

## The Role of Qassem Soleimani's Performance in the National Security of the Islamic Republic of Iran

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### Abstract

Qassem Soleimani, as a prominent figure of resistance and a symbol of Iranian-Islamic identity, as well as the fight against terrorism worldwide, by establishing a modern school, contributed to national solidarity and the promotion of Shia identity. This, in turn, strengthened the national security of the Islamic Republic in both military and political dimensions. Soleimani emerged as a national hero during the Iran-Iraq War and in the fight against ISIS, embodying a model of national champion. Therefore, his independent personality became an influential factor in advancing national security for the Islamic Republic. Considering himself a homeland soldier, Soleimani, while defending Islam, also symbolized the defense of the homeland. Accordingly, the goal of this research was to identify and explain the role and performance of Qassem Soleimani in the national security of the Islamic Republic and answer the question of what role his performance played in Iran's national security. The research methodology was descriptive and analytical, both in terms of the primary objective and the method of data collection. The research results indicate that Qassem Soleimani, through the creation of a discourse of resistance and mobilization of resources, contributed to strengthening the national security of the Islamic Republic.

**Keywords:** National Security, Resistance Discourse, Political Security, Military Security

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## Introduction

The issue of security and security policy, both domestically and internationally, has always been one of the major concerns for countries worldwide, including Iran. In the contemporary era, the national security environment of Iran continues to be influenced by the primary traditional variable in foreign security, namely the nature of neighbors and the international nature of the surrounding environment of Iranian territory. Therefore, the Islamic Republic must organize its foreign security relations in accordance with this diversity of neighbors. Within this context, the factor of popular support, manifested through participatory frameworks and people's involvement, strengthens the national governance of Iran.

Sustainable national security is achievable when, over the long term, internal vulnerabilities and severe external threats do not jeopardize territorial integrity, internal cohesion, and the political regime. In the discourse of sustainable national security, embracing diverse and challenging statements, as well as the software aspects of security emphasized in the modern approach, highlights the role and centrality of societal factors for achieving higher levels of stability. Based on this, individuals and groups play a prominent role in this approach, and security is attainable within the framework of consent.

After the victory of the Islamic Revolution, one of the most important approaches that shaped the theoretical foundations and security policies of the Islamic Republic was the Dar al-Salam (House of Peace) approach, drawn from the jurisprudential foundations of Islamic scholars. This approach provides an

interpretive formula for national security in line with the Dar al-Salam perspective on security policy, considering Iran's security as interconnected and continuous with the security of the Islamic world. Qassem Soleimani's support for the people of Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, Iraq, and his fight against international terrorism serves as evidence for this claim.

Qassem Soleimani, due to various responsibilities within the Islamic Republic, gradually evolved into a significant figure in the system of the Islamic Republic. His role had a direct and indirect impact on Iran's national security, considering the geopolitical changes in the region and his role both inside and outside of Iran. Considering Soleimani's performance in the developments in Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine, and Yemen, one can attribute special importance to his role in providing national security for Iran.

Fundamental changes resulting from the Islamic Revolution in the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic led to the consideration of regional powers and major international players in domestic calculations and the agenda of foreign policy. Soleimani played a stabilizing and security-assuring role in defending the sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries against terrorist groups. When the crisis erupted in Syria, and citizens of 80 countries engaged in warfare with the Syrian people and government as terrorist groups, Soleimani supported the Syrian regime and worked towards preserving its territorial integrity and geography. Similarly, when the terrorist group ISIS occupied one-third of Iraq's geography, he played a role in defending the nation and the territorial integrity and geography of Iraq. Therefore, this article aims to address how

Qassem Soleimani's performance provided the grounds for national security for the Islamic Republic.

