

## Week 4 of World War III

### Introduction

This is my analysis of week 4 of World War III. In my article on the logic of the war between Iran and the West I argue that we are about to witness a dramatic transformation in world history that can be compared to the transformations that occurred because of World War I and World War II. The article was written on Friday February 20, 2026. The next day the war started.

I recommend to follow the analyses of Mohammad Marandi, professor at the University of Tehran who provides excellent analyses of the war and developments in Western Asia. I administer his website, where I publish all his YouTube videos that I can find.

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### Vision of the new Supreme Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei

The new Supreme Leader of Iran, Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei, has given two public addresses. They are important to understand his vision for the future. Prof. Saied Reza Ameli of the University of Tehran has provided an analysis of the first speech, which provides some context for understanding this vision. [Here](#) are the English, Spanish and Dutch version of contributions.

### The economic change

In the fourth week of the war it has become clear how the post war era might look like. For decades, Iran has allowed free passage through the Strait of Hormuz, where one-fifth of the world's oil is transported. Despite heavy Western sanctions and economic isolation the country did not introduce fees and tolls. Other nations routinely charge fees for their waterways:

- Egypt demands \$200,000 to over \$1 million for large vessels through the man-made Suez Canal.
- Panama gets \$100,000 to \$500,000 per transit via its canal.
- Turkey levies fees on the Bosphorus.
- Canada and the United States collect charges for the St. Lawrence Seaway.

Iran has now introduced a fee of about \$2 million from some vessels passing through the Strait of Hormuz. This fee will probably stay when the war ends. But more importantly, Iran now created a leverage of power, because it has shown that they can shut down the Strait of Hormuz whenever they want. That is why in the coming week the war will intensify, because will not accept this new leverage and will do everything to break it. It will be the most important week of the war, because that will decide the future of Western Asia.

The U.S., with the support of the family dictatorships in the region, will launch a massive ground invasion, that might decide the future of Iran and these family dictatorships.

### The coming week is the most crucial week

Trump has threatened to bomb the energy infrastructure of Iran. Iran countered that threat with a threat to destroy the oil complexes in the region. This would lead to a dramatic rise in the price of oil. Some people think it is an empty threat. I don't think so.

The preparations for a ground invasion are in full swing. The permanent control of the Strait of Hormuz by Iran is just not acceptable for the West and the family dictatorships. But the dynamics of a ground invasion are unpredictable. Here are some possible consequences:

- Trump bombs the energy infrastructure and tries to capture the control of the Strait of Hormuz.
- This provides the rationale for Iran to bomb the oil infrastructure of Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and maybe Oman.
- In Bahrain this sets in motion a process in which the 80% Shia population mobilizes to take over the state.
- Iraq, that considers Kuwait as part of their territory, prepares an invasion, that Saddam Hussein tried to carry out in 1990 and was driven back by the US invasion.
- Yemen attack Saudi Arabia and goes on to occupy the oil rich south.

The ground invasion is the last card of the US in this war. They either destroy Iran with nuclear bombs or they lose and are driven out of Western Asia. The coming week is a crucial week in the war.

## **Not just retaliation: Israel, nuclear bomb, and new military union**

It has become clear that the strategy of Iran is not just about retaliation. Last week the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) has issued a severe warning to the Israeli military, slamming it for committing widespread war crimes in Gaza and Lebanon. The IRGC said that Iran will respond with overwhelming force targeting the gathering points of Israeli forces in the north of the occupied Palestine and the Gaza belt. So it is not only about retaliation. It is about the existence of the apartheid state of Israel.

Another important development last week was the appointment of Mohammad Baqer Zolqadr as the new Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, replacing Ali Larijani. In July 2003 Zolqadr recommended caution before signing the Additional Protocol of the NPT, because it could make Iran vulnerable to foreign intelligence services. In August 2004, Zolqadr emphasized that Iran has a right to develop and use nuclear technology. Under Zolqadr Iran might withdraw from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Zolqadr has declared that Iran would retaliate against Israel were it to be attacked: *"If a missile is fired at the Bushehr power plant, Israel must say goodbye forever to the Dimona nuclear center which is the place where nuclear weapons are produced and kept in that country."* He revisited this theme in November 2004: *"In case of an attack against our nuclear installations, there will be no restraint in jeopardizing the interests of the invading country in any corner of the world."* Last week Iran attacked the Dimona area, but not yet the nuclear facilities.

