

United States-Iran Shared Interest and the Stability of the Strait of Hormuz

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ABSTRACT

The Strait of Hormuz lies between the Persian Gulf and the Oman Gulf and is the only sea route connecting the Arabian Sea to the Indian Ocean. It is a trading route that strategically brings energy from the Middle East to many countries worldwide. Accordingly, the United States (US) and Iran have shared interests in the strait and play a central role in maintaining its stability. Unfortunately, since 1979, the US and Iran have been involved in a conflict. The tensions between the two peaked after the US left the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), which specifically discussed the Iran nuclear deal. As a result, the security of the Strait of Hormuz has been disrupted by various Iranian attacks on merchant ships and Iran's threats to close the strait. This study explains the impact of the US-Iran conflictual relations on the strait's stability. It uses the concepts of conflict of interest and maritime security with a qualitative research method and case studies based on primary and secondary data. This article concludes that although the US and Iran have common interests, their conflictual relations have disrupted maritime stability and affected the supply and world oil prices.

Keywords: United States, Iran, Shared Interest, Strait of Hormuz

Selat Hormuz yang terletak di antara Teluk Persia dan Teluk Oman merupakan satu-satunya jalur menuju Laut Arab dan Samudra Hindia. Selat ini bernilai strategis karena menjadi jalur perdagangan yang membawa energi dari kawasan Timur Tengah ke berbagai negara di seluruh dunia. Karena nilai strategis tersebut, Amerika Serikat (AS) dan Iran sama-sama berkepentingan terhadap selat Hormuz dan berusaha memainkan peran sentral dalam menjaga stabilitas keamanan selat tersebut. Sayangnya, sejak tahun 1979, AS-Iran berkonflik dan ketegangan di antara keduanya memuncak paska AS keluar dari Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) yang membahas khusus kesepakatan nuklir Iran. Akibatnya, keamanan Selat Hormuz terganggu dengan berbagai serangan Iran terhadap kapal dagang milik negara-negara pengguna Selat Hormuz dan ancaman Iran untuk menutup Selat Hormuz. Oleh karenanya, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan dampak konflik AS-Iran terhadap stabilitas dan keamanan Selat Hormuz. Penelitian ini menggunakan konsep benturan kepentingan dan keamanan maritim dengan metode penelitian kualitatif berupa studi kasus berbasis data primer dan sekunder. Dari data yang diperoleh, penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa walaupun AS dan Iran memiliki kepentingan yang sama, namun hubungan konfliktual di antara mereka telah mengakibatkan stabilitas keamanan maritim di kawasan terganggu dan mempengaruhi pasokan serta harga minyak dunia.

Kata-kata kunci: Amerika Serikat, Iran, Kepentingan Bersama, Selat Hormuz

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The tension between the United States (US) and Iran has yet to improve. It started with negative perceptions of the two after the Iranian Revolution in 1979. The US-Iran relationship continued to deteriorate during the Gulf War between Iraq and Iran throughout 1980 and the imposition of an embargo by the US on Iran during the Bill Clinton administration (Raharjo 2012). The worsening of US-Iran relations peaked after the US, under Donald Trump's administration, left the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) that deals with Iran's nuclear program. The US-Iran conflict flared up in mid-2019 when the US blamed Iran for attacking merchant ships and oil tankers around the Strait of Hormuz (Reed 2019). On the other hand, Iran was irate since the US included the Iran Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) in the list of international terrorist groups. The tension was further worsened by the killing of top General Qasem Soleimani of the IRGC in early 2020 (Congressional Research Service 2020).

Despite the conflict and different political views, the two countries have common interests in the Strait of Hormuz. The strait is the only access for the Middle East countries to develop their sea-based trading. Thus, the channel becomes essential for the economies of the Middle East region, especially for oil and gas exports, and for countries that depend on energy imports, mainly the US and its allies in the Asia Pacific (Slade 2019). Thus, the US, Iran, and other countries have common interests in ensuring the security and stability of the sea-based trading routes in the Strait of Hormuz. Regrettably, the US and Iran are both interested in dominating the leadership in the strait to ensure the security of the Strait of Hormuz and ships passing through the channel (Gilsinan 2019).