### **Topic Importance**

The existence of threats and dangers arising from the presence and infiltration of the United States in the immediate security environment of Iran, and the necessity of ensuring security by neighboring countries, have led to Iran's national and regional security being of high value and credibility. On the other hand, Qassem Soleimani turned the significant threat of ISIS into an opportunity for the resistance front in the region. With his strategic management and calculated actions, along with the support of his allies and the axis of resistance, he successfully preserved the national and regional border security.

The significance of addressing this issue becomes more prominent when we understand Qassem Soleimani's role in Western Asia, leading to the regionalization of the discourse of resistance. Weakening terrorist groups means weakening the influential players, including the United States, who supported them. In contrast, the position of the resistance has strengthened, transforming into a united front. This was not something the Americans were willing to accept because the unity of the resistance implies the weakening of Israel. Israel is not only facing an unprecedented political crisis internally but also due to the vulnerability and threat it faces as a result of this resistance alliance. Therefore, the U.S. The government concluded that to prevent excessive weakening of Israel, it must eliminate General Qassem Soleimani, and it did so. Soleimani was not merely an intelligence arm and

operational leader of Iran's Revolutionary Guard; He symbolized Iran's political and military presence in the region. There was a belief that he was an autonomous military figure and the chief architect of Iran's strategic policies in the regional countries from Lebanon to Afghanistan, especially in Iraq and Syria.

### **Research goal**

Examining and explaining the role of Qassem Soleimani in the military, political and economic security of the Islamic Republic of Iran

### **Research question**

Qassem Soleimani's performance has played a role in the national security of the Islamic Republic.

### **Research hypothesis**

Qassem Soleimani brought about the national security of the Islamic Republic through Jihadi management, mobilization of resources and creation of resistance discourse in the West Asian region.

### **Research Methodology**

The current research method is descriptive in terms of fundamental purpose and analysis.

### **Conceptual definitions**

#### **National Security**

National security includes both mental and material well-being and is essentially part of the responsibilities of national governments to prevent direct threats from abroad to the

survival of regimes, the civic system, and the way of life of their citizens (Mundell, 2017, p. 56).

Economic security involves the preservation and improvement of the people's way of life in a society through the provision of goods and services, both from domestic sources and participation in international markets (Mundell, 2017, p. 57).

### Military security

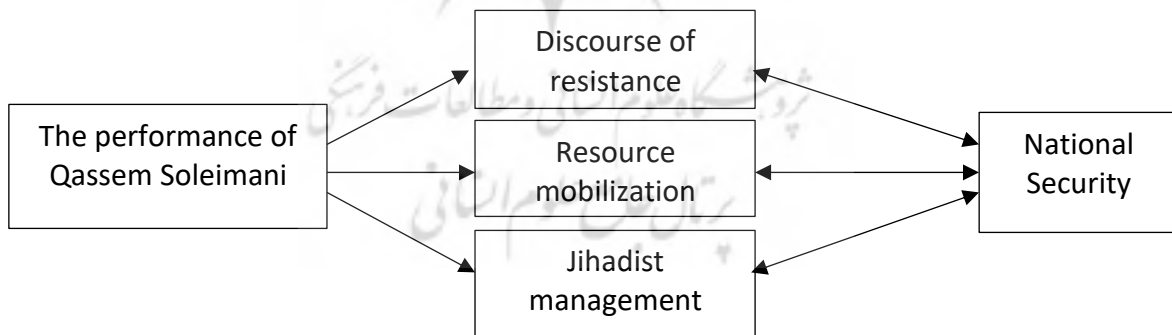
as conventionally studied, pertains to the safety of the country and its fundamental values from military threats by forces and external factors. Buzan argues that military threats are a central concern for security, stating, "Military action can generally threaten all components of the government and practically

does so. The material foundations of the government come under pressure. It can disrupt and destroy institutions, suppress, destroy, or erase government thinking, and valuable achievements in politics, art, industry, culture, and all aspects of humanity may be eliminated through the use of force" (Nasri, 1997, p. 38).

