

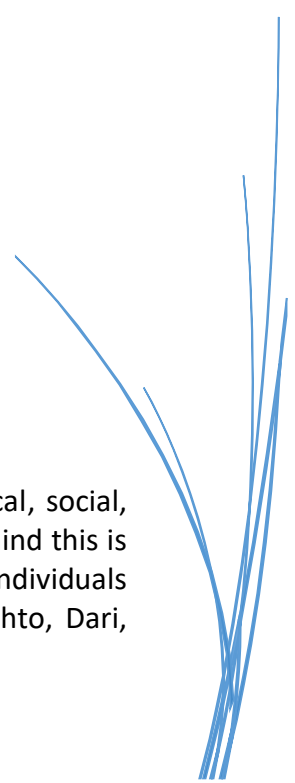
WEEKLY ANALYSIS

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A LOOK AT THE CONFLICT BETWEEN ISRAEL AND IRAN: OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES, AND ITS FUTURE



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A LOOK AT THE CONFLICT BETWEEN ISRAEL AND IRAN: OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES, AND ITS FUTURE

Introduction

After 46 years of hostility, proxy battles, and fiery rhetoric, tensions between Israel's Zionist regime and the Islamic Republic of Iran have finally escalated into direct military confrontation.

This conflict, which lasted 12 days, began when Israel launched a coordinated air assault under the codename "Rising Lion." The strikes simultaneously targeted Iranian nuclear scientists, senior commanders of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), key military infrastructure, and nuclear facilities. As a result, several nuclear scientists and some senior IRGC commanders were killed, and damage was inflicted on Iran's critical infrastructure and nuclear sites.

In response, Iran carried out retaliatory strikes under the name "Truthful Promise 3," deploying drones and missiles against Israeli territory.

After nine days of intense exchanges, the United States entered the conflict. Under the operation name "Midnight Hammer," U.S. forces deployed advanced B-2 bombers to drop fourteen massive bombs, each weighing thirteen tons, on Iran's Fordow and Natanz nuclear sites, which are deeply buried within mountains. Additionally, the U.S. launched multiple Tomahawk missiles at Iran's nuclear facility in Isfahan.

Iran retaliated against the U.S. strikes with "Glad Tidings of Victory," firing fourteen missiles at Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar, the largest U.S. military base in the region and the headquarters of U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM).

Ultimately, the conflict came to an end after 12 days, following a ceasefire proposal from the United States, which was accepted by both Iran and Israel.

Given these events, key questions emerge: What were Israel's and the United States' objectives in attacking Iran, to what extent were these goals achieved, and what possible scenarios lie ahead for this conflict?

WHY DID ISRAEL LAUNCH A MILITARY ATTACK ON IRAN?

After Iran's Islamic Revolution, the Islamic Republic refused not only to officially recognize the State of Israel but even to acknowledge its existence as a de facto reality. Instead, Iran consistently refers to Israel as the "Zionist occupying regime." This rejection runs so deep that, even in sports events, Iranian athletes refuse to compete against Israeli athletes.



Beyond this, Iran is the only country in the world openly calling for the destruction of Israel. Unlike other Muslim countries, Iran also rejects any plan to divide Palestine into two separate states for Israelis and Palestinians. Instead, Iran insists that the establishment of a Palestinian state should be decided through a referendum that includes all Muslims, Jews, and Christians native to the region, not recent immigrants.

To pursue this vision, the Islamic Republic has employed various tools against Israel. On one level, it provides support to Palestinian groups and movements. On another, it backs Hezbollah in Lebanon. It also supports the Assad government in Syria and other groups across the Middle East that oppose Israel. Moreover, Iran has established a special external operations unit within its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) known as the Quds Force. In fact, in Tehran's Palestine Square, a symbolic countdown clock has even been installed, marking the supposed time remaining until Israel's destruction.

Given Iran's intense hostility toward Israel, which threatens Israel's very existence, Israel has grown increasingly alarmed by Iran's progress in missile technology, and even more so by Iran's nuclear program. Although Iran insists its nuclear activities are for peaceful purposes, Israel fears that Iran's potential acquisition of nuclear weapons could bring Israel closer than ever to existential danger.

Therefore, Israel, often working alongside its Western allies, has spared no effort to counter Iran's ambitions and actions.