Last week Iran's General Staff came with an important declaration. It says that it is necessary to form an alliance of states to ensure security and develop military cooperation in the Middle East without the participation of the United States and Israel. The statement says: *"Time is ripe to create a union of states to ensure security and military cooperation in the region without the participation of the United States and Israel. The countries of the region will never need a state located thousands of kilometers away to guarantee their security."* Iran is already defining the new security architecture after the war.

## **Iran's conditions for ending the war**

Trump presented a 15-point plan to Iran which basically says: accept defeat and disarm. This is not going to happen. Iran laid down six conditions for ending the war.

First, Iran demands binding guarantees that war will not be repeated. It rejects temporary or symbolic ceasefire arrangements.

Second, Iran calls for the closure of US military bases across the region.

Third, Iran insists that the aggressors pay compensation for damages inflicted during the war.

Fourth, Iran calls for an end to all ongoing wars across regional fronts, positioning the current confrontation within a wider regional context rather than an isolated conflict.

Fifth, Iran wants the establishment of a new legal regime governing the Strait of Hormuz.

Sixth, the Iranian demand extends into the media sphere, calling for the prosecution and extradition of individuals affiliated with what it describes as hostile media operations targeting Iran.

These conditions go far beyond conventional ceasefire terms. It is an attempt to redefine not only the outcome of the current war but also the regional order that underpins it.

## Reparations

The demand for reparations is very important. In the course of the history of the modern world Western countries have imposed reparations after a war. Examples in Europe include the Napoleonic Wars (1803- 1815), the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871), World War I (1914-1918) and World War II (1939-1945). The Napoleonic Wars were concluded with a peace treaty between France on the one hand and Britain, Austria, Russia and Prussia on the other. The French had to pay a total of 1,863.5 million francs that was financed by taxes and loans from banks in London, Amsterdam and Hamburg. After the Franco-Prussian War, the French had to pay an indemnity of 5 billion francs to Germany. After World War I, the Allies forced Germany to pay reparations of 132 billion gold marks or US \$ 33 billion. After World War II, reparations payments were imposed on the Axis powers. Germany paid US \$ 5,277 million, of which US \$ 839 million was reserved for Israel (which did not exist at the time of the war) and Jewish individuals. Italy paid US \$ 366 million to Greece, Yugoslavia, France, and Ethiopia. Japan had to pay US \$ 1,486 million to Burma, the Philippines, Indonesia, South Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand and South Korea.

European colonizers imposed reparations on the colonized people after devastating wars. European drug dealing powers conducted two Opium wars against China (1839-1842 and 1856-1860). They forced the Chinese through these wars to pay reparations to drug dealers that had lured millions of Chinese into drug addiction.

In 1791, the enslaved Africans in the French colony of Haiti started a revolution that ended in a victory on January 1, 1804 when they formally declared the first free black republic in the Americas. It took the defeated French twenty years to reorganize for a decisive battle to reinstate slavery. In 1825, the French came with 14 warships and 528 cannons and presented Haiti with the choice: pay 150 million gold francs as reparations and get recognition of Haiti as a free nation by France and other European nations or face economic blockade, starvation, war and the reinstatement of slavery. The amount was equivalent to a whole year of Haiti's revenues. Haiti accepted unwillingly. They were forced to borrow the amount from French banks who charged a 6% interest rate for their loans. Haiti finished paying reparations to France in 1947.

The Netherlands with the help of the U.S. imposed reparations of 6.5 billion Dutch guilders (US\$ 1.7 billion) on Indonesia after the war of liberation in 1949.

So when Iran wins the war, the question of reparations will determine the new power structure in the region.

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