

## Sino-Iranian Relations: More Cooperation Despite Sanctions

By

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### Abstract

The goal of China's policy toward Iran is to maintain a positive relationship with the West while also developing a cooperative relationship with Iran. Iran's financial and political requirements can be satisfied by China, which makes it a main political and economic supporter of Tehran. China has declared its opposition to unilateral US sanctions and has sought an alliance with Iran, a regional pivotal country in the Middle East that is hostile to the United States. These actions have been taken in an effort to counteract the expanding influence of the United States in international affairs. Since it was first launched in 2013, President Xi Jinping's Belt and Road Initiative has served as the primary impetus for China's involvement in international affairs. This initiative has been the primary driver of China's foreign policy. Iran is also seen as playing a key role by China in the process of sustaining peace in the Persian Gulf region. This is significant because the Persian Gulf is China's primary route for importing oil. This study aims to shed light on the Chinese strategy towards Iran, specifically with regard to the nuclear issue and the Chinese role in Iranian international relations. The study concluded that Iran is a strategic partner for China, especially after the announcement of the Belt and Road Initiative. China needs large quantities of Iranian oil, and China benefits from Iran's geostrategic position in its international trade and its access to other partners.

**Keywords:** China, Iran, Nuclear Deal, Negotiations, Sanctions

### Introduction

Throughout the last century, the People's Republic of China has worked to achieve the slogan "independent foreign policy for peace," which aims to protect China's independence, sovereignty, and unity while creating an international environment conducive to the implementation of reform and openness programs and the building of a more advanced and prosperous nation. China's Foreign Ministry has identified three main threats: terrorism, extremism, and separatism (Chen 2019).

Around China, there are six distinct geopolitical regions. Northeast Asia, Oceania<sup>1</sup>, the land region of Southeast Asia, the maritime region of Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Central Asia. In each of these regions, there is a wide range of diplomatic and security challenges.

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<sup>1</sup> Pacific Ocean islands make up the majority of Oceania. Located between Asia and the Americas, the South Pacific Ocean's coral and volcanic islands make up Oceania.

According to China's perspective on the world, the following is true:

- In the "Middle East," the Chinese government is very careful, always focusing on playing the position of mediator and nothing more, just as it did during the negotiations between the United States of America and Iran. As a result, it sees the United States' ability to control the "Middle East" as waning and is no longer able to rely on that country. Because of this, the countries in the area might work together with China (Gade et al. 2019, 2071-97).

As a result of Europe's exposure to the eurozone crisis, the Chinese chose the countries of southern Europe since they are the most affordable in terms of land, real estate, and businesses. Noting that China is also a top commercial partner for many African countries.

When it comes to commercial and economic dominance, China will be able to compete with the Atlantic trade zone, which has dominated the world for the past eighty years by enforcing its will, enforcing its regulations, and indoctrinating its commercial and cultural conceptions (Han et al. 2019, 60-9).

When it comes to China's foreign policy, it's all about protecting its own interests at the expense of reciprocity.

During a trip to South Sudan in August 2011, the Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi said the following six things about Chinese diplomacy:

China's foreign policy has always been based on the notion of autonomy.

China opposes hegemony and aims to establish global peace.

A fair and just worldwide political and economic order is being developed by China.

As a result of the Five Principles, China is eager to establish and develop friendly, cooperative relations with all countries based on mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-aggression and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, equal opportunity and mutual benefit.

For the sake of strengthening global prosperity, China maintains a policy of wide-ranging openness to the outside world, and is willing to engage in large-scale trade, economic and technical cooperation, and scientific and cultural exchanges with nations and regions across the world.

China actively participates in multilateral diplomatic operations and is a stabilizing force for sustaining peace and stability at the world and regional levels.

## **Research Significance**

This research depicts Iran as in need of a partner like China, especially in the context of the economic sanctions imposed on it. Due to Western sanctions, Iran's pivotal location on the Belt and Road Initiative and its oil richness, Beijing has turned to be Tehran's strategic partner. Before Tehran can agree to be China's base in West Asia, it needs a different kind of relationship with the Chinese government.

## **Research hypothesis**

The research begins based on the following hypotheses:

Iran is concerned about China's growing influence in this bilateral relationship.

