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Two IDF soldiers killed in Hezbollah attack in southern Lebanon

Bulldozer dispatched to help stuck tank is hit by a projectile, causing deadly blaze; at least 3 drones from Lebanon downed by Israel

By [Emanuel Fabian](#)

and [Agencies Today](#), 4:50 pm



Sgt. First Class Maher Khatar killed in Lebanon on March 8, 2026 (Israel Defense Forces)

Two Israel Defense Forces soldiers were killed in a Hezbollah attack in southern Lebanon early Sunday morning, as missiles and drones rained down across much of northern Israel throughout the day.

Meanwhile, Israel carried on with heavy strikes in Lebanon, with the IDF saying that some 200 members of Hezbollah and other terror groups have been killed since hostilities intensified last week.

One of the slain Israeli troops was named Sunday afternoon as Sgt. First Class Maher Khatar, 38, a heavy machinery operator in the 91st "Galilee" Regional Division's combat engineering unit, from Majdal Shams.

The name of the second soldier is to be released later, the army said.

The incident took place near an army post in southern Lebanon, just across from the Israeli border community of Manara.

According to a preliminary IDF probe, the incident began when a tank got stuck amid operations in the area. The IDF sent a Puma armored personnel carrier and two D9 armored bulldozers in an attempt to extract it.

One of the D9 bulldozers was struck by a projectile, possibly an anti-tank missile or a mortar, causing a blaze that killed the two troops, according to the IDF's probe. One officer was also lightly injured in the incident.



Israeli tanks gather at a position along the Lebanon border on March 8, 2026. (Jack Guez/AFP)

Rocket and drone sirens sounded repeatedly overnight and throughout Sunday morning and afternoon, sending residents of Haifa, Karmiel, Safed, Rosh Hanikra and many other areas in northern Israel scrambling for shelter.

The IDF said that Hezbollah has been launching most of its attacks from deeper within southern Lebanon, and not from close to the border.

At least three drones launched from Lebanon were downed by Israel in the north mid-morning, the IDF said. A prolonged chase after one of them set off sirens in a wide swath of

territory.

The IDF said that several homes in northern Israel were damaged by helicopter fire during attempts to shoot down the drone. The helicopter had used its 30mm cannons to shoot down the drone over the Lebanon border, according to the IDF.

"As part of the interception attempts, a small number of homes in Israeli territory were hit by artillery shells that were fired," the military said, adding that no injuries were caused and the incident is under further investigation.

The IDF said Sunday that it had conducted over 600 strikes in Lebanon, using over 820 bombs, after Hezbollah began attacking Israel on Monday in response to the killing of Iran's supreme leader.



Rescue workers search for victims at a destroyed building that was hit by an Israeli airstrike in Ghaziyeh, southern Lebanon, March, 8, 2026. (AP Photo/Mohammed Zaatari)

Among the 200 operatives killed by Israel in Lebanon in the past week, the IDF said, were 80 members of Hezbollah's elite Radwan Force, 70 Hezbollah artillery operatives, and a number of top commanders, including the chief of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad in Lebanon. According to Lebanon's health ministry, Israeli strikes in the past week killed 394 people, including 83 children.

The Lebanese government, which has claimed it is working to disarm Hezbollah, has slammed the terror group's renewed attacks on Israel, accusing it of dragging Lebanon into a regional war on behalf of Iran.

Iranians depart Beirut

Overnight between Saturday and Sunday, [Israel struck](#) a swanky Beirut hotel, killing at least four people. The IDF said it carried out a targeted attack on key commanders of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.

Amid the heavy cross-border fire, more than 100 Iranians, including some diplomats, were evacuated from Beirut overnight, a Lebanese official told AFP on Sunday.

"A total of 117 Iranians, including diplomats and embassy staff, were evacuated on a Russian plane that left Beirut overnight from Saturday to Sunday," the official said on condition of anonymity.

The evacuation came after Lebanon's government on Thursday banned any activity by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps — a main backer of Hezbollah. The government also imposed a visa requirement on Iranians entering the country as part of measures to pressure Hezbollah.

The official said the Iranian embassy had informed Lebanese authorities beforehand of the evacuation operation, which was carried out via Beirut's international airport. The official added that the plane was heading to Turkey, without specifying the final destination of the Iranians.

The body of an Iranian diplomat killed during the war, along with those of his wife and three children, were also on board the plane, the official added.



Damaged hotel rooms which were hit by Israeli strike are seen in Beirut, Lebanon, March 8, 2026. (AP Photo/Hussein Malla)

The IDF on Sunday reiterated its warning to Lebanese civilians in all of southern Lebanon to evacuate amid the fighting against Hezbollah.

"Hezbollah's terror activities are forcing the IDF to act against it with force in the area," said army spokesman Col. Avichay Adraee.

"Airstrikes are ongoing as the IDF operates with great force in the area. Therefore, for your safety, we once again urge you to evacuate your homes immediately and head north of the Litani River," he said.

The warning was first issued by the IDF on Wednesday. The military estimates that over 420,000 Lebanese civilians have so far evacuated their homes since Hezbollah renewed its rocket attacks on Israel last week, prompting fresh IDF activity against the terror group.

Israel regularly struck Hezbollah targets in Lebanon following a 2024 agreement, accusing the terror group of ceasefire violations, and continued to hold on to five border posts inside Lebanon, citing security needs. It has now expanded beyond those points, citing defensive needs.

The November 2024 ceasefire ended a year of hostilities between Hezbollah and Israel, which started when the terror group began firing missiles and drones into northern Israel one day after its ally Hamas launched a devastating attack on southern Israel that set off the war in Gaza. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/two-idf-soldiers-killed-in-hezbollah-attack-in-southern-lebanon/>

6 wounded by shrapnel, 1 seriously, as Iran fires suspected cluster warhead missile at Israel

7 volleys send millions of Israelis to shelters; Iranian president vows 'stronger response' to US-Israeli strikes as fresh attacks reported in Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain

By [Emanuel Fabian](#)
and [Agencies Today](#), 3:04 pm



Emergency services at the scene of a ballistic missile attack from Iran, in Tel Aviv, March 8, 2026 (Chaim Goldberg/Flash90)

Six people were injured, one of them seriously, at two impact sites in central Israel following an Iranian ballistic missile attack that apparently used a cluster warhead on Sunday afternoon, the sixth salvo of the day targeting Israel.

The Magen David Adom ambulance service said a man in his 40s was seriously wounded in Tel Aviv. In Petah Tikva, five others were hurt, including a man aged 25 in moderate condition and three in good condition.

More than a dozen impact sites were reported across central Israel, police officials said, adding that the spread of the impact sites indicated that the Iranian ballistic missile was likely carrying a cluster bomb warhead.

Iran has launched multiple ballistic missiles at Israel carrying [cluster bomb warheads](#) during the ongoing conflict, indiscriminately spreading small bombs in wide areas of the country.

The IDF said search and rescue soldiers were dispatched to the scenes, and it was investigating the circumstances of the impacts.

