REPORTS

BUSTING OUT
Iranian Public Opinion Toward the NPT

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This report explores Iranian popular opinion on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the determinants of Iranian attitudes. Using data from a 2008 survey of 710 Iranians administered by the University of Maryland's Program on International Policy Attitudes, we find that that a significant minority of Iranians (10 percent in 2006 and 14 percent in 2008) would prefer that Iran withdraw from the NPT. Our statistical analysis shows that Iranians who fear a US attack on Iranian nuclear facilities and distrust the International Atomic Energy Agency are more likely to want to quit the NPT. We therefore argue that those who do not trust other nations are most likely to oppose the NPT.

KEYWORDS: Iran; Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

In response to increasing international concern about Iran's nuclear brinkmanship, numerous organizations have fielded public opinion surveys in Iran. These surveys cover a range of issues related to Iran's domestic and foreign policies, including Iranians' support for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and Iran's commitment to it, their beliefs about other states' commitment to the NPT, and their views on the development of nuclear weapons.[1] All of these polling efforts and/or residual products present media-friendly tabulations rather than in-depth analysis and thus offer few, if any, explanatory insights on Iranians beliefs about the NPT and related issues.[2] Furthermore, most firms that have conducted these surveys in Iran do not make respondent-level data available to the public, giving scholars no opportunities to expand upon these ultimately unsatisfying analyses.

This report aims to advance contemporary understanding of Iranian beliefs about the NPT.[3] As discussed below, there is considerable debate over whether or not Iran is using its civilian nuclear technology program to mask an attempt to acquire nuclear weapons. Despite Iran's claims that its program is entirely legal, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which oversees NPT compliance, has repeatedly reported that Iran has not satisfactorily established "confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature" of its nuclear program.[4]

This report, however, does not enter into the debate regarding Iran's intentions. Instead, using data from a 2008 survey of 710 Iranians administered by the University of Maryland's Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA), it explores Iranian attitudes toward Iran's participation in the nonproliferation regime, as well as the determinants of those attitudes. The 2008 survey offers the most recent and most reliable data on Iranian

views on the NPT. Analysis of these data will enable observers to measure with greater precision the distance between the views of the public and the statements of the Iranian regime on this key policy question.

This report begins with a discussion of whether or not public opinion matters in Iran. It then describes the data employed and sets forth and tests several hypotheses. The penultimate section details the analytical results, concluding with a discussion of the implications of this analysis.

Does Iranian Public Opinion Matter?

An important preliminary question is whether or not Iranian public opinion plays any role in influencing the decisions of the authoritarian regime.[5] There are compelling reasons to believe it does. Iran's regime has invested considerable resources in securing and sustaining its popular legitimacy. For instance, Iran regularly conducts elections at federal and subnational levels, albeit with candidates vetted by the regime's Council of Guardians. (There is less intrusion by the Council in subnational elections, and thus Iranians tend to view these contests as more accurately reflecting public preferences.)

The importance of the Iranian "street" was made evident in 2009, when widespread protests broke out following President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's re-election in a deeply flawed contest. While the protests initially were limited to expressing support for Ahmadinejad's reformist challenger, Mir Hossein Moussavi they soon transformed into the "Green Revolution," challenging the regime's very legitimacy. In a further embarrassment, Hassan Khomeini, the grandson of revolutionary leader Grand Ayatollah Khomeini, voiced his support for the Green Movement, as did almost all of his other living descendants.[6]

The regime, particularly President Ahmadinejad, has also energetically cultivated popular support for its controversial nuclear aspirations. Ahmadinejad has successfully removed the debate over Iran's nuclear policy from the exclusive realm of policy elites and brought it into the public domain. In doing so, he has framed the nuclear issue as a question of "national independence," and the nuclear program as able to "stymie foreign powers seeking to deprive Iran of its rightful place—as a major international and technological power."[7] By most accounts, this approach has been successful. Numerous polls have found a near unanimous belief, among Iran's political elite and general public alike, that Iran should have a "full nuclear fuel cycle," which Tehran may view as "interchangeable with deterrence."[8]

US policy makers also implicitly assume that Iranian public opinion matters. The George W. Bush administration, believing the Iranian regime amenable to regime change, explicitly reached out to the Iranian public. In 2005, Congress passed the Iran Freedom and Support Act of 2005, which appropriated $10 million to fund groups opposed to the Iranian government. President Bush praised the allocation of these so-called "regime change funds" as the first step in assisting popular efforts to overthrow Iran's theocratic government and forge a liberal democracy.

