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NUCLEAR DEAL: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND, IMPLICATIONS FOR THE REGION AND TURKISH-IRANIAN RELATIONS

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With the nuclear deal of 14 July 2015, years of tension between P5+1 and Iran seemed to come to an end. What the “post-deal Iran” would bring in regarding the Iranian-Western relations, Iranian stance in the region, and Turkish-Iranian relations constitutes the framework of this policy brief. In that respect, it is argued that the new era in the Iranian-Western relations in the “post-sanction” atmosphere would potentially bring in quite a number of opportunities in addition to fixing the relationship. Furthermore, a better working relationship between the West and Iran and between Turkey and Iran would be possible, which, in fact, could be translated into a more stable Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region and more secure energy flow to the West. However, the long-term implications of the deal would still depend on the choices of each actor and their capability and/or will to utilise the post-sanctions relaxation to achieve certain political and economic regional and global ends.

Iran seems to come to terms with the West with respect to its nuclear programme and this new dynamic would potentially open up a new stage in Iran's relations not only with the West but also in terms of its stance in the region and its interactions with its neighbours. The implications of this new atmosphere, both in terms of Iran's economy and its socialisation within broader international community and with respect to regional power politics require a closer look within this new context. New dynamics in the relationship between the West and Iran has the potential to have a great deal of impact both at the regional and global level. Considering its timing, when a Saudi-led intervention into Yemen¹ caused a great deal of irritation in Iran and the Western criticism about Iranian support for the Assad regime is on the table, a possible era of rapprochement between Iran and the West

might have important policy implications.

In this policy brief, thus, possible policy implications of the "post-deal Iran" in terms of the Iranian-Western relations, Iranian stance in the region, and Turkish-Iranian relations are analysed. From energy security to regional conflicts, several areas of possible implications are observed and some projections into the future are offered. Before moving on to these, first, the historical background of the Iranian nuclear programme is presented in order to trace the roots of one of the most controversial regional issues back to its origin which will also provide a valuable opportunity to find out critical junctures in the process. After that, implications of the settlement for the Iranian-Western relations and for the region are investigated. Finally, implications of it in terms of the future of the Turkish-Iranian relations are analysed with respect to

a wide range of areas from energy links between the two to their economic and political interactions and to their stance in regional developments.

The main argument after presenting some major implications is that the new era in the Iranian-Western relations in the “post-sanction” atmosphere would potentially bring quite a number of opportunities in addition to fixing the relationship. It might also engender a better working relationship between the West and Iran and between Turkey and Iran which could be translated into a more stable Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region and more secure energy flow to the West. However, the long-term implications of the deal would still depend on the choices of each actor and their capability and/or will to utilise the post-sanctions relaxation to achieve certain political and economic regional and global ends.

Historical Background: From “Atoms for Peace” to the Crisis of Iranian Nuclear Programme

Before moving on to possible implications of the nuclear deal from Iran’s economic and political prospects to the Turkish-Iranian relationship, a brief investigation of the historical background of the Iranian nuclear programme would prove useful. To begin with, it is noteworthy to mention that the programme had been encouraged and directly supported in the first place by the very powers that opposed it currently due to their concerns about possible military outcomes of the programme. Eisenhower took the initiative in the 1950s to give a start to “Atoms for Peace” programme, named after his speech at the UN in 1953, referring to encouragement of the use of nuclear technology for peaceful reasons with the goal of emphasising the potential of nuclear

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energy for the future. Under the Shah rule, Iran got a great deal of support within the context of this scheme not only from the United States, but also from West Germany and France up until the revolution in 1979. Iran, as a signatory of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), accepted being legally obliged not to become a nuclear-weapon state.² In the late 1970s, just before the revolution, suspicion was already there especially for the United States. This suspicious attitude was a result of the Iranian attempts to develop laser enrichment and plutonium reprocessing

technologies as well as Iran's Atomic Energy Organisation's alleged research on nuclear bombs that could enable Iran to develop nuclear weapon technology in a very short time thanks to already acquired know-how and material. The revolution, without a single doubt, marked the major turning point within the context of dramatically shifting attitudes.

