

MP-IDSA *Commentary*

How Imminent is the Next Israel-Iran War

Adil Rasheed

September 01, 2025

Summary

Some strategic experts fear there is a high probability of a renewed and expansive Israel–Iran war in the coming months.

The tenuous ceasefire following the June 2025 12-Day War between Israel and Iran seems to be fraying at the seams. Fears of a new round of hostilities, if not an all-out war, have increased since late August, after the three big European states—the United Kingdom, France and Germany (known as the E3)—notified the UN Security Council on 28 August 2025 about Iran's 'significant non-performance' under the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).¹

The move gives Iran 30 days to allow international inspections of its nuclear sites and stockpiles of highly enriched uranium, in addition to initiating 'down-blending' (the process wherein highly enriched uranium is diluted with low-enriched uranium). If Iran fails to comply, then the JCPOA clause for re-imposition of sanctions—known as the 'snapback procedure'—comes into effect, wherein the theocratic state would face restrictions on arms transfers, missile development and nuclear enrichment, alongside asset freezes and travel bans on designated individuals.

It must be noted that Iran already faces sanctions from the US, after the latter withdrew from the JCPOA nuclear deal in 2018 and imposed crippling socio-economic punitive measures on the Islamic Republic.² However, noted analyst of Israel–Iran relations Trita Parsi believes that the 'snapback' clause will only jeopardise the prospects of resolving the complex Iranian nuclear issue and escalate political tensions in the region. In an article in *Foreign Policy*, he writes:

Israel hardly needs a pretext to strike Iran's nuclear sites, as its surprise bombing campaign in June demonstrated. But a UN demand backed by Europe provides valuable political cover—a thin veneer of legitimacy—for renewed attacks. In the eyes of Israeli leaders, 'snapback' is not a diplomatic manoeuvre. It is a green light.³

It is important to note here that Israel had attacked the Islamic Republic from 13 June 2025, three days before the Trump administration was scheduled to hold the now-cancelled sixth round of discussion with Iran in Oman to hammer out a new nuclear agreement.⁴

War by the 7th of October Anniversary?

While Parsi fears an outbreak of war between Israel (backed by the US) and Iran to take place as early as December 2025,⁵ geopolitical analysts like Mohamed El-Doh

¹ [“E3 Nations Trigger UN Snapback Sanctions on Iran over Nuclear Deal Violations”](#), All India Radio, Akashvani, 29 August 2025.

² [“Germany, France, UK Trigger Process to Re-impose Sanctions on Iran”](#), *Al Jazeera*, 28 August 2025.

³ Trita Parsi, [“The Next Israel-Iran War Is Coming”](#), *Foreign Policy*, 11 August 2025.

⁴ Daryl G. Kimball, [“The Israel-US Strikes on Iran: A Strategic Blunder”](#), Arms Control Today section, Arms Control Association, July/August 2025.

⁵ David Lin Channel, [“Very Real’ War Risk By December: Will U.S. Fight Global Conflict? - Trita Parsi”](#), YouTube, 31 August 2025.

point to “multiple converging factors … toward a high probability of a renewed and more expansive Israeli strike against Iran within the coming months, most likely between September and October 7, 2025.”⁶

Surprisingly, the rhetoric of war in the region is increasing daily. On 18 August 2025, Yahya Rahim Safavi (senior military adviser to Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei) issued a warning: “A new war with Israel could break out at any moment. We must be strong and prepared.”⁷ He also made it clear that the cessation of present hostilities should not be categorised as a ceasefire: “We are not in a ceasefire; we are in a stage of war. No protocol, regulation, or agreement has been written between us and the US and Israel.”⁸

It is also reported that Iranian lawmaker Hossein-Ali Haji-Deligani told Iran’s *Tasnim News Agency* that the Iranian parliament has started drafting a plan to withdraw from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty itself, in response to the E3’s ‘snapback’ sanctions move. According to *The Times of Israel*, he is reported to have said: “These are the consequences of activating the snapback mechanism,” and accused the E3 countries of being “the source of many problems in the world”.⁹