The Obama administration seems to have made the same assumptions. Twitter, a social network that allows users to quickly pass short messages to large groups, emerged as a key tool in organizing the demonstrations that followed the flawed 2009 presidential election. Twitter had previously scheduled a major update, which would have taken the service offline, for a date shortly after the start of the protests. The US State Department, in a radical departure from its usual practice, asked Twitter to delay the upgrade to facilitate further popular mobilization.[9] The regime attempted to shut down the social network, but failed. These efforts underscore the value of public opinion, both to the regime and to outside forces.

Iranian Public Opinion and the NPT: The Lay of the Land

In 2006, one of the authors of this report, in conjunction with PIPA and Search for Common Ground, commissioned a nationally representative survey of Iranians. That effort found that a majority of Iranians (69 percent) were "aware that Iran" was a signatory to the NPT. (11 percent of respondents either refused to answer or did not know and 21 percent said that they were not aware.) A majority of respondents (66 percent) also thought it was a good idea that Iran had agreed to be a part of that treaty, compared to the 10 percent who called it a "bad idea." (The balance of respondents refused to answer or said that they did not know.) Finally, when respondents were asked whether or not they believed Iran should withdraw from the NPT, 60 percent said Iran "should not withdraw," while only 15 percent said Iran should withdraw (the remaining 25 percent declined to provide a response).[10]

While Iranians overwhelmingly supported the NPT and Iran's commitment to it, they did not believe other signatories were living up their obligations. When asked "how well you think the United States is fulfilling [its disarmament] obligation," a majority (73 percent) said "not very well." Most Iranians believed that other states were failing to meet their NPT obligations, asserting that many (22 percent of respondents), some (26 percent) or a few (28 percent) countries have "secret programs for developing the capacity to produce nuclear weapons." And a robust majority (84 percent) indicated that they believed that in the future there will be more countries with nuclear weapons than there are today.[11]

Iranians continued to evince support for the NPT in the 2008 survey. A majority (59 percent) of respondents indicated that it had been a good idea for Iran to sign the NPT as a non-nuclear weapon state (two years earlier, 66 percent of respondents had shared this view), and 63 percent believed that Iran should remain within the NPT.[12] The percentage of Iranians (76 percent) who believed that there were many (24 percent), some (28 percent) or a few (24 percent) countries with secret nuclear programs remained steady.[13]

Perhaps one of the reasons the NPT continues to attract such support among Iranians is the public belief that it confers rights on Iran rather than retarding Iran's ability to cultivate a nuclear capability. However, both the 2006 and 2008 data demonstrate that, while Iranians support the NPT, they overwhelmingly believe that other NPT states—be they nuclear weapon states (NWS) or non-nuclear weapon states (NNWS)—are shirking from their commitments.

International Distrust: A Source of Opposition to the NPT

There is no theoretical literature on public attitudes toward the NPT, so this report cannot build on any public opinion literature (Iranian-focused or otherwise) in order to explain the variation in Iranian opinion on the NPT. We argue that Iranian social psychology will play a large role in shaping views on the NPT. Iranians who are generally more trusting of other people and nations are going to be more accepting of a constraining international regime, such as the NPT, while those who are less trusting will not want to be hampered by its strictures.

We assume that the NPT is not a constant subject of conversation among average Iranians. While the nuclear issue is an important one, we believe it safe to assume that the mass public in Iran does not have the same level of information about and interest in the NPT as have Iranian foreign policy elites. Thus, individuals' views on the NPT, as on other relatively esoteric foreign policy issues, will be largely shaped by their predisposition to see the world a certain way. This predisposition comes, to a great extent, from social psychology.

The psychological predisposition that is most likely to determine whether one views the world from a hostile or cooperative perspective is the individual's sense of trust in other people (known as generalized or social trust). Generalized trust in other people allows for trust in other nations, known as international trust.[14] International trust is essentially a product of the individual's view of basic human nature.[15] People who have a generally dim view of human nature and do not trust others have a hard time trusting foreigners and foreign nations.

