

COMPLIMENTARY

# Frontier

Oct 2025 | #02

a magazine for global muslim affairs

VOLUME 1 ISSUE NO.2

## MALAYSIA'S MEDIATION: MIDDLE POWER, MORAL VOICE

Page 06

**A LONG-DELAYED RECOGNITION:  
WESTERN POWERS SIGNAL A  
SHIFT ON PALESTINE AT THE UN**

Page 12

**TRAVEL BAN AND THE IDF:  
RIGHTS WITHOUT RECOURSE**

Page 48

**KASHMIR: NATION AND PEOPLE  
ABANDONED BY THE WORLD**

Page 20

**THE MYTH OF INVINCIBILITY:  
HOW IRAN'S RESILIENCE  
REDEFINED THE BALANCE OF  
POWER**

PAGE 28

**FROM KUALA LUMPUR TO GAZA:  
HOW THE SUMUD FLOTILLA  
REDEFINED  
SOLIDARITY**

Page 24



# CONTENTS

**04**

From the  
Editor

**06**

Malaysia's  
Mediation:  
Middle Power,  
Moral Voice



**12**

A Long-delayed  
Recognition:  
Western Powers  
Signal a Shift on  
Palestine at the  
UN



**20**

Kashmir: Nation  
and People  
Abandoned by  
the World

**24**

From Kuala  
Lumpur to Gaza:  
How the Sumud  
Flotilla Redefined  
Solidarity

**28**

The Myth of  
Invincibility: How  
Iran's Resilience  
Redefined the  
Balance of Power

**36**

How Films  
Reframe the  
Palestinian  
Struggle  
and Western  
Conscience

**32**

What Gaza  
Reveals About  
the End of the  
Rules-based  
Order



**40**

Prime Minister  
Anwar Ibrahim  
Speaks at the  
Emergency Arab  
-Islamic Summit,  
Doha

**43**

Rohingya: the  
World's Forgotten  
Refugees

**48**

Travel Ban  
and the  
IDF: Rights  
Without  
Recourse

**55**

Hit By 25%  
Tariffs (Now  
19%): Should  
Malaysia Go  
Deeper into the  
Muslim World

*Behind the missiles and media narratives lies a deeper truth—resistance, not dominance, is shaping the next global order.*

# THE MYTH OF INVINCIBILITY: HOW IRAN'S RESILIENCE REDEFINED THE BALANCE OF POWER

*Iran's long endurance under siege has shattered one of geopolitics' most enduring illusions: that military dominance ensures moral authority. As Israel's strikes backfire and the global balance tilts toward multipolarity, a deeper truth emerges — resilience, over might, may come to define the new architecture of power.*

By Michelle Kimball





## A Nation Under Siege—and Still Strong

**F**or more than four decades Iran has endured relentless economic warfare. Sanctions imposed after the 1979 Iranian Revolution were meant to isolate the country and cripple the economy. Yet instead of collapse, Iran adapted—building advanced industries and gaining world-wide recognition up to today in science, defence, and technology.

As one analyst put it, “Iran turned isolation into innovation.”

When Israel launched airstrikes claiming to pre-empt a nuclear threat, international experts, including from the IAEA International Atomic Energy Agency) and U.S. National Intelligence, swiftly rejected the rationale, finding no evidence of an active weapons program. The attacks killed senior Iranian officials and scientists and struck civilian sites, prompting Iran to retaliate with targeted strikes that smashed Tel Aviv and pierced Israel’s much-touted Iron Dome defences.

Many observers saw echoes of the false “weapons of mass destruction” claims that justified the Iraq War, that killed hundreds of thousands.



## Gunboat Diplomacy and Global Hypocrisy

At a Kuala Lumpur forum hosted by the International Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies (IAIS), scholars described these events as part of a broader pattern—gunboat diplomacy replacing genuine negotiation.

Western powers, they argued, routinely invoke international law against others while violating it themselves.

Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, in remarks quoted at the event, called the attacks “punitive and unprovoked,” warning that they undermine diplomacy and extinguish hopes for peace. His statement captured a growing sentiment across the Global South: that the rules-based order only applies when convenient for those writing the rules.

## Shattering the Myth of Invincibility

For decades, mainstream Western media portrayed Israel as militarily invincible — protected by U.S. patronage and fortified by the “Iron Dome.” That image is beginning to crumble.

Iran’s ability to strike strategic Israeli targets has upended the myth of absolute Israeli superiority. Analysts also noted the imbalance in media coverage: Iranian retaliation dominates headlines, while Israel’s repeated bombardments of hospitals and civilian areas in Gaza receive far less scrutiny.

This selective outrage sustains a moral hierarchy in which some nations are absolved of their own violence.

