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## ***Contents***

### **Articles**

- **Foreign Policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran from the Perspective of the Theory of Relative Universality IR**  
*Mohammad Reza Dehshiri*
- **Iran and Probable Economic Futures in the International System until 2030**  
*Seyed Jalal Dehghani Firozabadi / Seyedreza Mousavinia / Firoze Dadfar*
- **Narco-Terrorism and Foreign Policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Central Asia (2018-2023)**  
*Rashid Rekabian / Mehdi Padron / Sadegh Shafii*
- **Scientific Sanction as a Foreign Policy Tool: Case Study; Iran's Space Technology Sanctoins and the Ban of Access to Environmental Science**  
*Maryam. Dehghani / Reza. Mousazadeh / Mohammad Ali. Solhchi*
- **An Analysis of the Impact of Media Diplomacy on Domestic Power and International Relations in Developing Nations**  
*Mahdi Hajiahmadi / Nazanin Malekian*
- **Neutrality in Malaysia's Foreign Policy: Outcome of a Civil Perception of Islamic Teachings and a Manifestation of Social Integration**  
*Mojtaba Attarzadeh*
- **India - China Geopolitical Competition in Africa**  
*Meysam Hadipour*
- **The Foreign Policy of Germany after Russia's Invasion of Ukraine; An Explanation from the Perspective of Neoclassical Realism**  
*Amir Raham Shojaei / Seyed Amir Niakoui*



# **The Foreign Policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran from the Perspective of the Theory of Relative Universality IR**

*Prof. Mohammad Reza Dehshiri<sup>1</sup>*

The theory of Relative Universality in International Relations attempts to explain the mutual nexus of relativity and universality in international relations. It believes that based on the "theory of unity in diversity", it is possible to have unity of worldview and plurality of methods. Therefore, it is possible to have diverse and multiple rules based on uncertainty and changeability of circumstances in international relations, while benefiting from permanent and universal principles. This article attempts to answer the question of how the theory of relative universality can be applied in the field of foreign policy and how a balanced approach to foreign policy can be established in the interstitial spaces by creating a harmony between homogenizing universalist and heterogeneous relativist approaches, establishing a dialectic between centripetal and centrifugal forces, and harmonizing globalization and localism in the era of glocalization. This research, emphasizing on universality in principles and relativity in procedures, argues that by using the eclectic approach, it is possible to establish a dialectical complementarity between seemingly contradictory concepts in foreign policy, such as idealism versus realism, introversion versus extroversion, internationalism versus regionalism, and bilateralism versus multilateralism, by adopting a spectral approach and avoiding binary and dichotomist one.

## ***Keywords***

Relative Universality, Foreign Policy, Eclecticism, Realistic Idealism, Endogenous Extraversion.

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<sup>1</sup>. Professor of Political Science, School of International Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tehran, Iran mohammadreza\_dehshiri@yahoo.com

# Iran and probable economic futures in the international system until 2030

*Seyed Jalal Dehghani Firozabadi*<sup>1</sup>

*Seyedreza Mousavinia*<sup>2</sup>

*Firoze Dadfar*<sup>3</sup>

The economic field has experienced rapid changes in the past decades and according to estimates, it will have a tremendous and undeniable impact on international developments in the coming years due to the shifting of governments in the global power distribution pyramid and changes in the components of power and actors. This issue clearly shows the entanglement of economy and politics in the environment of the international system in the 21st century and doubles the necessity of future research in this field for the country's foreign policy apparatus. Based on this, this article seeks to extract future economic trends in the international system and draw possible economic futures and scenarios for the Islamic Republic of Iran. The results of the research show that for the Islamic Republic of Iran by 2030, the increase in the share of Asian powers, especially China, in the world economy and trade is a favorable scenario; The acceleration of the digital and technological economy and the service-oriented economy, a conditional preferred scenario; Global employment crisis, a tolerable scenario; The vulnerability of the agricultural economy at the global level is an unfavorable scenario, and finally, the accelerated trend of countries towards renewable energy will also be an unfavorable scenario.

## ***Keywords***

International Economy, Iran, Future Studies, Asian Powers, Scenario.

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<sup>1</sup>. Professor, Allame Tabataba'i University (Corresponding Author).

