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RFC: ATII20618V12

**Revista Dilemas Contemporáneos: Educación, Política y Valores.**

<http://www.dilemascontemporaneoseducacionpoliticayvalores.com/>

**Año: VI**

**Número: Edición Especial**

**Artículo no.:21**

**Período: Julio, 2019.**

**TÍTULO:** El papel de Alemania en la relación de Irán con la Unión Europea.

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**RESUMEN:** La Unión Europea es probablemente la única organización intergubernamental en el mundo, cuya relación es tan importante como la relación con sus estados miembros. Las relaciones entre Alemania e Irán tienen una larga y fluctuante historia. El objetivo principal de este estudio es examinar el papel de Alemania en la relación entre Irán y la Unión Europea. El método científico de esta investigación es un método analítico descriptivo y la recopilación de datos se realiza utilizando recursos de revisión bibliográfica. Los hallazgos confirmaron la hipótesis de la investigación: Alemania, como un actor importante y estratégico en la Unión Europea, tiene un papel de interfaz entre Irán y la Unión Europea.

**PALABRAS CLAVES:** Alemania, Unión Europea, Teoría del Constructivismo.

**TITLE:** The role of Germany in Iran's relationship with the European Union.

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**ABSTRACT:** The European Union is probably the only intergovernmental organization in the world, whose relationship is as important as the relationship with its member states. This issue shows the role of a powerful and influential country in the union to strengthen the relationship between Iran and the European Union. Relations between Germany and Iran have long and fluctuating history. The main purpose of this study is to examine the role of Germany in the relationship between Iran and the European Union. The scientific method of this research is descriptive-analytical method and data collection is accomplished using library resources. The findings confirmed the research hypothesis: Germany, as an important and strategic actor in the European Union, has the interface role between Iran and the European Union.

**KEY WORDS:** Germany, European Union, Constructivism Theory.

**INTRODUCTION.**

The European Union is probably the only intergovernmental organization in the world, whose relationship is as important as the relationship with its member states. Hence, engagement with the EU has become one of the main foreign policy priorities of other countries, especially global and regional powers.

Transmission of technology has particular importance with regard to the industrial capacity of the European Union and the investment of its member countries, given their ability to participate in financial and credit affairs in the infrastructure and economic development programs of Iran. In addition, the union can play an important role in reducing international pressure on the Islamic

Republic of Iran, given the controversy and political hostility between Iran and the United States. According to the attitude of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the European Union can play a facilitating role in providing national interests:

1. In its foreign relations, the Islamic Republic of Iran views the European Union as a balancing actor of US pressure. The unipolar system and the view to the European Union as a set that can play a more flexible role in the foreign policy of Tehran was a common approach in recent years. In this context, the basic need for Europe has been based on a axis that it can be used to moderate the radical approach of Washington.
2. Iran's political leaders tried to compensate the effects of US economic sanctions by maintaining relations with the European Union in various respects and in this way, they even benefit from the EU's support for membership in the World Trade Organization and the impact of its votes on collective decisions on interest topics in international organizations.
3. The European Union is the most important and powerful political and economic union of the world, whose economic, political and military capabilities can compensate the international weaknesses of the Islamic Republic of Iran.
4. The European Union can contribute to the economic development and expansion of trade through investment in Iran. Investments in the oil and gas industry, despite the sanctions imposed by the United States, confirm this issue.
5. European countries are technologically desirable. Russia and China, which the Islamic Republic of Iran has relied on them in recent years, lack the desirability of Iran's technology, while Iran needs modern technology and the EU can meet these needs.
6. EU member states can be influential in international forums and political and international affairs related to the Islamic Republic of Iran, especially the nuclear issue.

In addition, some of the strategic elements linked the two sides together. The current status of international and global developments since September 11 has created important and positive dimensions for bilateral relations and cooperation in various fields. The government of the Islamic Republic of Iran seeks to increase its relations with European countries in line with the strategic policy of eliminating tension and expanding international cooperation.

Iran and the European Union are both economically and politically in a position that can establish a solid and close partnership and relationships. However, in spite of the desire of the European Union and the Islamic Republic of Iran to strengthen and expand the relations between the two sides, there has been a fragmentation in this regard. Fragmentation means that the actors do not have a high degree of convergence. On the other hand, due to the existing tendencies and benefits, they are not in a divergent situation, so they are in a state of fragmentation, that is, a state between convergence and divergence.