Israel, which has long operated under a constant sense of existential threat, found a new justification for military action after Hamas's "Al-Aqsa Flood" operation. This gave Israel the pretext to strike various groups backed by Iran, known collectively as the "Axis of Resistance," targeting them one after another. In this context, the potential fall of the Assad regime in Syria was also seen as beneficial for Israel's strategic interests.

After these regional dynamics shifted, U.S. President Donald Trump pursued negotiations with Iran, setting a two-month deadline. However, these negotiations were largely viewed as a tactic designed to mislead global public opinion and distract Iran. Behind the scenes, Trump's administration was preparing plans for a direct military attack on Iran.

Trump deliberately steered the negotiations into a deadlock, clearing the way for Israel to carry out a direct military strike on Iran. A chain of evidence suggests that the plan was for Israel to first attack Iran's nuclear scientists, senior military commanders, and critical military infrastructure, while the United States would then strike Iran's nuclear facilities, which were beyond Israel's military capabilities to destroy alone.



DID ISRAEL AND THE UNITED STATES ACHIEVE THEIR OBJECTIVES?

During the 12 days of fighting between Israel and Iran, both sides made different claims about their successes and losses. The conflict caused significant damage and casualties on both sides, including the deaths of numerous individuals.

Although independent sources have not yet provided a full, confirmed estimate of the total damage, it is verified that Israel's strikes killed many of Iran's nuclear scientists and military commanders. Meanwhile, Iran's missile attacks on Israel inflicted not only casualties but also damage to infrastructure and key facilities.

However, the main reason behind the 12-day conflict was the goal of destroying Iran's nuclear facilities. On the tenth day of the war, the United States entered the fighting and carried out airstrikes against three Iranian nuclear sites. Immediately afterward, U.S. President Donald Trump claimed that the strikes on the Fordow, Natanz, and Isfahan nuclear sites had completely destroyed them. Following these strikes, which were met with only a relatively limited Iranian response (Iran retaliated by firing fourteen missiles at Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar), Trump announced that the war was over, that it was time for peace, and that a ceasefire had been reached between Israel and Iran.

Despite these statements, Iranian sources have so far not provided clear statistics about the extent of the damage. However, Iranian reports suggest that the destruction at Iran's main nuclear sites was not as severe as claimed. A controversial leaked report from the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) indicates that Iran's nuclear program was not completely wiped out.

Moreover, there is still uncertainty about the fate of 400 kilograms of uranium enriched up to 60 percent. It is believed that, before the U.S. attack on the Fordow site, Iran may have moved this enriched uranium to an undisclosed location.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), while not giving a definitive statement about the level of damage, has confirmed that no radioactive emissions have been detected at Fordow. Similarly, Iran's Atomic Energy Organization has reported no radioactive leaks at Natanz and Isfahan either. This suggests that there was no active uranium at these three sites at the time of the attacks, or possibly that the Israeli and American strikes were not powerful enough to cause significant radioactive contamination.

So, on one hand, Trump claimed that the mission was accomplished and that Iran's nuclear program had been completely dismantled, implying that both Israel and the United States had achieved their goal. On the other hand, reports and statements from Iranian officials indicate that Iran's nuclear program remains intact and that the Israeli and U.S. attacks merely disrupted or delayed it.



Taking into account the conflicting claims from both sides, a key conclusion emerges: although Iran suffered casualties and damage during the conflict, its nuclear program appears to have survived without serious harm. If this is confirmed, it would mean that the 12-day war fell short of achieving its primary objective. This outcome could open the door to new scenarios regarding the future of Iran's nuclear issue.

POSSIBLE FUTURE SCENARIOS

Overall, three main scenarios can be anticipated regarding this situation:

First Scenario: If it turns out that Iran's nuclear facilities were not completely destroyed, as President Trump claims, and that Iran managed to secretly move its 400 kilograms of enriched uranium to another location, possibly a hidden nuclear facility, then Iran may pursue its nuclear program with even greater speed and determination. In that case, it is highly likely that the United States would launch another military attack on Iranian soil.

Under this scenario, the conflict, which is currently under a ceasefire, could quickly reignite, because neither Israel nor the United States is willing to allow Iran to continue its nuclear program unchecked. As highlighted earlier, if Iran were to acquire nuclear weapons or make significant technological advances in this field, it would create a powerful deterrent against Israeli and U.S. attacks and could even empower Iran to strike a devastating blow against Israel. This is precisely the kind of existential threat that Israel fears most.

