the past two decades, but the issue of Iran's nuclear program dates back to Mohammad Al Baradei's (the former secretary of IAEA) visit from Natanz in the early of 2003. At that time an experiment on some centrifuges showed that Iran has installations and can work on uranium enrichment. After visiting Natanz Mohammad Al Baradei announced that the world has been shocked by Iran's activities.

America's exploitation of these comments paved the way to claim that it is completely true that Iran is trying to get nuclear weapons.

In general, Europeans were very sensitive about nuclear activities of Iran from 1990s. But they considered it as normal on the basis of IAEA reports and were not under the influence of United States of America. However Iran's nuclear activities have always been a basic issue in what it called constructive and critical negotiations with Iran. The European Union has always tried to encourage Iran to observe the treaties and international disarmament. (Khalozadeh. Europe Book 10. p.168)

After September 11 attacks, the European Union gave more importance to terrorism and nuclear weapons than violation of human rights, and got close to US regarding these issues. The explosion of - Bali - that was attributed to Muslims doubled these worries. And destroying nuclear activities of those countries that did not have nuclear weapons and fighting terrorism became top priorities of America.

On the basis of this strategy and condemnation of Iran for development of nuclear weapons in the scope of military forces, restricted Iran's foreign policy in international system. Assaulting Afghanistan by America to fight terrorism especially Al-Qaida group, made them escape and both European Union alongside America accused Iran of giving protection to members of Al-Qaida group. Iran has always denied these accusations. All of these issues made Iran's foreign policy lose its prestige that had gained during Mohammad Khatami's presidency.

It can be said that from that time the views of the US and the EU became the same. So Iran could not use the European Union's power against the US and hold the balance of power. But the greatest challenge between Iran and EU - US was additional protocol that Iran should join. On May 1997, IAEA approved additional protocol to increase its abilities to prevent those unsaid activities of countries that did not have nuclear weapons. All members of NPT should sign this protocol. In other words additional protocol imposes more instructions on these countries. (Chen Zak p.12) And countries without nuclear weapons could accept this protocol. This is a mutual protocol between IAEA and countries without nuclear weapons and it is not a collective agreement, so all of those countries which are related to this protocol should accept it.



Despite the fact that Iran was the first country in the Middle East which has accepted NPT in 1970s but together with Iraq and North Korea did not accept additional protocol. USA and EU put pressure on Iran to accept additional protocol. Then EU gave Iran an ultimatum demanding that it should accept complete inspections of IAEA, or business relations of Iran and EU will be suspended. This ultimatum was on July 22nd 2000 and pointed out that it will overshadow Iran's relations with other countries. (Ahto Lobjakas)

The reasons that Iran did not accept additional protocol can be summarized as following:

1-Iran believed that according to article 4 of NPT can use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and other powers like EU and US cannot intervene.

2-Iran believed that there shouldn't be distinction among countries in accepting additional protocol and specially NPT. This means that NPT imposes tough conditions on countries without nuclear weapons but there are not these conditions for countries which have these weapons. In addition, Israel that has not signed this treaty and has more than 200 nuclear warheads never has been interrogated and there is not any pressure on Israel to accept this protocol.

3- The inspectors of IAEA are from powerful countries and pursue special aims to spy on these countries for powerful countries. (Chen Zak. same)

#### 3.1.4. The reasons of European Union entry to Iran's nuclear negotiations

From EU point of view any asymmetric power in the Middle East will change the regional and international balance of power. On the basis of this attitude, any attempt by Iran to achieve nuclear power can result in changing regional balance of power and this means Iran has the position and potential tools to change international politic equation. The Europeans consider Iran's nuclear technology as an attempt to achieve nuclear weapon because they think that Iran has no popularity among Its Arab neighbors and with the exception of Israel policies in Palestine there is not any common ground between Iran and its Arab neighbors.

The Europeans believe that Iran thinks it is essential to have nuclear power to decrease its vulnerability in Middle East because it had some unpleasant experiences

like 8 years fighting with Iraq and America's military invasion to neighboring countries, including Iraq and Afghanistan. Although Iran has always said that its nuclear efforts is peaceful, but this issue has become a political agenda in European Union. Europe has various reasons to oppose Iran's nuclear program, like:

1-Iran's missile capability has had a rapid development and missiles with a range of 2000 kilometers can target both Europe and Israel. These missiles can carry nuclear weapons; the third world war will be probable because Israel will invade Iran. (Haj Jafari. P.56)

2- Mistrust about Iran's nuclear program: What makes Europe not to trust Iran in its nuclear program is the fact that Iran has situated in the Middle East, neighboring countries like India and Pakistan (which have atomic weapons) and it is close to countries like Israel. Caustic comments of Iranian officials about Israel have always provoked this country to attack Iran. Because Israel feels the country is under threat of Iran. So, in this condition it is not a far –fetched topic for Iran to achieve atomic weapons as Europeans think.

Another matter that makes Europe not to trust Iran is a historical similarity to those countries which have nuclear weapons. It is hard for them to believe that Iran only pursues peaceful purposes in its nuclear program. For example the atomic program of France is the same as Iran, historically. Also the French, had achieved nuclear weapons before World War II, but it was after the war and during the presidency of General de Gaulle, that French put a peaceful nuclear technology on its agenda. They never confessed to diversion from peaceful purposes until they tested their first atomic bomb in 1960. So on the basis of this history; it is hard for the French to believe that Iran only pursues peaceful purposes in its nuclear program.

And the last reason why Europeans do not trust Iran in its nuclear program, is Iran's support for some groups like Hezbollah and Hamas in the past three decades. so they think that Iran wants to damage Israel's entity whit help of its partners. (Ebrahimifar & Areinfar. p.113-114)

3) Europe is one of the most important supporters of NPT, and European politicians believe if they cannot stop Iran's nuclear program, NPT and IAEA as the only

competent source to supervise nuclear program of members, will become null and void. (Bozorgmehri. p.300)

4- Environmental worries: maintaining and managing atomic installations needs a high level technology which Iran lacks. Every kind of negligence in exploitation of a nuclear power station (for example busheh) will lead to radioactive leak into Persian Gulf and contaminate all of oil sources. This means, European consumers that provide 50 percent of their oil from Persian Gulf, should get petrol, contaminated with radioactive. In their cars which is unacceptable for them. So, both international environmental organizations and European consumers have doubt on management and technological facilities to maintain standards of power stations and fear that their health is endangered. (Ebrahimifar & Areinfar. p.115)

5. Arms race in Middle East: Iran's attempts to achieve nuclear technology have made other countries in the region to have the same objectives and there is a growing tendency to develop nuclear power in the world. Nuclear weapons make a powerful country from Iran to pursue its interests with more power. Iran's access to nuclear weapons will lead to arms race and provoke other countries in the region to follow the same program and nullify the laws and related organizations. (Ebrahimifar & Areinfar. p.116)

### 3.1.5. Iran's nuclear choices after September 2001

As we mentioned before, Iran's nuclear crisis, was begun with Mohammad Al Baradei's report (the former secretary of IAEA) to June 6th 2003 meeting. The general secretary of IAEA pointed to Iran's shortcomings in not reporting some of nuclear activities and then mentioned Iran's positive behavior to compensate for past shortcomings and demanded Iran to sign the additional protocol. The board of governors also criticized Iran for not reporting some of its activities at the end of its meeting on June, 8th, 2003 and demanded Iran to sign additional protocol. Also the general secretary of IAEA was assigned to make another report for September 2003 meeting.

After the report of general secretary and the statement of board of governors of IAEA based on Iran's shortcomings, the international pressures intensified on Tehran to accept and sign the additional protocol. In this regard the European Union said in

its meeting on June 2003 that the continuation of political negotiations and economical relations with Iran depend on accepting additional protocol. On September 2003 the European Union issued a statement demanding Iran to accept and sign additional protocol without any preconditions and immediately, to be confident of Iran's nuclear activities. (Amiri. p.248)

On September 2003, Iran's nuclear crisis reached its climax because on the basis of IAEA inspections on Iran's nuclear centers, from June to September 2003, it was revealed that Iran has not reported some of its activities. Mohammed Al-Baradei in his report to board of governors on September 2003 highlighted Iran's shortcoming in not reporting its activities. After analyzing this report, the board of governors passed a resolution demanding Iran to do the following actions; 1- complete stopping of uranium enrichment activities; 2- To sign 93+2 protocol immediately and determined a deadline to it; 3- Making the complete declaration of its nuclear program; 4- Complete cooperation with inspectors of IAEA. (Ziyabigdeli. p.13-14)

Also on October 2003, the European council declared its worries about Iran's nuclear program and supported the resolution of board of governors, and demanded Iran to observe all of above- mentioned cases. The foreign ministers of EU also announced that, extension of relations with Iran depends on its cooperation with IAEA. (Amiri. p. 249-251)

The report of IAEA and the declaration of EU that obliged Iran to accept the additional protocol was at a time that united states of America insisted on sending Iran's nuclear program to united nations security council. So Islamic Republic of Iran for a good management of this crisis and on the basis of a "cost - benefit" analysis had to make a strategic choice. There were four strategic choices for IR of Iran; First, withdrawing from NPT; Second, removing nuclear installations. Third, not accepting additional protocol .Fourth; accepting additional protocol and cooperation with IAEA.

#### 3.1.5.1. Withdrawing from NPT

On this basis Iran ends its cooperation with IAEA and under article 10 of the NPT, withdraws from this treaty. But it was hard and even impossible for Iran to do so, because withdrawing from NPT had many security threats for Iran's national

security: first, in case of withdrawing from this treaty, Iran's case will be sent to Security Council certainly, (It was sent to Security Council on February 2006) because there was a kind of international agreement on accepting additional protocol by Iran in the summer 2003. So withdrawing From NPT was the beginning of a process called (Iraqize) for Iran. In the other words, being under unlimited inspections of Security Council, away from IAEA and additional protocol regulations under the article 7 of United Nations charter, also, within the framework of seventh chapter, it is possible to exert political, economical and finally violent and stiff penalties on Iran. Second, withdrawing from NPT was meant a diversion towards making nuclear weapons in the public opinion of different countries from Non - Alignments and Russia and china to Europe, so they thought that Iran is a threat to international security and it is unavoidable to face it. (Abbasi. Foreign policy challenges of the Islamic republic of Iran and the European Union in the period after September 11.p.224-225)

Therefore withdrawing from NPT had great security, political and economical costs for Iran, including: the global consensus against Iran, a reduction in Iran's international prestige, political isolation, economical sanctions, interruption of economical relations, preventing Iran from reaching to global technology and capital. As a result it could endanger Iran's independence and sovereignty and development and decrease its national power and political legitimacy.

#### 3.1.5.2. Removing nuclear installations

The second choice for Iran was, removing and abandoning its nuclear activities. The supporters argued that attempts to achieve nuclear technology are not profitable for the country. In fact Iran does not need nuclear technology and energy, considering that Iran has great sources of energy like oil and gas. In addition, insisting on nuclear technology would not be in the national interest now and endangers the security of Islamic Republic of Iran.

