

Analytical Review

THE CONCEPT OF GREATER ISRAEL AND ALLEGED U.S.-ISRAELI STRATEGIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST: A GEOPOLITICAL ANALYTICAL REVIEW

Identifiers:

ID: 107-26/DTN

Year: 2026

Volume: 2

First Page: 39

Last Page: 46

Correspondence: Taha Nazir PhD,

Researcher, Worker, and Journalist.

Thomson Reuters - ID N-5730-2015 |

ORCID ID - [orcid.org/0000-0002-](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5308-6798)

5308-6798 | <https://tahanazir.com>

Funding Statement: The authors declare that no specific funding was received for this study.

Ethics Approval Statement:

Ethical approval was not required for this study, as it did not involve human participants, animal subjects, or identifiable personal data.

Consent for Publication

Statement: The author has reviewed and approved the final manuscript and consents to its publication in accordance with journal policies.

Additional information is available at the end of the article.

Taha Nazir PhD¹, Zaigham J. Kayani²

¹ Research Scientist, Writer, Media Professional and Social Worker. <https://tahanazir.com/>

[ORCID](#) | [Publons](#) | [ResearchGate](#) | [Scopus](#) | [Academia](#) | [Linkedin](#) | [Google Scholar](#) | [Loop Frontiers](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Scinapse](#)

² Broadcaster, Journalist, Media Producer, Editor in Chief, and Chief Executive Officer, Media South Asia Canada Inc.

zjkayani@gmail.com | +1 (647) 285-5959 | Toronto, Canada.

[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#)

Running title: Middle East escalation cycles, U.S.–Israel strategy, and regional stability

Abstract

This review examines claims that U.S. and Israeli actions are driving cycles of escalation involving Iran and GCC states, sometimes framed around a “Greater Israel” narrative. Using historical ideas, recent military patterns, and regional security dynamics, it analyzes how repeated strikes and retaliations shape tensions, alliances, and strategic calculations across the region. It also considers how U.S. military basing, Gulf security dependence, and energy politics may deepen the risks of entrapment and miscalculation. While the “Greater Israel” concept lacks clear evidence as official policy, the interaction of U.S. regional presence, Israeli Iranian confrontation, and GCC vulnerabilities raises serious concerns about wider instability, global energy disruption, and shifting great power competition.

Keywords: Middle East conflict, U.S. policy, Israel Iran tensions, GCC security, escalation dynamics, energy security, regional geopolitics

About author

Taha Nazir is a researcher, writer, and independent scholar based in Toronto, Canada. His work focuses on political analysis, international relations, and media discourse, with particular interest in South Asian geopolitics and global security dynamics. He has contributed to analytical writing and research commentary across various platforms, engaging with contemporary policy and governance issues.

Zaigham J. Kayani is a Toronto-based journalist, broadcaster, and media professional with over three decades of experience in mass communication and community engagement. He holds a master's degree in mass communication from Allama Iqbal Open University, Pakistan. He has worked across print, radio, and television in Pakistan and Canada, and currently serves as CEO of Media South Asia Canada Inc., promoting multicultural media and community dialogue.



Data Source: Archives, Biographies, Databanks, Encyclopedias, Libraries, Metadata Registries, Reports, Repositories, arXiv, Crossref, OpenAI, Wikipedia, World Health Organization, Zenodo.

Conflict of Interest Statement: The author declares all potential conflicts of interest and affirms that any such interests have been appropriately disclosed in accordance with standard ethical guidelines.

AI Tools and Assistance Statement: Artificial intelligence tools were utilized to support content structuring, data analysis, and evidence synthesis. All outputs were critically reviewed and validated by the author, who assumes full responsibility for the accuracy, interpretation, and conclusions of the work.

Peer Review Statement: This manuscript has not undergone external peer review, as it represents a structured synthesis and analysis of existing evidence. The methodological approach adheres to established standards to ensure rigor, transparency, and scientific validity.