If the fact is accepted that the ignoring the current union with 28 members and a population of more than 500 million people to establish relations with European governments in order to attract investment and technologies needed and in general to develop economic, commercial and financial relations is impossible, then this question arises that consolidate bilateral relations with which key powers should be prioritized in the foreign policy agenda of Islamic Republic of Iran to improve relations with the European Union, manage disputes with this union and maximize the political, economic and commercial capacities of the regional organization.

So according to this situation and the mutual needs of Iran and European Union, the support of a powerful country, which has a well position in the European Union can facilitate these interactions. One of these countries, which has a good interaction with our country, is Germany.

The relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Germany and its expansion in political and economic dimensions are one of the most important foreign policy priorities of our country in relation to the European Union. Despite long history and some fluctuations in the past two decades, these relationships have been relatively stable, so that it can be said this country has a balanced approach to Iran compared to other countries in Europe.

In spite of some disputes between Iran and Germany on regional issues, common ties have provided a suitable basis for regional cooperation between the two countries. The emphasis of senior German government officials on Iran's key role in addressing regional crises reflects their realistic view about regional variations.

In any case, Iran and Germany can have a much closer relationship as two reliable partners in various political and economic fields, which its results gain many benefits for many people of both countries, so that one of these benefits is improving and consolidating Iran's relationship with the European Union.

Based on the historical ties that exist between Iran and Germany, this question arises that whether Iran could use this capacity to develop relations with European governments and reduce disputes between the two sides.

Therefore, the present study seeks to answer the following main question: What is the role of Germany in the European Union in the relationship between Iran and the European Union?

The reason for the article is that, given the strategic position of Iran in German history and foreign policy, this country was the main driver of the development of the European Union's relations with Iran to the extent that Germany has been able to change its policy towards Iran in the context of the "change through the engagement" to a European discourse.

The research method used in this article is descriptive-analytic. This means that we are trying to analyze the role of the German government as an independent variable on Iran's relationship with the European Union as a dependent variable. The theoretical framework chosen to establish the relations between these variables is constructivism theory.

### **The position of Iran in foreign policy of European Union.**

Because of Iran's influence in the Middle East, Central Asia and the Persian Gulf states, Iran has always been the subject of great powers such as the European Union. The effort to resolve regional crises and create stability and security have created conditions for Iran to always be known as a potential partner for the European Union. On the other hand, European Union can benefit from stable relationships with Iran and consequently create better interaction with the countries of the Middle East and provide a better position to compete with other global powers to achieve its goals. Iran's enjoyment of rich resources of energy and European efforts to diversify its energy partners and reduce its dependence on Russia are also other factors of Iran's importance in EU foreign and security policy. Of course, Iran's vast market for exporting European goods is another factor in the importance of the status of Iran.

### **Iran's relationship with the European Union.**

Since the start of the Islamic Revolution, both Iran and the European Union have been willing to have friendly relations. On the one hand, the Islamic Republic of Iran wants to use the influence of the European Union in the international system to attract foreign investment of the European Union, use new technologies and knowledge of the European Union, take advantage of the political power of Europe against the United States, and reduce the American political and economic pressures specially in nuclear case. On the other hand, the EU is also pursuing objectives such as the development of economic and energy relations in the Middle East, investing in Iran, increasing influence in the

Middle East, influencing the Middle East peace process using political influence of the Islamic Republic of Iran, countering the phenomenon of terrorism, preventing the development of massacre weapons, creation of a multilateral system in the Middle East and the international system, and at the same time to expand its political relationship with Tehran as an influential international power along with the United States.

In spite of these desires and numerous fields to expand the relations between Iran and Europe, the level of post-revolutionary relations has always been tumultuous and turbulent. Various reasons can be noted for these tensions. On the one hand, Europe was worried about Iran's attempts to export the revolution to Arab reactionary countries, which if it was successful, it could overthrow their political system. They also complained about Iran's opposition to Israel and the Arab reconciliation process with the Jewish state. In addition, they considered Iran's support for Islamic groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah contrary to their own interests. In addition to these cases, they were worried about Iran's nuclear and missile program. In contrast, the Iranian government was worried about the EU's support for the United States and Israel against Iran. In addition, the Iranian government has always complained that the member states of the Union have provided for their opponents of the Iranian government, such as the PMOI, a mummy in their territory, calling for the overthrow of the Islamic Republic system. The Islamic Republic is also worried about the EU's support for the United States in relation to the nuclear program and the participation of the union in Iran's sanctions.

