

The Annual Activities of Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS) in 2008

About the IPIS:

Foreign policy developments and their extensive and profound impacts on all areas, particularly national interests and security, have more than doubled the importance of conducting research and investigations in the field. This has encouraged the Islamic Republic of Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to prepare the grounds for setting up an education and research center to serve the country's foreign diplomacy apparatus

The Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was established in September 1983. Its mission is to provide in-depth views and analyses for devising and disseminating the foreign policy of the

Islamic Republic of Iran by conducting studies, evaluations and analyses of international issues. The institute can be referred to as the center for conducting studies and research on the country's foreign policy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Within this framework, research works in political, international, legal, economic, macro and strategic fields enjoy a special status. IPIS is considered one of the most prestigious regional and international institutes, which extensively cooperates with top international research centers on organizing conferences and roundtables, exchanging delegations and implementing research projects.

Objectives:

One of the main tasks of the Institute for Political and

International Studies at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is to help promote knowledge related to international relations and upgrade foreign policy literature. It achieves this by preparing the ground for debates and exchange of opinion, by encouraging studies and research, and publishing analyses and views on foreign policy.

The stated objectives of IPIS are as follows:

- Conducting studies and research on foreign policy;
- Promoting literature on the science of international relations;
- Assisting the implementation of the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran;

Administration:

The Institute for Political and International Studies is one of the affiliated offices of the Training and Research

Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It has been divided into a number of sub-sections and centers:

A- Director General: The Institute for Political and International Studies is under the management of a director general who is appointed by the foreign minister, based on the recommendation of the deputy minister for education of the Foreign Ministry.

B- Deputy Director-General for Research: The Department of Research is tasked with conducting studies and research as well as coordination among different research departments.

C- Executive Deputy: The executive deputy is tasked with coordinating executive, administrative, financial and logistical activities.

D- Research Centers: The Institute for Political and International Studies has

several research centers that help implement its objectives. These centers constitute the main structure of the institute's current affairs in all spheres. The educational and research personnel of these centers include experts from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ambassadors, senior diplomats, university scholars, researchers and thinkers of political and international affairs. These centers are as follows:

Center for Asia and Pacific Studies

Center for Central Asia and Caucasus Studies

Center for African Studies

Center for European Studies

Center for American Studies

Center for Strategic Studies

Center for Energy and International Economy Studies

Center for Middle East and Persian Gulf Studies

Communications and Information Center

Center for Legal Studies

Main IPIS Activities

A- Roundtables & Meetings

One of the most important measures taken by the Institute for Political and International Studies in recent years has been to organize roundtables and meetings with other nations to discuss and exchange views on bilateral and multilateral issues of interest. The institute has always paid special attention to such events, which have been equally welcomed by foreign counterparts. On average, the institute has annually held more than 30 joint roundtables.

B- International Seminars

The institute organizes international seminars on issues of mutual interest for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Since many years, it has annually pursued at least two international seminars on Persian Gulf and Central Asia and Caucasus. So far, it has held 18 international seminars on Persian Gulf and 16 on Central Asia and Caucasus.

Because of their importance, these two international events are included in the calendar of international conferences and welcomed by political and international analysts. Every year, the main theme of these seminars focuses on a special regional topic.

Similarly, the institute has also organized other international seminars on sensitive regional and global developments. These seminars include:

Islamic World: Challenges and Opportunities (2003)

Energy and Security in the Indian Ocean (2003)

Restructuring the United Nations (2004)

Security and Energy: The Asian View (2005)

Investigating the Zionist Regime's Crimes in Lebanon (2006)

Investigating the Holocaust (2006)

Latin American Trade (2006)

Iran's Peaceful Nuclear Activities (2007)

C- Research Projects

Another task of the institute is to define and execute research projects on political and international issues. These projects are carried out by experts and researchers at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as by university scholars and researchers. They are in line with the policies of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and

can be used by scientific and academic institutes and centers nationwide.

D- Speeches

One of the regular tasks of the institute is to invite educational and political personalities and elites for giving speech and presentation on various international issues. The institute frequently invites prominent Iranian and foreign political figures and analysts. It also invites foreign guests and diplomats residing in the country to deliver speeches.

