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# Forecasting and Political Science: The Case of the Iranian Nuclear Crisis

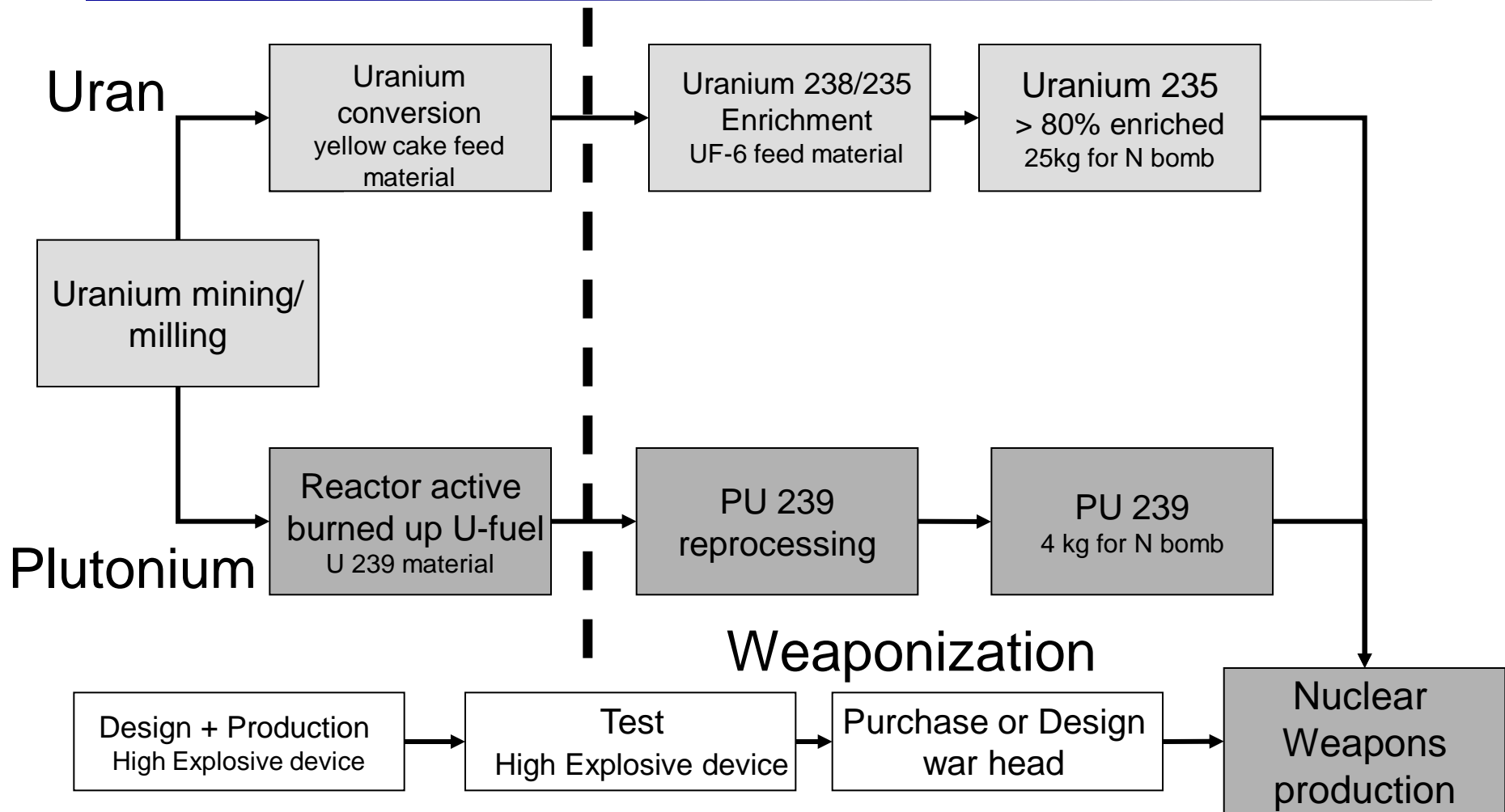
Lecture given at ISPE College, Friedrich-Ebert-  
Foundation Prishtina, Kosovo

# Outline

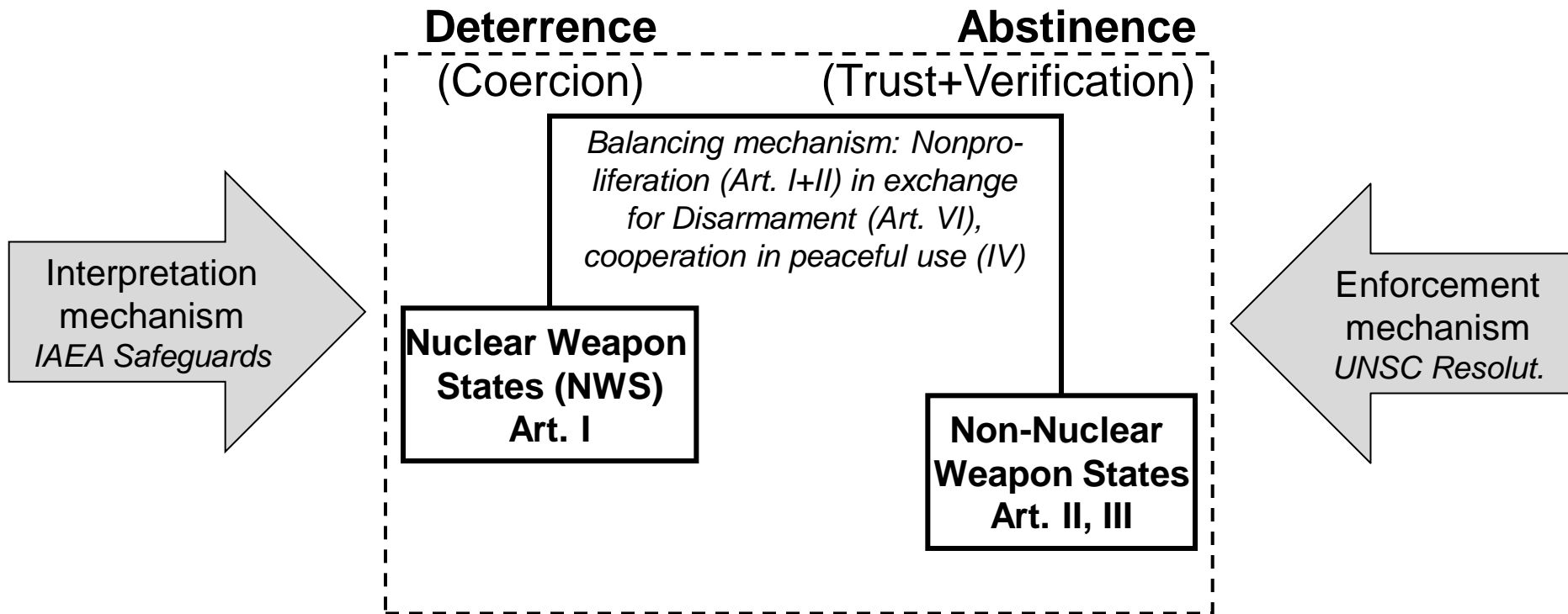
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1. Introduction
2. What is forecasting?
  1. Forecasting vs. Scenario building
  2. Scenarion building and possible futures
3. The case of Iran (IRI)
  1. Technical status and development
  2. The JCPOA of 2015
  3. The U.S. decision to withdraw
  4. JCPOA Time frame: probable futures
4. Conclusion