Data Synthesis and Analysis

Data were synthesized using meta-analysis (fixed/random effects) with heterogeneity assessed by I^2 and Cochran's Q. Where pooling was not feasible, narrative and thematic syntheses were applied. Network meta-analysis and meta-regression were conducted where appropriate, in accordance with PRISMA and Cochrane guidelines.



Introduction:

The notion of “Greater Israel” — a territorial concept extending from the Nile River in Egypt to the Euphrates River in Iraq — originates in Revisionist Zionist thought articulated by Vladimir Jabotinsky in the 1920s and later echoed in certain Likud party platforms. While never adopted as official Israeli government policy, the idea periodically resurfaces in regional discourse, particularly during periods of heightened Iran-Israel tensions. Recent allegations posit that U.S. and Israeli actions, framed through energy independence rhetoric and repeated military exchanges, are advancing this vision by destabilising the broader Middle East. Former President Donald J. Trump's public statements emphasising U.S. energy self-sufficiency (“America doesn't need Middle East oil”) have been interpreted by some analysts as signalling reduced U.S. strategic dependence on Gulf stability.



en.islamonweb.net

The 'Greater Israel' Doctrine Goes Mainstream in Netanyahu's Israel - Islamonweb

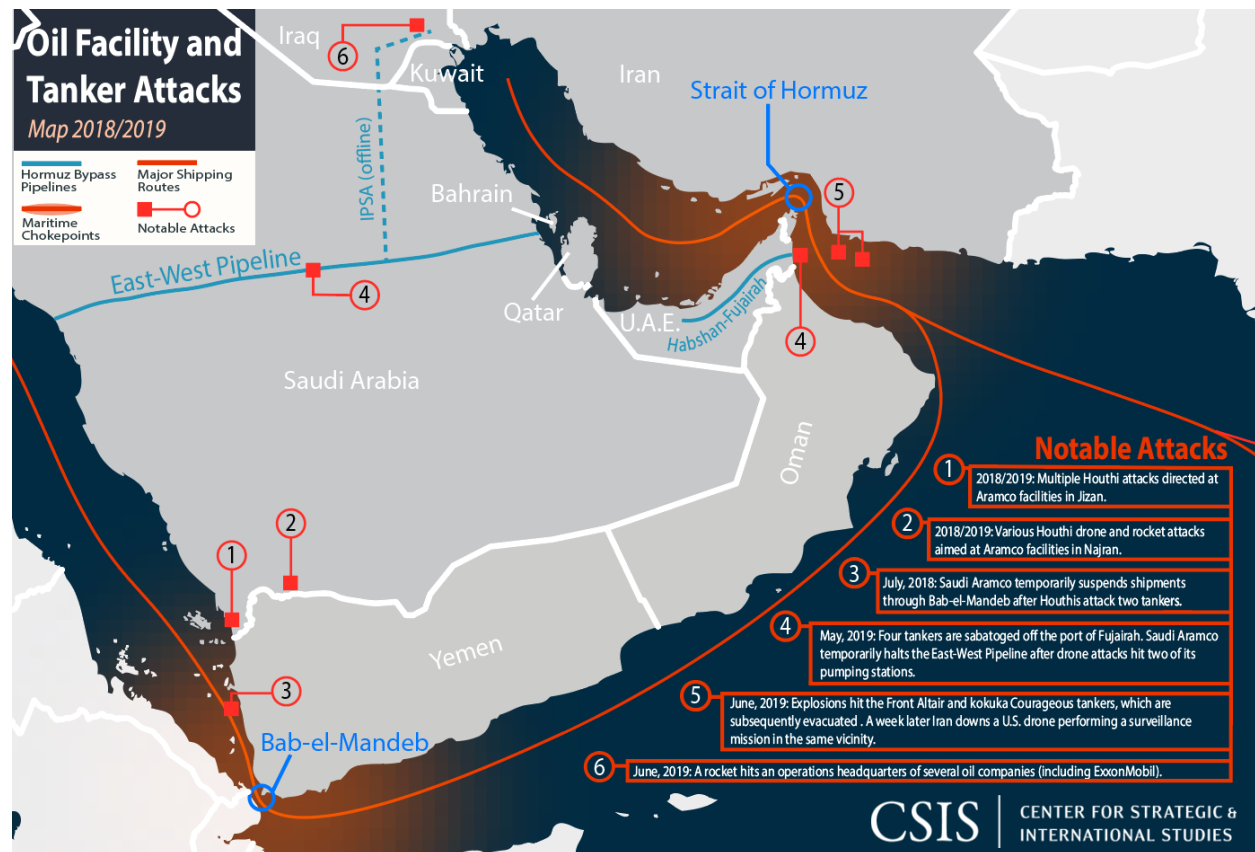
Figure 1: Historical map illustrating the maximalist “Greater Israel” concept (Nile to Euphrates), a fringe ideological vision rather than current official Israeli policy (source: open geopolitical archives).

