

Col. Jacques Baud: Trump's Final Card Just ENDED Israel – Full Breakdown

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#Nima

Hi, everybody. Today's Monday, April 27th, 2026, and our dear friend, our brother, Colonel Jacques Baud, is here with us. Welcome back.

#Jacques

Thank you very much for inviting me again. I'm happy to be back on your channel. Thank you.

#Nima

So let me start with what's going on with the case of the war between Iran and the United States. We had the Iranian foreign minister going to Islamabad, then to Muscat. And today he's in Russia, in St. Petersburg, to talk with Vladimir Putin. But what has happened in Islamabad is somehow interesting. He went to Islamabad, he gave some sort of document to be sent to the United States. Then after going to Moscow, he got back again to Islamabad and updated it. I don't know what has happened during this time that he was in Moscow. He got back and he updated it. The Iranian proposal, which is basically what they're talking about, shows no sign of talks or any sort of negotiations on the Iranian nuclear program.

It's all about the Strait of Hormuz and how they can reopen the Strait of Hormuz. And it's something new for the negotiations, because you remember before this war started, there was no issue with the Strait of Hormuz. Right now, it's the basis, it's the foundation of the negotiations. And Iran is trying somehow to put it in a way that would be acceptable for Iran to take part. How do you see, looking at the way the United States is moving and sending a lot of—last night we saw—they're sending a lot of weapons, a lot of personnel to the UAE and to Qatar. I don't know what is happening in their mind, if they're thinking of a new operation against Iran, and what would be the objective of that operation. Your understanding of the current situation?

#Jacques

Well, first of all, we have to understand, I mean, all that makes a lot of sense. I mean, we don't know exactly what was discussed in Islamabad. In Islamabad, we know a little bit better. And in Oman... we don't know all the details. And of course, we don't know the details yet about what will be discussed in Russia. But remember what Araghchi wrote in his tweet just prior to his departure for his tour. He said he wants to have some coordination and discussion with his neighbors. First of all, all three countries are obviously neighbors of Iran. That's the first point. The second point is, in his tweet, he mentioned bilateral relations. So it's bilateral issues. And as in any country, you have the so-called multilateral diplomacy. It's what you do when you go to international fora, such as the UN, EU, whatever. That's the multilateral diplomacy.

And you have the bilateral diplomacy. And that's exactly what you do when you manage your relationship with your neighbors. That's as simple as that. That's the first point. Now, why at this point in time and why with these three countries? Because obviously there are other neighbors. First of all, Pakistan is the mediator in the discussions that were going on in early April between Iran and the United States. And with the support of China, Pakistan was, in fact, ensuring the kind of mediation offices between the two. And apparently, from what I've seen—and again, I'm not sure, I mean, I haven't seen any official statements—but what I have received as information in terms of the discussions that were held between Iran, or Araghchi, and the leadership of Pakistan, these were discussions related to the mediation activity of Pakistan.

In essence, what Iran said to Pakistan was to make precisions and give details on its position regarding the relation with the United States. Maybe some kind of red lines or things like this—what they will accept, what they will not accept, up to which point they are able to negotiate on certain aspects. Remember that the whole discussion is, for Iran, on the Iranian side, the basis for the discussion is the 10-point plan. It would probably be better to say the 10 conditions set by Iran, in fact. And obviously, if you read these 10 points, you see that there are some points that Iran will not discuss. They will only accept these conditions as they are. But you have probably a few of these points where you have a certain margin of negotiation.

And that's probably what Iran discussed with the Pakistanis. Now, just after that, Araghchi went to Oman, and Oman makes a lot of sense because with the war, the Strait of Hormuz has obviously gained strategic importance. I mean, there's always strategic importance, but today it is used as a pressure point on the international economy and the US economy, by the way, by Iran. Now, obviously, Iran is not the only owner of the Strait of Hormuz. The second, in quotation marks, owner is Oman. And remember that Oman was the mediator for the discussions that happened between the US and Iran just at the end of February, just before the war was launched.

