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CONTENTS

[Pg. 1]

- Welcome Letter

[Pg. 2]

- Committee Positions

[Pg. 5]

- Overview
- History

[Pg. 6]

- Oil

[Pg. 7]

- The Iranian Revolution and Political Islam in Iran

[Pg. 8]

- Iran-Iraq Tensions

[Pg. 9]

- Modern Day Iran
- Links and Sources

Islamic Republic of Iran

Dear Delegates,

Hello and welcome to PICSIM 2006! My name is Syon Bhanot, and I have the great pleasure of serving as your chair in the Iranian cabinet for the weekend's proceedings. Before we begin, a little about myself – I am a senior here at Princeton, majoring in Public Policy and International Affairs at the Woodrow Wilson School. My focus has been on American foreign policy and the Middle East, so, hypothetically, our committee already has a leg up on everyone else. But let's not let it get to our heads, shall we? My director this weekend is the fantastically tall Antonio Lacayo, a junior, also majoring in the Wilson School. As you will see, he is quite an entertaining and well-dressed fellow.

So, as you know, we are representing Iran, the home of oil, religiosity and one of the world's most controversial governments. If you haven't seen the news lately, I suggest you do before coming to PICSIM, because honestly, Iran is in there in some capacity pretty much every day. Thanks to recent elections, Iran has a pretty militant government, which is quite volatile and reactionary, so anything could happen there between now and the conference. I urge you to keep a close eye on the news in the coming weeks, because you don't want to come to PICSIM unprepared for the chaos that will most certainly surround our committee.

Below you will find another great research tool – our committee's background guide. Now, I want to be clear that you can not just skim the guide and expect to be all set to go for PICSIM - far from it. This is very much a starting point for your research. Read it. Soak it in. Enjoy it. Maybe even give it a hug. Then go to work doing the real research. Know your character in and out and be ready to grapple with anything and everything that will come our way. In particular, I suggest you learn more about Iranian nuclear issues and the current government's stance towards its neighbors, two topics bound to get attention at PICSIM 2006.

Remember, how good the conference goes depends on your level of preparation. I guarantee that we will have fun, but in order for us to be productive at PICSIM, I am counting on you guys to give it 100%, or more if possible. Also, please try to cast aside any personal feelings you have about the issues and focus on representing your cabinet member as best you can. So, let's say you aren't a huge fan of militant Islam or of theocratic government – don't let that color your representation of your character. Got it? I want our cabinet to be as real as possible, and I expect no less from you all.

So, that's enough of that. I am very much looking forward to meeting you all and wreaking havoc where appropriate. It's going to be a blast, and together, I'm confident that we will have a wonderful time together. Best of luck in your preparation, and I'll see you soon!



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Princeton Interactive Crisis Simulation 2006



Committee Positions

At PICSIM, the members of this committee will be taking on the roles of the Iranian cabinet members, who I have listed below. I, as Committee Chair, will be taking on the role of Iran’s President, Mahmud Ahmadi-Nejad. Below you will find the names of the positions and individuals represented by delegates in the committee, as well as a short description about each of them. I urge you to use this only as a starting point – research your positions and come to the conference prepared not only to take on the role to which you are assigned, but also to represent the actual cabinet member who you are assigned to characterize:

First Vice Pres.	Parviz Davudi
Vice Pres. for Atomic Energy	Qolam Reza Aqazadeh-Khoi
Min. of Defense & Armed Forces Logistics	Mostafa Mohammad Najar
Min. of Economic Affairs & Finance	Davud Danesh-Jafari
Min. of Foreign Affairs	Manuchehr Motaki
Min. of Health	Kamran Baqeri-Lankarani
Min. of Intelligence & Security	Gholam-Hossein Mohseni Ezhei
Min. of Interior	Mostafa Pur-Mohammadi
Min. of Islamic Culture & Guidance	Mohammad Hosein Safar-Harandi
Min. of Justice	Jamal Karimi-Rad
Min. of Petroleum	Kazem Vaziri-Hamaneh
Permanent Representative to the UN	Mohammad Javad Zarif-Khonsari

