compelled to accede to the aggressor's demands.
To achieve the third objective, they target the country's essential infrastructure. In other words, they seek to intensify pressure on the population by damaging economic, service-related, and vital structures.
However, compared with many regional countries, Iran possesses a different degree of strategic depth and a distinct range of capabilities. For example, small countries such as Qatar, Bahrain, and Kuwait are not comparable to Iran in terms of territorial expanse and strategic depth.
During the recent war, reports also emerged that certain regional countries had proposed temporarily shutting down specific facilities and even paying Iran compensation, provided that Iran refrained from attacking those installations.
In my view, the changes observed in the trajectory of Iran's attacks against certain countries may be associated with such considerations. For example, at certain junctures, attacks against some countries continued, whereas those against others diminished or ceased. If these reports are accurate, they indicate that the opposing side has concluded that the security of its vital infrastructure depends on its own conduct and decisions.
This issue is also important from another perspective: when a country proposes shutting down its facilities to avoid being attacked, it is effectively acknowledging its own strategic vulnerability.

The Commander-in-Chief's statement emphasizes the transformation and deepening of Iran's defense doctrine and the enhancement of military capabilities. Can this be regarded as an indication that the country is moving beyond a purely defensive strategy toward active deterrence and an offensive approach?
Yes. One of the first statements made by Martyr Abdolrahim Mousavi, the then-Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, following his appointment, was that the country's military doctrine and strategy had changed. This transformation was consolidated during the tenure of the martyred Leader, but not all its dimensions had been implemented before then.
We have now reached a stage of capability and operational conditions in which the full implementation of this strategy has become feasible. This means that we will no longer simply wait for the enemy to attack before responding.

For example, if indications emerge that an operation against Iran is being prepared, the possibility must exist for the Armed Forces to act preemptively to neutralize the threat before an attack occurs. If tanker aircraft are stationed in a particular country and this deployment constitutes an indication that an operation against Iran is being prepared, why should we wait for the attack to take place before responding?
This is precisely the transformation that has taken place in the country's military doctrine: a shift from an exclusively reactive approach toward active deterrence and confronting threats before they materialize into an operational attack.

Overall, what mandate does the Commander-in-Chief's recent message establish for the Armed Forces, political officials, and hostile countries?
If I were to summarize the entirety of the Commander-in-Chief's statements in a single sentence, to the extent of my own knowledge and understanding, I would say that he has clarified all possible courses of action and ambiguities and determined the responsibilities of all parties.
This message has clarified the mandate not only for the Armed Forces but also for political officials and hostile countries. The enemies must understand that they can no longer enter the arena with their previous calculations and expect Iran to respond solely within a restricted and predictable framework.
Another point that must be considered is the position of the Leader as an elected representative of the people and an articulator of the public will. In my view, through this message, he expressed some of the people's demands and aspirations that had been voiced during public gatherings and nightly demonstrations.

How to stop US-Israel war on Iran



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OPINION



The illustration shows Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (top) and US President Donald Trump. ● *MATTHEW ABSALOM-WONG/SMH*