Iran is often forced to work with China to break free from the United States' attempts to keep it isolated

The Chinese will continue to buy Iranian oil because it is inexpensive on one hand and because they don't want to follow American orders, on the other hand.

## **Research Questions**

The isolation of Tehran is absurd amid the major geopolitical conflict taking place between the United States and China. The United States put economic sanctions on Iran, but China was able to get around them by continuing to buy oil from Iran.

## **Research Problem**

Answering the following research questions is the crux of the research challenge:

- How does China regard Iran's long-term interests?
- Is China to continue its trade with Iran while the United States continues to impose sanctions?

## **Research Method**

Researchers employ inductive methods to depict reality without going overboard in their analysis of it. To examine the development of relations between the two countries from a historical perspective as well.

## **Research Objective**

The main objectives of this study are Chinese policy toward Iran, its strategic relevance to Beijing, the threats and hazards both nations face, and the future of relations between the two countries.

### ***An in-depth understanding of Iranian foreign policy***

Iran is considered one of the main and most influential countries in the Middle East because of its cultural and religious components as well as its geostrategic location. Iran was and will continue to be a civilized Middle Eastern competitor (Al-Edwan, 2013: 123). Its geostrategic significance grows as its political and economic aspirations and ambitions in the Arab Gulf region expand (Mohammad, 2007: 11).

The ingredients are in place for Iran to become a regional fulcrum. It has the elements of power and is currently investing these elements in order to attain a regional role, and it aims to become a feared regional force by expanding its influence in the Arab region. As stated by Al-Rashidi (2008), Iranian political goals and interests are focused on the following: "for the preservation of religious rule in Iran and eliminating any internal dissent that threatens this system while facing the external opposition with all power." Strengthen the political standing of Iran in the Middle East and Central Asia so that it can play a leading role in constructing a Gulf security system, taking advantage of recent developments in the area and refusing to rely on external forces in the Gulf security system (Kaczmarek 2017, 1027-46).

With the help of the ruling regime in Tehran, the Iranian revolution and the Iranian state model could be exported to the rest of the Islamic countries in accordance with Tehran's

instructions, while relying on the factors of geographical proximity and civilizational and cultural considerations that connect it to the Islamic countries.

By utilizing its geostrategic position and comprehensive capabilities of the state aims to gain an influential role in the Middle East and Islamic world, and also by laying foundations for new relations with Western powers and the United States of America on mutual interests, which contribute to it playing a role in the region (Köstem 2018, 726-52).

Iran aspires to be the region's dominant power by 2025. Scientific and technical advancement is what will ultimately lead to this outcome. As Iran's scientific output doubles every three years, it is no surprise that in 2010, Iran was number one in published scientific research, ahead of only (Japan) by 12,000 research publications (Abdl-Hay, 2010: 256). Iran uses a comprehensive strategy that focuses on strengthening the elements of power and filling its gaps because the region keeps seeing more and more imbalances. This helps Iran gain a good name and more influence in the region.

### ***The Syrian crisis and its role in developing the Iranian-Chinese relationship***

Iran's regional ambition strongly depends on geographical, ideological, and security pillars to manage its Middle Eastern strategic deployment. Immediate post-2003 efforts were made to integrate Iran's policy toward Iraq, Syria, Yemen, and Egypt with those of other countries and groups in the region. Iran's nuclear deal, which is based on the country's military capabilities, puts a cap on what it can do in the Middle East (Mastanduno 2019, 479-504).

Iran sees Syria as an important link in its regional influence chain, one that extends from western Iran via Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon to include the occupied Palestinian territories. Iran and Syria have a more solid and long-lasting connection than any other Arab countries in the region. Relationships between China and the United States are influenced by a number of variables.

Syria is a main and strategic player in the region (Seale, 1992: 573). A gas pipeline from Qatar that would have passed through Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Syria to bring Qatari gas to Europe via Turkey was rejected by Syria in 2009 in favor of the Iranian "Islamic Gas Pipeline" that passed through Iraq to Syria and then Lebanon and ultimately to Europe via Cyprus. The pipelines will cover a distance of 5,600 kilometers, through which 110 million cubic meters of gas will be carried per day, following discussions that began in 2009.