Mahmud Ahmadi-Nejad - [The Chair]

Iran’s President, made headlines a few months ago when he declared that Israel should be “wiped off the map.” He is an ultra-conservative, having also been a top commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps, the regime’s ideological army. Following the 1979 Islamic revolution he became a member of the ultra-conservative faction of the Office for Strengthening Unity. According to other OSU officials, when the idea of storming the U.S. embassy in Tehran was raised in the OSU central committee, Ahmadinejad suggested storming the Soviet embassy at the same time. Ahmadinejad’s activities in the Revolutionary Guards were directly related to suppression of dissidents in Iran and terrorist attacks abroad. A recently revealed document has shown his involvement in planning an attempt on the life of the Indian-born British author Salman Rushdie. He also served as governor-general of Ardebil Province in northwest Iran during the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq War. He is a member of the right-wing Association of Engineers and a member of the central council of the Society of the Devotees of the Islamic Revolution. Most recently, he was the mayor of Tehran, where he moved to restrict activities in cultural centers in the capital, turning them into religious centers. *The Committee Chair will be taking on the role of Mr. Ahmadi-Nejad.*

Ayatollah Ali Hoseini-Khamenei - [The Director]



The Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Hoseini-Khamenei has acted as the religious leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran since 1989 and holds the position for life as appointed by the Assembly of Experts. As Supreme Leader, the ayatollah holds extensive power over the government; though he does not technically choose the members of cabinet, nor does he technically have a direct say in the political process, he nonetheless controls the political process in Iran, to some extent. He is, one of the most powerful individuals, both politically and religiously, in Iran. *The Committee Director will be taking on the role of Ayatollah Ali Hoseini-Khamenei.*

Parviz Davudi, the First Vice President of Iran, got his PhD in economics in the United States. He currently teaches at Shahid Beheshti University and is an advisor to Judiciary chief Mahmud Hashemi Shahrudi. He also served as deputy economy minister during the administration of Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani. Essentially, the selection of Davudi as First Vice President selection was made because of his practical expertise and ability to help stabilize the Iranian economy.

Qolam Reza Aqazadeh-Khoi, the Vice President for Atomic Energy, is one of the foremost experts on Iran's nuclear weapons system. He is a holdover from the Khatami presidency, where he held the same post – as such, he is an expert and chief architect of the Iranian nuclear weapons program. As long ago as 2002, he proclaimed Iran was not seeking to acquire nuclear weapons, and to this day, he maintains publicly that they are solely being developed for peaceful purposes.

Mostafa Mohammad Najar, the Minister of Defense and Armed Forces Logistics, is a former member of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC). He was born in 1956, and has a B.S. in mechanical engineering (designing of solid materials) and an M.A. in strategic administration. He has been a member of the IRGC since its establishment in 1980. He was the Director of Cooperatives of IRGC since 1981, Director of strategic studies on Middle East Affairs, Director of the Logistical Center of Imam Ali (AS), and Shahid Rajaei Technical Support Institute and Director of Hadid Industrial Group (IRGC's first military hardware manufacturing company). He is also a member of the Board of Directors of the Organization of Defense Industry and a former Chairman of the Executive Board of Sasad Ammunition Producing Group. In short, he is an expert in the technical field of weapons production and delivery, and is relied on for an informed assessment of military operations. He is also a radical conservative, who has participated in a number of anti-West activities, including terrorist strikes against US Marines stationed in the Middle East.

Davud Danesh-Jafari, the Minister of Economic Affairs & Finance, was initially pegged to be the First Vice President for the new Iranian government, but he settled into this position instead. He has been an advocate of attracting foreign investment into Iran, which he believes would not only bolster the economy, but would also improve Iran's relations with other nations. In the cabinet, he will be looked to for an economic perspective on all decisions made by the group.

Manuchehr Motaki, the Iranian Foreign Minister, faces the difficult task of leading Iran's diplomatic efforts at a time when very few nations share peaceful relations with the country. Motaki has lobbied heavily in neighboring countries to generate support for Iran and its foreign policy, but has maintained that Iran has a right to develop its nuclear arsenal, a sticking point in much of Iran's diplomatic talks. Essentially, Motaki is charged with staving off Iranian political



isolation in an environment where Iran is increasingly pursuing policies which make its neighbors (and the West) ill at ease.