### Political security

The term or concept of "political security" was first introduced by Buzan in the book "People, Governments, and Fear" when discussing the various aspects of societal security. According to him, the security of human societies can be divided into five categories: military, political, economic, social, and environmental security, which are intricately related to each other (Buzan, 2010, p. 34).

### Research conceptual model



### The Role of Qassem Soleimani in the Regional Balance Reconstruction Based on the Discourse of Resistance

With the occurrence of the Islamic Revolution, despite changes in the government and foreign relations of the country, the interest in playing a transregional role continued. However, the form and content of Iran's

assertiveness and responsibility changed. The policy of supporting revolutionary groups and Islamic resistance in Palestine and Lebanon, assisting Bosnia, strengthening presence in Iraq after the fall of Saddam Hussein, and supporting the Syrian government against the West and terrorist movements are examples of the continued transregional approach in the post-Islamic Revolution Iranian biographical narrative (Hashemi and Rezai, 2019, p. 67).

Qassem Soleimani was a prominent military figure in Iran who transformed Shia identity and resistance identity into a global brand. He sought to shape the regional balance based on the resistance balance. He also removed the resistance and resistance front model from the anarchic space and, with the power equation, managed to create a regional balance based on the resistance balance. He believed that a reduction in Iran's power would create conditions where the lack of balance would increase aggressive reactions from major powers and regional actors against Iran.

There is a direct relationship between insecurity, threats, and vulnerability, and each can be interconnected and causative; meaning not only does insecurity lead to threats, but it also contributes to vulnerability. Security policy-makers need to consider both threats and vulnerabilities when formulating their strategies.

### **Qassem Soleimani and Independence**

Independence is among the elements of the resistance discourse, consistently a major concern for contemporary Iranian foreign policy makers. Independence in Iranian culture can be attributed to the presence and influence of foreigners within the country, their

interference in internal affairs, and the occupation of Iran by major powers in various historical periods. Thus, in the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, there is a strong sensitivity to the issues of power and independence in the face of foreign pressures, usually relying on the option of resistance against external pressures (Ghanbarloo, 2012, p. 65). Soleimani's doctrine can be explained within the framework of independence and national dignity of the Islamic Republic.

The influence of Soleimani's doctrine in the West Asia region led to the transformation of the resistance doctrine into the hegemonic doctrine in the region. After the victory of the Islamic Revolution, the imposed war played a significant role in shaping the ideology of resistance. The people of Iran, in the continuation of the ideology that led to the victory of the Islamic Revolution, learned the experience of resistance in an unequal war.

The resistance discourse, initially manifested at the domestic level, gradually extended to the West Asia region. The reason for this expansion was the universal nature of the Islamic Revolution and its reflection in this region. (Pourhassan et al., 2021, p. 251).

One of the most important aspects of the resistance discourse in the West Asia region is the formation of Islamic resistance groups. In the political literature of the ruling system, resistance groups are interpreted as proxies of the Islamic Republic. However, despite the supportive and advisory role of the Islamic Republic, these resistance groups are social and indigenous entities, differing significantly from the proxy role they are associated with.

In general, resistance in the West Asia region can be understood in two general and specific

concepts. Its specific concept is more focused on the issue of Palestine. For this reason, the fighting groups of Palestine and Hezbollah, confronting Israel, are named as Islamic resistance groups. However, resistance in its specific sense includes forces that resist the hegemonic system on the international stage.

Today, the existence of resistance groups from Ansar Allah in Yemen to Islamic Jihad in the Gaza Strip, and the Popular Mobilization Forces in Iraq, and similar groups in Pakistan and Afghanistan, is one of the important realities in the most strategic and sensitive regions of the world that has transformed the power equations. (Pourhassan et al., 2021: 252). For many Iranians, Qassem Soleimani was a national hero who prevented the occupation of Iraq and the attack of ISIS on Iran. According to a survey by the Center for International and Security Studies at Maryland, Soleimani's popularity increased from 73% in 2016 to 82% in 2019, making him a beloved figure in Iran (Dagres, 2021, p. 1).

