

Regional Developments and Political and Security Challenges

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(www.rieas.gr) Publication date: 11 October 2026

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Executive Summary

This analytical policy paper addresses current regional developments and the resulting political and security challenges in the Middle East. It examines the risks of escalation on energy security, international trade, and maritime shipping lanes. Furthermore, the paper highlights the dimensions of uncontrolled arms proliferation and the illicit drug trade as tools used to undermine regional and international stability. The paper concludes with a set of policy recommendations addressed to decision-makers and the international community, emphasizing the imperative of forming a decisive international coalition and dismantling proxy networks to restore regional security balance.

Keywords: Regional Developments, Political and Security Challenges, Middle East, Regional Security, Iran, Energy Security, Strait of Hormuz, Uncontrolled Arms, International Coalition, Policy Paper, Iraqi Coordination Council.

The world continues to witness dramatic events that have had undeniable repercussions and spillover effects across the globe without exception. Foremost among these developments is the war between the United States and Iran on one hand, and the war between Israel and Iran on the other. All of this has been the direct product of the aggressive and terrorist approach pursued by the Mullahs' regime in Iran—a trajectory whose features began with Khomeini's ascension to power in 1979 under the banner of "Exporting the Revolution". Since then, Iran has become a haven for terrorism and a backer of numerous terrorist leaders worldwide. This approach continues unabated to this day. Not content with this, Iran has sought to acquire nuclear weapons despite its false assertions of pursuing peaceful nuclear energy. There was complicity, specifically from the administration of U.S. President Barack Obama, through the (5+1) agreement signed with Iran, which enabled Tehran to acquire large numbers of centrifuges and reach high levels of uranium enrichment approaching 60%—a clear indicator of Iran's attempt to enrich uranium for military purposes.

Concurrently, the criminal Iranian regime planted terrorist cells in numerous countries worldwide, particularly in the Middle East and several Arab nations, extending through Africa and spreading across Europe and the Americas. Their objective has been to liquidate opponents of the Tehran regime and destabilize nations where Iranian militias and proxies spread corruption—resulting in four Arab capitals falling under the control and sway of the Iranian regime: Baghdad, Damascus, Beirut, and Sanaa. The so-called Quds Force has been responsible for all aspects of funding, arming, and directing these militias.

Undoubtedly, the war on Iran has had massive repercussions on the entire Middle East region and the rest of the world as a result of closing the Strait of Hormuz to maritime navigation. This led to record-high oil prices due to the severe drop in oil supplies, especially given that the Arabian Gulf region alone exports more than 60% of global oil market needs. This impact extended to the global aviation sector due to unprecedented fuel price increases. Among the spillovers of the war on Iran was its shelling of sites in Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Iraq, Oman, Jordan, and Israel using drones and ballistic missiles, causing casualties, injuries, and substantial economic losses.

We have repeatedly warned and alerted the international community on numerous occasions regarding the dangers of cooperating with the terrorist regime in Iran, until the situation became unbearable. Iran began acting in a brutal, barbaric, and destructive manner, resulting in hundreds of thousands of deaths, injuries, and missing persons, alongside millions of displaced persons and refugees worldwide. This paper aims to review the geopolitical, economic, and security repercussions of the ongoing escalation and present the required political and security approach for the international community to deal with this file.

First: Background of the Scene and Regional Developments

The ongoing developments are the fruit of decades of aggressive and terrorist policies pursued by the Iranian government. It has come to export terrorism and terrorists globally to impose its dominance and expand its influence within the framework of "Exporting the Revolution" and the concept of "Velayat-e Faqih".

Second: Geo-Economic and Security Repercussions

There is no doubt that the repercussions arising from the confrontation with Iran have had grave effects on the Middle East as a whole and the rest of the world:

- **Energy Crisis and International Trade:** Threats and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz caused a sharp decline in global oil supplies.
- **Chaos and Security Instability:** Developments resulted in Iran and its arms targeting Arabian Gulf states, Jordan, and Israel, as well as Iraqi Kurdistan, with ballistic missiles and drones, creating widespread instability in the security landscape of these nations.

What must not be overlooked is the issue of drug manufacturing and exportation aimed at funding terrorist operations. Iran has exploited the weakness of certain states and the growing power of militias to transform areas under its influence into a hub for drug cartels by manufacturing various types of narcotics. The cultivation of poppy, mustard, and other plants used in drug manufacturing has become openly widespread in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Yemen through a complex network of drug traffickers engaged in smuggling operations that reach South America and other parts of the world, generating vast sums reaching billions of dollars used to finance militia activities and terrorism.

General Policy Recommendations

Based on the aforementioned strategic data, we submit the following recommendations to decision-makers and the international community:

1. **Establishing a Decisive International Coalition:** There is an urgent and critical need to establish an international coalition akin to the coalition formed to fight the ISIS terrorist organization. This coalition should aim to dismantle Iran's arms in the region and decisively curtail its influence without compromise or negotiation, as experience has proven that these groups only respond to the language of force, and relying on dialogue with them is merely a waste of time and opportunity.
2. **Reviewing International Strategic Calculations:** I address this message to the entire international community, led by the United States and our partners and friends in the European Union, emphasizing the necessity of re-evaluating calculations regarding the

Iranian file and the Middle East as a whole, given the paramount geopolitical importance of the region as the world's primary oil exporter.

3. **Ending the Phenomenon of Militias and Uncontrolled Arms:** The coming phase must be entirely free from the terrorist regime in Iran, focusing on ending the existence of militias and banning uncontrolled arms that threaten international peace and security and violate international rules and laws.
4. **Addressing the Root Cause of the Crisis:** The reader will notice that I have focused heavily on Iran in this paper. This is not arbitrary; rather, it is placing the finger on the wound, as Iran is the root cause of everything occurring in the Middle East in terms of cross-border terrorism, as noted throughout this paper.

We reaffirm our full support for the vision calling for the construction of a "New Middle East" built on foundations of comprehensive peace and close partnership with the free world. This vision seeks to showcase the civilized face of the region's peoples, grounded in tolerance, peaceful coexistence, and a sincere desire to live safely in a world governed by justice and compassion, far removed from all forms of extremism, terrorism, and violence. It is my sincere hope that this message finds its way to decision-makers to initiate constructive dialogue, leading to a world where stability prevails and all enjoy peace and human dignity under the umbrella of shared values that accommodate everyone without exception.