In the interests of Qatar, Turkey, and Russia, which have a near-monopoly on the sale of gas to Europe and wish to keep Iran exporting only to Asia and China, the Iranian pipeline presents a threat. Turkey's admission into the European Union will be hindered by Iran's holding of a Mediterranean port. Geopolitical reasons for striking Syria included Syria's position on Iran's Islamic gas pipeline (Shuai 2020, 96-107).

A preliminary meeting between Iran, Iraq, and Syria was conducted in 2009 to discuss the project. After months of negotiations, the three governments agreed in July 2011 to spend \$10 billion on the project. The final agreement was achieved in March of 2013 between all parties. As of July 2013, Iraq and Iran agreed to boost the volume of gas exported from Iraq (Shuai et al. 2019, 68-77).

About 2,000 km is planned to be the length of the Islamic gas pipeline that will extend to Syria and southern Lebanon. There are two sub-lines in the pipeline, one for Baghdad (the

Elam line) and one for Al-Mansuriyah and Al-Sadr (the Khorram Shahr line), which will bring gas from Asalouyeh to Iraq via the Iraqi border. The two pipelines are expected to transport 40-45 million cubic meters of gas per day to Iraq, and the Iraqi gas line, which will extend 500 kilometers from Iraqi territory and feed Damascus with 25-30 million cubic meters of gas per day via a 600-700-kilometer line, will branch out into Syrian territory to feed the south. Each day, Lebanon has an output of between 5 and 7 million cubic meters. It will be able to flow 110 million cubic meters of gas per day and 40 billion cubic meters per year through the Islamic pipeline. The Iranian treasury is estimated to gain \$3.7 billion a year from this pipeline's gas exports. Iran's long-term intentions include building a 4900-kilometer gas pipeline over the Mediterranean from Lebanon to Cyprus, Greece, and Italy (Badawi, 2013).

Syria's major oil supplier was Iran, which provided the country with 3.6 billion dollars in credit to meet its financial shortfall and import nearly 4 million barrels of oil at a 10 percent discount since 2012. Iran and Syria also made a deal that lets Iran buy big parts of Syria's investments and future projects

Using the strategic vacuum in the region that allowed for internal incursions, Iran attempts to consolidate its regional dominance by supporting some of the loyalists in endangering the security and stability of those countries. Iran also makes use of the country's advantageous geographical location, as well as its substantial financial and military capabilities, to further its foreign policy objectives. To increase its influence in the region, ideologically, politically, and militarily (Zhao et al. 2022).

In addition, China's attitude on the Syrian issue diverged from that of the United States, which is not a new phenomenon. In view of China's pragmatic foreign policy regulated by the intersections of ideology and interests, China's political orientations have always clashed with their American equivalents in recent times (Zreik 2021a). As a result, China's position on the Syrian issue stands apart in that it has surpassed the typical boundaries of situational disagreement between US and Chinese policies in the Middle East and has entered into a precedent that is unprecedented in this region. In light of the expansion of the Middle East's crises to the point of military conflicts, China's intervention in the reality of the balances of power in the region with Russia and Iran contributes to a new development in that equation (Al-Housaini, 2015: 41).

As a direct response to the American statement of a shift in U.S. strategy toward the Asia-Pacific region, which is an area of expanding Chinese power, China is working to respond in other regions, resulting in friction between the two countries. In addition, China has accused the United States of violating its core interests, either by supplying American weaponry to Taiwan or aiding separatist forces in Tibet, using the Syrian crisis as a chance to do so. As a result, China viewed the Syrian crisis as a response, even if just politically motivated (Martini 2022, 18-35).

The apparent liberalization in the behavior of regional powers is one of the most important pieces of evidence that we are living in an era of non-polarity. For these states, the international balance between the two camps was an important factor in determining their foreign policy in both the Cold War and post-Cold War eras. As the international system has evolved from a condition of "polarization," whatever its form, to a state of "non-polarization," the central regional powers have become more autonomous in their foreign policy decisions (Dugin, 2016). In Trump's National Security Strategy paper, which came out on December 18, 2017 (American recognition of a multipolar world), he also talks about a new era of global

competition.<sup>2</sup> The international system has lost some of its liberal ideological character, so democracy is no longer a big part of international talk.