### **The performance of Qassem Soleimani in the economic security of Iran**

The nature of the Islamic Revolution of Iran is based on Islamic teachings, reflecting its universality in policymaking. Emphasizing principles such as rejecting authoritarianism, refusing dominance over the country's natural and economic resources, defending the rights of the oppressed, adhering to international commitments, and establishing a peaceful relationship based on interaction and cooperation are fundamental principles enshrined in the Constitution guiding the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Constitution, Articles 11, 152, and 153).

In this context, Soleimani's role in securing foreign exchange and selling Iran's oil during the sanction's era garnered significant attention. During a period of severe sanctions on Iran, many attempted to sell oil with government permission, but no one succeeded in selling even a single barrel. The only person who could assist the government during that time was Qassem Soleimani (Khabar Online, 2020, News Code: 1495491).

Regarding Soleimani's economic activities for Iran's national interests, it can be acknowledged that Iran-Iraq foreign trade, due to the presence of the U.S. military in Iraq, was initially limited to border markets from the early 1980s, as customs statistics show. With the strengthening of Iran's role in the region and the withdrawal of U.S. terrorist forces from Iraq since (2008), Iran-Iraq trade also flourished, witnessing a significant surge in imports and exports in the region. With enhanced security in the region under Soleimani's leadership, Iran-Iraq foreign trade increased from less than \$1 billion in the early 2000s to an estimated \$9 billion in (2018), a notable figure. Alongside the immense volume of economic transactions between Iran and Iraq, the strategic role of this relationship in circumventing sanctions imposed on Iran has always been noteworthy, thanks to Soleimani's initiatives and actions in bypassing the sanctions (Fars News, 2020, News Code: 13991114111321).

In Soleimani's perspective, economic justice, fair distribution of wealth, and attention to the people's needs were crucial. He pursued the establishment of the prerequisites for the government of Mahdi, aiming to quench the world's thirst for justice. Commander Mahdi Iranmanesh states: He took the letters people gave him seriously, saying, "When someone

gives me a letter, they want a response. I have a duty, and I must respond."

### **Performance of Qassem Soleimani in the Military-Security and Political Security of Iran**

Qassem Soleimani, with the theory of regional security, sensitized each country to secure national security and the security of its friendly neighbors. The axis of resistance, in the face of Western policies in altering the region's geography and ensuring Israel's security, encountered numerous challenges. As a prominent figure in the resistance and symbol of counterterrorism, he stood alongside Sunni Palestinians in the 51-day war and against Shia Hezbollah forces in the 33-day war, demonstrating resilience against Israel. Additionally, during the peak of the Syrian crisis, he aided Israel and reached Baghdad on the brink of collapse, leading anti-terrorism operations until achieving successful outcomes.

Soleimani's fight against terrorism and extremism had noticeable geopolitical results. For instance, Iran's joining the Shanghai Cooperation Organization addressed some of the key concerns of China and Russia regarding extremist tendencies in certain regions. Russia, concerned about the rise of Takfiri movements in Chechnya, and China in the Xinjiang region, witnessed Iran's ambiguous stance shift after the formation of the terrorist group ISIS in the region. Iran's active role and reliable partnership with global powers like Russia, along with political support in important international forums, especially the United Nations Security Council, were acknowledged even during the fight against terrorism,

contrary to the concerns of the West and some regional countries.

Another aspect of Soleimani's international activities worth noting in the national security and identity verification processes is the Arbaeen pilgrimage. A significant part of it is indebted to the security belt resulting from Soleimani's activities, in collaboration with individuals like Abu Mahdi. The Arbaeen pilgrimage has gradually become a symbol of Shia power and can have a significant impact on the religious identity of Iranians. Additionally, the Arbaeen pilgrimage transformed into a symbol of security in West Asia. Soleimani also valued the democratic nature of the Islamic Republic's system. In a speech, he emphasized that democracy and the comprehensive independence of our country differentiate it from others. (Khabar Online, 2015, news code, 513728)

One of Soleimani's most outstanding areas of activity was the fight against ISIS in Syria and Iraq. In 1391, he went to Syria to fight this Takfiri group. Three years later, in 2014, when Baghdad was on the verge of ISIS occupation, he declared the end of ISIS in a letter addressed to Ayatollah Khamenei, published in the country's media.