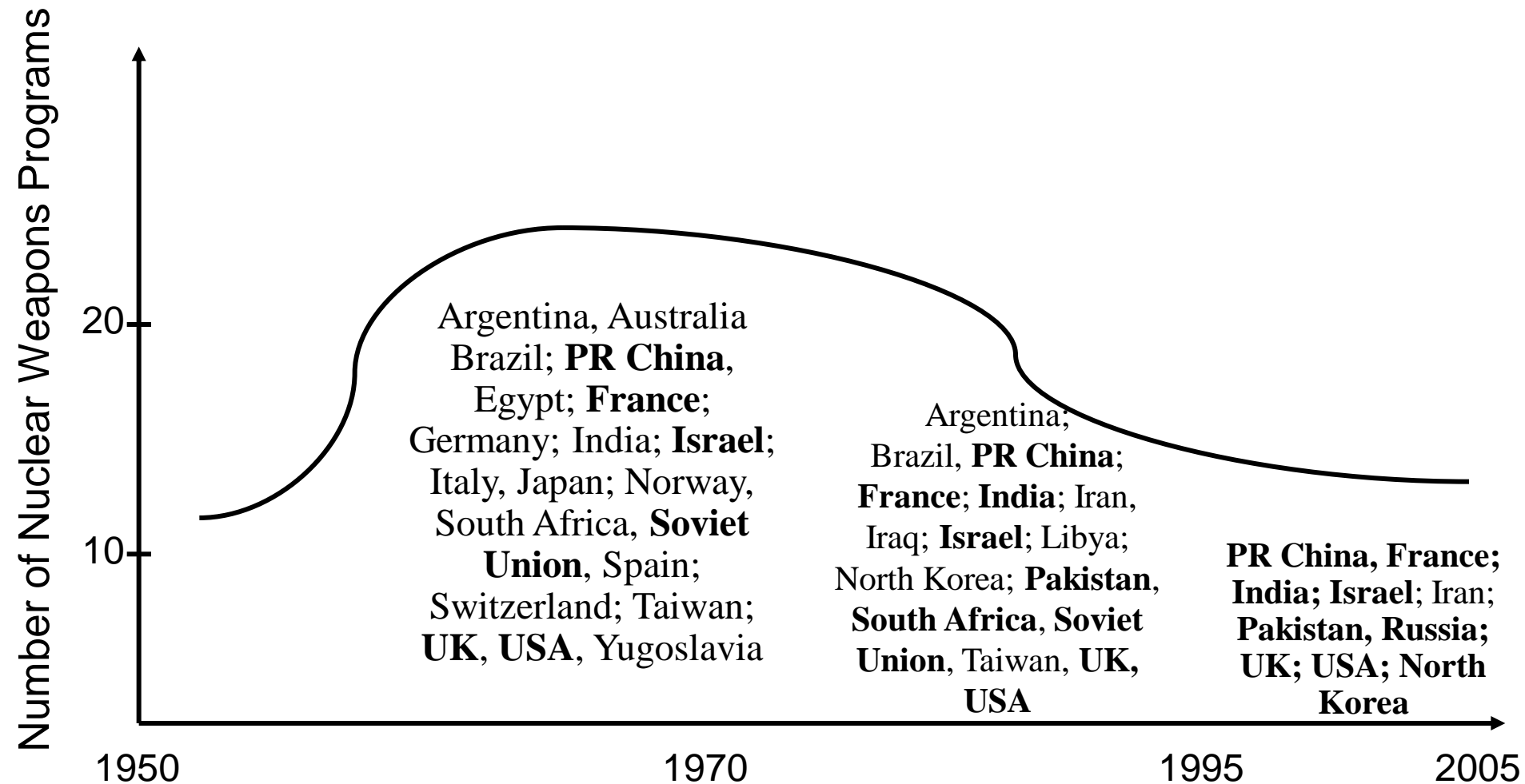
# Nuclear Weapons: Uranium + PU production