Kamran Baqeri-Lankarani, the Minister of Health, was born in Tehran and is 40 years old. He received a post-doctorate certificate in 1992 from the Shiraz Medical Sciences University, and then served as a member of the Presiding Board of Shiraz Medical System Administration from 1996-2000. At present, he is working on addressing Iran's various health-related issues, most interesting of which is avoiding the potentially devastating Avian flu.

Gholam-Hossein Mohseni Ezhei, the Minister of Intelligence and Security, was a Prosecutor and Judge for the Special Tribunal for the Clergy, and a Special Prosecutor in the Ministry of Intelligence and Security. He was also a founding official and member of the staff selection board for the Ministry, giving him extensive experience working in the branch of government he now heads. He is considered to be a conservative hardliner, a characterization that has earned him the reputation of being ruthless in matters of national security.

Mostafa Pour-Mohammadi, the Minister of the Interior, was born in Qom and completed theological studies at Qom, Mashhad and Tehran. He served as an advisor to the Supreme Leader and as head of the Political and Social Department and the Special Department for Security and Intelligence in the office of the Supreme Leader. He is also the former Deputy Minister of Intelligence and Security, and the former Military Revolutionary Prosecutor.

Mohammad Hosein Safar-Harandi, the Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, was born in Tehran and got his MA degree from the Academy of Military Sciences in 1993. He was deputy commander of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps (IRGC) in the Hormuzgan, Kerman and Sistan-Baluchestan provinces (1980-1983) and was a member of the council devising the Islamic Republic News Agency's strategies (1993-1997). He was also the Deputy Editor in Chief of the ultra-conservative Iranian newspaper, the Kayhan. He is yet another Iranian cabinet member with a conservative, military background, and will provide a religious context for our cabinet discussions at PICSIM.

Jamal Karimi-Rad, the Minister of Justice, was the former Spokesman of the Judiciary, and a former prosecutor in the Zanzan and Qazvin provinces of Iran. Importantly, he was the Director of the Taazirat Department in Qazvin, which was an agency designed to implement forms of corporal punishment, including public flogging. He received an MA in State Management from the State Management Educational Center and has an MA in International Law from Tehran University.

Kazem Vaziri-Hamaneh, Iran's Minister of Petroleum, was the fourth nominee for the post, only after the President failed to get approval for the first three nominees. He was the deputy oil minister under the previous government in Iran, and has been hailed as the best man for the job, on account of his 30 years of experience in the field of oil management and oil policy. Thus far, the government's policy regarding oil has been to reform the industry by purging the "mafia" many believe runs it and by distributing oil revenues more evenly among the poor.

Mohammad Javad Zarif-Khonsari, is Iran's Permanent Representative to the UN. Dr. Zarif is a career diplomat and has served in different senior positions in the Iranian Foreign Ministry and



in various international organizations. His responsibility from 1992 until his appointment as Permanent Representative was Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs. Zarif holds a Ph.D. in International Law and Policy from the Graduate School of International Studies at the University of Denver. In addition to his diplomatic responsibilities, he has been a Visiting Professor of International Law at University of Tehran, where he has taught human rights, international law and multilateral diplomacy.

Overview

In order to get a sense of how best to represent Iran at PICSIM 2006, it is necessary for us to explore Iran's history, present and future. This background guide will provide you with a barebones look at the history of Iran and the pressing issues which threaten to shape the future of Iranian politics. It is up to you to use this background as a first step in your preparation for the conference – you will need to do more research on your own to ensure that you will be fully prepared for our intense weekend together.

History

Iran has a long and rich history, and before we discuss the current state of politics in Iran, it is important that we outline its past. For centuries, the territory we now know as Iran was called Persia. Village life developed there in 4000 BC, and for centuries, Persia was ravaged by periodic invasions by groups like the Arabs, the Turks and the Mongols. The most notable of these invasions was arguably that of the Arabs in the 7th Century, which brought Islam to the region. To this day, Islamic traditions define Iran as a deeply religious state.

