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This file photo shows Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (C), flanked by his counterparts Sergey Lavrov of Russia (L) and Wang Yi of China, during a meeting in New York, US on September 27, 2024.  
• [en.mfa.ir](http://en.mfa.ir)

## 12-Day war and the future of Middle East deterrence, diplomacy

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### OPINION EXCLUSIVE



The June 2025 conflict between Israel and Iran, widely referred to as the 12-Day war, marked one of the most significant security flash-points in the Middle East in recent years. Though brief, the war profoundly impacted Iran's military doctrine, reshaped regional security thinking, and recalibrated diplomatic trajectories. While it did not produce a decisive strategic shift, it acted as a pressure test for existing deterrence frameworks, alliances, and regional fault lines. The following article synthesises the key takeaways regarding Iran's deterrence posture, regional and global responses, and the evolving role of Gaza in Iran's broader strategic calculus.

### Iran's deterrence doctrine: strengths and limits

The 12-day conflict underscored both the effectiveness and constraints of Iran's deterrence approach. Tehran demonstrated its ability to retaliate against Israel using ballistic missiles and drones. This visible response preserved the credibility of Iran's deterrence: that it can impose meaningful costs on its adversaries if provoked. However, Iran also avoided full-scale escalation, notably focusing on select targets while enhancing its missile and air defence capabilities. This marks a shift toward a more calibrated deterrence model, less about maximal coercion, and more about survivability, strategic ambiguity, and escalation control. Iran appears to be moving away from high-risk confrontation and instead adopting a more calculated strategy that combines conventional military strength with deniable operations and increased investment in defense systems and infrastructure. Regionally, this measured response slightly elevated Iran's

prestige among sympathetic populations and political actors, who saw Tehran as capable of defending its interests. Still, the exposure of Iran's vulnerabilities, including the ability of Western and Israeli forces to strike Iranian targets, tempered the perception of Iranian invincibility. Iran's deterrence remains intact, but it is clearly evolving.

### Impact on Arab and global security policies

The war did not fundamentally transform Arab or global security alignments vis-à-vis Iran, but it did prompt incremental recalibration. The Persian Gulf states, particularly those ones who had normalised relations with Israel, reassessed the risks of deeper entanglement. Many adopted a hedging strategy: continuing security cooperation with the US while also advocating for diplomatic restraint to prevent wider conflict. States with closer ties to Iran, such as Iraq and factions in Lebanon, sought to maintain delicate balancing acts, wary of being

drawn into a broader regional confrontation. On a global level, the US and European powers emphasised crisis management and deterrence measures, including maritime security, intelligence sharing, and nuclear safeguards, rather than embracing wholesale containment strategies that could spark open warfare.

The strategic takeaway is clear: while no major realignments occurred, regional and international actors are increasingly focused on conflict containment and damage control, rather than confrontation or appeasement.

### Gaza's role in Iran's diplomatic positioning

Any durable Gaza agreement, involving ceasefires, reconstruction, or prisoner exchanges, carries important, though not decisive, implications for Iranian power and diplomacy. Gaza's fate matters to Iran, but it is one variable among many. A peace process there may moderate some of Iran's tactics but is unlikely to shift its overarching regional posture.

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## Israel launches deadly strikes on Gaza in first major truce violation

Hamas affirms commitment to US-brokered cease-fire deal



Smoke billows following an Israeli strike that targeted a building in the Bureij camp for Palestinian refugees in the central Gaza Strip on October 19, 2025.  
• [AFP](http://AFP)

### International Desk

A fragile Gaza cease-fire edged close to total collapse on Sunday after Israel launched new deadly airstrikes across Gaza on the pretext of Palestinian attacks on its troops, in the first major violation of the cease-fire meant to halt more than two years of war.

Palestinian resistance movement Hamas and its military wing al-Qassam Brigades in the Gaza Strip on Sunday affirmed their commitments to the US-brokered cease-fire agreement, stressing that the regime continues to breach the agreement and fabricate flimsy pretexts to justify its crimes.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu consulted with Israel's security heads and directed the military to take "strong action" against any cease-fire violations, but did not threaten to return to war.

Israel's military claimed that Hamas fighters shot at troops in areas of the southern Gaza city of Rafah that are Israeli-controlled according to agreed-upon cease-fire lines. No injuries were reported.

Hamas, which continued to accuse Israel of multiple cease-fire violations, said that it wasn't connected to any clashes in Rafah.

"We reaffirm our full commitment to implementing all agreed-upon terms, especially the cease-fire across all areas of the Gaza Strip. We have no knowledge of any incidents or clashes taking place in the Rafah area, as it is part of the red zones under the occupation's control", the statement by the al-Qassam Brigades said.

"Communication has been completely cut off with the remaining units of ours there since the resumption of the war in March of this year. We have no information on whether they have been martyred or are still alive since that time". Gaza's civil defense agency said a number of Israeli air raids killed at least 11 Palestinians in the coastal enclave on Sunday. Despite the cease-fire in place since October 10, Israel has launched many attacks in the Gaza Strip, killing more than 50 people throughout the strip.

Hamas resistance movement also rejected a statement from the US State Department, in which it cited "credible reports" claiming the Palestinian group would imminently violate the cease-fire deal.

Hamas said the US allegations were false and "fully align with the misleading Israeli propaganda and provide cover for the continuation of the occupation's crimes and organized aggression" against the Palestinians in Gaza.

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## Iran could restore its nuclear capabilities in medium term:

Expert

### INTERVIEW

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