Photos and videos from the impact scenes showed widespread damage.

There were no serious injuries reported in five earlier salvos targeting Israel throughout Sunday morning, beginning at 2 a.m. local time. A seventh attack on Sunday afternoon also did not appear to cause any damage or injuries.



Home Front Command soldiers operate at the site of a missile impact in central Israel, March 8, 2026. (Israel Defense Forces)

Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait and Bahrain all also reported new attacks, more than a week after the US and Israel launched preemptive strikes against Tehran, and Iran's president vowed to step up such activity.

The previous Iranian attacks on Israel set off sirens in the center, north and south of the country, forcing millions to seek shelter. The IDF said a ballistic missile that targeted southern Israel was likely intercepted, according

to initial military assessments.

The site of a missile impact in central Israel, March 8, 2026. (Fire and Rescue Service)

And following a salvo targeting central Israel, some fragments from the interception were reported to fall in unpopulated areas.

Meanwhile, Gulf states Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait and Bahrain all reported new attacks Sunday.

Neighboring countries have borne much of Tehran's response after the US and Israel launched a massive air campaign against Iran, with 16 people, eight of them civilians, killed in the Gulf states since the war began, according to an AFP tally.

Iran's president threatened Sunday to step up attacks on American targets throughout the Middle East amid the ongoing conflict.



“When we are attacked, we have no choice but to respond. The more pressure they impose on us, the stronger our response will naturally be,” President Masoud Pezeshkian said in video comments Sunday. “Our Iran, our country, will not bow easily in the face of bullying, oppression or aggression — and it never has.”



Israeli security forces at the scene where shrapnel from a missile fired from Iran fell in southern Israel, March 8, 2026. (Avshalom Sassoni/Flash90)

Pezeshkian appeared to be backtracking from conciliatory comments toward his Gulf neighbors on Saturday. Those comments, in which he appeared to apologize for attacks on their soil, were quickly contradicted by Iranian hardliners.

Pezeshkian said Iran was not looking for a battle against neighboring Arab countries, many of which host American military bases.

“They are our brothers,” he said, accusing the US of trying to pit the region’s countries against one another.

Many Iranian attacks have gone beyond US bases in the region, striking energy facilities, hotels and cities.



In this handout picture provided by Iranian presidency, Iran’s President Masoud Pezeshkian addresses cabinet members, as they visit of the tomb of the late Iranian revolutionary leader ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, in Tehran on January 31, 2026. (Handout/Iranian Presidency/AFP)

In Kuwait, two border guards were killed while on duty, the interior ministry said Sunday. The military said fuel tanks at the country’s international airport were targeted in a drone attack.

Emirati authorities said Sunday that a Pakistani driver was killed overnight when debris from an aerial interception fell on a vehicle in Dubai. It’s the second death of a Pakistani national there in recent days.

Pakistan’s Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed grief over the deaths of the two Pakistanis in Dubai.

Two other civilians, from Nepal and Bangladesh, have been killed by missile debris in Dubai since the war began.

The UAE said its air defenses detected 17 ballistic missiles on Sunday — destroying 16, while one fell into the sea — and intercepted 113 of 117 drones detected, with four falling inside the country.



This video grab taken from UGC images posted on social media on March 7, 2026 shows smoke rising from the Dubai International Airport. (Photo by various sources / AFP)

Saudi Arabia’s defense ministry reported intercepting 15 drones, including an attempted attack in the diplomatic quarter of the capital Riyadh.

Bahrain said three people were wounded by falling missile debris over a university building in Muharraq city and that a water desalination plant was damaged.

Kuwait’s national oil company announces a “precautionary” cut to its crude production, as the country’s military says it

responded to several drone and missile attacks.

Fuel tanks at Kuwait’s international airport were targeted in a drone attack, the military added.

The official Kuwait News Agency said a fire at the airport was brought under control, reporting no “significant injuries.”

The military called the drone attack “a direct targeting of vital infrastructure.”

A separate statement said “some civilian facilities sustained material damage as a result of falling fragments and debris from interception operations.”

The Kuwaiti interior ministry said two border guards “were martyred... while performing their national duty,” without elaborating. It is not clear whether their deaths were the result of an Iranian attack.

The UAE’s defense ministry said air defenses were responding to “incoming missile and drone threats from Iran,” while Bahrain’s interior ministry says air raid sirens were activated.

Qatar's defense ministry said the country was targeted a day earlier by 10 ballistic missiles and two cruise missiles fired from Iran, but most of them were intercepted and caused no casualties.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/6-wounded-by-shrapnel-1-seriously-as-iran-fires-suspected-cluster-warhead-missile-at-israel/>

IDF says it hit key commanders of IRGC's Quds Force in Beirut; 4 reportedly killed **Lebanese media reports strike on Ramada hotel, 10 others injured; Israeli military says it took measures to limit collateral damage, pans Iran for using civilians as human shields**

By [Emanuel Fabian](#),

[Agencies](#) and [ToI Staff](#) Today, 11:23 am



First aid responders inspect a Ramada Hotel room targeted by an Israeli strike, in Beirut's Rawche area, on March 8, 2026. (Ibrahim AMRO / AFP)

The Israel Defense Forces said Sunday it carried out a targeted attack on key commanders of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps in the Lebanese capital, amid reports that an Israeli strike hit a swanky Beirut hotel, killing four.

The IDF, in a statement, said the targets early Sunday were members of the Lebanon Corps of the Quds Force, the IRGC's extraterritorial arm, who "acted to advance terror plans against the State of Israel and its

citizens from Lebanese territory while operating simultaneously for the IRGC in Iran."

The army added: "The Iranian terror regime systematically operates among civilian populations in both Iran and Lebanon, cynically exploiting residents and using them as human shields to further terrorist objectives."

It said it took various steps to minimize the risk to civilians, including the use of precision weaponry and aerial surveillance.

Lebanese officials said the strike killed at least four people at a Ramada hotel. An AFP photographer at the bombed seafront hotel saw shattered windows and heavy damage to one room while security forces sealed off the area.

The IDF said that the results of the strike were still under review.



First aid responders are seen inside the lobby of the Ramada hotel in which a room was targeted by an Israeli strike, in Beirut's seaside Rawche area, on March 8, 2026. (Ibrahim AMRO / AFP)

Last week, the Israeli military issued an [unusual threat](#) against Iranian regime officials in Lebanon, warning that they will be targeted if they do not leave the country.

Reuters reported on Saturday that following those threats, more than 150 Iranian nationals, including diplomats and their families, had left Lebanon.

Days after the US and Israel launched strikes on the Iranian regime on February 28, Iran-backed Lebanese terror group Hezbollah began firing missiles and drones at Israel, pulling Lebanon into the war.

In response, Israel launched an offensive aimed at pushing Hezbollah away from the border and eliminating its threat, and has expanded its presence in southern Lebanon. Last week, the Israeli military issued an unusual threat against Iranian regime officials in Lebanon, warning that they will be targeted if they do not leave the country within 24 hours.