For the first time in modern history, the Chinese policy of not intervening in crises outside its immediate interests or geopolitical area has been abandoned. China's embassy in Damascus has remained open during the conflict in Syria, and the Chinese Foreign Ministry has urged that the mission be closed. Its plan for resolving the Syrian issue was announced in February 2012.

If Berlin was the birthplace of the Cold War, Damascus was the birthplace of China's foreign policy change. As a result of its vetoes against resolutions on Syria, China's position on the conflict has been characterized by its opposition to external intervention in general and military intervention in particular, as well as the rejection of any measure in the Security Council that would open the door to such intervention. In addition, China has only exercised its veto privilege six times in relation to Syria (Zreik 2021b). Not because of its natural resources, but because of Syria's strategic location and cultural significance in the equation of Middle Eastern politics, the country is a strategic asset for China. After Russia and China's vetoes, Beijing sees a "window of opportunity" to end the Syrian conflict. Because it believes that NATO misapplied Security Council resolutions by intervening in Libya to overthrow a legitimate government rather than to defend its people, it has used its veto power to prevent any Western engagement in Syria (Ghiselli & Alsudairi 2022).

### ***3. China's stance on Iran's nuclear program and Iran's role in the Middle East***

A major crisis has arisen in the Middle East because of Iran's nuclear program and its impact on regional security and stability, necessitating a thorough analysis to understand the implications of these claims, both regional and international.

As a result of Israel and the United States' repeated threats to target Iranian nuclear facilities before the recent agreement on the country's nuclear program, this is still the case today. In the wake of Biden's election as president, it's likely that military threats might play a role in determining whether or not the Obama administration's nuclear agreement with the Iranian regime would be scuppered (Owais et al. 2022, 263-74).

Iran had become a rival in the Middle East, and the United States of America couldn't isolate it completely, so it defined its ambitions for Iran in three ways:

- 1- Ethnic groups in Iran, such as Arabs, Kurds, Baluchis, and Azeris, are being urged to split away from Iran.
- 2- Bombing military and nuclear sites and targets in order to prevent nuclear weapons from being manufactured.
- 3- Toppling the Iranian government by bombing and agitating its citizens.

The following factors make it difficult to pin down Iran's nuclear program (Mahmoud, 2005: 25-8):

Iranian nuclear reactor locations are unknown due to the absence of international inspection teams and espionage satellites such as those operated by Israel and the United States. Noting that international inspection teams are responsible for this information.

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<sup>2</sup> US President Donald Trump announced the basic provisions of the updated version of the National Security Strategy, stressing that the United States is entering a "new era of competition", in which it is being challenged by Russia and China. The new strategy includes "recognizing, whether we like it or not, that we have entered a new era of competition," Trump said.

The dilemma is that military planes will arrive on Iranian soil, strike their objectives, and return to their bases. The Israelis, who are 1,500 kilometers away from the Iranian nuclear reactors, face a challenge here, but this can be overcome by launching from one of Iran's neighboring countries (Zreik 2021c).

However, it is difficult to surprise the Iranian air force, as the attacking aircraft may potentially be shot down if there is no surprise, but the air force and air defense in Iran are quite primitive compared to that of the United States and Israel (Hellmüller 2022, 1-17).

A global political cover is required, but this is not currently available. However, it may be readily available in the future. In today's world, Russia and China are the only international umbrellas under which Iran may shelter, yet their similar interests with the United States and Europe make them ideal bargaining partners for Iran.

Only two things stand in the way of a preemptive strike against Iran's nuclear facilities:

Iran's nuclear facilities are spread out over a large area throughout the country, some of which are built underground and heavily defended. With so many and so far away Iranian facilities, an attack by either Israel or the United States, or even both, will likely necessitate a multi-day air campaign lasting two or three days round the clock, removing the surprise element and allowing Iran to organize its defenses in time to salvage what it can before it is destroyed (Liangxiang 2022, 131-41).

A radioactive leak from Israel's bombardment of Iranian nuclear plants makes the Iranians' use of chemical weapons against Israel inevitable, which scares the Israelis. Iranian responses against Israel may also affect Israeli interests around the world through pro-Iranian organizations.

