A question for the international community is whether the prohibition on the use of force against Iran for its development of nuclear weapons has increased the risk of war. The danger inherent in Iran’s possession of nuclear weapons, although their use is not imminent, probably exceeds the risks associated with an imminent armed attack by a nation with only conventional weapons, which was the greatest threat when the international community adopted the UN Charter in 1945. A doctrine of nuclear preemption would authorize force based upon the danger that a nation presents rather than how soon it might attack. Such a doctrine would recognize that nations developing nuclear weapons and committing grave crimes, such as aggression, crimes against humanity, genocide, or war crimes, are more dangerous than a nation with conventional weapons planning an imminent attack.

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