This choice had great costs for the country because: first, nuclear technology is one of the most important factors of power in 21st century and it is like a platform for more developments. Second, having peaceful nuclear power and fuel cycle is an important deterrent power that provides the security for country by itself. Third:

nuclear technology will increase the bargaining power of Iran in the region and world because diplomacy always needs supporting power of hardware and software. Fourth, the abovementioned factors improve the position and role of Iran as a regional power in the world and region. Fifth, on the basis of domino effect, United States of America will expand it to missile disarmament, if Iran abandons its nuclear installations. Sixth, abandoning nuclear technology as an element of national power will cause a national desperation and weakens the national mentality as another element of national power. Consequently all of these will decrease the coefficient of national security. (Dehghani. nuclear negotiations of Iran and Europe p.5)

So on the basis of logic and cost interest analysis, it was not reasonable for Iran to abandon its rights in NPT and even additional protocol because in cooperation with IAEA, Iran had accepted unlimited inspections so, decision - makers could not choose this case, because it had great costs for Iran.

#### 3.1.5.3. Not accepting additional protocol

It was another choice for IR of Iran to ignore the resolution which issued on September 2003 by board of governors of IAEA. It means not accepting the additional protocol 93+2, not reporting the details of its nuclear activities and continuing uranium enrichment. While the accounts of general secretary of IAEA in spring and summer of 2003 indicated that Iran has not reported some of its nuclear activities to IAEA and when there was a global consensus against Iran to accept additional Protocol, it was not reasonable for Iran to ignore that resolution. Especially accusations and propaganda of United States of America had provoked the international community against Iran.

In fact just like withdrawing from NPT this choice had a lot of security dangers. Because not accepting the protocol was interpreted by public opinion as the concealment of nuclear weapons and reinforced global suspicions of non – peaceful nuclear activities. It also had the following dangers for Iran; changing Iran's nuclear program to a security matter, global mistrust and consensus against Iran, approaching the views of EU to US, growing tendency of non- alignment countries like Russia and china to US policies against Iran and finally sending Iran's case to security

council on November 2003 .(Abbasi. Foreign policy challenges of the Islamic republic of Iran and the European Union in the period after September 11.p.228-229)

#### 3.1.5.4. Accepting additional protocol and cooperation with IAEA

The fourth choice for IR of Iran to manage its nuclear crisis was cooperation with IAEA and accepting additional protocol. This was considered as the most important and possible choice for Islamic Republic, because in comparison with other three choices, it had more advantages. Especially this choice could provide nuclear technology for Iran better than other choices.

Although it had its own undeniable political costs and limitations for Iran, cooperation with IAEA and accepting protocol did not have the dangers and cost of other choices but it could decrease them. First, it could remove any doubts about making nuclear weapons. Second, through detailed inspections, the possibility of international consensus against Iran was removed, because it was proved that Iran's nuclear program is peaceful. Third, it was found that America's accusations and propaganda were incorrect against Iran. Fourth, Iran's international prestige was reconstructed and different countries put their trust in Iran.

Therefore IR of Iran should choose among above-mentioned cases, although none of them was favorable for Iran, but it had to choose one with less costs and more advantages. So Iran chose cooperation with IAEA and accepted additional protocol. (Dehghani, Nuclear options and policies of Islamic Republic of Iran)

### **3.2. The role of human rights in the relations of Iran and EU**

Within the past decades and especially after the end of World War II, the subject of human rights became popular and discussions for establishing an international organization became serious because of obvious lack of respect to human rights in conflicts and wars. The western countries wanted a definable role in this process (Eurocentric) and nobility of European experience was a peripheral production of this western approach which on its basis the global human rights system equals to European approaches about this subject. So Europe has tried to establish and reinforce human rights organizations. They also try to make political

and economical relations with other countries on the basis of human rights observation.

In fact the behavior and function of European countries especially after establishing (EU) implies they have observed human rights traditionally. This role specially can be seen in the past years to encourage other countries to observe the laws of human rights. There are a lot of institutions and treaties in Europe which pay attention to concepts and regulations of human rights in the economical relations with other countries. (Golshanpajouh. p. 372)

### 3.2.1. The position of human rights in foreign affairs of EU

Since Rome Agreement in 1957 the unification of Europe has been on the basis of universal principles of freedom and democracy, the rule of law and human rights but four decades after Rome Agreement, EU put human rights in its foreign affairs. This subject was legally binding by EU Treaty on November 1993. According to this Treaty , development of democracy , the rule of law and respecting human rights and basic liberties of people are the main goals of EU foreign affairs and economical cooperation should also help these principles, in addition Amsterdam Treaty (May 1997) has made some principles to impose sanctions on the countries which violate human rights. These principles became stronger by Nice Treaty (was agreed in December 2000). (Abbasi, the role of human rights in the political divergence of Iran and the EU, p.16-17)

For first time in the history of EU and in a single text, different kinds of civil , political, economical and social rights of European citizens and all residents of Europe was written into the EU charter in Nice meeting on December 9th 2002, also foreign affair of EU should be on the basis of this charter.EU uses different tools to progress towards democracy and human rights goals in its foreign affairs. Some of these tools are; diplomacy and foreign policy like statements, political actions and resolutions and negotiations with other countries.

In this regard EU Follows a special legal basis, known as “the article of human rights” and this article is written in almost every agreement with other countries as a basic factor. EU has passed 6 laws regarding human rights progress in other countries. All of these have been approved since 1998, including laws about death



penalty (1998), EU negotiations about human rights (2001), torture and cruel penalties (2001), children rights and armed conflicts (2003), protectors of human rights (2004), developing of international humanitarian laws (2005). (Abbasi, Foreign policy challenges of the Islamic republic of Iran and the European union in the period after September 11, p. 179-180)

### 3.2.2. The European system of human rights protection

The European Union system of human rights protection is mainly on the basis of “European social charter” which presents a list of social and economical rights. In addition there are two other conventions: “The convention of protecting ethnic minorities” and “European convention of torture prevention and inhumane behaviors”. We will discuss each of these conventions:

#### 3.2.2.1. European Social Charter

The European social charter is an important document that was approved by member states of European council on October 18th, 1961. Social and economical rights of European citizens (member states) is the scope of this charter, the most important rights in this charter and additional protocol are; the right of labor, fair condition of labor, labor security, fair wages, the right of social and economical protection of mothers and workers and their families, equality and indiscriminate on the basis of sex and the right of participation in determining work conditions and work environment. (European Social Charter, trans. Hassan Moradzadeh) Member states are obligated to join and accept all of these rights and make changes in their local principles on the basis of this charter because of basic social changes, this charter had some changes on May third 1996: men and women equality, economical social rights of children and teenagers, protecting unemployed people, fighting against discrimination and inequality. (Yari.p.129-130)

#### 3.2.2.2. Framework Convention for the protection of National Minorities

This convention was approved in 1994 by European council and was binding in 1998. This is the first document about the protection of minorities until September 2012. 39 countries had approved this convention the basic principles of this convention are: The freedom of gathering, no discrimination against ethnic

minorities, helping the development of religion, Language and cultural traditions of minorities, freedom of speech and free access to the media, freedom of cross-border communication. (Aftab.p.8-9)

### 3.2.2.3. European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

This convention was approved in 1987 and was binding on February first 1989. This convention emphasize on article 3 of European convention of human rights and says;" Nobody should be tortured or put under inhuman and contemptuous behaviors and penalties. (Yari.p.131)

### 3.2.3. The European institutions of human rights

Europe has one of the most coherent regulations on human rights in the world. Institutions like the European Council, the European Commission, and the European Parliament have made a special system to promote human rights among member states of the EU and in their relations with other countries.

In agreements of EU establishment, Meeting of heads of state was not predicted but in decades of 1960 and early of 1970, they held some meetings of this kind. In 1974 in Paris meeting they arranged to establish an institution known as European Council. Since *Maastricht* Treaty (February 7th 1992) the European council has had the responsibility to conduct the policies of EU security and foreign affairs. In addition, European council has constantly issued different statements about important international topics like human rights and terrorism. The European Council is the first political organization among European countries that has been established to promote social and economical situation of member states and to promulgate their common ideas and principle, this organization also has the responsibility of policy making in EU. For more coherent, it guarantees the freedom, so respecting human rights is a prerequisite for membership in the Council. Also, the European Council has close cooperation with EU, Western European Union, and Security Organization of Europe, UN, international and regional NGOs to institutionalize democracy and complete protection of human rights. (Alwandi & Kiani.p.4)

The European Parliament (EP) is another institution which has an eminent position among the other European institutions since Amsterdam Treaty (1997). The European Parliament is an active legislative institution which plays an important role in public opinion formation through issuing resolutions, arranging reports, asking questions in European Commission. The European Parliament has 20 commissions that foreign affairs commission is one of its most important ones, which human rights topic has constantly been one of its primary concerns. The annual Sakharov prize for freedom of thought is in this commission which is given to people or organizations who have fought for basic liberties and human rights.

The subsidiary committee of European Parliament human rights was established in 2004. This committee discusses different topics of human rights and approves reports and resolutions. This committee also drafts the annual report of human rights in the world. Basic responsibilities of this committee are topics like human rights, protecting minorities, protecting democratic values in third world countries. (Alwandi & Kiani.p.4)

The European Commission (EC) is another institution that in cooperation with European Parliament designs the priorities for giving foreign aid to other countries on human rights and democracy. It also reports to the Parliament the last actions and how much they have achieved their goals. In this regard, the European Commission has the unique role of promoting stability in EU activities about human rights. (Ghaebi.p.51)

#### 3.2.4. Human rights negotiations between Iran and EU

According to agreements on 9th round of talks Iran and EU began periodic negotiations about human rights. These negotiations were the result of expert opinions on human rights and began in Tehran (2001) between two sides at a time that Denmark presided over EU. Until now there have been four rounds of these negotiations, two sides wanted to discuss about human rights cooperation and to talk about following topics:

A) The priorities of EU on human rights negotiations with Islamic Republic of Iran: Freedom of speech – torture prevention and death penalty, rule of law, discrimination

against women and minorities, cooperation with international mechanisms on Human rights.

B) The priorities of Islamic Republic of Iran on human rights negotiations with EU:

Racism and racial discrimination, animosity against Islam, discrimination against Asian and African migrants, respecting immigrant and refugees rights, the situation of minorities, the right of development economical , social and cultural rights.

The history of periodic negotiations between Iran and EU: the first round of negotiations was held in Tehran 2001. Within two days of a round – table meeting that Denmark presided over EU delegation, the subject of “discrimination” from Iran side and “torture prevention” from European side was the center of negotiations. Other issues discussed in this two day meeting including: international legal frameworks of torture and discrimination prevention, torture prevention in Islamic teachings, racial discrimination, discrimination against Muslims and public information about human rights. The second round of negotiations was held in Brussels (2001) presided by Greece. in this round of negotiations “ the rule of law “ and “ fair judgment” were suggested by Iran and EU respectively to be discussed. The third round of negotiations was held in Brussels on 8th and 9th of October 2003. “The right of development” and “freedom of speech “were suggested by Iran and EU respectively for discussion. they discussed how to achieve the development sources and international obstacles in the road of development, within the framework of “the right of development” and the freedom of speech and its position in a democratic community, the right of parliament members and freedom of speech, the balance between authority and legal regulations and the freedom of the press, in the framework of “freedom of speech”. (Golshanpajouh.p389-390) the fourth round took place in June 2004 in Tehran, after the conclusion of the UN Commission on Human Rights, and not before it as initially planned. The round-table discussion focused on the Administration of Justice and International Cooperation to Promote Human Rights. During the fourth session of the dialogue at officials’ level which followed, the EU stressed the importance of Iran adhering to the universally-accepted standards of human rights set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the two International Covenants on Human Rights. The discussions covered all aspects of the human rights situation in Iran. The EU delegation also raised the cases of 40

prisoners of conscience at present in detention in Iran, who should be released immediately and definitively. Concern was also reiterated at the destruction of the Baha'i holy site at Babol, and the refusal of the authorities to allow the dignified re-interment of the remains it contains. (EU Annual Report on Human Rights, adopted by the Council on 13 September 2004)

In all of these negotiation there were different organizations including representatives of European commission, European council, European parliament, university professors and active NGOs on human rights. Also in Iranian delegation, in addition to ministry of foreign affair, there were representatives of judiciary system, parliament, university professors and NGOs.