The hotel was housing displaced people fleeing the war in southern Lebanon and Beirut's southern suburbs, and some were seen leaving the building for fear of further airstrikes.

Ten people were also injured in the attack, the Lebanese health ministry said in a statement.

Last week, Israel said it had killed [Daoud Alizadeh](#), the acting commander of the Lebanon Corps, in a strike in Tehran. Another strike in Beirut last week killed the [chief of staff at the Lebanon Corps](#), Reza Khazaei.

On Saturday, Hezbollah launched many dozens of rockets and drones from Lebanon at northern Israel,

with no reports of injuries. Meanwhile, the IDF launched a wave of airstrikes on Beirut's southern Dahiyeh district, a Hezbollah stronghold.

The military also reiterated an evacuation warning it had issued on Thursday for the district's four major neighborhoods.



Displaced people fleeing Israeli airstrikes sleep at a school turned into a shelter in Beirut, Lebanon, March 7, 2026. (AP Photo/Bilal Hussein)

The Lebanese government, which has claimed it is working to disarm Hezbollah, has slammed the terror group's renewed attacks on Israel, accusing it of dragging Lebanon into a regional war.

Lebanon's health ministry said at least 294 people have died in Israeli airstrikes over the past week, prompting Prime Minister Nawaf Salam to warn of a looming "humanitarian disaster."

Israel regularly struck Hezbollah targets in Lebanon following a 2024 agreement, accusing the terror group of

ceasefire violations, and continued to hold on to five border posts inside Lebanon, citing security needs. It has now expanded beyond those points.

The November 2024 ceasefire ended a year of hostilities between Hezbollah and Israel, which started when the terror group began firing missiles and drones into northern Israel one day after its ally Hamas launched a devastating attack on southern Israel that set off the war in Gaza. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/idf-says-it-hit-key-commanders-of-irgcs-quds-force-in-beirut-4-reportedly-killed/>

Black clouds over Tehran rain down oil drops after Israel strikes oil facilities

IDF says fuel depots served Iran's military infrastructure, as Iranian Red Crescent warns that contaminated precipitation 'is extremely dangerous'

By [Agencies](#) and [Emanuel Fabian](#)

Today, 12:24 pm Updated at 2:56 pm



Clothes clips covered in soot from burned fuel are seen as smoke from a strike on an oil facility lingers in the cloudy sky over Tehran, Iran, March 8, 2026. (AP Photo/Vahid Salemi)

The sky over Iran's capital was blanketed with thick, choking smoke Sunday morning, hours after Israeli strikes hit oil facilities in Tehran.

Residents reported the smell of burning lingering in the air, with many saying it appeared dark even as the sun rose and rain poured on the city. Some residents reported oil-saturated raindrops from black clouds raining down on the city hours after the strikes.

Iran's environmental authorities urged Iranians to remain indoors to avoid respiratory problems and other health consequences.

The Iranian Red Crescent said the oil depot explosions released into the air "significant quantities of toxic hydrocarbon compounds, sulfur, and nitrogen oxides."

"In the event of precipitation, the resulting rain is extremely dangerous and highly acidic," it added in a statement, warning of skin burns and severe lung damage.

Fars news agency reported that Saturday's strikes hit four oil storage facilities and an oil production transfer center in Tehran and Alborz. Four tanker drivers in the center were killed, Fars reported.

The strikes sent up pillars of fire that could be seen in videos as a glow against the Saturday night sky. It appeared to be the first time a civil industrial facility has been targeted in the war.

With the sun blotted out Sunday morning, disoriented people in the Iranian capital had to turn on their lights to see through the gloom.

“I thought my alarm clock was broken,” a driver in his 50s told AFP on condition of anonymity.

By 10:30 a.m. local time, cars still needed their headlights to drive along Valiasr Street, a main thoroughfare that runs north-south through the city. On the streets of Tehran, security forces directed traffic while wearing special coats and masks to protect themselves.



Four men walk as a thick plume of smoke from a US-Israeli strike on an oil storage facility late Saturday lingers in the cloudy sky behind them in Tehran, Iran, Sunday, March 8, 2026. (AP/Vahid Salemi)

The IDF said Saturday night that the fuel depots struck near Tehran served Iran’s military.

“The military forces of the Iranian terror regime make direct and frequent use of these fuel tanks to operate military infrastructure. Through them, the Iranian terror regime distributes fuel to various consumers, including military entities in Iran,” the IDF said in a statement.

The IDF said the strike “constitutes an additional step in deepening the damage to the military infrastructure of the Iranian terror regime.”

An official told state TV on Sunday that four people were killed in the strikes on five oil facilities in and near the Iranian capital.

“Last night, four oil depots and a petroleum products transport center in Tehran and the Alborz were attacked by enemy aircraft,” the CEO of the National Iranian Oil Products Distribution Company, Keramat Veyskarami, told state TV.



A resident takes pictures while standing on the roof of his house covered with soot after an overnight strike on the Tehran Oil Refinery in Tehran on March 8, 2026. (ATTA KENARE / AFP)

“Four of our personnel, including two oil tanker drivers, were killed in the incident,” he added, saying the facilities were damaged but the “fire was brought under control.”

Veyskarami said Iran’s oil depots had “sufficient gasoline reserves.”

In addition to the environmental damage, Iran’s parliament speaker said Sunday that oil prices will

continue to soar, inflicting pain on the global economy as long as the war in the Middle East goes on.

Oil prices have soared since the US and Israel attacked Iran on Feb. 28, reaching their highest levels since 2023. The price for a barrel of Brent crude jumped 8.5% to \$92.69 on Friday — up from nearly \$70 a barrel just late last week. Meanwhile, benchmark US crude climbed 12.2%, to \$90.90 a barrel on Friday.

Flames rise from an oil storage facility south of the capital Tehran as strikes hit the city during the US–Israeli military campaign, March 7, 2026. (AP/Vahid Salemi)

“If the war continues like this, there will be neither a way to sell oil nor the ability to produce it,” Speaker

Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf said in a social media post. He said the war is not only impacting the US, but also the Middle East and the whole world “due to Netanyahu’s delusions.”



Tehran's governor Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian said Sunday morning that fuel distribution in the Iranian capital had been "temporarily interrupted."

"The problem is being resolved," he added.

For now, each vehicle in Tehran was limited to 20 liters of fuel. On Sunday morning, there were long lines at petrol stations, with AFP counting around 40 cars waiting at one.



Vehicles move along a highway past a war memorial statue and a billboard depicting Iran's late supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, with plumes of black smoke billowing, in Tehran on March 8, 2026. (AFP)

Meanwhile on Sunday, Iran struck Gulf infrastructure, hitting fuel tanks at Kuwait's international airport and damaging a desalination plant in Bahrain.

The official Kuwait News Agency said a fire at the airport was brought under control, reporting no "significant injuries." The military called the drone attack "a direct targeting of vital infrastructure."

