

The Israeli / Iranian war is between two governments un...

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Since I have commented quite extensively on the Israeli action in Gaza I think I should do so on the Iranian / Israeli conflict.

There are a number of things to point out. The first is that theocracy is not a sound basis for government anywhere. Nor does it produce stability.

I do, of course, have major concerns about the direction of politics in Iran. As it moves increasingly to the right the risk of conflict is growing.

The same is true, though, in Israel where increasingly powerful right-wing theocratic groups have also helped destabilise the country and good government, resulting in the current regime that is as worrying as that in Tehran.

I make the point for the obvious reason that there are no governments worthy of support in this conflict.

Intervention has then to be to preserve a greater good, which is the existential right of states to be. I presume that this is the justification for UK and US intervention on behalf of Israel, although I do not hear that being said. If it is, there is a logic to it. Israel has a right to be.

However, the right to preserve this greater good is not restricted to Israel. Palestine also has a right to be. Israel appears to be denying that by its actions in both Gaza and the West Bank.

In that case I think support for Israel has to be conditional to match the condemnation of the actions of Iran. If it is to be supported Israel's government must respect boundaries determined in law and international agreements. The US and UK have the necessary obligation to make that clear.

This conflict has been created by the actions of two governments that have few redeeming characteristics. I support neither, but respect the rights of the nations and peoples they represent. The role of the international community is to find a higher

good. David Cameron 's 'Top gun' language this morning does not suggest we are in anything like that position as yet. That's as depressing as is the persistence of these theocratic governments that are promoting fear and terror.