### 3.2.5. The role of human rights in political challenges between Iran and EU

Human rights is an important factor in EU foreign affair with Iran, they have said frankly that further relations with Iran depends on respecting human rights and democratization of the country. The European countries to put pressure on Iran emphasize that for having friendly relations, Iran should respect human rights. "Olli Rehn" the former commissioner of EU development said: human rights violation in recent years in Iran has made it impossible to develop relations with Tehran. Some accusations about human rights violation in Iran that have been reported by EU organizations and inspectors are:

A) The bad condition of freedom of speech and freedom of thought especially restricting the freedom of the press, censorship of the press and arresting journalists and political activists. B) The continuation of human rights violation in IR of Iran especially executions. C) Not respecting international Laws in Judiciary system and especially against religious minorities. D) Discrimination against religious minorities. E) Not letting UN special envoy visit Iran to see the human rights conditions directly. F) Discrimination against women that they do not have the same rights as men. (The institution of American Studies)

Paying attention to EU behaviors about human rights issues in Iran, they can be divided into two categories: violation of laws and the need to join all human rights conventions by IR of Iran; Not respecting some of international principles of human rights.

EU in its negotiations with Iran has paid attention to both parts at the same time. We should bear in mind that there are some differences between Islamic thinking and western philosophy which leads to distinction between international principles and Iran's Laws regarding human rights. Due to factors such as differences in religion, philosophy, ideology, culture, identity and ideological, important matters which caused a political challenge between the parties on human rights and EU puts its accusations against Iran on the basis of these issues are: Discrimination against women, violent penalties like to revenge a death and stoning, freedom of speech and freedom of press and the rights of religious minorities and children. (Abbasi. Foreign policy challenges of the Islamic republic of Iran and the European Union in the period after September 11.p184-185)

### **3.3. The role of terrorism in EU and Iran relations**

EU in its relations with Iran has constantly paid attention to terrorism and fundamentalism since the beginning of Islamic revolution of 1979. EU has criticized Iran for some incidents, including: taking US embassy members as hostages, the case of Salman Rushdie, Shapour Bakhtiyar assassination, the assassination of some opposition leaders in Europe, the Mykonos crisis, supporting Hezbollah and Palestine Islamic Jihad and Hamas, which EU considers as terrorist groups but Iran regards them as liberator groups and EU has asked Iran to stop supporting these groups and to end its actions against Iranians who live abroad.

Against these accusations, IR of Iran believes that no terrorist campaign has done by Iran in EU member states but the murder of opposition members in Europe is because of their own problems as Iran claims. Also Iran claims that its support for Hezbollah in Lebanon and Palestinian groups is support for liberator groups not terrorists. In addition Iran criticized EU double standards in protecting Israel actions. Also, Iran believes that providing protection for Mojahedinekhalth organization by EU is support for terrorist groups because Iran considers this organization as a terrorist group.

### 3.3.1. The approaches and actions of EU against terrorism

EU especially after the cold war has paid a lot of attention to terrorism; this attention is on the basis of new threats facing EU. The Europeans also believe that new threats are not only military and cannot be resolved by military tools, contrary to threats of cold war era.

European institutions tried to present a common definition of terrorism on December 2001 the head of EU states agreed on a common definition of terrorism and common penalties against those who committed murder, kidnap and hijack also EU commission suggested a common definition of terrorism and penalties against terrorists and they increased cooperation among their security forces, in this regard EU introduced 32 kinds of crimes as terrorist crimes and EU has defined terrorism as : aggressions and breaking the laws by a person or an organization against one or more countries and their people in order to frighten and change political , economical or social structures of a society .(Amiri.p.135-137)

After September 11, EU thought on violent confrontations with terrorists and emphasized on new cooperation to promote their security power in fighting against terrorists in a joint agreement. Six European countries including England, France, Germany, Italy, Spain and Switzerland invested 150 million Euros to fight against terrorism. (This agreement was because of terrorist incidents of Madrid and London).In fact EU has reconsidered in its defensive policy. (Abbasi. Foreign policy challenges of the Islamic republic of Iran and the European Union in the period after September 11.p.103)

In 2005 EU adopted the European guide line on fighting terrorism with human rights observation. This guideline revolves on four basic axes: prevention – protection- pursuit- reaction. The UN resolution in 1993 provided the inspiration for making a list of persons and organizations that support terrorism. On this basis EU makes its own list which is updated every six month. The possible penalties for members of these groups include, closing bank accounts and seizure of properties in EU member states. It also covers other people besides Al Qaida and Taliban and new groups. The main guideline of EU in fighting terrorism is to coordinate national policies at member states with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and

USA. EU tries to fight terrorism among member states by judiciary and security coordination. There have been some suggestions for adopting a single charter in fighting terrorism. (Khalozadeh, Europe Union joint program to combat terrorism)

The European defense policy has four basic axes; Diplomacy: one can expect two functions of diplomacy. First: diplomacy is the best way to recognize threats in other countries. In other words diplomacy by direct or indirect communication can understand the security problems of other countries and suggest solutions to them. Second, Europe through diplomacy can make other countries recognize its red lines or use carrot and stick approach. Deterrence: It is about a time when using weapons of mass destruction is more probable. At the same time it will cover any support for terrorism. The important point that should be noticed is the fact that deterrence is not a unilateral action but a multilateral action. Control: this action is about countries which try to make weapons of mass destruction and measures to prevent terrorists and countries from using such weapons. Providing administrative mechanisms of international Regimes: the main goal of Europe is stability, life and reinforcement of international regimes. Europe tries to encourage countries to their commitments about regimes by different ways. Not having positive effects, there are some punitive actions like political and economical sanctions and even military action on the agenda. Regarding military action there are two choices: “precaution war” and “pre-emptive war” “the aim of pre-emptive war is destroying other countries capabilities of using weapons of mass destruction what is important in precaution war in the future. It should be mentioned that both of these were posed in UN meeting to amend UN but deadlocked. But after the formalization of this strategy in America's National Security Strategy (September 2002), other countries have put this topic in their national security policies officially or implicitly. (Khabiri)

### 3.3.2. The view point of IR of Iran on terrorism

It is more than a half century that two categories of terrorism and liberation movements have been mixed politically and there is not a distinctive border between these two categories, because international community has not found a standard and exact definition for this phenomenon that be acceptable by all countries. Hence, international efforts to confront terrorism have had no results and there has been a condition that different countries have different view points for these two concepts.



So, supporting and recognizing different groups depends on political interests of different countries. Therefore some countries support the actions of some groups and other countries consider their actions as terrorism.

Iran says its approaches on terrorism are on the basis of Islamic teachings. So Iran's definition for terrorism is: The actions of any individual, groups and organizations with political goals which directly attack life, property and dignity of innocent people, women and children. So Islam has condemned and forbidden terrorism. According to this definition, the IR of Iran besides Islamic laws considers all international treaties against terrorism as legitimate agreements. Therefore both Iran with its Islamic ideology and Europe with its liberal culture have condemned different kinds of terrorism and oppose it. In this regard, it seems that Iran and EU have ideological differentiation. For example their understanding is different about Palestinians suicide campaigns against Israel. Iran does not consider it as an action of terror but EU considers it as a complete terror action. (Abbasi, Foreign policy challenges of the Islamic republic of Iran and the European Union in the period after September 11. p.89-92)

Iran's dominance in the region and the interests of super powers in Middle East is another factor that the western media accuse Iran of supporting terrorism, as Iran believes. In other words, the western media, to impose the hegemony of western countries over Islam try to introduce Islamic world as an enemy or a challenge so they could mobilize their forces. (Yazdani & shikhon.p.216)

### 3.3.3. Terrorism related issues in EU and Iran's relations

The western media introduce Iran as a country which supports terrorism: the reason for this is because of following cases:

#### 3.3.3.1. The case of Salman Rushdie

Salman Rushdie published a book – satanic verses – in 1988, insulting Islam. Muslims in different countries protested against it and violent demonstration took place in Pakistan. In the same year, the leader of Islamic Revolution of Iran released a statement and condemned the author and publishers of this book to death. This fatwa was welcomed by Muslims and opposed by western countries. In this regard an

institution known as- khordad 15 foundation – promised a reward of 2.6 million dollars for whoever kills Salman Rushdie. Although Salman Rushdie continues his secret life but some other people who had role in publishing and selling the book, were killed. As a result, tension increased between Iran and EU members and they recalled their ambassadors from Tehran. The political of Iran and England were disrupted and in support to England, Germany suspended the administration of cultural agreement. EU member states in Luxembourg meeting in 1995 demanded Iran's guarantees for these three principles: Iran should not kill Salman Rushdie; Iran's relations with other countries should be based on international laws and terrorism condemnation in every possible form by Iran. In reaction to these points, the spokesman of Iran's foreign ministry said: despite the international pressures, Iran will never backtrack from Ayatollah Khomeini's fatwa about Salman Rushdie. (Normohamadi.p.250-251)

#### 3.3.3.2. Mykonos case

On 17 September 1992, in Mykonos restaurant in Berlin, Dr. Sadegh Sharafkandi the general secretary of Iranian Kurdistan Democrat party was assassinated. Sharafkandi – the main target of assault – in the company of some members and representatives of his party, were visiting Germany by an invitation from socialist party of Germany. That year socialist party of Germany was hosting "international socialist conference". Sharafkandi was a successor to Abdurrahman Qasemlu who had been assassinated in Vienna in 1989. Authority of Germany began the trial in 1993. In 1996 the judge who was in charge of the trail in the court, issued a summons for Ali Fallahiyani – information minister of Iran since 1989 – to come to and be present at the court as suspected to murders. The case heard by the court from October 28th, 1993. The summons was approved by high court of Germany and was requested by the prosecutor general of Germany. He claimed that there are certain reasons which show the assassinations have been done under the supervision of Iran's information ministry. Some weeks before the assassinations in 1992, in an interview on TV, Ali Fallahiyani had said: the KDPI is one of their targets inside and outside the country. After this relations between the two countries became strained. When the prosecutor general of Germany announced that they will arrest him and take to the court if he comes to Germany, Iran threatened will do the same, mutually. After

this EU members recalled their ambassadors from Tehran and the relations became strained for seven months. (Musaviyan)