E- Educational Cooperation & Promotional Activities

The institute has research and educational cooperation with prominent domestic and foreign institutes, centers and universities. This cooperation is usually in the form of joint research projects, exchange of researchers, joint roundtables and seminars, exchange of magazines and books, short-

term educational-research training workshops, as well as technical conferences, roundtables and interviews.

F- Councils & Internal Meetings

The institute carries out its activities within the framework of three councils: Book Council, Research Council and Strategy Council. The weekly sessions of think-tanks regularly discuss a wide range of political and international topics. It also holds weekly sessions of the heads of study groups within the same framework.

G- Publications

The institute publishes its educational and analytical achievements and works in the form of book, magazines, bulletins and reports. These materials are available to foreign policy decision-makers as well as those interested in international relations. Some of

the most important publications are as follows:

Foreign Policy (quarterly)

Central Asia and Caucasus Studies (quarterly)

Iranian Journal of International Affairs (quarterly in English)

African Studies (quarterly)

Al-Alaghah Al-Iraniah Al-Dovaliah Magazine (in Arabic)

Amu Darya (magazine in Russian)

Events and Analyses (monthly)

Main Activities of IPIS in 2008

A-National & International Seminars:

-2nd International Seminar on Imam Khomeini and Foreign Policy:

“A Glance at Palestinian Issue and Liberation of Al-Quds” - June 2, 2008

-18th International Seminar on Persian Gulf:

“Regional Cooperation for Attaining Stability and Security” - June 18, 2008

-Preparatory Seminar on 100 Years of Oil and Foreign Policy in Iran - Oct. 22, 2008

-16th International Seminar on Central Asia and Caucasus: “Rivalry and Standoff in Caucasus: Roots, Dimensions and Consequences” - Oct. 29-30, 2008

-Seminar on Israeli Invasion of Gaza: Crimes against Humanity - Jan. 5, 2009

B-Roundtables

Roundtable with China’s Institute for Contemporary International Relations, Tehran - May 18, 2008

Roundtable with Russian Institute for World Economy and International Relations, Tehran - April 22, 2008

Roundtable with Indian Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses, New Delhi - April 26-27, 2008

Roundtable with Polish Institute for Oriental Studies, Warsaw - April 23-26, 2008

Roundtable with Kazakhstan's Institute for Strategic Studies, Tehran - June 19, 2008

Roundtable on Iran-India Relations: Opportunities and Challenges, Tehran - Nov. 3, 2008

Roundtable of Iran and Turkey, Istanbul - Nov. 13, 2008

Roundtable of Iran and Tajikistan, Tehran - Dec. 9, 2008

Roundtable of Iran and Tanzania, Dar es Salaam - Jan. 16, 2009

Closed Roundtable of Zionist Regime's Elections and Results, Tehran - March 9, 2009

Roundtable of Iran and Indonesia, Jakarta - Feb. 28, 2009

Roundtable on Africa Deliberations, Tehran - March 12, 2009

C-Speeches & Meetings

- Speech by Mr. Mansour Al-Araez, director of Al Shartan Institute, Bahrain's Foreign Relations Council, April 14, 2008

- Speech by Mr. Paulo Buta, Argentinean researcher at Madrid Institute of Foreign Relations, May 15, 2008

- Mr. Morteza Pouya, Pakistani thinker (challenges and opportunities), June 10, 2008

- Meeting with families of martyrs of the 33-day war of Lebanon, June 11, 2008

- Meeting between Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki and Persian Gulf experts, June 27, 2008

