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# STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF IRAN'S ARMED FORCES



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# Section 8 – Military and Security

## Introduction

The security and defense architecture of a democratic Iran must be **fundamentally different** from the militarized and politically manipulated structures of the past. The purpose of this section is to present a **comprehensive framework** for building an armed forces establishment that is **professional, apolitical, accountable, and fully integrated into civilian governance**.

In a post-authoritarian transition, military reform will be one of the most sensitive and complex tasks facing the new government. The process must balance **immediate stability** with **long-term transformation**, ensuring that the armed forces remain capable of protecting the country while shedding the ideological, partisan, and repressive characteristics of the old system.

## Strategic Rationale

The armed forces of the new Iran will:

- **Defend sovereignty and territorial integrity** against external aggression.
- **Protect constitutional order** and democratic institutions from internal threats.
- **Serve the people**, aiding in crises and natural disasters.
- **Contribute to regional peace and international security** through cooperative defense diplomacy.

These objectives cannot be met by simply rebranding the existing military structures. They require **deep institutional change**, modern training, new doctrine, and cultural transformation rooted in democratic values.

## Guiding Principles

The reform program for Iran's armed forces will be guided by the following enduring principles:

1. **Civilian Control** – The military will operate under the direction of elected civilian authorities.
2. **Rule of Law** – All military actions will comply with constitutional provisions and international law.
3. **Political Neutrality** – The armed forces will not serve any political faction or ideology.
4. **Transparency and Accountability** – Defense activities and budgets will be subject to public oversight.
5. **Professional Excellence** – Recruitment, training, and promotion will be merit-based and free from corruption.

## Scope of Reform

The transformation will encompass:

- **Mission Definition and Legal Foundations (8.1)**
- **Foundational Principles (8.2)**
- **Unified Command Structure (8.3)**
- **Integration and Screening of Existing Forces (8.4)**
- **Modernization of Defense Capabilities (8.5)**
- **Professional Military Education and Human Capital Development (8.6)**
- **Civilian Oversight and Budget Transparency (8.7)**
- **Military Diplomacy and Regional Stability (8.8)**
- **Crisis Response and Disaster Assistance Role (8.9)**
- **Long-Term Strategic Vision for the Armed Forces (8.10)**

Each subsection will detail the policies, legal measures, and operational frameworks necessary to build a **modern, respected, and trusted defense institution**.

## Transition Considerations

Reform will unfold in **three overlapping phases**:

- **Stabilization Phase (0–2 years)**: Secure borders, prevent power vacuums, and maintain essential defense capabilities.
- **Reform Phase (2–6 years)**: Implement structural changes, integrate forces, and begin modernization programs.
- **Maturity Phase (6+ years)**: Achieve full operational integration, advanced capability development, and regional security leadership.

## Desired End State

By the conclusion of the reform process, Iran's armed forces will:

- Stand as a **trusted institution** under civilian control.
- Possess **modern, interoperable capabilities** suitable for 21st-century security challenges.
- Be fully integrated into regional and international cooperative frameworks.
- Represent the **will and security of the Iranian people**, not the interests of any one political group.

## 8.1 Mission and Purpose of the Armed Forces

In a democratic Iran, the armed forces will exist to **protect the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and constitutional order of the nation**. Their mission will be firmly grounded in the principles of democracy, the rule of law, and the protection of human rights. They will serve **the people of Iran** — not any political party, faction, or ideology.

The purpose of the armed forces will extend beyond mere defense against external threats; they will also contribute to **regional stability, humanitarian assistance, and national resilience** in times of crisis. The new mission statement must be simple, unifying, and enshrined in the constitution to ensure enduring clarity and public trust.

