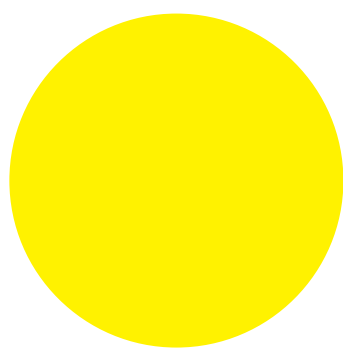


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Egypt moves to cool Iran-US tensions amid fears of a power shift favoring Israel

INTERVIEW
EXCLUSIVE



Abdul Amir Nabavi

With tensions between Iran and the United States on the rise, Egypt's Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty has intensified diplomatic outreach, engaging officials from both sides along with counterparts in Qatar, Turkey, and Oman, and urging a return to diplomacy over military solutions. Egypt's efforts to defuse tensions are not unique, as other regional states are pursuing similar initiatives, but Cairo's motivations may differ. Abdul Amir Nabavi, an expert on Egyptian affairs, told Iran Daily that beyond seeking to avert the fallout of military escalation in the region, Egypt aims to prevent a shift in the balance of power in Israel's favor, while also working to bolster its standing as an effective and responsible regional actor.

IRAN DAILY: What security, geopolitical, and regional considerations have prompted Egypt to actively engage at this stage in diplomatic efforts to reduce tensions between Iran and the US?

NABAVI: Egypt, like other Arab actors in the region, is deeply concerned about current developments. In effect, the escalation of the crisis and the possibility of a renewed war would carry profound and negative consequences for the security and economies of regional countries. Egypt, much like Turkey and other Arab states, is worried that intensifying disputes over the Iran file could drag the region into a crisis with no clear end in sight. An uptick in clashes and the risk of war could set off waves of migration, ethnic and sectarian conflicts, increased arms smuggling, and similar destabilizing phenomena across the region. Egypt, already anxious about developments in Libya, Sudan, and Gaza, fears that the Iran file could further add fuel to the fire of existing crises. On the other hand, should Israel achieve its objectives with regard to Iran, the decades-long balance prevailing in the region would be disrupted, allowing Israel to emerge as an unrivaled power in the Middle East. The elevation of Israel's regional standing is not something Turkey, Arab countries, and especially Egypt are prepared to accept. They prefer, under current conditions, that the existing balance be preserved in some form.

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At the same time, by stepping up diplomatic engagement and seeking ways to manage and de-escalate the crisis, Egypt is also working to enhance its own regional standing.

International Desk

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei stressed in a stark warning that any war initiated by the United States against Iran would turn into a regional war.

Addressing a large gathering of people on Sunday, the Leader said recent US rhetoric about war and military assets was nothing new.

"The Americans should know that if they start a war this time, it will be a regional war," he said, stressing that threats and displays of military power will not intimidate the Iranian nation.

"Sometimes they talk about war and speak of aircraft and warships; this is not a new thing," he said, recalling that US officials had repeatedly threatened Iran in the past by claiming that "all options are on the table, including the option of war."

Referring to US President Donald Trump's threats against Iran, Ayatollah Khamenei said, "The Iranian nation should not be frightened by these things; the people of Iran are not affected by such threats."

He emphasized that Iran would not be the initiator of any war, but warned of a firm response to aggression.

"We are not the ones who start [a war], and we do not want to attack any country, but the Iranian nation will deliver a hard punch to anyone who attacks and harasses it," he said. In another part of his speech, the Leader described the recent riots across Iran as "similar to a coup," saying the plot aimed at destroying sensitive and effective centers involved in running the country.

He said attackers targeted police stations, government centers, Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) facilities, banks, and mosques, and even set the Holy Qur'an on fire, noting that the attempt had ultimately been thwarted.

The Leader also said the Iranian people had reduced the flames of the recent American-Zionist sedition to ashes, just as they had defeated previous conspiracies, adding that the nation will decisively confront any future challenges as well.

Ayatollah Khamenei cited returning the country to its rightful owners — the people — and cutting off US influence from Iran as another defining characteristic of the Islamic Revolution, saying this feature angered and unsettled Washington and drove it, from the very beginning, into hostility toward the Iranian nation and system.

Referring to Iran's advances in various fields, he said few would have believed that the Iranian nation would one day reach a point where Americans would copy weapons produced by Iran.

He said such achievements were the result of self-confidence, hope, and ambition instilled in the nation by Imam Khomeini, whom he described as a symbol of hope and self-belief who motivated the people toward effort and progress.



Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei addresses a gathering of Iranians from all walks of life in Tehran on February 1, 2026.
• khamenei.ir