Following the revolution, Shah's ambitious nuclear goal of constructing 20 nuclear power plants was shelved by Ayatollah Khomeini, the leading political-religious figure during the revolution. Moreover,

deals with France and West Germany about the construction of new nuclear energy plants were cancelled. All in all, Iran suspended its programme for some 8-9 years up until it perceived it necessary once again and allegedly with military goals in mind after its war with Iraq. After the war between Iraq and Iran, Tehran revisited its stance and decided to resurrect its halted uranium enrichment efforts. This decision was a critical juncture within the context of the tension between the West and Iran over its nuclear programme as the starting point of the crisis between the two as we know of now which was far from being that controversial at the time. The question was then, to find a reliable partner to replace the United States, West Germany, and France in Iran's pursuit of increasing use of nuclear energy which would normally require nuclear know-how and construction capabilities. China and the USSR stood

out as some promising candidates. Due to its struggle with the negative consequences of the dissolution including a serious economic crisis, the USSR could not live up to its commitment to cooperate with Iran in this regard in the 1980s. In 1995, Iran and Russia succeeded in finalising a deal not only including construction of a nuclear plant in Bushehr³ – of which construction was started by West Germany but interrupted with the Revolution in Iran and which was highly damaged during the Iran-Iraq War–, but also Russian support to Iran in terms of nuclear know-how, a significant achievement of Iran in the post-revolution era in terms of its nuclear ambitions.

Another important critical juncture, which is at least as important as the first one, was the exposure of two secret nuclear plants in Natanz and Arak by the Iranian oppositional group, the National Council of Resistance of Iran, in 2002. This is the

After the war between Iraq and Iran, Tehran decided to resurrect its halted uranium enrichment efforts. This decision can be considered as the starting point of the nuclear crisis between Iran and the West as we know of now.

point that introduced the question of how to deal with the Iranian nuclear programme more seriously than ever at the global level.⁴ Since then, from sanctions to embargoes to harsh political exchange of statements to labelling the country as one of the “rogue states” and a part of “axis of evil”, the relationship between Iran and the West has been highly problematic.⁵

Regarding the attitudes of some key actors during the “crisis” surrounding the Iranian nuclear programme, quite briefly, whereas Israel occasionally defended a military action in order to tackle the situation, the United States, whereas always keeping this option on the table, refrained from being as militaristic as Israel. On the other hand, some other leading powers such as Germany and France supported a settlement based on negotiation and bargaining. While Russia and China followed a supportive policy line, Turkey’s position

was also supportive of the programme with the belief in every state’s right to use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes according to the Article IV of NPT⁶ and its belief in the Iranian programme’s peaceful ends. Turkey also adopted a critical stance against intensifying sanctions.⁷ Turkey, on the one hand highlighted its opposition to any possible militarisation of the programme whereas frequently repeated its concerns about the risk of further alienating and marginalising Iran by harsher sanctions and embargoes, and put its weight on a policy line that emphasised the significance of diplomatic solutions within which context it can play the role of mediatory as in the case of the deal between Brazil-Iran and Turkey in 2010.⁸

Settlement of the Crisis and Its Possible Implications

Years of tension between P5+1⁹ and Iran seemed to

come to an end in the temporary framework agreement of November 2013, but more importantly with the negotiations in April between the two sides on the finalisation of a comprehensive nuclear deal in the summer of 2015. According to the deal of April, the major points of tension, namely Iran's enrichment level, capacity and stockpile would be closely monitored and limited. The two more controversial points of tension, namely enrichment and heavy water facilities would also be an important part of the final deal. Natanz facility would act as the only enrichment facility, the Heavy Water facility in Arak would be redesigned in order not to be able to enrich weapon level plutonium products, enhanced access would be given to International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) officials, used fuel would be exported in order not to be reprocessed, and the Additional Protocol of NPT would be implemented. In return of

these, unsurprisingly Iran's first and foremost demand is lifting sanctions which would significantly help its economy. Both the EU and the United States agreed to do so whereas the United Nations would terminate all related resolutions.¹⁰