According to this logic, social trust is the foundation of cosmopolitanism, since cosmopolitanism is impossible without general trust in others. Generalized trust reduces ethnocentrism, and allows an individual to identify with those outside his/her own community.[16] Generalized trust is bolstered by education, which is known to positively correlate with social trust.[17]

Trust in others conditions an individual's foreign policy preferences; those who are distrustful of others (and thus of other countries) would want their government to be vigilant for threats posed by other countries. Such individuals are more likely to favor avoiding participation in international institutions. Those individuals who have a more positive view of human nature—i.e., who believe that people and nations can generally be trusted—will be more supportive of their country's participation in international institutions. The logic of the argument is visualized in Figure 1.

Those with a high level of international trust are much more positive about the nature of international relations. They do not necessarily see the world as a constant struggle by states to gain more security at the expense of other states, and they believe that trust and cooperation between states are possible. "International trusters" believe

FIGURE 1
Trust in others in general

Does not want cooperative foreign policy   Wants cooperative foreign policy

Low trust in other nations   High trust in other nations

that it is possible for states to overcome their basic distrust and focus on issues of mutual concern, and they view international institutions as useful forums for solving common problems and reducing tensions between states.

So how would Iranian international trusters and distrusters differ on the question of whether Iran should remain in the NPT? International distrusters would oppose the NPT regime, viewing it as a shackle restraining Iran from maximizing its security potential. Iran's membership in the NPT precludes its development of nuclear weapons and thus limits what Iran can do to arm itself in order to deter, defend, or compel, leaving Iran vulnerable to other states. Also, the regime requires regular IAEA inspections, which could reveal information about Iran that could threaten its security. An Iranian who distrusts other nations would not assume that an international organization could have real autonomy and thus may believe the IAEA will be used by powerful members of the United Nations to make Iran weaker.

An international truster, on the other hand, would be much more positive about the NPT and Iran's participation in it. People with high levels of international trust generally see other states as less threatening, and thus they differ from international distrusters regarding the danger of adhering to the NPT. By remaining in the NPT, Iran is signaling that it does not intend to threaten its neighbors. This posture could reduce the tension between Iran and other states, allowing it to mend its ailing domestic economy rather than divert resources into weapons development and procurement. An Iranian who trusts other nations would see the IAEA and the United Nations as key to building confidence that Iran does not intend to develop nuclear weapons and therefore does not represent a grave threat to international security.

Iranians with low levels of international trust would thus be opposed to Iran's continued participation in the NPT, while those with relatively higher levels of international trust are more likely to want to remain. This logic yields a set of hypotheses for us to test in the analysis. The first hypothesis centers on how the sense of threat from other countries conditions views toward the NPT. *Iranians who view other countries as threats will be more supportive of the Iranian government withdrawing from the NPT.*

As we also argued above, international distrusters would be more likely to view the NPT as a constraint on Iran's ability to develop nuclear weapons, thus harming Iran's ability to deter, defend, and compel. International trusters, by contrast, would not want Iran to make the provocative and destabilizing move of developing nuclear weapons. The second hypothesis then follows, *Iranians who want Iran to develop nuclear weapons will be more supportive of the Iranian government withdrawing from the NPT.*

Another major difference between trusters and distrusters is their respective views on the costs and benefits of IAEA and UN involvement in Iran's affairs. Those who distrust other nations would be strongly opposed to this involvement because they believe the IAEA and the United Nations undermine Iran's security. This is one reason why they would want to withdraw from the NPT. Those who tend to trust other nations, on the other hand, would welcome the role that the IAEA and the United Nations play in Iran's affairs. Since international trusters would want to remain in the NPT, they would accept the role of the IAEA and the United Nations as necessary for maintaining the nonproliferation regime.

Therefore, our third hypothesis is that *Iranians who do not trust the IAEA and the United Nations will be more supportive of the Iranian government withdrawing from the NPT.*

The following sections of this report use statistical analysis to test these hypotheses.

Data and Research Design

We test the arguments developed in this study, as well as potential alternative explanations, by performing a logistic regression on data from the 2008 PIPA Iran Survey. We also compare the relative magnitude of the effect of the significant explanatory variables on the variance in our primary variable of interest, allowing us to measure which of the significant explanatory variables has the strongest influence on Iranian attitudes toward the NPT. The number of respondents in the original sample was 710; we use a subsample of the original sample, with the *don't know/refused* responses removed. This leaves us with a sample of 334 respondents.