According to new foreign policy instruments in Iran, Iranian diplomacy should be given a bigger role in dealing with difficult issues, including the Iranian nuclear program, relations with the United States, and relations with the Arab Gulf states. Foreign policy knowledge and diplomatic skills have made Raisi a strong candidate for president. He has emphasized mutual understanding with neighboring countries, identifying similar interests and rejecting disputes with other countries (Anderson 2018).

Limiting Iranian rhetoric toward the West and the United States of America while highlighting Iran's constants in foreign policy, which are neither Eastern nor Western policy based on the revolution's principles, nor do they imply any change in the content of relations or issues, as President Ahmadinejad has stated (Zreik 2022a, 7-26).

Improving Iran's ties with Latin America and Africa by negotiating, supporting collaborative initiatives, and focusing on the economics of the country. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has already begun this process by strengthening Iran's ties with those regions (Graf 2018, 443-532).

The role of diplomacy in Iran's foreign policy is one of the most important soft power tactics under President Raisi. Noteworthy is President Ahmadinejad's policy of "smart power" in foreign policy maneuvers, which combines both soft and strong power tools.

In the wake of the U.S. withdrawal from the nuclear agreement with the 5+1 countries, the G-20 summit in Osaka and the Vienna talks on June 27-28, 2019, failed to ease tensions between Iran and the United States. However, countries like China and Russia, despite the

economic sanctions imposed on them, remain steadfast in their support for Iran (Soliev 2019, 71-5).

### ***The Shape of the Iranian-Chinese Relationship***

China's foreign policy toward Iran operates according to five principles of peaceful coexistence, which include: mutual respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, non-aggression, non-interference in internal affairs, and equality as the foundation for establishing relations between the two countries.

"Peaceful rise" and "respect for the five principles of peaceful coexistence" are the most frequently used expressions in China's foreign policy. It is not enough to reassure neighboring countries and to form a strategic alliance. Negotiation and understanding; avoiding intractable disputes and deferring them until the appropriate time, focusing on confidence-building measures; and continuing to engage in bilateral and international economic integration procedures are all part of the peaceful approach (Burton 2019, 18-34).

From 1986 to 1988, when China gave anti-cruise missiles to Iranian ships as part of a strategic alliance, the two countries' relations took on a new dimension when Beijing agreed to supply Tehran with the technology necessary for developing its own types of surface-to-surface missiles. Between 1993 and 2000, China gave Iran a total of \$1 billion in military aid. After that, Western sanctions on Iran made military cooperation between China and Iran much less valuable (Zreik 2022b, 43-65).

To avoid a U.S. naval embargo on China's oil supply in the event of a crisis between Beijing and Taiwan. Some scholars believe that China must line up with Iran to confront American hegemony through its Arab allies, such as Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries. China will then line up with Iran to control the eastern shore of the Persian Gulf and prevent its complete closure by imposing a naval blockade. Building land pipelines, rail connections, and roads to avoid US Navy patrols is a short-term strategy for China, while it continues to improve its naval capabilities over time (Shehab, 2011: 3).

China has used Iran as a point of entry into the Gulf region to increase its military and economic clout there. Attempting to crowd out the American foe who was trying to restrain China's ongoing efforts. China and Iran signed a deal in September 2010 to build a \$2 billion rail link from the Chinese capital, Beijing, to the Middle East via Iran, which connects the Iranian capital, Tehran, with the city of Khosravi on Iraq's border. The route also passes through the cities of Arak, Hamada, and Isfahan.

Half of China's yearly oil imports come from the Middle East, which is the world's top energy consumer. It was expected that intra-regional commerce in 2013 would total \$300 billion. There has been a rise in trade between Saudi Arabia and Iraq, as well as Sudan and its southern regions. The free trade negotiations with the Gulf Cooperation Council, which began in 2004, have yet to come to a conclusion despite China's resoluteness (Fung 2018).

