



Mohammadreza Kaffash Jamshid:
page 2

Feasibility and Roadmap of a Regional Non-Aggression Pact

Control of the Strait of Hormuz: Iran's Trump Card That Changed Global Equations



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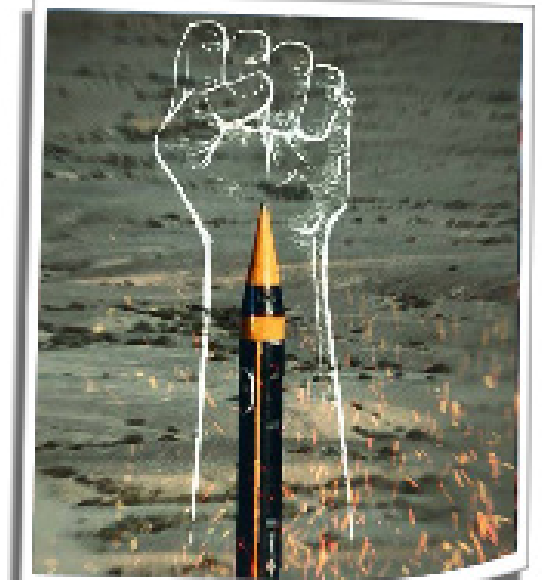
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page 4



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page 5

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page 6

Feasibility and Roadmap of a Regional Non-Aggression Pact

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The implementation of a regional non-aggression pact between Iran and the Arab states of the Persian Gulf, under the current circumstances of sharply escalating tensions, is a complex undertaking but not an impossible one. This idea, which has recently been proposed by Saudi Arabia, deserves careful consideration. Assessing its feasibility requires taking into account the emergence of new political will in the region, serious structural obstacles, and the formulation of a multi-stage roadmap.

1. Political Will: A Shift in Strategic Calculations

The most important factor for the realization of this idea is a strategic shift in the outlook of the principal actors, particularly Saudi Arabia. According to recent diplomatic reports, Riyadh is actively examining and advancing the prospect of a non-aggression pact with Iran. This change in approach is rooted in several

important developments:

Declining Confidence in U.S. Security Guarantees

The recent conflict demonstrated that the American military presence does not necessarily provide security for Arab countries; rather, it may place them on the front line and expose them to retaliatory attacks. The failure of direct negotiations between the United States and Iran in Islamabad further deepened these doubts.

Economic and Military Vulnerability

Missile and drone attacks during recent tensions targeted critical infrastructure, including oil facilities and maritime routes in the Strait of Hormuz, exposing the severe economic vulnerability of Arab states in the region.

The Emergence of a "West Asian Helsinki Model"

The proposed initiative could resemble the "Helsinki Model" of the 1970s. The objective of such a model is not friendship or alliance,

but rather the management of tensions among adversaries through the establishment of clear rules of conduct, military transparency, and crisis communication channels designed to prevent unintended conflict.

2. Operational Challenges

At first glance, the absence of a non-aggression agreement between Iran and the United States appears to be a major obstacle. However, it is not necessarily an insurmountable one. A closer examination is required.

The Absence of an Agreement and the Persistence of Tensions: At present, Iran and the United States exist in a condition that can be described as "neither peace nor full-scale war." This structural hostility renders any regional agreement inherently fragile, as a confrontation between the two countries could at any moment draw the entire region into conflict. As analysts have observed, even a future agreement between

Washington and Tehran would likely not eliminate tensions, but merely transform them into prolonged, low-intensity pressure.

From Obstacle to Necessity: Paradoxically, this very obstacle may become a compelling necessity. It is precisely because of the uncontrolled and potentially dangerous hostility between Iran and the United States that regional states have begun contemplating the creation of an independent protective framework. Some reports have claimed that Saudi Arabia declined to allow the use of its airspace or military bases for recent operations related to the Strait of Hormuz. Such developments suggest that Arab states may increasingly seek to secure their interests through de-escalation and shield themselves from the consequences of direct or proxy confrontation between Tehran and Washington.

3. Internal Divisions and



Regional Actors

The most serious challenge lies in the differing positions among the Arab states themselves.

While Saudi Arabia has moved toward rapprochement with Iran, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain have maintained a considerably tougher approach toward Tehran while simultaneously preserving their relations with Israel. Diplomats remain doubtful that Abu Dhabi would join such a pact. Furthermore, some analysts argue that the success of any durable regional arrangement would remain limited, or even produce adverse consequences, unless the issue of confronting Israel's continued role in generating regional tensions is addressed.

