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Israel's war on Iran is not about nuclear weapons

It is, and has always been, about regime change and breaking the Axis of Resistance



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The claim that has been adopted by the United States, Israel and its European partners, that the attack on Iran was a “pre-emptive” attempt to stop Tehran from acquiring nuclear weapons, is demonstrably false. It holds about as much weight as the allegations against Iraq’s Saddam Hussein in 2003 and this war of aggression is just as illegal.

For the best part of four decades, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been claiming that Iran is on the verge of acquiring a nuclear weapon. Yet, every single attempt to strike a deal which would bring more monitoring and restrictions to Iran’s nuclear program has been systematically dismantled by Israel and its powerful lobbying groups in Western capitals.

In order to properly assess Israel’s attack on Iran, we have to establish the facts in this case. The Israeli leadership claim to have launched a pre-emptive strike, but have presented no evidence to support their allegations that Iran was on the verge of acquiring a nuclear weapon. Simply stating this does not serve as proof, it is a claim, similar to how the US told the world Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction.

Back in March, the US Director of National Intelligence, Tulsi Gabbard [testified before a Senate Intelligence Committee](#) that the intelligence community “continues to assess that Iran is not building a nuclear weapon and Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has not authorized the nuclear weapons program he suspended in 2003.”

On top of this, Iran was actively participating in indirect negotiations with the US to reach a new version of the 2015 Nuclear Deal. Donald Trump announced Washington would unilaterally withdraw from the agreement in 2018, instead pursuing a “maximum pressure” sanctions campaign at the behest of Israel.

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Trump that Iran was violating the Nuclear Deal, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) released a report which stated Iran was in full compliance with the deal at the time.



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If you trace back every conversation with neo-conservatives, Israeli war hawks and Washington-based think tanks, their opposition to the Obama-era Nuclear Deal always ends up spiraling into the issues of Iran's ballistic missile program and its support for regional non-State actors.

Israeli officials frequently make claims about Iran producing a nuclear weapon in "years", "months" or even "weeks," this has become almost second nature. Yet their main issue has always been with Iran's support for groups like Hamas and Hezbollah, who strive for the creation of a Palestinian State.

Proof of this all is simple. Israel, by itself, cannot destroy Iran's vast nuclear program. It is not clear the US can destroy it either, even if it enters the war. An example of the US' ineffectiveness at penetrating Iranian-style bunkers, built into mountainous ranges, as many of Iran's nuclear facilities are, was demonstrated through the American failure to destroy missile storage bases in Yemen with its bunker-buster munitions, which were dropped from B-2 bombers.

Almost immediately after launching his war on Iran, Netanyahu sent out a message in English to the Iranian people, urging them to overthrow their government in an attempt to trigger civil unrest. The Israeli prime minister has since all but announced that regime change is his true intention, claiming that the operation "may lead" to regime change.

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Israel's own intelligence community and military elites have also expressed their view that their air force alone is not capable of destroying the Iranian nuclear program. So why then launch this war, if it is not possible to achieve the supposed reason it was *"pre-emptively"* launched?



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There are two possible explanations:

The first is that the Israeli prime minister has launched this assault on Iran as a final showdown in his *"seven front war,"* with which he hopes to conclude the regional

conflict through a deadly exchange that will ultimately inflict damage on both sides.

In this scenario, the desired outcome would be to conclude the war with the claim that Netanyahu has succeeded at destroying or has significantly degraded Iran's nuclear program. He would also throw in claims, like we already see him making, that huge amounts of Iranian missiles and drones were eliminated. This would also make the opening Israeli strike, which killed senior Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) commanders and nuclear scientists, make sense. It would all be the perfect blend of propaganda to sell a victory narrative.

On the other hand, the assumption would be that Tehran would also claim victory. Then both sides are able to show the results to their people and tensions cool down for a while. If you are to read what the Washington-based think-tanks are saying about this, most notably [The Heritage Foundation](#), they speak about the ability to contain the war.

The second explanation, which could be an added

bonus that the Israelis and US are hoping could come as a result of their efforts, is that this is a full-scale regime change war that is designed to rope in the US.

Israel's military prestige was greatly damaged in the Hamas-led attack on October 7, 2023, and since that time there has been no victory achieved over any enemy. Hamas is still operating in Gaza and is said to have just as many fighters as when the war began, Hezbollah was dealt significant blows but is still very much alive, while Yemen's Ansarallah has only increased its strength. This is an all round stunning defeat of the Israeli military and an embarrassment to the US.

As is well known, Iran is the regional power that backs all of what is called the Axis of Resistance.

Without it, groups like Hezbollah and Hamas would be significantly degraded.

Evidently, armed resistance to

Israeli occupation will never end as long as occupied people exist and live under oppressive rule, but destroying Iran would be devastating for the regional alliance against Israel.



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The big question however, is whether regime change is even possible. There is a serious question mark here and it seems much more likely that this will end up on a slippery slope to nuclear war instead.

What makes the Israeli-US claim that this war is somehow pre-emptive, for which there is no proof at all, all the more ridiculous of a notion, is that if anything, Iran may now actually rush to acquire a nuclear weapon for defensive purposes. If they can't even trust the Israelis not to bomb them with US backing, while negotiations were supposed to be

happening, then how can a deal ever be negotiated?

Even in the event that the US joins and deals a major blow to the Iranian nuclear program, it doesn't mean that Iran will simply abandon the program altogether. Instead, Tehran could simply end up rebuilding and acquiring the bomb years later. Another outcome of this war could end up being Israeli regime change, which also appears as if it could now be on the table.

The statements, views and opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of RT.

OPINION

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