The military ties between Beijing and Tehran have re-emerged, with the two countries exchanging visits and military delegations to sign agreements and assess the scope of their military cooperation. In October 2015, several Chinese companies signed a contract with Iran's Electronic Defense Company "SA Iran" to use the "Baidu-2" satellite navigation system for military purposes. The signals from this system have greatly improved Iran's use of satellite navigation, missile guidance, and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).



On top of the restrictions on money transfers to Iran in US dollars imposed after May 2018's US exit from the nuclear agreement, the first round of sanctions were imposed in August of that year on products critical to the Iranian economy, such as the trade in vehicles, metals, and carpets. Then, on November 4, 2018, the second phase of US sanctions against Iran started, which put financial restrictions on buyers of Iranian crude oil and its products, as well as those working in the port and insurance sector in Iran or shipping to or from Iran, and on financial transactions with the Central Bank and Iranian financial institutions (Segal, 2018).

Iran's Foreign Minister, Javad Zarif, made his first visit to Beijing since the US pulled out of the nuclear accord, and it is expected that Sino-Iranian trade and investment cooperation will continue and grow provided a secure framework for financial exchanges between the two nations can be established. For a variety of reasons, we're considering working together. In this way, China can utilize its collaboration with Iran to exert pressure on the United States of America in their conflict over tariffs and the United States' withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement, in addition to securing other sources of oil. US Treasury sanctions expert Daniel Glaser says that a short-term diplomatic dispute won't make China change its long-term energy strategy, and China will benefit greatly from Iran's urgent need for it in the form of deferred payment instead of cash or in exchange for exporting products and Chinese goods in exchange for Iranian oil (Abdo, 2018).

The fact that Iran has become China's largest arms buyer and that Tehran's growing political and military clout in the Middle East has been dealt with pragmatically by Beijing is perhaps the most crucial element that has solidified relations between China and Iran. It viewed the strengthening of its ties with Iran as a threat to American hegemony in the Gulf and a competition for its regional missions. China and Iran have a lot in common when it comes to regional challenges, and this helps to strengthen their bilateral ties (Nahlawi 2019, 111-43). To add insult to injury, there's the ongoing conflict in Syria, where both countries are working hard to keep President Bashar al-Assad in power through military and financial aid. As well as the fact that both countries oppose American unilateralism and American hegemony, in light of the recent conflict between America and the two countries.

### ***5. China's rebuff to US sanctions against Iran***

Chinese-Iranian relations have blossomed since the early 2000s, with China being Iran's primary economic partner, oil consumer, and geostrategic partner. China has traditionally refused to recognize any sanctions other than those imposed by the United Nations (Lavites, 2018). When the United States imposed its embargo on Iran in January 2016, China was Iran's first trading partner, and the Chinese goal of collaborative cooperation became obvious when President Xi Jinping visited Tehran and the two nations agreed that trade between them would increase to \$600 billion over the next year. While China offered \$10 billion in loans to Chinese enterprises for ten years, it also helped Iran develop dams and other infrastructure.

Despite its pledge not to increase its purchases of Iranian oil, China refused the United States' request to stop buying Iranian oil, buying over 700,000 barrels of oil per day from January to May of this year, which exceeded its value of \$8 billion. However, China acquired a stake in the French company Toulouse.

With Iranian crude exports down by more than a third from April to May of the same year, Tehran was forced to lower oil prices and help transport it by all available means to the countries that import it. Iran's exports of crude oil fell by more than a third, or more than two million barrels per day, from April to May (Whipple & Andrews, 2019).

In an attempt to avoid US sanctions and defy Washington, China continues to acquire Iranian oil despite the current trade battle between the two countries. Withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action by the United States has led to a "great pressure" campaign of financial sanctions against Iran, and oil sales to Russia and China are part of Iran's strategy. A Chinese energy company has also taken over the exploration and development of Iran's oil and natural gas assets, which include one of the world's largest conventional crude oil reserves (Zreik 2019, 56-65).

Iranian former Foreign Minister Javad Zarif believes that China must meet the challenge of ending "American intolerance" around the world, stressing that his country will happily lend its support to this effort. Iran is essential to China's new energy Silk Road, which connects the Persian Gulf, the Caspian Sea, and Central Asia. China also requires Iran to sustain the flow of oil from the Persian Gulf. In order to avoid the Malacca Strait, which the US Navy patrols, China requires a number of pipelines in this Asian network of energy security, including the Iran-Pakistan Pipeline and the Iran-Turkmenistan Inland Connection. In December 2009, Turkmenistan said it planned to send natural gas to China through a new pipeline (Khazar, 2012: 5-6).