Collaboration and conflict may emerge from the US and Iran's shared interests. Both the US and Iran desire influential positions in the region due to their strategic interests in the Strait of Hormuz. However, if conflictual relations exaggerate their common interest, a crisis around the Strait of Hormuz most likely occurs. This crisis is latent to disasters as any conflict around the strait will cause an increased risk for tankers operating in these waters. If left unchecked, this conflict will also lead to a more severe security crisis on a larger scale.

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The importance of the Strait of Hormuz makes even a minor conflict can become a significant security threat in a short time (Slade 2019). Various reactions from the US and Iran – to show their dominance – have contributed to the crisis and the deteriorating security situation. Therefore, this article explains how the US-Iran conflict impacts the security and stability of the Strait of Hormuz. This article will be divided into several sections, including the concept of conflict of interest and maritime security, an explanation of the conflict of interest in the Strait of Hormuz, the US and Iran conflicts, and the impact of these conflicts on security and stability in the Strait of Hormuz.

Methods to Assess the Impact of the US-Iran Conflictual Relations on the Hormuz Strait's Stability

In this article, the authors use a qualitative research method with a case study approach to form a conclusion on this issue. With a case study approach, this research intensively focuses on one particular object that becomes the research case. Case study data can be obtained from all involved parties and collected from various primary and secondary sources. Furthermore, these research methods can produce descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior, which carefully describes the characteristics of a symptom or problem under study and reveal how it happened (Moleong 2007; Mudjiyanto 2018).

Researchers used primary data from interviews with Nostalgiawan Wahyudi, a researcher at the Center for Political Research, Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI), focusing on Islamic politics and the Middle East. The researchers also collected secondary data from various sources through a literature study related to the research topic. The researchers then validated the data and research results through triangulation before analyzing the data to make conclusions. Triangulation was done to compare the truth of any information obtained from different sources (Bachri 2010). Thus, the data's basis or truth and validity are very concerning. Therefore, the data obtained by researchers related to the US-Iran conflict and the security of the Strait of Hormuz were

validated from different sources based on primary and secondary data findings.

Interests, Conflict, and Security as the Basis of the US-Iran Relations

In this article, the authors used three correlated concepts to elucidate the US and Iran's relationship and the impacts on the Hormuz Strait security. These concepts include (1) conflict of interest to describe the interests of the US and Iran at the root of the problem, (2) conflictual relationship to explain the US and Iran relations, and (3) maritime security to analyze the impact of the US-Iran conflict on the security stability of the Strait of Hormuz.

In the international system, countries' interactions are based on the goals and desires to meet the national interest. Papp (1997) admits that it is not easy to formulate a definition of national interest since many factors can affect a country's national interest, including the leader of the country and their background – not to mention if we consider the state, not as a single actor in which many actors have various interests (Goldstein 2003). However, in simple terms, national interest can be understood as a crucial element that reflects the needs and goals of a country deliberating its internal conditions, including political, economic, military, and socio-cultural conditions, as well as the existing external environment (Dermawan 2019; Goldstein 2003; Roskin 1994; Morgenthau 1948).

For realism scholars in international relations study, states' most important national interest is pursuing power as that power will advantage them. These advantages include getting a better solution in the bargaining process on an issue in their favor (Goldstein 2003; Morgenthau 1948). The relation between power and interest is emphasized by Hans J. Morgenthau, as quoted by Mochtar Mas'oed (1990), who sees national interest as an effort to pursue power that can establish and maintain control of a country over other nations. Gaining power is essential since international relations are anarchic due to the absence of global sovereignty. As a result, countries choose to be self-centered and wary of others.

Authority and strength provide opportunities for the countries with the power to distribute their influence to retrieve what they demand (Baldwin 2016; Lawson 2015; Schieder & Spindler 2014; Robert & Sorensen 2013; Rochester 2010; Burchill et al. 2005, Goldstein 2003; Dougherty & Pfaltzgraff 1996)

Additionally, from the realism perspective, the state has a significant role in international relations through its ability to formulate and enact foreign policies. Therefore, as long as international relations are still perceived as anarchic, the states' behavior in international relations is directed at keeping the elements of their power to guarantee their sovereignty among states and maintain the balance constellation of political power on a global level.