Soleimani dedicated his life to continuous and tireless jihad in the path of God. (Torabi Kalate Ghazi, 2021, p. 54) Regional security was one of the most important perspectives of General Soleimani. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Western countries, under the leadership of the United States, aimed to secure the Zionist regime's security, putting the "reengineering" of West Asia on their agenda. Accordingly, regional countries were to become insecure, weakened, and fragmented.

Border disputes between regional countries, religious competitions between Shia and Sunni governments and nations, ethnic prejudices like Pan-Kurdism and Pan-Arabism, the role of reactionary players in the regional arena, and the existence of terrorism were considered weaknesses and fault lines in the West Asia that could achieve the West's goal of creating insecurity in the region.

To weaken security in West Asia, a multifaceted project of "creating Takfiri terrorist groups" such as al-Qaeda and ISIS was formed for the reengineering of the region. One aspect of this project was the geographical change of borders through the partitioning of Islamic countries, aiming to make their national governments weak and their territorial integrity compromised. As a forward-thinking strategist, Soleimani, with an understanding of Western policies, developed the theory of regional security to prevent the execution of their projects. According to this theory, the security of Islamic countries in West Asia is interconnected, affecting each other. In other words, insecurity in Syria affects security in Iraq and, in turn, impacts Iran's security. (Pak Ayin, 2020, p. 1)

Qassem Soleimani, with the assistance of the forces of the Axis of Resistance, defended the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of the region against the Zionist regime and its Western and Arab supporters. By narrowing the field against the Zionist regime and its Western and Arab backers, he instilled hope in the hearts of the people of the region. Bestowed with the title of the champion of the Islamic Ummah by the leadership, he continues to play a crucial role. Today, the unity and cohesion of the anti-Zionist countries in West Asia, and the transformation of the Axis of

Resistance into a united front, will contribute to the security and increased power of the region.

Soleimani's perspective was based on the idea that the gap between power and threat is very close, just as the gap between disbelief and faith is very close. There is a discussion that the gap between power and threat is very close, and as much as you empower yourself, the level of threats against you decreases. However, in politics, some have a "tactical" mentality, and some have a "strategic" mentality. Someone like Moses has a tactical mindset, and someone like Khidr has a strategic mindset. No one says that Moses heals, but everyone says that Khidr heals. Why? Because you have heard the companionship of Moses and Khidr in the Quranic stories, the literature of the Gospel, and the Torah literature. Moses' thinking was "evidentiary" (positivist); his argument was that he had to see and test something, even asking God to show him the Day of Judgment. God said, "Are you not a believer in the power of God and the Day of Judgment as you claim to be My prophet?" Moses replied, "Yes, I believe, but I want to see it for the certainty of my heart." In the methodology of the Islamic Republic, this is considered "evidential methodology"; you must observe, test, and believe or not believe based on it. But Khidr was not like this; he saw the future. How did he see the future? Based on today's evidence. Soleimani's thinking was strategic; he wanted to understand the existing future and how the formation, definition, and redefinition of this future were. Therefore, the discussion is that for a military person in the operational field, tactical understanding is sufficient, meaning you show military readiness. But some elements are not seen by those who only have tactical understanding. One of the



less seen issues that Soleimani saw was the emergence of challenging identities. Soleimani believed that it is necessary to have a strategic approach in the strategic interaction space to pay attention to some emerging threats in addition to the concrete frameworks that exist. Some threats have a "reflective" nature, and some are "emerging" (Mottaghi, 2021: p. 6).

