

## **Strategic Policymaking in the Era of Regional Escalating Crises**

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### **Abstract**

Political revolutions have the ability to expand and escalate in the surrounding environment. The United States, as a central player in the Western world, uses the mechanisms of aggressive action against neighboring countries and resistance groups. Iran's regional strategy in the years after the Cold War has been "comprehensive support for the resistance front" and "combating a system of domination". Such an approach has led to an increase in security conflicts between America and Iran. America has used the "offshore balancing strategy" to contain and limit Iran.

Offshore balancing as a part of America's security policy has been dedicated to limit Iran's influence. The third and fourth waves of the technological revolution have left their impact on the process and nature of regional crises. Every country needs to use crisis management mechanisms to reduce its strategic costs in the era of "escalating crises". According to such an idea, the main question of the article is: What are the characteristics of strategic politics in the era of progressive regional crises? How can it be controlled, limited and restrained? The hypothesis of the article emphasizes that: Strategic policy-making in the era of regional and international crises will be based on crisis management mechanisms. Crisis management is achieved through multilateralism, international cooperation, mediation and general participation of actors.

**Keywords:** Escalating Crises, Regional Security, Crisis Management, Multilateralism.

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### **1. Introduction**

Regional crises have increased significantly in the third decade of the 21st century. The main reason for the spread of regional crises should be seen in the technological changes and displacement of the balance of power. Marginal identity and actors gradually improved their position and used resistance mechanisms against the actors beyond the control of the global system. The concept of resistance was first used by Michel Foucault. Political revolutions and obstacles to the influence of foreign actors are the main components of the resistance policy.

Strategic policy-making in the 21st century cannot be achieved without paying attention to the equation of power. Empowerment in the 21st century will be a function of technology, identity and management of the critical environment. Any actor who controls a more comprehensive level of the balance of power naturally achieves a greater security surplus. The increase in the threats by America and Israel against Iran and on the resistance front is because they have achieved a surplus of technological and geopolitical power. The signs of the geopolitical power of America and Israel in the Gaza war and the invasion of Lebanon include "surplus technological power" and "silence of regional countries."

America's confrontation with the "Resistance Front" has been a function of Israel's regional and strategic security policy. The strategic cooperation between America and Israel is so remarkable and evident that Ukrainian President Zelensky pointed out in a meeting with the Secretary General of NATO in early October 2024 that Ukraine expects Israel to be supported to the same degree by America, the Western world, and NATO. In such conditions, regional crises are escalating and can leave an impact on the equation of American regional hegemony.

Iran's geopolitical role has left a fundamental change in the regional power and security equation. All the efforts of American presidents in the past 45 years have been aimed at dealing with the dynamics of Iran's regional and strategic role. Such a situation can be seen as part of the main signs of changes in the geopolitical equation. The existing facts show that Iran's regional role has been to deal with terrorist threats and regional power vacuums (Mearsheimer, 2001:63).

The change in the balance of power has led to comprehensive geopolitical responsibilities for regional actors, including Iran. Iran's geopolitical

responsibility can be seen as a threat to the Western world and Israel. Iran's responsibility has a historical, geopolitical, strategic and ideological nature. The change in the balance of power has its effect on Iran's geopolitical destiny and the strategic importance of the Resistance Front in the regional environment. The geopolitics of power in the 21st century has gained a global nature and has the ability to connect strategically with other areas of political and security power of countries. Regional order in the conditions of progressive environmental crises will be a function of technological capabilities, political will and action initiative to deal with threats.

The elements and signs of strategic policy-making in the era of escalating crises can be considered in terms of issues and changes in identity, strategy, geopolitics, balance of power and crisis management. Each of the mentioned signs is considered as a part of security and power policy. Identity templates are generally created by the necessary infrastructures for resistance formations. Any action based on resistance is considered a part of the strategic mechanisms of actors in the space of regional competition.

## **2.Methodology**

This article, with its applied nature and analytical descriptive approach, seeks to answer the main question of the article using library resources. ". According to such an idea, the main question of the article is What are the characteristics of strategic policy in the era of progressive regional crises? How can it be controlled, limited and contained? The hypothesis of the article emphasises that Strategic politics in the era of regional and international crises will be based on crisis management mechanisms. Crisis management is achieved through multilateralism, international cooperation, mediation and general participation of actors.

## **3.Theoretical Framework**

### **3-1 .Multilateralism**

Process of organizing relations between groups of three or more states. Beyond that basic quantitative aspect, multilateralism is generally considered to comprise certain qualitative elements or principles that shape the character of the arrangement or institution. Those principles are an indivisibility of interests among participants, a commitment to diffuse reciprocity, and a system of dispute settlement intended to enforce a particular mode of behavior (Scott,20204). The first sign of multilateralism

can be seen in the use of constructive cooperation mechanisms with other actors to deal with regional crises. Regional crises occur in conditions where the role of environmental and international actors is reduced. Whenever countries are confronted with signs of crisis, instability and insecurity, they will need multilateral cooperation. The concept of crisis management in some historical epochs means the emergence of crisis signs for a change in the balance of power. In order to control revolutionary groups and countries, it is possible to use "collective action" mechanisms, that is, to put the countries in a state of reduced communication, encirclement and limitation, and finally exclusion.

