

A Comparison between Approaches of Islamic Revolution of Iran and the United States to Combat Terrorism

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In accordance with the clear principles of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Constitution, which are rooted in Quranic and monotheistic concepts, defending Muslims, the oppressed, and the deprived against the tyrants is one of the foreign policy principles of the country (The constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, article 154). Since the Islamic Republic of Iran considers human happiness throughout human society as its ideal, it considers independence, freedom, and the governance of justice and truth as the right of all the people of the world. Consequently, while it completely abstains from any kind of intervention in the internal affairs of other nations, it supports the struggles of the oppressed for their rights against the oppressors anywhere in the world.

In Nahl Sura (Verse 36), the Almighty God says that fighting against tyranny and tyrants and defending rights of the deprived has been one of the most important goals of prophets. The tyrant systems have always victimized the oppressed to achieve their own goals, hence, the Prophet of Islam used to observe the principle of defending the oppressed and opposing oppression through all of his political relations. He used to emphasize defending the oppressed, though they are a group, tribe or a small country.

The Islamic Revolution of Iran, led by both the Late Imam Khomeini and Ayatollah Khamenei, which is a revolution to meet goals of the prophets, has defined supporting the world's oppressed people as one of its main principles and goals; in a way that it is known as the "Movement of the Oppressed".

"Given the Islamic content of the revolution, which was a movement to realize victory of all oppressed over the oppressor, the Constitution paves the way for continuing this revolution both inside and outside the country, especially in expanding the international relations with other Islamic and popular movements. In accordance with the Islamic principles and concept in the Constitution (e.g. articles 11, 14, 152, 154 etc.) the Islamic Republic System commits itself to support rights of all people, especially Muslims and the oppressed, throughout the world.

Also article 154 of the constitution says, "The Islamic Republic of Iran considers human happiness throughout human society as its ideal. It considers independence, freedom, and the governance of justice and truth as the right of all the people of the world. Consequently, while it completely abstains from any kind of intervention in the internal affairs of other nations, it supports the struggles of the oppressed for their rights against the oppressors anywhere in the world."

Support can cover an extensive concept which may vary from sending weapons and forces to showing sympathy and expressing intimate feeling to offering friendly advices to the oppressed in order to show sympathy or speaking with the oppressors in order to meet the rights of the oppressed.

For the United States it can be said that by the end of the Cold War, the policy of keeping status quo was replaced by a sort of "management and guidance" engineering of the new condition in order to meeting interests of the world's sole superpower, the United States.

The Persian Gulf War and the US attack against Iraq in 1990 are considered as the inception of the US new policies in the Middle East region started after developments of the international system. When the United States started to adjust and pursue its policies based on the hegemonic principles or so-called the American Peace, the Middle East was introduced as one of its strategic priorities. Accessing to the richest region in terms of the underground reserves in order to meeting its interests on one hand and the necessity of securing production, distribution and transmission process of energy as the sole duty of a hegemony towards its allies and other states of the international system on the other hand made inevitable the presence of the US in the Middle East developments process. All of these efforts made to realize political and expansionism goals of the United States.

The 9/11 phenomenon equipped the US leaders' with the necessary incentive and excuse to pursue the mentioned religious-political belief. Attacking Afghanistan and achieving some temporal achievements in this country incentivized this ideology in the United States, so they started to attack Iraq with the excuse of fighting against weapons of mass destruction and creating a democratic state which is loyal to all humanistic rights (based on its western definitions) and would play as a role model in the Middle East. 9/11 is one of the most important events of the US political history, which became a turning point in the international system and the US statesmen considered it as an attack to their territory. The consequences of this event were so extensive that we can track them out to now.

It turns out that the US has pursued a contradictory strategy to face terrorism. In this article, I try to underlie the nature of extremism and terrorism and then to analyze approach of the Islamic Revolution and the United States to combat extremism and terrorism.

What are Extremism and Terrorism

Terrorism is one of ambiguous words and concepts in the international arena whose complicated concept and examples have perplexed us in terms of definition. It is exactly the reason why the United States has become able to take an expansionism and political perception of this phenomenon.

Terrorism is sociopolitical byproduct based on which the US patterns to differentiate its allies from its enemies use it as a political label to make the opposition distrusted. In various lexicons, terrorism has been defined as follows: "The principle of ruling and applying pressure. The governmental principles ruled in France in 1793-794. In Persian language it refers to a condition in which political assassins and terror are defended." Groups who use violent tools and methods to reach their political aims are called "Terrorism" and their action is called "terror". Terrorism is a measured and regular use of illegal violence or threat to use illegal violence to induce horror to force governments and societies to give up and surrender.