Soleimani's strategic thinking made him aware of wonders and have a completely realistic perception of threats in international relations. Threat is a constant matter in international relations discussions. Therefore, we must constantly strengthen the military and empowerment, and create the necessary grounds to neutralize threats. So, it is very important to pay attention to this issue. If foreign policy is dedicated to securing national interests, and if national interests are the guiding light of foreign policy, for military and strategic planners, understanding threats and resilience against threats is a completely strategic, effective, and decisive matter.

Soleimani was aware that the southwest of Asia is a turbulent region. He was aware that the role-playing of countries and actors is possible when you provide the fields of recognition and confrontation with threats. Therefore, Soleimani transformed the Quds Force according to his understanding of regional threats and came to the conclusion that threats have an accumulative nature and emerging threats take shape. When "George W. Bush" presented the theory of the "dual world," when "Huntington" discussed the "clash of civilizations," their whole goal was to create a kind of military, tactical, and identity arrangement in different countries, especially in the regional space. In that space, in historical conditions

and circumstances, Soleimani was able to elevate his understanding of strategic issues and equip the environment for dealing with threats in a turbulent environment.

Soleimani's perspective was that dealing with threats should be done through social mechanisms. In other words, to deal with threats, we must activate social forces, organize social forces; social forces do not have enough power to organize themselves. Soleimani's perspective was that marginalized forces should be identified as resistance forces and this force should be fertile. Therefore, the next characteristic of General Soleimani's managerial action was that he gave freedom of action to social forces in regional environments; anyone in the framework of the environment he had could play a role. For this reason, Soleimani was able to make social forces, tribes, and various groups that were in the environment and were part of the power equation somehow effective and position them to play a significant role in the political and social environment (Mottaghi, 2021, p. 11).

Qassem Soleimani has transformed into the primary representative of a specific style of insurgent force that is exclusively Iranian. Typically, paramilitary groups define themselves against the government, engage in combat with government forces, and strive to eliminate any trace of government power. However, individuals under Soleimani's command often prefer collaboration within the framework of government power, thus inviting their governments to cooperate from within. By combining paramilitary and government forces, they form a powerful and formidable collective. Hezbollah in Lebanon is the most prominent example of this style (Soufan, 2018, p. 6).

When the Arab Spring began in late 2010, Soleimani quickly realized the potential benefits for Iran. In a speech in May 2011 in Qom, he declared that the uprisings "provide the greatest opportunities for our revolution... We must witness victories in Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, and Syria. This is the result of the Islamic Revolution." In the following months, Soleimani, by establishing paramilitary forces under his command, made himself indispensable to the regimes in Damascus and Baghdad. He may be seen standing on the hoods and beds of trucks, surrounded by fighters shaking each other to hear and see better. (Adesnik, 2018)

Soleimani played a vital role in many significant offensive operations in the Syrian war, including the recapture of the city of Qusayr from rebels. Remaining loyal to his original style, Soleimani sought to integrate government and paramilitary power. In confronting ISIS, he also established new Shia militia groups; Among these groups were Lashkar Fatemiyoun (consisting of Afghans living in Iran) and "Zeinabiyoun" Brigade (consisting of Pakistanis).

Another important and significant task that Qassem Soleimani undertook was to truly increase the strategic depth and ideological influence of the Islamic Revolution across the region. Today, we can observe resistance groups from the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden to the Mediterranean coasts and even in Latin America, such as Venezuela. One of Soleimani's characteristics was his keen insight and awareness of regional conditions, thanks to his field presence. Iran was the first country to rush to the aid of Syria and Iraq against ISIS, supporting the people of these countries in the face of terrorist groups. Soleimani even

predicted the formation of such a group in advance (Bahman, 2020).