According to the final deal of July 2015, Iran agreed to reduce its uranium enrichment-capacity by two-thirds, from around 20,000 centrifuges to around 6,000 at its Natanz facility for ten years, cut its stockpile of low and medium-enriched uranium by 96 percent to no more than 300 kg –which is enriched no more than 3.67 percent– by diluting or selling it to other countries for 15 years, not build new uranium-enrichment or heavy water facilities for the next 15 years, redesign its Arak facility in a way that it will not produce weapon grade plutonium and to be subjected to intensive monitoring measures. In return, the US, the UN

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and the EU will terminate all resolutions, sanctions and regulations with respect to Iran. The exception is that ballistic missile technology transfer will continue to be restricted for eight years and heavy weapons and arms embargo on conventional weapons will be in place for five years.¹¹

With respect to the implications of the deal of 14 July 2015, energy supply will be a key issue. Other important implications will include the recent tension over Yemen and Iranian stance with respect to this crisis. Moreover, the deal might have serious political implications with respect to the question of

dealing with the Assad regime which has so far enjoyed a great amount of Iranian backing.

Having the second largest proven natural gas reserves and fourth largest proven oil reserves of the world, Iran will be able to utilise its energy resources much more effectively without Western pressure on its efforts towards cutting energy deals as well as with an increasing economic capability to renovate its infrastructure and it can reach Western market with new transportation projects and this would engender in no less significant economic benefits for Iran. This would directly affect



the energy game in Eurasia in general and the difficult task of securing energy supply with a reliable and affordable pricing policy. Especially Iranian gas to the market might help highlight the importance of the Iranian supply within the context of “diversification” efforts of Europe referring to the European struggle to diversify both supply and transit routes toward Europe in order to tackle Russian hegemony over them. This might be the case in case of a close contact with a cooperative approach between the West and Iran after the ultimate settlement of the nuclear crisis. However, the closer contact between Russia and Iran in energy realm would result in further worsening of the EU’s efforts to diversify its supply in a way that it can keep itself as secure as possible from potential strategic uses of the “energy card” in the future. Therefore, the EU would need to act proactively with a focus on “socialising” Iran in the

immediate aftermath of the settlement in order to gain an upper hand over Russia, if possible, within the context of acting as the primary energy partner of Iran. Otherwise, energy dependency question would turn into a probably more threatening dual dependency in the long-term. On the other hand, if the EU can incorporate Iran in the energy game in Eurasia effectively, it would be able not only to challenge Russian hegemony over energy supply but also to challenge it in a way that a more preferable pricing policy can be achieved thanks to competitive pricing options. Thus, Russian energy role as a hegemonic supplier can be challenged by economically and politically by damaging its leading energy supplier role. The limits of cooperative moments in the Iranian-Russian relationship stemming from S-300 deals, nuclear cooperation and shared stance over the Assad regime will be tested. Since Iran is an important

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new supplier for the West in order to challenge Russian influence over energy export and pricing policy, this dimension would be one of the major battlefields in the post-sanctions environment.