The Alleged Escalation Cycle: Mechanism and Historical Patterns

Critics describe a repetitive pattern: Israeli strikes on Iranian or proxy targets (e.g., 2024–2025 operations against IRGC facilities), Iranian retaliation across the Middle East (missile/drone strikes on GCC infrastructure or shipping), U.S. condemnation followed by targeted support for Israel, and renewed Israeli action. This cycle, they argue, incrementally weakens regional states while advancing Israeli security dominance.

Examples include the April 2024 direct Iran-Israel exchanges (Operation True Promise and subsequent Israeli response) and 2025 escalations involving Houthi and Hezbollah proxies. U.S. responses have consistently reaffirmed Israel’s right to self-defence while maintaining basing access in GCC states. The psychological and economic effects — insurance denial for shipping, rerouting via the Cape of Good Hope — amplify disruption even without full-scale war.

Figure 2: Strategic map of the Strait of Hormuz highlighting oil transit routes and chokepoint vulnerabilities.



csis.org

Oil Markets, Oil Attacks, and the Strategic Straits

U.S. Energy Independence and GCC Entrapment Dynamics

Trump's repeated emphasis on U.S. energy dominance has been cited as evidence of diminished reliance on Gulf oil. GCC states (Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman) host critical U.S. facilities, including Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar (headquarters of U.S. Central Command) and the U.S. Fifth Fleet in Bahrain. Analysts argue this basing dependency limits GCC autonomy: independent moves toward de-escalation with Iran risk external pressure or attacks that could be attributed to non-state actors.

Historical parallels include U.S. basing arrangements in the Philippines (pre-1992) and post-2003 Iraq, where host nations faced entrapment in great-power rivalries. The Abraham Accords (2020, normalised relations between Israel and UAE/Bahrain) further integrated GCC states into U.S.-Israeli security frameworks.

Figure 3: President Donald J. Trump addressing energy policy, underscoring U.S. independence from Middle East oil imports.



reuters.com

Trump pushes energy dominance agenda in meeting with US oil executives | Reuters

Table 1: Alleged Escalation Cycle and Regional Impacts

Phase	Action	Key Actors	Reported Regional Consequence
1	Israeli strike on Iranian/proxy targets	Israel Defence Forces	Iranian retaliation across Middle East
2	Iranian response (missiles/drones)	IRGC / proxies	Damage to GCC infrastructure/shipping
3	U.S. condemnation + support	U.S. administration	Reinforcement of Israeli position; GCC reliance on U.S. protection
4	Renewed Israeli action	Israel	Cycle repetition; incremental weakening of regional states

Figure 4: President Benjamin Netanyahu and former President Donald J. Trump in joint appearance, symbolizing close bilateral coordination.



[npr.org](https://www.npr.org)

Netanyahu meets Trump to talk tariffs, Gaza war: NPR

Strategic Objectives and Counter-Arguments

Alleged goals cited in regional discourse include regime pressure on Iran, economic weakening of Gulf states, and territorial expansion toward a Greater Israel framework. Counter-arguments note that Iranian leadership remains intact, Iran's economy faced sanctions pre-conflict, and U.S. intelligence assessments (National Intelligence Directorate) have stated Iran lacks a current nuclear weaponisation pathway. Mainstream analyses attribute tensions to genuine security concerns (Iranian nuclear programme, proxy networks) rather than a grand redesign. GCC states retain agency through OPEC+ coordination and diversified partnerships (e.g., China's Belt and Road Initiative investments).