### 1. Strategic Mission Statement

**"The Armed Forces of Iran shall defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and democratic constitutional order of the nation, protect the people and their rights, and contribute to regional peace and international stability in accordance with the laws of the nation and the principles of the United Nations Charter."**

### 2. Core Purposes

- 1. Defend Against External Aggression**  
Maintain readiness to deter and, if necessary, repel any military threat to Iran's territory or people.
- 2. Safeguard Constitutional Order**  
Ensure that the democratic process and institutions are never undermined by internal or external forces.
- 3. Protect the People**  
Respond rapidly to national emergencies, natural disasters, and humanitarian crises.
- 4. Support Regional Stability and Peace**  
Engage in cooperative security arrangements and peacekeeping missions consistent with Iran's defensive posture.

### 3. Foundational Principles Underpinning the Mission

- **Non-Partisanship:** The armed forces will remain politically neutral and subordinate to civilian authority.
- **Rule of Law:** All actions will comply with national and international law, including the Geneva Conventions.
- **Professionalism:** Service will be based on merit, competence, and ethical conduct.
- **Defensive Doctrine:** The armed forces will maintain a posture that deters aggression without threatening neighbors.

## 4. Implementation Measures

### A. Legal Foundations

- Enshrine the mission in the constitution and national defense law.
- Require a parliamentary supermajority to change the mission statement.

### B. Organizational Alignment

- Review and revise all military doctrines, training programs, and operational plans to align with the mission.
- Establish a **National Defense Strategy Council** under the Ministry of Defense to ensure all branches operate within mission parameters.

### C. Public Communication

- Conduct nationwide awareness campaigns to explain the new mission.
- Incorporate the mission into military oaths, ceremonies, and education programs.

## 5. Risks and Mitigation

- **Risk:** Attempts to politicize the armed forces.  
*Mitigation:* Strong legal protections for non-partisanship and independent oversight bodies.
- **Risk:** Public skepticism due to past abuses by military or security forces.  
*Mitigation:* Transparent reform processes, public reporting, and early humanitarian engagement to build trust.

## 6. Long-Term Outcomes

A clear and enduring mission will:

- Anchor the armed forces in democratic governance.
- Provide a stable framework for military planning and development.
- Foster public trust and a sense of national unity.
- Position Iran as a responsible actor in regional and global security affairs.

## 8.2 Foundational Principles

The legitimacy, credibility, and effectiveness of Iran’s future armed forces will rest on a set of immutable principles. These principles are more than aspirational values — they are operational and legal safeguards designed to prevent the reemergence of partisan or authoritarian control over the military. They must be embedded in the constitution, enacted in statutory law, reinforced through military education, and upheld by civilian oversight mechanisms.

These foundational principles will define the ethos of the armed forces, guide all decision-making, and serve as benchmarks for performance and accountability. They will ensure that the defense establishment is seen as a **protector of the people**, not a tool of repression.

### 1. National and Non-Ideological Character

The armed forces shall exist for the sole purpose of defending the territorial integrity, sovereignty, and democratic institutions of Iran. Loyalty will be to the nation and its constitution — not to any political faction, religious ideology, or ethnic interest.

#### Key Standards

- **Non-partisanship:** Members may not engage in partisan political activity while in service.
- **Religious neutrality:** Military policy, training, and operations will be free from sectarian influence.
- **Inclusivity:** Recruitment and promotion will be based solely on merit, professional competence, and ethical conduct, with equal opportunity for all Iranian citizens regardless of background.

#### Implementation Steps

1. Remove all political or religious oaths from the enlistment process, replacing them with a single oath to defend the constitution and the people of Iran.
2. Prohibit the use of military facilities, funds, or personnel for partisan activities.
3. Create an **Office of Military Inclusivity and Equal Opportunity** to monitor diversity and report annually to parliament.

#### Risks & Mitigation

- *Risk:* Resistance from entrenched ideological factions.
- *Mitigation:* Enact binding legislation with criminal penalties for political interference in the military.

## 2. Civilian Oversight and Accountability

A democratic system demands that the armed forces remain under the control of elected civilian authorities. Civilian oversight prevents the misuse of military power and aligns defense priorities with national policy.