Sensing Iran’s restiveness, its allies Russia and China also ratcheted up their rhetoric against the E3’s move to impose the ‘snapback’ clause, with the Russian foreign ministry warning the West against making “erroneous decisions before they lead to irreparable consequences and further tragedy”. Similarly, the Chinese foreign ministry called the E3’s recent move “not constructive”.¹⁰

On the Israeli side, former Israeli intelligence officer Jacques Neriah said that a second round of conflict with Iran is imminent. Speaking on Israeli 103FM radio on 24 August, Jacques Neriah reportedly said: “There is a sense that a war is coming, that Iranian revenge is in the works. The Iranians will not be able to live with this humiliation for long.”¹¹

Later, former Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant told Israeli Channel 12's Meet the Press (on 30 August) that Iran’s Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, must be killed in the next campaign. He stated: “Although Khamenei was not eliminated in this round, his elimination must be part of any plan of the State of Israel if a campaign against

⁶ Mohammed ElDoh, “[Forecasting an Imminent Israeli Strike on Iran](#)”, *Global Security Review*, 29 August 2025.

⁷ Amir Daftari, “[Iran Issues New War Warning: ‘Any Moment’](#)”, *Newsweek*, 18 August 2025.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ “[Iranian Lawmaker Says Tehran Will Withdraw From Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Due to Snapback Sanctions](#)”, *The Times of Israel*, 29 August 2025.

¹⁰ “[China, Russia Warn of ‘Irreparable Consequences’ of Iran Sanctions Snapback](#)”, *Iran Press TV*, 29 August 2025.

¹¹ “[Iran Readying for ‘Second Round,’ as Hezbollah Braces For War, ex-IDF Intel Officer Warns](#)”, *The Jerusalem Post*, 24 August 2025.

us is launched.”¹² Warning that Iran might rebuild some of its strength, particularly its ballistic missile arsenal, Gallant said that Israel should be ready for a different war.

Echoing Gallant’s fears, Iranian parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf claimed: “In the next possible war, our restraint will end.” Addressing the Iranian parliament, he said: “New geographic areas and targets will be added to our response. And if the enemy overreaches again, the war could expand into economic and political arenas as well.”¹³

‘Greater Israel’ Campaign?

Heightening the sense of foreboding across West Asia has been Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s interview with the Israeli *i24NEWS* channel on 12 August, wherein he purportedly expressed his affinity to a “historic and spiritual mission”, attached to the vision of the ‘Promised Land’ and ‘Greater Israel’.¹⁴

The remarks made during the interview were enough to trigger a wave of condemnation across the region, with a coalition of 31 Arab and Islamic countries and the Arab League criticising Netanyahu’s remarks and with some analysts parsing them in light of Israel’s present military activities in the region. Thus, various Arab commentators dubbed Israeli retaliation for the 7 October attacks not just a campaign against Hamas, but a war aimed at grabbing more Arab territories to assert its hegemony over the region.

Writing for the *TRTWorld* web portal, political commentator Noureldeine Ghanem wrote that Israel was currently pursuing the Greater Israel project, as it felt the daunting dream now appeared achievable. Thus, Ghanem states,

Since October 2023, Israel—with the help of American and European weapons—has annihilated entire Gaza, conducted extensive military invasions and expanded illegal Zionist settlements in the occupied West Bank, significantly weakened rival Hezbollah in Lebanon, occupied more territory in Syria, bombed Yemen’s Houthis, wiped out senior leaders of Iran in a 12-day war, and seized control of Gaza’s frontiers with Egypt, in a major violation of its security agreements with Cairo.¹⁵

¹² “[Israel Must Kill Khamenei in Next Round of Iran War, ex-Israeli Defense Chief Says](#)”, *Iran International*, 30 August 2025.

¹³ “[Iran Warns Next War with Israel Will Spread to New Battlefronts](#)”, *Iran International*, 26 August 2025.