I mean, that was the talks in Geneva, and Oman was negotiating. The discussion and the declaration of the Omani foreign minister have confirmed, by the way, the goodwill of Iran, and have also confirmed that there was no reason and no ground for the Israelis and the Americans to attack Iran. So, meaning that the relationship between Iran and Oman is still very good. And probably what Araghchi went to discuss with his Omani counterpart was to see how they can manage the crisis,

because there is obviously a management. Now we see that despite the fact that the US is trying to block the Strait of Hormuz, the Iranian position is not a full blockade, but a filtration system, if you want, where they allow some countries to enter, some kinds of ships.

I mean, they obviously will exclude any military or U.S. Navy ships and things like this, and so on and so forth. So what the Iranians want to do is to have a kind of filtration, especially during this particular crisis. And that's probably the topic of these discussions. And why did he come back to Islamabad? Well, most probably because, as a result of the discussion with Oman, they probably had, let's say, a common view on certain aspects of the management of the Strait of Hormuz, which could be used in further negotiations with the Americans. And obviously, the reason why the Americans, especially Donald Trump, are so adamant to have a discussion is because of the Strait of Hormuz.

Because that's the leverage that Iran has over the U.S. slash the Western world economies. So it makes a lot of sense, in fact, that you had this detour of Araghchi after Oman to go quickly to Islamabad and then head to Moscow, because obviously there were some aspects that had been discussed with Oman. So I think we are in a very basic and very conventional phase of diplomacy, where you go, you talk to your partners, you adjust your comments. It's not like the U.S. when you say, well, that's what we want you to do, and if you don't, we attack you. So what we are witnessing here between Araghchi and his other counterparts is simply the normal way of practicing diplomacy in a crisis situation. So for me, there's absolutely nothing uncommon in that.

I think we tend to be oblivious to the fact that diplomacy is about talking to each other. It's not about imposing things. But now we have in the West, obviously with Donald Trump, but we have exactly the same tendency and the same trend in the EU — that you don't use diplomacy to smooth the angles and to ease a solution between different partners, discussion partners, I mean. You're not doing that. You are just imposing a view, and you are just trying to — it's diplomacy by pressure, or deal the peace through pressure. That's exactly it. The EU is applying exactly the same kind of diplomacy that Donald Trump is doing. They are just using different tools because they don't have all the tools and all the instruments that the U.S. has. That's all.

#Nima

Colonel, when it comes to the weapons that the United States is sending to the region, I don't know how they can put themselves in the position they had before this war started. It doesn't matter how many weapons, how much ammunition you send to the region, it's almost impossible to get back to what the United States was before this war started in terms of radars and all the equipment they had in their bases in countries like the UAE and Qatar. But the other possibility would be, you know, the attack on Iran. I don't know what the objectives of that are and how successful that would be for the United States at this stage.

Do you see any sort of, you know, when you look at what the United States is doing, what comes to your mind? What does it mean, this sort of sending? We have three aircraft carriers right now. We had two when this war started, if you remember. And the Gerald Ford was not that much into the conflict, you know, because they had problems, you know, the sabotage inside, what happened later on. And right now you see three aircraft carriers in the region, and it seems that one of them is going to take care of Yemen, and the other two would be against Iran. Your understanding of that?

#Jacques

Well, first of all, we are here witnessing, and that's something we had more or less—it's slightly different, but however, the overall philosophy is the same—but we are witnessing it in Ukraine and here in the Middle East. The West doesn't understand war otherwise than as a balance of force. It's always a matter of the number of tanks you have and the number of this and the number of that. And you see that the Westerners have a very hard time understanding war differently from what they did during World War I. Essentially, that means the one who has more guns on one side, more tanks, and more blah blah blah, he will win. There is no sense that war is a combination of military action but also diplomatic action, and that's exactly what we are seeing in Ukraine, by the way. The West has always this way.

The Westerners, the Europeans, as the Americans, still understand war as during World War I. Nothing else. So you're completely cut off from your enemy. You are just trying to bring as much weaponry and the amount of fire on your enemy as possible. That's all. The problem here, and again... You may argue that there is a slight variation in the case of Iran because Trump tries to, as we said before, integrate some kind of—I mean, it's not real diplomacy. This is the kind of diplomacy through pressure, which essentially remains in the same scope as for the military: if you don't accept my condition, I will kill you. So that's exactly, you know, it's a variation of this World War I complex that we have in the West.