### **3-2 .Strategic Policymaking**

Any policy will be a function of the needs of the internal, regional and strategic environment. Political culture and geopolitical formations in any regional environment will play an effective role in the orientation and national role of countries. Security policy-making is based on signs such as environmental culture, geopolitical codes and the behaviour patterns of political elites. Any process and mechanism aimed at sustainable security will not be achieved without taking into account the environmental patterns and structures of the international system. Strategic policy-making is part of the governance imperative in any country. A correct understanding of the concept of strategic policy-making in political literature means knowing the patterns of power distribution in the social, economic, regional and international environment, and knowing how the power equation shapes the national security infrastructure of countries. The reality of strategic policy making is associated with signs of power building, security building and modelling of action. In this way, the concept of strategic policymaking has a close relationship with the concept of power and how it is linked to the political structure. In this regard, and due to the limited resources of power, no country can gain effective advantages in the domestic, regional and international competitive environment without a detailed understanding of the policy-making and goal-setting processes involved. In fact, just as the main goal of public and economic policy is based on increasing economic prosperity, the main goal of strategic policy is to reduce threats, ensure political survival and increase security. Of course, the formulation of strategic policy differs from country to country. In a country with a state-oriented structure, it is natural that government planning plays an effective

role in the political future and general shaping of that society, and institution-oriented countries have different strategic policy-making processes.

#### **4.Finding**

##### **4-1.Reproducing Identity Power and Resistance in Geopolitics**

Any strategic policy-making needs to know the geopolitical environment. Iran's regional environment is associated with signs of crisis, chaos, and conflict. Saul Cohen considers this region as a geographical area that will be involved in endless crises. Its main cause should be considered in the social, cultural and strategic conflicts of the actors with each other. Each of the regional actors has the idea of developing power and this controls mutual threats to others.

Any strategic, security and geopolitical change has been a function of identity issues and technological needs. Political revolutions have the ability to be effective in the regional environment. The Iranian revolution left a decisive role in the new regional balance. During the Cold War years, Iran tried to play a "regional balancing role" and this is considered as a sign of "control and management of regional crises". This approach continued until the collapse of the bipolar structure (Waltz,1993:56).

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Iran gradually promoted its regional and strategic role. Iran's relative advantage in the regional space should be seen as a matter of identity and geopolitical affiliation with groups that are referred to as "forgotten Muslims in the regional environment". The central thought of the strategic agents of the emerging world has been based on the role of America as the dominant global power. Such an approach has led to regional wars and endless crises from 2001 to 2024.

##### **4-1-1 .The Intersection of Identities and Unification of Liberal Outlooks**

Any strategic policymaking in the regional environment of the Middle East and Southwest Asia will not be possible without recognizing the components of identity. Identity can be seen as an inevitable part of power politics by actors who do not have structural authority but are trying to gain a new position in the regional political order. The liberal thoughts of the post-Cold War years did not understand the emerging realities of the Middle East and the new world order.

Francis Fukuyama's historical book titled *The End of History and the Last Man* can be seen as a new manifesto of liberal thought in world politics.

Fukuyama tried to show that not only the third wave of democracy has been formed, but since 1991, the evolutionary trends and historical dynamics were shaped by the ideology of liberal democracy. The realities of the historical environment in the Middle East and world politics have changed in the past years in such a way that Fukuyama published his last book in 2018 entitled *Identity: The Demand for Dignity and the Politics of Resentment* was published. The publication of Fukuyama's *Identity* shows the fact that a new wave of political and geopolitical transformations have been formed under the influence of the signs of the Islamic revolution in Iran, and this reflects its dynamics in the world order. The identity confrontation in the Middle East is caused by the politicization of social and ideological differences. Social groups in countries that do not have the necessary motivation for socialization create the necessary grounds for a security crisis (Mosalanejhad, 2015:92).

#### **4-1-2 .The Power of Identity, the Resistance Front and Regional Balance**

Any regional balance will be a function of the balance of power and the policies of the actors. In the years after the Cold War there were signs of a balance of power in the regional environment. The main axis in the balance of power is the issue of identity. The intersection of identities have the potential ability to create chaos in regional politics. Each regional actor is trying to gain as much surplus power as possible. The reason can be found in the lack of organized structures. Any actions of actors in the conditions of lack of structure will be based on signs of threat, crisis and regional instability (Rahimi and et al, 2020:63).

Iran's role in confronting regional belligerent and hostile groups led to an instability in politics in the Arab Middle East. Iran was able to play an effective role in confronting the belligerent groups, especially ISIS. In this historical period, Iran benefited from the "national role of regional security builder". Playing such a role can be seen as an effective factor in dealing with emerging threats from groups such as ISIS and Jabhat al-Nusra. Iran's regional role was such that in the process of confronting Takfiri terrorist groups, it created the ground for the realization of models of "resistance identity" in the regional environment of the Middle East, Southwest Asia, and the Eastern Mediterranean (Nasr, 2007:36).

The emergence of actors like ISIS, without Iran's geopolitical role, was considered the cause of endless threats in the region. The main cause of such



a situation is a fragmented society and a broken state. Iran was able to create the ground for the formation of stronger governments in the regional environment through the "identity mechanisms of the resistance front". The realization of this was not possible without signs of reproducing geopolitical power.