- Speech by Mr. General Ehsan ul-Haq, former chairman of Pakistan Army's Joint Chiefs of Staff, July 21, 2008
- Tour of IPIS by students of Pakistan's International Islamic University, July 30, 2008
- Meeting with ambassadors of Central Asia and Caucasus in Tehran on the position of Islamic Republic of Iran regarding the Georgian crisis and the 16th International Seminar on Central Asia and Caucasus, Oct. 6, 2008
- Meeting with Lebanese activists and philanthropists, Nov. 19, 2008
- Speech by Mr. Bulat Nurgaliev, secretary-general of Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Dec. 4, 2008
- Speech by Mr. Thierry Kevil, French economist, Dec. 14, 2008
- Speech by Mr. Tanaka, head of Japanese Institute for Political Studies, Jan. 13, 2009
- Speech by Nicaraguan ambassador in Tehran and signing of a cooperation memorandum of understanding, Jan. 14, 2009
- Working breakfast with ambassadors of Central Asia and Caucasus in Tehran, Jan. 22, 2009
- Working breakfast with ambassadors of Asia and Pacific in Tehran, Feb. 19, 2009
- Speech by Mr. Terrier, French researcher of Crisis Research Group, March 4, 2009
- Speech by Mr. Temur Yakobashvili, Georgian minister for reintegration issues, March 5, 2009
- Meeting with students of political sciences of Shiraz University, March 5, 2009

- Speech by Mr. Miguel d'Escoto, president of UN General Assembly, March 10, 2009

D-Participation in International Conferences

- International Conference on Regional Cooperation: Strategy for Eurasian Development, New Delhi, April 2, 2008

- International Conference on Nuclear Energy for Arab Society, Bahrain, April 7-8, 2008

- International Conference on 60th Anniversary of Palestine Occupation, Syria, May 14-17, 2008

- International Conference of Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Beijing, May 18-23, 2008

- International Conference on Security and Strategic Cooperation in Asia, Istanbul, May 21-25, 2008

- International Conference on Afghanistan, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Geopolitical Security in Central Eurasia, Bishkek, June 11-15, 2008

- Deputy Minister for Education and research visits Dushanbe, Tajikistan, June 22-25, 2008

- Conference of Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, July 11-12, 2008

- Symposium of Islam in Asia, Tokyo, Nov. 13-17, 2008

- Roundtable of Iran and Turkey, Istanbul, Nov. 13, 2008

- Conference of Europe and Caucasus, Security Partnership, Yerevan, Nov. 25-30, 2008

- International Conference on Eurasian Security, Moscow, Dec. 10-13, 2008

- Roundtable of Iran and Tanzania, Dar es Salaam, Jan. 15-20, 2009
 - Conference on Palestinian Resistance, Beirut, Jan. 16-20, 2009
 - International Conference on Anniversary of Islamic Revolution, Islamabad and Karachi, Jan. 30-Feb. 3, 2009
 - International Conference on Bahrain Security, Manama, Feb. 24-26, 2009
 - Roundtable of Iran and Indonesia, Jakarta, Feb. 27-March 3, 2009
- E- Educational & Research Cooperation:**
- Cooperation with Faculty of International Studies at Tehran University for organizing the Conference on Iran-India Relations, May 26, 2008
 - Cooperation with Institute for Cultural and Iranian Civilization Studies in discussions related to regional and Persian Gulf issues,
 - Cooperation with International Center for Specialized Services of University Jihad, Allameh Tabatabaei Branch, for organizing the First International Seminar on Caspian Sea, Tourism, and Maritime Environment, in Tehran and Mazandaran, Nov. 4-8, 2008
 - Cooperation with Tehran University for organizing the Seminar on German Culture and Society, Oct. 8-9, 2008
 - Cooperation with National Iranian Oil Company for organizing the preparatory and International Seminar on 100 Years of Oil in Iran, Oct. 22-Nov. 10, 2008
 - Holding Roundtable on Africa in collaboration with Imam Khomeini Relief Committee, March 12, 2009

