



Article Type: Research paper

A comparative analysis of Iran and Israel's policy towards the Ukraine crisis

*Emad Helalat¹, Hamid Hakim²

1. Ph.D. student of International Relations, Faculty of Law, Theology and Political Sciences, Science and Research Unit, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

2. Assistant Professor, Department of International Relations, Faculty of Law and Political Sciences, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran

Article Info.

Received: 13/03/2023

Accepted: 04/09/2023

Available Online: 16/12/2023

Abstract

The Ukraine crisis is one of the historical turning points in the transition period of international relations, which can cause many changes in the international arena due to the presence of many actors in this crisis. This crisis is referred to as the beginning of a new order or the end of a transition period. Although the Ukraine crisis has occurred in Europe, it has involved many regions and actors. One of the most influential regions in the Ukraine crisis is the Middle East. Among the countries of the Middle East region, Iran and Israel, as two strategic actors, have displayed different levels of involvement in this crisis. Iran evaluates the crisis in Ukraine in line with the current changes in the international system, changes that may ultimately lead to alterations in the existing international order and the limitation of major powers, including European countries

Emad Helalat, Ph.D. student

Address: Ph.D. student of International Relations, Faculty of Law, Theology and Political Sciences, Science and Research Unit, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

E-mail: emad.helalat1357@srbiau.ac.ir

How to Site:

Helalat, Emad, Hakim, Hamid (2023). A comparative analysis of Iran and Israel's policy towards the Ukraine crisis. *Fundamental and applied studies of the Islamic world*, 5(3), 29-31.

and the United States in the form of NATO, as well as Russia. Therefore, it is necessary for Iran to play a role in this crisis in line with its national interests and to create conditions of neither war nor peace in Ukraine, or at the very least, ensure that Russia does not lose the war. Iran can play the role of an influential power alongside Russia against NATO, utilizing its strategic and military advantages.

In contrast to the Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel has a completely different approach to the Ukraine crisis and evaluates it in contrary with its own interests. Israel seeks to maintain the current international order and the balance of power within this structure. Israel looks for an actor within the framework of the current international system and assesses the changes in this structure, especially in relation to the interests of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Israel aims to preserve the status quo. Consequently, Israel seeks to end the war between Russia and Ukraine and believes that the costs incurred in this war should be borne by Iran. Therefore, Iran and Israel have adopted different foreign policies regarding the Ukraine crisis, taking into account political, security-military, and energy variables.

This research employs the comparative method and is framed within the realism theory to answer the question of how Iran and Israel have adjusted their foreign policies in relation to the Ukraine crisis. This article argues that Iran, as an actor challenging the international system, views the crisis in Ukraine as a reflection of changes within the international system and the formation of a new international order, which may limit the power of great powers such as NATO-USA and Russia. On the other hand, Israel seeks to at least maintain the existing structure and the balance of power, supporting it, though the defeat of Russia may be favorable for Israel. Consequently, Iran and Israel have pursued different policies in the areas of politics, military-security, energy, and commerce in relation to the crisis. The level of involvement of Iran and Israel, as influential actors in the international system and the Middle East, as well as their relationships with other relevant actors in the Ukraine crisis, are the main reasons why these two governments have been chosen for investigation in the context of the Ukraine crisis. Therefore, the research is organized in such a way that while examining the crisis in Ukraine, it describes and analyzes the policies of Iran and Israel regarding the war between Russia and Ukraine within three main components.

For Iran, the worst-case scenario would be the defeat of Russia, as it could lead to increased pressure, sanctions, and security measures against Iran. Iran aims to prevent Russia's defeat in the war, but it will play a minimal role in favor of Russia's victory. Iran also sees the crisis in Ukraine as an opportunity to expand its comprehensive relations with Russia, which can meet Iran's needs in various fields, particularly in the military and strategic domains. Furthermore, from a national security standpoint, regardless of the geographic distance between the crisis and the Middle East, a conflict between major powers outside the Middle East region is considered favorable for Iran, as it allows Iran to maximize its own interests. In recent years, proxy wars and conventional conflicts have posed a threat to Iran's national security. Therefore, both in terms of security and its level of involvement, the Ukraine crisis will have an impact on Iran.

On the other hand, Israel does not view the crisis in Ukraine in line with its own policies and seeks to end the war and establish a ceasefire. The parties involved in the conflict are important to Israel. In terms of security and geopolitics, Israel does not want to escalate tensions with Russia due to the expanding relations between Russia and Iran, as well as Russia's presence in the Middle East, particularly in Syria. This presence directly and indirectly affects Israel's national security due to Iran and its allies in Syria. For Israel, the weakening of NATO and Russia is the worst possible scenario because it would reduce the pressure on Iran and grant Iran more freedom of action in Syria. The best scenario for Israel is the end of the war and the maintenance of the balance of power. In line with this, Israel seeks to maintain its relations with Russia without any tensions. Israel has provided diplomatic support to Ukraine, framing its support as purely humanitarian and informational. However, under pressure from NATO and the United States, and considering the possibility of Iran's increased involvement in the Ukraine crisis, Israel may change its policy, although such a change seems unlikely. Additionally, Israel is dissatisfied that the current costs of the war are being incurred in Ukraine instead of Iran. Overall, Israel adopts a realist policy aimed at maintaining the status quo, while Iran's policy can be seen as driven by the desire to demonstrate prestige.

Key words: Arab people, futures studies, opportunities, challenges