

In the face of our initiatives, the United States failed to earn Iran's trust

Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, Head of the Islamic Consultative Assembly



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The US understood our logic and principles. Now it must decide whether it can earn our trust or not. I am grateful to the Iranian nation, who — on the advice of the Supreme Leader — took to the streets and stood in support of their children.”

Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf, Speaker of the Iranian Assembly, wrote on X:

□ “Before the negotiations, I emphasized that we possess the necessary goodwill and resolve, but due to the experiences of the two previous wars, we do not trust the oth-

er side.

□ My colleagues on the Minab 168 team, put forward forward-leaning initiatives, but the other side ultimately failed to gain the trust of the Iranian delegation in this round of talks.

□ The United States has understood our logic and principles. Now it is time for it to decide whether it can earn our trust or not.

□ We have always regarded ‘dignified diplomacy’ as another approach — alongside military struggle — to secure the rights of the Iranian nation. We will not relent for a moment in our efforts to consolidate the achievements of forty days of national de-

fense by Iranians. I am grateful for the efforts of our friendly and brotherly country, Pakistan, in facilitating this negotiation process, and I extend my greetings to the people of Pakistan.

□ Iran is one single body with 90 million souls. I am deeply thankful to the entire heroic nation of Iran — who, on the advice of the Supreme Leader, took to the streets to support their children and sent us off with their blessings. I also commend my colleagues for their tireless work in these intense 21-hour negotiations.

Long live and may Iran remain everlasting, our dear Iran!

The Transition from Deterrence to Imposition of Will

The incident of February 28, 2026 — which involved a direct attack by the terrorist army of the United States and the accursed Zionist regime on Iran, resulting in the martyrdom of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution and a number of senior military commanders — might, at first glance, be interpreted as a point of failure for the Islamic Republic of Iran's deterrence strategy. However, a deep and insightful analysis of the 35 days of resistance following this event reveals a different, transformative narrative. This narrative speaks not of collapse, but of

a strategic transition and a paradigmatic evolution in Iran's national security theory: a transition from the classical model of “deterrence based on the threat of retaliation” toward a new paradigm of “the power to impose will and determine the endgame of a conflict.” This evolution encompasses three distinct yet intertwined layers: a transformation in strategic theory, a transformation in operational architecture, and a transformation in regional geopolitics.

In the first layer, this incident acted as an accelerating catalyst, ushering Iran's deterrence theory into a new evolutionary phase. Deterrence is a dynamic pro-



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cess, not a static event. The 35 days of resistance demonstrated three sequential stages of this process. The first stage was “Deterrence by Denial” — i.e., neutralizing the enemy’s ability to achieve its ultimate objectives through the steadfastness of all pillars of the nation and state, rendering the attack futile. The second stage was “Imposing Prohibitive Costs” — i.e., a calculated escalation of the material, political, and security costs of continuing the war for the enemy at both regional and international levels, making the prolongation of the conflict irrational for them. The culmination of this evolution manifested in the third stage: “Imposing Will and Shaping the Endgame.” At this stage, strategic initiative was transferred to Iran, and the country, by maintaining cohesion and applying multifaceted pressure, was able to make the terms and framework for ending the conflict conditional upon the realization of some of its own demands and objectives. This is the materialization of the concept of “imposition power.”

This success at the strategic layer would not have been possible without a simultaneous transformation at the operational layer — the architecture of warfare. Effective resistance against a superpower and its regional ally necessitated the simultaneous and coordinat-

ed employment of capabilities across all possible layers of war. What occurred during these 35 days was the nascent emergence of an “Integrated Command Model of Multi-Layered Resistance.” In this model, conventional defensive operations to protect national sovereignty were interwoven with asymmetric warfare and the activation of regional networks of the Axis of Resistance to expand the battlefield and target enemy interests deep within the region. These two layers were simultaneously supported by offensive and defensive operations in cyberspace and information warfare. And all of this rested upon a foundation of independent space-based capabilities for reconnaissance, navigation, and communications. This complex coordination was not the product of traditional hierarchical structures, but rather the result of a “flexible, mission-oriented, and inter-agency network” that integrated lessons learned from decades of resistance experience into its modern architecture.