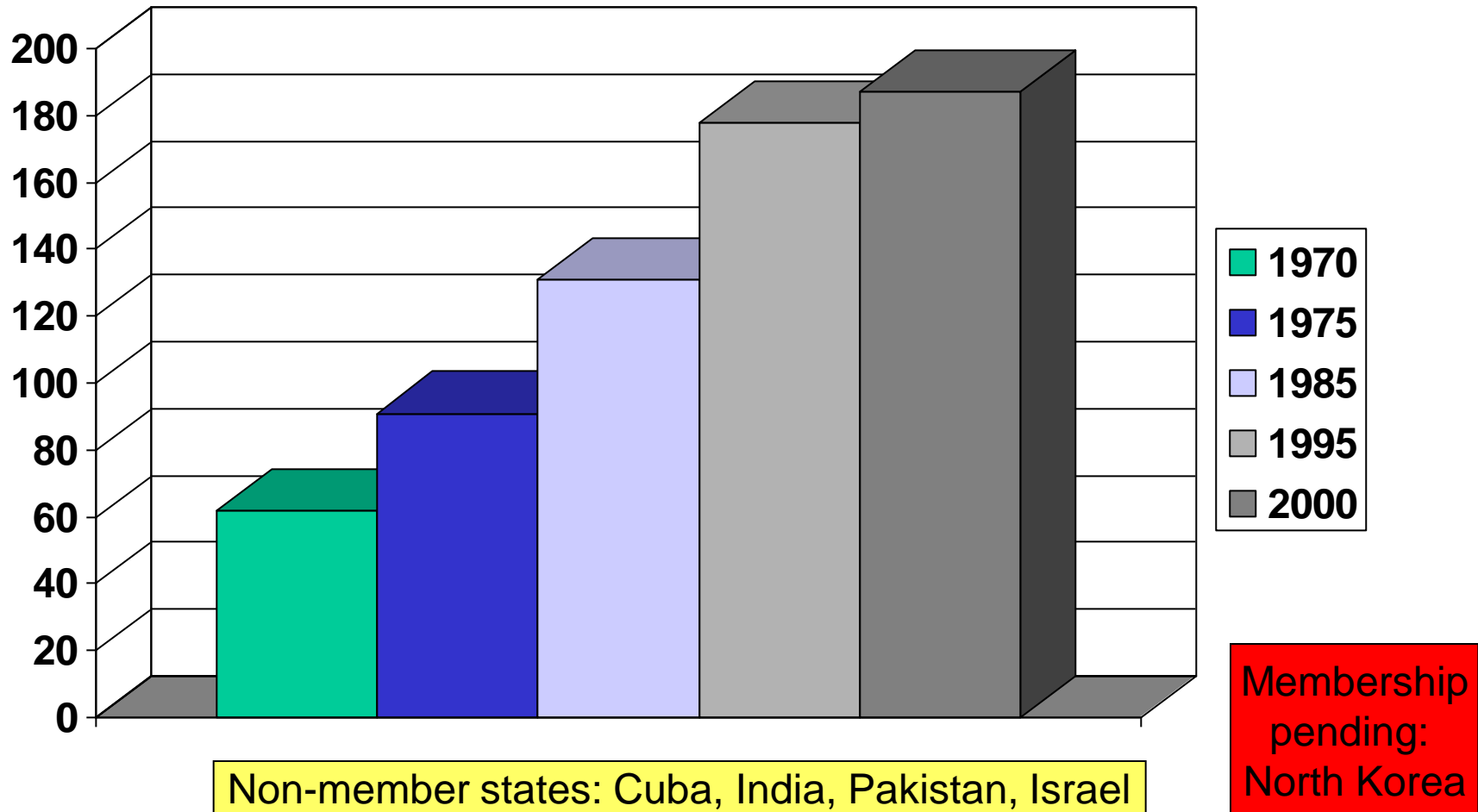
# Constitutional order of the Nonproliferation Regime



# Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Programs 1950-2005



# Membership of Nonproliferation Treaty 1970-2005



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# What is forecasting in political science?

# Forecasting political events

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- The principle of forecasts is already included in the term: to cast forward what has happened in the past and is happening in the present. In academic language, this principle is called extrapolation. Often the term „forecasting is used interchangeably with prognosis.
- Prognoses can be divided into explanatory prognoses, description prognoses, modeling prognoses and simulation prognoses (Zimmerli 1998: 284).
  - Modeling prognoses and simulation prognoses use relevant imaginations of systems or subsystems in which events should occur (Gabriel 2012: 115). Simulation prognoses are often conducted as computer-based analysis of combinations of specific conditions (ibid).
  - Explanatory prognoses are forecasts which can be derived from general sets of theories or hypotheses (ibid).
  - Description prognoses, on the contrary, focus on describing plausibilities and use larger data sets (ibid: 122)