So that's where we are. And in addition to that, we understand that we are now in a phase where the US and the Israelis have obviously used the ceasefire to restock their weaponry, to rearm to some extent, and to bring new equipment into the theater. You mentioned those carriers and all that. Now, the problem is that with such a deployment of force, we have the risk of going into an even much harder conflict than the one we had in March, and even something that triggers a regional war, literally, if not more, because the US is so eager to have something that looks like a victory that they seem to be engaging in the idea that they are ready to put everything they can in order to achieve this kind of victory.

Again, I think even if they would destroy the whole of Iran, they would not be able to have a victory. That's a certain fact. But that's where we are heading. Now, the Americans understand that. Probably not Donald Trump, but probably the Pentagon. And that also is reflected by the different people who were fired recently in the Pentagon—those generals, the Secretary of the Navy, and all

that—indicating that there are probably a lot of diverging opinions in the Pentagon as regards the strategy towards Iran. And that means that what we are witnessing today may also make some people conscious of the risk that is looming here.

And you may have, as a result, that Trump, as he has done many times, is threatening to unleash the fire of hell on Iran. But in the end, he will refrain from doing that. He will find a way to refrain because he knows that this will lead to something that could be a catastrophe, and something that is exactly what he said he would avoid doing during the presidential campaign. So we may have here—and again, it's very difficult to assess what exactly we will witness—but one of the options is that Trump still thinks he could be able to scare the Iranians in order to achieve what he wants: to have a capitulation, to some extent, of Iran under US conditions, period.

#Jacques

What will happen, we don't know, because I'm certain that the Iranians will refuse. They will not play this game. And we know that the Iranians—and they have said that—and so far they have always done exactly what they said before. So there is no indication that Iran is bluffing in any way. The U.S. has bluffed many times, and not just in the case of Iran. They did that with Palestine. They did that with Ukraine or Russia. They did that with the tariffs. They did that with Venezuela. They did that with Greenland, meaning that bluffing and threatening to use an unlimited amount of force in order to achieve a result is a standard policy of Donald Trump.

Now, it may work when we talk about Westerners or, let's say, European culture and things like that, but I'm not sure it will work in Iran. And therefore, that's where we have an unknown factor here. They certainly tried to put a lot of pressure on Iran through presence, through deployment of force and show of force. But if this doesn't allow them to reach any result, then, of course, that's where we have—we are a little bit, I mean, when looking at the way Trump makes a decision, anything can happen. And that's the dangerous situation we have. If we had rational people in the West—I mean, if you look at Iran, the same as in Russia, by the way, and even the Palestinians, Hamas, and even Hezbollah—you see that there is a very strong logic in their behavior.

They have clear strategies, they have clearly stated objectives, and they behave accordingly. And therefore, you can really anticipate—probably not always anticipate—but you can see the limit of what they are ready to do because they say it. These leaderships are essentially rational. They may not have exactly the same logic as ours, but they are rational. If you understand them, you are able to anticipate what they do—probably not at the tactical level, but at the strategic level. The problem is with the West: we have a leadership, and that's obvious with Donald Trump, a little bit probably less obvious in Europe, but essentially this is the same.

We have a leadership that doesn't work according to a rational process. And if I can make a comparison, even if scientifically some may argue that it's not very solid, the Iranians, Russians, Palestinians, and Hezbollah have a left-brain approach to a conflict. They analyze, they rationalize

the conflict, they make their assessment, and establish a strategy. Europeans and the US have a right-brain approach to leadership. It's very much intuitive. It's based on emotions rather than rationale. There is almost no scientific approach to the conflict. They don't even try to understand the strategy of their opponent. They just act as they wish, like a kid.

Usually, the right-brain approach is associated with women, and the left-brain approach is associated with men, although there is absolutely no scientific proof of that. But it gives the flavor of the whole thing. And again, I'm not making a scientific statement here. I'm just saying it's an approach to explain or to highlight the difference in the intellectual approach to the conflict. And that's exactly what we have. We have a more, yes, intuition-driven approach to the conflict in the West and with Donald Trump. He feels like this. It's exactly like when you have those European diplomats or the French foreign minister who says, well, we need to prevent Iran from having the nuclear bomb.