Given the relative stability of the European Union's foreign policy toward Iran, we are witnessing fluctuations in the relations between Iran and the European Union due to changes in the foreign policy discourse of governments that have come to power in Iran. Whenever governments in Iran have taken a more moderate and realistic foreign policy, tensions in relations have fallen, and when they have adopted more idealistic positions, relations have been reduced.

**Barriers to develop the relations between the European Union and Iran.**

In recent years, some elements such as terrorism, human rights, the Arab-Israeli conflict, the United States and Iran's nuclear program have prevented the expansion of relations between Iran and the European Union. The experience of three decades of relations between Europe and Iran after the Islamic Revolution shows that European countries are not prepared to endanger their broad relations with the United States in order to maintain their relations with Iran.

In spite of the disagreement between the European and US countries about how to deal with the Iranian nuclear issue in its early stages, over time, there has been a complete convergence of positions between the two sides on dealing with Iran. According to the failure of European governments to manage Iran's nuclear issue and the failure to advance their strategy, these countries have sought to repair transatlantic gaps by approaching the United States and adopting strong positions against Iran. The difference in the type of withdrawal from terrorism is another factor in the divergence between Iran and European countries.

Although Iran supports groups such as Hezbollah and Hamas and recognize them as liberation groups, but these groups are on the list of terrorist groups in the European Union. This also raised the gap between two side's attitudes on the Arab-Israeli conflict. After the Islamic Revolution, the issue of human rights has been one of the most important challenges in the relations between Iran and the European Union. Although this issue has been somewhat affected by the nuclear issue in recent years. Indeed, the differences between the two sides in the area of human rights originate from the fact that the European Union defines itself as a normative and civic authority in the international system, and considers itself to be the protector of human rights on the basis of the philosophical principles of liberalism.



**Iran in the politics of Germany.**

Before analyzing how Germany is influencing EU foreign policy towards Iran, it is necessary to analyze the attitude and policy of Germany in relation to Iran.

The historical study of the relations between Germany and Iran since the unification of that country and the formation of the First Reich Empire in 1871 indicates that in the Middle East, no country as significant as of Iran has been considered by Germany, to the extent that many analysts refer to these relationships as "historical relations" or "special relations".

Germany is the only western country that, after the revolution, maintained its good relations with Iran at short intervals, with the difference that after the revolution, the two countries tried to strengthen the political level of their relations. However, this question arises that what is the reason of this particular view of Germany to Iran compared to other Middle Eastern countries and why, at least for the last three decades, in spite of the continued pressures of the United States and the Jewish lobby, Berlin has tried to establish its relations With Tehran, so that during these periods the relationship has been diminished, but has not disappeared.

In studying Germany's foreign policy behavior since the unity and independence of that country in 1871, it can be seen that whenever Germany sought to pursue a global policy, Iran was at the center of Middle East policy of that country. The initial and main reason for this issue was the situation of Iran. Because of its geographic location, Iran can meet both the geopolitical and economic needs of Germany.

The traditional tendency of Iran to the third force to reduce the influence of Russia and Britain, which was considered by Nasser-al-Din Shah towards Germany, not only paved the way for the movement of the German industry to enter Iran's economic realm, but also led to Germanys influence in the context of Iranian policy.

The study of the history of the relations between Iran and Germany by Bradford J. M. clearly shows how Germans were repeatedly aware of Iranians desire and tendency for German government to play the role in the field of Iran's economy and politics in order to create a counterbalance to the colonial politics of Russia and Britain.

Germany was the founder of industry in Iran in the 1920s. At that time, Reza Shah was able to establish the National Bank of Iran by inviting 70 German officials. He considered the policy to bring all machinery, mining, cement, paper, and chemical industries from Germany into the Iran. This process continued so that in the early 1940s, 43% of Iran's total imports from Germany and 47% of Iran's total exports were made to that country. However, it should be noted that the tendency toward the third force was not the only reason for Iran's move toward the German economy and industry, but also cultural factors affected on this issue. Traditionally, the goods made by Germany were so popular among the Iranian people and have been considered as a priority respect to other European countries. The result of this historical trend in the development of economic relations is that, before the expansion of Western banking and general banking sanctions against Iran, over the past two three years, two thirds of industrial companies and three quarters of the small and middle enterprises of Iran used the equipment manufactured by Germany.