In June 2014, ISIS forces captured Mosul, a city with nearly two million residents in northern Iraq. Faced with jihadist advances, tens of thousands of Iraqi forces and federal police withdrew and dissolved. By October 2014, ISIS had reached the outskirts of Baghdad, launching rockets at the main international airport. In the absence of a credible Iraqi army, someone had to save the capital, and proxy Shia forces under Soleimani - alongside other paramilitary groups from different communities - were delighted to do so. Soleimani ordered some Iraqi paramilitary forces responsible for defending Assad to cross the border for the salvation of Iraq (Morris, 2014).

The participating paramilitary forces in the defense organized themselves into the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF), an organization for coordinating with the government. In Baghdad, most groups forming the Shia-led Fatah movement were in some harmony with Iran, although not all were directly controlled by Soleimani. Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi, late that same year at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, thanked Iran for the "swift" delivery of weapons and equipment, "without an immediate payment request." He praised Qassem Soleimani and referred to him as one of Iraq's most important allies in the fight against ISIS. Today, ISIS no longer holds any significant territory in Iraq.

One of the reasons for Iran's presence and Soleimani's role in confronting ISIS is to ensure the national security of the Islamic Republic of Iran. This security, entirely self-sufficient and intrinsic, has successfully been achieved within the framework of a country, utilizing

regional influence, powers, and its components, forming a successful security doctrine. It has effectively prevented terrorist actions by opposing groups to ensure the safety of its citizens. Another crucial reason for Iran's presence and Soleimani's struggle against ISIS is the security of pilgrims visiting the holy shrines in Iraq. Iranians have been walking towards these sanctuaries for years, especially during months like Muharram and Safar, securing the paths to prevent any terrorist threats against the pilgrims.

In June 2014, ISIS forces seized Mosul, a city with a population of approximately two million in northern Iraq. Faced with the advancing jihadist forces, thousands of Iraqi army and federal police personnel abandoned their uniforms and fled. By October 2014, ISIS had reached the outskirts of Baghdad, launching rocket attacks on the city's main international airport. In the absence of a reliable Iraqi army, someone had to step up to save the capital. Soleimani ordered Iraqi paramilitary forces, obligated to defend their country, to return and rescue their government. These forces, organized as the Popular Mobilization Forces (known as "Hashd al-Shaabi"), played a central role, especially in the intense battles, even though not all of them are directly under Soleimani's control. (Soufan, 2018, p. 10)

Although not all Hashd al-Shaabi forces are under the direct control of Soleimani, but Soleimani's forces are one of the largest groups forming Hashd al-Shaabi and have generally been present in the most intense conflicts. For example, in early 2015, these forces played a central role in recapturing the city of Tikrit. A battle in which pictures of Soleimani himself in the front line were published many times.

Soleimani, in his efforts to ensure security in West Asia and counter Western tactics, developed the model of "resistance." He framed the fight against extremism and terrorism based on the development of a resilient strategy. Western countries sought to create division in the anti-Zionist front, and Soleimani, through strategic management, united these nations under the banner of the "Axis of Resistance." One of his significant achievements was bringing together seven nations—Syrians, Lebanese, Iranians, Pakistanis, Afghans, and Iraqis—under the umbrella of resistance, fostering unity.

He emphasized using the native identity and culture of each country, avoiding the imposition of an Iranian-centric approach. Hezbollah with a Lebanese identity, Hashd al-Shaabi with an Iraqi identity, and other groups, such as Zeinabiyoun, Fatemiyoun, and Heidariyoun, were developed based on their national and local characteristics, making them resilient and deeply rooted in their respective countries. (Pak Ayin, 2020, p. 1)

Soleimani, following a regional security approach, sensitized each country to the national security of its own and friendly neighbors. The Axis of Resistance thwarted Western tricks aimed at altering the region's geography and securing Israel's safety. He played a pivotal role in the 51-day war alongside Sunni Palestinians and the 33-day war with Shia Hezbollah forces, achieving victory over the Zionist regime. During the Syrian crisis, he personally went to aid Bashar al-Assad, reaching Baghdad on the verge of falling to ISIS and leading the anti-terrorism operations until success was achieved.

