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## Explaining the Role of the Islamic Republic of Iran in China's global Approach

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### Extended Abstract

The growing global power of the People's Republic of China and its efforts for superiority in power-generating resources in the international arena have made it particularly important to explain the role of other countries in its global approach. In the meantime, the Islamic Republic of Iran, due to its regional position and influence, geopolitical and geoeconomic advantages, and its role in the power structure in the international system, is of great importance to the great powers in different eras and to China in the current state of the world system. Also, the development of growing relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and China as a result of the commonalities and structural requirements of the international system, the capabilities of various areas of cooperation, and emerging common areas has led to increased attention

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to the relations between these two countries in the international arena. The purpose of this article is to explain the role of the Islamic Republic of Iran in China's global approach and examines the role of the Islamic Republic of Iran in China's global approach and the strategies branching from it.

This study employs an experiential epistemology and an analytical-explanatory method, gathering credible evidence through empirical methods to elucidate the reality and relationships between variables. The research design began with an initial idea and evolved as the researcher's understanding of the subject deepened. Data were collected through library research. In this method, sources related to the research are studied and the necessary evidence is prepared in the form of the index card and analyzed using a Qualitative method.

Analysis of China's choices, political actions, and economic actions in the global arena indicate that the country has adopted a partnership-oriented approach to developing its global relations. Within the framework of the partnership-oriented approach, after the end of the Cold War, China has established a network of global and multidimensional partnerships that serves as a guiding framework for foreign policy and the center of its strategy for developing economic and political cooperation with other countries in the world. In the first step, it signed strategic partnership documents with various countries. In the second step, it sought to deepen partnerships with various countries in the world by creating foreign policy initiatives. In the third step, along with other dimensions of partnership-oriented cooperation, it promoted institutional cooperation to strengthen partnerships in the world.

China's global approach is indeed partnership, which is in contrast to the US's alliance approach. China's partnership approach includes; bilateral strategic partnership, partnership in the form of Chinese initiatives and institutions, and partnership in economic, political-security and specific Practical areas including energy, technology, digital and investment. China's political-security partnership approach in the region is in its early stages compared to economic partnership, and the status of its long-term security commitments to the countries in the region is unclear. In fact, Beijing, in continuation of its energy security and investment policy in the region, seeks to play a diplomatic and security role in West Asian affairs. In the cultural sphere, it is also trying to expand its

influence in the region with political and financial support and the establishment of cultural institutions.

China's partnership-oriented approach with West Asian governments is being pursued in the economic, political-security and cultural fields. The signing of strategic partnership documents with regional governments and the effective role in Chinese initiatives such as the Belt and Road Initiative, the Digital Silk Road, and the Global Development Initiative demonstrate the prominence of the West Asian region in China's partnership-oriented approach.

In this framework, Iran plays an important role. Strategies such as the "South-South Strategy", "Hedging Strategy" and Chinese initiatives such as the Belt and Road Initiative, the Health Silk Road, the Digital Silk Road, the Global Development Initiative and the Global Security Initiative are in line with China's partnership-oriented approach, in which Iran's role is prominent due to its geopolitical location, energy security and Iran and China similar views on international political and security issues. China promotes a multipolar world order through institutions and rules in which other civilizations and worldviews, such as Iran, have a special position. The Islamic Republic of Iran and China have similar views on global political and economic blocs to move from the rules of the liberal order to a new order.

For example, Iran has a special place alongside other major countries in the region in Beijing's balanced approach. In addition to developing China's relations with the Persian Gulf countries, cooperation with Iran is also on the agenda of the Chinese government, and Beijing has a balanced view of cooperation with Iran compared to other countries in the West Asian region.

Iran's geopolitical and strategic location in Central Asia, Europe, and Africa and direct access to international waterways have given it a special place in Chinese initiatives such as the Belt and Road Initiative, the "Digital Silk Road," the "Health Silk Road," the "Global Development Initiative," the "Global Security Initiative," and the "Global Civilization Initiative".

The structural requirements of the international system have forced China to adopt new partnership-based strategies such as; searching for a like-minded partner outside the liberal order, diversifying markets, industrial strategy and creating new investment axes in the world and creating a supply chain in-

dependent of the West to neutralize the US sanctions policy. In each of these strategies, the Islamic Republic of Iran has an important position for China. In order to escape the US containment policy, China has developed relations with like-minded governments, developed relations with governments outside the US alliance network, activated and expanded the development of regional organizations and groups.

Iran is one of the countries that can help China to implement the above strategy. China has tried to expand trade relations with other regions of the world and diversify global supply chains, in which countries of the global south, including Southeast Asia, Africa, Latin America, and West Asia, including Iran, play a decisive role. China is seeking to create a supply chain independent of the sphere of influence of the United States and its allies in the world. The investment policy on clean and renewable energy and electric vehicles is at the center of Beijing's policy. China needs a strategic partner in the sanctions sectors to escape US pressure. Given the similar conditions of Iran and China in this sector, the country needs a long-term strategic partner like Iran.

The US containment policy through new plans and alliances at the global level (QUAD and AQUOS) and the region (Abraham Pact aimed at normalizing relations between the regime-Zionist regime and Saudi Arabia) as well as the multidimensional interaction of the regional rivals of the Islamic Republic of Iran with China are among the obstacles to the development of cooperation between Tehran and Beijing.

Within the framework of China's partnership-oriented approach, the initiatives and strategies that China has developed in various fields to guide foreign policy in the world prescribe principles, foundations, and actions in China's foreign policy that both have potential capacities for cooperation with Iran. At the same time, China needs Iran's current role and position in the international system to better implement them. Iran has a special position in the aforementioned initiative and China's partnership-oriented policies in the economic and political sectors of China towards West Asia. By developing specific programs in various fields, Iran's role in China's grand strategies in the West Asia region can be improved.

**Key words:** Iran, China, partnership-oriented approach, potential capacities, strategic partnership.

**Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in conducting this research study.