Although intelligence organizations in the US and elsewhere have all stated that Iran is not working on a bomb, Iran has expressed its clear view that it doesn't want to have a nuclear bomb. It has the Strait of Hormuz for that. It doesn't need to have a nuclear bomb. But we still continue to maintain that. And that also explains why, when we talk about the objectives that we want to achieve, they change from one day to another, because we don't know why we are fighting. And that's exactly the reason why the Americans will not be able to win, because they don't even know what they are fighting for. And that's the problem. Basically, there is a huge amount of similarity between what we are seeing at the strategic level, not at the tactical level.

There are different issues, obviously, but when operationally, at a strategic level, you have a lot of similarities between what we see with Iran and what we see in Ukraine, and between Ukraine and Russia. And again, you have the same approach, this scientific approach to the war. And the Iranians, as they have shown, have an extremely cold-blooded approach to the war. They are not trying to convert the warfighting into an emotional thing. This is extremely well and rationally calculated. Remember when we saw the so-called decapitation at the end of February, early March, when the Israelis, using their usual tactic, because they always kill the heads.

And by the way, it's also interesting to see in relation to the negotiation, you may remember that Donald Trump, on Saturday, canceled the mission of Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff. He commented in the press, "Well, we have all the cards, they have none. And in addition to that, I don't know to whom we should talk in Iraq." And that's also very interesting because they killed the leadership, and now they don't know to whom they can talk. And that's exactly the problem when we talk about the strategy. And that's also the reason why you see that the Ukrainians tried to kill Vladimir Putin, the Israelis tried to kill the head of Hezbollah, Hamas, and so on and so forth.

But the Iranians and the Palestinians or Hezbollah have not tried to do the same because they understand that when you start to assess the situation strategically, you need to understand the way your enemy thinks. And regardless of whether the guy is a good guy or a bad guy, once you understand his way of thinking, the way he designs his strategy, you have a weakness there.

Because, and that's exactly what we have seen in Ukraine, for instance, the problem is that when you are not able to assess your enemy, that's the weakness of the Ukrainians. The Russians know the Ukrainians much better than the Ukrainians understand the Russians. And we have exactly the same thing here. The Iranians understand the Americans much better than the Americans understand them.

And that's the advantage. Now, in order to achieve strategic success, you have to understand your enemy. If you want to outmaneuver your enemy, you have to understand him. You have to understand how he thinks and all that. Once you kill the chief, the supreme guide or whoever, when you kill the generals and all that, you don't know how they will react. You create uncertainty for your own forces. You make it more difficult to assess the enemy. You make it more difficult to approach and understand the strategy of your enemy. You make it more difficult to adjust your own strategy to something that you don't understand. And that's why killing the head, or the so-called decapitation strikes, are strategic mistakes.

And if you, I mean, we are slightly off the subject, but I have studied quite extensively. As I was studying, I made my study for international security expert, and we studied quite extensively the nuclear strategies that you had during the Cold War, just at the end of the Cold War between the US and Russia. Very interesting to see in those nuclear strategies, both sides — the Soviets at the time, the Americans on their side also — tried to avoid destroying the enemy's leadership. That's the reason why in the ABM Treaty, for instance, the two main parties of the ABM Treaty, which were the Soviet Union and the US, were only allowed to protect the capital city with anti-ballistic missiles. They were only allowed to protect the capital city because the idea was you need to protect the leadership.

Because if you don't protect the leadership, how can you then talk peace? And if you kill the leadership, then there is absolutely no prospect for having a negotiation. And that was how there were different nuclear strategies in the U.S. and the Soviet Union. These strategies evolved over time, but they had as a common aspect that you should preserve the enemy's leadership. Now, today we are hopefully away from a nuclear conflict, but the principle remains the same — that when you start a war, if you are able to, and the precondition is of course that you can understand the enemy's leadership, you can understand how he thinks, how he acts, how he will wage war, how he understands war, and all these kinds of things. But if you kill the leadership, then you are powerless. That's exactly what Donald Trump said on Saturday.