There will be direct and significant policy implications with respect to current regional tensions as well. Especially at a time when the civil conflict in Yemen has the potential to turn into a regional one with a strong sectarian tone between a Saudi-led camp with an anti-Shia and anti-Iran sentiment and harsh criticism on the Iranian side, this development seems

quite important. A closer relationship between the West and Iran might be the way out in the regionalised war in Yemen by causing US-backed war machine Saudi Arabia to revise its position,¹² if Iran's silence was not already on the table as a "carrot" in order to reach the deal. It is also possible that Saudi halt of direct military operations might not that coincidental. In terms of the long-term settlement of the crisis in Yemen, it is important to note that as well as closer ties between the West and Iran and a less aggressive mood in the relationship between Iran and Saudi Arabia, closer cooperation

between Iran and Turkey over Yemen could also prove quite useful in terms of acting as a symbol of Shia-Sunni cooperation and of a regional shared stance regardless of sectarian divisions.¹³ The region could benefit to a great extent from a cooperative approach adopted by Iran and Turkey as opposed to their clashing policies with respect to the Arab Spring and shifting political dynamics in the MENA region. Their closer political stance would act as a counterweight against current and emerging sectarian militarism. This common ground might also pay off well in terms of the question of how to deal with the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) which threatens regional stability to an important extent and requires regional cooperation at the highest level putting aside a global initiative. Unstable political dynamics of neighbouring countries from Iraq to Syria and Yemen prepare the ground for further

advance of such groupings as well as provide a fertile ground for the emergence of similar militant groups in the future. As for Turkey's relations with the Balkans and with the countries under the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy, Western connection would help strengthening dialogue between Turkey and Iran. Iran with a more Western inclination in its policy-making with a closer political and economic dialogue with Turkey, Egypt and even Saudi Arabia might positively contribute to the elimination of weak state mechanisms and economies of the region.

The governments have been gradually changing one after another following the Arab Spring. The most illustrative one of "such" trend is the Egyptian case. Among all, the Assad regime in Syria stands out as a key battlefield that Iran feels obliged to defend. On the other hand, Turkey, being one

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of the rivals of Iran in terms of regional superiority, is insistent on its stance that Assad, who is responsible for the death of more than 250,000 people since 2011 and disloyal to his promise of reforms and democratisation should be out of the picture before a settlement over Syria is achieved. These developments in the broader MENA region and particularly in Syria does not only threaten regional stability with its spill-over effects and cause exchange of harsh criticisms between the leading regional powers such as Iran and Turkey, it also contributes to the maintenance of

the possibility of an external intervention in the region of which impacts might be quite destabilising as it was witnessed after the Iraq War. Thus, Iran, which shared a common stance with Turkey with respect to the post-war reconstruction of Iraq and to the prevention of long-term external presence in the region, might need to re-consider its stance. A closer relationship between Iran and the West might push both sides to find a middle ground and to have a working relationship over the question of Syria and its future rather than maintaining tension via constant exchange of

criticism of the other's policies regarding Syria. A more "socialised" Iran not only by linking its natural gas to the West which would also require legal and bureaucratic harmonisation to some extent but also by much more closely linking its economy to the West might result in a much less aggressive and more cooperative Iran in terms of regional developments. On the other hand, if this window of opportunity for the West is missed and Iran opt for a less cooperative approach, a richer Iran with much less obstacle in its way to export its hydrocarbon resources and to foster trade with neighbouring regions might result in higher levels of self-confidence and higher capabilities of funding and supporting like-minded groups around itself, too. This can have serious implications not only in Yemen or Syria, but also in Iraq with its Shi'ite population and predominantly-Shi'ite cities including some holy ones such as Najaf and

Karbala. While ISIS makes its move in several cities in Iraq, a Shi'ite rise, if turns into demands for more political and economic power, can push Iraq to the brink of a medium to long-term crisis once again. This atmosphere would threaten the future of regional efforts to tackle regional problems from coping with the groups like the ISIS to exporting hydrocarbon resources of region to the West in a secure and sustainable way as an important source of income to controlling occasional tension stemming from sectarian differences in the region.

Thus, again, as in the case of the future of energy politics in the region after sanctions are lifted, regional policy implications with respect to regional points of conflict will also depend on both the Western attitude and Iranian policy preferences between choosing a more aggressive attitude or maintaining its "milder" stance in its relations with the West.

In the last decade, their shared stance with respect to the post-war Iraq and Turkey's support to the peaceful ends of the Iranian nuclear programme brought Iran and Turkey closer.

