

"There Is No Ceasefire" — Scott Ritter on Iran, Israel & What Comes Next

Is the US–Iran ceasefire real—or just the next phase of war? Support Independent media to remain bold: <https://patreon.com/IndiaGlobalLeft> Link for donation: <https://paypal.me/sankymudiar> In this explosive interview, former UN weapons inspector Scott Ritter challenges the dominant narrative around the US–Iran ceasefire, arguing that "there is no ceasefire — ceasefire is a process." As tensions continue to rise across West Asia, Ritter breaks down: Why the "ceasefire" may not actually mean peace Israel's escalation in Lebanon and what it signals Iran's key demands: uranium enrichment, sanctions relief, and US military withdrawal What the United States is likely pushing behind closed doors The real military outcome of the war — did Iran emerge stronger? The implications for NATO and the global balance of power Could this conflict expand further — even beyond the region? This conversation goes beyond headlines to unpack the geopolitical reality shaping the next phase of global conflict. If you want to understand what's really happening behind the US–Israel–Iran war, this is essential viewing. Follow us on Substack: <https://substack.com/@indiagloballeft> Twitter: <https://twitter.com/Indiagloballeft> Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/indiagloballeft/> Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61559411353392> Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/show/69Y9iCWUv8ha3ATsPWtWk0?si=ee1f0de3de094f17> Telegram: <https://t.me/+WNlqoiv1Rhg5NjEx> Keywords: US Iran ceasefire, Scott Ritter interview, Iran, Israel, war analysis, Middle East geopolitics, NATO strategy, Iran military strength, Lebanon escalation, US foreign policy

#Mudiar

Hello and welcome to another episode of *India and Global Left.* If you're new to the show, please hit that subscribe button. Also, consider becoming a YouTube member, a Patreon, or donating a small amount using the link in the description box. Without further ado, let me welcome our guest tonight, Scott Ritter. Scott is an American, former U.S. Marine Corps intelligence officer, former U.N. Special Commission weapons inspector, author, and commentator. Scott, welcome back to *India and Global Left.* Thanks for having me. I want to start with the ceasefire. Over the past few years, we've seen several ceasefires not lasting because of the absence of a substantive framework for peace. How likely is this ceasefire to last?

#Scott

The ceasefire is a process; it's not a singular event. There is no ceasefire right now, so to talk about a ceasefire lasting when there isn't one is an absurdity. We're talking about a process where both sides have gone as far up the escalation ladder as they rationally can. Any further escalation turns

what has been a tragedy into permanent damage—not only for each party in the conflict, but for the region and the globe as well. I think all parties recognize this, with maybe one exception being Israel, which appears to be the most problematic entity here. But, you know, this is just the first phase of a longer process to get to a ceasefire that can actually last. When this was announced, we had two major issues.

We had, you know, Israel–Lebanon, and we had the United Arab Emirates deciding that they wanted to, you know, start their own war with Iran, apparently. These are unresolved issues that have to be—this has to be tightened up before you can have a ceasefire. And again, a ceasefire isn't really going to happen until there's an agreement on what the final outcome will be. It's hard to talk about a ceasefire when Iran puts a 10-point peace plan on the table, the United States puts a 15-point peace plan on the table, both parties agree to sit down and work it out over a period of two weeks, and then the United States rejects the Iranian proposal up front. No ceasefire. So there is no ceasefire right now. There's a need for a ceasefire, and there might even be a desire for a ceasefire, but there is no ceasefire at this point.

#Mudiar

Talking about the lack of a ceasefire, the most important news is the latest Israeli attack in Lebanon. This came right after the so-called ceasefire was announced, and reportedly 254 people have been killed in what's being described as one of the deadliest attacks since the war began. What's your reading of Israel escalating in Lebanon in such a horrific way, as some UN bodies have called it, right after this announcement?

#Scott

Well, first of all, you have to be careful about hyperbole, because to single out this Israeli action as being particularly egregious minimizes the tremendous sins Israel has committed in the past—against the Palestinians, against the people of Lebanon, and against Iran. It's as if the Iranian bombardment never took place. Have people looked at Tehran and seen the damage that's been done? What Israel did to Beirut, of course, is horrifying. It should be condemned. But to sit here and pretend that this is abnormal—no, it's normal. This is what Israel does. This is who the Israelis are. We need to stop treating this as an anomaly and understand that this is literally the norm for Israel. This is what Israel is.

