



Study of Doubts / Discourse Formation and Response
The Days of the Epic of the Sacred Defense

A Multimedia Special Issue of the Monthly Magazine "Shubahat" (Doubts)

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Iran's Responsibility to Defend the Islamic Republic Against Israeli Aggression

Question:

Has the Islamic Republic's insistence on opposing Israel and seeking its elimination led to the outbreak of this devastating war?



The Israeli regime is widely regarded as an occupying and aggressive regime and as one of the principal sources of instability in the region. The conflict between Iran and Israel has structural, historical, moral, and religious roots, and it cannot be reduced to the decision of a single individual.

Tensions between Iran and Israel have persisted for more than four decades. These tensions have included regional rivalry, ideological confrontation, targeted assassinations, and reciprocal military actions. Within such a structure, no single leader—even one playing a significant role during wartime—can be considered the sole cause of the outbreak of war.

Therefore, even if Iran had initiated a war with Israel, responsibility could not logically be attributed solely to the Iranian leadership. This is particularly the case when the primary and fundamental driver of the conflict lies in the existence and conduct of the Israeli state itself.

There is little doubt that actions taken by Israel have repeatedly served as triggers that set off cycles of retaliation. In recent years, the following actions have been directed against Iran:

- assassinations of Iranian military commanders;
- airstrikes against Iran-affiliated forces in Syria;
- cyberattacks and acts of sabotage targeting Iranian facilities;
- attacks on Iranian territory or on Iranian interests abroad;
- and dozens of other acts widely described as crimes.

Under such circumstances, Iran's response has naturally become part of a broader cycle of action and reaction. Consequently, the outbreak of the war cannot reasonably be attributed to the Iranian side alone.

Decision-making authority in Iran's security policy is multi-layered rather than concentrated in a single individual. Although the Supreme Leader holds the

final authority within this chain, the Supreme National Security Council, the armed forces, the Ministry of Intelligence, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, and various advisory bodies all participate in the decision-making process.

Particularly in matters of war, decisions are generally collective and based on field assessments. It is therefore inaccurate to attribute responsibility for any major event to a single person.

Many wars are not the result of a single decision; rather, they emerge from gradual escalation triggered by multiple incidents—for example:

- an assassination,
- a limited retaliatory action,
- a counterattack,
- strategic miscalculation,
- or misinterpreted signals between the parties.

In such scenarios, attributing the outbreak of war to a single individual lacks analytical rigor from the perspective of

international relations theory.

Iran's official position is fundamentally defensive rather than offensive. According to Iran's own narrative, its involvement in the conflict is framed as a response to aggression.

In international law, when a conflict is interpreted within the framework of self-defense against an attack, assigning absolute blame to the defending party is not logically justified—even if the defensive response exceeds the scale of the original attack.

This is particularly relevant in the case of Iran and Israel. According to many analysts considered independent and impartial, Israel is widely viewed as the initiating party, while Iran's response is often portrayed as remaining within the limits of defensive reaction.

Moreover, Israel's actions in this context have been carried out with explicit support and backing from the United States.