#### 3.3.3.3. The war of embassies

After a range of explosions in 1985- 86 in France, a Tunisian jihadist on February 17th, 1987, contacted to police in France and have a complete list of a terrorist network that had done a bloody attacks on February and September of 1986. Wahid Gorji the official interpreter of Iran's embassy in Paris was an officer of Iran's information ministry in Paris who was introduced as coordinator of campaign. On June 1987 this network was destroyed by police of France but they could not arrest Wahid Gorji who took refuge in Iran's embassy. The French officials controlled Iran's embassy right away to prevent his escape. Jacques Chirac the former prime minister of French gave Iran an ultimatum that Wahid Gorji should surrender himself; otherwise Iranian diplomats will be dismissed from France. He added that France is ready to release Wahid Gorji for freedom of French hostages in Lebanon. Iran immediately threatened that will take hostage of twelve French diplomats that were in Tehran. On January 13th "Ville d'Anvers" ship was attacked by Iran, near to Hormoz straits .The message was clear that Tehran will not surrender. On January 14th the revolutionary guard seized the embassy of France in Tehran and French diplomats were taken as hostage. This was the war of embassies that lasted for four months. On January 17th 1987, France disrupted its political relations with Iran. (Saki)

#### 4.3.3.3. The issue of support to Palestinian groups and Lebanon's Hezbollah

EU accuses Iran for supporting Palestinian groups and Hezbollah of Lebanon and in general making problems in Middle East peace process. EU considers Hamas as a terrorist group. So it is impossible to negotiate Hamas as Javier Solana the former head of EU foreign policy says in an interview with Alahram newspaper in 2004. According to the Islamic Republic of Iran's view the West is not truthful in the fight against terrorism and the follow double standards. While Israel's daily killing of defenseless people of Palestine, the Western countries kept silent in the face of Israeli actions and the struggle of the Palestinian people in defense of their rights know terrorism, While Iran considers itself bound to defend and support the

Palestinian people on the ideas and ideals of the Islamic Revolution (Nourmohammadi.p252-253) The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that Hezbollah is not a terrorist group, but is a political party in the Lebanese political arena and has an active presence in parliament and government and the party's military wing has been formed and continue to defend Lebanese territory against Israel (Abbasi. Foreign policy challenges of the Islamic republic of Iran and the European Union in the period after September 11.p.120)

### **3.4. The Middle East Peace Process**

#### 3.4.1. A brief history of Arab-Israel issue

Palestine is a region in the Middle East with a long history. It is a holy place and respectful for three old religions of Islam, Judaism and Christian. It was under control of Ottoman Empire until 19th century, and then Great Britain took control of it. In 20<sup>th</sup> century the Judaism movement- Zionism - made a lot of effort to settle all Jew people in Palestine. In 1917 the foreign minister of Britain Arthur James Balfour promised Lord Walter Rotschild – the head of Zionism federation – to make a home for Jews in Palestine after World War II, and following Jews slaughter in Europe, lots of them migrated to Palestine. After World War II, Jew militias in Palestine started a campaign against English Forces in 1947. English forces withdrew from Palestine. Fighting between Arabs and Israel intensified. On May 14th 1948 the Jews announced their independent country and immediately the USA and the soviet (USSR) recognized Israel. Arab countries opposed the establishment of Israel and Arab countries like Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon and Egypt fought against Israel. The first war between Arabs and Israel was in 1948 to 1949. (Erfani)

In 1967 a six- day war took place in the Middle East that Israel defeated Arabs and annexed more lands to occupied lands in that year. UN Security Council passed the resolution 242 demanding Israel to withdraw from occupied lands but it has not been administered by Israel. (Baghi)

#### 3.4.2. The EU reasons for paying attention to the Middle East

The importance of the Middle East is prominent at least in three basic axes: the strategic importance of the Middle East which provides connection among Europe,

Asia and Africa and makes the region as a crossroads for global connection. The economic resources of the Middle East specially oil, which makes it a unique region. The Middle East is the homeland of three important religions: Judaism, Christian and Islam. So these factors make great region and it can be considered as the heart of international politics.

Historical cultural, economical and political relations of European countries from ancient times with the Middle East region have made EU to have a special look on the Middle East. The geographical proximity of the Middle East to Europe and the needs of the EU countries to energy have made EU members to regulate their relations with countries of this region and they have put this, on top of their foreign policy. (Khalozadeh. Europe Union's position on the Middle East peace process)

There are many crises in the Middle East with international reflection like Israel and Arab conflict, the security of energy, terrorism, mass destruction weapons, Iraq crisis and Iran's nuclear activities. Because the Middle East is a center for global race of super powers especially the US and Europe and even China and Russia, the future of international relations will be possibly in this region, so the EU presence in the Middle East is an effort for playing an active role in political and economical reconstruction of the Middle East as one of the most important regions in the world. The EU policy in the Middle East is basically influenced by three factors of geographical proximity, energy security and historical memory. So the EU has a special attention to issues like terrorism, arms race, Israel -Palestine peace process, Kurds and in this region because these factors have a mutual effect on each other. In addition to above mentioned factors, some of European countries like England, France, Italy and Germany have had their own interests and position in one of the countries in the Middle East. Providing stability in the Middle East is the basic strategy of the EU in the region because of above mentioned factors. The stability in the Middle East will lead to security in Europe and prevents illegal migrations to Europe and guarantees the energy transfer to European markets. So on the basis of this policy, the EU tries to play a role in Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan. (Pour Esmaili)

### 3.4.3. The approaches and actions of the EU in the Middle East Peace Process

With its 27 members, the EU has been able to provide security and develop economy, relatively. Since establishment of ECSC in 1951, there has not been any war among the EU members. But the continuation of peace in this region depends on some conditions first; there should be stability in countries neighboring the EU, because it will affect the security of the EU. (Daghchi) So, the EU thinks that solving Israel – Palestine conflict is a key to other crises in the Middle East like terrorism and extremism. Hence, this is the first priority in their 2003 security document. From the EU point of view, the extreme involvement of the US in Iraq and extreme support for Israel, have deteriorated the situation.

On the other hand, on the basis of some analyses, the reason that the EU supports some demands of Palestinians is anti Zionism feelings in Europe and increasing opposition to some policies of Israel in western media and criticizing Israel by some of the EU officials in recent years approves this view point. Israel and Zionist community got really angry with a report of European Commission on January 2004. It was a survey of European people about Israel. The survey revealed 59% percent of European people consider Israel as a threat to global peace. (Mufidi Ahmadi)

In general the EU foreign policy towards Middle East has some challenges: first, the joint foreign policy of the EU member states has not comprehensiveness against international crises. Second, the development of the EU to the east and becoming a union with 27 members has decreased the efficiency of the EU foreign policy. On the other hand, the EU has not an independent role in the Middle East issues but the EU constantly tries to play a complementary role and in coordination with the US in the Middle East because US and Israel have never agreed on active role of the EU in the Middle East Peace Process. The EU supports Israel rights of living in peace and security within its international recognized borders. It also recognizes the idea of two states and an independent Palestinian country on the basis of 1967 borders and changing some parts of their land and dividing Jerusalem as capital and a fair solution to refugees' issue. The EU supports the withdrawal of Israeli military forces from recognized borders of 1967, and demands Israel to end its limitations against Palestinian people, and stop residential settlements. In general the

EU for its future presence in the Middle East emphasizes on some basic issues: making peace on the basis of some presented mechanisms especially road map, giving priority to economical cooperation, using diplomacy, the use of its experiences in this region and using financial tools. The modern policy of the EU in the Middle East has three aspects: supporting an independent Palestine, efforts for regional stability in coordination with other actors, financial support for peace process. At the same time, the EU has tried to increase its economical presence in the region. On December 11th 1996 the European Commission signed a trade agreement with Palestine to help the economical development of Palestine. (Farsayi.p121-122) the EU has been the biggest financial supporter of Palestine and the Middle East Peace Process since 1993 to 2009. The financial supports of the EU to Palestine from 2005 to 2010 amounted to 1/95 billion dollars which consists of %56 percent of total international assistance in this period. The EU also accepted more than 1/3 of international assistance to Lebanon in international conference of supporting Lebanon on January 2007 in Paris. (Khalozadeh. Europe Union's position on the Middle East peace process)

#### 3.4.4. Iran's foreign policy toward the Middle East Peace Process

Since Islamic revolution of 1979 under the leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini, ideology has become one of the political tools of Iran's foreign policy. Under the IR of Iran constitution, supporting the oppressed and their struggle against oppressors, Muslim rights in the world are basic principles of Iran's foreign policy. Without doubt these principles have been taken from the Islamic and revolutionary ideologies of Ayatollah Khomeini. These principles are clear in his message about the resolution (598) of Security Council (the ceasefire between Iran and Iraq on July 16th 1988) as he said: "I clearly declare that IR of Iran invests throughout the world for resurrection of Islamic identity of Muslims and there is no reason for Muslims not to stand and fight to seize power. We should plan carefully to achieve our goals. We should try hard to solve the problems of Muslims. Iran as a military and invulnerable fort meets the needs of Islam soldiers and will teach them the basis of Islam and how to fight against heresy". (Asadi.p.64-65)

These words are the priorities of foreign policy of Iran even now during Mahmud Ahmadinejad's (former president) government; the presence of ideology in

foreign policy was more popular. Supporting jihadist groups of Palestine and Lebanon is on the basis of these principles of foreign policy. Since the Islamic revolution of 1979 the basic principle of Iran in regional policy has been on the basis of opposing Israel and there will be no compromise with Israel and the annihilation of Israel should be the aim of every Muslim as Mahmud Ahmadinejad has emphasized several times that Israel should be removed from the world map. (Abbasi. Foreign policy challenges of the Islamic republic of Iran and the European Union in the period after September 11.p.154) Iran also after the death of Ayatollah Khomeini has opposed any negotiation of Palestinians with Israel. From Ayatollah Khamenei's point of view, the only way to liberate Palestine and Ghods (Jerusalem) is fighting against Israel by groups like Fatah, Hamas and Islamic jihad. Iran also increased its activities among Palestinian groups and often equips them through Syria and Lebanon. In 2002 Israel seized (Catherin A) ship which was carrying 50 tons of weapons to Palestine which had been sent from Iran. Iran refuses to recognize Israel because it is contrary to its revolutionary stands. Also agreement between Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel was the first important issue after Ayatollah Khamenei took power. According to this agreement Israel and Palestine do not oppose each other anymore and started secret negotiations. The result was an agreement on September 1993 in White House between Yasser Arafat- the leader of PLO-and Yitzhak Rabin – the former prime minister of Israel – by the presence of Bill Clinton – the US president. After resolving some differences the final agreement was signed on May fourth 1994 by above- mentioned officials in Cairo. Iran with some Palestinian groups opposed this agreement and called it a compromising agreement. From that time Israel intensified its attacks against Palestinians and assassinated Palestinian leaders, so Iran's goals separated totally from Arafat and PLO and approached to other groups like Hamas and Islamic Jihad which were against compromise. Iran could not accept that the words of the revolution founder about the annihilation of Israel have been ignored by Palestinian groups. So it did not help the fulfillment of Oslo agreement but reinforced some fighting groups in Palestine and provoked violence between two sides. (Toyserkani)



### 3.4.5. The influence of the Middle East Peace Process on foreign policy of Iran and the EU

Middle East peace process is another challenge between Iran and the EU. They have had a lot of negotiations regarding this issue. During critical negotiation from 1993 to 1998 and constructive and comprehensive negotiations there have been constantly discussions about the Middle East Peace Process and how to solve the conflict between Israel and Palestinians. (Khalozadeh. Tehran and Brussels, obstacles and challenges) Because the existence and legitimacy of Israel and the essence of the Middle East crisis is the main issue between Iran and the EU, in the Middle East since the revolution of 1979, Iran's policy has always been on the basis of opposing Israel but it is completely different for the EU.