#### **4-1-3 .Securitized Society in Geopolitical Crises and Security Threats**

A change in the balance of power creates the basis for the securitization of the regional environment. Whenever the actors are not able to control the balance and formations of multilateral cooperation, the ground for the securitization of the environment is formed. In the early years of the 21st century, the security environment of the Middle East region has faced signs of escalating crises and widespread security challenges, the result of which should be considered in signs such as the reproduction of permanent war in the regional environment. Passing any kind of security formation in the troubled region requires balance of power, balance of threat and balance of identity for stability and balancing (Ward,2012:135).

The new Middle East reflects signs of disruption. The fragility of powers arises in situations where actors are not able to create balance in the regional environment. Therefore, the policy of strategic and regional policymaking, in a geopolitical crisis, requires the securitization of society. The securitization of society can be seen as the main axis of decision making and security policymaking and strategy for crisis management. The crisis in the Middle East has given rise to the formation of a securitized society (Biden, 2020:8).

The securitized society will in opposition and in conflict with the securitization of society. It will not be possible to realize mechanisms related to a securitized society without paying attention to Iran's national and regional role. Any role played by Iran in the past years reflected the reality that was based on the securitization of society in the regional environment. The socialization of security provides the basis for the realization of political socialization. Political social acceptability is related to environments where there are social contexts for controlling environmental gaps (Gilpin,2011:76).

In his view, Castells points to many failing factors within many governments. Regional security policy will require cooperation, participation and "division of regional security work". Any division of

security work requires identity, cultural, and structural formations. The power of identity can create signs of balance to manage escalating crises. The comprehensive support of the United States to Israel makes the infrastructure of the continuation of the crisis and regional security conflicts inevitable.

#### **4-1-4 .Politicization of the Reproduction of Legitimizing Identity**

Legitimizing identity is formed in situations where actors do not make much effort to change the balance of power. The most important characteristic of legitimizing identity should be considered in the balance of power, identity balance, and threat balance. In his studies, Castells points to the years after the Cold War and the lack of a definitive structure, and how the ground for the emergence of different and conflicting identities was created. In the view of Castells and Saul Cohen, the Arab Middle East has been formed with signs of resistance and has the necessary ability to spread the crisis (Patrik, 2017:35).

The identity of the resistance is based on the confrontation and conflict of the rival actors. There is another form of identification that includes "legitimizing identity" and "planned identity". This type of identities provides the basis for mutual and organized cooperation of actors in structural formation. The connection of identity and technological components can be considered as one of the factors in Castells's view that makes the emergence and role-playing of conflicting identities inevitable.

Legitimizing identity has the potential for creating social, structural, and strategic balance. Any identification of actors based on signs of structural action can be considered as "legitimizing identity". The legitimizing identity creates the background for the reproduction of identity forces, ethnicity, and groups with fundamentalist action patterns. The identification of conflicts and the rise of identity forces have shaped the foundation, including ethnic and local forces, class forces and fundamentalist forces in the Middle East in the third decades of the 21st century.

The formation of a legitimizing identity is a function of the necessity of power balance. The balance of power in the 21st century is connected with signs of identity balance. Any regional balance will be able to create a clear and powerful effect in weakening the structure of regional governments. The emergence of a planned identity and a legitimizing identity is important



because it affects the infrastructures of the balance of power in the regional environment and international politics (Agnew,1999:17).

#### **4-2 .Management of Regional Crises and Chaotic Geopolitics**

Any kind of crisis management requires knowledge of the political and geopolitical environment. Southwest Asia in the 21st century has faced signs of chaos, instability, and endless crises. Each of the signs of the crises can be seen as a function of political radicalism and the prominence of the power of identity in the competing trends in the regional environment, which has left its impact on security policy in the surrounding countries. Crisis management will be effective in situations where there is a power balance. Some actors in the regional environment try to benefit from hegemonic mechanisms (Gaddis,2011:36).

The idea of hegemony by some regional actors and great powers can be considered as one of the main challenges of balance and crisis management in the regional environment. Any kind of strategic policymaking requires the management of decentralized actors and processes. Social crises are formed and reproduced in conditions that create the background for the appearance and role of rival forces. Marginalization of rival political forces and ideological groups can be seen as a part of power and threat management policy (Weir,2014:75).

In the first years of the 21st century, regional crises have had the potential to create security challenges. Therefore, any kind of security and strategic policymaking needs to understand the social forces and decentralized actors in the regional environment. Iran's role as a regional actor with a revolutionary approach has significantly affected the balance of power. Political and ideological revolutions will inevitably have signs of movement, dynamism, and regional effectiveness.

Crisis management is not possible without paying attention to the signs and mechanisms of the balance of power, and it will not leave specific effects on the regional balance. America and Israel are among the actors who are trying to provide the basis for gaining regional hegemony. The expansion theory expresses the fact that social forces, like technological waves, have the necessary ability to be effective in the surrounding environment. Zbigniew Brzezinski is also considered among theorists who consider the post-Cold War world to be a chaotic world (Hilpert and Wacker,2015:5).

**4-2-1 .Policymaking to Control Identity and Strategic Conflicts**

The identity and strategic conflicts of the regional environment are related to the conditions in which cultural signs, identity and discriminating social action are formed. Analysis of the social environment in different geographical areas reflects signs of crisis and conflict. The social movement of Wall Street, the social movements of France and England in the last decade show that many social waves have been formed and spread outside of the Middle East region. An era in which, contrary to expectations, we are not witnessing the movement of the world towards convergence, but we are witnessing a new type of global alignment based on culture and identity (Mosalanejhad,2017:65).