Similarly, Antunes and Camisao (2018) define the national interest as the state's interest based on its power. Power, as in authority, can be interpreted as economic, military, and cultural power. This condition can motivate countries to become great leaders, enabling them to pursue their national interests effectively. However, it can also lead to conflicts of interest and disputes between countries (Goldstein 2003). Although not all conflicts of interest will end in war and involve violence, the conflict of interest has led to physical violence in the US-Iran case. As described by Horowitz (1985) and Folarin (2013), in some cases, conflict can escalate into war. Competition between conflicting parties that aims to maintain status and values and to gain power will result in behavior that tends to be conflictual. As a result, opposing parties will attack each other to dominate. This is the nature of every country in the international system where there is no single authority because, in the view of realism, relations between countries will be conflictual and competitive (Dugis 2016).

Based on the elaboration above, it is assumed that the US and Iran have shared interests in the Strait of Hormuz but have a conflictual relationship. Iran has an interest in advancing its economy by relying on its oil. However, with the economic sanctions imposed by the US, Iran's interests have been disrupted. Meanwhile, the US is interested in spreading democratic values and domination of security in the Middle East region, as well as safety and access to oil from the area. However, the nuclear threat and the threat of closing the Strait of Hormuz from Iran could disrupt all US

interests in the Middle East. This conflict of interest brought the two countries into conflict, suppressing and attacking each other.

The interests of the US and Iran in the region cannot be separated from the strategic function of the Hormuz Strait. Geoffrey Till (2018) describes at least four primary functions of the sea that can provide benefits to the country in times of peace and war, namely (1) the sea as a resource, (2) the sea as a transportation and trade route, (3) the sea as a medium of information and dissemination of ideas, and (4) the sea as an attribute of power. As a resource, the sea is the gathering place for biological and energy resources. The sea is also the main link for transportation and trade activities. Meanwhile, as an attribute of power, the sea can be an instrument to fulfill a country's national interest.

Accordingly, countries are increasingly concerned about their maritime security from various threats. Maritime security is vital since threats and potential threats harm the safety of the sea itself and all its resources, the security of trade routes, human security, and environmental security (Bueger 2015). Furthermore, Bueger and Edmunds (2017) also state that the sea is a center for power projection and geopolitical strategy. Therefore, countries that fathom the strategic geopolitical function of the Strait of Hormuz will take the necessary actions to ensure security in this water so that their interests are achieved.

The Strategic Functions of the Strait of Hormuz

The Strait of Hormuz is one of the world's most essential and strategic transit points and trade routes. This strait is the only waterway connecting the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman to the open waters of the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean and a route for the world's oil trade. Iran controls the northern part of the strait, while Oman and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) supervise the southern part. According to the 2008 US Department of Energy report, daily oil flows in the Strait of Hormuz reached 16,5–17 million barrels daily. This figure represents 40% of all oil traded by sea or 21% worldwide. On average, an oil tanker sails through the strait every eight to ten minutes, with four million tonnes of oil

passing daily (Pham 2010).

Over the last two decades, oil consumption has drastically escalated due to economic growth, which spread, accompanying the increase of the middle class in mentioned countries. China's oil demand, for example, nearly tripled during this period. The United States (US) also imports about 1,4 million barrels per day through this route (Barden 2019). Saudi Arabia exports the most oil through the Strait of Hormuz, although it can divert the flow by using a 746-mile pipeline across the kingdom to a terminal on the Red Sea. The UAE can partially pass through the strait by shipping 1,5 million barrels per day via pipeline from its oil fields to the port of Fujairah on the Gulf of Oman. Kuwait, Qatar, and Bahrain have no choice but to ship their oil by water (Ratcliffe et al 2021).

However, the Strait of Hormuz has security problems that worry the countries using the strait. During the Iran-Iraq War in the 1980s, the two countries routinely threatened each other's oil shipments. In 1988, the US warship Vincennes shot down an Iranian passenger plane, killing 290 people. In 2010, a Japanese oil tanker was attacked by a group linked to Al-Qaeda (Al Jazeera 2019). Not to mention the tension between Iran and Arab countries, which both take advantage of the marine resources in the Strait of Hormuz but have problems regarding borders in the waters (Damayanti 2021). Such threats indeed disturb and threaten the ships of countries using the Strait of Hormuz, including the US, one of the largest oil consumers of the Middle East.

The US is very concerned about the importance of the Strait of Hormuz due to its function as the main transportation route for oil supplies from the Middle East to the US (Schnars 2010). Oil-related economic interests and ensuring the security of the strait are the US's top priorities in the Strait of Hormuz. To that end, the US needs to maintain its military presence in the Middle East region, such as the US Navy's Fifth Fleet in Bahrain, the US Air Force Central Command base in Qatar, and the US Army base in Kuwait (Wahyudi 2021).