The diminished sample size, however, does not reduce the confidence one can have in the results of our analysis, which were statistically significant (some of them at .01, the highest level of statistical significance). Thus our sample size does not hamper our ability to identify robust predictors of Iranian attitudes toward the NPT.[18]

As the reduction of the original sample makes clear, a substantial number of cases were lost because respondents chose the *don't know* and *refusal* responses (which were collapsed into one category during the initial response coding). In order to determine whether there was a systematic bias in the respondents who answered *don't know/refused* to several of the relevant questions, we ran a correlation matrix of the variables included in the analysis to determine which was most highly correlated with *don't know/no response* (DK/NR). Table 1 shows those correlations.

The correlation matrix shows that females, those with less education, and those with lower income are correlated with frequent DK/NR responses. This profile of the average DK/NR respondent suggests an explanation for their reticence. Women in Iran, while well-educated in comparison to women of other states in the region, are less likely than men to be politically engaged and to feel politically efficacious.[19] (This is likely to be exacerbated by Iran's highly patriarchal society.) Thus, Iranian women are more likely to think that they are not prepared to answer questions on issues such as NPT policy. It also makes sense that those with lower general levels of education and income (usually highly correlated) have lower response rates. People with lower levels of education tend to perceive themselves as less politically efficacious. They are also more likely to lack knowledge about the matter in question and thus more likely than those with greater knowledge to not respond to the question.[20]

The Key Variable of Interest: Iranian Attitudes Toward the NPT

In order to assess Iranian attitudes on nuclear policy, we ran a model with the following question as its dependent variable: *Do you approve of Iran continuing to be a member of*

TABLE 1
Pearson correlation coefficients for independent variables and don't know/no response respondents

Variable	Correlation
Gender	−.191**
Education	−.147**
Income	−.127**
Age	−.088
Iran Nuclear Weapons Preference	−.066
Tehran	−.042
Secret Nuclear Programs	−.037
US Attack Nuclear Facilities	−.037
US Base Threat	−.014
UN Influence	−.013
IAEA Influence	−.013

**correlation significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

the NPT or do you think Iran should withdraw from it? Respondents who chose *withdraw from NPT* were coded as 1 and those who chose *continue to be a member* as 0.

Figure 2 shows the breakdown of responses for the dependent variable. As these results make clear, a majority of respondents are satisfied with the status quo. Eighty-six percent of respondents want Iran to continue as a member of the NPT. We do see, however, that 14 percent want the nation to withdraw from the NPT.

Explanatory Factors

We examine rival explanations within both of our models in light of the previous work on Iranian nuclear policy preferences and general attitudes toward foreign policy discussed above.

Our first hypothesis is based on the assumption that people who distrust other countries will, generally, be more likely to want to withdraw from the NPT. We employ five survey items from the 2008 PIPA survey to instrument for a sense of threat from other nations. The first examines the perceived threat posed to Iran by the presence of US military bases in the Middle East. The question specifically asks, *How much, if at all, do you think US bases in the Middle East are a threat to Iran?* Respondents were given the options of: *not at all a threat* (0), *a minor threat* (1), *some threat* (2), and *a major threat* (3). Those that see US military bases as a major threat are expected to want Iran to withdraw from the NPT.

Our second threat measure looks at Iranian citizens' beliefs about the prevalence of secret nuclear programs. The question asks, *How many countries do you think have secret*

FIGURE 2

NPT status preference
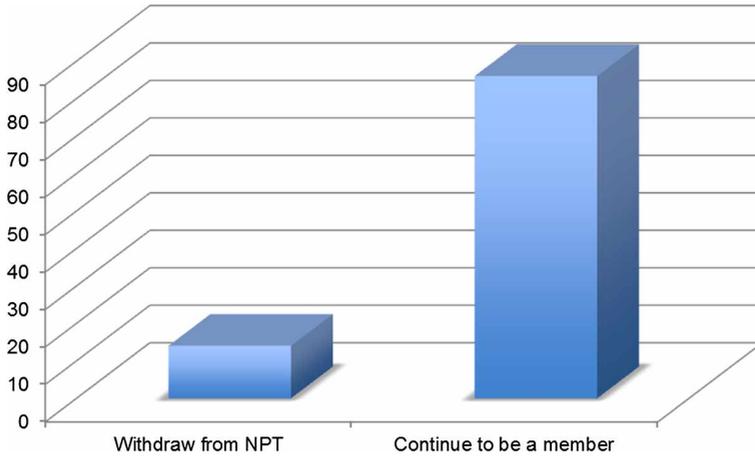
programs for developing the capacity to produce nuclear weapons? Respondents were presented with the following responses: none (0), a few (1), some (2), and many (3). We hypothesize that individuals who believe there are many secret nuclear regimes in the world would want Iran to leave the NPT. The last question to measure threat perception asks respondents, How likely do you think it is that the United States will take military action against Iran's nuclear facilities in the next year or two? Respondents could answer not at all likely (0), not very likely (1), somewhat likely (2), and very likely (3). Those who believe that the United States will attack are expected to be more likely to want to leave the NPT. Such an argument is bolstered by the fact that the United States invaded nuclear weapon-free Iraq but not nuclear weapon-possessing North Korea; hence, nuclear weapons appear to be a deterrent.

