



## **Qatar, Saudi Arabia led efforts to influence Trump against US strike in Iran, sources tell 'Post'**

**January 15, 2026** *jpost.com* reported: “Officials from Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Oman worked “behind the scenes” to defuse tensions between the US and Iran in an attempt to prevent an attack, a person with knowledge about the matter told The Jerusalem Post on Thursday. Egypt was also involved in the diplomatic efforts, Reuters reported Thursday.

US President Donald Trump informed Tehran that the US would not attack and asked it to exercise restraint as well, Pakistani English-language newspaper Dawn reported Thursday afternoon, citing Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan Reza Amiri Moghadam.

On Wednesday evening, Trump said he had been informed that the killings in Iran’s crackdown on nationwide protests were subsiding. “We were told that the killing in Iran is stopping, and there’s no plan for executions,” Trump said in the Oval Office. “I’ve been told that on good authority. We’ll find out about it. I’m sure if it happens, I’ll be very upset...”

## **Second day in a row | US again urges citizens: Leave Iran immediately**

**January 14, 2026** *israelnationalnews.com* reported: “For the second consecutive day, the US State Department on Tuesday urged US citizens in Iran to leave that country immediately.

‘US citizens should leave Iran now. Consider departing by land to Turkey or Armenia, if safe to do so,’ the official social media account of the US Department of State Consular Affairs wrote.

‘Protests across Iran continue to escalate. Increased security measures, road closures, public transportation disruptions, and internet blockages are ongoing. The Government of Iran has restricted access to mobile, landline, and national internet networks. Airlines continue to limit or cancel flights to and from Iran, with several suspending service,’ it added.

On Monday, the State Department issued an urgent security alert, warning American citizens in Iran to leave the country immediately as nationwide protests intensify and conditions grow increasingly unstable.

Americans who remain in the country were advised to shelter in a secure location with essential supplies, avoid demonstrations, maintain a low profile, and monitor local media for rapid developments. The alert also urges US citizens to keep phones charged, stay in contact with family, and enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) for ongoing updates...”

## **Report: Iran protests death toll estimated at least 12,000**

**January 13, 2026** *israelnationalnews.com* reported: “*Iran International* reported on Tuesday that it has concluded, following what it described as an extensive verification process, that at least 12,000 people were killed so far during the ongoing protests in Iran, mainly over two consecutive nights.

According to *Iran International*, the assessment was reached after reviewing overlapping accounts and evidence from multiple sources, including individuals described as close to Iran’s Supreme National Security Council and the presidential office, as well as reports from members of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps in several cities. The outlet also cited testimony from eyewitnesses, families of those killed, medical staff, and information linked to hospitals.

The report states that the killings occurred largely on Thursday and Friday, identified as the deadliest period, and characterizes the events as unprecedented in scale, geographic spread, and level of violence in Iran’s



contemporary history. *Iran International* said those killed were mostly civilians and that many were under the age of 30.

*Iran International* further reported that, based on information it received, the deaths were primarily caused by forces affiliated with the Revolutionary Guard and the Basij. The outlet asserted that the operation was organized and carried out following directives from Iran's highest leadership, with the involvement of senior state institutions..."

### **Khamenei says pro-regime rallies are a 'warning' to the US**

*January 13, 2026 israelnationalnews.com* reported: "Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Monday praised the pro-government rallies organized by authorities in response to two weeks of nationwide protests, declaring that the turnout served as a 'warning' to the United States. 'This was a warning to American politicians to stop their deceit and not rely on treacherous mercenaries,' Khamenei said, according to Iranian state TV.

Khamenei added that the demonstrations showed strong public backing for the regime. 'These massive rallies, full of determination, have thwarted the plan of foreign enemies that were supposed to be carried out by domestic mercenaries,' he stated. Khamenei had previously downplayed the widespread protests in his country, claiming they are driven by fringe elements.

The Supreme Leader's comments on Monday follow President Donald Trump's repeated warnings that the US would hit back at Iran if it were to kill anti-regime protesters..."

### **EU should consider forming combined military force: defence chief**

*January 12, 2026 spacewar.com* reported: "EU countries should weigh whether to set up a combined military force that could eventually replace US troops in Europe, the bloc's defence chief said Sunday. EU defence commissioner Andrius Kubilius floated creating a 'powerful, standing 'European military force' of 100,000 troops' as a possible option to better protect the continent.



'How will we replace the 100,000-strong American standing military force, which is the back-bone military force in Europe?' he asked in a speech in Sweden. The suggestion comes as US President Donald Trump has heightened fears among NATO allies over Washington's reliability by insisting, he wants to take over Greenland.

Worries over Trump's commitment to Europe have already spurred countries to step up efforts to bolster their militaries in the face of the threat posed by Russia. Ideas about establishing a central European army have floated around for years but have largely failed to gain traction as nations are wary of relinquishing control over their militaries. The US has pushed its European allies to increasingly take over responsibility for their own security, and raised the prospect it could shift forces from Europe to focus on China..."

### **South Africa defends naval drills with Iran, Russia as 'essential'**

*January 12, 2026 spacewar.com* reported: "South Africa on Saturday began naval drills with Russia, Iran and China, describing the maneuvers off its coast as not merely a show of force but a vital response to rising maritime tensions.

The week-long 'Will for Peace 2026' exercises come just days after the United States seized a Russian flagged oil tanker in the North Atlantic, saying it carried crude bound for Venezuela, Russia and Iran in violation of Western sanctions. The seizure followed an American raid that toppled Moscow's ally Nicolas Maduro in Caracas.

The drills — led by China — were more than a military exercise and a statement of intent among the BRICS group of emerging nations, Captain Nndwakhulu Thomas Thamaha, South Africa's joint taskforce commander, told the opening Ceremony. 'It is a demonstration of our collective resolve to work together,' he said..."