And Bahrain's interior ministry said Sunday that an Iranian drone attack damaged a water desalination plant, accusing Tehran of "randomly" targeting civilian infrastructure.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards Corps said on Saturday that it had struck the United States' Juffair base in Bahrain, adding it had been used to attack an Iranian desalination plant earlier in the day.

Bahrain's national communication office later said the Iranian attack on a water desalination facility has had no impact on water supplies or network capacity. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/black-clouds-over-tehran-rain-down-oil-drops-after-israel-strikes-oil-facilities/>

Israel preparing for at least a month of fighting with Iran, senior IDF official says

The IDF is preparing for weeks of continued fighting with Iran, saying it must not 'take its foot off the gas' as it targets the destruction of Tehran's ballistic missile array, which officials say has been reduced from about 460 launchers to roughly 150

Yossi Yehoshua | 17:01

IDF leaders say they see a rare strategic opportunity to significantly weaken Iran's capabilities and warn that the campaign should continue until the Iranian regime collapses.

"It is impossible to miss this opportunity. We must not take our foot off the gas until this regime collapses — neither we nor the United States. This is an opportunity we will not get again," a senior IDF General Staff officer said.



Eyal Zamir (Photo: IDF)

Discussions with generals at the General Staff reflect a similar view, describing the current moment as a rare convergence of military and political conditions that could allow Israel and its allies to inflict deep damage on Iran.

Defense officials say coordination with the United States is especially close as the campaign enters its next phase. According to a senior official, Israel and the United States have divided operational sectors, targets and missions and are working with what he described as "excellent coordination."

During the first week of the campaign, most of the offensive effort was carried out by Israel, the official said. But a significant shift is expected as U.S. forces increase their role. "The Americans are bringing an enormous mass of capabilities, and we will see that in their strikes," a General Staff official said. "They are not operating according to a munitions economy — they are using what they have."

The next phase of the campaign is expected to focus on systematic strikes against Iran's military and industrial capabilities, Israeli officials said. The IDF plans to expand operations and intensify attacks on Iran's

military, industrial and technological infrastructure. “We are continuing the pounding and expanding into additional areas, while systematically thwarting military capabilities,” additional General Staff officials said.

The Israeli military is preparing for a campaign that could last several weeks. One senior officer said the planning aligns with statements by former U.S. President Donald Trump calling for Iran’s “total surrender.” “Trump spoke about four weeks. We are also preparing for at least a month,” the official said.



Destruction in Tehran (Photo: AFP)

IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir said during a situation assessment Sunday evening that Israelis should prepare for a prolonged conflict.

“Israel has been in a state of ongoing emergency for two years,” Zamir said. “What we need now above all is persistence and patience. It will take more time — however long it takes, it will take. This is the war of our generation, and it will determine our future and our security here for

many years to come.”

One of the central goals of the campaign is destroying Iran’s ballistic missile network. According to Israeli military estimates, Iran began the conflict with about 460 missile launchers and now has roughly 150 remaining.

Still, Israeli officials say the threat remains significant. “Surface-to-surface missiles remain a central challenge,” one official said. “The Iranians are trying to clear the ‘blockages’ we created by striking the tunnels and restore launch capabilities, but they are not succeeding.”

Military officials say the limited size of Iranian missile barrages is not due to conservation of weapons but rather the impact of Israeli strikes. “There are entire surface-to-surface missile commands that cannot function,” Israeli Air Force officials said. “Commanders and headquarters have been hit, launch sites damaged and tunnels blocked. This effort continues constantly alongside the other operations.”

Despite the military gains, Israeli defense officials say military action alone is unlikely to bring about regime change in Iran. “However successful a military move may be, it will ultimately require action by the Iranian public as well,” a security official said. “But we are optimistic about the results of the joint operation with the Americans.”

Israeli officials also warned that ending the campaign prematurely could allow Iran to quickly rebuild its missile capabilities. “If we stop now, they will rebuild the missile array,” one official said. “China and North Korea will help them, and we will find ourselves facing the same problem again in a short time.”

<https://www.ynetnews.com/article/bkesuvjtzl>

UAE launches first strike inside Iran, targets desalination plant

In an exclusive report, the UAE struck an Iranian desalination facility in response to continued attacks; Israeli officials view the strike as a signal, saying the UAE may join the war if Iranian attacks escalate

[Moran Azulay](#)|07:11

After several days of sustained missile and drone fire, the [United Arab Emirates](#) carried out a strike inside Iran. The attack targeted an Iranian desalination facility, and Israeli officials assess that the strike was intended primarily as a signal to the Iranian regime. However, if Iranian attacks intensify, the UAE could join the military campaign, even if only in a limited capacity.

Earlier Sunday, the UAE said Iran launched a new attack against it, firing 16 ballistic missiles and 117 drones.

Smoke over Tehran after Israeli strike (Photo: Majid Saeedi/Getty Images)

Since the war began, Iran has launched missiles and drones toward several Gulf states,



including the UAE. Iranian officials initially said the attacks were aimed only at U.S. bases, but the countries targeted have reported damage to civilian sites as well. Among the incidents was a strike on the building housing the Israeli Embassy in Abu Dhabi, where two Israelis were lightly wounded.

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian issued what he described as an apology to neighboring countries, saying Iran had decided that “neighboring states will not be attacked unless an attack against us originates from their territory.” Despite the statement, reports of strikes against Bahrain and Qatar emerged minutes later. Earlier, dramatic footage circulated showing a drone hitting Dubai’s international airport.



Alert in Dubai over an Iranian attack (Photo: FADEL SENNA / AFP)

UAE President Mohammed bin Zayed issued his first public statement since the start of the war on Sunday, saying the country was in a strong position and praising the military’s performance.

“The UAE is in good condition. The armed forces have played a commendable role,” he said. “We are in a time of war, and I pledge to fulfill our duty to defend our country and our people. I promise that the UAE will emerge stronger.”

In the UAE, which has established itself as the Gulf’s economic hub, there are concerns not only about the security threat but also about potential damage to the country’s image as a preferred destination for international business.

“People are afraid of what's happening. It's the first time they have to hide in underground places. Dubai airport, one of the biggest in the world, has to shut down for a few days,” financial strategist Nabil Milali told Reuters.

According to data from Israel’s Institute for National Security Studies, by Thursday Iran had launched 941 drones, 189 ballistic missiles and eight cruise missiles toward the UAE

<https://www.ynetnews.com/article/r1gmgoy11g>

Saudi Arabia has told Iran to stop attacks, warned of possible retaliation, sources say

Tehran said to demand closure of US bases in region and cessation of intelligence sharing with Washington

By Reuters and Tol Staff Today, 6:06 am



Screen captures from videos said to show smoke billowing from the Ras Tanura refinery in Saudi Arabia after an Iranian drone strike, March 2, 2026. (X, used in accordance with Clause 27a of the Copyright Law)

Saudi Arabia has told Tehran that while it favors a diplomatic settlement to Iran’s conflict with the United States, continued attacks on the kingdom and its energy sector could push Riyadh to respond in kind, four sources familiar with the matter told Reuters on Saturday.