Now, despite the passing of about a century and a half of the formation of the German Reich Empire, the geopolitical situation of Iran and its proximity to the Persian Gulf, Asia Minor, and the vast Eurasia region have made Iran an ideal choice for global politics and ambitions of Germany. One important example in this regard is the speech by German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel on May 8, 1996 at the Annual Jewish Congress in Washington in the presence of US security and political officials: The German Federal Republic has determined its foreign policy towards Iran. In this regard, in order to realize the German policies and role in the Persian Gulf, the Middle East, Central Asia and

the Caucasus, the Mediterranean Sea and North Africa, there is need for good and traditional relations with Islamic Republic of Iran.

Perthes, an analyst on Middle East and Iran, says, "Contrary to the notion and expectation of all, the economy and the economic aspect of the national interest of Germany is not the main force in the policy of Germany in the Middle East. Although Germany directs a export economy like China, but German trade with the Middle East and North Africa only constitutes 3 percent of the foreign trade of the country.

This does not mean Germany's economic disregard to the Middle East, but it means the geopolitical and security attitude of Germany to this region. If, in the past and during the first Wilhelm period, Germany sought to achieve its geopolitical desire by constructing the Berlin-Baghdad-Tehran railway and by creating a Hamburg shipping line in the Persian Gulf and Port-Lengeh, but now this country was struggling to use Iran's role to contribute more to the crises in Iraq and Afghanistan and to the Middle East conflict. That is why Germany, unlike other Western governments, supports the idea of creating a collective security system in the Gulf, with the presence of all the countries in the region, including the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The special ties between Germany and Iran can be seen in all three periods of German global politics, the first Wilhelm period from 1891 to 1916, the Nazi government from 1933 to 1945, and the united Germany from 1991 to date. Interestingly, this geopolitical view of Germany over the course of these three periods has always been consistent with economic attitude of this country toward Iran. This economic attitude of Germany to Iran improved to the point where it promoted Germany's position in the economy of Iran from the fourth rank in 1933 to the first rank in 1957. In fact, from 1957 onwards (with the exception of the last two or three years), Germany remains the first significant partner of Iran in the world. The study of the relations between Iran and Germany illustrates the three important roles of Germany in Iranian history:

1. Germany as the most important country to transfer technology to Iran.
2. Germany as the most important mediator of Iran-Western relations (of course in the life period of the Islamic Republic of Iran).

Along with these special historical ties and the historical interest of Iranians in the presence of Germany in the context of Middle Eastern politics, another factor contributing to the creation of these historic or special ties, as mentioned earlier, is the economy. Among the 27 members of the European Union, Germany has the most advanced economic relations with Iran; as for Germany, Iran is an attractive economic market.

After Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, Iran is the third largest trading partner of the Germany in the Middle East, and if Iran did not encounter with political sanctions, it would become the most important economic partner of Germany. Germany supplies 35% of Iran's imports from Europe. After Germany, Italy with 19% and France with 16% have the second and third ranks. Germany is also the country that has made the most investment in the Iran among European countries, and about half of the European countries investment belongs to Germany. In the form of multinational corporations, this country has also invested in Iran, which can also show its contribution to foreign investment improvement in Iran. The sectors that Germany has more invested include the production of factory machinery, automotive and automotive parts, petrochemicals, the chemical industry, the production of electrical products and construction materials.

Germany is also the most important provider of machinery, equipment and technology for Iran. According to Michael Toucus, former chairman of the Iran-Germany Chamber of Commerce in Tehran, about two-thirds of the Iranian industry relies on German engineering products, which reflects Iran's dependence on spare parts and German suppliers. Now that it has been referred to the Chamber of Commerce of Iran and Germany, it should be said that the purpose of forming this room in 1354 was to strengthen the trade links between the two countries and develop cooperative activities

and active participation in the preservation and development of relations between Iran and Germany. Considering Germany's importance for economic relations with Iran, this room is the second international network of foreign German chambers of commerce. With support from this room, more than 1,700 German companies, including two economic giants companies, Siemens and BASF, are active in Iran. In contrast, the German effort to diversify the sources of oil and gas supplies has led to a special attitude towards Iran. This issue has made Iran as the focus point for German oil and gas companies to invest in its gas sector. From the point of view of German energy companies, investing in the Nabucco gas pipeline project (this pipeline exports Central Asian gas from Central Asia to European markets) is economic when Iran joins to this project as one of the gas suppliers.