This is who they are, and we have to treat them accordingly. You know, the Israelis don't want peace. They can't have peace. Benjamin Netanyahu cannot function in an environment where peace has broken out everywhere, because then he would lose any hold on legitimacy. He exists only as a national security leader. He needs crisis, he needs chaos, he needs conflict. So, to preserve his own personal political legacy, he needs war. And that's what he's doing. He doesn't want peace. Israel

doesn't want peace. So peace will have to be imposed on it. The question now is, how much does the United States want peace, and what is the United States willing to do to put pressure on Israel to get that peace? And, you know, this is where President Trump has to decide.

Is he willing to sacrifice his own personal political legacy? Because that's what's on the line here—the end of Donald Trump, the Donald Trump brand. He's very dangerously close to being swept out in the midterm elections by the Democrats, who would then hold him and his administration to account. And that would be the end of Donald Trump's presidency and legacy. I think there's a growing recognition that this is indeed where he's at. So the question is, is he going to let Benjamin Netanyahu destroy him? I think the answer to that is no. But, as I said earlier, this is a process, and we're going to have to let that process play out. Tragically, that means even more people are going to die, because Israel is an absolutely irresponsible party.

#Mudiar

And when you say more people are going to die, do you mean just in Lebanon, or all across the region?

#Scott

All across the region. This is what Israel does for a living. Israel kills people. They'll kill people in Lebanon, they'll kill people in Syria, they'll kill people in Yemen, they'll kill people in Iran. They'll kill people wherever they feel they need to. They'll do it directly or indirectly. Israel is responsible for all the violence in the Middle East.

#Mudiar

I wanted to ask you a bit about some of the talking points on what the two sides are going to discuss in Islamabad—Saturday, I think. Some reports say Friday, some say Saturday; I'm not sure about that. I particularly want to ask you about Iran's demands regarding enrichment, the end of sanctions, and the removal of U.S. military bases. Donald Trump said they're going to keep U.S. troops very close, and that if Iran doesn't accede to U.S. demands, they'll attack again. What do you make of these clauses?

#Scott

Well, let's start with enrichment. Iran will retain the right to enrich—this is 100% guaranteed. The only way Iran would ever give that up is if Iran were destroyed, if the regime collapsed. And the United States and Israel will prove incapable of achieving that outcome. There will be compromises made, however, and I believe those compromises will be defined by the agreements that were almost reached before this current round of fighting began on February 28th. I think, at the end of the day, that deal will form the basis of what a post-conflict nuclear agreement looks like. And for

Donald Trump, he can declare a great victory, because that deal is stronger in terms of blocking any potential path for Iran to pursue nuclear weapons—which they've never wanted to do.

We have to convince ourselves that they can't. This deal prevents that. The JCPOA did not. So Donald Trump can say, "I have a better deal. I promised you a better deal. I gave you a better deal." I do think that's going to be on the table. This is where the United States is going to have to go to Israel and say, "You've got to accept reality here." So, there's that. Sanctions will be lifted—totally lifted. The Security Council resolutions wiped clean, IAEA Board of Directors notifications and such wiped clean. Iran's going to have a clean slate. This is pretty much also a guarantee. U.S. bases—well, if I were the Iranians, I wouldn't emphasize this too much, because it's going to happen. The United States is in retrograde mode as it is.

The bases no longer have justification in areas where Iran doesn't have direct control. The United States is already starting to leave Syria and Iraq. Some nations, like Qatar, have indicated that the United States will not be welcomed back. And if there's a peace agreement that truly allows Iran to exist without restrictions, then there's no need for an American military presence in the region—especially a large one. So rather than the Iranians trying to humiliate America, which won't work—I'm just saying it straight up—the Iranians will compromise on this and just let Mother Nature take its course. You know, you didn't mention the Strait of Hormuz. That's a big one. But Donald Trump appears to already accept the fact that Iran is going to control the Strait of Hormuz.

And in that whole thing, he's talking about how Iran and the United States will work together. Now, whether or not that's how it plays out—who knows. But I do believe that... and the Iranians have talked about reparations, but there won't be reparations directly. What I do believe is that the tolling that will take place at the Strait of Hormuz—the money collected there—will be used to pay for reparations, for reconstruction in Iran and elsewhere. I think that's an elegant solution that can be had. You know, the United States put down some demands that just aren't realistic at all. To get those demands, you have to win the war—and the United States most certainly didn't win this war.

#Mudiar

And what would be some of the demands that the United States would put forward? Because we're not clear about that. White House officials, like Carolyn Leavitt, have said that the points circulating in the media are not the ones they're actually pushing. There's a lot of speculation. If you could, give us your sense of what the U.S. would be putting forward.

