

# Epic Fury shows what a true US-Israel alliance looks like

written by Asher Fredman | 04.03.2026

Operation Epic Fury/R The close cooperation and coordination between the US and Israel has been evident both in months of planning at the highest levels and in the execution of the operation itself.

One of America's most advanced platforms, the US F-22 Raptor, was forward-deployed to Israel's airbases. US KC-46 Pegasus tankers were operating directly out of Israeli airfields to refuel both American and Israeli aircraft. The unparalleled intelligence cooperation between the two countries enabled Israel to eliminate more than 40 senior Iranian officials, including supreme leader Ali Khamenei, in the opening minute of the war.

Reports also indicate that groundbreaking US-Israeli cooperation in electronic warfare and data sharing has allowed the US Task Force Scorpion Strike's swarms of one-way attack drones to penetrate Iran, as well as enabled the near-immediate translation of tactical intelligence into kinetic strikes.

## **True ally**

It is not surprising that, on March 2, US Secretary of War Pete Hegseth described Israel as "a true ally with real capabilities, unlike some of our traditional allies who just whine and call to end the war."

In the short term, this cooperation is leading to the severe degradation of Iran's ballistic missile capabilities, nuclear weapons program, chokehold on vital maritime waterways, and ability to support its terror proxy network. It is also weakening and destabilizing the Iranian leadership and forces of repression.

There must be no mistake: An Iran armed with thousands of ballistic missiles and producing 100 more a month would constitute a severe threat to both Israel and vital American assets. Their removal makes a critical contribution to Israel's and America's national security.

The implications of this cooperation for long-term US-Israel relations will depend on the outcome of the operation. On the one hand, the fusion and integration of

American and Israeli capabilities strengthens the case for expanding US-Israeli defense, intelligence, and technological partnerships in parallel with a gradual drawdown of US military aid to Israel.

Operation Lion is the most highly integrated bilateral offensive in modern history in terms of intelligence and operational cooperation. The result of this unprecedented integration, if continued through to the full achievement of the operation's objectives, is likely to be not only a fundamental change in Iran, but the advance of peace through strength across the Middle East and around the world.

On the other hand, if Iran ends up looking like Iraq after the 2003 invasion, this may overshadow the tremendous military accomplishments of the operation.

It is therefore necessary to learn and implement the lessons of the Iraq war, particularly the need for great caution before deploying ground forces. Regime change cannot be carried out by foreign militaries. Only the Iranian people can take control of their destiny and bring about a new government.

### **Heroic courage**

At the same time, it is critical to recognize that Iran in 2026 is not Iraq in 2003. Large segments of the Iranian people have already demonstrated, with heroic courage, their desire to build a brighter future for their nation, not to see it sink into sectarian infighting or jihadist terror.

Therefore, the US and Israel must do everything possible to create the conditions for a regime transformation in Iran that leads to a moderate and peaceful future for the country.

This includes sustained efforts to eliminate each of the regime officials chosen to replace those that were killed, as well as the elimination of potential hardline heirs to Khamenei.

Other steps include intensified damage to regime installations used for internal control and repression, strikes aimed at liberating prisons holding opposition figures, and the encouragement of cooperation among opposition groups, including through enlisting Reza Pahlavi and other figures capable of influencing the public.

The current operation in Iran can also have far-reaching positive implications for regional cooperation in the spirit of the Abraham Accords, particularly for the envisioned Middle East Strategic Alliance.

### **New alliances**

Iran's decision to launch attacks against the UAE, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, and Jordan has led to unprecedented cooperation among US CENTCOM partners, including Israel.

It is also contributing to expanded national discourses in the UAE and other GCC countries, focused on both pride over the successes of their armed forces in providing air defense and on a growing understanding of the need to upgrade military capabilities to meet future threats.

These developments will likely lead to increased regional military cooperation and integration in the future, continuing trends that were already explicit in the case of Israel's Abraham Accords partners and more discreet in the case of countries like Saudi Arabia.

Increased integration among America's Middle East allies would be highly important from the point of view of US global power projection and resource allocation. One of the goals of the Abraham Accords, and of Israel's transfer to CENTCOM's area of responsibility, was to empower America's regional partners to take greater responsibility for securing the region from common enemies.

If the current operations lead to the further enhancement of these partners' capabilities and integration, and to the elimination of the threats posed by Iran, this will allow the US to more fully turn its attention and resources to China and the Indo-Pacific.

The joint Israeli-American operation has the potential not just to reshape the Middle East, but to help establish a new world order based on peace through strength and paradigm-shifting alliances between countries opposed to radical regimes and groups.

It is therefore critical that the US and Israel continue the operation in a steadfast and determined manner until all of the operation's objectives have been fully achieved.

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