After the special geo-economic advantage that Iran provides for Germany, it seems that cultural factors have also contributed to establishing special ties between the two countries. Based on the attitudes of some experts, among the Asian nations, Iranians are the closest nation to the Germans because both countries share the same language and descent.

The history of the issue of the origin and historic source between the two German and Aryan people originates from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Contrary to what has been evident in colonial powers such as France and Britain, in Germany public attention to linguistics and the Iranian jurisprudence is fundamentally not due to economic incentives and the desire for direct and immediate domination, but also the political motive for paying attention to Iranian issues has mentally basis. Investigating the Iranian jurisprudence was sometimes considered as a part of the search for the Aryan origins of the Germans.

The aforementioned factors have created historic and special ties between the two countries so that even the constraints on the structure of the international system, such as the US and British pressure, or the moral responsibility of Germany towards Israel and the Jewish lobby, have not been able to

interrupt the relationships with Iran for a longtime. However, the obstacles have limited the scope of these relationships.

### **Germany's role in EU policy towards Iran.**

The German government, from 1982 (three years after the formation of the revolution and the commencement of the exchange of diplomatic missions each other), became weaker, and after the 1991 unification struggle, worked more coherently to define the European discourse about Islamic Republic of Iran. Indeed, In fact, Germany nor only could prevent Europe from the policy of containment and isolation of the United States against Iran by adopting a policy of "change through engagement" towards Iran and turning it into a European discourse, but for three decades, Europe became the most important trading partner of Iran (Albeit since 2009, with the intensification of Security Council resolutions, it gradually shifted its position to China).

The geopolitical appeal of Iran along with Iran's willingness to play a proactive role in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf and the pressure of German economic groups to develop trade relations with Iran are all convergence forces that encourage Germany to play a leading role in foreign policy of European governments towards Iran. This role can be examined in two distinct periods during the thirty-five-year life of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The first period includes the beginning of the revolution to the end of the 8-year Iran-Iraq war, and the second period incorporates the Hashemi Rafsanjani's power as president of Iran until now. In the first period, for some reason, Germany's influence on the politics of European states respect to Iran was quite limited. Firstly, there was no European common foreign policy in that period, and the European community did not have enough independent situation because of the ideological competition between the United States and the Soviet Union.

The most important barrier to this independence was the threat of communism and European security dependence on the United States. However, in the 1980s, Germany has always tried to prevent the confrontation between Iran and the West. Thus, the most important role that can be imagined in this period for Germany is the mediating role. It should also be noted that Hans Dietrich Gonscher is the first European foreign minister to enter Iran in 1984 with the aim of improving and developing relations between Iran and Europe. As West German Foreign Minister, he clearly announced his readiness to negotiate with Iran in order to prevent the complete isolation of this country from the West. One of the most important examples is the role of the German in announcing Iraq as striker in its 8-year war with Iran. This action directed other European governments to adopt such position. Gonscher, even supporting the United Nations Secretary-General's report, confirmed that Saddam should pay compensation for Iran because of rape. Before that, Germany has repeatedly mediated the parties involved in the war. According to German analysts, Germany's diplomatic efforts have contributed to Iran's adoption of the UN cease-fire announcement.

Germany's special look at Iran during the 8-year war was such that, unlike all European countries in the European Union, Germany retained its ambassador to Tehran. The only misconduct and mismanagement of Germany over the course of the 8-year war was the state's appeasement and silence against the actions of German companies to equip Iraq with weapons of mass destruction and the sale of chemicals to the country to produce chemical bombs and to train the Iraqi army in use these weapons.

However, supporting Iraq in its war against Iran was a general trend among Western governments. Of course, Germany's support for Iraq was far less than other European nations, especially Britain and France. The reason for this should also be found in the declaration of neutrality by Western Germany in this war. This action could gain the relative trust of the officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran towards the Germany. Indeed, it was because of the relative trust that other European nations

expected Germany to engage in negotiations with Iran to abolish Imam Khomeini's fatwa against Salman Rushdie. As Salman Rushdie stated, during a meeting from Germany in December 1993 that "The key to cancel my death is in the hands of the Federal Republic of Germany.

