

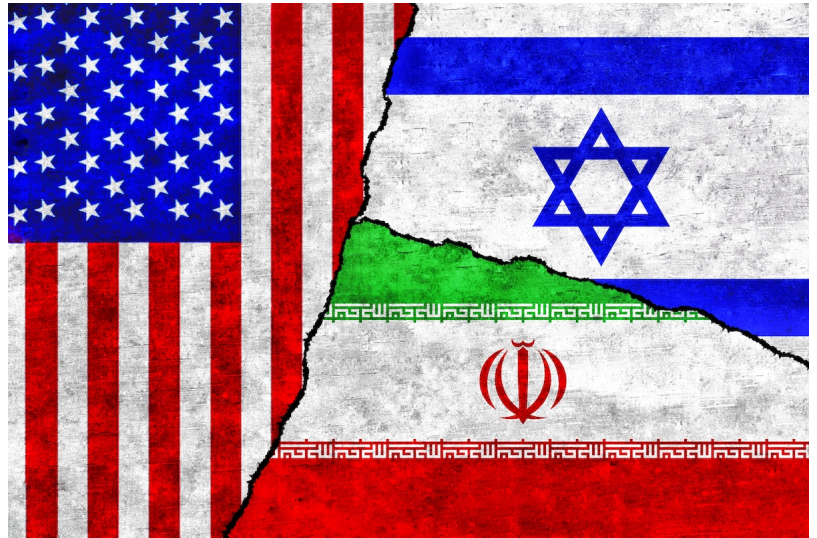


Written by [Paul Dragu](#) on June 13, 2025

Israel Strikes Iran. Was America Really Not Involved?

Israel unleashed a devastating multifaceted attack on Iran Friday morning, striking nuclear enrichment and missile launch sites as well as killing a number of the country's top military leaders and nuclear scientists. U.S. officials deny American involvement, but there are signs indicating otherwise.

Israel's Operation Rising Lion continues, and it includes 14 planned days of attacks, according to senior officials. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in a statement that the "operation will continue for as many days as it takes."



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Was America Involved?

Shortly after the attack, Secretary of State Marco Rubio released [a statement](#) denying U.S. involvement and warning Iran not to target Americans:

Tonight, Israel took unilateral action against Iran. We are not involved in strikes against Iran and our top priority is protecting American forces in the region. Israel advised us that they believe this action was necessary for its self-defense. President Trump and the Administration have taken all necessary steps to protect our forces and remain in close contact with our regional partners. Let me be clear: Iran should not target U.S. interests or personnel.

The Iranians aren't likely to absolve the U.S. of responsibility. The foreign ministry released [a statement](#) saying the U.S. is the "'primary supporter' of the Zionist [Israeli] regime" and that Washington will be held responsible.

Also, Iranian media [claim](#) American refueling tankers were operating near Iran 24 hours before the strike and that the two countries coordinated the attack.

American reporters have likewise suggested coordination between the two nations. Dov Lieber, a *Wall Street Journal* correspondent in Tel Aviv, [said](#):

This was a surprise attack. It seems to have caught the Iranians off-guard. It seems that there was a coordinated Israeli and American campaign to trick the Iranians into thinking that if there was going to be an attack, it may come after the talks. The Israelis themselves were saying on the record that they were going to wait to see what happened in the talks and if it didn't go well, they would attack.

Iranian representatives were scheduled for a sixth round of talks in Oman over the weekend.

An Axios report reinforces the notion that collusion between the U.S. and Israel not only happened, but



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played a major role in the massive success of the operation. [According](#) to Axios:

Two Israeli officials claimed to Axios that Trump and his aides were only pretending to oppose an Israeli attack in public — and didn't express opposition in private. "We had a clear U.S. green light," one claimed. The goal, they say, was to convince Iran that no attack was imminent and make sure Iranians on Israel's target list wouldn't move to new locations. Netanyahu's aides even briefed Israeli reporters that Trump had tried to put the brakes on an Israeli strike in a call on Monday, when in reality the call dealt with coordination ahead of the attack, Israeli officials now say.

Axios never received confirmation from U.S. officials that that's what happened.

Trump's Response

President Donald Trump did little to distance America from what could erupt into a war between two of the Middle East's most capable military powers. He waited hours after the attack before making public comments, and when he did, he bragged about the lethality of the American weaponry Israel deployed against Iran. He also urged the current leadership to make a nuclear deal "before there is nothing left." In his [statement](#), he also said he had warned Iranian leaders that they risked action "much worse than anything they know." He blamed the breakdown of nuclear negotiations on "certain hardliners" who "spoke bravely" but who are all dead now.

[Trump told](#) *The Wall Street Journal* Friday morning that he knew the attack was coming, and that he spoke with Netanyahu Thursday. He dubbed the campaign "a very successful attack, to put it mildly."

The administration clearly knew something was about to happen. Earlier in the week the State Department had ordered all nonessential employees at the U.S. embassy in Baghdad to leave, and authorized nonessential employees to leave Bahrain and Kuwait. Trump suggested to reporters Wednesday when he arrived at an event at the Kennedy Center that the region was about to become more volatile than usual. "They are being moved out because it could be a dangerous place, and we'll see what happens," he said. "They [Iran] can't have a nuclear weapon."

But while Trump continues to urge Iran to make a nuclear deal, Iranian media reports indicate that nuclear talks are likely off the table now.