It is also important to note that shifts between the two possible policy lines among others can be expected in line with the future shifts in the Iranian leadership which underlines the importance of long-term institutionalised cooperative efforts.

Prospects for Turkey-Iran Relations after the Settlement

The two important regional powers, Iran and Turkey had experienced a relationship full of mistrust and suspicion since the revolution in Iran with the 1990s being the zenith of a highly securitised relationship. However, in the last decade, their shared stance with respect to the post-war Iraq and Turkey's support to the peaceful ends of the Iranian nuclear programme brought the two closer to each other. Even though their desire to utilise their "sphere of influence" during the Arab Spring and in its aftermath caused some troubled times

in their rapprochement and desecuritisation of the relationship in the last decade, it would be fair to argue that they still enjoy a much better relationship compared to the 1980s and 1990s, being unprecedented levels of economic interactivity and prospects for stronger energy ties are the flagships of this era of overall improvement. This relationship would be surely and significantly affected by the emergence of a post-sanctions Iran.

In terms of the economic dimension, Turkey and Iran already succeeded in achieving a remarkable improvement in their economic links in the last decade with their economic interactivity. In this improvement, not only desecuritisation of the relationship with Iran which took place especially since the Iraq War thanks to shared concerns and policy preferences, but also Turkey's transformation into a "trading state" with a much higher level of economic interactivity abroad and closer

economic relations with neighbouring regions is important. According to the figures retrieved from the Turkish Statistical Institute, the trade volume between Turkey and Iran which was around \$1 billion in 2000 increased to more than \$ 13 billion in 2014. This made Turkey the fifth largest partner of Iran while Iran has become the sixth largest trading partner of Turkey. Considering the absence of objections coming from the West and especially the United States in the post-sanction era, a further boost in economic interactivity as well as an energy-driven boom in trade volume due to future prospects of Iranian entry to the energy game in Eurasia could well be expected. Both heads of the states Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Hassan Rouhani occasionally emphasises the importance of closer economic links and mention the goal of \$30 billion trade volume and encourages businessmen toward that goal via business trips and high level

support from leading political figures. The recent visit of Erdoğan to Iran highlighted the desire to further improve this level of economic interactivity as well as emphasising the importance of cooperation in order to deal with the situation in Yemen.

Considering Turkey's desire to carry Iranian gas to Europe in order to reinforce its pursuit of becoming a key energy hub within the context of the famous East-West energy corridor, the new dynamics in the relationship between Iran and the West are also important. Since especially the United States' stance was quite rigid in response to Turkey's search for deals with Iran in that regard, such as expanding recent TANAP's capacity, Iranian gas is quite important as a possible supply point. The ultimate capacity of TANAP will be expected to be around 60 bcma¹⁴ which would require participation of several more supplier countries other than

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Azerbaijan. One of the key suppliers with respect to this increase in the capacity of the pipeline can be Iran thanks to the post-deal atmosphere. Moreover, the two countries might search for new pipeline projects in the post-sanction era in which Turkey's role in carrying Iranian gas to the West would be significant. In addition to the Turkish Stream's already ambitious capacity of 63 bcma,¹⁵ this possible increase in the capacity of TANAP would dramatically contribute to Turkey's role as a transit country. This 63 bcma, coupled with TANAP's projected 60 bcma around 2030, making up to

123 bcma will account for more than one-fifth of the European natural gas demand. On the Iranian side, this would also benefit Iran not only economically but also in terms of raising its profile in the global energy chessboard as an important supplier and thus contribute not only to its economic improvement but also to its integration into the international community with a higher bargaining power.

