International Relations · GS - II

The Iran nuclear issue illustrates the limitations of diplomacy when strategic mistrust, security concerns and competing geopolitical interests shape international negotiations. Analyse the role of multilateral agreements and international institutions in managing nuclear proliferation and regional conflicts.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
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MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Nuclear non-proliferation, JCPOA, NPT, IAEA safeguards, UNSC Resolution 2231, strategic mistrust, sanctions, verification, multilateral diplomacy

Model Answer

Introduction

The Iran nuclear issue demonstrates the complexity of reconciling national security concerns with international non-proliferation objectives. The 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) sought to address these concerns through negotiated restrictions and international verification.

Role of Multilateral Diplomacy

1. **Negotiated limitations:** The JCPOA imposed restrictions on Iran's nuclear programme in exchange for sanctions relief, creating a negotiated framework for addressing proliferation concerns.

2. **International verification:** The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) provides technical monitoring and verification under applicable safeguards and agreed arrangements.

3. **United Nations framework:** UNSC Resolution 2231 endorsed the JCPOA and established arrangements for its implementation.

4. **Collective engagement:** Multilateral negotiations bring regional and global stakeholders into a common diplomatic framework, reducing dependence on unilateral measures.

Major Challenges

- Strategic mistrust weakens compliance and negotiations.
- Disagreement over sanctions relief and verification creates implementation difficulties.
- Regional rivalries connect nuclear negotiations with wider security concerns.
- Changes in domestic political leadership can undermine diplomatic continuity.

Way Forward

Sustained negotiations, credible verification, reciprocal commitments and regional confidence-building measures are necessary. International institutions must facilitate dialogue while ensuring compliance with non-proliferation obligations.

Conclusion

Multilateral diplomacy cannot eliminate geopolitical competition, but it provides mechanisms to manage it. The Iran nuclear issue highlights the importance of verification, mutual commitments and institutional continuity in maintaining international security.