Conclusion

The discourse surrounding a U.S.-Israeli strategy to establish "Greater Israel" through managed Middle East destabilisation reflects deep regional anxieties amid repeated Iran-Israel exchanges and GCC basing dependencies. While the maximalist Greater Israel concept remains historically

fringe and non-official, the interplay of U.S. energy independence rhetoric, persistent military cycles, and Gulf entrapment dynamics warrants rigorous monitoring. Sustainable regional stability requires diplomatic off-ramps, verifiable de-escalation mechanisms, and diversified security architectures beyond single-power reliance. For global actors — China (37% of oil imports via Hormuz), Europe, and India — the stakes extend far beyond bilateral U.S.-Israel relations, underscoring the need for multilateral engagement to prevent protracted conflict in this critical geopolitical theatre.



Ethical Statement

This is a research-based manuscript prepared and structured in a scientific narrative review format. Modern AI-assisted tools were used to access current and authentic information from digital archives, bibliographic databanks, online libraries, research articles, academic repositories, and encyclopedias.

Preprint Notice

This manuscript is shared as a non-peer-reviewed preprint on platforms such as Zenodo, SSRN, and Research Square to support scholarly discussion. The content is research-based and developed using publicly available and verifiable sources. Readers are encouraged to interpret the material as preliminary and subject to revision.

Disclaimer

This non-peer-reviewed article is shared for general academic discussion. AI tools were used to assist with clarity and organization. Readers are advised to independently assess and verify the information.

Literature Search and Information Management

Literature retrieval was conducted using a structured and reproducible search strategy in accordance with PRISMA-S reporting standards. Search strategies were independently evaluated using the PRESS framework to ensure methodological quality, accuracy, and completeness. Grey literature was systematically identified using the CADTH *Grey Matters* framework to enhance coverage of unpublished, non-indexed, and policy-relevant sources, thereby minimizing publication bias and improving evidence comprehensiveness.

Risk of Bias and Evidence Quality

Risk of bias was assessed using validated, design-specific tools (RoB 2, ROBINS-I, QUADAS-2/3, AMSTAR 2, Newcastle–Ottawa Scale, and CASP). The certainty of evidence and strength of recommendations were evaluated using the GRADE framework, ensuring a standardized and reproducible assessment across study designs.

Review Typology and Reporting

Review designs were classified into standard categories (scoping, umbrella, rapid, qualitative, and mixed-methods), with reporting aligned to established guidelines (PRISMA-ScR, PRIOR, PRISMA-RR, ENTREQ, and PRISMA/MMAT) to ensure methodological rigor and transparency.



References:

1. Cordesman, A. H. (2025). *Iran and the Strait of Hormuz: Strategic risks*. Center for Strategic and International Studies.
2. International Institute for Strategic Studies. (2025). *The Military Balance 2025*.
3. Jabotinsky, V. (1925). *The iron wall*. (Revisionist Zionist writings).
4. U.S. Energy Information Administration. (2025). *Strait of Hormuz oil transit data*.
5. U.S. Department of Defense. (2024). *Annual report on military power of Iran*.



© 2025 DownTown News. This publication is released under the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0) license. You are permitted to: Share: Copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format. Adapt: Remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, including commercial use. These freedoms cannot be revoked if the licensing terms are followed.
License Terms: Attribution: You must provide appropriate credit to DownTown News, include a link to the CC BY 4.0 license, and indicate if any changes were made. Attribution must be given in a reasonable manner that does not imply endorsement by DownTown News. No Additional Restrictions: You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that restrict others from exercising the permissions granted by this license.

For full license details, please refer to the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0).