From 1502 until 1736, Iran was ruled by the Safavid dynasty, which brought order to Iran and cemented Shiite Islam as the state religion. During this period, religious differences led to a number of wars between the Safavids and the neighboring Ottoman Turks. However, it was the Afghans who eventually toppled the Safavid dynasty in the 18th Century, which led to the founding of the Qajar dynasty in 1794. The Qajar dynasty, which ruled until 1925, was marked by a constant loss of Iranian territory to neighboring countries and growing pressure from European nations, including czarist Russia and Great Britain, on Iranian politics. This pressure intensified in the early 1900s, when it was discovered that Iran had significant oil reserves; eventually, the British and the Russians agreed to split up Iran into two distinct spheres of political and economic influence in 1907. Iran was essentially occupied by the British and Russians during the First World War, and joined the League of Nations after the conflict.

In 1921, Reza Khan took control of Iran, founding the Pahlevi dynasty and instituting a military dictatorship. He stepped aside soon thereafter, leaving the rule of Iran to his son, Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlevi. In 1943, at the Tehran Conference, the US, the USSR and Great Britain all recognized the independence and territorial integrity of Iran, though the USSR was dissatisfied and supported a minor revolt in Northern Iran. Nevertheless, this Conference laid the groundwork for the Iranian state which exists today.

During his time as ruler of Iran, the shah held close reins on the government as absolute monarch, but he moved toward certain democratic and social reforms within Iran. For example,



starting in the 1960s and continuing into the 1970s, the Iranian government undertook a broad program designed to improve economic and social conditions, with land reform as a major priority. In an effort to transform the feudal peasant-landlord agricultural system, the government purchased various estates and sold the land to the people. In a January 1963 referendum, Iranian voters overwhelmingly approved the shah's extensive plan for further land redistribution, and within three years, 1.5 million former tenant farmers were plot owners. Meanwhile, a new government-backed political party, the Iran Novin party, was introduced and won an overwhelming majority in the parliament in the 1963 elections. Another sign of political reform came in 1963, when women received the right to vote in national elections.

However, the shah's various reform programs were not sufficient; economic conditions worsened, alienating some of Iran's major religious and political groups, and resulting in mass riots in mid-1963. The general political instability was reflected by the assassination of Iranian Premier Hassan Ali Mansur and an unsuccessful attempt on the shah's life in January 1965. The shah's pro-Western policies nevertheless continued into the 1970s; however, the growing Westernization and secularization was strongly denounced by the Islamic clergy, headed by the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who had been exiled from Iran in 1964. Internal opposition within the country was regularly purged by the Shah's secret police force (SAVAK), created in 1957. Needless to say, Iran was on the brink of rebellion in the mid-1900s, and a few decades later, that potential erupted into Revolution.

This basic introduction brings us into the eventful 20th century in Iran. We will now look at some of the most significant events of the past half century and highlight some important issues in Iran today.

Oil

Since its discovery in the early 1900's, oil has played a major role in Iranian politics. In 1951, the National Front movement, headed by then-Premier Muhammad Mussadegh, a militant nationalist, forced the parliament to nationalize the oil industry and form the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC). The success of the NIOC earned Mussadegh the position of Prime Minister in Iran shortly thereafter. Although a British blockade led to the virtual collapse of the oil industry and serious internal economic troubles, Mussadegh continued to pursue a policy of oil nationalization in his new position of political authority. However, he was openly opposed by the shah and his monarchist followers, who ousted Mussadegh from power in August 1953. It is widely speculated that covert U.S. activity was at least partially responsible for Mussadegh's ousting.

In 1954, Iran allowed an international consortium of British, American, French, and Dutch oil companies to operate its oil facilities, with profits shared equally between Iran and the consortium. After 1953 a succession of Premiers restored a measure of order to Iran; in 1957 martial law ended after 16 years in force. Iran established closer relations with the West, joining the Baghdad Pact (later called the Central Treaty Organization), and receiving large amounts of military and economic aid from the United States until the late 1960s.