Our second hypothesis centers on the notion that Iranians who want their country to develop nuclear weapons will want to withdraw from the NPT. The survey measures the amount of support for developing nuclear weapons with the question, Iran's position is that it should have a full fuel cycle nuclear energy program, but it shouldn't develop nuclear weapons. Do you: (a) think that Iran shouldn't pursue a full fuel cycle nuclear energy program, (b) approve of this program, or (c) think Iran should develop nuclear weapons?

To test our hypothesis that those Iranians who have a negative view of the United Nations and the IAEA will tend to support withdrawing from the NPT, we use the following question from the survey, Please indicate if you think each of the following are having a mainly negative or mainly positive influence in the world. We include the United Nations and the IAEA in the analysis. Response choices were mainly negative, depends/neither, and mainly positive. Those who see the United Nations and/or the IAEA as a negative influence are hypothesized to be more likely to want Iran to withdraw from the NPT.

In addition to the independent variables suggested by our three hypotheses, we include controls for five variables in our models. Given the difficulties of sampling in Iran, we include two controls for location: community size and Tehran regional residency.[21]

For community size, answers were *less than 10,000 (rural)*, *10,000–100,000 (small town/city)*, *100,000–500,000 (medium-size city)*, *500,000 to 900,000 (large city or urban area)*, and *more than 900,000 (very large city or urban area)*. We also code respondents who live in Tehran differently than those in other regions of the country. It is important to account for potential differences arising from Ahmadinejad's time as mayor of the city and the fact that Tehran residents are more exposed to politics. We also take into account respondents' age, income, education, and gender. Table 2 summarizes our arguments and their corresponding operationalizations.

Results of the Analysis

The logistic regression analyses results for our model are presented in Table 3. (For more details, see Appendix A.)

The first model examines only the explanatory variables while the second looks at both the explanatory and control variables. Both models have consistent results as far as our explanatory predictors are concerned. We find support for two of three categories of explanation: perception of threats from other countries and of the influence of international agencies.

TABLE 2
Hypothesis and independent variables

Hypothesis	Independent Variables
H(1): Those Iranians who view other countries as threats will be more supportive of the Iranian government withdrawing from the NPT.	How much, if at all, do you think US bases in the Middle East are a threat to Iran? Not at all a threat (0), a minor threat (1), some threat (2), or a major threat (3).
	How many countries do you think have secret programs for developing capacity to produce nuclear weapons? None (0), a few (1), some (2), or many (3).
	How likely do you think it is that the United States will take military action against Iran's nuclear facilities in the next year or two? Not at all likely (0), not very likely (1), somewhat likely (2), or very likely (3).
H(2): Those Iranians who want Iran to develop nuclear weapons will be more supportive of the Iranian government withdrawing from the NPT.	Iran's position is that it should have a full fuel cycle nuclear energy program, but it shouldn't develop nuclear weapons. Do you: (0) not want weapons or (1) think Iran should develop nuclear weapons.
H(3): Those Iranians who do not trust the IAEA and the UN will be more supportive of the Iranian government withdrawing from the NPT.	Please indicate if you think each of the following are having a mainly negative or mainly positive influence in the world: United Nations and the IAEA. Mainly negative (-1), depends/neither (0), or mainly positive (1).