With respect to the security dimension, eliminating the risk of a nuclear Iran in the foreseeable future in case of a serious regional tension is an important

security-related consequence for Turkey. Even though Turkey's official stance was quite supportive of the Iranian nuclear programme with the belief that it would not turn into a programme with military ends, ultimate elimination of this potential would require a revision in the potential security threat Turkey might face in the medium to long-term. Considering the risk of Iranian transformation of the programme into a military one in a short span of time by using already achieved know-how and nuclear material, even current Iranian politics does not tend to focus on military ends, in case of a regional tension, no one could guarantee that the Iranian leadership would not adopt a different stance. Since instability is almost a norm in the region and the fate of not only rapprochements but also rivalries are far from predictable, the elimination of this concern will further contribute to desecuritisation of the relationship

between Turkey and Iran. This point proves more vital considering its timing when Ballistic Missile Defence System (BMDS) discussions and tension between the two over the future of the MENA region after the Arab Spring once again securitised their relationship to some extent. Additionally, Iran's "socialisation" and improved links with the West after settlement of the crisis might push it to transform into a more reasonable actor searching for a milder regional stance which would also contribute to the desecuritisation.

All in all, the new atmosphere in the relationship between Iran and the West could offer change in several points of tension from the clash over Syria to energy links between the East and the West. If the post-sanction dynamics are analysed and action can be taken wisely and without delay by the West, we might witness a quite different picture within the context of

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Iran's regional and global profile and its relationship with the West. However, the extent of this change surely depends on first, the commitment of P5+1 and Iran to comply with their agreement, second to the other actors' moves to prevent a closer contact between the two which might in turn weaken their links with Iran, such as Russia and China, and third, to the results of the possible return of Ahmadinejad to Iranian politics (which might not be probable or as successful as he expects if Rouhani signs the deal and enjoys a significant economic recovery coupled with Western sympathy) the emergence of any other less cooperative political

figure with a tougher stance in nuclear talks. Last but not least, Turkey's ability to adjust its overall stance in the region along with its day-to-day policies in response to this shift in line with its own power and interest-driven calculations would determine to what extent Turkey can utilise this change. Turkey and Iran might enjoy a better economic relationship, a significant increase in their economic interactivity and a more stable regional equation whereas they might also turn this picture upside down and miss a valuable chance of contributing to the normalisation after settlement of one of the most important controversies in the region with global impact.

Endnotes

- 1 See “Saudi Arabia launches air strikes in Yemen”, *BBC*, 26/3/2015, <<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-32061632>>, accessed 2/4/2015.
- 2 For a detailed background analysis, see Mustafa Kibaroglu, “Iran’s Nuclear Ambitions from a Historical Perspective and the Attitude of the West”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, 43:2 (2007), pp. 223-245
- 3 Anton Khlopkov and Anna Lutkova, “The Bushehr NPP: Why Did It Take So Long?”, Center for Energy and Security Studies, <<http://ceness-russia.org/data/doc/TheBushehrNPP-WhyDidItTakeSoLong.pdf>>, accessed 27/05/2012.
- 4 Amin Saikal, “The Iran Nuclear Dispute”, *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 60:2 (2006), pp. 193-199, at p. 193. Also, see Aylin G. Gürzel and Eyüp Ersoy, “Turkey and Iran’s Nuclear Program”, *Middle East Policy*, 19:1 (Spring 2012), pp. 37-50, at p. 38.
- 5 For a more detailed analysis of sanctions, see Andrew Parasiliti, “After Sanctions, Deter and Engage Iran”, *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy* 52:5 (2010), pp. 13-20, at p. 17
- 6 Article IV of the Non Proliferation Treaty is as follows: 1. Nothing in this Treaty shall be interpreted as affecting the inalienable right of all the Parties to the Treaty to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I and II of this Treaty. 2. All the Parties to the Treaty undertake to facilitate, and have the right to participate in, the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Parties to the Treaty in a position to do so shall also co-operate in contributing alone or together with other States or international organizations to the further development of the applications of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, especially in the territories of non-nuclear-weapon States Party to the Treaty, with due consideration for the needs of the developing areas of the world. For more detailed information on NPT via its treaty, see “The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons”, <<http://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2005/npttreaty.html>>.
- 7 For some studies on Turkey’s stance, see Mustafa Kibaroglu and Barış Çağlar, “Implications of a Nuclear Iran for Turkey”, *Middle East Policy* 15, no. 4 (2008), pp. 59-80; Aylin Gürzel and Eyüp Ersoy, “Turkey and Iran’s Nuclear Program”, *Middle East Policy*, 19:1 (Spring 2012), pp. 37-50; Aylin Gürzel, “Turkey’s Role in Defusing the Iranian Nuclear Issue”, *The Washington Quarterly*, 35:3 (2012), pp. 141-152.
- 8 See Mehmet Özkan, “Turkey–Brazil Involvement in Iranian Nuclear Issue: What Is the Big Deal?”, *Strategic Analysis*, 35:1(2010), pp.26-30 and Aylin Gürzel, “Turkey’s Role in Defusing the Iranian Nuclear Issue”, *The Washington Quarterly*, 35:3 (2012), pp. 141-152.
- 9 The term refers to the group of states that aims at conducting joined diplomacy with Iran since 2006 regarding the nuclear programme. P5+1 states are China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, the United States plus Germany.
- 10 See “Iran nuclear deal: negotiators announce ‘framework’ agreement”, *The Guardian*, 3/4/2015, <<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/02/iran-nuclear-deal-negotiators-announce-framework-agreement>>, accessed 16/4/2015.