EU has some difficulties in the Middle East which are resulted from different conditions like energy resources in the region, various threats of Islamic extremism terrorism and drugs and it should try to promote its international role against exclusive role of the US in the region. As one of the road map designers, the EU is one of the main supporters of peace process in the Middle East and two states solution, so they do not approve of any action which weakens the peace process. (Amir Baik)

It is clear in the statement of the European Council on June 17th, 2005 about Iran which says: the EU encourages Iran to use its influence for presenting any action which damages returning to political process or endangers it. The EU encourages Iran to join international consensus without any pre conditions and accept two states of Israel and Palestine which live in peaceful co – existence within their recognized borders. (Abbasi. Foreign policy challenges of the Islamic republic of Iran and the European Union in the period after September 11.p.598)

At the end of the chapter we can say that the Europeans even more than Americans are sensitive over Iran's nuclear activities and overall capabilities of Iran in the field of weapons of mass destruction. Because Europe in addition to the International Security concerns, they are also sensitive and concern to their Continental security which gradually is in range of Iranian missiles. That is why the issue of transparency in Iran's nuclear activities has always been one of the

preconditions for Europe to develop relations with Iran and in fact sign a trade cooperation agreement between Iran and Europe is also subject to the settlement of the Iranian nuclear issue. On the other hand, Western Europe (EU) as the origin of the west civilization has always shown sensitivity, relative to standards and values of its human civilization – circuit. And especially in the field of human rights deals with the issue by the fundamentalist view and has stronger and larger than America's position in this field. At the same time, Europe takes advantage of the interaction of human rights with Iran as a lever to modify Iran's behavior and the Union critical statement in June 2004, which was issued after inconclusive talks in Tehran on the human rights situation in Iran, is an example of such measures.

In addition to the nuclear issue and human rights, the Middle East Peace Process and terrorism also are disputed issues between Iran and Europe. Because by accepting the road map plan by Europe and also a member of Europe at four comprehensive settlement of the Palestinian crisis (in partnership with America, Russia and the UN), European views came to America more than ever on Palestinian issues. Because otherwise Europe could completely lose its role as before and accordingly, the pressure on Iran rises to refrain from moral support to Palestinian groups and Lebanon (as supporting terrorism). The combination of these factors causes a negative view of politicians and public opinion in Europe on Iran.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: VIEWPOINTS OF EUROPEAN POLITICAL ELITES AND PEOPLE OF EUROPE TO THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN**

This chapter addresses a range of polls conducted to gauge the viewpoint of Europeans towards Iran. Furthermore, the activities of European Parliament, as the representative of the European political elites, in dealing with Iran are discussed. The latter is due to this fact that the member states of the European Parliament are representatives of all member states of European Union.

Therefore, these viewpoints have been presented under the following two separate sections: 1) the viewpoints of European citizens to Iran, 2) the measures taken by the European Parliament against Iran.

### **4.1. The viewpoint of European citizens on Iran**

Conducting polls is one of the most common ways to understand the viewpoints and standpoints of the people and societies towards any phenomenon. Nowadays, the public opinion poll is considered as an important component of any given policymaking process in any given society and one can sense the adoption of new practices to achieve more accurate results in this domain. To this end, several large institutions have emerged that provide the results of their polls to politicians and decision-makers into various formats.

More surveys carried out have been associated with both the Iranian nuclear file and the human rights situation in Iran, so at first we talk about the polls done about Iran's nuclear program then we discuss polls which related to Iran's human rights situation.

#### **4.1.1. Surveys related to Iran's nuclear program**

The CNN and Times polls in Europe (March 2005) showed that 6 out of every 10 adults in Great Britain, France and Germany believed that Iran was not a nuclear

threat to Europe. In contrast, those who believed that Iran was a nuclear threat were 34%, 30% and 27% in France, Germany and Britain, respectively. Also, 59% of those individuals who knew Iran as a nuclear threat believed that diplomacy was the best solution. Besides, only 3% believed in military solutions and nobody was in favor of military action against Iran (Iranian Students News Agency).

Meanwhile, the German Marshall Fund poll in 2007 indicated some significant changes. Accordingly, 68% of Europeans believed that a nuclear Iran would lead to nuclear proliferation in the Middle East. Consequently, 54% of Europeans believed that a nuclear Iran could threaten Europe and 68% of Europeans believed that if Iran became a nuclear-armed country, it would put nuclear weapons in the hands of the terrorists. Similarly, the results of TNS poll in 2007 were thought-provoking. The poll showed that, among 17,433 individuals across 27 European countries, 52% were in favor of taking a military action against Iran. Interestingly, the figure was 51% in Great Britain.

The PEW poll in 2009 recorded an increase in pessimism toward Iran. The poll showed that the vast majority of Europeans considered Iran as a nuclear threat. Accordingly, 81% in Spain, 79% in Germany, 78% in Italy and 74% in France believed to a threatening nuclear Iran. Also, the Eastern European countries showed a smaller percentage of this same feeling. As such, 65% in Poland, 63% in Bulgaria, 62% in Lithuania, 52% in Slovakia and 46% in Hungary expressed the same opinion. Also, the majority of individuals in 13 countries of Spain, Germany, Britain, France, Italy, Czech, Poland, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Slovakia, Hungary, Russia and Ukraine believed that Iran was a dangerous threat to their own countries. (Erin Carrier) In 2010, PEW Institute conducted a poll among 25000 individuals in 22 countries and questioned the desirability or undesirability and agreement or disagreement to Iran's acquisition of nuclear weapons. Also, the opponents to Iran's acquisition of nuclear weapons were questioned on how to prevent Iran from acquiring these weapons in terms of tougher sanctions or military action (Table A. 1).

In a similar vein, a poll conducted by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research Center in July 2010 examined more than 1000 individuals in Germany and France and 500 individuals in Sweden on the intervention of the international community in Iran and it confirmed the continuation of the previous trend. Accordingly, 80% in

Germany, 83% in France and 90% in Sweden called for intervention to prevent Iran from producing nuclear weapons. They also agreed on more sanctions against Iran. (Leila Krieger).

A poll conducted by Globe Scan Institute for the BBC among 29000 individuals in 27 countries in 2011 showed that only 16% of the respondents believed that Iran played a positive role in world affairs (just as in 2010). Besides, 59% of the respondents considered the negative influence of Iran and, thus, this number increased 3% over the previous year. However, North Korea, Pakistan and Israel were embedded with +16%, +17% and +21% and -55%, -56% and -49%, respectively. As such, they ranked higher than Iran. The poll showed that negative comments about Iran have risen in European countries. There was a 20% and 73% increase in Great Britain and Portugal, respectively. Finally, it was found that respondents in Germany and Italy (-85%) and France (-82%) directed the most negative viewpoints towards Iran.

The poll conducted by Chatham House Organization in July 2012 indicated that the majority of citizens of three major European countries (Britain, France and Germany) strongly opposed Iran's acquisition of nuclear weapons. As such, 9 out of 10 citizens of these three countries opposed nuclearization of Iran and 8 out of 10 citizens of Germany and Britain supported exerting sanctions against Iran. However, only half of respondents supported implementing military action against Iran (Table A. 2). Although young individuals supported exerting sanctions against Iran, the remarkable point was the existence of a kind of generation gap among proponents of exerting sanctions against Iran. For example, the British citizens, who aged 18 to 29 years old (compared to those individuals aged over 50 years old), represented 17% less support for exerting sanctions against Iran. Conversely, French youth were 14% more in favor of exerting sanctions against Iran. In the meantime, Greek citizens represented the least amount of support for exerting sanctions against Iran (up to 55%). (Table A. 3) The viewpoints of European citizens were very close together in terms of implementing military actions against Iran which were aimed at preventing the Iran's acquisition of nuclear weapons. For example, 51% of French and British citizens, 50% of German citizens and 52% of Italian citizens called for implementing a military attack on Iran. In contrast, 48% of French citizens, 41% of German

citizens and 40% of British citizens were proponents of accepting Iran as a nuclear-armed country (Table A. 4). Regarding Iran's negative image and status among European citizens, it was indicated that the majority of European citizens had a negative image of Iran. For example, 91% of German citizens, 86% of French citizens, 85% of Italian citizens and 84% of Spanish citizens had a negative image of Iran (Table A. 5) (Students of European Studies at University of Tehran).

Another poll which conducted by the Pew Research Center in 39 nations from March 2 to May 1, 2013, it indicates again the European concern about Iran's nuclear ambitions. The poll also finds that, despite broad opposition to Iran obtaining nuclear weapons, key publics continue to disagree on policy toward Tehran. Among the E3+3 countries, for instance, at least seven-in-ten among those who oppose Iran's nuclear program in the U.S., Britain, France and Germany back tougher economic sanctions, but the Russians and Chinese are divided on the issue. Meanwhile, only in the U.S. and France are clear majorities of people who oppose a nuclear armed Iran willing to support military action in order to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear arms. International opinion is clearly against Iran acquiring nuclear weapons. Majorities in most countries where the question was asked say they oppose a nuclear-armed Iran, including at least six-in-ten in each of the E3+3 countries: Germany (96%), France (94%), U.S. (93%), Britain (89%), Russia (75%) and China (62%). (Table A. 6)

Publics differ when it comes to the use of economic sanctions to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear arms. Roughly three-quarters or more of those who oppose Iran's nuclear program in the U.S. (78%), Germany (77%), Britain (75%) and France (73%) approve of tougher economic sanctions to deter Iran from developing nuclear weapons. But only 47% share this view in Russia, while the Chinese are divided on the question (44% favor; 47% oppose).

Also there is deeper disagreement about possible military action to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. On this question, there are even different levels of support among the U.S. and its western European allies. Among opponents of Iran's nuclear program, about two-thirds (64%) in the U.S. and 58% in France would support military action if necessary, but only 50% in Germany and 48% in Britain

say the same. Just 28% in Russia and 35% in China back a military option. (Table A. 7)

#### 4.1.2. Surveys related to Iran's human rights situation

According to a Pew survey in 2013, Iran's poor reputation for protecting personal freedoms does not help its international image. Majorities in 24 of 39 countries surveyed think Tehran does not respect the rights of its citizens. This includes three-quarters or more who hold this view in Europe. Also think that there is no respect for personal freedoms in Iran. Pluralities to majorities in 28 of 39 countries surveyed say the government of Iran does not respect the personal freedoms of its people, a finding that follows well-publicized crackdowns on opposition leaders and other groups since President Ahmadinejad was returned to office in a controversial 2009 election. Criticism of Tehran's rights record is most pronounced in Europe, the U.S. and Canada, where at least three-quarters of those surveyed say Iran does not respect the personal freedoms of its citizens.