TABLE 3

Logistic regression results—Dependent variable-NPT membership

Independent Variables	Model One			Model Two		
	Coefficient	Standard Error	First Differential	Coefficient	Standard Error	First Differential
US Base Threat	−.357*	−.171	−.103	−.481**	−.192	−.123
Secret Nuclear Programs	−.206	−.209		−.229	−.234	
US Attack Nuclear Facilities	−.541***	−.181	−.182	−.518**	−.200	−.147
Iran Nuclear Weapons Preference	−.566	−.375		−.582	−.439	
UN Influence	−.257	−.226		−.338	−.240	
IAEA Influence	−.531**	−.225	−.112	−.485*	−.241	−.091
Education				−.053	−.166	
Age				−.452*	−.213	
Income				−.279	−.188	
Tehran Resident				−.181	−.415	
Gender				−.044	−.388	
Pseudo R^2	−.104			−.148		
Log Likelihood	−133.94			−122.39		
Log Likelihood X^2	27.76			36.18		
N	343			334		

Note: Figures are unstandardized coefficients shown alongside standard errors. *p<.1; **p <.05; ***p<.01.

Our "threats from other countries" category produces two significant variables out of three. We find that Iranians who believe the United States is likely to attack their nuclear facilities in the next year are more likely to want their country to withdraw from the NPT. This is as predicted.

We also find, however, that individuals who do not believe that US military bases pose a threat to Iran are more likely to want Iran to remove itself from the NPT than those who believe the contrary. This runs counter to our prediction. But it could be that Iranians who view the US presence in neighboring countries as a threat may believe Iran can avoid a US attack by remaining in the NPT. Thus, those who believe that the United States will attack want out of the NPT so that Iran can develop a nuclear deterrent and those who see the United States as only a potential threat do not want to provoke it by quitting the nuclear weapons treaty.

Beliefs about secret nuclear programs do not have a significant impact on attitudes toward the NPT. If Iranians want to withdraw from the NPT, it is not because they fear that their neighbors are developing nuclear programs.

Only one of two variables in the "perceived influence of international organizations" category was significant. We find that individuals who believe the IAEA has a negative influence are more likely to want Iran to withdraw from the NPT. This means that Iranians who do not trust the IAEA and think that its motives toward Iran are malevolent want to withdraw from the NPT. Conversely, we did not find a significant relationship between views on the United Nations and on Iran's position within the nonproliferation regime. This shows that there is a difference in how Iranians view the IAEA and the United Nations; Iranians view the IAEA with distrust, and, despite the agency being part of the UN system, they do not have such negative attitudes toward the United Nations as a whole.

The third category of explanation, which focused on the Iranian public's desire to develop nuclear weapons, does not present a significant relationship. The desire to develop nuclear weapons does not seem to be a primary reason that Iranians want to withdraw from the NPT.

We find that younger Iranians are more likely to want Iran to withdraw from the NPT. Education, gender, residence (Tehran or elsewhere), and income did not prove to be significant predictors.

Due to the type of statistical analysis we use, the coefficients reported in Table 3 do not represent the order of influence of the explanatory factors on Iranian attitudes toward the NPT. As a result, in Table 3 we also report the significant explanatory factors in order of importance. We see that the variable measuring fears of a US attack on Iranian nuclear facilities proved to have the largest impact on Iranian attitudes toward the NPT. The variable measuring whether Iranians felt that US military bases in the Middle East pose a threat to their country was the second most powerful predictor of views on the NPT, and the variable measuring views on the influence of the IAEA the third most powerful.

Conclusions

In sum, the Iranian mass public holds very general views on the NPT, and these views are not likely informed by a grand strategic vision for Iranian foreign and security policy. Instead, the average Iranian's beliefs about human nature predispose him or her to certain general views of international politics. Those who are the most convinced of the possibility of an immediate attack are the most committed to the idea of withdrawing from the NPT. Additionally, there is no relationship between a desire for Iran to develop a nuclear arsenal and to withdraw from the NPT. Those Iranians who want their government to withdraw from the NPT do not hold this view because they want Iran to develop nuclear weapons. This is a very important finding for policy makers concerned about Iran's nuclear intentions. Should support within Iran grow for withdrawing from the NPT, foreign governments should not assume this means that the Iranian public is clamoring for nuclear weapons. Lastly, a section of the Iranian public holds the IAEA in disdain and does not trust its motives, and this distrust is driving support for quitting the NPT.[22] Thus, many

Iranians do not want out of the NPT in order to develop nuclear weapons, but simply to avoid ostensible harassment by the IAEA (a common topic in the Iranian media), as well as the humiliation and perceived loss of sovereignty that result from IAEA involvement in Iranian affairs.