He said, well, anyway, we don't know to whom we can talk in Iran. And that shows the total absence of a rational strategy when addressing the Iranian problem. And again, Donald Trump is a case in point, but you have exactly the same thing in Europe. They don't even try to understand, let's say, Vladimir Putin when it comes to Ukraine, because they think that starting to understand Vladimir Putin is already a kind of treason, because obviously you are accepting what he's doing. It's not that. That's why you have intelligence strategic analysts, as I was, by the way, because you have to understand how the two parties think. That's the weakness of the West. That's a weakness

of Europe towards Russia. And that's a weakness of the United States in Iran. That's a weakness of Israel towards the Palestinians and towards Hezbollah. They are not able to understand the enemy.

And you see that those wars, and that's all the four wars. I mean, yes, yes. We can say in Israel, whether it's one divided in two or two wars — against the Palestinians, against Hezbollah — I consider that as two different wars. But anyway, the wars against Iran, the Palestinians, Hezbollah, and Ukraine are waged at a tactical level. The war is done by tacticians. And when we talk about those conflicts, we're always witnessing one tank was destroyed here, one drone was used there. So we are in kind of micromanagement of the war. And you never see, and when you talk about Ukraine, nobody talks about the strategy of Ukraine. There is a Russian strategy, but what is the strategy of Ukraine? We are talking about the successes and the destruction and all the killing and massacres that Israel does.

But what is the strategy of Israel? We don't really know. But we understand the strategy of Hezbollah because it's explicitly stated. Although with Israel, we can make some deductions about what they want to achieve. But that's another subject here. And that's the weakness of the West at large. We tend to be tacticians. And as Sun Tzu said 2,500 years ago, tactics without strategy is just noise before defeat. And that's exactly what we have. Iranians are strategists, Russians are strategists, Palestinians are strategists, Hezbollah are strategists. The others are tacticians. That's why they will fail. And that's why they fail. They do a lot of destruction. They do a lot of killing, which for the West amounts to a success.

Because again, since you don't have stated objectives, the number of people you kill—and we are still in this idea of the balance of forces—so you kill more, then you are winning more. But that's not how it works. And to exemplify this, we could show what happened in Gaza. The amount of civilians killed is tremendous, but Israel nevertheless lost, even if they lost much fewer civilians, even much fewer military than the Palestinians. So this is quite a quantitative approach to war that we have in the West. Quantitative and tactical leads only to defeat because the leadership in the West, and again exemplified by Donald Trump, are fighting wars without any clear objectives. They don't know what they are doing, essentially.

#Nima

With this war between Iran and the United States, we have some states that are part of the conflict, but they're not that much involved, I would say. I'm talking basically about the GCC countries. But before getting to the point of the GCC and what's going on with the GCC countries, how do you see the situation between Israel and Lebanon? Israel is trying to occupy the southern part of Lebanon. Lebanon said if that's the plan, nobody's going to get back to the northern part of Israel. And they're doing this right now as we speak.

The fight is going on. Yesterday, Benjamin Netanyahu was talking about, let's go, let's open up the war, and we're going to hit them the way they have never seen before. But we haven't seen that

coming. And we see both sides fighting each other. There's some sort of war of attrition on the ground. And Israel is trying to do its best to send its forces in the southern part of Lebanon to protect them. We know how Hezbollah is attacking them, killing them, and putting a lot of pressure on the northern part of Israel.

#Jacques

Your understanding of that? Well, first of all, we have to understand that for Israel, the whole southern part of Lebanon—that means from the Israeli border to the Litani River—is considered as essentially Jewish, or Israeli if you prefer. I say Jewish because you have a lot of commentators, mostly religious commentators in Israel, who say that the territory that was given to the Jews included also the area up to the Litani River. Again, I'm not a theologian and I'm not able to judge that. My view is that the Bible is not a real estate document, and therefore this has nothing to do with it. This is my view. We have borders that had been defined after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in the 1920s. We have a border between Lebanon and Palestine, as it was called during the British Mandate. And this line was defined—I think this border was defined in 1924, if I'm not wrong.

#Jacques

But since then, you had the 1948–49 war in Israel, where, in fact, Israel didn't define its border. Israel is the only country in the world that has no border officially, has never defined its border. There is a ceasefire line—the ceasefire line of 1949—which more or less is the same as the 1924 border with Lebanon. But it's not exactly the same, by the way. So again, here you see you have two borders. And the border defined by Israel, as I said, is a ceasefire line, not a border. Then, when the Israelis came into Lebanon in 1982, they occupied the territory, and as they withdrew, they kept a certain amount of territory within Lebanon.