NUCLEAR DEAL: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND, IMPLICATIONS FOR THE REGION AND TURKISH-IRANIAN RELATIONS

- 11 See “Full text of the Iran nuclear deal”, *The Washington Post*, <<http://apps.washingtonpost.com/g/documents/world/full-text-of-the-iran-nuclear-deal/1651/>>, accessed 20/7/2015 and “Iran nuclear deal gets UN endorsement, paving way for sanctions relief”, *Reuters*, 20/7/2015, <<http://www.rt.com/news/310276-un-resolution-iran-deal/>>, accessed 21/7/2015.
- 12 As of the time of writing, Saudi stance seems already softened with their announcement of the end of the operation even though Saudi Arabia declares that it will continue challenging Houthi forces in Yemen. See “Saudi-led coalition announces end to Yemen operation”, *Reuters*, 21/4/2015, <<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/21/us-yemen-security-saudi-idUSKBN0NC24T20150421>>, accessed 21/4/2015.
- 13 “Iran and Turkey back political solution to Yemen crisis”, *Al Jazeera*, 8/4/2015, <<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/04/rouhani-iran-turkey-agree-stop-yemen-war-150407192559290.html>>, accessed 15/4/2015.
- 14 See Lada Evgrashina, “Azeri oil fund to help finance TANAP gas pipeline”, *Reuters*, 6/11/2012, <<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/11/06/azerbaijan-energy-idUSL5E8M6C1P20121106>>, accessed 17/11/2013 and Gulmira Rzayeva, “TANAP – Hazar Gazını Avrupa’ya Taşıyan Atılım Projesi”, <http://www.hazar.org/UserFiles/yayinlar/MakaleAnalizler/Gulmira_Rzayeva.pdf>, accessed 16/11/2014.
- 15 See “Russia drops South Stream gas pipeline plan”, *BBC*, 1/12/2014, <<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-30283571>>, accessed 2/12/2014; “Putin Blames EU as Russia abandons plans for South Stream gas pipeline”, *The Guardian*, 1/12/2014, <<http://www.theguardian.com/business/2014/dec/01/russia-blames-eu-as-it-abandons-plans-for-south-stream-gas-pipeline>>, accessed 2/12/2014; “In Diplomatic Defeat, Putin Diverts Pipeline to Turkey”, *The New York Times*, 1/12/2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/02/world/europe/russian-gas-pipeline-turkey-south-stream.html?_r=0>, accessed 2/12/2014.

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