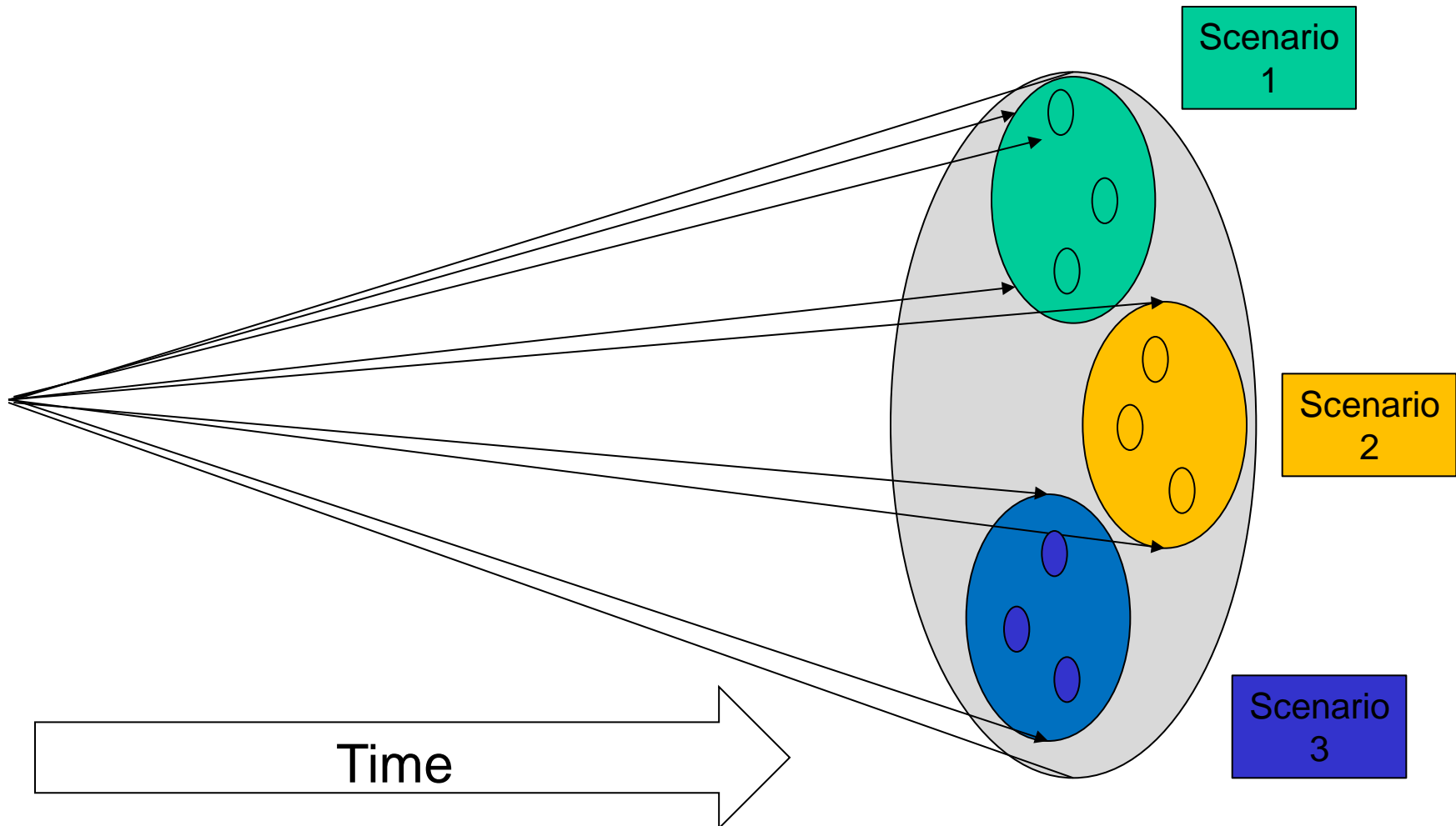


# Forecasting vs. Scenario building

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- The difference between scenarios and forecasts is that scenarios do not make any statements about the probability of possible future developments while forecasts do. S. do not explain what will happen but portray several alternative possibilities for future developments and explain the reasons for these potential future paths (Gabriel 2012: 126).
- scenarios can be distinguished by the technique that was used to create them: **systematic-formalized techniques and creative narrative techniques** (Kosow/Gaßner 2008: 32-60).
- In systematic-formalized techniques usually the key factors of scenarios are arranged in matrixes in order to display every factor in front of each other so the strength of the relationship between two factors can be classified (Kosow/Gaßner 2008: 38-45). After the analysis of the key factors, a number of raw scenarios is developed which are then further described and enhanced (ibid: 44).
- Creative narrative techniques are based on intuition and the knowledge scenario builders have acquired before they start constructing the scenarios (ibid: 38-45).

# Scenarios as possible futures



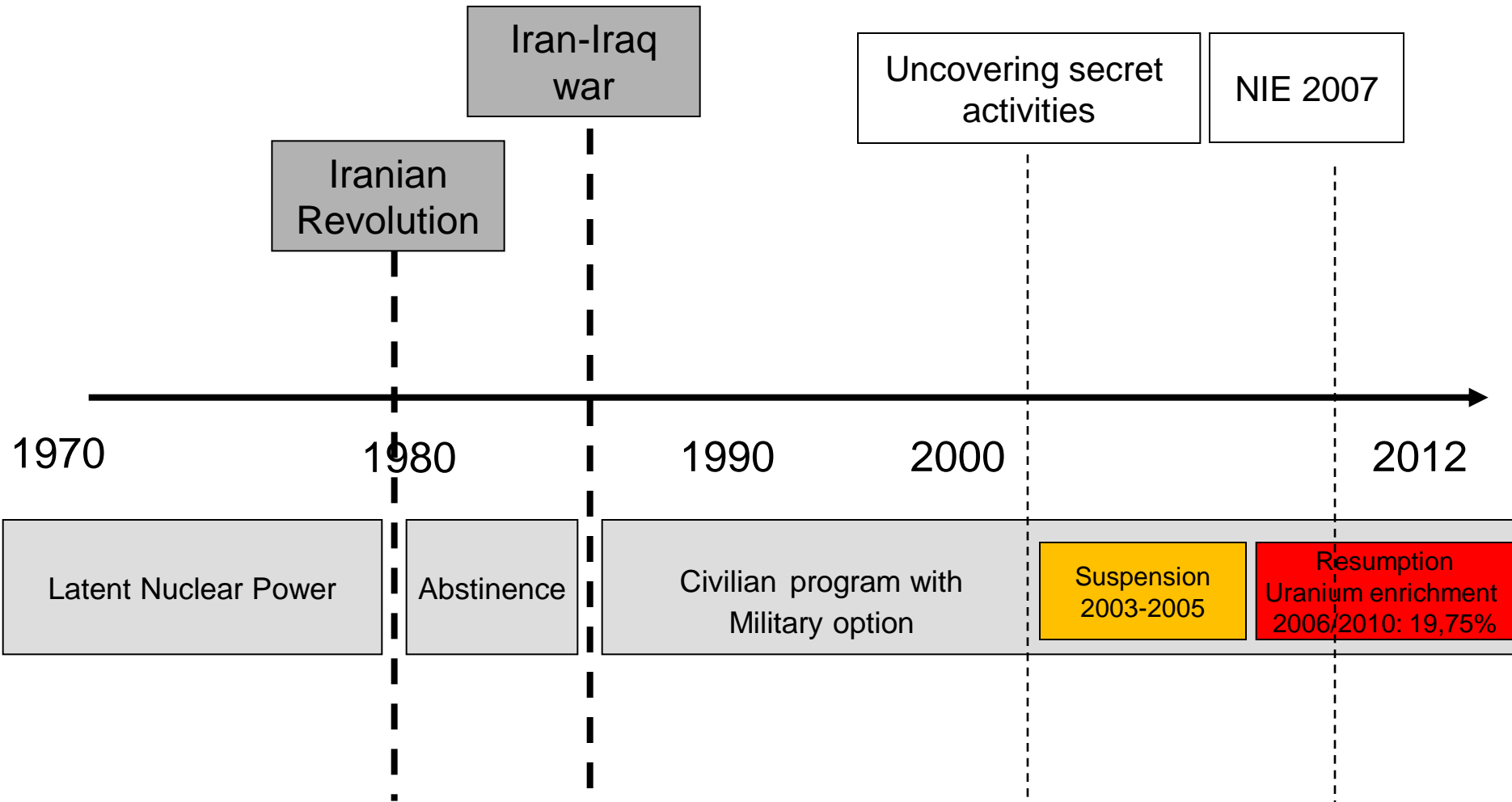
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# The case of the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI)