In addition, to ensure the security of the Hormuz Strait and deal with terrorism, the US military presence in the Middle East tries to balance power in the region. The balancing act also aims to

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prevent hostile countries from controlling the region's natural resources, which can be used for extortion and manipulation (Al-Kaabi 2012). The US military bases are tasked with ensuring and maintaining the security of oil flow from the Middle East transported through the Strait of Hormuz (Al Jazeera 2019). By constructing these military bases, the US also protects merchant ships belonging to other countries that also transport oil through the Strait of Hormuz. Through all of its balancing measures, the US holds a crucial role in ensuring the security of the strait for itself and its partner countries' interests in the Middle East and Asia Pacific region.

On the other hand, Iran is interested in the Strait of Hormuz, mainly due to its economic activities, and this water supports Iran's leading income source. Although overland pipelines can transport natural resources from Middle Eastern countries to the rest of the world, the Strait of Hormuz is the primary means for exporting resources to various countries. In 2018, Iran's petroleum exports accounted for US\$ 60.2 billion in Iran's revenue, or more than 14 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In addition, Iran also relies heavily on the Strait of Hormuz for imports of its own non-oil consumer and industrial goods, including food and medicine (Goldenbrg et al. 2019).

However, in recent decades, Iran's oil and gas export activities have been threatened by the US, the European Union (EU), and the United Nations (UN). Iran is suspected of supporting terrorist acts and carrying out nuclear development, so the US, EU, and the United Nations imposed economic sanctions on Iran. The Trump administration has even lowered its Iranian oil sales target through economic sanctions with its maximum pressure strategy. As a result, Iran's average crude oil and condensate exports fell from 2,5 million BPD in 2017 to only 500.000 BPD in May 2019. The sanctions hit Iran's economy hard; it has been shrinking since 2011 (Saeed and Jahan-Parvar 2020).

In response, Iran used the Strait of Hormuz as its primary political means to pressure the US to lift its sanctions. Iran has always used the Strait of Hormuz as its mainstay weapon in bargaining if Western countries, especially the US, are deemed to have acted detrimentally to Iran's strategic interests. To realize these interests,

Iran also often attacks ships passing through the Strait of Hormuz so that the security of this strait is disturbed. By disrupting the strait, Iran demonstrates that it can suppress and retaliate against US actions by increasing crude oil prices. Any oil price increase would replace Iran's lost revenue due to economic sanctions (Ratcliffe et al. 2021).

In line with the Trump administration's steps to pressure Iran over the nuclear deal, Iran has also intensified military tensions with the US since mid-2019. Following a series of attacks on oil tankers in the Gulf of Oman, Iranian forces shot down a US drone they claimed was operating in Iranian airspace. Later, the US and Saudi Arabia accused Iran of being responsible for drone and cruise missile attacks on Saudi oil facilities (Congressional Research Service 2020).

The US-Iran Shared Interests and Conflictual Relations

The US and Iran had previously established harmonious collaboration and had become allies. Diplomatic relations between Iran and the US had existed since 1856, when the monarchy system of Shah Reza Pahlavi ruled Iran. US-Iranian relations grew closer when Mohammad Reza Shah succeeded his father in 1941, and this relationship lasted well until 1979 (Aldasam 2013). However, good relations and the US' involvement in Iran were viewed negatively by nationalist parties and Islamic clerics. This resistance culminated in the coup of the democratically elected Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddegh in 1953.

The coup d'état, carried out to strengthen Mohammad Reza Pahlavi's regime, became destructive momentum for US-Iran relations. The Iranian people rejected the implementation of political, economic, and military assistance that advanced the Iranian economy along with the colonialism of capitalism and materialism (Putri 2016). Prime Minister Mosaddeq was a senior statesman in Iranian politics with a long record of opposing the Pahlavi dynasty and foreign oil companies in Iran. Subsequently, the US turned from an ally of Iran to an enemy. This coup, at the same time, also awakened the Islamic clerics in Iran. Ayatollah

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Khomeini soon became a symbol of the Iranian people's 'resistance and hope' against the shah's oppression. It took more than two decades for Ayatollah Khomeini to muster enough support to revolutionize and erase the Shah of Iran in 1979 and the US's involvement (Hussain 2015).