**F-Weekly Sessions,
Brainstorming & Strategic
Discussions**

- Latest Developments in Arab League, Mr. Mohammadi, Director General for Middle East department of MFA, April 9, 2008
- NATO Summit in Bucharest: Achievements and Challenges, Mr. Molaei and Mr. Zabib of IPIS, April 16, 2008
- Islamic Republic of Iran's Energy Diplomacy, Mr. Biniyaz of IPIS, April 23, 2008
- Iraq and Kuwait Conference, Mr. Seyyed Hossein Niknam of IPIS, April 30, 2008
- Futurology, Mr. Mohammad Hossein Latifi, senior expert, May 7, 2008
- Examination of Lebanese Developments, Mr. Dehqani Poudeh of IPIS, May 14, 2008
- Pakistan's Foreign Policy on Afghanistan, Mr. Jalal Kalantari of IPIS, May 21, 2008
- Crisis of British Labor Party and the New Nuclear Idea in Europe, IPIS European Studies Group, May 28, 2008
- Pakistan after Elections: Challenges Ahead, Mr. Mir Mahmoud Mousavi, senior expert, June 8, 2008
- Reforms in Vietnam, Mr. Molla Abdollahi, senior expert, May 29, 2008
- US Macro Security Strategy and Globalization (Strategic Discussions), May 26, 2008
- US Macro Security Strategy and Globalization (Strategic Discussions), June 9, 2008
- Examination of French Foreign Policy, IPIS European studies Group, June 1, 2008
- US Macro Security Strategy and Globalization (Strategic Discussions), June 23, 2008

- India's Energy Strategy, Ms. Sara Vakhshuri, senior energy expert, June 26, 2008
- Current Developments in Afghanistan and Iran's Role, Mr. Bahrami, senior expert, June 26, 2008
- Examination of Shell's Energy Scenarios Until 2005, Mr. Farrokh Mostofi, senior energy expert, July 2, 2008
- New Developments in International Economy and Its Impacts on Asia and Iran, Mr. Aboutalebi, senior expert, July 16, 2008
- The Next Decade and US Position in International Relations, Mr. Ahmad Sadeghi of IPIS, July 23, 2008
- The Roots of Darfur Crisis, Mr. Qaderi of IPIS, July 30, 2008
- State Challenges, Democratization of South Caucasus and Its Impacts on Islamic Republic of Iran's Security, Mr. Afshin Zargar, post-graduate student, Aug. 6, 2008
- A Glance at the Mediterranean Union Summit in Paris, IPIS European Studies Group, Aug. 13, 2008
- The Promised Land, Globalization and Diplomacy, Hojjatoleslam Pour-Seyyed Aqaei, Mr. Ghanbari and Mr. Darvishi, from Qom Seminary School, Aug. 20, 2008
- Investigation of Crimes Committed by Mr. Karadzic at Yugoslavia Criminal Court, Mr. Ardalan of IPIS, Aug. 28, 2008
- The Georgian Crisis and Repercussions, IPIS Central Asian and Caucasus Group, Sept. 3, 2008
- China and Japan: Universal and Dissimilar Structures in Global Interaction, Mr. Sadria, university professor and East Asia expert, Sept. 10, 2008

- Current Developments in Pakistan and Future Outlook, Mr. Qelichkhan and Mr. Qolipour, senior experts of South Asia, Sept. 17, 2008
- Pakistan's Past and Future Developments, Mr. Pirouz Ghofrani of IPIS, Sept. 24, 2008
- Domestic Developments in Israel, Mr. Hamidreza Dehqani of IPIS, Oct. 1, 2008
- Call for Establishing Eastern Nation Union, Mr. Shapour Ravasani, university professor emeritus of Eldenburg, Oct. 8, 2008
- China and US: Strategic Cooperation and Rivalry, Mr. Shariatinia, senior expert on China, Oct. 15, 2008
- Jordan and Middle East Developments, Mr. Irani, senior expert, Oct. 30, 2008
- 2008 US Elections and Islamic Republic of Iran, Mr. Zahrani, university professor, Nov. 12, 2008
- European Union Strategy for Afghanistan, Mr. Jalal Kalantari of IPIS, Nov. 26, 2008
- Post-Cold War Development in Japan's National Security Strategy, Mr. Moheb Ali, senior expert, Dec. 3, 2008
- Latin America: Views, Policies and Strategies, Mr. Mehdi Mohtashami, senior expert, Dec. 17, 2008
- Latin America: Views, Policies and Strategies, Mr. Eslamian and Mr. Soltani, from department for Latin America, MFA, Dec. 24, 2008
- Islamic Republic of Iran and Africa, Mr. Baqeri, Deputy Minister for African Affairs, Dec. 31, 2008
- Iran-EU Relations and France's Rotating Presidency, Mr. Foghani, deputy head of Office for European Organizations, MFA, Jan. 21, 2009