One of terrorism features is that it can be seen in a new face in each epoch. Accordingly, terrorism has been divided into 5 forms: traditional terrorism, new terrorism, post-modern terrorism, state terrorism and virtual terrorism. Traditional terrorism used to be done by power owners and their relatives and it was under the framework of the government and people were in safe. When people got involved the power and they were used to take both direct and indirect strategies for taking power and political concessions, new or modern terrorism was emerged. The post-modern terrorism was the byproduct of development of information and communication technologies and emergence of concepts such as globalization, which helped terrorism to pass the national borders; in this sort of terrorism, it is not just the human being who would be in danger. The state terrorism was posited along with provision of states with nuclear capabilities and avoiding nuclear war. In other words, waned about costs of a nuclear war, states avoid it and

pursue their targets through sociopolitical groups. After 9/11, the United States began to consider Islam and Political Islam equal extremism and terrorism in its fight against terrorism, so in general it tries to fight against Islam.

The Islamic Revolution's Approach to Combat Extremism and Terrorism

The foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran is considered as the guide for how should behave and react in the international arena. Combating terrorism is composed of a set of activities which are carried out with a defensive or preventive approach to adjust consequences of violent behaviors in both social and political arenas. Relying on military forces, economic activities these activities mostly are done by the internal forces. To operationalize the Islamic Revolution and Islamic Republic of Iran's approach to fight terrorism phenomenon in the region, many efforts are necessary such as establishing Islamic alliance, fighting arrogance, resisting against the US expansionism in the region, supporting region's Muslims, especially Lebanese people, trying to reconstruct Iraq and reviving the stability in the region and also trying to quench security concerns. In this regard, we can point to Iran's orientations to popular uprisings in the region, fighting arrogance and expansionism of Americans in the region, supporting people of Lebanon and Palestine, and also Iran's ideological discourses and behaviors in respect to Iraq. Of the most important examples of the Islamic Revolution's fighting against extremism and terrorism in the "intellectual exposure" and "environmental battle", we can point to the geographical arena. All of these cases are in parallel with the usual and stable discourse of the Islamic Revolution and in contrast with the American discourse, which searches for its all interests in the chaos of the region.

Formation of terrorism in the Middle East Region is a current against the "Islamic Awakening" which is accompanied with stimulating religious and ideological prejudices. In this approach, the United States follows "creative anarchy" in the western Asia region.

The Islamic Republic of Iran's approach is based on the Islamic Revolution's discourse against the arrogance and emphasizing the "Resistance Front" stability has influenced the awakening of nations in the region. Against the US chaotic approach, Iran defines its approach in the region based on the stability of the region. Beside following divine ideals, religious principles and political thinking of the leaders of the Islamic Revolution, Islamic

Republic of Iran considers its national and security interest in the stability of the region and its states, which it needs formation of popular, independent and powerful states.

As the Leader of the Islamic Revolution says, production, promotion and supporting terrorism is for reviving the lost interest in the Region. Terrorism in the Middle East Region is a proxy war for meeting interest and strengthening the weapon-producing companies. Actually tekfiri and terrorist groups in the Muslim World carry out the proxy wars. Emergence of terrorism in the ideological, religious, ethnical, political and geographical forms in the Muslim Countries is due to measures taken by the arrogant system to weaken and subvert these systems. Unlike the western states, especially the United States, Islamic Republic of Iran is located in this region and lives there, so stability and security of the region is entangled with its own stability and security and this anarchy is against the interests of Iran.

Therefore, as you see, the approach of the Islamic Revolution and actually the stable, fixed and non-contradictory strategy of Islamic Republic Iran to fight extremism and terrorism is very important. The usual approach of Iran has always been combating extremism and terrorism in the region and Muslim World and to do so it defends the oppressed from the oppressors. To reach this ideal and goal, besides using religious and belief principles, the Islamic Revolution has used tactical and operational methods to revive stability and security in the region.

For the Islamic Republic of Iran, terrorism is divided into various levels. Local, regional and international modern terrorism led by ISIS today is an international terrorism which tries to subvert states and induce Islamophobia in the world. For the Islamic Republic of Iran and its leader, the Islamic Revolution performs the proxy war, some activities of the terrorist groups try to take revenge of Islam and Islamic Revolution for West and the United States, so they try to subvert the Islamic systems of the region.

Today, fighting against the ISIS extremism is categorized among the discourse teachings of the Islamic Revolution, so Islamic Revolution supports it through rendering financial funds, dispatching “Harem Defenders, and has extended to an international issue to which all Muslim states must be concerned.

The United States Approach to Extremism and Terrorism

After withdrawal of Britain in 1971, their vacant place was replaced by the US forces, which it increased problems and tensions in the region. Supporting the tyrant regimes, the military presence in the region, transporting weapons and diplomatic and economic supports in favor of the Persian Gulf and Middle East puppet regimes played important role in survival of these regimes after the first Persian Gulf War.