Conclusion

Despite the major obstacle posed by U.S.–Iran hostility, the realization of a regional non-aggression pact in the Persian Gulf may evolve from a political aspiration into a strategic necessity

for Arab states. The process could unfold through the following phases:

Phase One: Regional Multilateralism

Saudi Arabia, together with mediators such as Pakistan, Qatar, and Türkiye, should establish a framework for regional security dialogue. To gain Iranian confidence, this framework should operate independently of the United States.

Phase Two: Confidence-Building Measures

Rather than immediately addressing major geopolitical disputes, discussions should focus on technical and humanitarian agreements, including: Establishing direct military communication channels to prevent misunderstandings, similar to the Helsinki model, guaranteeing the security of civilian maritime navigation and expanding environmental cooperation.

Phase Three: Decoupling Gulf Security from U.S.–Iran Tensions

The strategic objective should

be the creation of a mechanism through which regional security is no longer tied to the trajectory of Tehran–Washington disputes, enabling regional states to withstand the shocks generated by such tensions. In this context, regional countries would need to redefine both the nature and the extent of their relations with the United States.

To prevent potential American obstruction, Arab states and Iran would need to increase the “cost of dependence on the United States” for regional actors while simultaneously raising the “cost of undermining the pact” for Washington itself. This strategy could be implemented through three operational steps:

Step One: Reducing Dependence on the American Security Umbrella

Key Concept: Indigenous Security Guarantees

Action: Establish a direct crisis hotline and dispute-resolution mechanism between Iran and Saudi Ara-

bia. Once both parties are capable of managing crises independently, the role of the United States becomes fundamentally diminished.
Step Two: Shielding the Pact from U.S.–Iran Hostility
Key Concept: Active Neutrality

Action: Include an explicit provision in the agreement stating: “Should the United States launch an attack against Iran, Arab states will not permit the use of their territory, airspace, or military bases for such operations. In return, Iran will commit not to attack those states.”

Such a clause could effectively remove the Persian Gulf from the geography of war and diminish one of the principal incentives for continued American military presence in the region.
Step Three: Increasing the Cost of Obstruction for the United States

Key Concept: Economic Leverage or Open-Door Engagement

Action: Either employ mechanisms such as de-dollarization and joint investment projects with China to protect the pact from potential U.S. sanctions, or offer Washington a limited role—such as that of an observer within the framework of the agreement—so that it does not perceive the arrangement as a rival structure and therefore lacks incentives to undermine it.

Step Four: Institutionalization

Gradually transform political commitments into a comprehensive security structure capable of managing the divergent interests of its members.

Ultimately, the success of this initiative will depend on whether the political will to manage tensions proves stronger than the desire to eliminate rivals.

Control of the Strait of Hormuz: Iran's Trump Card That Changed Global Equations

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In both the Twelve-Day Imposed War and the Ramadan War, the enemy pursued objectives beyond military attacks and the assassination of senior officials and prominent figures. Alongside its military operations, it sought to instigate unrest and engineer regime change from within. However, national unity and the cohesion of the country's governing institutions prevented it from achieving its primary objectives. Consequently, having become aware of its miscalculations regarding its strategy of a rapid collapse of Iran, the enemy has altered its behavior and adopted new strategic approaches. Nevertheless, its ultimate objective remains unchanged: the destruction of Iran. Nor is it likely to retreat from this goal. At this stage, in addition to employing familiar instruments such as maritime blockade, restricting Iranian oil exports, and consequently weakening the country's economic foundations, it appears that the American-Zionist adversary is once again contemplating surprise conspiracies in an effort to compensate for some of its political and military setbacks.

The severe degradation and neutralization of enemy air-defense systems, the extensive destruction of radar installations and U.S. military bases in the Persian Gulf littoral states, and the unexpected economic losses imposed on American allies constituted only part of the damage and defeats inflicted upon the enemy after Iran seized the strategic initiative. More importantly, unlike previous wars in which the United States was able to mobilize public opinion through media manipulation and democracy-oriented narratives, the situation was reversed during the imposed war against Iran. Today, people around the world increasingly view the United States and Israel as the principal sources of contemporary instability and as the aggressors and bullies of the modern



international order.

The global economy is highly sensitive to tensions in the Middle East due to its vital dependence on energy supplies and international trade. It can be argued that during the recent conflict, virtually no sector of the global economy remained untouched, and the consequences of the enemy's unsuccessful aggression became visible across the world. The economic repercussions of the war manifested themselves through several channels: regional conflict and instability in the Persian Gulf, the collapse of tourism in Arab countries—particularly the United Arab Emirates—the disruption of numerous airline routes, increased transportation costs, higher insurance premiums for oil tankers, rising energy prices including crude oil, gasoline, and jet fuel, and, perhaps most significantly, the loss of 20 billion cubic meters of gas following the destruction of Qatari gas facilities during the conflict with Iran. According to Bloomberg, these developments have had substantial consequences for the global

tation, cannot realistically be regarded as one of the principal actors in the emerging international order.