#Scott

Well, the two big ones are no nuclear enrichment and no missile program—which means it isn't going to happen. Those aren't going to happen. Will Iran agree to some sort of limitation on its

missiles? I don't know. I don't know if they will or not. The missiles are what enabled them to win this war. And if I were Iran, I wouldn't even consider it until you put Israel's nuclear weapons on the table. But nobody's even talking about Israel's nuclear program.

So, you know, at the end of the day, I think the U.S. demands are going to come down to some sort of compromise agreement on enrichment and a compromise agreement on the Strait of Hormuz. And rather than go after Iran's missile program, to come up with a security mechanism in the region that helps prevent war from breaking out and therefore makes Iran's missile program moot in the eyes of its neighbors. But again, the United States doesn't have a strong hand here. It's the United States that needs this war to end more than Iran needs this war to end.

#Mudiar

Um, I wanted to ask you a little bit about how you would describe the outcome of this war so far, given that there's been so much Hasbara. If you could give us a bit of clarity in military terms—how did Iran fare during these 40 days? That would be helpful, because if the war starts again, it might be important to know what's happened over the last 40 days, militarily speaking.

#Scott

Well, let's just put it in broad terms. Iran took on the world's two most powerful militaries—Israel and the United States—especially when it comes to air power. Iran took them on and denied them victory. The goals and objectives of the United States and Israel were regime change. That did not happen. In fact, the regime got stronger. The other goal was the destruction or suppression of Iran's ballistic missile and drone capability. That didn't happen either. Iran has retained significant capability and has proven it can deliver strikes with these missiles and drones to any target out there.

You know, the United States likes to talk about destroying the Iranian Navy, but I want to point out that the Iranian Navy yesterday laid mines in the Strait of Hormuz, blocking it off. So clearly, the Iranian Navy isn't destroyed. In fact, I don't think we destroyed very much other than empty buildings, because we went into this war not fully understanding or comprehending how Iran has organized itself for defense—thirty-one autonomous military districts, each capable of continuing the fight in isolation from all others. So, we've never really come to grips with that.

Iran has been studying the way the United States and Israel wage war for decades now. People tend to forget that Iran had an air defense agreement with Syria, where Iranian air defense specialists were forward-deployed along with some Iranian assets. Iran studied how Israel operated—how they communicated, what weapons systems they used. They studied how the United States operated in the same way. We had extensive air power involvement over Syria, using every type of aircraft, how we communicated, what weapons we used, and what our tactics were. And Iran has adapted accordingly.

When you look at how this war began, the propaganda was that the United States and Israel annihilated Iran's air defense systems—wiped them out. But did we, or did the Iranians just decide not to play that phase of the game? Because that phase was defined by long-range standoff weapons. You know, it wasn't that Israeli and American aircraft were physically dominating Iranian airspace. It's that, from the periphery, we were able to launch weapons that struck deep inside with great effectiveness. Yeah, they hit targets—but what targets actually presented themselves?

I'll bet that the vast majority of the targets struck by the United States and Israel related to air defense were decoy targets, not the real thing. The real systems were actually in hide sites, in bunkers somewhere, hidden. And what we saw was that when the United States and Israel began to deplete their standoff weapons, Iran started to reestablish its air defense system—using all new tactics and capabilities. Rather than having a radar-focused war, which is the normal air defense model of operations, Iran came in with infrared and electro-optical seeking—changing tactics, everything.

And that's why they had great success in this most recent phase, shooting down American aircraft—because they're playing a different game than we were prepared to play. The Iranians have thought this thing through. They know what they're doing. This is a plan twenty years in the making. The United States came in, and we've been changing our plan on a daily basis. So that tells you right off the bat who's winning and who's losing. The Iranians have been consistent throughout. They know where they want to go. They know what they want to accomplish. It's the United States that's changing the parameters of victory, changing force structures, and changing priorities on nearly a daily basis. And that's not the sign of a side that's doing well—that's the sign of a side that's desperate.

#Mudiar

I wanted to ask you a bit about the significance of this war for NATO, given that you've been focusing and talking so much about the NATO proxy war in Ukraine. Donald Trump has criticized the EU for not providing direct military support during this war. What do you think the impact of this war will be on the future of NATO, and subsequently on its role in Eurasia?