And the fact that they kept those territories is the rationale behind the emergence of Hezbollah. Hezbollah is a resistance movement, and the resistance is aimed at recovering those territories that were kept by Israel after they withdrew from the invasion of 1982. And then later, of course, you had subsequent invasions, and always Israel kept additional small parts of territory. In any case, the purpose of Hezbollah is to free those territories. And now Israel is trying to move these borders further north, up to the Litani River. Now they haven't reached... I mean, they have reached on the eastern side of the Litani River, but not the eastern and central part of this river.

And they have established a so-called yellow line that is a kind of no man's land, we can say, or let's say a buffer zone, if you prefer, in which they have simply destroyed every single village there. But really, people call it the Rafah doctrine, because that's what they have done in Rafah in Gaza. That means converting all existing villages into rubble, basically. They came with bulldozers and they razed everything, with the idea that the people cannot come back. So that shows, in my view, by the way, it's an allegory of the purpose of the State of Israel. They never construct things. They destroy, they raze. When the Israeli comes, we are back to desert.

They destroy everything. They destroy religion. And we have also these pictures that have not been shown in the Western media, by the way, where you see those Israeli soldiers decapitating Mary, the mother of Jesus, and also destroying statues of Jesus Christ on the cross, showing that, in my view, it's a clear demonstration of what Israel is about. It destroys everything. This is an allegory. I think we cannot do better. They are the best examples of what they are able to do. They destroy everything. Again, this yellow line now extends, I don't know how many, probably 10 to 20 kilometers depending on the place, into Lebanese territory.

The problem we have in Lebanon is that the Lebanese army, and also because the Lebanese government is very strongly corrupt, has never been able to set up a Lebanese army that has the willingness to oppose the Israeli occupation. That's the reason why Hezbollah is still in place. Hezbollah, again, it's a particular party, but the military part of Hezbollah, al-Muqawwama, which essentially means the resistance — that's the name of the military wing of Hezbollah. The resistance is here because of the Israeli presence. But eventually, the idea is that once the Israelis have left Lebanese territory, these militias should disband and be integrated into a nationwide armed force. That was the idea.

And that's still the idea. And Hezbollah is also a signatory of the Taif Agreement that states that. So there is no doubt that Hezbollah is committed to the defense of the southern part of Lebanon. And the rest of Lebanon has never done anything, in fact, to resist effectively against Israel because, again, of this corruption that is endemic in the government and institutions in Lebanon. So that's where we are. And eventually, the problem is that the international community—and that's the perverse aspect of designating Hezbollah as a terrorist organization—because if you say Hezbollah, in fact, Hezbollah is an organization that's always defended against the occupation in South Lebanon.

It's not an organization that has done terrorist activities elsewhere or tried to make an international revolution or Islamic revolution all over the world or whatever. But the Western propaganda, by portraying Hezbollah as a terrorist organization, has made it such that it's justified now to destroy Hezbollah and therefore for Israel to be in Lebanon. You see, while in fact, Hezbollah is only a pretext for Israel. Again, when you remember, I mean, we have what we have seen and what we still see, by the way, in southern Lebanon. And we have seen that in 2006, Lebanon, or the southern part of Lebanon, Hezbollah, has built a lot of networks of allies, bunkers, or underground passages and all that in order to defend the territory.

Something very similar, probably less complex, but very similar to what we had in Switzerland during World War II as we organized for defense in the Alps. So we dug into the Alps to create fortifications, machine gun positions, artillery positions, all protected under rock. And that's exactly what Hezbollah has done. So when you dig yourself into your own territory, that means you have no intention to attack others. When you want to attack others, you don't dig on your territory. You buy tanks, you buy aircraft in order to move ahead into the other's territory. So everything we see about Hezbollah shows that it's a defensive organization.

