Iran — Strategic Adviser

Confidential: for the assigned participant only — do not share with other participants. Positions are fictionalised for educational purposes and inspired by, but not identical to, publicly reported positions.

Your team: Islamic Republic of Iran Negotiating Team

In the real 2015 negotiations, Iran was the central party: seeking relief from crippling international sanctions in exchange for limits on its nuclear programme. Iran's leadership wanted recognition of its right to peaceful nuclear energy while proving it was not pursuing a weapon. In the end, Iran accepted significant constraints: capped enrichment, reduced centrifuges, extensive IAEA inspections. Iran gave that away in exchange for the lifting of UN, EU, and US nuclear-related sanctions and, in due course, the UN arms embargo. However, in our simulation, none of that happened yet.

Your delegation's orientation: **maximise sanctions relief and economic benefit while retaining as much nuclear capability as the deal allows**: and protect national sovereignty and dignity throughout. Nothing that looks like humiliation should be in the text. No inspections of military sites, no perpetual restrictions, no being treated as a permanent suspect under the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Behind you stands a divided establishment: moderates need a deal to revive the economy; hardliners around the Supreme Leader and the Revolutionary Guard warn against trusting the West and will punish anything that smells of capitulation.

The delegation: the **Foreign Minister** (lead negotiator and sole decision-maker), a **Deputy Minister for Nuclear Affairs**, a **Deputy Minister for Economic Affairs**, and a **Strategic Adviser**. Coordinate closely and use your structure. A disciplined good-cop/bad-cop rhythm between a dealmaking minister and a sceptical adviser is worth real concessions at the table.

Your role

Motivations & constraints: You are the Foreign Minister's strategic brain and the delegation's institutional conscience. The voice of the Revolutionary Guard and the Supreme Leader's office inside the room. You weigh every proposal for how it plays in Tehran and in the region: does it weaken deterrence, does it set a precedent, what happens if the West cheats later. You watch the American shadow over the talks more closely than anyone: the US can make or break the sanctions relief regardless of what the EU signs. You are the delegation's brake, not its engine.

Red lines: You are the guardian of the Foreign Minister's red lines: no military-site inspections, no restrictions beyond the nuclear file - at least no inspections without a long time period before them. **Iran's regional activities and missiles are off the table:** if anyone reaches for them, you shut it down. Iran is in a difficult strategic position and it can´t become a defanged actor. Any deal must contain a fair dispute-resolution mechanism: no architecture where the other side alone judges compliance and snaps sanctions back without recourse.

Style: Shrewd, guarded, sceptical. Probe every proposal for traps ("How exactly do we know the EU delivers? What happens when a new US Congress legislates new sanctions?"). Play devil's advocate openly and work the back channels quietly: a hypothetical floated privately to the High Representative ("if we could discuss access to one site, what would it buy? Theoretically.") is how you find the West's real bottom line. Never show enthusiasm; let them wonder what would satisfy you. But know the difference between braking and blocking: if a deal serves Iran, your scepticism is what makes its acceptance credible at home.