However, the effect of Germany on the foreign policy of European states towards Iran originates to the post-Soviet era. In this period, the threat of communism as the most important threat of Western countries was eliminated, and Germany once again after half a century witnessed a unifying experience between its two eastern and western parts. By returning the natural geography of Germany and formation of 80 million population, German fear became evident once again in Europe. Germany considered itself as a winner of the Cold war, so that its lost geography was recovered, and it could prove to United States and other Western allies that the policy to look the east was the key to unity of Germany and the immediate end of the Cold War. In addition to the policy of looking at the East, another German experience was that it was not possible to change the political behavior of governments using a sanction policy. Indeed, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, together with the unifying factor, provided a platform for the formation of a new global policy of Germany. The first major aspect of this policy was the presentation of a different image of Germany's foreign policy and its gradual independence from the United States in decision-making in international level. The motive that led to the formation of a common European foreign policy (CFSP), due to its commonalities with the French's attitude to international politics.

In fact, we must measure Iran-Germany relations and the European Union in such an international space. At this time, Iran became an area for proving the independence of Germany's foreign policy and the European Union and the autonomy of the European states from the United States on international issues. The first sign of this gap was the lack of agreement of Germany on America's position on Iran within the framework of the "containment" policy. While the United States has always emphasized on the international isolation of Iran through international sanctions, after the cold



war and in the context of double restraint policy, Germany not only developed the theory of "change through engagement," but also used the "non-exclusion" theory about Iran.

Germany turned this attitude into European discourse within the framework of a common European foreign policy. For this reason, most analysts called Germany the architect of the diplomatic and cooperative contacts between the European Union and Iran within the framework of the "Critical Dialogue" (1997-1992), "comprehensive Dialogue" (1998-1993) and "conditional engagement" (2003) so far.

The first talks between Iran and the European Union were held in the form of critical talks by the initiative of German Foreign Minister Klaus Cinkel. From the beginning of the talks, the United States and Israel intensified their diplomatic pressure on Germany to declare the futility of those negotiations. In an important case, one can point out to an incident in the Germany and Israeli dispute over Iran.

According to Iran's Ambassador to Germany, Seyyed Hossein Mousavian, in March 1995, a telephone conversation between Helmut Kohl, German Chancellor and Israeli Prime Minister Isaac Rubin, on the relationship between Iran and Germany was intensified so that the Israeli Prime Minister interrupted the phone without saying goodbye. In response, Kohl also immediately informs the Israeli authorities that his future visit to Tel Aviv will be canceled. It is clear that the anger of Israel is not only because of the relations between Iran and Germany, but also because of the impact that these relations have on the direction of the policy of other European nations towards Iran.

The German initiative to direct European foreign policy toward Iran has not limited to launch diplomatic negotiations and critical and inclusive discussions, but it played a central role to determine the headings and axes of these dialogues, such as cooperation on Middle East peace, Terrorism and human rights. Even in Mykonos's case and Berlin's verdict against the authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran, when the German government, despite its willingness and solely because of US and

Israeli diplomatic pressure, was forced to call its ambassador, other members of the European Union expressed the same reasons for calling their ambassador from Iran. This interruption has not lasted too long and resumed a year later with the start of the Khatami presidency in Iran.

Given the Germans' happiness because of unity in the early 1990s, it was clear that Berlin was planning to assume Iran as a Middle East Partner and on the other hand, according to Volker Peretz, head of the German Institute for International Affairs and Security (SWP), include Iran as a problematic partner. As an example, Germany, by extending its \$ 2.40 request for Iran, due to the demand of the Hashemi Rafsanjani government, played supportive role for the private sector of its country to extend the \$ 4 billion repayment period and other European governments to comply with the request of Iran's government. Among other German protectionist policies against Iran, which led to the adherence of other European governments, was including the MKO in the list of terrorist organizations in the country, which led the European Union to do the same action.

Germany not only led the European Union to expand its institutional relationship with Iran but also it tried to improve its trade relations with Iran, despite the pressure and sanctions of the United States of America, in particular the DAMATO law, as well as the Iran-Libya sanctions (ILSA) and opened the way for other European countries to abandon sanctions, as this trend is noticeable in the tendency of French and Italian companies to invest in oil and gas industries of Iran. In this regard, it should be noted that German investments in Iran have supported the investment of other European countries. The member states of the European Union prefer Germany to take the first step in order to take action because they trust in the recognition of Germany from the status of the Islamic Republic of Iran. In addition, Germany's support for Iran's accession to the World Trade Organization has led the European Union to take a positive role on this issue. During his trip to Tehran in January 2001, the Minister of Finance of Germany, Hans Achilles, announced that his country attempt to join Iran in this organization. However, it should also be noted that the official position of the European

Commission in this regard was to agree with Iran's observer membership in the World Trade Organization.