Instead, this new reality highlights the growing importance of states that possess energy resources and exercise control over their transportation networks.

It is well known that the principal instruments of pressure employed by the United States against Iran include economic sanctions, military confrontation, and maritime blockade. Yet the ability to influence global energy management has the potential to neutralize even sanctions themselves.

Evidence of this dynamic recently emerged when Beijing officially instructed its companies to disregard U.S. sanctions when purchasing Iranian oil. This development may signal the beginning of broader resistance by energy-dependent countries to Washington's sanctions regime against Iran. It suggests that when the issue at stake is the reliable supply of energy, even the most severe American pressures may fail to alter the behavior of major actors in the global energy market.

At the same time, within its revised strategy, the enemy appears intent on pursuing maritime blockade not only to restore part of its damaged prestige regarding the Strait of Hormuz, but also to limit Iran's oil exports, intensify economic pressure, and undermine national cohesion in an effort to force Iran into submission. Accordingly, the issue that now assumes critical importance is economic resilience for both sides and social resilience for Iran. Fortunately, one of the consequences of the war has been the emergence of greater national unity among the Iranian people in their struggle against the United States. The sustained and active presence of the public has played a decisive role in neutralizing major conspiracies and thwarting hostile plans.

Resistance Beyond War: At the Heart of Our Way of Life and the Key to Victory Against the Enemy



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At a time when the world finds itself amid rapid political, economic, and cultural transformations, the concept of “resistance” has broken free from its purely military confines and has become a fundamental principle woven into the very fabric of national identity.

The Iranian nation, which throughout its long history has repeatedly experienced the bitter realities of invasion and external pressure, now faces challenges that are more complex, though no less harmful, than those of the past. Under such circumstances, a deeper understanding of the nature and significance of resistance has become essential. Today, resistance is no longer confined to the battlefield. It has become our way of life, our mode of existence, and the spirit that animates the body of our society.

Historical experience demonstrates that resistance is greater than war itself. Although war may represent the highest point of physical confrontation with an adversary, it is neither the beginning nor the end of resistance. Rather, it is merely one part of a broader phenomenon.

True resistance is the profound endurance that continues after the dust of battle has settled. It survives in the streets and neighborhoods of cities, amid economic hardships, and within the minds and consciousness of ordinary citizens. The day after war is the day when nations require a form of resistance that is more authentic, more sustainable, and deeper than the act of fighting itself. It is this resistance that enables societies to withstand economic challenges, media

pressure, and psychological attrition while preserving hope for the future.

Resistance is not merely about fighting. It is about living consciously in the face of those who seek to appropriate our existence, our identity, and our collective will. This means that resistance manifests itself in every moment of daily life, in our decisions, our choices, and the manner in which we confront adversity. Consequently, resistance evolves into a way of life.

It is reflected when a family, confronted with inflation and economic hardship, manages its affairs with prudence and moderation. It is evident when a student, despite scientific restrictions and obstacles, continues the pursuit of knowledge through determination and hard work.

These are all manifestations of a form of resistance that has risen beyond the level of political reaction and become an existential and identity-based principle.

The spirit of resistance is the determination that enables a nation to remain steadfast amid storms.

Today, this spirit is embodied in the presence of people in public life, in their endurance under economic pressure, and in their persistence in the face of cognitive and media warfare.

Understanding this reality is essential because the contemporary enemy increasingly targets not societies through conventional weapons, but rather through ideas, beliefs, and perceptions.

Cognitive warfare seeks to extinguish the “light of reason” and the “light of hope” within nations.

In this arena, every Iranian who is capable of distinguishing truth from false narratives and who resists imposed despair is performing one of the most sacred forms of re-



sistance.

It is precisely this popular steadfastness that gives rise to resistance itself—a resistance that emerges from suffering and transforms slogans into lived perseverance.

In the contemporary era, the significance of this “resistant way of life” has become even greater.

When an adversary targets the economic and psychological foundations of a nation, only a people who regard resistance not as a temporary tactic but as a philosophy of survival can emerge victorious. Resistance does not mean accepting suffering as an end in itself. Rather, it means transforming suffering into an opportunity for growth and a motivation for innovation.

For this reason, the resistance displayed by people today is more significant and more sacred than war itself, because it is this resistance that safeguards the future of a nation against external domination. At this historical juncture, the eyes of all free people around

the world, the hearts of all awakened consciences, and the cries of the oppressed everywhere are fixed upon the Iranian nation.