On the other hand, the Anholt Institute conducted a poll in 2008 and 2009 about the viewpoints of individuals in 20 countries (thousands of people were questioned in each country) towards Iran and 49 other countries. The poll was conducted in six different areas and the results indicated that the people of these 20 countries placed Iranian government in the fiftieth, or last, rank. (For more information refer to Table A. 8) One point of the hexagon that analyzed is the governance dimension. Two of its questions addressed the following concepts: The country is competently and honestly governed; the country respects the rights of its citizens and treats them with fairness.

The both concepts focus on a nation's domestic governance. That a country is seen as being competently and honestly governed is obviously hugely indicative of that government's reputation. The second concept assesses whether or not a government is providing its citizens with the basic rights of a free society.

The result of the survey in seven European countries participating in the survey in both 2008 and 2009 is as follows:

2008: France 50, Germany 50, Italy 50, Poland 49, Russia 47, Sweden 50, the UK 50.

2009: France 50, Germany 49, Italy 50, Poland 50, Russia 50, Sweden 50, the UK 50.

#### **4.2. The measures taken by the European Parliament against Iran**

As mentioned earlier, the European Parliament is one of the basic institutions of European Union. Besides, one of the important tasks of the Parliament is to monitor the European Commission. The Commission plays the role of the executive branch of European Union and it is responsible for proposing laws, implementing decisions, ratifying the conventions and accomplishing routine activities of European Union. The regulatory function of the Parliament in regard to the Commission requires the president and members of the Commission to obtain a vote of confidence from the Parliament and, thus, the Parliament can impeach them altogether. Accordingly, the European Parliament, along with the Council of Europe, takes the responsibility for making decisions about the budget of the Union and monitoring the use of this budget.

The European Parliament is the only institution of European Union whose members are elected by direct popular votes. Most members of the European Parliament have been divided into political parties and some limited numbers of representatives originate from non-political and independent parties. If representatives take part in fractions, they will act more powerful in influencing the Commission's decisions. The European Parliament elections are held every five years. The citizens of member states of the European Union take part in a national election and they elect their representatives in the European Parliament through a direct voting method. A certain number of representatives are elected from each member state to enter into the European Parliament. The number of representatives from each member state of the European Union has been detailed in the European Union's Constitutional Convention. The larger member states have more representatives than smaller member states. However, smaller member states have a larger share and, taking into account the share of their population, this share is awarded to them. According to the Lisbon Treaty, it has been stipulated that, from



Election 2014 onwards, each member state should have at least six representatives in the European Parliament. The maximum number of representatives in a populous state is 96 individuals (Mashregh News, Special Report).

The nomination is done by national political parties. Since the selected candidates act as the representatives of the European Parliament, they may, if appropriate, join any given transnational political groups. These political groups are actually made up of extensive European political parties in which the majority of national political parties of member states are present. In this way, the results of elections in the European Parliament will determine which of the European political entities exert more influence in decision-making process of the European Parliament. Given the Lisbon Treaty, it is clear that the European Parliament is entitled a significant legislative power in the European Union. As such, the European Parliament plays a crucial role in the policy-making process of the European Union. Nevertheless, the decisions and the measures of the European Parliament are not limited to Europe and they affect the rest of the world as well. Although this entity bears the name of the European Parliament, it is actually an international entity, follows a global decision-making trend and sets universal policies (Mashregh News, Special Report).

On the human rights situation in Iran and Iran's nuclear file, it can be said that the European Parliament was one of the most active institutions in the field of criticism of human rights against the Islamic Republic of Iran and its nuclear program. Besides, this institution has always played an important role in the ratification of the decisions and the preparation of reports to provoke negative public opinion against Iran in the international arena. Also, this entity may be affected indirectly on the decisions of the United Nations. Since 2008 onwards, the European Parliament has issued a total of 14 resolutions in connection with human rights issues in Iran and its nuclear program. (Table A. 9) And the following is a brief description of these resolutions.

Resolution of January 31, 2008 - P6-TA-2008-0031

The resolution is related to both the Iranian nuclear file and the human rights situation in Iran. In this resolution the EU parliament reaffirms that the proliferation

risks of the Iranian nuclear program remain a source of serious concern to the EU and the international community, also it reiterates its full support for the UN resolutions adopted under Article 41, Chapter VII of the UN Charter.

In the other hand, it strongly condemns the death sentences and executions in Iran, in particular those imposed or carried out on juvenile offenders and minors, and urges the Iranian authorities to respect the internationally recognized legal safeguards with regard to minors, such as the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, also it urges the Iranian authorities to respect internationally recognized legal safeguards with regard to persons belonging to religious, ethnic, linguistic or other minorities, recognized or otherwise; strongly condemns the current disrespect for minority rights and calls for minorities to be able to exercise all rights granted by the Iranian Constitution and international law; urges the Iranian authorities to act constitutionally and eliminate, in law and in practice, all forms of discrimination and other human rights violations against persons belonging to religious, ethnic, linguistic or other minorities, including, inter alia, Arabs, Azeris, Baluchs, Kurds, Baha'is, Christians, Jews, Sufis and Sunni Muslims; calls in particular for the de facto ban on practicing the Baha'i faith to be lifted.

Resolution of April 24, 2008 - P6-TA (2008)0185

The European Parliament has criticized in the resolution of the draft bill on "family protection" which has been submitted in the Iranian Majlis and attempts further to legitimize polygamy, temporary marriage and the unilateral and arbitrary right of men to divorce and obtain child custody. Also it strongly condemns the repression of civil society movements in Iran, including women's rights defenders such as those involved in the Campaign; urges the Iranian authorities to end the harassment, intimidation and persecution of people peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression, association and assembly, and to release immediately and unconditionally all prisoners of conscience.

Resolution of June 19, 2008 - B6-2008-0327

It is in relation to the execution of juvenile offenders and urges the Islamic Republic of Iran to lift the death sentence against the four juvenile offenders and recalls Iran's international human rights obligations in this regard.

In addition it reiterates its strong condemnation of the death penalty and calls for an immediate moratorium on executions in Iran; is appalled that Iran continues to have the highest number of executions of child offenders in the world and that the moratorium on stoning is still not fully implemented; asks for a revision of the acts and behaviors that are criminalized and punishable by death, such as same-sex relations.

Resolution of September 4, 2008- P6-TA-2008-0412

The European Parliament passed a resolution against the Islamic Republic of Iran, titled "Death Penalty", on September 4, 2008. It contained 12 clauses and was practiced around such themes as legal conviction procedure and death penalty in Iran. This resolution focused on some declarations and statements issued by the Office of the Presidency of European Union in 2008. Accordingly, the Parliament expressed its deep concern on the number of executions in Iran in 2008 (191 cases). According to International laws, Article 6 (Paragraph 5) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Rights of the Child, the death penalty was prohibited for children. In addition, this resolution claimed that there were at least 130 cases of death penalty convictions in Iran in 2008 (The European Parliament Resolution of 4 September 2008 against Iran).

Resolution of January 15, 2009- P6-TA-2009-0029

The EU Parliament strongly condemns the repression, persecution and threats against Shirin Ebadi and expresses its grave concern at the intensified persecution of human rights defenders in Iran, also calls on the Iranian authorities to meet their international human rights commitments, and more specifically to respect the right of peaceful assembly enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights signed and ratified by Iran.

Resolution of February 10, 2010- (P7-TA-2010-0016)

During this resolution, the EU Parliament expresses serious doubts concerning the accuracy of the election results which led to the confirmation of President Ahmedinejad in office for a second term. And supports wholeheartedly the democratic aspirations of the Iranian people and deeply deplores the fact that the

Iranian Government and Parliament are apparently incapable of responding to the justified demands of Iranian citizens, in particular the young generation, who have seen their hopes for economic and social development stifled for too long.

Also the EU Parliament calls on the Iranian Government fully to respect the right of peaceful assembly and freedom of expression, including in connection with the demonstrations announced for 11 February 2010; strongly condemns the use of violence by the Iranian authorities against demonstrators who are seeking to exercise freedom of expression and the right of peaceful assembly.

As well as the EU Parliament condemns the Iranian authorities' efforts to censor the print media and to jam radio, television and Internet services, such as the BBC, and calls on the EU and its Member States to address the international fallout from these methods in the International Telecommunications Union (ITU).

Resolution of September 8, 2010- P7-TA-2010-0310

In one of the paragraphs of the resolution, the Parliament strongly condemns the sentencing to death by stoning of Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani, and takes the view that, regardless of the facts, a sentence of death by stoning can never be justified or accepted.

On the other hands, calls on the Iranian authorities immediately to release all those who are being detained solely on the basis of their involvement in peaceful protests and their desire to exercise their basic human right to freedom of expression, and, in particular, reiterates its call for the acquittal of the seven Baha'i leaders. Recalls that freedom of thought, conscience and religion is a fundamental right which must be guaranteed in all circumstances, in accordance with Article 18 of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)*, to which the Islamic Republic of Iran is a party and which it has ratified, and calls for the immediate release of all human rights lawyers who have been arrested.

Resolution of January 20, 2011- P7-TA-2011-0021

The resolution was issued due to issues such as freedom of expression, opinion and freedom of the press, release political prisoners, journalists and human rights defenders, including Nasrin Sotoudeh, and in this way: considers that the sentence of

Nasrin Sotoudeh is of a political nature, aimed at taking one of Iran's leading human rights defenders out of practice; calls on the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to immediately and unconditionally release Nasrin Sotoudeh; calls on the Islamic Republic of Iran to adhere to the standards set-forth by the UN Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers, which states that lawyers must be allowed to carry out their work "without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference" and recognizes that lawyers are entitled to freedom of expression, including "the right to take part in public discussion of matters concerning the law, the administration of justice and the promotion and protection of human rights.

Resolution of March 10, 2011- P7-TA-2011-0096

The resolution is listed once again on Iran's nuclear issues and human rights in Iran, mainly human rights clause (clause 27), severe discrimination against women in political and social rights and the death penalty, execution of the Baha'i minority, human rights defenders, lawyers, students and journalists. In this way, several clauses of the resolution are listed: urges Iran to put an end to all forms of discrimination in the country; is concerned by the discrimination and political and social repression affecting women in particular in Iran; calls on the Iranian authorities to stop discriminating against people on the basis of their sexual orientation; denounces the inhumane and medieval practice of sentencing people to death for alleged offences pertaining to choice of partners or sexual practices; expresses grave concern over the numerous executions of minors and the public stoning of women carried out every year despite international appeals for Iran to abide by human rights standards; regrets the fact that the situation of human rights defenders, including human rights lawyers and women's rights defenders, who are especially targeted, is deteriorating; is deeply concerned by the fact that human rights defenders have suffered various attacks and been subjected to unfair trial and are being deterred from making use of their constitutional rights; calls for the immediate release of all those human rights defenders and prisoners of conscience who are still imprisoned; reiterates, notwithstanding Iran's right to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes under the rules of the non-proliferation regime, that the proliferation risks in connection with the Iranian nuclear programme remain a source of serious concern to the European Union and to the international community, as

expressed very clearly in many UNSC resolutions; calls on the Iranian authorities to fulfill Iran's obligations under the NPT; calls forcefully on Tehran to ratify and implement the Additional Protocol to the Safeguards Agreement; condemns Iran's continuing refusal to fully cooperate with the IAEA, obstructing the IAEA's work, denying full and unconditional access to key facilities and objecting to the appointment of inspectors.