- Iraq after the Security Agreement (SOFA), Mr. Nourian, senior expert, Jan. 28, 2009

- The New Iraq and Islamic Republic of Iran, Mr. Hossein Kamalian, head of Iraqi ad hoc committee, MFA, Feb. 4, 2009

- A Glance at US Middle East Policy in the Obama Administration, Mr. Moheb Ali, senior expert, Feb. 18, 2009

- Discussions between Department of Research and Education of MFA and Institute for Political and International Studies, March 11, 2009

A Comparative Chart of IPIS Activities (2005-8) in terms of International Conferences, Joint Roundtable, Topical Roundtable, Speeches and Meetings

International Seminars

1- The 2nd Seminar on Imam Khomeini and Foreign Policy:

“A Glance at Palestine Issue and Liberation of Al-Quds”

Concurrent with the 19th death anniversary of Imam Khomeini, founder of Islamic Republic of Iran, the Institute for Political and International Studies organized the 2nd International Seminar on Imam Khomeini and Foreign Policy on June 2, 2008. The main topic of the event was Palestinian cause and liberation of Al-Quds. Some 35 guests from different countries attended the seminar.

A photo exhibition entitled “Palestine, 60 years of Occupation, 60 Years of Resistance” was held on the sidelines of the main event in collaboration with the Center of Documents and Strategic Studies at the Society for Defending Palestinians.

Addressing the opening ceremony of the seminar, Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki said the

overthrow of the monarchical regime and the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran were recognized as the domestic goals, and the ouster of Zionist regime and restoration of the rights of Palestinians as foreign goals of the late Imam Khomeini's movement.

"Imam Khomeini permitted the donation of religious taxes to the Palestinian resistance, as well as the severance of ties with Israel, the handover of Israeli embassy in Tehran to Palestinians, severance of ties with Egypt for signing the Camp David Treaty, and the observance of World Qods Day. He viewed the Zionist regime as a usurper entity, but distinguished between the Jewish society and the Zionists.

After the opening ceremony, Iranian and foreign speakers expressed their views and opinions in a general session, two parallel sessions and a

closing ceremony. The subject matters of the sessions were:

- Imam Khomeini, Islamic Revolution and Palestine
- Imam Khomeini and Palestinian Crisis in the Passage of Time
- Imam Khomeini and Foreign Policy

2- The 18th International Seminar on Persian Gulf: "Grounds for Regional Cooperation on Attaining Stability and Security"

The 18th International Seminar on Persian Gulf with the central theme of "Grounds for Regional Cooperation on Attaining Stability and Security" was held on June 17-18, 2008. Some 30 Iranian and foreign guests were in attendance.

After the opening ceremony, an open session, six workgroup sessions and a closing ceremony were held

during the seminar. Topics of the sessions were as follows:

- Persian Gulf, General Discourse
- Persian Gulf, Regional Stability and Security
- Persian Gulf and Grounds for Regional Cooperation
- Iraqi Developments and Regional Impacts
- Regional Cooperation and Stability, and Media's Role
- Role of Economic Cooperation in Stability and Security
- Role of Political Cooperation in Stability and Security

3- The 16th International Seminar on Central Asia and Caucasus: "Standoff in Caucasus: Roots, Dimensions and Repercussions"

The 16th International Seminar on Central Asia and Caucasus themed "Standoff in Caucasus:

Roots, Dimensions and Repercussions" was held on Oct. 29-30, 2008. Some 32 Iranian and foreign guests, especially from the region, attended the seminar.

Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki in the opening ceremony elaborated on the root causes and dimensions of the crisis in the Caucasus as well as the position of Islamic Republic of Iran.

"The Caucasus region is in dire need of sustainable and balanced development as well as mutual trust. To this end, broadening ties with neighbors remains high on the agenda of the Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign policy. Iran pursues national security within the confines of regional security, which can be attained through regional peace. The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that it is necessary for regional states to reduce the adverse consequences and factors of

tension. Therefore, it maintains that the presence of extra-territorial currents only exacerbates the complications in the region," he said.