Identity can lead to the expansion of strategic and trans-class conflicts. Regional conflicts in Huntington's view are not only related to the Middle East and include a wider range of geographical areas. The world politics of the post-Cold War period "started its operation in line with the cultural borders", an era in which nations and different identity groups tend to "parade under the symbols of their cultural identity". Cultural symbols can create a specific form of sign in the framework of distinguishing colors and flags (Walsh,1944:95).

Huntington points to the fact that the social and political developments of the regional environment have been influenced by the ideological dynamic waves caused by the Islamic revolution. He believes that in the post-Cold War era, we are witnessing the revival of forgotten identities, ancient historical conflicts, and a renewed "self-discovery" that nations have risen in "searching for identity or recreating their ethnicity." Huntington's main point is that culture and cultural identities, on a broad level, are the same civilizational identities. Identities that have the ability to influence the patterns of solidarity, divergences, and wars in the world after the Cold War. From the point of view of the sociology of social movements and theorists such as Ralph Dendroff and Lewis Coser, many societies have a set of social gaps. Signs of social divide in the post-Cold War years have been influenced by issues of ethnicity, religion, class, gender, age, cultural affiliations, and lifestyle. Each of these issues can become an effective factor in the formation of social and identity movements. In general, in the sociology of social movements, a new form of cultural components has emerged, which leaves its effects in regional politics, power and security.

#### **4-2-2 .Controlling Normative and Strategic Gaps**

The security and strategic environment of the Middle East reflects signs of an identity crisis. Every identity crisis should be seen as a reflection of the normative and strategic gaps of actors in the conditions of competition without structure and structural guidelines. Security transition periods in areas without identity and security structure face widespread social challenges. The Arab Middle East and Southwest Asia generally have normative gaps and escalating crises. Many of the identity crises caused by the role of Takfiri and Salafi groups can be seen as a reflection of the reproduction of the historical and ideological gaps hidden in the social structure of the Middle East (Hanieh,2019:535).

The conflicts in West Asia and the Arab Middle East are beyond the gap between tradition and modernity. The new divisions are rooted in the social structure and political culture of the Middle East. This type of identity and ideological gaps can create the necessary grounds for the reproduction of new security conflicts. In such a situation, the scene of disputes in the Middle East has been compared to the era of religious wars in Europe; a sectarian battle under which the governments move and are subject to. The future of the Middle East will be deeply influenced by these forces.

Ethnic divisions can be considered among the factors and forces that have influenced the political and security processes of regional countries. Any crisis-producing issue in the internal structure of countries can leave its effects on the pattern of action of regional actors. In the years after the Cold War, a field of studies has emerged to find the role of ethnic issues as one of the influencing forces on the processes of identity formation. The emergence of the resistance identity in the Salafist world and Saudi-oriented action patterns can be seen as a new revolutionary force that has spread in the Middle East.

The identity and ideological components of Saudi Arabia can be considered as the main axis of the discourse of opposition to the identity and geopolitical approach of the resistance front in the regional environment. Saudi Arabia's strategic decision making and policymaking process to control Iran's regional role in the framework of regional crises. In this process, institutions and organizations such as the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council will play a central and determining role. The Persian Gulf Cooperation Council and the Arab League, under the influence of the Saudi security strategy, play a role in confronting the process of revolutionary

identification and the process of Islamic awakening (Cannon and Donelli, 2019:510).

#### **4-2-3 .Tactical Flexibility in Conflict Resolution**

One of the main indicators of the strategic policy making of countries including Iran in the era of "escalating crises" can be considered related to "tactical flexibility". Flexibility is achieved in order to realize signs of "tactical pragmatism" and "diplomatic reconciliation". The mentioned signs will be the main focus of Iran's foreign policy and national security in the conditions of crisis, threats and increasing security challenges. Therefore, if any country in the area of regional conflicts benefits from the mechanisms related to "conflict resolution", it will inevitably be considered as a strategic agent in the administration of regional affairs (Lukin,2018:73).

Iran's role in the regional environment is explained based on signs of regional and strategic compromise. Ruhollah Ramezani pointed out that geopolitics and the Iranian elite's behavioral patterns signal flexibility to maintain the status quo and optimize strategic benefits arising from power politics inevitable. Such an approach was able to see its effects in the patterns of political action and strategic decisions of Iran in the space of regional crises, especially in October 2024.

The escalation of the crisis in the regional security space has led to the adoption of mechanisms such as "tactical flexibility" by Iran. Clarifying that tactical flexibility does not mean ignoring the necessity of "operational action" to create balance. Balance is a function of the power equation. The power of the actors should be considered among the factors that make possible the effective ability to create balance. Any flexibility in a crisis environment will require a certain level of strength (Diesen,2020:21).

Empowerment is part of the strategy of actors who are trying to improve the "security policy" equation at the "regional and international levels". Iran is among the actors that have "geopolitical capacity" and "tactical mobility" to deal with threats. Such a country will need to use mechanisms such as balancing to stabilize its position. Balance can be seen as the main axis of power politics, competition, compromise and cooperation of actors in competitive conditions.