Thursday saw Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan speak to Iranian Foreign Minister

Abbas Araghchi and set out Riyadh’s position with clarity, the sources said.

Saudi Arabia is open to any form of mediation aimed at de-escalation and a negotiated settlement, the sources quoted the minister as saying, underlining that neither Riyadh nor other Gulf states had let the US use their airspace or territory to launch airstrikes on Iran.

But Prince Faisal was also quoted by the sources as saying that if Iranian attacks persisted against Saudi territory or energy infrastructure, Saudi Arabia would be forced to permit US forces to use their bases there for military operations. Riyadh would retaliate if attacks on the kingdom’s critical energy facilities continued, he said. The sources said the kingdom had remained in regular contact with Tehran through its ambassador since the US and Israeli military campaign against Iran began on February 28, following the collapse of talks on Iran’s nuclear program.



The Saudi and Iranian foreign ministries did not respond to requests for comment.

Despite the warnings, the Saudi state news agency reported overnight that the kingdom had intercepted eight drones after they entered its airspace.

This video grab taken from UGC images posted on social media on March 2, 2026, shows smoke billowing from a Saudi oil refinery at the Ras Tanura oil production plant, near Dammam in Saudi Arabia's eastern province, after an attack (Handout / UGC / AFP)

The United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia have all come under heavy drone and missile fire from Iran over the past week.

Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, was killed on the first day of the war. Tehran responded by hitting Israel and Gulf Arab states hosting US military installations, and Israel has attacked Lebanon's Iran-backed Hezbollah.

Araghchi said in an interview on Saturday that he remained in constant contact with his Saudi counterpart and other Saudi officials, adding that Riyadh had assured Tehran it was fully committed to not allowing its territory, waters or airspace to be used for attacks against Iran.

On Saturday, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian apologized to neighbouring Gulf states for Tehran's actions — an apparent attempt to defuse regional anger over Iranian strikes that hit civilian targets — and said Iran's temporary leadership council had approved suspending attacks on nearby countries unless an attack on Iran came from those nations.



This satellite image provided by Vantor shows firefighting crews working to contain a fire and damage after a drone attack at Ras Tanura oil refinery, in Saudi Arabia, Monday, March 2, 2026. (Satellite image ©2026 Vantor via AP)

But hours later, Iran's Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters — the unified combatant command of the Iranian armed forces — said in a statement that US and Israeli bases and interests across the region would remain targets.

Two Iranian sources confirmed that a call had taken place in which Riyadh warned Tehran to halt attacks on Saudi Arabia and neighboring Gulf states. Iran, they said, reiterated its position that the strikes were not aimed at

Gulf countries themselves but at US interests and military bases hosted on their territory.

One Iranian source said that Tehran had in response demanded that US bases in the region be closed and some Gulf states stop sharing intelligence with Washington that Iran believes is being used to carry out attacks against it.

Another Iranian source said some military commanders were pressing to continue the strikes, accusing the US of using bases in Gulf states and these countries' airspace to conduct operations against Iran.

Iran had in recent years mended fences with its Gulf neighbors, including former regional arch-rival Saudi Arabia. The diplomatic campaign imploded in the blitz of drones and missiles launched by Iran's Revolutionary Guards in the past week. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/saudi-arabia-has-told-iran-to-stop-attacks-warned-of-possible-retaliation-sources-say/>

Panel picking Iran's next supreme leader has reached consensus, members say



Israel vows to hunt down Khamenei's successor; Assembly of Experts apparently bypasses formality of meeting in person amid ongoing air war, doesn't release name

By [Agencies](#) and [Tol Staff](#) Today, 2:14 pm

A large banner with a portrait of the late Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei (C) is displayed next to portraits of the late Ayatollah Khomeini (L) and of Hassan Nasrallah (R), the third secretary-general of Hezbollah, outside the US Consulate in Johannesburg on March 7, 2026 (Photo by EMMANUEL CROSET / AFP)

TEHRAN, Iran — The body tasked with selecting Iran’s new supreme leader has reached a decision, several members said Sunday, although the name has yet to be announced.

Israel threatened to target whoever is chosen.

“The most suitable candidate, approved by the majority of the Assembly of Experts, has been determined,” said Mohsen Heydari, a member of the selection body who represents Khuzestan province, according to Iran’s ISNA news agency.

Another member, Mohammad Mehdi Mirbagheri, confirmed in a video carried by Iran’s Fars news agency that “a firm opinion reflecting the majority view has been reached.”

On Saturday, a senior cleric in the Assembly of Experts said its members would meet “within one day” to choose the leader succeeding the slain ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who was killed in an Israeli airstrike in the [opening minutes of a joint air war campaign](#) with the US on February 28.

Khamenei’s son Mojtaba has been widely reported to be the front-runner, with some reports claiming he was already chosen but had not been named for fear he would be targeted. Khamenei is believed to still be alive and likely has gone into hiding.

The Israeli military warned it would continue pursuing every Khamenei successor. In a post on X in Persian, the military also warned it would pursue every person who seeks to appoint a successor for Khamenei, referring to the clerical body charged with choosing the Islamic Republic’s supreme leader.



This image provided by Airbus shows the strike on Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei’s compound in Tehran, on Feb. 28, 2026. (Airbus via AP)

However, assembly member Ayatollah Mohammad Mehdi Mirbaqeri said on Sunday that the panel has more or less reached a majority consensus.

The Mehr news agency quoted him as saying “some obstacles” still needed to be resolved regarding the process.

Another member, Ahmad Alamolhoda, said that the head of the assembly’s secretariat, Ayatollah Hashem Hosseini Bushehri, is responsible for announcing the assembly’s decision.

Iranian media said the group had a minor disagreement over whether they would need to meet in person to issue their final decision or bypass this formality.

Heydari Alekasir said in a video released by Nournews on Sunday that an in-person meeting was not possible under current conditions, suggesting remote and written alternatives.

“This is an extraordinary situation, the assembly cannot meet in a plenary,” he said.

Since the war began on February 28, Israeli and US strikes have killed dozens of officials and commanders, including Khamenei, with Iranian media reporting on Tuesday that strikes flattened an auxiliary building of the Assembly of Experts in the city of Qom. The IDF said it targeted the building, and was awaiting information on the results of the strike.



This handout picture taken in Tehran on October 30, 2024, shows Mojtaba Khamenei (2nd L), one of the children of Iran’s slain supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. (Office of Supreme Leader / AFP)

Heydari Alekasir said the candidate had been picked based on the late supreme leader’s advice that Iran’s top leader should “be hated by the enemy” instead of praised by it.

“Even the Great Satan (US) has mentioned his name,” the senior cleric said of the chosen successor, days after US President Donald Trump said Mojtaba Khamenei was an “unacceptable” choice for him.

Trump said on Thursday that the younger Khamenei, a mid-ranking hardline cleric, was the most likely successor, according to Axios, but warned he would reject such an option and that he should be [personally involved](#) in selecting Iran’s next leader.