Of course, it should not be claimed that Germany has merely opposed to US's international sanctions on Iran. In this regard, Germany's behavior shows a range of submission and resistance. The first sign of this surrender was the refusal by Germany to complete the Bushehr power plant in 1992. In later instances, Hermes insurance, as one of the largest insurance companies in the Europe, reduced its bank guarantees to export goods from \$ 3.3 billion in 2004 to \$ 1.2 billion in 2005. Interestingly, a 70% reduction in these insurances not only did not reduce the export of goods to Iran, but also increased sharply before the intensification of Security Council resolutions that were issued to stop Iran's nuclear activities. For example, exports of German companies to Iran reached \$ 5.7 billion in 2006, while before the Hermes decision, the amount of exports were \$ 5 billion in 2004.

The volume of trade between Iran and Germany, despite the sharp decline in Berlin's support from German businessmen in 2008, reached its highest level. So that the volume of German exports in the first quarter of 2008 grew by 63% over the same period in 2007. The reason for this must be sought in the historical trust of the German business community to its economic partners in Iran. The trust that has not prevented even with the withdrawal of Hermes insurance to issuance bank guarantees.

When the Iranian nuclear issue was transferred from the IAEA to UN Security Council and this council issue four resolution under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter against Iran in 4 years, not only the pressures were intensified on the Germany to decline its trading exchange to Iran by United States, Britain and Israel, but also German companies were threatened by the US government. Hence, Germany pursued a bi-directional policy against these pressures. On the one hand, officials of Germany expressed their deep concern about Iran's nuclear activities and threatened the country with further pressure, and on the other hand, they actually allowed the German companies for economic engagement with Iran. Despite the fact that due to increased internationally sanctions,

Germany's exports to Iran dropped 19 percent in 2011, but the Germany was still the first European partner of Iran, so that Germany sold the goods with advanced technology with the value of 2.84 billion euros in the eight-month period from January to September 2011. The rate that was usually 30% of all European exports to Iran. However, it should be noted that Iran had a negligible share in German export economy with 0.5% of its exports and is forty-third partner of Germany.

However, the fact is that the accumulation of undercover pressures by the United States and the Israeli lobby along with the crisis in Tehran-London relations caused by the attack of a number of students on the British embassy in December 2011 totally broke the resistance of Germany to the regime of massive EU sanctions against Iran. The European Union, under pressure from Britain, imposed sanctions on the oil and gas industry, the monetary and banking system and Iran's insurance since July 2012. As a result, the comprehensive talks between Iran and Europe during the presidency of Khatami turned into sweeping sanctions during the presidency of Ahmadinejad, the sanctions that have been unprecedented in the history of Iran-EU relations due to their wide-ranging nature and severity.

While these sanctions effectively stop Tehran-Berlin trade relations due to the sanctions on Iran's banking and insurance policies, the two countries have tried to stop sanctions through a third party that is the United Arab Emirates. In this regard, it should be noted to the German-UAE Chamber of Commerce and Industry in 2008. According to reports from the meeting in Dubai, one of the reasons behind the formation of this room is how to trade with Iran in light of the international sanctions imposed by the United States. The significance of this is that almost 80% of all imports of the UAE are re-exported, of which one-quarter of that is imported from the Dubai to Iranian market. There are no new information about Germany's exports to the UAE, but according to statistics released in 2008, while Germany's exports to Iran grew by 9.9% in 2008, this growth rate for German exports to the UAE in the same year increased 48 percent and reached to 16.8 billion euros.

The fact is that when the American authorities enter into negotiations with the European governments to exert pressure and sanctions on Iran, they initially negotiated with Germany. They know that if Germany is willing to accompany, other countries, such as Italy, Sweden and Finland, will cease to resist. Experience of comprehensive sanctions in 2012 indicated that Germany accompany sanctions when it seed the isolation among its west alliance. The attack of some Iranian extremist students at the British Embassy in Tehran has played a decisive role in the legitimacy of British occupation in provoking and exerting pressure on EU members to impose sanctions on Iran. In fact, the great pressure from the United States and Britain and the relative parallelism of other members of the European Union was a factor that required Germany to enact comprehensive sanctions against Iran.