An actor who has the ability to create a balance based on power, diplomacy and compromise mechanisms is natural to be able to organize a certain level of competition. The model of Iran's competitive action in the regional

environment has a tactical and operational nature. Iran is aware of the fact that in the conditions of war and peace, it should put a certain level of competition on the agenda. Playing any political and operational role in the Middle East regional environment will not be achieved without paying attention to power mechanisms, compromise, foresight, balance and tactical flexibility (Richmond,2019:215).

#### **4-2-4 .Strategic and Tactical Multilateralism**

Multilateralism can be considered as one of the main mechanisms related to strategic policy making. Any cooperative action of the actors creates the infrastructures of participation and cooperation. Any conflict control requires the use of "balance of power" mechanisms. The balance of power is the concept of the emergence of conditions that allow the participation and roles of rival actors. Any kind of balance can be seen as a function of mechanisms based on "autonomy", "coalition" and "tactical action will."

Each of the mentioned components requires a certain level of strength and tactical will. Therefore, Iran's operational action in the form of True Promise 1 and 2 is important because it reflects signs of "optimized political will". Although multilateralism is important and effective in the balance of power structure, political competition can create a new level of competition oriented action. In the troubled region, any multilateralism will be a function of environmental competition (Mosalanejhad,2018:95).

Environmental competition in the troubled region is a part of the reality of power politics to resolve the conflict. Any multilateralism in the space of organized competitions can be seen as a part of the balance of power equation and tactical competition of effective actors in the regional environment and international politics. Optimizing the results of Iran's strategic policy can be found in models such as nuclear diplomacy and conflict resolution in the space of regional competition (Elkalout and Hedaya,2024:1825).

Multilateralism reaches the desired result when the actors have a certain level of "action based on effective power". Any action without applying the power equation creates certain challenges for countries. It is for this reason that finding the role of political units based on balancing makes possible signs of competition, security action and mechanisms related to constructive cooperation. Multilateralism forms a specific form of competition, cooperation, and conflict in every historical era. The expansion and



escalation of the crisis is among the factors that hinder the effectiveness of multilateralism.

#### **4-3 .Tactical Coalition Policy Making**

The second sign of Iran's strategic multilateralism can be considered in the signs and indicators of "tactical coalition building". This approach is important for the reason that it creates a context for the role-playing of actors in the regional environment. The necessity of Iran's tactical coalition building in the regional security policy of Southwest Asia is important because Iran and many rival countries are located in the turbulent region (Hegghammer,2010:74).

The characteristic of the troubled region is that it reduces the possibility of durable and relatively stable cooperation between Iran and any other regional country. The reason for this should be seen in the role of decentralized actors and the endless intervention of the United States in regional politics. The United States uses "repeated constructive destruction" mechanisms in its political and security role. Such an approach is considered one of the main axes of American security policy in the regional environment of Southwest Asia (Schweller,1998:72).

One of the main reasons for Iran's regional and strategic success can be considered the use of coalition-building mechanisms. Geopolitical necessities form the main axis of political action and foreign policy of countries. In the years after the victory of the Islamic revolution, Iran tried to play a constructive and cooperative role in security in the regional and extra-regional environment. Any strategic role finding inevitably leaves its impact in the field of political action and foreign policy trends.

Since the regional environment is in a state of crisis and chaos, it is natural that the Islamic Republic of Iran, in addition to mechanisms based on self-reliance, also uses models such as coalition building. Coalition building in the regional space and foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran will be a part of the necessity to deal with geopolitical and security threats. The cooperation between Iran and Russia is important because both countries are trying to confront unilateral patterns and policies based on the hegemony of the United States (Johnson and Foster,2024:1845).

The alliance building and security cooperation between Iran and Russia is important because it can create the necessary grounds for generating power to deal with common threats in the regional environment. Russia's support



for Israel can be considered as one of Iran's regional challenges in the future. Cooperation with Russia will not be possible without mechanisms related to the power equation. Iran's de facto support of Russia in the process of the Ukraine war can be seen as a part of the policy of strategic cooperation in the direction of tactical coalition building.

Since Iran lives in "geopolitics of chaos", it seems natural that many strategic cooperations with regional countries and great powers have a changing nature. Any power policy is considered as a part of the tactical action mechanisms of Iran and regional countries. Russia will not have any desire to accept the overload caused by geopolitical commitments against a country like Iran. Therefore, any coalition building in the regional environment of Southwest Asia will be associated with signs of instability and lack of continuity.

Iran's alliance with each of the great powers and regional actors will be a function of the "threat balance strategy". The threat balance is important because it highlights the mutual role of Iran, Russia and China in the form of "coalition against the domination system". Such an approach should be seen as a function of the mechanisms used by the main actors of international politics against the "expanding motives of the hegemonic power". Iran also has such an approach and considers any power gain of the hegemonic actor to lead to increasing geopolitical conflicts.

#### **4-3-1 .Politicization of the Balancing Regional Role**

Iran's regional role is based on signs of structural and organizational strength. Any structural power can create an effective background in the regional environment. An actor who has effective power, first of all, should have the necessary ability for "self-reliance" and "self-sufficiency". Secondly, gradually improve its capabilities and organize signs of "regional balance". Thirdly, it should have the ability to "resolve conflicts" in crisis situations. Each of the three mentioned components is considered among the features of "regional balancing actor."