In the third layer, this resistance transcended the function of merely defending territorial integrity and transformed into the production of a “public security good” for the West Asia region. By proving its ability to withstand and deadlock a combined, extra-regional invasion,



Iran effectively challenged the model of security dependency on external powers. This event provides an unparalleled historical opportunity to redefine the architecture of collective security in the region based on endogenous and independent logic. Iran’s resistance can serve as the cornerstone for the formation of new collective security pacts — pacts centered on mutual guarantees of territorial integrity, collective response to extra-regional aggression, and the resolution of disputes through intra-regional dialogue. In this model, Iran emerges both

as a “hegemon” and as a “proposing and facilitating power” — one that recognizes its own sustainable security as being contingent upon collective security and cooperation with its neighbors.

In conclusion, the incident of February 28 and the subsequent 35 days of response must be understood not merely as a crisis, but as a “constitutive moment” in Iran’s strategic history. This event elevated the latent capacities of the resistance model to a qualitatively new level and steered the national security paradigm away from purely defensive logic and toward an active logic capable of shaping the regional security order. The primary task now for policymaking and research institutions is to extract the lessons learned from this period and institutionalize them in the form of a “New National Security Doctrine Document.”



From the «Command Room» to the «Battle of Narratives»

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In the era of hybrid warfare, battlefields have expanded far beyond geographical borders and military front lines. Today, the primary arena of conflict is the «cognitive front» and the «realm of narrative» — where the objective is to capture minds and reconstruct realities.

In the Ramadan War, the adversary, relying on digital tools, social networks, and mainstream media, seeks to manage public opinion, create rifts between the Iranian nation and its national and Islamic values, and ultimately weaken the will and morale of the resistance forces.

In such a distorted and turbulent space, «indifference» and «silence» amount to surrendering to the enemy's narrative. Therefore, reciprocating with an intelligent and proportionate response is not a choice but a strategic and vital necessity for preserving national security.

On this challenging path, the distinct and intelligent activism of Dr. Qalibaf is evident. Drawing on the valuable legacy and lived experience of the Sacred

Defense era and crisis management during the Twelve-Day War, alongside field command and management of the conflict, he has correctly understood that in modern warfare, one must be active in the «narrative room» simultaneously with the «war room».

Now, we seek to answer the question: Why is his model of activism in the narrative arena effective and impactful?

Intelligent Management of Digital Battle (International Activism):

With a precise understanding of the language and discourse of global media, he employs short, ironic, and meaningful English tweets. This style of «saying little but conveying much» has not only neutralized media strikes and verbal attacks from powerful figures such as Trump but has also transformed them into opportunities to reflect the truth and turn the enemy's aggression into its own weakness.

2. Comprehensiveness in Audience Targeting (Multi-Layered Narrative):

Dr. Qalibaf's narrative transcends political boundaries and penetrates the deeper strata of society. By writing articles in international media and sending strategic letters to Muslim countries, he amplifies the voice of truth on the international stage. Simultaneously, with a precise focus on the «domestic front,» he addresses the people in the streets, as well as the country's productive arm — workers, industrialists, start-up activists, and economic pioneers.

3. The Link Between «Economy» and «Resistance»:

One of the most prominent features of his activism is the continuous and purposeful appre-

ciation of the steadfastness of economic actors. This perspective demonstrates a deep understanding of the fact that in hybrid warfare, «economic resilience» and «self-sufficiency» are the main bastions against sanctions and pressure. By valuing the efforts of producers, he is effectively strengthening the «economic front of resistance» and consolidating the country's productive base.

Managing public opinion in the new era requires a combination of «media literacy,» «field experience,» and «clarity of expression.» On this path, the late Ali Larijani was among those who, with a deep understanding of the coordinates of cognitive warfare, played his role in intelligent and effective narrative-building. Today, fortunately, this strategic approach is being pursued with strength and competence by Dr. Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf — for he has shown that alongside field command, he also has an active, up-to-date, and impactful presence in the «narrative room».

It seems that if other officials and policymakers of the country also draw inspiration from this conscious, multi-layered path, we can navigate the complex arena of hybrid warfare with greater coordination and intelligence.