How can the West keep Iran involved in the nonproliferation regime and conduct proper inspections of its nuclear facilities? There is no immediate reason to believe Iran will withdraw from the NPT; the Iranian government has stated that its policy is to remain a party to it. In addition, there is strong, if not universal, support for this course among Iranians. Probably the most important thing the West can do to keep the Iranian public committed to the NPT is to avoid giving the impression that an attack on Iran's nuclear facilities is imminent. While the threat of an attack might induce the Iranian authorities to cooperate, it could also backfire, increasing public support for withdrawing from the NPT and, possibly, for developing nuclear weapons. The West's task is to figure out whether— when it comes to Iran's nuclear development—it is better to use the carrot or the stick. Our study seems to indicate that the stick may generate a climate in Iran that is more favorable to freeing the country from the strictures of the NPT.

Quitting the NPT may be a further step in Iran's development of nuclear weapons, or it may simply be a populist victory for the regime in Tehran. Either way, US and other policy makers need to do more to convince the Iranian public that the IAEA is an honest broker trying to make the world a safer place, not to single Iran out for unfair treatment. This may be an impossible task, however. As discussed above, the average Iranian has quite simple preconceptions of the world. These may not be changed easily, especially when change is sought through external propaganda.

NOTES

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3. This is a substantially revised version of a paper that appeared in the *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies* in December 2012. The authors thank Sarah Watson Jordan for providing support editorial assistance. The authors also thank panel participants and audience members alike at both the 2011 Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association and the 2011 Annual Meeting of the

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17. Jens Hainmueller and Michael J. Hiscox, ''Learning to Love Globalization: Education and Individual Attitudes toward International Trade,'' *International Organization* 60 (2006), pp. 469–98; Ronald Inglehart, *Modernization and Postmodernization: Cultural, Economic, and Political Change in 43 Societies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); Kaltenthaler et al., ''Explaining Citizen Attitudes For Trade Liberalization.''

18. If we had found that our analysis yielded low levels of significance, we would have suspected that the small sample size reduced our chances of getting statistically significant results. We would also have had to consider whether our predictors were useful for understanding Iranian attitudes toward the NPT. In any case, we have highly significant statistical results, which indicate that our small sample size is not a problem.

19. Mahnaz Afkhami and Erika Friedl, *In the Eye of the Storm: Women in Post-Revolutionary Iran*, (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1994); Valentine Moghadam, ''Patriarchy and the Politics of Gender in Modernising Societies: Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan,'' *International Sociology* 7 (1992), pp. 35–53; Valentine Moghadam, ed., *Gender and National Identity* (London: Zed Books, 1994); Myron Weiner and Ali Banuazizi, *The Politics of Social Transformation in Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1994).

20. Adam Berinsky, ''The Two Faces of Public Opinion,'' *American Journal of Political Science* 43 (1999), p. 1,209–30; Jon Krosnick and Michael Milburn, ''Psychological Determinants of Political Opinionation,'' *Social Cognition* 8 (1990), pp. 49–72.

21. For a discussion of these challenges, see Fair and Shellman, ''Determinants of Popular Support for Iran's Nuclear Program,'' 2008.

22. Because the IAEA is more directly involved in Iran's nuclear issue than is the United Nations as a whole, the Iranian public has a more negative opinion of the IAEA.

Appendix A: Data and Methods

In order to test the hypotheses developed in this study and alternative potential explanations, we use a logistic regression with data from the 2008 PIPA Iran Survey. Using Gary King's Clarify program for Monte Carlo simulations, we also first examine differences to determine the relative power of the significant independent variables in explaining the variance in our dependent variables. This statistic allows us to directly compare which of the significant independent variables has the strongest influence on the dependent variable. The number of respondents in the original sample was 710. We use a subsample of that with the ''don't know/refused'' responses removed. This leaves a sample of 334 respondents for the analysis. We have examined the demographic breakdown of ''don't know/refused'' respondents and there are no noticeable patterns present to suggest that removing these respondents creates any bias.

Since many of our independent variables ask respondents questions that are potentially answered from within the same value set, we need to assure that multi-collinearity is not an issue with the specification of our model. The influences of the IAEA and the United Nations are more highly correlated (rho $=.46$) than any other variables but still allow for variation. Likewise, location (Tehran) and income are highly correlated (.43), but this is explained by the geographic disparity of income within the country. Age and education are also correlated (at rho $=.41$) but this also can be explained and demonstrates variation. Likewise, we find that all variance inflation factor scores are below the typical threshold of ten for excessive collinearity. As a result of the correlation matrix and the variance inflation factor, or VIF, scores, we do not believe collinearity is an issue for our specified model of analysis.