There are many strong foundations for Sino-Iranian economic connections, the most important of which are as follows:

1- China imports 14 percent of its oil from Iran, and China works in Iran through Chinese oil companies or joint Chinese oil companies with other countries, such as the joint China-Angola Sonagol Company, which signed a contract with Iran worth 7.5 billion dollars to develop the Azadegan and South Pars fields, in addition to the signing, in October 2004, of a contract worth 70 billion dollars to purchase oil and liquefied gas from Iran.

2- China has supplied Iran with superior military technologies, including missile technology, making it a major arms exporter. Chinese military exports to Iran totaled \$810 million between 2000 and 2009, according to statistics, prompting the United States to impose sanctions on several Chinese arms companies for allegedly violating US procedures and international controls on the transfer of military equipment. Accusations that China is providing Iran with advanced anti-ship missiles that could threaten the US Navy's control in the region and aid Iran's development and production of long-range ballistic missiles are rising.

In order to ensure the flow of oil supplies, China has complied partially with the American boycott by ceasing its cooperation with Iran in the field of missiles since 1999. However, the Chinese leadership has failed to persuade the American administration to stop exporting military technologies to other countries. Like Iran and North Korea, the United States of America considers it to be an enemy and a sponsor of terrorist activities.

Chinese chemical and electronic industry technology was the most widely exported in the first decade of the new millennium. By 2014, Iran-China trade will have grown to \$50 billion, up from \$11 billion in 2005 and roughly \$27 billion in 2009. (Al-Sammadi, 2012: 9).

## **Conclusions and Contributions**

Relations between China and Iran date back decades. In addition to providing the PRC with energy, Iran also provides a strategic opportunity. According to this paper, China's geopolitical and economic interests dictate its relationship with Iran. The Islamic Republic is essential for connecting the BRI to Eastern Europe and enhancing China's geopolitical power. China has a lot to gain by keeping close ties with Iran under the BRI. A framework for corporate

partnership and political cooperation is provided. China's energy supply may be secured by this business partnership as part of this initiative.

The BRI can help Chinese businesses invest in Iran by stabilizing the economy and connecting it to neighboring countries. Located on China's New Silk Road, Iran is a critical connection connecting Asia to Europe. It is also critical to China's geopolitical and economic domination in the region. China challenges US policies on Iran by developing BRI projects and preventing Iran's economy from collapsing due to US sanctions. As a BRI source and linkage point, Iran undermines US authority over the country and raises doubts about the United States' position as a global leader. China's backing for Iran provides a counterpoint to the United States' stance. As a result of the JCPOA, Iran now has a partner with whom it can resist the United States (Zreik 2021d, 51-67).

BRI is supported by China's improved position in Iran. As the BRI connects Europe to Iran, it can deepen its grip on the country. Whoever controls the heartland is in charge of the global island and the entire planet. When China's economy began to rise, it reneged on its 1997 commitment to Clinton and distanced itself from Iran. Aware of China's political and economic might, it has thrown its support behind Iran in the fight against sanctions and denounced US attacks on the Islamic Republic. It is for these reasons that the Sino-Iranian connection exists. As both countries were ruled by the Steppe dynasty, they were also connected by the Silk Road.

Iran's contribution to the internationalization of the RMB is mostly based on crude oil. The fact that China is the world's top importer of Iranian oil suggests that Iran has just a tiny role to play in the internationalization of the RMB through the crude oil trade. For the US, Iran's move from the USD to RMB in its currency evaluation system is a hint that the RMB is becoming a more powerful global currency and a warning that the USD's position is under threat. Iran serves as a warning to the United States about the rise of China's power. Although the data makes it difficult to assess Iran's role in the BRI, it does indicate why the RMB is so important to Iran at this time. If sanctions are eased, the Sino-Iranian collaboration has the potential to continue and thrive. Through the Medical Silk Road and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), China's influence in Iran is increasing.

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