Mojtaba Khamenei, 56, was not in Tehran when his father was killed by airstrikes early in the war, an Iranian source told Reuters on Wednesday.

He has close ties to Iran's elite Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and is one of the most influential figures in the Iranian clerical establishment, thanks to the influence he built behind the scenes and his role as his father's gatekeeper, according to people familiar with the matter.

He has for years been seen as one of the top candidates to succeed the elder Khamenei, despite never holding a government position, aside from working in his father's office.



This handout picture provided by the office of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei shows him during an address in Tehran on February 17, 2026. (Handout / KHAMENEI.IR / AFP)

Ali Khamenei ruled Iran from 1989 as the supreme leader after serving as president for nearly eight years.

Mojtaba Khamenei was a particular target for criticism by protesters during unrest over the death of a young woman in police custody in 2022, after she was arrested for allegedly breaching the Islamic Republic's strict dress codes.

He is seen as having leverage over Iran's security apparatus, which has repressed several waves of protests in recent years.

Mojtaba has worked closely with Iran's IRGC — designated a terrorist group by the US and EU — both with commanders of its expeditionary Quds Force and its all-volunteer Basij that violently suppressed nationwide protests in January, murdering thousands of Iranians, the US Treasury has said.

The United States sanctioned him in 2019 during Trump's first term over working to "advance his father's destabilizing regional ambitions and oppressive domestic objectives." <https://www.timesofisrael.com/panel-picking-irans-next-supreme-leader-has-reached-consensus-members-say/>

Iran unleashing unprecedented terror campaign against Israelis abroad, senior official warns

National Security Council official confirms travel warnings raised for Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia, describing a "fundamental change" in Tehran's approach.

By AMICHAH STEIN MARCH 8, 2026 21:43 Updated: MARCH 8, 2026 23:46



Iranians rally as Muslims attend Friday prayer, in Tehran, Iran, March 6, 2026 (photo credit: MAJID ASGARIPOUR/WANA (WEST ASIA NEWS AGENCY) VIA REUTERS)

In a stark warning to Israeli travelers abroad, a senior National Security Council (NSC) official warned in a conversation with The Jerusalem Post that the Islamic Republic has engaged in an "unprecedented removal of restraints" regarding terror plots abroad, shifting from cautious proxy warfare to direct, "dirty," and unfiltered attempts to harm Israelis globally.

The senior official described a dramatic shift in Tehran's modus operandi. Following a series of intelligence and military blows sustained by the regime, Iran is no longer operating solely through layers of deniability.

"We are seeing an Iranian removal of restraints that is almost unprecedented," the official stated. "No proxies, no filters. Where they can act, they act. Whether with brazen determination or in a 'dirty' manner. It is a fundamental change in approach because they feel they have nothing to lose right now given what they have absorbed."

As part of the heightened alert, the NSC has raised travel warnings for several countries bordering or in close proximity to Iran: Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. These join existing high-level warnings for the [United Arab Emirates](#) and other nations in the region.

The official emphasized that the threat is not limited to Iranian agents but includes a "mix of efforts." Tehran

is recruiting “anyone available,” including criminal syndicates, mercenaries, Afghans, and Azeris to carry out attacks. “Anyone who is available and ready to work,” the official says.



An activist holds an image of Iran's late Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei during a march organised by Stop the War Coalition, calling for an end to hostilities amid US-Israeli strikes on Iran, in London, Britain, March 7, 2026. (credit: REUTERS/Jack Taylor)

The official added, “Some of those [killed in recent days](#) in Iran were planning terror attacks abroad, and the moment they were killed, the command and control capability of all the processes was disrupted.”

Iranian regime 'eager for battle'

The official described a regime that is “eager for battle.” In the past, Iran relied heavily on maintaining a safe distance from terror plots – such as the attempted attacks in Cyprus and other countries – blaming local criminals or third parties to maintain plausible deniability. That era appears to be over.

The official highlighted the success of global cooperation, noting that dozens of terror attempts are thwarted annually. He emphasized that even nations with strained diplomatic relations with Israel are cooperating to prevent attacks on their soil.

“It is a known rule that for counterterrorism, you have no enemies,” the official said. “Even countries that like you less – a terror attack has image and economic implications. There is a distinct interest that there will be no terror.”

The NSC official ended with practical, urgent advice for Israelis currently abroad or planning to travel. Beyond the state-level threat, there is a rising concern regarding “lone wolf” attacks incited by global anti-Israel sentiment and religious fatwas (decrees).

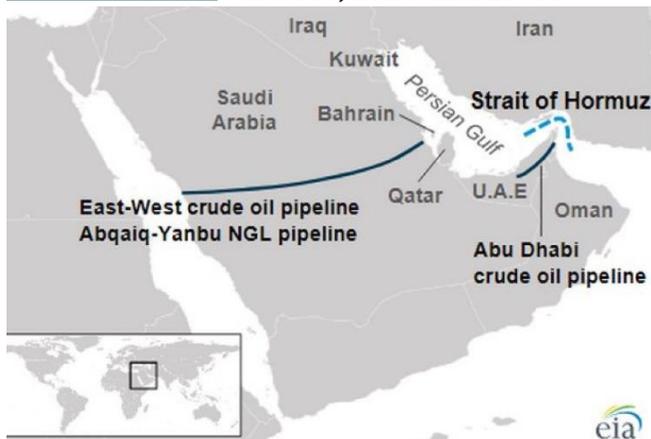
“An Israeli, wherever he is, needs extra caution these days,” the official warned.

He advised Israelis to avoid large gatherings at Chabad houses and kosher restaurants in sensitive areas and to avoid displaying outward signs of Israeli or Jewish identity.

“I recommend to any Israeli, wherever they are, [to] avoid places associated with the Jewish community and Israel. We need double caution here,” the official concluded. “Avoid that local ‘crazed’ individual who decides to take initiative.” <https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/article-889282>

Saudi Pipeline Blown-Up; 5 Million Barrels of Oil Per day OFFLINE

Hal Turner World March 07, 2026 Hits: 26410



With the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, Saudi Arabia began re-routing their oil through a 742 mile long pipeline called the "East-West Pipeline (PETROLINE)" as seen on the map above. That pipeline is now blown up.



The pipeline was capable of carrying five million barrels of oil per day. Now, it can move nothing.

Middle Eastern countries have watched their ability to ship oil, crippled by the Israel/US/Iran conflict. Saudi Arabia had previously built the East-West pipeline in case of such an eventuality, so THEIR oil could still be shipped, albeit via the Red Sea.

Those plans just got blown up.

Expect the price of oil to jump again, and the price for Gasoline to follow.

Here in northeastern Pennsylvania, 94 octane gasoline ("Super unleaded") was \$3.279 per gallon one week ago; tonight it is \$3.72 Up \$0.45 per gallon in one week.