After the opening ceremony, seven specialized sessions and a closing ceremony were held, in which speakers elaborated and exchanged views on the following issues:

- Roots and Dimensions of Caucasian Standoff;
- Goals and Policies of Regional and International Players in the Caucasus;
- Regional Convergence, Peace and Stability in the Caucasus;
- Energy Security and Pipeline Politics After the Caucasian Conflict;
- Geopolitics and International System After the Caucasian Crisis: Views on the New Cold War;

- Security Arrangements in the Caucasus: Prerequisites and Future Outlook;

Mr. Sheikholeslam, deputy foreign minister and head of the Department of Middle East and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), addressed the closing session of the seminar.

He said regional cooperation and establishment of security arrangements based on joint capacities and mutual interests could help resolve regional issues and direct regional states toward political and economic integration.

"The transfer of energy from the region requires a calm atmosphere devoid of any tension. The recent crisis demonstrates that negligence toward geopolitical realities and attempts to politicize the economic phenomena will not help resolve the region's political issues," he said.

Roundtables:**1- Roundtable with China's Institute of Contemporary International Relations**

The joint roundtable of Institute for Political and International Studies and China's Institute of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR) was held on April 17, 2008, at the IPIS. Participants discussed and exchanged views on international relations, regional issues and bilateral nuclear issues in three sessions. The most important issues raised during the roundtable are as follows:

CICIR President Cui Liru said there have been fundamental developments in international affairs, increasing interdependence and the globalization of world economy.

"Power has shifted from the West to the East and Asian

countries have become effective markets in the global economy. There are concerns about security and stability in Asia due to the emergence of new challenges. There have been numerous developments and a new generation of leaders assumed power in many countries. Under the circumstances, it is imperative for us to come up with new missions and definitions in order to clearly comprehend the challenges ahead," he said.

IPIS Director General Mr. Mousavi said terrorism, organized crime, environmental pollution, climate change and poverty are the main threats facing the world.

"All major countries are making strides to build a new generation of nuclear weapons with the sole purpose of fighting terrorism. The pressing question is whether these military warfare and

weapons of mass destruction could be effective in fighting terrorism and whether this is rational? Global security is worsening by the day and terrorism has become a pretext for certain countries to pursue their own strategic agenda," he said.

2 - Roundtable with Russian Institute for World Economy and International Relations

The first joint roundtable of IPIS and Russian Institute for World Economy and International Relations was held on April 22, 2008. Three Russian experts and directors along with experts from the Iranian Foreign Ministry attended the roundtable entitled "The Position of Russia and Islamic Republic of Iran on World Order and Impacts on Bilateral Relations."

Deputy Director of Russia Institute for World Economy and International Relations Mr. Vladimir Baranovsky said the

current world order is fluid and its structure is changing rapidly.

"Although the United States is still the strongest player, its role is on the decline and it has become more vulnerable due to the policies of the past 8 years. Russia intends to return to the world order but this time around it does not recognize the American leadership. It will likewise respond strongly to the political siege in the region of Commonwealth of Independent States. The mistakes made by the United States have largely benefited the Russian Federation," he said.

Elaborating on the national security strategy of powers such as the United States, Russia, China and the European Union, IPIS Director General Dr. Mousavi said, "The West continues to develop its nuclear weapons under the pretext of war on

terror. It seems Russia has adopted the strategy of confrontation. China is also inclined toward militarization, which is inevitable. This country needs to advance its armed forces in order to secure its energy imports and commodity exports."

3- Roundtable with Indian Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses

The fifth roundtable of IPIS and Indian Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses (IDSA) entitled "The Dynamism of Regional and International Security: Iranian and Indian Views" was held on April 25-26, 2008, in New Delhi.

IPIS Director General, Mr. Mousavi said documents pertaining to the US national security strategy, China's development strategy, Russia's national security strategy, NATO's new security strategy and Europe's security strategy

emphasize the role of security and threats.

"If weapons of mass destruction and terrorism are combined, a new phenomenon will materialize in the name of mega-terrorism," he said.

IDSA Director C. Sudya said, "The transfer of crimes, disease, terrorism and drugs is among the negative aspects of globalization. This process, although it globalizes the world market, has made it vulnerable."