<sup>2</sup>. Associate professor, Allame Tabataba'i University

<sup>3</sup>. Assistant professor, Payame Nor University

# Narco-Terrorism and Foreign Policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Central Asia (2018-2023)

*Rashid Rekabian<sup>1</sup>*

*Mehdi Padron<sup>2</sup>*

*Sadegh Shafii<sup>3</sup>*

Drug trafficking has become a widespread and persistent problem in Central Asia. The Islamic Republic of Iran is one of the countries facing threats from narco-terrorism and drug traffickers in Central Asia. Despite these challenges, drug-related issues also offer potential opportunities and capacities for Iran. By recognizing and utilizing these opportunities in a timely manner, Iran can use "drug diplomacy" or "narco-terrorism diplomacy" to further its foreign policy goals and secure its maximum interests through multilateral cooperation with Central Asian nations. Using Stephen Walt's Balance of Threat theory, this study aims to analyze the effects of narco-terrorism on Iran's multilateralism policy as one of the affected countries in Central Asia. The research is conducted using a descriptive-analytical approach, and its data are collected from online resources and articles. The main research question is "What is the Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign policy strategy regarding narco-terrorism in Central Asia?" Based on Stephen Walt's theory, the research findings suggest that Iran's foreign policy strategy focuses on regional collaboration in various fields, including working within frameworks such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and providing economic, political, security, and military convergence.

## ***Keywords***

Threat Balance, Narco-Terrorism, Iran, Central Asia, Drug Traffickers.

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<sup>1</sup>. Associate Professor, Faculty of Law and Political Sciences, Ayatollah Boroujerdi University, Iran (Corresponding Author).

<sup>2</sup>. Senior Expert in International Relations at Gilan University.

<sup>3</sup>. Member of the academic staff of Ayatollah Boroujerdi University, Iran.

# Scientific Sanctions as a Foreign Policy Tool: Case Study; Iran's Space Technology Sanctions and the Ban of Access to Environmental Science

*Maryam. Dehghani*<sup>1</sup>  
*Reza. Mousazadeh*<sup>2</sup>  
*Mohammad Ali. Solhchi*<sup>3</sup>

The United States has historically utilized various restrictive policy instruments, including financial sanctions against Iran, in line with its foreign policy. Multiple sanctions have been imposed on Iran's space technology and two research centers active in this field in recent years. The US is applying these sanctions as a tool to exert political pressure, an adverse consequence of which is Iran's limited access to space science breakthroughs. Space-based technologies have always been incredibly helpful in protecting the environment through mitigating the effects of climate change, causing major developments in terms of observing, monitoring, and collecting data from different regions on the planet as regards environmental pollutants and the climate. Space technology is a development tool playing a pivotal role in the progress of countries active in the field, including Iran. This technology has an important role in achieving and facilitating access to sustainable development goals including supervision of natural resources and environmental conservation. The present study employs a descriptive-analytic approach to answer the question of how the US restrictive policies on Iran's space technology could affect the environment and whether such restrictions are justifiable as per the international human rights instruments. Accordingly, it is hypothesized that the prevention of access to space technology will negatively affect Iran's environment, on top of being in

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<sup>1</sup>. PhD Student in International Law [maryam.dehghani2016@gmail.com](mailto:maryam.dehghani2016@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>. Professor, Faculty of International Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Corresponding Author) [rmousazadeh8@gmail.com](mailto:rmousazadeh8@gmail.com)

<sup>3</sup>. Associate Professor, Faculty of Law and Political Science, Allameh Tabatabaei University, Tehran [solhchi@yahoo.com](mailto:solhchi@yahoo.com)

contradiction to international treaties and the country's right to science. This will in turn lead to environmental degradation within and outside the country's territory, causing major challenges to the effective management of natural resources.

***Keywords***

Sanctions, Right to Science, Human Rights, Space Technology, Environment.

# An Analysis of the Impact of Media Diplomacy on Domestic Power and International Relations in Developing Nations

*Mahdi Hajiahmadi<sup>1</sup>  
Nazanin Malekian<sup>2\*</sup>*

The present research seeks to explain the influence of media diplomacy in reinforcing domestic authority and developing international relations according to an inductive approach. A mixed-methods research design was used for this study. To identify the components that explain the topic, 32 indicators were established based on theoretical and documentary research. These indicators were subsequently elaborated through the Delphi method, and finally, 14 definitive indicators that explain the research variables were determined and surveyed after two rounds of Delphi implementation. The statistical population comprised two distinct groups: 1- policymakers and administrators, 2- experts and specialists. A total of 170 participants were randomly selected for the first group, while 20 individuals were selected for the second group based on the theoretical saturation criterion. The groups were examined using a researcher-made questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The results revealed that, from the perspective of the population, the synergy and alignment between national media and foreign policy can significantly affect the governance structure and social cohesion. Furthermore, other explanatory indicators of the variables showed no significant interrelationships. Moreover, all the explanatory indicators of "media diplomacy" and "international relations" had a significant correlation with medium and strong correlation; however, there was no notable significant correlation between "taking advantage of cultural and artistic resources for media diplomacy" and "scientific and technological relations".

## ***Keywords***

Media, Media diplomacy, Domestic Authority, International Relations, Development, Developing Countries.