Iran is among the countries that are located in the "troubled region". The main feature of the troubled region should be sought in bilateral and multilateral cooperation. Multilateralism in Iran's geopolitical approach has led to the promotion of Iran's regional role. Iran's strategic areas have been based on the equation of "effectiveness" and "strategic inspiration" since the

early years of the Islamic Revolution. Each of the two mentioned components reflects the main axis of Iran's geopolitical and strategic action. Iran's strategic action in Southwest Asia is important because it has "regional effectiveness". Iran's most important strategic challenge is that the diplomatic field has little connection with its strategic thinking. The result of such a situation can be found in regional competitions. The contradictions reproduced in the relations between Iran and the great powers provided the necessary background for some manifestations of tactical effectiveness. In the years after the Cold War, Iran played the "national role of inspiring and protecting the resistance front."

Playing the role of the protector of the resistance front means that Iran uses the mechanisms and policies of "regional asymmetric balance" to establish its tactical and strategic position in Southwest Asia. Iran's regional and geopolitical role is important for the regional balance because "conflict management in an environment of escalating threats" is considered a difficult and risky task. Playing the role of balancing region has been based on signs of confidence building in the resistance front.

Excessive trust in the actors of the international system in the conditions of anarchy cannot create lasting favorability for Iran. The step-by-step solution of political and strategic differences in the regional environment requires playing a "tactical balancing role". Playing such a role will require signs of geopolitical power. The security crisis of 2024 can be seen as a reflection of the radicalization of "US offshore balance policy" in the regional environment and international politics (Pompeo, 2018:8).

Whenever the great powers are in the transition space from the "technological loop", it is natural that the ground for the emergence of military conflicts at the regional and international level is created. In 2023 and 2024, America has been in the space of offshore action in two regional areas. America's support for Vladimir Zelensky has created the basis for the escalation of the crisis in central Europe. In the same way that the whole western world has effectively supported Israel in the process of the Middle East regional war.

Iran's regional balancing role in Southwest Asia requires the use of three options: "political debate", "diplomatic bargaining" and "strategic consensus". Each of the three mentioned components should be considered among topics that create organized and durable behavioral norms for

competing groups. Iran's support for the resistance front increases the motivation of regional actors to resist and confront Israel's military aggression.

Although many available evidences show that Israel has limited motivation for a ceasefire and reconciliation, the strategy of "America's Offshore Balance" creates signs of a new balance. The new balance is aimed at signs of compromise in the regional and strategic environment. The existing realities show that maintaining Iran's geopolitical position and playing the strategic role of regional balance will require the understanding of strategic rules in an environment without a super-central power (Cingoz,2024:62).

Each of the regional actors use "strategic coalition building" mechanisms to achieve their goals. Such an approach means that a wide range of regional countries need to maximize the level of alliance and cooperation with great powers in order to survive and improve their national security. Such an approach increases Iran's national security challenges. Iran's geopolitical and strategic needs will be achieved and reproduced based on the four components of "referring to geopolitical logic", "referring to national feeling", "referring to strategic history and professional judgment" and finally "referring to strategic ideology, norms and values."

#### **4-3-2 .Tactical Coalition Policy Making**

The second sign of Iran's strategic multilateralism can be considered in the signs and indicators of "tactical coalition building". This approach is important for the reason that it creates a context for the role-playing of actors in the regional environment. The necessity of Iran's tactical coalition building in the regional security policy of Southwest Asia is important because Iran and many rival countries are located in the turbulent region.

The characteristic of the troubled region is that it reduces the possibility of durable and relatively stable cooperation between Iran and any other regional country. The reason for this should be seen in the role of decentralized actors and the endless intervention of the United States in regional politics. The United States uses "repeated constructive destruction" mechanisms in its political and security role. Such an approach is considered one of the main axes of American security policy in the regional environment of Southwest Asia.

One of the main reasons for Iran's regional and strategic success can be considered the use of coalition-building mechanisms. Geopolitical

necessities form the main axis of political action and foreign policy of countries. In the years after the victory of the Islamic revolution, Iran tried to play a constructive and cooperative role in security in the regional and extra-regional environment. Any strategic role finding inevitably leaves its impact in the field of political action and foreign policy trends.

Since the regional environment is in a state of crisis and chaos, it is natural that the Islamic Republic of Iran, in addition to mechanisms based on self-reliance, also uses models such as coalition building. Coalition building in the regional space and foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran will be a part of the necessity to deal with geopolitical and security threats. The cooperation between Iran and Russia is important because both countries are trying to confront unilateral patterns and policies based on the hegemony of the United States.

The alliance building and security cooperation between Iran and Russia is important because it can create the necessary grounds for generating power to deal with common threats in the regional environment. Russia's support for Israel can be considered as one of Iran's regional challenges in the future. Cooperation with Russia will not be possible without mechanisms related to the power equation. Iran's de facto support of Russia in the process of the Ukraine war can be seen as a part of the policy of strategic cooperation in the direction of tactical coalition building.

Since Iran lives in "geopolitics of chaos", it seems natural that many strategic cooperations with regional countries and great powers have a changing nature. Any power policy is considered as a part of the tactical action mechanisms of Iran and regional countries. Russia will not have any desire to accept the overload caused by geopolitical commitments against a country like Iran. Therefore, any coalition building in the regional environment of Southwest Asia will be associated with signs of instability and lack of continuity.

