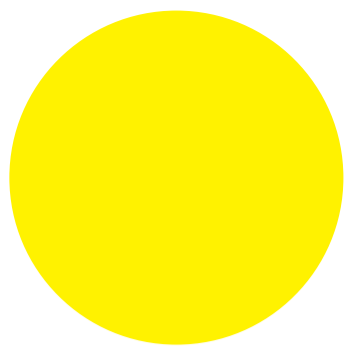


WHO chief slams attacks on Pasteur Institute, medical centers

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Pezeshkian: Iran determined to defend itself against US-Israel aggression

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War exposes fragility of security provided by global powers in West Asia

By Edris Khosravi
International affairs expert

OPINION EXCLUSIVE

The Middle East remains one of the world's most complex and volatile regions, having gone through sweeping changes over the past decade. From the Arab uprisings to armed conflicts and economic shifts, the region has consistently stayed in the global spotlight.

In recent years, major political upheavals have complicated efforts to maintain security. Chief among them were the Arab uprisings that erupted in 2010 across parts of the Middle East and North Africa. Initially aimed at toppling authoritarian regimes and ushering in democratic systems, these movements left a deep mark on the region. Countries including Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen and Syria were swept up in protests and political change.

Political developments in the Middle East have been shaped, directly and indirectly, by international powers. The role of the United States, Russia, the European Union and other global actors has stood out, fueling intense geopolitical competition across the region.

Economically, the Middle East has also undergone major shifts. Most countries in the region are key oil and gas producers, yet falling oil prices, recurring oil shocks during conflicts such as the Arab-Israeli wars, the Iran-Iraq war and now the US-Israeli aggression against Iran, along with sanctions and domestic economic strains,

have taken a heavy toll on regional economies and piled up challenges.

Oil remains the backbone of many regional economies. Price drops over the past decade have put Persian Gulf states under pressure to balance their budgets, while price spikes have often led to wasteful spending and fiscal mismanagement. Several Middle Eastern countries have also faced international sanctions. Iran, for instance, has been under unilateral US sanctions since its 1979 Islamic Revolution and later faced additional measures tied to its nuclear program from both Washington and the United Nations Security Council. These restrictions have weighed on trade, investment and overall economic conditions.

Alongside external pressure, internal economic woes have played a major role. Despite considerable wealth, Middle Eastern countries struggle with high unemployment, corruption and weak governance, factors that have undermined stability and put security at risk.

The past decade has also brought notable social changes. Population growth, shifting cultural norms and rising unemployment have all reshaped the region.

The Middle East has one of the fastest-growing populations in the world, placing increasing strain on the resources and infrastructure of regional nations. At the same time, cultural and social changes have become more visible, particularly among younger generations

and in the evolving role of women in society.

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IRGC shoots down 2nd US F-35 fighter jet in Ramadan War

Iran warns of expanding scope of war if threats against infrastructure persist

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The remains of an American F-35 fighter jet shot down by the IRGC in the sky over central Iran on April 3, 2026. IRNA

US-Israeli war crimes amid international silence

Rasoul Mousavi
Vice president of Iran's Islamic Azad University

PERSPECTIVE EXCLUSIVE

The United States and the Zionist regime, by attacking the Islamic Republic of Iran, have violated numerous human principles and international laws, including human rights and international conventions concerning the protection of civilians, universities, and religious figures. In this

regard, Islamic Azad University, as one of the largest non-state, in-person universities globally, in order to inform international forums and document these crimes, points to just a few examples of the violent actions of these two aggressors.

Assassination of Iran's political-religious leader & supreme spiritual authority for Muslims worldwide

This act, occurring in peacetime, is a clear violation of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions (inviolability of religious figures)

and Article 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (prohibition of incitement to violence against religions). Threatening his life is a direct threat to the spiritual identity of millions worldwide.

Destruction of scientific, academic centers

Universities, as centers of knowledge, awareness, academic discourse, and the education of future generations, enjoy special protection under international law. In the attacks by the American-Israeli coalition, by the fourth week of the war, 154 academic

sections in 21 universities across the country had been targeted. Among these, the Agricultural Research Center of Islamic Azad University's Science and Research Branch, the research and educational buildings of Iran University of Science and Technology, the Electrical Engineering Faculty of Khajeh Nasir University of Technology, and Isfahan University of Technology suffered serious damage. These actions are a clear violation of Article 52 of the Geneva Conventions and customary rules of international humanitarian law.

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Minister calls for urgent action to protect cultural heritage

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India purchases oil from Iran for first time in seven years: Report

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Karaj's unfinished B1 Bridge damaged

US-Israel targeting of civilian infrastructure exposes 'moral collapse'

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