

it, negotiation is nullified. This has always been Iran's condition. This position is important because some insist that if Iran is indeed rightful, it should negotiate with the other side and convince it, but Iran will not negotiate concerning any matter in which it sees absolutely no dispute and is unequivocally certain that the islands belong to Iran and the other side has no share in them. Essentially, participating in any meeting for resolving this issue confers upon the other side the right and the impression that, in any case, these allegations hold some weight. Therefore, this matter of negotiation is nullified in essence. The discourse concerning tribunals or complaints to various international courts is treated likewise. All international adjudicatory institutions that examine such cases must possess the consent of both parties. The Emiratis are entirely aware that as long as Iran is not willing and does not desire to introduce this matter in international forums, and fundamentally holds no belief in raising this matter, their complaint will not advance. Therefore, it is predominantly the same rhetorical discourse that has been articulated in recent communiqués.

**Some analysts, in the dispute between Iran and the Emirates over the islands, do not consider even the possibility of military conflict improbable. How probable is the occurrence of such an event?** It does not appear that the Emiratis are in a condition to possess the capability for military conflict with Iran over the islands. They know that they are far more vulnerable to enter into such a conflict with Iran. Because when conflict begins, the issue is not merely the islands; when two sides enter war, all capabilities of both sides are exposed to threat, and the side more exposed to peril is the Emirates. Therefore, I find it improbable that they would enter such a situation. On the other hand, if they desire to rely on international powers, including, for instance, the United States of America, it does not appear that the Americans wish to endanger their own interests in the region because of an outdated issue. Their own perception is that these islands have no connection to the Emirates and that the matter is more political. This is because the discourse is exceedingly dated and has been discussed repeatedly in American juridical and political circles; it has been examined in

tribunals and various institutions outside the region, both in Europe and in America. The Emiratis are not in a condition that enables them to impose their position upon Iran. I do not believe that either the Emiratis or the Americans now possess any motivation to enter a stage of military interference and military conflict.

**Among your remarks, you indicated that the United States and certain other powers are truly cognizant that this matter is political and that these islands belong to Iran. What is the reason that, in recent years and concurrently with the articulation of these allegations by the Emirates, certain states support them?** In certain instances, the matter certainly revolves around putting pressure upon Iran. Ultimately, they possess the allegation and the belief that Iran has exerted a series of threats against the Arab states in the region. So, they support their positions in this manner. But certainly, this matter is political. However, in certain instances, the reasons are not merely related to pressure upon Iran; other reasons exist, among them political relations, broader economic rela-



The Iranian flag is being raised in Abu Musa, one of the three Persian Gulf islands retaken by the Iranian Imperial Navy, in 1971 after British forces withdrew. WIKIMEDIA

tions with the Emirates, and also the interests and expedencies that various parties pursue. They sometimes, without regard to the matter of their relations with Iran and even, perhaps, by placing both sides on the scales and assessing expediency, reach the conclusion that relations with the Emirates are of greater importance for them. Therefore, they attempt to support Abu Dhabi's view, and solely to the extent of a communiqué. Although for us, even this much is unacceptable. No patriotic person in Iran will accept that, for example, Russia or China or certain parties that

have close relations with Iran sign a joint communiqué within the same framework that the Emiratis desire.

**How should Tehran's reaction in the face of these allegations and actions be so that the least harm is inflicted upon national interests?** In my opinion, we must not exhibit a passive posture concerning this matter. After every communiqué of theirs, Iran usually immediately issues a communiqué and refutes and rejects their positions, and this condition has persisted thus

for years. When they intensified their actions with the assistance of other regional and international interlocutors and in the form of issuing communiqués, the Islamic Republic of Iran also undertook practical measures within the islands. Therefore, in my opinion, this time, as well, the situation proceeds thus and is repeated. The Emiratis themselves had declared in the past that they are following this pattern and issued these communiqués symbolically, and the Iranians, in relation to this matter, provided the requisite response. At present, I do not observe an alarming situation, but Iran's vigilance must increase so that extra-regional parties do not interfere and do not enter this affair. Because, in any case, the conditions are not such that we can obtain assistance from the international environment for this important matter. Therefore, when the conflict is a political conflict between two sides, we must attempt to ensure that extra-regional parties, meaning those outside this framework of the Council, do not enter into this tension between the Iranian and Emirati sides.