Diesel fuel one week ago was \$4.079 per gallon one week ago; today diesel at that same station is now \$4.999 per gallon. **Up \$0.92 in one week.**

<https://haltturnerradioshow.com/index.php/component/content/article/saudi-pipeline-blown-up-5-million-barrels-of-oil-per-day-offline?catid=17&Itemid=101>

PANIC-BUYING In Dubai Supermarkets After Revelation "Only 10 days Fresh-Produce Left"

Hal Turner World March 07, 2026 Hits: 19982



The CEO of one of the world's largest logistics companies told Swiss broadcaster SRF on March 5 that Dubai has approximately ten days of fresh food left. That sentence has not appeared on a single major English-language front page. It should be the headline.

Stefan Paul, CEO of Kuehne and Nagel, was not speaking hyperbolically. He was reading his company's supply chain data.

Dubai and the broader Gulf import between 80 and 90 percent of their food. Approximately 70 percent of GCC foodstuffs transit the Strait of Hormuz. The strait has been closed to commercial traffic since February 28.

Global air cargo capacity serving the Middle East fell 22 percent between February 28 and March 3, according to Aevean data published through Reuters.

Jebel Ali, the port that serves 50 million people across the Gulf and serves as the regional hub through which the vast majority of Dubai's perishable imports flow, **was struck and suspended operations**, with partial

resumption beginning March 5.

Ten days of fresh produce is what you have when the ship lanes close, the air routes collapse, and the port is hit simultaneously.

Fresh produce is not canned goods. It is not strategic reserves. It is the strawberries, the tomatoes, the lettuce, the mangoes, the herbs, and the dairy that make a modern city function as a modern city. These products have days of shelf life, not weeks or months. They cannot be rerouted around the Cape of Good Hope because the Cape of Good Hope adds four to six weeks to a transit and a strawberry does not survive four to six weeks in a container.

When the routes close, the perishable category depletes in real time with no backstop.

Dubai is one of the wealthiest cities on earth. It has the fiscal capacity, the sovereign wealth,

and the logistical relationships to acquire food from anywhere. The problem is not money. The problem is physics. You cannot teleport produce from Spain or Kenya or India onto Dubai supermarket shelves when the air cargo lanes are 22 percent contracted and the port is still recovering from Iranian strikes. The money is willing. The infrastructure is not available.

The ten-day figure is a **fresh produce specific estimate, not a total food supply figure.** Dubai has substantial dry goods, frozen stocks, and strategic grain reserves maintained by the UAE government. The population is **not** facing famine. What it is facing is the moment when the visible symbol of a globalized, prosperous, interconnected city, a fully stocked supermarket, begins to thin. That thinning is a political event as much as a logistical one.

The UAE government has absorbed 1,072 Iranian drones, suspended 70 percent of regional flights, watched its data centers targeted, and seen its Fujairah bypass route threatened. Empty produce aisles in Dubai Spinneys is the point where the population that has so far watched the war with alarm rather than hunger begins to feel it directly.

The war's civilian transmission mechanism has arrived. Not through inflation statistics that take months to compile. Through the absence of tomatoes.

Iran has now demonstrated it can reach the molecular composition of the food supply of its adversaries' allied cities within ten days of opening hostilities. That is an entirely new category of coercive leverage. It does not require a weapon capable of hitting a supermarket. It only requires the ability to close the routes that the supermarket depends on.

The bypass route for oil was Fujairah. The bypass route for food was air cargo. Both are now compromised. There is no third route. <https://haltturnerradioshow.com/index.php/component/content/article/panic-buying-in-dubai-supermarkets-after-revelation-only-10-days-fresh-produce-left?catid=17&Itemid=101>

Promoters of trans surgeries for kids sue Trump over investigation

By [Katelynn Richardson, Daily Caller News Foundation](#)

March 8, 2026



The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) sued the Trump administration on Tuesday for launching an investigation into its guidance on sex-change procedures for minors.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) began probing in January whether the AAP and the World Professional Association of Transgender Health (WPATH) made "unsubstantiated representations or engaged in unfair practices" in their guidance on treating minors with gender dysphoria.

"Using the threat of investigation or prosecution against an organization in order to silence speech the government does not like is retaliation, prohibited by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution," the AAP argues in its [complaint](#). "Moreover, issuing an overbroad subpoena as a tool to compel disclosures in such a retaliatory action violates the Fourth Amendment."

The **AAP issued a policy in 2018 stating puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones, as well as surgeries like double mastectomies, on a "case-by-case basis." It reaffirmed the policy in 2023.**

The organization did not [reevaluate](#) its position after the American Society of Plastic Surgeons [released](#) a position statement Feb. 3 recommending delaying gender-related surgeries until after at least 19 years of age. Yet the American Medical Association agreed that surgeries should be "deferred to adulthood."

AAP pressured WPATH to remove age minimums for sex-change surgeries from its Standards of Care Version 8 guidance before publication (SOC-8), emails [reported](#) by the Daily Caller News Foundation revealed in 2024.

Court records unsealed in 2024 also [revealed](#) Biden administration officials pressured WPATH to remove age minimums to align with legislative priorities. WPATH [suppressed](#) publication of evidence reviews that undermined their recommendations, court records showed.

Documents the FTC requested WPATH produce included "all Communications with Professional Medical Organizations related to SOC 8," [according](#) to a motion to quash the investigation.

The FTC did not respond to a request for comment from the DCNF.

AAP's lawsuit states gender-affirming care "refers to a broad range of steps that may be used to affirm a

patient's gender."

"These steps can range from social acceptance and mental health care to medical treatments, such as hormone treatments and puberty blockers, and legal affirmation," it states. "In very rare cases, GAC could also include gender affirming surgeries, when determined to be developmentally and medically appropriate for an individual patient, in consultation with family and medical and mental health providers."

In December, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) [announced](#) proposed rules that would prohibit Medicaid dollars from funding sex-change procedures for minors and restrict participating hospitals from performing the procedures on minors. President Donald Trump signed [executive](#) orders during his first month in office defining "sex" as either "male or female" and [restricting](#) federal funding from promoting child sex changes. **Content created by The Daily Caller News Foundation is available without charge to any eligible news publisher that can provide a large audience. For licensing opportunities of our original content, please contact licensing@dailycallernewsfoundation.org. <https://www.wnd.com/2026/03/promoters-trans-surgeries-kids-sue-trump-investigation/> **The AAP and a few other professional medical organizations need to go away permanently.** rdb**

OP ED

Make or Break Time for Iran's Remaining Allies

by [Con Coughlin](#) March 8, 2026 at 5:00 am



Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan publicly condemned the joint US-Israeli attack on Iran while saying he is "saddened" by the elimination of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and offering his "condolences" to the people of Iran. Erdogan's reaction is indicative of the close ties he has developed with Iran's ayatollahs, and his opposition to the notion of the emergence of a democratic, Western-aligned government in Tehran.

Pictured: Erdogan meets with Khamenei in Tehran on January 29, 2014. (Image source: Iranian Supreme Leader's website/AFP via Getty Images)

US President Donald J. Trump's decision to launch his devastating military campaign against Iran's ayatollahs means that countries, such as Turkey and Qatar, which have previously been ambivalent about their attitude towards Tehran, will now need to undertake a serious reappraisal of where their true interests lie.