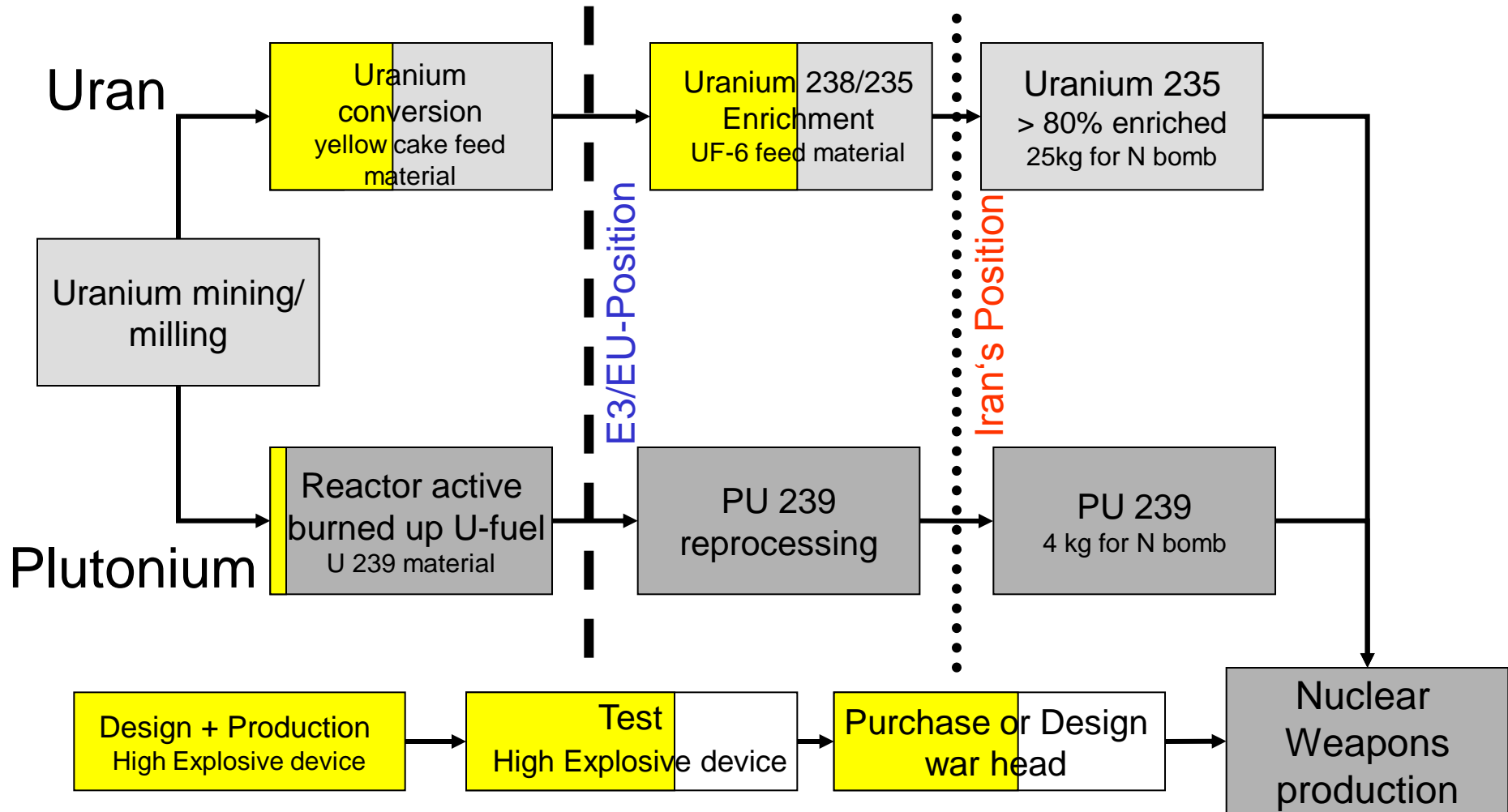
# (Potential) Nuclear Powers within IRI's security perimeter

