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Undefeated: Here's how Iran sees the outcome of its war with the US

Tehran professor Mohammad Marandi explains in an interview why Iran feels stronger, but trusts neither the US nor Israel to keep a deal

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RT composite. © RT

Iran believes it has emerged stronger from its latest confrontation with the United States and Israel, but remains deeply skeptical that any agreement reached at the negotiating table will be honored, University of Tehran professor Mohammad Marandi has insisted.

Speaking to Fyodor Lukyanov for Russia 24's International Review, Marandi said the mood in Tehran is one of guarded confidence after what he described as a "*decisive victory*" in both military and diplomatic terms. He analyses that Iran's opponents suffered serious strategic and financial losses, while the war had strengthened Tehran's self-confidence and further deepened its ties with Russia.

At the same time, Marandi cautioned that few in Iran expect the new memorandum of understanding with Washington to be implemented smoothly, warning that the coming weeks and months are likely to remain difficult.

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Fyodor Lukyanov: *Do Iranians feel like victors?*

Mohammad Marandi: The general view in Iran is that we have achieved a decisive victory. And it's not just that the country has held its ground.

The Americans, the Israelis, and their allies suffered very serious losses throughout the war.

I believe that the financial damage inflicted on Iran's enemies is considerably greater than the damage suffered by Iran itself, although that too was significant. As for the subsequent blockade, Iranians are convinced they have won that battle too. The Americans tried to starve Iran into submission, but this turned out to be a double-edged sword. The global economy suffered greatly.

And, of course, the Americans' recklessness played into Russia's hands, because of the energy crisis. After all, most of the oil from the Persian Gulf is heavy crude, and the only alternative source in the world with significant reserves of it is Russia.

So they've shot themselves in the foot twice. But the Iranians feel they've won this protracted war as well. That is precisely why Trump was so insistent on a quick deal.



(L) Mohammad Marandi; (R) Fyodor Lukyanov. © Akila Jayawardena / NurPhoto via Getty Images; Sputnik / Vladimir Smirnov

Lukyanov: *The deal, as it stands, suits Iran, as I understand*

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Marandi: Yes, the Iranians believe they have won at the negotiating table too. There were serious disagreements there. Contrary to what Trump and the Pakistani prime minister said, a few days before the agreement was announced, there was no final text of the memorandum. Significant contradictions remained. But by bombing Beirut in an attempt to scupper a potential agreement, Netanyahu, ironically, achieved the opposite. And when Iran decided to launch a second strike against the Israeli regime, Trump immediately made key concessions, including on Lebanon and the withdrawal of Israeli troops to mark the end of the war.

Lukyanov: *The concessions in the memorandum are just words; there is no guarantee that what has been stated will be implemented.*



Marandi: Naturally, in Tehran, as, I am sure, in Moscow and throughout Russia, there's enormous skepticism towards the United States. And there's boundless mistrust of the Israeli regime. No one seriously expects that the signed memorandum will be easily implemented or that everything will be agreed upon in the second phase. That would be very naive. Most Iranians view the coming days, weeks and months as a very difficult period.

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There are likely to be flare-ups of military tension, but most likely not on the scale of the 39-day war. On the whole, people are optimistic, although the economic difficulties are very real. However, Iran's self-confidence has grown, and the country feels that its opponents have been significantly weakened, even if not completely swept away.

Lukyanov: *A key element of this war is Iran's relations with the Arab Gulf states. They were furious at the Iranian strikes, but cannot ignore the new realities and the strength Iran has demonstrated. What happens now? Is a security framework in the region possible?*

Marandi: Iran's actions against its neighbors were a response. These countries contributed to the war against Iran; in Tehran's view, they were participants in it. They helped kill thousands of Iranians. And Iran had no choice but to strike back when its critical infrastructure was under threat. When the enemy began striking at vital targets, we had to respond with strikes against

the states that were aiding the Americans and Israelis.



A black plume of smoke rises from a warehouse in the industrial area of Sharjah City following reports of Iranian strikes in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, on March 1, 2026. © AP Photo / Altaf Qadri

As we can see from the example of Oman, when a country does not provide bases or contribute to the war against Iran, it reaps the benefits. Iran's relations with Oman are very good, as they are with Iraq. Tehran is now trying to engage each of the five remaining Gulf states bilaterally, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and the UAE. In some cases, it has been more successful, in others less so. The aim is to forge new relationships.



Iran is not demanding that ties with America be severed, let them have the strongest possible ties, but on one condition, that these ties are not directed against Iran, and that their territory is not used as a springboard for war. Progress is being made;

Read more: The US-Iran talks are these countries are going nowhere beginning to realize that the US has done them nothing but harm, taken trillions of dollars, failed to provide genuine security, and did not even regard their security as a priority. They did everything to protect Israel, but almost nothing to protect the Gulf states themselves. Iran is pointing this out to them and wants to see whether we can create a new regional reality in the Persian Gulf. If this happens and the countries change their policies, it will strengthen them and the entire region, and deal a blow to the interests of the Israeli regime. Incidentally, Israel is aware of this communication and is actively trying to thwart it, particularly in the case of the UAE.

Lukyanov: *Following last year's 12-day confrontation, I heard some of your colleagues lamenting that Iran had found itself face to face with its enemies, practically on its own. Did you feel isolated this time around?*

Marandi: To a certain extent, yes. But I must point out that Russia helped Iran and showed solidarity, particularly during this war. The same can be said of other friendly countries, to a greater extent than before. I think it's fair to say that Iranian-Russian relations have advanced significantly over the last four or five years. And this war has continued to strengthen them. There's certainly an element of isolation. When you stand up to an empire, you are alone. I'm sure that the Russians, even with the support of Iran and China over the last five years, have also felt isolated. But it is unfair to claim that Russia did not support Iran, especially in this war, because assistance was provided. And it seems to me that the path we are on is, unfortunately, linked to war, death and destruction; this is not of our own making, but it is leading to a further strengthening of the close ties between Iran and Russia.

This interview was produced specifically for the program [International Review \(Russia 24\)](#), and was translated and edited by RT team



By **Fyodor Lukyanov**, the editor-in-chief of *Russia in Global Affairs*, chairman of the Presidium of the Council on Foreign and Defense Policy, and research director of the Valdai International Discussion Club.



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