After the end of the eight-year war, despite facing numerous hardships, Soleimani continued to actively defend Islam, the Quran, and the Ashura school. With the emergence of ISIS, he played a crucial role in the resistance and counteraction against ISIS in Syria and Iraq, becoming a prominent figure in the Islamic world. Many youths in Islamic countries, particularly in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Iran, are now influenced by his spirit, thoughts, and jihadist behavior.

Soleimani defined himself from the beginning of his revolution as a soldier of the Islamic Republic. His relationship with the concept of "Velayat" (Supreme Leadership) was entirely ideological. In his approach to guardianship, he prioritized understanding the correct positions and then committed practical action accordingly. Soleimani believed in the tangible representation of Islam based on numerous Quranic verses, turning many divine verses into tangible reality. His school is one that imparts lessons in the fields of the battlefield and action. (Haji Najari, 2021, p. 2)

In both thought and action, Soleimani strongly emphasized the approximation and unity of the Islamic world. He sought solutions for mobilizing the Islamic world against the enemies of Muslims and expelling the enemy from Islamic lands. Despite being a champion of fighting Takfiri ideologies, he was also a staunch advocate of unity. Soleimani, throughout the defensive war and the struggle against ISIS, emerged as a national hero, considering himself both a defender of Islam and a symbol of defending the homeland.

## Conclusion

Over the past years, Qassem Soleimani has succeeded in regional reconstruction through Jihadist management and mobilization of forces, aligning with the goal of ensuring the national security of the Islamic Republic. He strived to enhance security in the region by shaping the Islamic Resistance Front and unifying liberation movements in the Islamic world. Throughout the years, Soleimani played an active and significant role in the confrontations between the United States and Iran. In the first arena, opposing American resistance to the Islamic Revolution, Soleimani became a symbol of success and triumph for the Islamic Republic. Additionally, he successfully thwarted Western countries' plans to undermine the Islamic Revolution in various fields.

In the fight against the Zionist regime's occupation, Soleimani was one of the most influential figures, empowering Palestinian groups to form an active resistance against Israelis. Ismail Haniyeh, during Soleimani's martyrdom ceremony, referred to him as the martyr of Quds, emphasizing his undeniable role in strengthening resistance against the Zionist regime and ensuring national security. This impact was not limited to Palestine alone. In Lebanon, he pursued a similar approach, leading to the end of the Zionist regime's occupation in southern Lebanon and their defeat in the 33-day war.

In countering America as an intervening and occupying actor in the region, Soleimani played an unparalleled role. His claim to ground American forces in Iraq and Afghanistan is not only an Iranian perspective but is supported by numerous analyzes from

military and political authorities in the United States. Western analysts also agree that Soleimani successfully countered America's presence in Iraq and Afghanistan, making significant strides in resisting American hegemony in the region and ensuring regional security.

Soleimani also played an undeniable role in defeating terrorist groups, especially ISIS, in the region. His actions and courage elevated him to the status of a champion in the fight against terrorism globally. Considering the support that Western, Arab countries, and the Zionist regime provided to terrorist groups, Soleimani's actions positioned him as one of the world's foremost military strategists. He represented the success of Iran against the hegemony, occupation, and terrorist nurturing of the United States and the Zionist regime,

safeguarding the national security of the Islamic Republic.

Commander Soleimani possessed a unique military acumen and expertise. He was well-versed in combat knowledge and had practically tested and refined his skills in three major fields: The Holy Defense, combating armed villains, and ultimately, combat in the strategic and regional arenas in Iraq and Syria. Leading the Quds Force, Qassem Soleimani not only contributed to the security of the Islamic Republic but also played a pivotal role in the relentless efforts and struggles for the security of the entire region. This great global strategist, Qassem Soleimani, fought wherever there was a need to establish security, tranquility, and restore natural life to the people.

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