They look to your perseverance. They place their hopes in your resilience. They await the manifestation of your unwavering determination. Resistance today has transcended the boundaries of a single nation and has become an echo of hope in the hearts of freedom-seeking people across the world. Know that this resistance is greater than any battlefield confrontation, for its arena is the human heart and its weapon is the human will. The post-war era will require an even deeper form of resistance—a resistance capable of transforming suffering into capital for growth and hardship into a bridge toward victory. And when God grants the Iranian nation the strength of will and steadfastness required for this difficult path, the highest forms of divine support and triumph shall become manifest.

Analysis of Armenia's Parliamentary Elections

Mohammadreza Kaffash Jamshid, Member of the Scientific Council of the Ardabil Provincial Governance and Legislation Think Tank

Armenia's parliamentary elections, scheduled for 7 June 2026, are widely regarded as highly significant in terms of both their outcome and their potential consequences.

In this election, representatives of the Ninth National Assembly will be elected for a five-year term. Competition is centered on 101 parliamentary seats, and all political parties must secure at least 4 percent of the vote, while electoral coalitions must obtain 8 percent of the vote in order to gain representation in parliament. According to available reports, a total of 17 political parties and 2 electoral coalitions are competing in this election.

Given the current political environment, this electoral cycle presents a picture of a deeply polarized and highly contentious contest, accompanied by profound distrust regarding the integrity of the electoral process. The principal dimensions of the election can be analyzed as follows:

1. The State of Competition and the Prospects of Political Parties:

Although various opinion polls differ in their precise figures, they collectively reveal a relatively similar pattern. The Fragile Lead of the Ruling Party

The Civil Contract Party, led by Nikol Pashinyan, remains ahead in most surveys. However, its projected share of the vote may not be sufficient to enable it to form an independent single-party government. One survey conducted in April 2026 estimated the party's support at 26.7 percent, while another projected approximately 40.5 percent support under conditions of high voter turnout.

The Strengthening of the Opposition: Opposition support appears to be increasingly concentrated around two parties and two influential economic figures:

Strong Armenia, led by Sam-



vel Karapetyan, which is generally regarded as having pro-Russian orientations. Prosperous Armenia, led by Gagik Tsarukyan.

In addition, the Armenia Alliance, led by former President Robert Kocharyan, is, according to some surveys, on the threshold of entering parliament.

Deep Social Polarization: Public confidence in Pashinyan has reportedly declined significantly. According to one survey, only 8 percent of respondents expressed trust in him. Another survey, however, still identified him as the country's most trusted political figure, with approximately 20 percent support. These contrasting findings reflect the severe polarization that characterizes Armenia's political landscape.

2. Serious Concerns Regarding Electoral Integrity

The greatest challenge surrounding this election is not competition among policy platforms, but rather widespread doubts concerning whether the electoral process will be free and fair. An Atmosphere of Intimidation and Distrust

Various sources have reported the existence of a "climate of fear," the use of adminis-

trative resources for political purposes, and legal actions directed against political opponents and prominent business figures, including Karapetyan.

Expectations of Electoral Fraud: A Gallup survey indicates that more than 40 percent of respondents believe that the election will be either "somewhat fraudulent" or "definitely fraudulent". One analysis has even characterized the election as effectively "stolen," warning that its outcome may already be predetermined.

Legal Changes and Institutional Concerns: Controversial amendments to Armenia's electoral legislation have further intensified these concerns. The reforms grant authorities additional powers to disqualify election observers, a development that critics argue may undermine independent oversight of the electoral process.

3. Two Main Scenarios for Armenia's Political Future

Based on the available evidence, two dominant scenarios have emerged regarding the country's political trajectory.

Scenario One: Relative Government Victory Accompanied by a Legitimacy Crisis

Under this scenario, the ruling party secures victory by relying on its relative electoral advantage and benefiting from the fragmentation of opposition votes.

However, it fails to obtain an absolute parliamentary majority. Such an outcome would likely result in either a fragile coalition government or a minority administration, both of which would face serious challenges to their legitimacy from a substantial segment of society from the very beginning.

Scenario Two: Political Crisis and Widespread Electoral Manipulation

Analysts close to the opposition warn that the government may view extensive electoral manipulation—or alternatively, a significant reduction in voter participation through public discouragement—as necessary for its political survival. Should such a scenario materialize, the likelihood of public protests and even "revolutionary developments," similar to those warned about by Robert Kocharyan, would increase considerably.

Conclusion

Armenia's upcoming parliamentary election appears less like a routine democratic contest and more like a critical political turning point marked by a profound crisis of legitimacy.

The absence of mutual trust, the highly securitized political atmosphere, and serious allegations regarding electoral engineering indicate that, regardless of which political force receives the largest share of votes, acceptance of the outcome by a substantial portion of society is likely to prove difficult.

The country's short-term future will therefore be determined not only at the ballot box, but also by the ability of society and civil institutions to monitor the electoral process and respond to its results.