The war that Israel and the United States launched against Iran on February 28 is in a lull, not at an end. Major combat has paused, diplomacy has stalled and both sides are preparing for the next round. To understand why the fighting will soon resume, we need to understand the motivations of the two cabinets that started it. Neither of them wants peace. Israel's leadership seeks domination over the Middle East, and the United States seeks to preserve its domination over the world. Simply to state these aims is to underscore that both cabinets are operating in a world of delusion.
Israel's political leadership is consumed by the belief that Israel's survival depends on its military supremacy over the Arab world and on the permanent subjugation or elimination of the Palestinian people. This belief is a form of collective madness, yet it is the doctrine that governs Israeli policy. Israel's leaders cannot accept that peace is within reach. In the Arab Peace Initiative of 2002, the Arab states offered Israel full normalisation in return for a Palestinian state on the 1967 borders, and that offer still stands. Peace cannot be built on genocide in Gaza or on hatred of the Palestinian people and the drive to remove them from their land. Yet that is the path Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has chosen, and he now campaigns on it openly, with his "national religious" allies, including Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich, who twist religion in the service of hatred and killing.
The United States is consumed by its declining power. Iran has been a target for more than 70 years. In 1953, the CIA and British intelligence overthrew Iran's elected prime minister, Mohammad Mossadegh, after he nationalised Iran's oil. The United States then installed the shah and backed his police state until the Iranian people overthrew it in 1979. The US has never forgiven Iran for escaping from US domination. The US backed Saddam Hussein's deadly war against Iran in the 1980s, and followed with four decades of economic warfare, covert operations, cyberattacks and assassinations. Trump tore up the 2015 nuclear agreement in 2018, bombed Iran's nuclear sites in June 2025, and then, in February of this year, joined Israel in open war, killing Iran's leader in the opening strikes.
Washington's fixation on Iran is in the service of American hegemony. In The Grand Chessboard (1997), Zbigniew Brzezinski named Iran one of five "geopolitical pivots," states that matter less for their own power than for where they sit. Iran commands the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz. Brzezinski wrote that an "antihegemonic" coalition of China, Russia and Iran could emerge "only if the United States is shortsighted enough to antagonize China and Iran simultaneously." Well, yes, Washington has been that shortsighted and reckless.
The signs that the war will restart are not hidden. Last week, War Secretary Pete Hegseth visited Israel to discuss renewed joint strikes, and Israeli sources report that the plans target Iran's petrochemical facilities and nuclear sites. The White House has promised that the United States will not attack Iran before the November 3 midterm elections, which is another way of announcing a timetable for war. The US naval blockade of Iran's ports has passed its 100th day. Trump rejected Iran's proposal for a seven-day ceasefire in September, even though Tehran says the offer remains on the table.
Israel's October 27 election adds fuel to the fire. On October 18, Trump endorsed Netanyahu, saying the United States would "finish the job" against Iran only with Netanyahu in charge. On October 21, at a rally in Dimona (home to the reactor where Israel secretly built its own nuclear arsenal), Netanyahu declared that the only way to end the Iranian threat is to overthrow the regime and said he had issued that directive to the army, Mossad and the security services.
Iran has understandably drawn its own conclusions. Its commanders have announced a new offensive doctrine that includes preemptive strikes and attacks on bases in neighbouring countries used for operations against Iran, and they warn that renewed attacks would bring a global energy crisis. Attacks on shipping in the Strait of Hormuz reached a new peak this month.
This is the reality that the Arab world, especially the Persian Gulf countries, now faces. The US bases across the Persian Gulf did not bring security in this war. They turned their host nations into targets. The US-Israeli strategy of divide and conquer, which cast Iran as the region's permanent enemy and invited the Arab states to shelter under American power while accepting Israeli hegemony, has brought war to the region, economic loss to the Persian Gulf, and mass killings in Palestine and Lebanon.
The only way to stop this madness is for the Arab world to tell the United States that enough is enough. The Arab states should declare that they will never accept Israeli hegemony, that there must be a sovereign State of Palestine and that the region's security will come from regional cooperation rather than from Washington. The solution could be two states, as in the Arab Peace Initiative, or one binational democratic state, or a confederation. What matters is that Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs, each about eight million people, live in peace, safety and self-determination. What is not possible is the perpetuation of Israel's brutal apartheid state.
The beginnings are visible. Qatar has called for a regional dialogue among the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council states, Turkey and Pakistan, and Qatar, Pakistan and Oman have kept the channels of mediation with Tehran open throughout the war. These efforts should grow into a standing regional security framework that includes Iran, the Persian Gulf states, Egypt, Turkey, Iraq and Pakistan, built on mutual non-aggression, freedom of navigation, and a zone free of nuclear weapons that must eventually include Israel.
The Arab states have far more leverage than they recognise. If Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and their neighbours announced that their territory and airspace will not be used for another war on Iran, and that normalisation with Israel is off the table until a Palestinian state exists, the calculations in Washington and Tel Aviv would have to change quickly. And the American people, who hate the war on Iran and side with Palestine, would cheer.
The era of US-led divide and conquer, with Iran cast as the permanent enemy of the Arab world, is over, even if Washington and Tel Aviv refuse to admit it. The Arab states should say so openly now before the next round of war begins, and in doing so, open the way to a region that provides for its own security and peace.

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The leaked image reveals the extent of damage US forces suffered from Iranian retaliatory missiles at this airbase hosted by an Arab country in the region during the war on Iran. ● *MEIDASTOUCH*