

Are there ways out of war?

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As the [FT has noted](#) this morning:

Netanyahu is good at starting wars, but it's ending them that matters

It is a comment I agree with.

I must especially agree because, as far as I can see, there is no reason for a war against Iran at the moment, except for Netanyahu's desire to:

- * Distract attention from Gaza
- * Distract attention from his own ongoing political difficulties
- * Create a feeling within Israel that he cannot be removed because there are wars in progress.

Iran does not have nuclear weapons.

The US has agreed in military briefings that Iran is not creating risk on these grounds at present.

And as a matter of fact, Israel does not have the means to destroy Iran's nuclear capability, even if it were under threat from it, meaning that it is inherently dependent on US involvement and escalation of this conflict, for its objectives to be achieved.

So, it all comes down to the US position, and no one has a clue what Trump will do. Let's not pretend otherwise. The man is far too unpredictable, and maybe cognitively challenged, to make anything approaching a predictable decision on this.

What should be done? I suggest:

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An immediate ceasefire: Israel must halt its bombing in return for Iran rejoining negotiations. Of course, conditions on verification might be imposed on Iran, but it has agreed to these in the past. The goal must be the end of a policy of forced regime

change, which would, as President Macron has suggested today, be too chaotic to manage.

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US mediation via shuttle diplomacy is essential. This is the way that the US can deliver security for Israel. A bombing campaign cannot provide it.

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The U.S. must support talks that also include UAE and Saudi engagement (at least) because both are key to broader security in this area.

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New nuclear proliferation agreements have to be a goal, with Israel being required to take part, which it has refused to do to date. Agreements have to be two-sided.

Is any of that likely? Who knows? I do not claim to do so.