Second Scenario: If, on the other hand, it is proven that Trump's claim of completely destroying Iran's nuclear program is accurate, then the likelihood of renewed large-scale conflict would decrease significantly. However, that does not mean the United States would simply leave Iran alone.

Now that Iran is militarily weakened and Israel has established significant dominance over Iranian airspace, Israel might still carry out occasional strikes on Iranian military targets, much like it does in Syria and Lebanon. Even if the nuclear threat is removed, Iran's missile capabilities would continue to pose a serious concern for Israel.

In this scenario, it's likely that the United States would intensify sanctions against Iran, putting more economic pressure on Tehran in hopes of forcing Iran to negotiate over its missile program. While it seems unlikely that Iran would willingly abandon its missile program entirely, given Israel's and America's upper hand, Iran might feel compelled to accept some limitations at least as a way to ensure its own survival and to prevent further Israeli attacks.



Third Scenario: A third possibility assumes that the United States does not want Iran to become so weak that it risks collapse or total disintegration. For this reason, the U.S. neither deepened its own involvement in the conflict nor allowed Israel to continue its operations unchecked.

One piece of evidence supporting this theory is that after Iran attacked the Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar, President Trump refrained from launching further retaliatory strikes. If Trump's real goal had been to overthrow the Islamic Republic entirely, that moment would have been the perfect opportunity to do so, especially in partnership with Israel. Yet he held back.

According to this scenario, if the United States seeks negotiations with Iran, these talks might focus solely on Iran's nuclear program and potential concessions to the U.S., rather than demanding limitations on Iran's missile program or conventional military capabilities. The U.S. does not appear interested in seeing Iran utterly destroyed or reduced to a powerless state.

In fact, this perspective suggests a deeper strategic calculation: there's a fundamental difference between U.S. interests and those of Israel and many Arab states. While Israel and its Arab neighbors might prefer to see the Islamic Republic eliminated, the U.S. sees value in preserving Iran as a regional power. Why? Because Iran's presence continues to frighten Arab countries and even Israel itself. This fear keeps those countries closely aligned with Washington, sustains U.S. arms sales in the Middle East, and justifies the presence of American military bases in the region.

CONCLUSION

Until recently, the chances of a direct war between Israel and Iran seemed low. Both countries were deterred by fear of one another, particularly because Iran, through its network of proxy groups known as the Axis of Resistance, was able to keep pressure on Israel. However, as this Axis weakened or was dismantled, Israel found the ground clearer to consider a direct attack on Iran.

In this context, the United States, especially under President Trump, played a crucial role. By orchestrating nuclear negotiations with Iran that many view as misleading or deceptive, the U.S. paved the way for Israel to attack Iran, with the plan that the U.S. would deliver the final, decisive strikes.

In the recent 12-day conflict, while the full extent of casualties on both sides remains unclear, the central issue was the damage inflicted on Iran's nuclear infrastructure. President Trump claimed that the U.S. strikes had completely destroyed Iran's nuclear facilities. Yet, there are reports, including from some American sources, suggesting that Iran's nuclear sites were not as thoroughly damaged as Trump asserted. Instead, it appears the strikes may have only weakened Iran's program and delayed it, rather than eliminating it entirely.



This conflicting information creates two opposing potential scenarios for the future. One possibility is renewed military attacks on Iran aimed at definitively destroying its nuclear capabilities. The other is a cessation of hostilities and a return to negotiations, this time possibly focusing on other concerns of Israel and the U.S., particularly Iran's missile program.

Which path unfolds depends largely on future assessments of Iran's nuclear status and how close the country might be to developing nuclear weapons.

Moreover, the most likely scenario, driven by broader U.S. strategic interests in the Middle East, is that the United States does not actually seek Iran's total destruction. Instead, America's primary goal is to prevent Iran from becoming a nuclear power. If Iran were to achieve nuclear status, the U.S. would lose leverage over Tehran, Arab states and Israel might drift away from U.S. influence, American arms sales in the region could decline, and the very purpose of U.S. military bases across the Middle East might be questioned.

Therefore, the U.S. appears focused on eliminating Iran's nuclear ambitions while still allowing Iran to remain a regional power. This approach preserves the delicate balance of fear and influence that sustains America's strategic interests in the region.

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