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The tensions between America and Iran explained by Megan Specia and Rick Gladstone

The United States and Iran have remained engaged in a conflicting relation for many years in their history. The Iranian regime which is ready not to compromise on its nuclear program, is creating security risks for the international community. It is widely believed that Iranian nuclear program threatens the stability of the Middle Eastern region specifically and of the whole world generally. This nuclear program has been considered as a threat for United States allies in the region. It is also against the norms set in many international treaties. Most of all it is the violation of the United Nations charter both in its spirit and action. Considering the tense security situation erupting from the Iranian threat, the United States supported the six-party talks for curbing the nuclear proliferation by the Iranian state, but later actions by Iranian authorities forced the United States to pull back from the agreement. United States President Donald Trump has openly argued that Iranian steps are a threat to the international peace order.

In all this developing situation, it is important to note that what the United Nations (the supreme authority) in the world has to say. Although the United Nation chief Antonio Guterres has raised his concern on this situation the role of United Nations remains debatable in this complete scenario. To understand the role of the United Nations in such situations one needs to understand its charter. For example, the United Nations charter which was adopted in 1945 calls that this institution will prevent the future generations from the threat of wars and will create conditions which will force countries to respect the international treaties. In light of these clauses of the UN charter, one needs to understand the Iranian situation. There are some questions which remain unanswerable if this situation is viewed from the United Nation’s lens. They are

* Is Iran complying with all the international treaties?
* Is Iran a stabilizer or a destabilizer in this developing situation?
* What role the UN should play in this situation?
* Does this situation raise the threat of war?

There are some questions which remain unanswerable despite the massive authority the UN has compared to both the United States and Iran. Since till yet, the situation is unfolding in the worst way as expected, so one may claim that the UN remains ineffective in addressing these concerns. These concerns have been highlighted by Madeleine Albright already in his article titled ‘United Nations'. He writes in the article that the United Nation is useless as it remains inefficient in addressing the challenge of maintaining peace in the region. He has clarified his point of view by presenting some past and recent example. He writes that the UN rejected the preemption charter presented by the then President Bush. He also argues that UN peacekeeping efforts have remained failed since there is still chaos and fear among the nations. He urges that the Security Council which is a superior group of nations at the UN must be enlarged and expanded so that the concerns of other regional countries should also be talked about.

At present, the United States- Iran conflict is making the headlines. With each passing day, there are threats that these countries will go into the war. The one instance which supports this argument is the recent New York time story referred above in the title. Such Iranian steps are forcing the United States to take strict measurements against such irresponsible behavior of Iran. To understand the role of the United Nations in this situation one needs to consider the charter of the United Nations, the role of the General Assembly and the function of the Security Council. These both bodies of the United Nation are headed by its Chief, which is appointed for the term of five years. The General Assembly of the United Nations is the largest arm of the UN. It makes laws and amends the existing laws in light of the changes developed in the international scenario. The General Assembly can urge the belligerent states to refrain from developing a worse situation. It can work for the peaceful arbitrations of the dispute between countries.

The Security Council, unlike the General assembly, is a selected group of countries all with powerful militaries and economies. The Security Council has the primary duty to maintain peace and security in the world and to decide where the peacekeeping delegations will be deployed. In the Iranian conflict, the Security Council have warned the United States not to aggravate the situation. The United Nation chief who heads each organ of this body has a nominal role in all crisis. He performs the function enshrined to him by the Security Council. Normally, the United Nation Chief's office urges the states to remain calm in the situation which can lead to further tensions accidentally. The Iranian conflict can be seen as a test case to view the functions and roles of the US- Iran conflict. Before this, one may have to notice that UN role and functions are pre-defined. No authority working under the UN is allowed to take actions which overrun its already defined statues. Similarly, in this US-Iran conflict, the United Nations has a pre-defined role and it largely depends upon the belligerent states and somehow on the arbitrary entities like the European Union that how this situation gets unfold.

Megan Specia and Rick Gladstone's article titled ‘The tensions between America and Iran explained' is of worthy read to understand the underlying reason for conflict between the two countries (Gladstone and Specia). They write that Americans consider that there are serious threats to the interests of the United States in the Middle East. This situation has not erupted in days, rather has developed in years. Both countries anticipate each other as serious threats. The US interests in the region are far impactful since much of its oil trade is carried over by the routes near to the Iranian borders. Iran which has threatened many times to attack the US allies in the region eyes on disrupting the oil supplies from this region. At present, both states are standing eye to eye with each other, which many International experts consider dangerous for regional peace.

The United Nations has many roles to play in this situation. Besides the UN Chief call of refraining from creating a dangerous situation, the General assembly session and the Security Council session must be called over. There is an obvious thought that the Security Council mighty give a go-ahead to the US for attacking Iran. On the other side, the General Assembly session which is yet to start from September in this year will just include speeches and harsh exchange of the words as like it does so each year. This situation is a test case for the authority of the UN. As it has already given ample time to both the parties for situating this matter, which has been neglected so far. The vote of China and the European countries in the Security Council will also be crucial since these both parties prefer the continuation of the Joint Comprehensive plan of action which was signed to limit the Iranian proliferation efforts. The UN role in this matter also remains questionable.

Works Cited:

Gladstone, Rick, and Megan Specia. “The Tension Between America and Iran, Explained.” *The New York Times*, 16 May 2019. *NYTimes.com*, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/16/world/middleeast/iran-tensions-explainer.html.