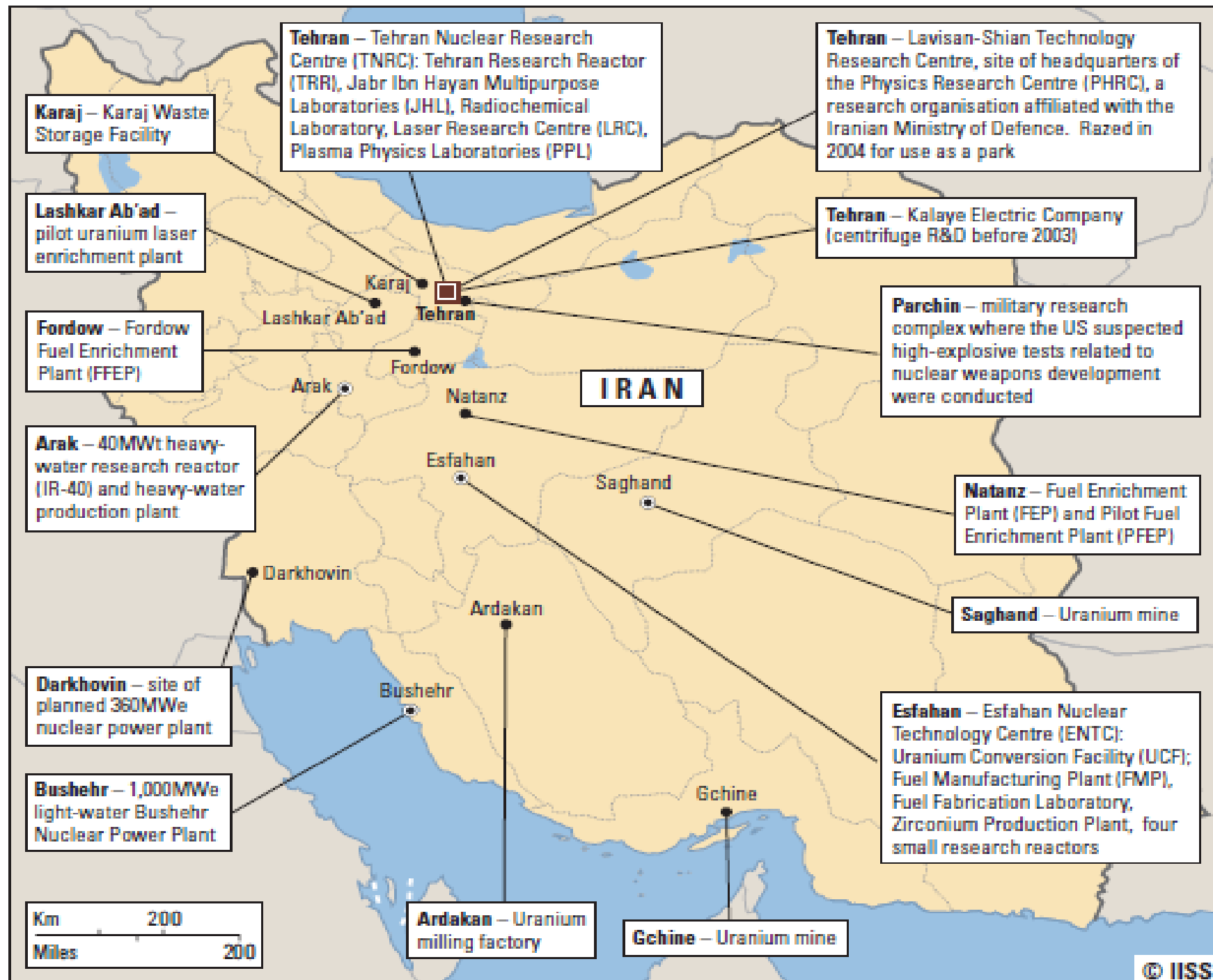


# Development of IRI Nuclear (weapons) program 1970-2014



# Nuclear Weapons: Uranium + PU production (current status of the Iranian program)





# Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, JCPOA 14.07.2015

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- Parties: Iran, US, RF, UK, F, FRG (EU HR).
- Goal: Ensure peacefulness of Iranian nuclear program in exchange for lifting international sanctions.
- Status: Binding political agreement with national/international supporting decisions.
- Predecessor: Framework accord (April 2, 2015) Joint Plan of Action (January 2014).
- Ratification status:
  - UN SC Res. 2231: stipulates sequenced lifting of sanctions.
  - US Congr.: withheld resolution of disapproval.
  - Iranian Parliament: approved JCPOA
  - IAEA: certified IRI compliance, signed Framework for Cooperation.
- Opposition: Israel, Saudia Arabia have voiced strong criticism that JCPOA does not prevent cheating, allows eventual dual use program, and paves way for Iranian regional hegemony.



# Major Provisions of JCPOA

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## Nuclear Provisions

- Uranium Enrichment: No. + quality of centrifuges; E.-Level, No. of Facilities; Stockpile limits.
- PU/Arak reactor: redesign+rebuild according to P5+1; no reprocessing for 15 years.
- Non-Nuclear weapons pledge

## Verification

- IAEA:
  - Longterm enhanced presence in IRI
  - Additional Prot. Implemented
  - Modified Code 3.1
  - Nov. 15, 2016: report on past weapons related activ.
  - Quarterly report on IRI implementation
- Int. Nuclear cooperation:
  - Avoidance of IRI activities

# JCPOA: Dispute Settlement and Sanction relief

1. Establishes a dispute resolution mechanism led by a Joint Commission/JC (one representative each from PRC, EU, F, UK, FRG, IRI, RF, USA).
2. Any party to the JCPOA could refer an issue of compliance to the JC.
3. If the JC is unable to resolve the issue in 15 days, any party could refer the matter to the foreign ministers of JC members, who have 15 days to resolve it.
4. Any state could request that an advisory board composed of three members (one appointed by each of the two disputing parties and a third independent member) provide a nonbinding opinion on the compliance issue
5. If these modalities do not satisfy the complainant, that participant could treat this as grounds to cease performing its commitments and/or notify the UN Security Council.
6. Upon reception, UN sanctions would automatically be reimposed thirty days later unless the SC passed a resolution to continue the lifting of sanctions .