#Scott

I think this war is the straw that broke the camel's back when it comes to NATO's viability. It's over for NATO. The United States and NATO have failed to recognize the reality they operate under, especially in the post-Cold War era, where NATO doesn't serve as a partner or an equal to the United States, but rather as a subordinate element of American national security and foreign policy. NATO's job was to salute smartly and say, "Yes, sir," to the United States—not to come up with its own independent thinking about what's best for Europe. And they forgot that. And they forgot it against a man who holds grudges. Right now, Donald Trump is going to hold Europe to account for its failure to rally around his illegal war of aggression against Iran.

You know, Marco Rubio last night talked about removing 100,000 troops from Europe. That's it. That's over. He talked about how we're not going to come to the defense of those nations that didn't come to our assistance. Well, there goes Article 5. So, you know, when Mark Rutte became Secretary General, I said he would be the last Secretary General of NATO. And I think the facts will show that he will be the last Secretary General of NATO. It's over for NATO. They're finished. I don't know how long it's going to take for the flag to come down and the headquarters to close. If NATO exists more than a year from now, it'll exist in name only, because when the United States is not part of the NATO structure, that structure is incapable of doing anything serious.

#Mudiar

And the consequence of that for Russia and Ukraine—

#Scott

The Russians are already prevailing. Ukraine is hanging on by the skin of its teeth. Much of Ukraine's ability to keep resisting Russia comes from the aid being provided by Europe. But, you know, European posturing is always based on security guarantees tied to NATO and its existence—especially when it comes to the collective self-defense aspect. You know, NATO can afford to take a tough posture if they believe that if Russia lashes out against one or more members, the whole alliance will come to their defense. That's a kind of deterrence. But when the United States leaves, NATO loses that capacity.

And Europe will be exposed as the very weak, dysfunctional entity that it is. I think Ukraine will continue to falter. When Ukraine collapses—I'm not going to put a date on it—but I can say that Ukraine will collapse, and Russia will achieve everything it wants to achieve. The fact is, because Russia is in such a strong position, it has the ability to intervene diplomatically in search of what some might call a grand bargain with the United States. That could include shutting down the Iranian conflict on terms acceptable to Iran and Russia, and winding down the Ukrainian conflict on terms exclusively acceptable to Russia and to the detriment of Europe.

#Mudiar

And should the Europeans ultimately be forced to make peace with Russia?

#Scott

I don't know how you force them to make peace. I think Europe will want to make peace because it will have no option but to do so, especially when the United States disengages from the collective security framework. Europe is incapable of defending itself, and as such, it'll be like a lamb being led to the slaughter. They'll have no choice but to make peace with Russia.

#Mudiar

I want to ask you a bit about Cuba. There's been some analysis suggesting that after Venezuela and Iran, Cuba might be next—given that Marco Rubio's life mission, as many analysts in Cuba say, is to topple the Cuban government. In your assessment, how likely is a direct war on Cuba?

#Scott

Not going to happen. The United States has shown fatal weakness when it comes to power projection. We lack sufficient standoff weapons. All Cuba has to do is resist and wait out any American action. The precedent of Iran is clear. Surrender was the solution for Venezuela. Cuba knows now it can either go the Venezuela route or the Iranian route. And Russia has shown that it's willing to back Cuba, sending multiple tankers to violate the energy blockade that the United States has placed on the island. The United States is not going to stop Russia. So I think right now we're going to have to reimagine our strategic goals and objectives vis-à-vis Cuba, because the post-Venezuela hype—that we were going to roll into Cuba and do the same thing to its leadership that we did to Maduro—is just empty threats.

#Mudiar

The Russian tanker reached Cuba with its oil, and there were reports about it. Do you think there was some understanding between the American Coast Guard and the Russians, or did they just evade the Americans and reach Cuba?

#Scott

Well, I think there was an understanding. The United States wasn't going to take on an actual Russian-flagged ship. They've been playing games with ships that re-flag en route, making it legally questionable whether or not it's actually a Russian-flagged vessel. But these tankers that are coming—they belong to Russia, to the Russian Federation. The United States isn't going to touch them.

#Mudiar

We'll leave it there, Scott. Thank you so much for your time. Well, thank you very much for having me.

#Ayushman

Hi, my name is Ayushman. I, along with Mudiar Jyotishman, have started this platform. Over the last two years, we've tried to build content for the left and progressive forces. We've interviewed economists, historians, political commentators, and activists so far. If you've liked our content and

want us to build an archive for the left, I have two requests for you. Please consider donating to the cause—the link is in the description below. And if you're not able to, don't feel bad. You can always like and share our videos with your comrades. Finally, don't forget to hit the subscribe button.