Resolution of November 17, 2011- P7-TA-2011-0517

It emphasizes on the release of political activists and human rights defenders and expresses grave concern over the steadily deteriorating human rights situation in Iran, the growing number of political prisoners, the continuously high number of executions, including of juveniles, the widespread torture, unfair trials and exorbitant sums demanded for bail, and the heavy restrictions on freedom of information, expression, assembly, belief, education and movement; stands ready to support additional sanctions for individuals responsible for human rights abuses; calls on the EU Member States which are permanent members of the UN Security Council to raise the issue of opening an investigation into whether the crimes committed by the Iranian authorities amount to crimes against humanity.

Resolution of February 2, 2012 P7\_TA (2012)0024

This decision primarily is about the situation of Iran's nuclear program and that the proliferation risks in connection with the Iranian nuclear program remain a source of serious concern to the EU and is deeply worried by the IAEA report's statement that credible information 'indicates that Iran has carried out activities relevant to the development of a nuclear explosive device'; deeply deplores Iran's acceleration of enrichment activities in violation of six UNSC resolutions and eleven IAEA Board resolutions, as reflected in the recent start of operations of enrichment of uranium to a level of up to 20% in the underground facility in Fordow near Qom.

Resolution of June 14, 2012- B7- 2012-0311

The EU Parliament during this resolution calls upon the authorities to respect internationally recognized legal safeguards with regard to persons belonging to religious minorities, officially recognized or otherwise; condemns the current

disrespect of minority rights and demands that minorities be allowed to exercise all rights granted by the Iranian Constitution and international law; further calls upon the authorities to eliminate all forms of discrimination based on religious or ethnic grounds or against persons belonging to minorities, such as Arabs, Baha'is, Azeri, Baluchi, Kurds and Turkmen, and also urges the Iranian authorities to ensure that the prisoners are not subjected to any torture and other ill-treatment, and that they are allowed to have regular access to lawyers of their choice and medical treatment, if and when needed. As well as calls on the Iranian authorities to remove all restrictions and affirm and respect the right to use minority languages, particularly the teaching of minority languages in schools.

Resolution of November 22, 2012- B7- 2012-2877

The EU Parliament strongly condemns the persecution and alleged torture committed by Iranian prison authorities that led to the death of blogger Sattar Beheshti and is extremely concerned by the growing number of alleged undeclared executions in Iran; calls for the immediate release of Sakharov Prize winners Jafar Panahi and Nasrin Sotoudeh, and/or grant them access to see their families, seek legal aid and receive adequate medical aid; also calls on the Iranian authorities to take immediate action to improve prison conditions and to ensure that all prisoners and detainees in their custody are protected against torture and other ill-treatment, in particular sexual assault.

Resolution of March 31, 2014- B7-0279/2014

In addition to the above-mentioned cases, the European Parliament passed a resolution against the Islamic Republic of Iran, titled "European Union's Strategy towards the Islamic Republic of Iran", on March 31, 2014. Having finally ratified the resolution, the European Union circulated it across institutions of European Union and European parliaments and governments. This resolution was formulated into 23 paragraphs and it revolved around such themes as nuclear issue, the outlook of Iran's relations with European Union, regional issues and human rights. Consequently, the European Union expressed its deep concerns over cases of human rights violations in Iran, including prohibition on freedom of speech and opinion, prohibition on freedom of information, prohibition on freedom of assembly, prohibition on freedom of civil

movements, violation of women's rights, implementation of death penalty, deployment of unfair trials and criminal laws, implementation of gender discrimination and sexual orientations. Besides, the European Parliament urged the Iranian authorities to release all human rights defenders, political prisoners, activists in trade and labor unions and those arrested in Iran's 2009 Presidential Election. The Parliament warned Iran in conjunction with high number of executions (the Baha'is, in particular) in 2013 and 2014. In addition, the European Union asserted that Iran's 2013 Presidential Elections was not held in accordance with their democratic standards. Then, the European Union resorted to a declaration on the criteria of free and fair elections adopted on 26 March 1994 in the Inter-Parliamentary Union. It should be noted that Iran has also been a member of the afore-mentioned union. Given the resolution, the European Parliament emphasized that it would give priority to the human rights issues in all its relations with Iran. Besides, the European Parliament urged the European Union to discuss human rights with the Islamic Republic of Iran in connection with judicial and security issues. Regarding the positive points of this resolution, one might point to welcoming the draft proposed by Dr. Rouhani to set Citizenship Rights Charter and the readiness of Iranian government to establish transparent and more productive relationship with the Western countries. Nevertheless, the European Parliament noted that citizenship rights should be fully consistent with Iran's international obligations, especially observing non-discrimination and the right to life, promoting the prohibition of torture, providing enough guarantee for full freedom of religions and freedom of expression. Finally, the European Parliament argued that these rights have been restricted by those national security-related offenses that were vaguely defined in Iranian context (The European Parliament Resolution of 31 March 2014 against Iran).

At the end of this chapter, what is received from different surveys carried out in Iran's nuclear program is that people in Europe have doubts about the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear program. In other words, Iran's goal is not only to obtain energy from uranium enrichment but Iran's insistence on the continuation of this program is to obtain nuclear weapons and I think the people of Europe have their own reasons to suspect. One of them is that the Europeans have announced several times that Iran is ready to provide all the essentials for developing a civilian nuclear



program on condition stop uranium enrichment program. But the Iranian government rejected such a guarantee. On the other hand, the repeated threats by some Iranian authorities especially the former Iranian President Ahmadinejad to wipe the state of Israel on the world map is the another reason of Non-peaceful program. Another issue in these polls is related to visibility and public opinion in Europe about the human rights situation in Iran. These polls show that people in Europe are deeply concerned about the human rights situation in Iran. The multitude of resolutions and reports of human rights organizations against Iran in connection with the increasing number of executions, stoning, torture, and imprisonment of political opponents and human rights activists, violates the rights of women and religious and ethnic minorities, the ban on freedom of expression, have doubled concerns of the people of Europe.

In the section on the European parliament measures, it can be seen that the resolution of the European Parliament against Iran from 2008 to 2014, has accelerated in the both field of human rights and nuclear program. In my opinion, all these resolutions issued in this period, in relation to human rights reflects deep concern of the EU Parliament members over the human rights situation in Iran. They are convinced that the high number of executions in Iran as well as repressive actions against women and religious and ethnic minorities, shows worsening human rights situation in Iran.

In relation to Iran's nuclear program, the European Parliament believes that there is no guarantee for non-diversion of Iran's peaceful nuclear energy to nuclear weapons. So as long as to provide the necessary assurance to the international community based on the non-diversion to nuclear weapons, should prevent the start of Iran's nuclear activities, because a nuclear Iran with ideology, identity and culture of the Islamic Revolution can be dangerous for the Middle East and the European Union, which is located near the geopolitics of the Middle East.

So the results of the survey and the European Parliament actions against Iran indicate a negative view of the European people and the political elite toward Iranian government.

## CONCLUSION

Various theories have been proposed on the impact of public opinion and political elites on political decision-making. According to the opinions expressed by theorists on public opinion, it can be said that public opinion is a kind of judgment by people on a controversial public issue at a special time. This is not the accumulation of the individual opinions, but the result of mutual action of the individual and the group in a given cultural, social, and economic texture, which could generally be called a social production. This is very crucial in many cases and can impose itself on the managers and decision makers in different ways.

In whatever related to the political elite, it was observed that, although elite theorists disagree on the cause of ruling and domination of minority elite over the mass of people, all agree that every society is divided into two groups of elites and masses. They also see masses of people as unorganized and chaotic crowd subordinate to elite, while the elite is seen as a self-conscious class that are consistent in behavior and have a common sense. Participation of political elite in decision-making process takes place in two ways: one directly through formal mechanisms and the other indirectly that might happen through formal and informal channels.

Due to the introduction above, the research question in this thesis is whether negative public opinion and political elites in Europe towards the Islamic Republic of Iran can have negative results and impact on the relations between Europe and Iran, or whether the European Union leaders pay no attention to public opinion and the political elite and the current policy towards the Islamic Republic of Iran is the result of decision-making power owners and leaders. In this study, it is tried to deal with the consequences of people and European political elite's attitudes towards Iran and

its impact on the relations between the parties, according to the main and sub-questions of research.

The mentioned survey started with this question: "Can negative attitudes of public opinion and the political elite in Europe be an obstacle to the progress between Europe and the Islamic Republic of Iran?" To get the correct answer to the main question, the answer to the sub-questions of this research must be achieved. The first sub-question seeks to clarify and explain the factors that stimulate public opinion and the attitude of the European political elite towards Iran.

In other words, which performance of the Islamic Republic of Iran at the international relations and foreign policy levels cause some concern in the minds of the people and the political elites of Europe. To answer this question, four factors among the most important and influential factor of divergence and tension in the relations between the parties have been mentioned. One of them is Iranian nuclear issue; Europeans have their own reasons for their concern for the fear of Iran's nuclear program.

They believe that Iran's missile capability is rapid. Moreover, by having missiles with range of 2,000 km, Iran can target both Israel and Europe, and if Iran has nuclear weapons, Israel will not hesitate to attack Iran, which is likely to lead to the establishment of a world war. The second reason is lack of confidence of Europeans in the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear program, because they believe that by being placed in the major crisis-causing region of the Middle East among neighbors such as India, Pakistan, and Israel, which have nuclear weapons, the Islamic Republic of Iran would not hesitate in trying to acquire such weapons.

Another reason is that if Iran acquired nuclear weapons, it will give them to its friends and including Palestinian groups (Islamic Jihad and Hamas) and Lebanon's Hezbollah to threaten the existence of Israel with the help of them. Finally, Europeans have environmental concerns and believe that the maintenance and management of nuclear facilities need high technology that Iran does not possess, and any negligence in the operation of nuclear power plants will lead to possible leakage of radioactive substances in the Persian Gulf. This will contaminate all oil resources and Europe provides 50 percent of its oil from the Gulf.

The other axis determining the foreign policy of Europe member states towards the Islamic Republic of Iran is the issue of human rights. Europeans clearly see the further expansion of mutual relations dependent on human rights and efforts of democratization of the country. As Olli Rehn, the former enlargement commissioner of Europe, said, "Human rights violation in Iran during recent years has made the development of EU relations with it impossible."

The European Union allegations about human rights violations in Iran include poor state of freedom of expression, continuation of stoning and execution, lack of full implementation of internationally recognized standards in the administration of justice, discrimination against ethnic and religious minorities, not allowing the UN Special Representative to visit Iran in order to contact with classes of the society, and the continuation of discrimination against women.

Another factor affecting relations between Europe and Iran is the issues related to terrorism. Europeans introduce Iran as a state sponsor of terrorism. The reason for this goes back to issues such as the case of Salman Rushdie (English of Hindi origin) that in February 1989 because of the publication of *The Satanic Verses* that was an insult to Islam, his death sentence was issued by Ayatollah Khomeini, the current leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran at that time, which has remained in force. In addition, assassination of opposition leaders abroad such as Mykonos case in 1992 in which the Secretary-General of the exiled Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (Sadeq Sharafkandi) was murdered and the murder was attributed to Iran.