## Sanction relief and snap-back mechanism

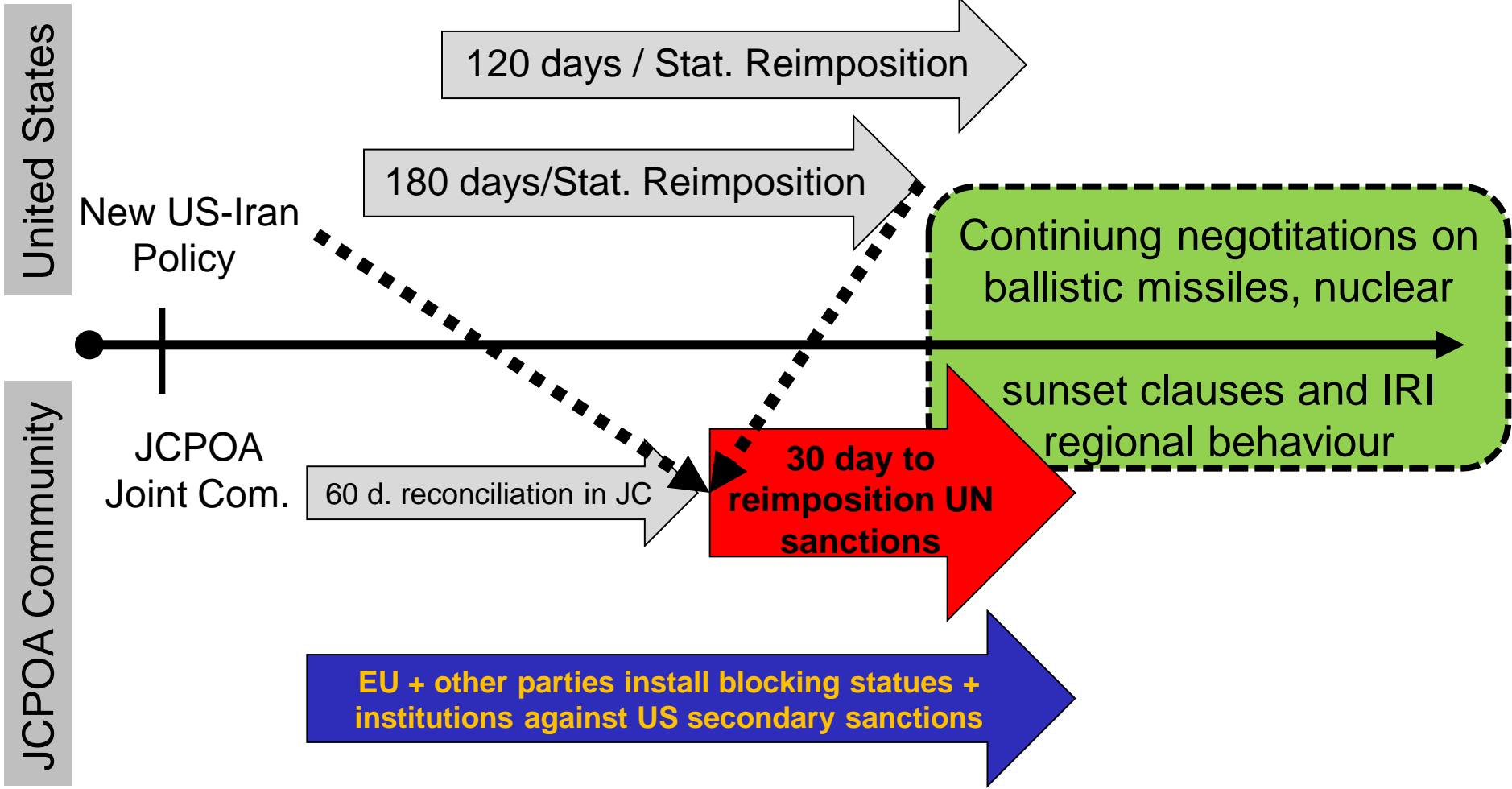


# US decision to withdraw US support for JCPOA, May 8, 2018

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- Calling the JCPOA „worst deal and one-sided deal“ ever ever signed.
- Reimposing highest possible level of US sanctions
- Three different kinds of US sanction procedures:
  1. Using statutory waiver authority on congressionally mandated US- sanctions (4 different laws) with 120-180 days deadline lines
  2. Rescinding mandatory Executive Orders (5 + list of sanctioned persons)
  3. Mandatory certification under Iran Nuclear Agreement Review ACT (INARA) to certify every 90 days that Iran ins in compliance with JCPOA.
- All other JCPOA parties have criticized withdrawal and vowed to uphold JCPOA despite US threat of ‚secondary sanctions‘.