Results of the Strikes

Israel hit Iran's main nuclear enrichment facility in Natanz and a nuclear research center and missile bases in Tabriz. It also hit military bases in Tehran, including Parchin.

The campaign also included precise assassinations of some of Iran's most important people, including Maj. Gen. Mohammad Bagheri, the second-highest commander after Ayatollah Khamenei; Maj. Gen. Hossein Salami, commander in chief of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps; Maj. Gen. Gholamali Rashid, deputy commander in chief of the armed forces; and the head of the aerospace unit of the Revolutionary Guards, Brig. Gen. Amir Ali Hajizadeh.

Ali Shamkhani, a powerful politician who was overseeing the nuclear talks with the U.S., was also killed, as were several nuclear scientists, including Fereydoun Abbasi, former head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, and Mohammad Mehdi Tehrani, president of the Islamic Azad University in Tehran. Iranian media [claim](#) Israel killed at least six nuclear scientists as part of a total of 78



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civilians, and injured 329 others.

Iran Promises Retaliation

Iranian leaders have promised disastrous retaliation. In a letter to the United Nations, the foreign minister of Iran [dubbed](#) the attack “tantamount to a declaration of war.” And the leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, [issued](#) the following statement:

The Zionist regime should expect a harsh punishment. The powerful hand of Iran’s armed forces will not let them go unpunished, God willing. Several of our commanders and scientists were martyred in this attack, but their successors will carry on their mission. By committing this crime, the Zionist regime has sealed its own bitter fate — and it will pay the price.

In the initial hours after the attack, Iran was surprisingly quiet. However, it has since launched 100 drones targeting Israel; Israeli officials say they were intercepted.

Israel Claims Regarding Iran’s Nuclear Program

Israel maintains that it acted in self-defense. Iranian leaders have made several public comments indicating they didn’t believe in Israel’s right to exist. And the entire campaign hinges on the premise that Iran was very close to achieving enrichment capable of creating nuclear weapons. Last month, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) released a [report](#) claiming Iran conducted secret nuclear activities with material it hadn’t declared. On Wednesday, with the support of the U.S., France, Germany, and the U.K., the IAEA censured Iran for refusing to comply with nonproliferation restrictions. The next day, the day before the Israeli attacks, Iran announced that it had built a third nuclear enrichment facility.

Moreover, at the beginning of the week, on Sunday, Iran’s intelligence minister, Esmail Khatib, claimed they had seized information related to Israel’s nuclear program. The following day, the head of the IAEA said the information Iran claimed to have seized may have referred to Israel’s Soreq Nuclear Research Center.

The Iranians have claimed all along that their nuclear program is strictly for civilian use. They have also said they plan to continue enriching. There is no consensus on how far they’ve come along in their efforts, but the IAEA has said they have 275kg of uranium enriched to 60 percent, far beyond what’s needed for civilian use. Israeli officials claim the enrichment is far higher, about 85 percent. Nuclear weapons need uranium enriched to 90-percent purity.

Israel’s strikes significantly increase the chance of escalation in a region that is perpetually volatile. Some suggest it may trigger a full-scale war in the region.

International Response

The international response, as expected, is mixed.

The U.S., of course, seems to approve.

France, which is “deeply concerned” about Iran’s nuclear ambitions, said Israel had a right to self-defense, but also urged both countries to “exercise restraint.”



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German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, who is uber hawkish when it comes to the Russia-Ukraine war, also emphasized a need to keep Iran from building nuclear weapons.

The prime minister of the United Kingdom, Keir Starmer, urged a return to diplomacy. He claimed that “stability in the Middle East must be the priority, and we are engaging partners to de-escalate.”

Russia, on the other hand, which has received thousands of drones from Iran for its war against Ukraine, [condemned](#) the attacks. According to a statement from the Russian Foreign Ministry:

We strongly condemn the violent action of the State of Israel. Unprovoked military strikes against a sovereign UN member state, its citizens, sleeping peaceful cities, and nuclear energy infrastructure facilities are categorically unacceptable.

China prescribed de-escalation.

Turkey’s response was especially critical of Israel. “The air strike shows that Israel does not want issues to be resolved through diplomatic means,” the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement.

A roll call of Middle Eastern nations reveals that none is happy, including Saudi Arabia, considered America’s strongest regional ally after Israel. The Saudis issued the following statement:

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia expresses its strong condemnation and denunciation of the blatant Israeli aggressions against the brotherly Islamic Republic of Iran, which undermine its sovereignty and security and constitute a clear violation of international laws and norms.

[#Statement](#) | The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia expresses its strong condemnation and denunciation of the blatant Israeli aggressions against the brotherly Islamic Republic of Iran, which undermine its sovereignty and security and constitute a clear violation of international laws and... pic.twitter.com/OYuWXwiE5y

— Foreign Ministry 外交部 (@KSAmofaEN) [June 13, 2025](#)

A spokesperson for United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said he

condemns any military escalation in the Middle East. He is particularly concerned by Israeli attacks on nuclear installations in Iran while talks between Iran and the United States on the status of Iran’s nuclear programme are under way.

The concern stateside is whether Israel’s attack will draw in America. It’s a very legitimate concern. Trump is already bragging about the superiority of American weaponry. The U.S. military is very prevalent in the region, providing plenty of targets for Iran should it follow up on its threats. And if and when Iran begins deploying missiles into Israel, it is highly unlikely the U.S. will not help shoot them down.

The world is turning out to be far less peaceful in Trump’s second term.



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