**“Such actions, carried out with utter impunity, constitute a blatant violation of international law, further eroding the norms that hold the global order together.”**  
**— Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim**

ISRAEL



IRAN



## Demonisation as Policy

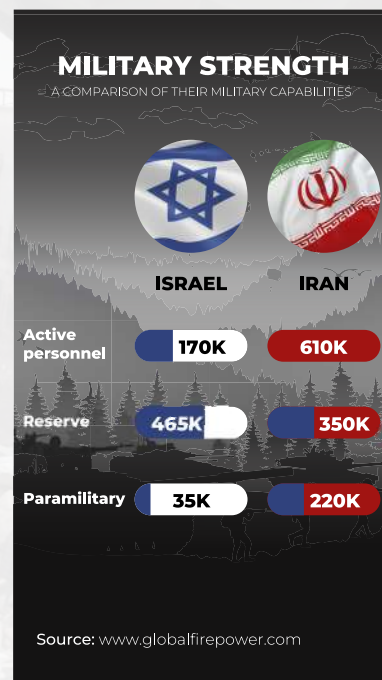
Much of today's hostility toward Iran dates back to 1979, when the Islamic Revolution overthrew the U.S.-backed Shah and severed ties with Israel. From Saddam Hussein's U.S.-supported war against Iran in the 1980s to President George W. Bush's "axis of evil" rhetoric, Tehran has been cast as a permanent villain for asserting independence and defending the Palestinian cause.

Yet Iran's endurance—its survival under siege—has turned it into a symbol of defiance for those seeking to challenge Western dominance. In a world increasingly skeptical of unilateral power, Tehran's resistance resonates far beyond its borders.

## A Multipolar Re-Orientation

Many analysts now see Iran as central to a shifting global landscape. Its growing ties with Russia and China signal a move toward a multipolar order in which U.S. dominance is no longer absolute.

"Iran's resilience offers the Muslim world a counter-narrative to Western hegemony," one speaker noted. Beyond sectarian divides, this call for unity urges Muslim nations to act assertively and pursue justice on equal terms.





# IRAN— ISRAEL 12- DAY WAR IMPACT

Total  
economic  
losses to  
Israel

**\$6B**  
ESTIMATES



## Law, Power, and the Future

Under international law, Israel's pre-emptive strikes violated the UN's Charter Article 51, while Iran's limited retaliation fell within its right to self-defence. Yet, as one analyst warned, "Any attack without Security Council authorisation represents a dangerous erosion of international law."

The deeper concern is that legality itself has become political. When powerful states act with impunity, law ceases to serve justice—it becomes a tool of control. The strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities risked not only radioactive fallout, but also the collapse of already fragile peace efforts, that were actively in progress.

“Iran’s endurance challenges a world order that privileges might over right.”



**Michelle Kimball**

Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Peace, Dialogue and Xenophobia Studies (PEDIX), IIUM

## Lessons in Justice and Resilience

If Israel can attack a sovereign state without consequence, what hope do smaller nations have? The answer, suggested the Kuala Lumpur panelists, lies in resilience rather than merely in retaliation—building independent capacity, upholding moral clarity, and insisting on equality in global engagement.

Iran's survival under siege offers lessons for the wider Muslim world: strength comes not only from domination, but from conviction and the ability to engage the world without surrendering sovereignty.

Beyond ideology, the issue is one of justice. Iran's endurance challenges a world order that privileges might over right. Whether this moment marks the rise of a more balanced global system—or merely a pause before another escalation—remains uncertain.

But one truth is unmistakable: the myth of US and Israeli invincible military and political power has been broken. And in that fracture, a new struggle for justice, sovereignty, and global order is taking shape.

**Advisors**

Prof. Dr. Maszlee Bin Malik  
Dr. Syed Azman Syed Ahmad Nawawi  
Dr. Ahmad Badri Abdullah

**Editor-in-Chief**

Dr. Abdul Latiff Mohd Ibrahim

**Managing Editor**

Wan Naim Wan Mansor

**Designer**

Emir Eslah bin Yasmin

**Copyright of IAIS ©2025**

Contents of this publication are copyrighted to the International Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies.

**Address:** Jalan Ilmu, Off Jln Profesor Diraja Ungku Aziz, 59100 Kuala Lumpur,  
Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur.

**Phone:** 03-7956 9188

**Fax:** 03-7956 2188

**Email:** [reply@iais.org.my](mailto:reply@iais.org.my)

**Visit our website by scanning the QR code below:**





**Published by:**

International Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies (IAIS) Malaysia,  
Jalan Ilmu, Off Jalan Prof Diraja Ungku Aziz, 59100 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.  
Tel: 03 - 7956 9188 | Fax: 03 - 7956 2188 | [www.iais.org.my](http://www.iais.org.my)

**Printed by:**

Vinlin Press Sdn Bhd, No. 2, Jalan Meranti Permai 1, Meranti Permai  
Industrial Park, Batu 15, Jalan Puchong,  
Selangor Darul Ehsan | Tel: 03 - 8061 5533 | Fax: 03 - 8062 5533





**International Institute of  
Advanced Islamic Studies**

**Address:** Jalan Ilmu, Off Jln Profesor Diraja  
Ungku Aziz, 59100 Kuala Lumpur,  
Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur

**Phone :** +60 37 956 9188

**Email :** [reply@iais.org.my](mailto:reply@iais.org.my)



[iais.org.my](http://iais.org.my)



[facebook.com/IAISMalaysia](https://facebook.com/IAISMalaysia)



[iaismalaysia](https://www.instagram.com/iaismalaysia)



[@iaismalaysia](https://twitter.com/iaismalaysia)



[my.linkedin.com/in/iaismalaysia](https://my.linkedin.com/in/iaismalaysia)



**MALAYSIA  
MADANI**