The US policies in the region since the early 1980's were a key factor in providing the initial condition for extension of extremism. For instance, the United States supported the traditional extremist groups in Afghanistan against the former USSR army and also used them as a tool to eliminate influence of the Islamic revolution of Iran. These policies resulted in emergence of terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda and The Aden-Abyan Islamic Army and in general new terrorism. The US support for Taliban in Afghanistan, during USSR war against Afghans provided Al-Qaeda with an opportunity to organize, recruit and train in order to start its operations in the mid-1990 across the world. As Samuel Huntington says, "The legacy of war was emergence of skilled warriors, military logistics training camps, wide individual and organizational interactions network in the Muslim World and most of all gaining a sort of feel of power and confidence from past achievements and intense inclination to reach more victories in the future. For this people, Jihad has been succeeded to knee a superpower like USSR, so they thought that they can fight against the corrupted regimes or even the United States. The US strategy during the Cold War to defend the anti-communism groups was in parallel with the policy of containment of Communism, so the United States supported activities of Osama Bin Laden, as well.

Thus, the US policies brought about a new wave of religious extremism. It itself was due to policy or approach of stimulating anarchy and chaos in the region of the Middle East which helped the US to reach its own interests. In the long term, the strategic policy of the United States has been followed with different approaches including the hardware presence, interaction, management, constructive chaos and uprising.

To meet its interests, the US takes advantage of power and informal tools in order to control players, resources and processes. Two of these tools which are used extensively are terrorism and extremism. Actually, hegemony uses the concepts of terrorism as a political label to discredit opponents. Terrorism, which today is supported by hegemonic states, is used for certain goals such as destabilizing states, stimulating uprisings in the domestic and foreign policies of countries. Hence, the United States applies the

constructive chaos against the opponent states, or at least those states which are on the verge of revolution or collapse and confiscates the popular revolutions or movements in favor of itself. Speaking about the Islamic Revolution of Iran, it applied cooperation, deviation and hard war, but it never succeeded and today it follows the soft war strategy against Iran.

Actually, the most important factor which affects strategies of the US foreign policies is the national interest of this country. In other words, the first priority of the American statesmen is the national interests of the United States and what makes them differentiated is their perception of interests and priorities. The US strategy to extremism and terrorism in the Middle East is meeting its own and the Zionist Regime's national interests. Following 9/11 accidents, the strategy of combating terrorism provided the US leaders with the opportunity to find a proper justification to meet their interests.

Conclusion

As mentioned already, in fighting against extremism and terrorism Washington takes a dual approach and always has considered its national interests as the most important variable of this approach. But, since its victory, the Islamic Revolution has followed a single and coherent approach against terrorism and extremism and has demonstrated its strategy in the field of action. The approach of the Islamic Revolution against the extremism and terrorism has always been different from the United States'. In other words, the national interest of the Islamic Revolution, "supporting the oppressed nations and liberating movements" and "fighting tyranny and terrorism" is an integrated part of its foreign policy which is followed through strengthening the region's stability and security. The national interests of the United States are hidden in the creative chaos and anarchy and the security of the Zionist Regime and the national interests of the United States and its allies are defined and allowed in this theoretical framework.

It is worthy to say that the approaches of the Islamic Revolution and the United States follow two different strategies in a certain case and phenomenon. Based on its stable strategy and thinking and ideal, Islamic Revolution has always supported the popular movements and had fought against extremism and terrorism, while the United States has always tried to undermine states threatening its interest through supporting Jihadist and extremist groups in the region. For example, sometimes it dispatches its forces to

Afghanistan and Iraq to fight against terrorists, but it supports terrorists to defeat the USSR army in Afghanistan in other times. It's a paradoxical approach followed by the United States statesmen in the world, especially in the sensitive region of the Middle East which is full of underground reserves and potential capabilities.

In conclusion, it must be said that one of usual and fundamental priorities of the United States in the Middles East is different from what is pursued by the Islamic Revolution, because supporting authoritarianism and authoritarian regimes are in parallel with the Washington's policies in the region. While the Islamic Republic of Iran seeks for a fair discipline in the region and to establish the justice tries to find the new discipline and follows its targets through people participation such as election and other mechanisms.

The general strategy of the United States suffers from a paradox which helps it to choose interaction, management/control or military attack and stimulating chaos based on its strategic interests. Besides meeting its national interests, Washington tries to shift the region's developments in favor of itself through supporting its regional allies and overthrowing the opponent ones and supporting the potential forces which are ready to support its interests and to play puppet roles.