# JCPOA Time frame: probable futures



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# Conclusion

# Conclusion and Outlook

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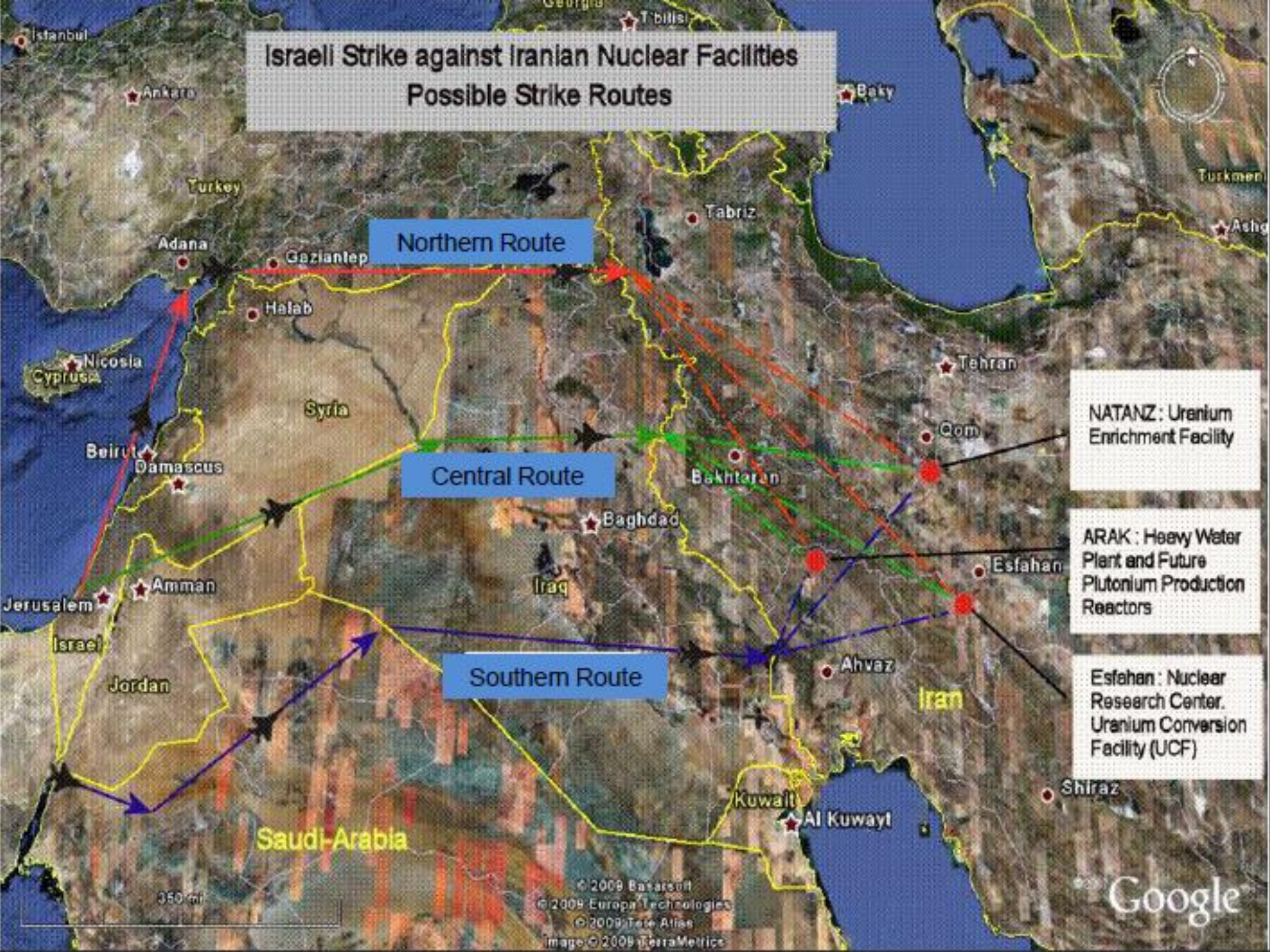
1. Assumptions:
  1. Given that the ISR-IRI conflict in Syria does not escalate and ISR does not seek preemptive military strike against nuclear facilities.
  2. Given that current moderate IRI Pres. Rouhani can hold course
  3. Given that Republican losses in US-mid term elections will be moderate
2. Unlikely that US triggers „snap-back-mechanism“ in UN Security Council requiring other UN members to reinstitute earlier UN sanctions.
3. Activation of snap-back mechanism would trigger „constitutional crisis“ in UN Security Council because other SC members would probably state that US and not Iran is significant non-performance of JCPOA.
4. US is likely to use uncertainty over JCPOA abrogation during negotiation period with North Korea (mid-June to mid-July 2018).
5. „Window-of-escalation“ possible but unlikely in August-September during US-mid-term election campaign period.

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<http://harnisch.uni-hd.de>

# Israeli Strike against Iranian Nuclear Facilities

## Possible Strike Routes





# Summary of UN Security Council Resolutions on Iran (1737, 1747, 1803 and 1929)

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- Require Iran to suspend uranium enrichment
- Prohibit transfer to Iran of nuclear, missile, and dual use items to Iran, except for use in light-water reactors
- Prohibit Iran from exporting arms or WMD-useful technology; Ban Iranian investment in Uranium mining and enrichment abroad
- Freeze the assets of 40 named Iranian persons and entities, focussing on the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).
- Require that countries exercise restraint with respect to travel of 35 named Iranians and ban the travel of 5 others
- Calls on states not to export arms (8 specific categories) to Iran or support new business with Iran.
- Calls for “vigilance” (a non-binding call to cut off business) with respect to all Iranian banks, particularly Bank Melli and Bank Saderat
- Establishment of a New Cargo Inspection framework; incl. inspection of cargoes carried by Iran Air Cargo and Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines if there are indications they carry cargo banned for carriage to Iran.

# ARTICLE II, NPT

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- Each non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the Treaty undertakes not to receive the transfer from any transferor whatsoever of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or of control over such weapons or explosive devices directly, or indirectly; not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices; and not to seek or receive any assistance in the manufacture of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

# The argument

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- The Nonproliferation Treaty establishes an asymmetric nuclear order of „haves“ (NWS) and „have-nots“ (NNWS). The balance of this order hinges on exchanging nonproliferation promises against disarmament and peaceful cooperation commitments. The current western military preponderance unsettles this order to the detriment of non-democratic countries, e.g. Iraq (2003) and Libya (2011).
- Among autocracies, personalized dictatorships are especially prone to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), because WMD serve both military and domestic reputational purposes.
- The current balance of the non-proliferation regime is kept through extending interpretation and sanctions mechanisms (through the JCPOA for Iran) and broadening and deepening the compliance instruments (through UN Sec Council Res. for DPRK) to address the NPT's weaknesses.