Prior to Trump launching "Operation Epic Fury", the military campaign designed to eliminate Iran's ability to produce nuclear weapons, ballistic missiles or support its proxies once and for all, several important regional players [sought to remain neutral](#) as the tensions deepened between Washington and Tehran over Iran's nuclear programme.

Even though they claimed to be allies of the US, they also sought to maintain links with the ayatollahs, even when it became abundantly clear that the Trump administration was determined to confront Iran over its clear delaying tactics in the recent round of nuclear negotiations.

Now, following the demise of Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, as well as scores of other prominent members of the regime, countries that have previously tried to maintain [cordial relations](#) with the ayatollahs face a stark choice: do they want to maintain their ties with known Islamist extremists, or forge closer ties with the US and its allies?

How they respond to this dilemma could have vital implications for their future development. By aligning themselves with the West, they will have the opportunity to benefit from having access to the exciting technological revolution taking place in Silicon Valley, involving new technologies such as artificial intelligence. On the other hand, if they choose to maintain their ties with extreme Islamist groups, such as the Muslim Brotherhood and the founders of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps, they will be left to fend for themselves.

What if, however -- Washington and Jerusalem should both carefully note -- they choose *both*? With the Iranian threat gone, what would prevent them from complying with Trump's demands of the moment and enjoying the benefits of modernity -- and *then*, when he is no longer in office, continue supporting terrorism, religious

extremism and jihad (holy war)?

Just because one is happy to have a roaring economy -- as we already see with Qatar -- that does not necessarily mean one will be happy with what is already being [reported](#) as "concern" about Israel's increased standing in the region.

The first suggestion that many Arab leaders may be reconsidering their neutral status in the conflict between the US and Iran came over a week ago, when Gulf leaders [voiced](#) their condemnation of Iran's "reckless and indiscriminate attacks" on their territory and infrastructure.

Leaders of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), a regional organisation comprising Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, indicated they were giving serious consideration to exercising their right "to respond to Iranian attacks" in order to protect regional security and stability.

In an attempt to escalate the conflict, Iran has deliberately targeted several of its Gulf neighbours, launching missiles and drones targeting sites in Kuwait, Bahrain, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Oman, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia. The attacks are seen by many as a deliberate ploy by the Iranian regime to pressure pro-Western Gulf states into calling on Trump and the Israelis to end their military campaign against the ayatollahs.

To judge by the response from Gulf leaders, however, the Iranian ploy has had the opposite effect, with Arab leaders now giving serious consideration to abandoning their neutrality and actively giving their backing to the US military campaign.

The only GCC member state opposed to confronting Iran was -- predictably -- Qatar, a state that has tried to maintain ties with the ayatollahs while becoming one of the [main backers](#) of Hamas terrorists in Gaza.

Qatar's former prime minister and foreign minister, Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jaber Al Thani, [cautioned](#) that GCC states "must not be dragged into a direct confrontation with Iran", even though Tehran "violated the sovereignty of the Council's states and was the aggressor".

Another sign that attitudes in the Arab world were hardening towards Iran's mullahs came with a joint [statement](#) issued by the leaders of Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, saying that "Iran's actions represent a dangerous escalation that violates the independence of numerous countries and threatens regional stability. Targeting civilians and countries not engaged in hostilities is reckless and destabilizing".

Another important consequence of Iranian aggression is that it has [helped to heal](#) the deepening rift between the UAE and Saudi Arabia, whose relations had been badly affected by rifts caused by their involvement in the conflicts in Yemen and Sudan, where the two monarchies have often found themselves supporting different sides. In a sign of a rapprochement, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and the UAE's President Mohammed bin Zayed spoke for the first time in months.

The shifting geopolitical landscape in the Middle East certainly makes the position of Turkey, a country that has sought to maintain strong ties with both Washington and Tehran, look even more exposed, especially after Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan publicly condemned the joint US-Israeli attack on Iran while saying he is ["saddened"](#) by the elimination of Khamenei and offering his "condolences" to the people of Iran.

Erdogan's reaction is indicative of the close ties he has developed with Iran's ayatollahs, and his opposition to the notion of the emergence of a democratic, Western-aligned government in Tehran.

Prior to the launch of Operation Epic Fury, Turkey had joined several Arab states in trying to negotiate a "diplomatic solution" between Washington and Tehran.

Turkey's objective in the negotiations was to strike a deal whereby Tehran would be allowed to preserve elements of its nuclear infrastructure, thereby keeping open the option of the mullahs being able to develop nuclear weapons at a future date.

Turkey, which remains a member of the Nato alliance, has done its best to undermine the Trump administration's military campaign against Iran, [denying](#) US forces vital access to its air, land and maritime space to conduct operations against the ayatollahs.

Pakistan, which sits on Trump's "Board of Peace," despite its failure to recognize Israel, has also been clearly [pro-Iran](#), although carefully framing its objections in terms of international law rather than theology.

The Trump administration certainly needs to take note of the long-term hostile conduct of so-called allies such as Turkey, Qatar and Pakistan as the US and Israel attempt to destroy Iran's nuclear program once and for all, and especially in rebuilding Gaza.

At the very least, if Turkey is not prepared to support the US military in times of crisis and no longer acts as

an ally -- and is indeed acting contrary to US interests -- then the White House would do well to conclude that the US and its allies should cease all military cooperation with it.

Con Coughlin is the Telegraph's Defence and Foreign Affairs Editor and a Distinguished Senior Fellow at Gatestone Institute. <https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/22322/iran-allies>



BS"D

STEP BY STEP

STEP BY STEP: Good news is that many friends and supporters of Lev U'Neshama (Heart and Soul) donated towards the Education Fund project to provide basic school supplies for actually 350 children within our Lev U'Neshama families.

We are grateful that the school supply part of our effort has been successful.

According to the Israel Population and Statistics office, Tzfat's population is about 40,000, and one third live at the poverty level. We do what we can so at least the children within our struggling LUN families can get the things they need.

Every week we are providing new sport shoes and eye exams/eyeglasses to the children on our request list. However, previous donations are rapidly dwindling. I am reaching out now before the fund has been emptied and we will have to say "no" to additional requests.

We work with two local shoe merchants who give Lev U'Neshama a discount but they advised us the cost of the shoes has increased. Also, we work with an accredited optician in town who also gives us a discount but his cost is stable.

Lev U'Neshama is an Israeli registered non-profit charity organization, volunteer run, no business expenses whatsoever and every \$ goes into our programs.

Shoes: \$45 per pair regular and \$60 for First Steps, baby shoes.

Eye Exam/Eyeglasses: \$60 per child.

Your support is urgently requested.

Or use the Zelle US to US bank transfer system (contact me at mortsmo@aol.com for bank information).

US Donors may also send checks made payable to

Simcha Smolensky, my son, who is also a volunteer. Send to:

Rabbi Simcha Smolensky, 6739 N Mozart St Chicago IL 60645

Your support will be appreciated.

Yaffa Smolensky