¹⁴ “[Netanyahu Says He’s on a ‘Historic and Spiritual Mission,’ Also Feels a Connection to Vision of Greater Israel](#)”, *The Times of Israel*, 12 August 2025.

¹⁵ Noureldein Ghanem, “[Israel is Pursuing E1 Plan and Sees ‘Eretz Israel’ Project Achievable. Will Anything Stop Tel Aviv?](#)”, *TRT World*, 29 August 2025.

Other experts like Parsi claim that Israel's war machine is now running full steam ahead, preparing grounds for an imminent and decisive showdown with Iran to deny the latter the time to recover from the Israeli and US drubbing it received during the 12-Day War. Thus, Parsi avers that Israel might soon launch strikes against Iran, backed by the US, as it is left with a small window of opportunity to capitalise on Iran's military losses caused by the June airstrikes and fresh internal unrest in the wake of US–Israeli strikes that might help in overturning the theocratic regime.¹⁶

Writing for the British daily *The Independent*, Camelia Entekhabifard claims that there is growing resentment among the Iranian masses against the regime:

Runaway inflation, a bleak outlook for the younger generation, mass emigration to uncertain futures abroad, poverty and entrenched corruption—these are only some of the reasons so many Iranians have turned against their rulers.¹⁷

The Closing Window of Strategic Advantage

In Parsi's estimation, Israel might likely consider resumption of hostilities by the end of 2025 to prevent the theocratic state from fully recovering and regrouping itself after the June setbacks. He claims that the onset of the new year might not be a suitable time for launching a new offensive, as preparations for the US House and Congressional elections might not garner President Trump's public support for a new war in West Asia at that critical time.¹⁸

Experts like Mohamed El-Doh believe that Israel has already started redoubling its efforts towards the “full neutralization of Iran's regional military ecosystem”, by attacking Houthis in Yemen (being able to kill its so-called premier Ahmad Ghaleb Al-Rahawi recently), by putting pressure on Lebanon for the disarmament of Hezbollah and by continuing its operations against Hamas in Gaza. Thus, Israel is now seeking to neutralise the regional proxies of Iran to prepare the ground for a full-scale attack on Iran.

In fact, the expert claims that Israel's ongoing military manoeuvres already point to an impending attack:

Indications within the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) suggest a possible force regeneration, given the apparent contradiction between political calls for full Gaza occupation and the IDF chief of staff's emphasis on giving forces a rest. This is consistent with a combat reconstitution phase.

¹⁶ Trita Parsi, “[The Next Israel-Iran War Is Coming](#)”, no. 3.

¹⁷ Camelia Entekhabifard, “[Two Months After Its War with Israel, Iran Braces For Another Showdown](#)”, *Independent*, 31 August 2025.

¹⁸ David Lin Channel, “[Very Real' War Risk By December: Will U.S. Fight Global Conflict? - Trita Parsi](#)”, no. 5.

This also aligns with the doctrine of unit rotation, replenishment, and training for the demands of long-range precision strike and high-tempo air operations.¹⁹

Notwithstanding the speculative nature of the immediacy of a war, there is no denying that the 12-Day War between Iran and Israel did not resolve the causes for the war between Israel and Iran. This leaves the prospect of the next phase of this currently frozen war highly probable. The negative implications of renewed hostilities between Israel and Iran are too high for regional countries and those in the extended neighbourhood, given that vital security, economic, commercial and energy interests are at stake.

¹⁹ Mohammed ElDoh, “[**Forecasting an Imminent Israeli Strike on Iran**](#)”, no. 6.

About the Author



Dr. Adil Rasheed is Research Fellow at the Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi.

Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses is a non-partisan, autonomous body dedicated to objective research and policy relevant studies on all aspects of defence and security. Its mission is to promote national and international security through the generation and dissemination of knowledge on defence and security-related issues.

Disclaimer: Views expressed in Manohar Parrikar IDSA's publications and on its website are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Manohar Parrikar IDSA or the Government of India.

© Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (MP-IDSA) 2025