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<sup>1</sup>. Doctoral Student in Communication Sciences, Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch, Tehran, Iran. mahdihajiahmadi5970@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup>. Corresponding Author; Associate Professor of Communication Sciences, Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch, Tehran, Iran. nz.malekian@gmail.com

# Neutrality in Malaysia's Foreign Policy: Outcome of a Civil Perception of Islamic Teachings and a Manifestation of Social Integration

*Mojtaba Attarzadeh<sup>1</sup>*

To attain national unity and mitigate ethnic tensions, Malaysian statesmen have employed religion as a primary element in the political sphere, utilizing a moderate interpretation of Islam and embracing pluralism. This approach has addressed the interplay between religion, politics, and society, facilitating the incorporation of various races, ethnicities, and religions within a political system characterized by parties representing their respective ethnic groups.

This study aimed to investigate how the foreign policy of Malaysia (as a dependent variable) is influenced by this strategy (as an independent variable). It also seeks answers to the following questions: "How does the specific civil reading of Islam create national harmony in Malaysia?" and "Does Malaysia's foreign policy reflect its multi-ethnic society?" The main research hypothesis was also as follows: "The Malaysian political system, by emphasizing shared Islamic teachings among various ethnicities, such as a strong work ethic, has facilitated the pursuit of ethnic demands within democratic frameworks while prioritizing national interests. Consequently, this has established a foundation for the implementation of suitable foreign policy". This hypothesis was examined through desk studies.

The study findings indicated that Malay Islam has successfully implemented a harmonious policy towards the followers of other religions, resulting in a reduction of internal issues related to democratic competition and facilitating the governance of the country.

## ***Keywords***

Malaysia; Ethnicity; Islam; Minimal government; Neutrality.

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<sup>1</sup>. Associate Professor, Isfahan University of Art. mattarzadeh1@gmail.com

# India - China Geopolitical Competition in Africa

*Meysam Hadipour<sup>1</sup>*

Countries compete in various regions of the world to ensure their national interests and achieve their objectives as much as possible. In the interim, Africa's capabilities have prompted global and regional powers to engage in a competition for the development of their relationships with African countries. China and India, two emerging world powers, have initiated intense competition in a variety of sectors to both satisfy their domestic requirements and expand their geopolitical influence. This study aimed to identify the domains representing the geopolitical rivalry between India and China in Africa. Preliminary studies indicate that China and India have embraced a bilateral and independent regional strategy; however, the presence of geopolitical rivalry in this area is unmistakable. The article employed a descriptive-analytical approach based on theoretical foundations to elucidate the military, political, cultural, and economic actions of China and India. The findings indicated that, in recent years, China has adopted a holistic strategy encompassing economic initiatives, financial investments in infrastructure, production, and natural resources, diplomatic engagements, military assistance, and the influx of Chinese immigrants in order to stabilize and strengthen its long-term position in the region. On the other hand, India has effectively developed its relations with African countries through partnerships in infrastructural and financing initiatives and the development of human, educational, and health resources.

## ***Keywords***

Geopolitical Competition, China, India, Africa.

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<sup>1</sup>. PhD in Political Geography, Tarbiat Modares University

# **The Foreign Policy of Germany after Russia's Invasion of Ukraine; An explanation from the perspective of Neoclassical Realism**

*Amir Raham Shojaei*<sup>1</sup>  
*Seyed Amir Niakoui*<sup>2</sup>

Without a doubt, the Russia-Ukraine war is one of the most significant events that has occurred in Europe since World War II. This conflict, which sees Russia on one side and the West, led by NATO, on the other, has resulted in considerable transformations in the foreign policies of many countries, including Germany, which stands as the most important country in Europe. Accordingly, the main question of this article is: What variables have influenced Germany's foreign policy regarding the Ukraine crisis, and how have the impacts of various factors at both the unit and international system levels manifested in the foreign policy approaches of this country, and how can these be explained? The research hypothesis emphasizes a profound change in Germany's foreign policy following this event. The findings of the article indicate that, from the perspective of neoclassical realism, Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022—understood by German politicians as a revisionist action and the delusions of Russian imperialism—ultimately directed Chancellor Scholz's government toward adopting a balancing approach without direct military engagement, despite the damage inflicted on the German economy. In this context, the Federal Republic of Germany has undertaken actions such as providing financial and military support to Ukraine, accepting Ukrainian refugees, imposing sanctions on Russia, striving to diversify its energy resources, enhancing its internal balance through military reinforcement, and especially working to strengthen and expand

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<sup>1</sup>. Corresponding author, PhD student in International Relations, University of Guilan.  
amir6776roham@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup>. Associate Professor, Department of Political Science and International Relations, University of Guilan. niakoe@gmail.com

NATO. The research methodology employed is descriptive-analytical, relying on up-to-date German and English sources.

***Keywords***

Russia's Invasion of Ukraine, Foreign Policy, Germany, Neoclassical Realism, European Union.