Iran's alliance with each of the great powers and regional actors will be a function of the "threat balance strategy". The threat balance is important because it highlights the mutual role of Iran, Russia and China in the form of "coalition against the domination system". Such an approach should be seen as a function of the mechanisms used by the main actors of international politics against the "expanding motives of the hegemonic

power". Iran also has such an approach and considers any rise in power of the hegemonic actor to lead to increasing geopolitical conflicts.

#### **4-3-3 .Politicization of Regional Role and Balance International Division of Labor and Balanced Cooperation**

In the conditions of geopolitical and strategic threats, each of the two countries, Russia and Iran, needs the regional role of the corresponding actor. Taking advantage of the necessity and threat balancing mechanisms in regional cooperation is important because it makes a certain level of tactical cooperation inevitable. The tactical cooperation between Iran and Russia is achieved in a situation where there are manifestations of "division of international security work" in the relations between the two countries. Although experience has shown that Russia has not been interested in strategic cooperation mechanisms with Iran in any historical period (Mearsheimer,2009:252).

Tactical cooperation in relations between Iran and regional actors can create a new level of "balanced cooperation". Any bilateral and multilateral cooperation is a function of the structural needs and geopolitical needs of the countries in the regional environment. Iran needs a certain level of cooperation, participation and tactical action to overcome regional threats. The necessity of Iran's role in the Arab Middle East and Southwest Asia leads to a certain level of balance, for its survival, it must use tactical action mechanisms. Ignoring the necessity of tactical action on the part of Iran creates the ground for the formation of security challenges and geopolitical risks. Such an atmosphere has increased visibly in 2023-24 and after the "Al-Aqsa Storm Operation" on October 7, 2023.

Like America and China, Russia is not interested in the growth and expansion of resistance front actors. The idea of resistance does not have much place in the political, strategic and security thinking of great powers. All the great powers emphasize the necessity of "regulating structural rules" in the tactical field. Iran has experienced relatively similar conditions during the sacred defense period. Although the main resistance movement has put its policies in the form of "identity action for survival", the existing tactical realities show that political survival will not be possible without the support of great powers (Karaganov,2018:89).

The passivity of Russia and China in the process of the Gaza war shows the fact that none of the major powers are willing to confront the United States



on regional issues. Russia and China are aware of the fact that Israel is part of the geopolitical base of the United States in the Middle East, which has the ability to be effective, active, and operational against emerging threats. In such conditions, it is natural that the Gaza war in 2025 will control, limit and reduce a significant part of "Iran's geopolitical movement."

Its main reason should be seen in the effective and direct support of the United States to Israel as a "fully armed proxy actor" in the regional environment. Israel's rise to power would not have been achieved without paying attention to the tactical, operational and strategic support of the United States. The developments from October 2023 onwards show the fact that Israel's operational action has been formed to maintain America's relative advantage in the Middle East and Southwest Asia. This will lead to the control of "geopolitical and tactical challenges" facing America and the Western world in the regional environment (Schumpeter, 1942:92).

Iran's relative advantage in the regional environment is related to the conditions that the "resistance identity" enjoys legitimacy, effectiveness and tactical expansion. Whenever the balance of power changes in the relations between regional actors and radical social movements, the ground will be provided for transformation in the tactical and operational patterns of great powers and regional actors. Regardless of the regional power equation, Iran loses its inspiring role in the Arab Middle East and Southeast Asia.

#### **4-3-4 .Inspirational Policymaking and a Coalition of Identity**

Geopolitical and strategic wars reduce the effectiveness of inspiring actors, including Iran, in the regional environment. The inspiration of Iran's strategic policy has been based on the forms of identity, ideology, and geopolitical action. The geopolitics of resistance gradually loses its function under the influence of the aggressive policies of America and Israel. In such conditions, it is natural for the resistance front to be in a state of structural crisis (Mosalanejhad, 2019:83).

Coalition building will have the ability to restore the relative power of regional actors. Although the Western world and regional countries are trying to limit Iran's position through cooperative action mechanisms, new patterns of Iran's strategic policy have been formed based on signs of coalition building. Coalition building can be seen as a complementary part of the strategy of maintaining and optimizing Iran's regional role in the