Another problem was embassies war, where after a series of explosions that occurred in France during the years 1986-1985, the French government claimed one of the subjects of these operations to be Vahid Gorji, the official translator of Iranian Embassy in Paris. He had taken refuge in the Iranian embassy in Paris, so French government immediately kept Iranian embassy under surveillance and demanded that he give himself up before the court.

Iran response, Iran besieged the French embassy in Tehran and took French diplomats hostage. Among other issues related to the issue of terrorism is the Islamic Republic of Iran's supports the Palestinian groups and Hezbollah in Lebanon, which are among terrorist organization according to Europeans and would disrupt the

Middle East peace process, the Iranian government sees them as revolutionary groups.

The fourth factor affecting the relationship between Iran and Europe that is described in this study is the Middle East peace process. EU and Iran have had many talks on Middle East peace, because the legitimacy of Israel's existence and the nature and the process of crisis in the Middle East have been the main points of dispute between the parties. In the event that Iran's policy in this regard is based on the opposition and the destruction of Israel, while for Europe it has completely been different. Europe Union is among the fans of the establishment of Israeli-Palestinian states beside each other.

Data presented in this study, to explain and reveal the views and opinions of political elites and public opinion in Europe are the answer to the second sub-question in the survey that is "How are the public opinion and the political elite's opinions in Europe towards Iran?" To get the answer to this question and to obtain the necessary information and data at what is related to the view of elite, this research has introduced the actions of Europe parliament against Iran's as a reflection of the opinion of the political elite towards Iran.

This means that issuing many resolutions by Europe parliament against Iran reflects the views and vision of the political elite in Europe towards Iran. According to Table A. 9, from 2008 to 2014, fourteen resolutions have been passed by the European Parliament against the Islamic Republic of Iran- on the Iranian nuclear issue, Iran's human rights abuses and regional issues. In whatever we need to gain information about public opinion of Europe towards Iran, this study has relied on several polls conducted by reputable international institutions and centers.

This data represents the opinions of people and the political elite of Europe towards Iran. The poll conducted by CNN and Time in March 2005 and the German Marshall Fund in 2007 and comparing them show significant changes, reflecting increased pessimism about the Iranian by European people. Because in 2005 less than 35 percent of people from France, Germany and Great Britain believed the Iranian nuclear program is a threat, while in 2007, more than 50% of people in Europe believed that a nuclear Iran could threaten Europe.

In addition, according to PEW survey in 2009, the pessimism of the countries of Western Europe towards Iran has risen to more than 75 percent. Polls by GlobeScan and House Chatham institutes, respectively, in 2011 and 2012 show the cynicism of European countries to have recorded an increase of 80 percent to nearly 90 percent.

Thus, considering the above, in investigating the main question of this study "Is the negative attitude of the people and the political elite in Europe an obstacle to the development of relations between Iran and the European Union?" and by comparing the results of surveys carried out from 2005 to 2012 showing increasing pessimism and negative attitude of public opinion in Europe to Iran, the increasing number of resolutions issued by the Parliament of Europe from 2008 to 2014 against the Islamic Republic of Iran. All represent the European Parliament's was being affected by the perspective of people in Europe. In another sense, the political elite (members of the EU Parliament), who is directly elected by the people of Europe, pay a lot of attention to the opinions of their voters.

As the negative attitude and pessimism of people in Europe towards Iran has recorded a higher percentage, actions and resolutions of the European Parliament have become more against Iran. The European Parliament resolutions against Iran, particularly the resolution of March 31, 2014 entitled "the European Union strategy towards the Islamic Republic of Iran", which was notified to the institutions of Europe, parliaments and governments of the Europe after final approval, show the impact of the European Parliament on the process of political decision-making in relation to foreign policy and international relations of the Union and the member states towards Iran. Thus, it can be said that the European Union institutions and member states in the EU are affected by the decisions of the European Parliament and the European Parliament, in turn, as mentioned above, is influenced by public opinion in decisions. Therefore, about the relationship with the Iranian government, leaders and authorities in Europe are affected by parliamentarians and people in Europe. Thus, it can be said that the main question of this research that is "Is the negative attitude of the people and the political elite in Europe an obstacle to the development of relations between Iran and the European Union?" has been confirmed.

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	Favorable	Undesirable	Accepting nuclear weapons	Opposition against nuclear weapons	Tougher sanctions		Military action	
					Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
Great Britain	22	58	3	90	78	18	48	37
Spain	13	73	3	94	79	18	50	34
Germany	8	86	1	98	77	21	51	39
France	18	81	5	95	76	23	59	41
Russia	36	45	7	81	67	22	32	32
Poland	26	62	8	87	72	17	54	25

**Table A. 1**

	Against the nuclearization of Iran (in percent)	Support for the intensification of economic sanctions (in percent)	In favor of military action (in percent)
England	94	80	63
France	91	79	51
Germany	96	80	50

**Table A. 2**

	In favor of tough sanctions (in percent)	Against tough sanctions (in percent)
Germany	80	18
England	79	18
France	74	26
Czech	79	17
Italy	78	15
Spain	72	25
Poland	71	21
Greece	55	39

**Table A. 3**

	In favor of attacking Iran (in percent)	Accepting a nuclear Iran
England	51	40
France	51	48
Germany	50	41
Czech	55	31
Spain	53	37
Italy	52	22
Poland	51	22
Greece	27	30

**Table A. 4**

	Negative image of Iran	Positive image of Iran
Germany	91	6
France	86	14
England	68	16
Greece	62	27
Poland	69	20
Spain	84	9
Czech	77	9
Italy	85	5

**Table A. 5**



Iran acquiring nuclear weapons	Favor %	Oppose %	DK %
U.S	3	93	4
Britain	4	89	6
France	6	94	0
Germany	4	96	1
Russia	8	75	18
China	18	62	20

**Table A. 6**

Which is more important	Prevent Iran even if it means military action	Avoid military conflict	Both/ neither	DK
	%	%	%	%
U.S	64	28	1	7
Britain	48	41	3	8
France	58	40	1	1
Germany	50	39	4	7
Russia	28	30	23	19
China	35	38	17	10

**Table A. 7**

Governance rank order		Score	Governance rank order		Score
1	Switzerland	67.3	26	Brazil	49.1
2	Canada	67.2	27	Estonia	48.3
3	Sweden	66.5	28	Lithuania	48.2
4	Germany	65.3	28	Argentina	48.2
5	Australia	64.7	30	Romania	47.1
6	Norway	63.9	31	Taiwan	46.6
7	Netherlands	63.5	31	South Korea	46.6
7	Denmark	63.5	33	Chile	46.5
9	United Kingdom	63.2	33	Mexico	46.5
10	France	63.0	35	Malaysia	46.3
11	Finland	62.6	36	Egypt	46.0
12	New Zealand	62.1	37	Turkey	45.9
13	Austria	61.9	38	U.A. Emirates	45.8
14	Scotland	60.8	39	Thailand	45.4
15	Belgium	60.5	39	Peru	45.4
16	Spain	60.1	41	India	44.7
17	Japan	59.9	42	Ecuador	44.5
18	Italy	59.1	43	Russia	44.1
19	Iceland	59.0	44	Indonesia	43.7
20	Ireland	58.9	45	South Africa	43.2
21	Hungary	52.3	46	Saudi Arabia	42.7
22	United States	51.9	47	Cuba	38.4
23	Singapore	51.4	48	China	36.7
23	Poland	51.4	49	Nigeria	36.3
25	Czech Republic	51.3	50	Iran	32.1

**Table A. 8**

Row	Resolution number	Resolution Date	Title	The main issues and concerns
1	P6-TA-2008-0031	31 January 2008	Iran status	<p>The human rights situation in Iran (the death penalty and executions, stoning, a ban on freedom of expression, freedom of opinion and banning freedom of religion (especially the Baha'is and Sufis)</p> <p>Nuclear issue</p> <p>Relations between Iran and Europe</p>
2	P6_TA(2008)0185	April 24, 2008	Women's rights status in Iran	<p>Political and social rights violations of women in Iran</p> <p>Gender-based discrimination and punishment of stoning</p> <p>Discrimination against women, particularly in relation to the lack of equal rights in marriage, divorce, inheritance and the appointment of women as judges,</p>

3	B6-2008-0327	June 19, 2008	Execution of juvenile offenders in Iran	Legal condemnation of the death penalty in Iran procedures and practices relating to the conviction and punishment of juvenile offenders
4	P6-TA-2008-0412	September 4, 2008	Death penalty in Iran	Procedural and legal condemnation of the death penalty in Iran
5	P6-TA-2009-0029	January 15, 2009	Shirin Ebadi's case	Demanding the release of political prisoners, prisoners of conscience and Baha'i minorities
6	P7-TA-2010-0016	February 10, 2010	Status of Iran	Nuclear issue Europe EU-Iran relations Human rights issues, most of clause (clause 12) covers the resolution. (Release of prisoners, political activists, women's rights defenders, journalists, writers, bloggers after the 2009 elections)

7	P7-TA-2010-0310	September 8, 2010	The case of Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani And Zahra Bahrami	The status of these two individual (Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani And Zahra Bahrami) Human rights violations, including executions, stoning, a ban on freedom of expression, prohibition of freedom of opinion and ban on freedom of the press
8	P7-TA-2011-0021	January 20, 2011	The case of Nasrin Sotoudeh	Such as freedom of expression, opinion and freedom of the press Releasing political prisoners, journalists and human rights defenders, including Nasrin Sotoudeh
9	P7-TA-2011-0096	March 10, 2011	Europe Union's approach towards Iran	The situation in Iran Iran's nuclear case Mostly human rights clause (clause 27) Severe discrimination against women in political and

				social rights and the death penalty Execution of Baha'i minorities, human rights defenders, lawyers, students and journalists
10	P7-TA-2011-0517	November 17, 2011	Human rights violations in Iran	Emphasis on the release of political activists and human rights defenders
11	P7_TA(2012)0024	February 2, 2012	The status of Iran's nuclear program	Human rights violations in Iran, especially freedom of expression, freedom of the press and the death penalty Iran nuclear issues
12	B7- 2012-0311	June 14, 2012	Ethnic-minority status	Human rights violations such as the prohibition of freedom of expression, opinion and association and prohibiting social rights, political and cultural rights of the minority Baha'i and Sufi-in

13	B7- 2012-2877	November 22, 2012	The human rights status in Iran (emphasis on mass executions and the death of Iranian blogger SattarBeheshti)	Release of political prisoners and human rights defenders Welcoming the release of NasrinSotoudeh and JafarPanahi (2012 Sakharov Prize winners)
14	B7-0279/2014	March 31, 2014	Europe Union's strategy towards the Islamic Republic of Iran	Regional issues and human rights (human rights violations in Iran, including a ban on freedom of speech and belief, a ban on freedom of information, freedom of assembly ban, ban on civil movements, women's rights, the death penalty, unfair trials and criminal law, discrimination gender and sexual tendencies) Nuclear issue Vision Iran's relations with Europe

**Table A.9**