The interview first appeared in Persian on IRNA.

# From collective security to singular crisis-mongering Iran's trio islands test of UAE's rationality



By Ahmad Dastmalchian  
Iran's former ambassador to Lebanon

## OPINION

Since the inception of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in the immediate aftermath of the triumphant Revolution, the cardinal tenet of its foreign policy has been the expansion of fraternal, amicable, and goodwill relations with neighboring states, particularly the Arab governments of the Persian Gulf. This policy, immutable and steadfast over four decades, has demonstrated, in pivotal regional junctures, Iran's profound valuation of peace and stability among adjacent nations. Notwithstanding such goodwill, for years, certain Arab states of the Persian Gulf have endeavored, through gratuitous provocations instigated by the United Arab Emirates, to vitiate these amicable relations. By promulgating incendiary communiqués concerning the three Iranian islands and asserting an illusory sovereignty thereupon, the UAE strives to dismantle the constructive and convergent milieu cultivated among regional countries. Such comportment neither aligns with the tenets of international law nor accords with geopolitical realities. The UAE must apprehend that it fundamentally lacks any locus standi for advancing such claims. Iran vigorously upholds its territorial sovereignty, having incontrovertibly demonstrated, during the Iraqi-imposed war, its refusal to capitulate even against a formidable international coalition comprising the United States, NATO, Arab

states, and European countries. Nonetheless, the Islamic Republic of Iran, with unwavering fortitude, persevered. The UAE, which now adopts a posture of power-seeking aspiration through its statements, ought to assimilate these veracities. The security of the Persian Gulf is indivisible. Should Iran's security be imperiled, the security of no Arab state within the region shall endure. Security constitutes an interconnected whole; the destinies of all nations bordering the Persian Gulf are interwoven. Security is neither procurable by pecuniary means nor importable, and under no circumstance is it ensured by reliance upon the United States, the United Kingdom, or other extra-regional hegemonies. For decades, Persian Gulf countries have disbursed billions of dollars to the United States, yet the corollary has been perpetual conflict, insecurity, extortion, and instability. Sustainable security has never been, nor will it ever be, engendered by the presence of foreign military forces. The UAE has comported itself beyond its actual capacities in Yemen, Sudan, and even within regional political processes, adopting a malevolent role. Its actions have contributed neither to regional stability nor peace but rather heightened crises. The UAE, involved irresponsibly in numerous regional dossiers, now advances untenable claims regarding the trio islands as a stratagem to obfuscate its regional failures by inciting nationalist fervor. Economic growth, advancement, and regional prosperity can only materialize through collective security. No developmental enterprise can flourish



Ahmed Al Mansuri, founder of the Crossroads of Civilization private museum, passes by a painting presenting the UAE and Israel friendship at an exhibition commemorating the Holocaust in Dubai, the UAE. AP

in an environment bereft of security. The Zionist regime brazenly assails whenever it discernibly perceives an opportunity within the regional balance — be it in Syria, Qatar, or Lebanon. These acts underscore that absent unity among regional nations, the Zionist regime shall target each independently. Recent visits by officials from Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan to Tehran epitomize a paradigm shift in regional perception. States have culminated in the conviction that security must originate intrinsically

from the region itself, through neighborly collaboration. An emergent security order aims to diminish American influence and curtail Zionist infiltration into the Persian Gulf. Regional countries have recognized that America profits from discord rather than stability. Hence, a regional security architecture predicated on trust, dialogue, and cooperative engagement must be established. The UAE's accession to the Abraham Accords has precluded its integration into collective regional security. The UAE has become excessively hubristic, mistakenly presuming it can enact a distinct role by reliance upon Zionists. This delusion is fraught with peril. Conversely, Saudi Arabia has stipulated a critical condition for peace, cognizant that no enduring peace can materialize

absent resolution of the Palestinian issue. Should the UAE disregard regional realities, its presumptuous conduct shall ultimately rebound detrimentally. Singular security within this region is an impossibility; no nation can extricate itself from the collective security framework. The UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, and all other regional states must, under these exceptional circumstances, advance towards direct dialogue and security cooperation. The Persian Gulf possesses the potential to become the most secure region worldwide, provided its countries abandon enmity and unfounded assertions, pursuing instead the paths of rationality and convergence.

The full article first appeared in Persian on ANA.

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