It's a resistance organization. But since it's considered a terrorist, then you have people approving the attack by Israel because, in the end, they fight terrorism. And when you fight terrorism, everything is allowed—torture, massacre of civilians, and so on and so forth. That's the reason why you have countries like the US, UK, and especially France, who designate people as terrorists so that they have free hands to do whatever they want. Because international law is, let's say, you're allowed not to respect international humanitarian law, or the law of war, if you prefer, against terrorism.

And that's exactly what's happening in Lebanon. And that's exactly the reason why we have those absolutely alarming scenes that we see in Lebanon, where civilians are massacred every day by bombing, by everything, even by snipers. You have exactly the same thing we have seen in Gaza, that kids are killed by snipers, by Israeli snipers. And I mentioned the case of those churches, Christian churches, I think, that were destroyed by Israel. This is all Christian heritage that is destroyed. They have done that already in the Golan and elsewhere. Remember that this place is the oldest place for Christianity. This is where Christianity has its roots, basically was born.

#Jacques

Yeah, absolutely. And therefore you have the oldest Christian communities. And in the West, of course, being Christian doesn't mean anything anymore. I mean, the West has abandoned religion and all that. For us, it means nothing. Destroying those communities—we have accepted that in Syria. We have accepted that in Syria. The West has accepted the destruction of the oldest Christian communities in the world. And that was even funded by the US, funded by France. You know, this is—and we still do the same. But again, we have both in the US and in France, governments under influence. And if you don't believe me, you go on the website of the State Department, where Marco Rubio is saying that they attacked Iran at the request of Israel.

At the request of Israel. That's all. So we have governments under influence. And that's very clear. We have exactly the same thing in France, by the way. So we are the most, the biggest sponsors of the destruction of Christianity. Lindsey Graham, all these guys, they have all sponsored the destruction of Christianity in the Middle East. You had all these communities in Syria, in Iraq, those Syriac—I don't know how you say it in English, but in French it's Syriac—which are the... Sorry? Syrians? No. No, no, it's not Syrian. It's Syriac. It's a community in Syria. But the Syriac, you also had Syriacs in Iraq.

They are very similar to the Assyrians, which also reminds us of the name of the Assyrian Empire thousands of years ago. But you have Assyrian communities, still very small communities today in Syria and in Iraq, who are among those original Christian communities. And they are fascinating communities, by the way, because they are the ones who have taken the most from both Christianity and Islam, because they are used to living between those two cultures. But this is a real Christian community. They speak Aramaic. They don't speak Arabic, by the way. They speak Aramaic, which was the language of Christ. Jesus Christ spoke Aramaic.

He didn't speak Hebrew. He spoke Aramaic. And now we are the ones who destroy this culture, and we allow Israel to do it for us. This is a tragic situation, but that's the situation in Lebanon. So the Israelis, in their expanding rage, attack Lebanon. But again, it's not the first time—they have done that many times in the last 50 years. And they will do that with others. I mean, Jordan will certainly, at one point, be attacked also. There have been some attacks against Jordan, by the way, by the Israelis, but on a very small scale, not in the same dimension and the same scope as what we have seen in Lebanon. But we'll see that.

#Nima

Carmen, before wrapping up, I think the most important issue right now with the war—if the war continues, if the United States decides to start a new round of war against Iran—here is the situation that GCC countries are in right now. The real losers, I would say, are these countries in the Persian Gulf, the GCC countries, because not only, you know, the escalation would devastate everything in their countries—desalination, oil production, everything. They're talking about Saudi Arabia being able to send its oil and energy through this east-west pipeline. And that's vulnerable. We know that.

Iran has proven that—has proved so far how they can hit this pipeline and how it can influence the global economy by that. And it's not only about their survival. You know, the internet connection is passing through the Strait of Hormuz in the Persian Gulf. Iran is just—basically their life is controlled by Iran, if they understand that. Because the escalation—I'm not talking about that Iran controls their life—I'm talking about the escalation would put a lot of pressure or maybe devastate the whole society in these countries. And what are they thinking of when you look at the behavior of these countries? It doesn't seem that they understand a little bit of the reality of what's going on in that region.