The US-Iranian relationship deteriorated after the 1979 Iranian revolution led by Ayatollah Khomeini. Khomeini was a revolutionary leader who opposed the US-Iran relationship as he perceived that the US had been dominating the government and politics in Iran as if it was a part of the US. When Khomeini led Iran, there was an Iranian hostage crisis, where radical students stormed the US embassy and held US diplomatic personnel hostage for more than a year, or 444 days to be precise. The embassy seizure was for political purposes. However, the US response vehemently rejected Iran's request. In the following years, the Reagan administration even violated the Algiers Accord, signed by the US and Iran on January 19, 1981, to resolve the hostage crisis, and imposed economic sanctions on Iran in response to the US embassy (Congressional Research Service 2020).

The tensions between the US and Iran eased somewhat when President Obama invited Iran to sign the JCPOA nuclear deal. The agreement limits Iran's nuclear program, especially uranium enrichment, for 10 to 15 years. The Obama administration expanded diplomatic efforts in negotiating the JCPOA. He also invested significant political capital in countering congressional efforts to stop the deal (Barnes and Barron 2018). The sanctions imposed against Iran were suspended through the agreement as long as Iran fully complied with the provisions and contracts related to its nuclear program.

The conflict of interest escalated and heated up in President Donald Trump's era. The Trump administration's approach to Iran reflects renewed US efforts to curb Iran's hegemonic behavior in the Middle East region. From the Bill Clinton administration to Trump, the US has used various foreign policies to halt Iran's nuclear weapons ambitions, ranging from economic sanctions, international pressure, diplomatic solutions, and even military intervention. These are all options for curbing Iran's nuclear weapons program (Perwita and Razak 2020).

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In May 2018, Trump's administration officially withdrew from the JCPOA agreement and insisted that it did not address US concerns about Iran's behavior and would not permanently deter Iran from developing nuclear weapons. Trump said the deal was supposed to protect the US and its allies from Iran's nuclear program. However, Iran's nuclear threat still poses a dilemma for the US even though the JCPOA agreement already binds Iran. In his speech, Trump mentioned that the JCPOA agreement was an agreement that only benefits Iran and does not guarantee peace (CBSNews 2018).

The US withdrawal from the nuclear deal automatically went hand in hand with the reapplication of the US economic sanctions on Iran. The reimposed sanctions, and additional sanctions imposed later, are at the core of the Trump Administration's policy of using maximum pressure on Iran. Sanctions by the US were reimposed in November 2018 and expanded to block Iran's financial transactions in 2019 (Far 2019). The sanctions put Iran's economy even more at risk as they forced governments and companies from Europe to Asia to end their economic ties with Iran. Consequently, Iran's oil exports are badly impacted, and socio-political tensions occur domestically (Congressional Research Service 2020).

The Impact of the US-Iran Conflict

The escalation of tension in the Strait of Hormuz poses a security threat to Iran, the US, and countries in the region. The long-term increase in the US deployments of naval, missile defense, intelligence, and asset surveillance in the area prompted Iran to do the same to counter the US. The hope of a peaceful resolution to this crisis is far-fetched because neither side is willing to concede. However, for this crisis to be resolved in a non-violent manner, both parties must reach an agreement and mutual understanding (Slade 2019). If the escalation of tensions in the region continues, a miscalculated move by either side can create an open war that leads to an even greater catastrophe.

Tensions between the US and Iran in the Strait of Hormuz impact three things. The first is regional instability. Tensions in the Strait of Hormuz are not just between Iran and the US. Strait's

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user countries, both Middle Eastern countries and outside the region, are also experiencing tensions with Iran. The extension of the tension's impact happened due to Iran's activities which significantly increased the scope and rate of missile attacks directed at the oil infrastructure and other countries' ships sailing through the Strait of Hormuz (Goldenbrg al. 2019). Since the US reimposed economic sanctions targeting Iran's oil exports in 2018, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani stated that if Iranian oil cannot exit through the Strait of Hormuz, then oil from other countries must not go through the strait accordingly. The policy underlies several of Iran's attacks in the Strait of Hormuz. Iran carried out a series of attacks in the form of confiscation and detonation of tankers from other countries such as Britain, Saudi Arabia, Japan, Norway, and even South Korea to threaten these countries to lift their sanctions immediately (Gambrell 2019).