In March 1973, the shah established the National Iranian Oil Company's full control over all aspects of Iran's oil industry, and the consortium agreed to act merely in an advisory capacity in return for favorable long-term oil supply contracts. In the aftermath of the Arab-Israeli War in October 1973, Iran, reluctant to use oil as a political weapon, did not participate in the oil embargo against the United States, Europe, Japan, and Israel. However, it used the situation to become a leader in the raising of oil prices in disregard of the Tehran Agreement of 1971. Iran utilized the revenue generated by price rises to bolster its position abroad as a creditor, to initiate domestic programs of modernization and economic development, and to increase its military power.

To this day, oil plays a significant role in the Iranian economy, and in governmental matters. At present, approximately 80-90 percent of Iran's total export earnings, and 40-50 percent of the government's budget, is composed of oil export revenues. Thus, Iran is heavily reliant on the price of oil set by the global market, qualifying it as a rentier state. This is both a blessing and a curse: it is a blessing at present because oil prices are high (Iran's GDP has increased at approximately 5% a year for the last few years), however, the Iranian economy would suffer greatly if the price of oil were to dramatically fall. Furthermore, despite high oil revenues, Iran continues to operate with a budget deficit as a result of its substantial food subsidies and its freezing of domestic oil prices in early 2005.¹

The Iranian Revolution and Political Islam in Iran

Despite economic growth in the mid 1900's, there was much opposition against the shah, and how he used the SAVAK to control the country. Shiite Muslims in particular were in staunch opposition to the shah, who they felt was too closely allied to the West. This opposition movement was led by the aforementioned Ayatollah Khomeini, who lived in exile in Iraq and later in France. His message of Islamic rule and an end to Westernization was distributed through music cassettes that were smuggled into Iran, duplicated, and distributed to revolutionaries throughout Iran. This strategy catalyzed a groundswell of support for political reform in Iran, which caused widespread unrest and protest against the leadership of the shah.

In 1978, the shah's hold on Iran began to weaken significantly in the face of constant protest that bordered on civil war; late in the year, martial law was declared. By January 16, 1979, the shah was simply unable to fight off the inevitable revolution, and was forced to flee Iran. After a period of internal competition over the future of Iran, the alliance led by Khomeini, which supported making Iran a theocratic state, prevailed. On February 1, 1979, Khomeini returned from France, overthrowing the shah's government on February 11 and becoming Iran's Supreme Leader. Two months later, a national referendum confirmed what was already known: the people of Iran wanted an Islamic government. Ayatollah Khomeini immediately declared Iran an Islamic Republic with a new Constitution reflecting the ideals of Islamic government.

The new government in Iran was, and remains to this day, very conservative, adhering very closely to a strict interpretation of the Koran and Islamic law. The government nationalized

¹ For more information on Iranian oil, please visit the following website, which was the source of this information: <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/iran.html>



industries and banks and revived Islamic traditions, like the traditional veiled dress for women. Western influence and music were banned and Westernized elites have fled the country since the late 1970s. Throughout the Revolution of 1979, clashes occurred between rival religious factions, while oil prices plummeted. The government also became brutal in nature, punishing its enemies with arrests and executions.

The Iranian Revolution was embodied in the events of Nov. 4, 1979. On that day, Iranian militants seized the U.S. Embassy in Tehran, taking 52 American hostages. In response, the Carter administration instituted an economic boycott, broke off diplomatic relations, and conducted an unsuccessful rescue attempt in April 1980. The hostage crisis lasted 444 days and was finally resolved on Jan. 20, 1981, the day Ronald Reagan was inaugurated as U.S. president. Nearly all Iranian conditions were met, including the unfreezing of nearly \$8 billion in Iranian assets. Without question, the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979 represented a radical departure from the pro-Western regime of the shah, and had set the stage for the anti-Western Iran that exists in the modern day.

