

The European Union faced with the Iranian nuclear crisis

(2003-2017)

Astrid Viaud

This book explores the nuclear programme developed by the Islamic Republic of Iran and the role played by the European Union in dealing with the crisis this programme provokes. Thanks to the skilful intergovernmental coordination of its Member States' foreign policies, the Union took on the role of actor that the members wanted to see it play. Starting from an *ad hoc* initiative developed outside the Council of the European Union, Germany, France and the United Kingdom strengthened the Union on the international stage. These three countries, aware of the difficulties of reaching consensus within the Council, advanced the negotiating process and then bestowed it on the High Representative of the Union. The latter informed the institutions of the Union and contributed to building consensus among members. At the same time, the European Union offered a platform for cooperation that aimed to increase the political power of each State by taking advantage of the economic weight of the Union on the international stage. After six years of sanctions decided by the UN Security Council, to which Iran has adapted while nonetheless circumventing them, the adoption of strong autonomous sanctions demonstrates the determination of the European Union and brings Iran into compliance. The diplomatic action deployed by the EU3+1, followed by the E3+3 with regard to Iran's nuclear programme, was first an incentive and then more of a coercion, due to the strong common interest in preserving the international security order by upholding the regime established by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

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