4- Roundtable with the Polish Institute for Oriental Studies

On April 23-26, 2008, upon an invitation of the Polish Institute for Oriental Studies, IPIS attended a joint roundtable in Warsaw.

Mr. Mohammadi, former deputy minister for education and research and Mr. Karimi, director of Center for European Studies, participated in the

event. During the meeting, Mr. Mohammadi spoke on the role of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the region and international relations. Mr. Karimi elaborated on the hidden US agenda of setting up a missile defense shield in Europe.

5- Roundtable With Kazakhstan's Institute for Strategic Studies

The roundtable of IPIS and Kazakhstan's Institute for Strategic Studies was held on June 19, 2008 at the IPIS. Kazakh speakers of the event included Kazakhstan's Ambassador in Tehran Yerik Utembayev, Director of Kazakhstan's Institute for Strategic Studies Bulat Sultanov, and the head of the institute's Research Department, Bulat Utembayev.

IPIS Director General Mr. Mousavi, Director General for Commonwealth of Independent States Saffari,

Director of Center for Central Asia and Caucasus Studies Mr. Moradi, Director of Center for Energy Studies Mr. Biniyaz, as well as Second CIS Department expert, Anvari, and Oil Ministry expert, Bahram Ali were among Iranian speakers at the event.

During the session, the participants exchanged views on Iran-Kazakhstan relations, outlook and strategies for forging a regional union, as well as the role of Shanghai Cooperation Organization and energy in the development of bilateral and regional ties.

6- Roundtable on Iran-India Relations: Opportunities and Challenges

Concurrent with the Iran-India Economic Commission's meeting, a roundtable entitled "Iran-India Relations: Opportunities and Challenges" was held on Nov. 3, 2008 at IPIS. The foreign ministers of

the two countries attended the roundtable.

Addressing the opening ceremony, Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki said the level of regional and international cooperation between Iran and India, as well as those pertaining to their organizations, is desirable. "The two countries have also cooperated closely on issues related to the region such as insecurity, occupation, terrorism and drugs. Given their geographical positions, Iran and India hold common views on many issues, including the situation in Iraq and Afghanistan. The two states favor regional peace and protection of the sovereignty of states," he said.

Noting that Iran and India have held talks and cooperated on mutual issues related to Afghanistan, Mottaki said Iran has offered support and finance to an Indian contractor

to establish Zaranj-Delaram Road in Afghanistan.

"On the international stage, the two sides reject unilateralism and emphasize the importance of respecting the rights of other nations. Tehran welcomes developments in India's foreign policy and hopes that the policy would involve the strengthening of relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran as well as regional peace and security," he said.

Indian External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee said, "We are by nature a multi-polar nation and this is reflected by the extent of our country as well as the diversity of its religious beliefs, languages and geography. India has always been a responsible member of the international community. However, we will not follow the rules if commitment is not accompanied with equality and lack of discrimination.

“Our position on the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as well as the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty is a proof of this claim. Threats of terrorism, energy security, food security, climate change, environment and natural disasters have created new challenges for the Asian nations. India is bolstering ties with all major powers, including the United States, Russia, the European Union, China and Japan, as well as emerging economic powers in Asia, Latin America and Africa.

“The civilian nuclear energy cooperation between India and the United States has helped advance our agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency, boosting our trust and capabilities in fulfilling our commitment in future. We have no other option but to expand our nuclear energy resources. The main drive behind our non-

military nuclear treaty with the United States is the same as our need to join the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline.”

7- Roundtable with Turkey’s Asian Center for Strategic Studies (TASAM)

The first joint roundtable of IPIS and Turkey’s Asian Center for Strategic Studies (TASAM) was held in Istanbul on Nov. 13, 2008. Mr. Mousavi, director general of IPIS at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the head of Turkey’s Asian Center for Strategic Studies, Suleyman Sensoy, headed the Iranian and Turkish delegations, respectively.

Prepared by
Gholamreza Ebrahimpour¹

¹ Gholamreza Ebrahimpour is the director of Center for Communication and Information of IPIS.