Iran-Iraq Tensions

In the 1970's, Iran improved its relations, especially in the economic sphere, with Communist countries, including the USSR. However, relations with Iraq were antagonistic for much of the late 1960s and early 1970s, in great part due to conflict over the Shatt-al-Arab waterway. A number of armed clashes took place along the entire length of the border between the neighboring states during this time period. In April 1969, Iran voided the 1937 accord with Iraq on the control of the Shatt-al-Arab and demanded that the treaty, which had given Iraq virtual control of the river, be renegotiated.

In 1971, Britain withdrew its military forces from the Persian Gulf. Concerned that Soviet-backed Arab nations might try to fill the power vacuum created by the British withdrawal, Iran increased its defense budget by almost 50%. This increase was facilitated by major U.S. and British economic and military aid, making Iran the region's strongest military power. This was evidenced by Iranian actions in 1971, when the government of Iran took control of three small, Arab-owned islands at the mouth of the Persian Gulf. Iraq protested Iran's action by expelling thousands of Iranian nationals from its borders.

On Sept. 22, 1980, Iraq invaded Iran, commencing an eight-year war primarily over the aforementioned Shatt-al-Arab waterway. The war rapidly escalated, leading to Iraqi and Iranian attacks on oil tankers in the Persian Gulf in 1984. The fighting crippled both nations, devastating Iran's military supply and oil industry and resulting in somewhere between five-hundred-thousand and one million casualties. Throughout the conflict, Khomeini rejected diplomatic initiatives and called for the overthrow of Iraq's president, Saddam Hussein. The United States played both sides in the war; officially, it supported Iraq and provided aid to help Iraq in its fight against the anti-Western Iranian regime. However, in November 1986, U.S. government officials secretly visited Iran to trade arms with the Iranians, in the hopes of securing the release of American hostages being held in Lebanon. This scandal became known as the Iran-Contra Affair, and symbolized America's self-interest-based approach to Middle East politics. In 1988, Khomeini finally agreed to accept a UN cease-fire with Iraq, ending the war.



Modern Day Iran

Iran remains a very complex and potentially volatile state in the modern day. Following the elections of a reformist president and parliament in the late 1990's, attempts to foster political reform in response to popular dissatisfaction have floundered - conservative politicians have prevented reform measures from being enacted, increased repressive measures, and consolidated their control over the government. Furthermore, Iran has recently been dubbed a member of US President George Bush's infamous "axis of evil," and is considered a state-sponsor of terrorism due to its support for terrorist activities in Lebanon. As a result, Iran has been subject to US economic sanctions and export controls, and is widely considered a "rogue nation" for its actions.

One potentially significant issue facing the Middle East and the global community is Iran's potential nuclear weapon development. Recently, Iran announced its intentions to enrich uranium domestically for "peaceful purposes," which has drawn sharp criticism from the United States and other Western powers, which see a nuclear Iran as a threat to global security. Meanwhile, Iran has insisted that these atomic programs are intended to produce power for its citizens, and that the international community ought to be more understanding of Iran's actions. The Bush administration has not bought Iran's explanation, and it recently called for Iran's case to be brought before the UN Security Council. The head of the International Atomic Energy Association (IAEA) recently declared: "The ball is in Iran's court. It is up to Iran to show the kind of transparency they need to show."² Meanwhile, European nations have attempted to negotiate with Iran, imploring it to move its programs out of its borders and into Russia. However, the head of the Atomic Organization of Iran has declared that such a proposal is unacceptable, saying, "Russia has not presented an official proposal to us. It has just raised ideas which are seriously flawed."³ Moving forward, the status of Iran's nuclear program continues to be a major issue in Iran.

Links and Sources

This background guide relied heavily on the following internet sources:

- <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ir.html>
- http://www.encyclopedia.com/html/section/iran_history.asp
- <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/iran.html>
- <http://www.iran-daily.com/1384/2458/html/>
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iran>

Cabinet members:

- http://www.caucaz.com/home_eng/depeches.php?idp=139
- <http://www.iranfocus.com/modules/news/article.php?storyid=3315>

² http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20051210/ap_on_re_mi_ea/iran_nuclear

³ http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20051210/ap_on_re_mi_ea/iran_nuclear



I urge you to use these resources and any others you find online or in print to prepare you for the conference.