

**Middle East war**

## Iran threatens 'crushing response' to Israel's October air strikes

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei insists Islamic republic will not back down



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**Bitia Ghaffari** in Tehran NOVEMBER 2 2024

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Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has threatened Israel and the US with a “crushing response” to last month’s air strikes against Iran and Iranian-backed militant groups in the Middle East

“I assure you that the Iranian nation and the country’s officials will not back down,” the Islamic republic’s supreme leader said in a speech on Saturday on the anniversary of the US embassy seizure in 1979 when more than 50 American diplomats were taken hostage.

“It is not only about revenge. It is about a rational move in compliance with religion, ethics, Islamic principles and international regulations.”

Iranian officials have stepped up their rhetoric against Israel since it launched strikes against military targets [on October 26](#), including air defence systems and missile factories in Tehran, Ilam and Khuzestan provinces. This was in response to [Iran’s attack on Israel](#) on October 1 following the assassination Hassan Nasrallah, the leader of Lebanese militant group Hizbollah, the republic’s main ally in the region.

In his initial remarks following the Israeli strike, Iran’s leader had called for a measured response, advising against efforts to either “downplay or magnify” the

attack. Iranian state media also minimise the impact of the strikes, which claimed the lives of four military personnel and a civilian.

On Thursday Major General Hossein Salami, the head of the elite Revolutionary Guards, said [Iran](#)'s retaliation would be "unimaginable". The remark [pushed up global oil prices](#).

People close to the regime have told the Financial Times that Iran might be considering a third strike against Israel before the US presidential election on Tuesday.

On Saturday, Brigadier General Mohammad Ali Naeini, the spokesperson for the Revolutionary Guards, said Iran's response would be "definite, powerful and beyond the enemy's comprehension".

Israel has said it would insist on unilaterally enforcing any agreement that brings an end to the war with the Lebanese militant group Hizbollah,

Iran blames the US for paving the way for Israel's conflict in Gaza and Lebanon as well as the Jewish state's attacks on Iran. Officials in Tehran have accused the US of providing an air corridor for Israel's warplanes on October 26.

Ayatollah Khamenei reminded his supporters that the battle against the US was a religious duty because America had humiliated the Iran for years.

"In our fight with the hegemonic power . . . we take all the [necessary] military and political moves. This is what officials are doing right now," Khamenei said.

"The Iranian nation has definitely succeeded in driving back and weakening the US, this great enemy that would use its power to bully other nations."

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