## **CONCLUSIONS.**

Iran is the only country with a strategic value for Germany in the Middle East, and this strategic value has created a “special relationship” between two countries. Even during the critical period of Iran-Western relations, the hostage crisis and then the Iran-Iraq war, Germany was the only western country that tried to maintain its relations with Iran.

With the concern that the breakdown of relations between Iran and the West might break its ties with Iran due to the requirement of its allies, Germany tried to act as a mediator in the management of the relations between Europe and Iran in the 1980s.

The unification of Germany in the 1990s led Iran to play a decisive role in its new global politics; As Germany encouraged European countries to open a dialogue with Iran and created a new era in relations between Europe and Iran within the framework of critical and comprehensive discussions. In fact, Germany prioritized the development of political and economic relations with Iran and encouraged other members of the European Union to same process; so that, it even led to resistance and opposition to US transboundary sanctions and sustained opposition to the ongoing Jewish lobby. For this reason, Germany should be considered as the main architect of EU policy towards Iran.

However, over the last two to three years, the policy of attracting members of European Union to interact with Iran, through a consensus among Western countries to prevent Iran's nuclear activities and the restraint of German international power to prevent this consensus, has replaced with policy of accompanying the European Union to apply sanction against Iran. As a result, since July 2012, Germany has failed to pursue a policy of a double standard about Iran.

In short, Germany's foreign policy on Iran and its impact on EU foreign policy can be divided into three distinct periods. In the first period, which began from 1991 and continued until 2001, Germany tried to establish a policy of critical dialogue and comprehensive discussions and urged its European allies to expand their relations with Iran rather than to comply with the US opposition to Iran. In the second phase, which began after the events of September 11, 2001, and gradually with the rise of discussions about Iran's nuclear activities in 2003 until 2012, Germany has gradually abandoned the policy of political engagement conditionally with Iran, and has repeatedly requested Western allies systematically on political pressure on Iran to suspend these activities. In this period, although Germany could not prevent the referral of the Iranian nuclear case from the IAEA to the UN Security Council and the adoption of 4 resolutions by the Council against Iran but continued its economic and trade cooperation with this country. In the third period, which began in 2012 and has continued so far, Germany was ultimately unable to stop the EU's decision to impose comprehensive financial, banking and other sanctions against Iran under the pressures of its allies, especially the United States, Britain and isolation concerns.

However, with the victory of Hassan Rouhani in the recent presidential election in Iran and the emergence of some signs of recovery in Iran-Western relations according to the hope that the parties would use the opportunity to open the dialogues in the 5+1 nuclear talks, it is expected that Germany will be at the forefront of European governments to resume economic and political ties with Iran and exert pressure on its Western allies to reduce the burden of sanctions on the country.

In the analysis of relations between Iran and the European Union, using constructivism theory, it can be said, that since the specific interests of Europeans have been fixed in a particular identity, the European Union continues to emphasize its relationship with Iran over the primacy of identity rather than interests. The European Union insists that Iran's identity must comply with international norms and criteria. However, at the same time, the Union supports continuing talks with Iran to modify Iran's positions on various issues.

The result of the eleventh presidential election and the changing of the overall atmosphere in Iran and the provision of issues such as deconstruction, moderation, constructive engagement with the world, and the re-establishment of relations between Iran and foreign countries in foreign policy have created new ideas and were welcomed by European countries.

Considering the existence of various issues such as the development of economic and energy relations and the increase of investment in Iran, increased influence in the region, the impact on the Middle East peace process, using the influence of Iran, the fight against terrorism and fundamentalism, the prevention of the spread of weapons of mass destruction collectively, and the creation of multilateralism instead of American unilateralism in the Middle East and playing the role of an influential international power alongside the United States, especially in the nuclear issue of Iran, the European Union tries to expand its political relations with Tehran.

On the other hand, Iran tries to exploit the EU's economic influence in international economics and international trade and use its political and international power to resolve international crises, attract foreign investment in Europe based on the requirements in the country, use the new technologies and the modern knowledge of the members of the European Union on various issues, exploit its political and economic power against the United States and the weaken of Washington's political and economic pressures, especially in the nuclear issue. Accordingly, and given the view of most of the European countries in the new Iranian government as well as the discourse of moderation in Iran, the

European Union and Iran have made new interoperability actions. If Iran's nuclear issue ends in a final and comprehensive agreement, it can be anticipated that, in accordance with the constructivism theory, the relations between Iran and the European Union will improve.

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**RECIBIDO:** 1 de junio del 2019.

**APROBADO:** 10 de junio del 2019.