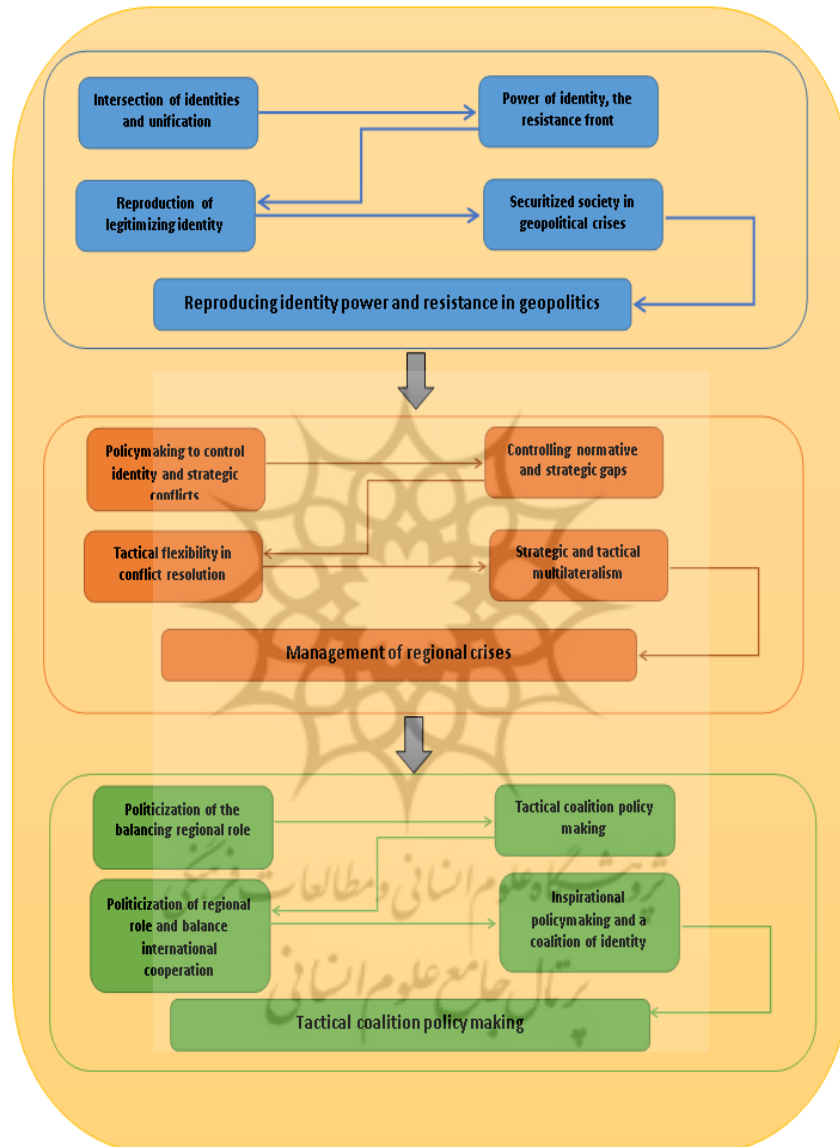
resistance front, which is achieved through coalition and cooperative action mechanisms.

Each of the regional actors can put a certain level of cooperative action with Iran on the agenda. The strategy of confronting Iran will not have any benefit for regional security. Regional security is achieved and improved in conditions where there are signs of cooperative action of great powers, regional actors and social movements carrying the resistance front in the space of cooperative tactical action.

From October 2024, the ground has been created for the gradual reduction of the power of Iran's allies. Explaining that it will be difficult for the resistance front to confront the regional actors who have a "garrison government". Israel not only has a growing military and tactical power structure, but also acts as the front line of the United States' tactical and operational front. Israel is among the actors that have "special tactical relations" with the United States, and this will make the balance of power for the survival and reproduction of the resistance front forces face a security challenge and a tactical risk.

### **5. Analysis and Conclusion**

Any policy will be a function of the needs of the internal, regional and strategic environment. Political culture and geopolitical formations in any regional environment will play an effective role in the orientation and national role of countries. Security policy making is based on signs such as environmental culture, geopolitical codes and the pattern of action of political elites. Any process and mechanism aimed at sustainable security will not be achieved without taking into account the environmental patterns and formations of the international system. One of the most effective environmental forms is the influence of identity factors on relations and geopolitical variables. Strategic policy-making in the era of increasing regional crises, considering the reproduction of identity and resistance forces in geopolitics and their criteria as inputs, the management of regional crises and chaotic geopolitics with its components as a process, and finally, coalition politics as a tactic, can be understood as outputs in a systems approach, as shown in Figure 1.



**Figure (1): Strategic Policymaking in the Era of Regional Escalating Crises**

Any regional security policy is a function of geopolitical formations and patterns of action. Decision makers. Regional security policy in the Middle East is based on two basic indicators: radical elites and a chaotic environment.

Any mechanism related to strategic policymaking in the Middle East will need to know the exact signs of actors' actions. Each actor tries to put a specific form of the equation of politics, power and mutual action in the space of regional competition. Iran's strategic policy-making will be based on signs of "regional crisis management". Any kind of crisis management can create the necessary background for multilateral cooperation.

In the Middle East and Southwest Asia, there have been signs of political and security competition, which leaves its impact on the formation of communicative actions. Iran's security policy has been based on signs of regional identification. Any identification is a function of the political and historical competitions of the countries of the region. In the conditions of crisis and security threats, every country needs to take advantage of special mechanisms and behavioral patterns that create the most security surplus.

Securing Iran in a high-risk environment will require strategic policymaking based on power, security, cooperation, and participation. Each of the mentioned indicators is obtained through political and security mechanisms. To achieve such goals, Iran will need "tactical flexibility" to resolve conflicts. Iran's second mechanism for realizing power and security should be sought in connection with "multilateralism". Iran's multilateralism with regional countries and great powers can have a tactical and strategic nature. Overcoming threats cannot be achieved without paying attention to power mechanisms and political competition. For security in the era of escalating regional crises, Iran should use cooperative action mechanisms with influential institutions and actors in the regional environment. Iran is aware of the fact that there have been intersecting identities in the regional environment, which has an impact on political competition. Mechanisms to overcome escalating crises can be found in security crisis management. Any crisis management will require the use of tactical multilateralism. In such conditions, Iran achieves signs of flexibility and multilateral cooperation with other actors. Such a trend can be seen as one of the main signs of regional balance.

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