The response to the threats in the Strait of Hormuz from the strait's user countries was that they join the US-led maritime security operation known as the International Maritime Security Construct (IMSC). This maritime security operation was established on November 7, 2019, and mainly aimed to deter Iranian activities. This operation is sponsored by the United States and countries throughout the area to ensure the freedom of sea-based trading and shipping lane in the Strait (IMSC 2021). Iran perceives this US-led maritime security operation as a threat and diplomatic pressure against it. Moreover, Iran has also proposed a security cooperation called Hormuz Peace Endeavor (HOPE) with the United Nations so that Middle Eastern countries will also support and participate together with Iran. However, unfortunately, regional governments did not receive the proposal for Iran's security cooperation well, and they even decided to join the US in IMSC (Vaisi 2020).

Secondly, apart from disrupting regional security, the US-Iran tension on the Hormuz Strait also jeopardized global trade, especially if it is related to the needs of every country in the world for energy and oil flow from the strait. To counter the US, its sanctions, and its alliance, Iran has caused oil infrastructure damage, attacks and seizures of tankers passing through the Strait of Hormuz, and other incidents. The attacks in Saudi Arabia, Aramco's facilities in Abqaiq, and Khurais, for instance, have

disrupted the production capacity of 5,7 million barrels per day (BPD) and resulted in the company temporarily halting shipments through the Strait of Hormuz (Goldenbrg et al. 2019).

Thirdly, rising tensions between the US and Iran also led to a rise in crude oil prices. This case was proven when Iran shot the US drone, the day after the incident, the cost of crude oil rose sharply. Benchmark oil prices for West Texas Intermediate were up 6,8%, while international benchmark Brent crude was up 4,6%. Global benchmark Brent crude was \$65,08 on Tuesday, trading at \$65,44 a barrel on Thursday. In addition, the US benchmark West Texas Intermediate pegged the price at US\$ 58,80 per barrel, opening a new session at US\$ 59,11 per barrel with an increase of 0,5%. The same situation was seen when Iran threatened to close the Strait of Hormuz on April 22. Brent crude had increased by 2,88% and WTI by 2,66%, respectively. The two companies' oil prices were the highest in May 2019 (Sayin and Kilic 2020).

This price increase also occurred due to the diversion of navigation routes and diversification of oil needs by strait user countries. This diversion and diversification were carried out because countries that owned tankers crossing the strait faced inflated costs during periods of conflict. As a result, the war risk premium paid each time a ship enters the region jumped from \$30,000 in early 2019 to \$185,000 in June, while cargo rates more than doubled to \$26,000 per day and remained up through 2020. In addition, every country passing through the Straits for trading activities will also need to send warships to escort their respective tankers, which will cost more (Smith et al. 2020).

The increasing oil prices also came off due to a decrease in oil exported through the Strait of Hormuz in 2020. Based on statistical data, the decline in Iran's oil exports in 2016 and 2018 reached almost 21 million barrels per day, decreasing to 18 barrels per day in 2020 (Statista 2022). Although not drastic, the conflict has reduced the number of oil shipments through the Strait of Hormuz and contributed to the increase in global oil prices. If this is allowed, a recession and global economic crisis due to rising oil prices may be inevitable.

Conclusion

The relationship between the US and Iran, which was initially harmonious, has inverted completely since the Iranian Revolution in 1979. This political change in Iran has led to a conflict of interest between the two countries, characterized by conflictual relations. Since then, it resulted in pressuring each other to achieve their shared interests through the policies of each government, which eventually exaggerated the conflict. The conflict between the two reached a climax during the administration of President Donald Trump, when Trump pulled the US out of the nuclear agreement, reinstated economic sanctions against Iran, and even made it more severe.

The US-Iran conflict negatively impacts the strategic position of the Strait of Hormuz, which is one of the world's most crucial oil trade routes. After the US reimposed economic sanctions in 2018, Iran used the Strait of Hormuz to pressure the US and its regional allies to lift sanctions. Iran does this by seizing and blowing up oil tankers, carrying out drone attacks, and demonstrations of military might against the US and other countries using the strait. Iran's response has made the situation around the Strait of Hormuz even more unsafe.

To overcome this issue, countries interested in the security and stability of the Strait of Hormuz and the international community need to negotiate and create a code of conduct that regulates the behavior of countries in the region, especially the US and Iran. This code of conduct must be a firm guideline for all countries with shared interests in sea-based trade routes around the Strait of Hormuz so that the stability of the security of these waters is maintained and prevents a global economic crisis due to rising world oil prices.

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