#Jacques

Well, I wouldn't say they don't understand. They understand it. The problem is that there's a lot of pressure from the United States. These are monarchies that are essentially artificial. All these countries are rather new, by the way. They didn't exist 60 years ago. A lot of them were just artificial creations. And they understand that the U.S. presence was not a guarantee of security, but is essentially today a liability in terms of security. And therefore, you have a lot of thinking about this. The problem is that they have no choice, because the U.S. needs the bases, the military bases and other assets they have on their territory. And therefore, they manage their way to bribe or, I don't know, to convince, let's say, these countries to accept this U.S. presence.

But it's a poisoned gift in reality. And they understand that if the situation escalates, they will be the first. And they are still, still today, the first victims of that because they cannot export their product. So that means that, more or less, they had to stop the refineries and some activities because you cannot store all your product over and over. So that means that you need to stop your activity, and

stopping your activity means you get no return on that. You don't get paid. They cannot export, and they cannot buy because they completely depend on external supply for almost everything. They are extremely dependent. And last but not least, they are also dependent on water, as you said.

Saudi Arabia and most of the GCC countries depend on desalination installations for something like 90–92%. Meaning that if those installations were destroyed, those guys would have to leave because they would not be able to replace the water within days. So they are under extreme pressure. And the problem here is that the U.S. is in fact using those countries effectively. I mean, in other circumstances, you would say they are using these countries as human shields. Because it's exactly that, you see. And the Iranians have made every effort, especially in early March, as they responded to the U.S. and Israeli attack by destroying key elements of these military bases.

The Iranians made it very clear that they had nothing against the countries themselves, but against the military installations, recalling to those countries that nevertheless, even if Iran has nothing against the countries themselves, according to international law, they are part of the aggressors. So it's absolutely clear that these countries are aggressors because they accepted that the Americans use their territory for the purpose of aggressing another country in an unjustified and unprovoked manner. So this is the situation. But I may expect it's probably too early to see that because obviously the Americans put a lot of pressure.

You probably have discussions within those states about this. By the way, I have the feeling that when you hear the comments coming from these countries, the rhetoric against Iran is not as strong as you might expect. They understand they are caught in a crossfire here. They are caught in a crossfire between Iran and the U.S. And they understand that the party which is guilty in that is the U.S. So they understand that perfectly. At the same time, they are bombed by Iran. So obviously, you can expect some negative comments—that makes sense. But I think those negative comments and this feeling that you get bombed by Iran are not directly translating into an aggressive political posture from these countries. I think that's very important.

And again, we are now in the middle of the conflict. The dynamics are such that the Americans have, and they still have, those military bases. Therefore, they will use those assets as much as they can and as long as they are usable. And that puts the GCC countries in this particular situation. But once the situation clarifies, once we have an agreement between Iran and the U.S., once the situation settles and the dust comes back down, we may have major changes, I think, and the Americans will have to make a lot of efforts to regain the credibility of these countries afterwards. Again, I don't have any crystal ball. I cannot see what the future will be. But my feeling is that this situation has, let's say, harmed very strongly U.S. credibility in the region.

And probably elsewhere in the world, by the way. Because now we have... I mentioned that. I mean, we talked about it, I think, two weeks ago. The same thing in Taiwan. A lot of people are having some thoughts about the situation. And... the only ones who have no thoughts about this are the Europeans. I mean, this is Finland and all that. They should have had those thoughts about the

problem of having the U.S. involved in their country, on their country. But the Europeans are probably, as we said before, the Europeans have lost their ability to think strategically. They think tactically, emotionally. And again, this right-brain approach is in fact playing against Europeans at this stage. But this is another topic—we're talking about the GCC. But I think we may have some changes.

I see that there is one, a sheikh in the UAE that wants now to get out of the UAE and to split the UAE. Whether it will happen or not, I don't know. But that shows that this may lead these countries to rethink their relations with the West at large, and especially with the U.S., especially when it comes to military relations. They will probably—I mean, again, we have countries that understand that they depend on Western technology so far, but tomorrow they may prefer to depend on Chinese technology, remember that. But so far, it's the West. They have nothing against the West, but they see that the West is not keeping its promises, and that when you have Western countries on your territory, basically you are just attracting war. You are mostly attracting disorder and chaos. So what's the point?

#Nima

Thank you so much, Col., for being with us today.

#Jacques

That was my pleasure. Thank you very much for inviting me. Thank you.

#Nima

Thank you.