### Core Structures

- **Ministry of Defense:** Headed by a civilian minister appointed by the head of state and confirmed by parliament.
- **Permanent Parliamentary Defense Committee:** Reviews defense budgets, procurement, strategic plans, and senior officer appointments.
- **Inspector General for the Armed Forces:** Independent office with authority to investigate misconduct and corruption.

### Implementation Steps

1. Establish constitutional provisions mandating civilian control over all branches of the armed forces.
2. Require parliamentary approval for all senior appointments at the rank of general/admiral.
3. Grant the parliamentary defense committee authority to summon military leaders for testimony in public hearings.

### Risks & Mitigation

- *Risk:* Political attempts to weaken oversight in times of crisis.
- *Mitigation:* Embed oversight powers in the constitution, not just statutory law.

## 3. Transparency in Operations and Budgeting

Transparency ensures public trust and deters corruption. Defense budgets, procurement processes, and major strategic initiatives must be open to scrutiny without compromising operational security.

### Transparency Measures

- Publish annual defense budgets with clear category breakdowns.
- Subject all major procurement contracts to competitive bidding.
- Conduct annual independent audits, with non-classified findings made public.

### Implementation Steps

1. Create a **Defense Budget Oversight Office** reporting directly to parliament.

2. Require quarterly public updates on large-scale procurement and infrastructure projects.
3. Launch an online public portal for non-classified defense spending data.

#### **4. Commitment to Human Rights and International Law**

The armed forces will comply fully with the Geneva Conventions, the UN Charter, and all other binding international agreements.

##### **Training & Enforcement**

- Mandatory courses on the laws of armed conflict for all ranks.
- Rules of engagement that prioritize civilian protection.
- Independent military courts with jurisdiction over war crimes and human rights violations.

##### **Implementation Steps**

1. Integrate human rights training into all military education programs.
2. Establish a **Military Legal Affairs Directorate** to advise commanders and monitor compliance.
3. Cooperate with international bodies in investigations of alleged abuses.

#### **5. Professionalism and Merit-Based Advancement**

Advancement must be based solely on performance, qualifications, and leadership ability.

##### **Implementation Steps**

1. Create a standardized annual evaluation process for all personnel.
2. Form a **National Promotions Board** including both senior officers and civilian officials.
3. Prohibit promotions based on political affiliation or personal favoritism.

#### **6. Defensive Posture and Regional Cooperation**

The armed forces will maintain a defensive military doctrine, focused on deterrence and regional stability, not offensive operations.

##### **Implementation Steps**

1. Draft a new National Defense Doctrine emphasizing territorial defense.
2. Initiate regional security dialogues and cooperative training exercises.
3. Participate in UN peacekeeping missions and humanitarian deployments.

## Safeguards Against Backsliding

To protect these principles from erosion over time:

- Enshrine them in the constitution.
- Require parliamentary supermajorities for any changes.
- Maintain public transparency to keep citizens engaged in defense oversight.

## 8.3 Unified Command Structure

A unified, clearly defined command structure is the backbone of an effective, disciplined, and loyal armed forces. Without a single national chain of command, a country's defense system becomes vulnerable to fragmentation, conflicting orders, and even armed rivalries. In Iran's recent history, the coexistence of the Artesh (national army) and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), each with separate leadership, missions, and loyalty structures, created systemic inefficiencies, wasted resources, and opened the door for political interference in military operations.

The new democratic Iran must permanently eliminate parallel military chains of command and replace them with a **single, integrated national defense command**. This command will be responsible for the coordination, strategic direction, and operational control of all military forces, from the highest headquarters to the smallest unit in the field.

### 1. Core Objectives of the Unified Command

1. **Operational Efficiency**  
Eliminate duplication of effort and ensure coordinated planning across all services.
2. **Political Neutrality**  
Prevent any branch or unit from aligning with political or ideological factions.
3. **Rapid Decision-Making**  
Ensure that orders can flow quickly from the highest civilian authority to operational units without delay or distortion.
4. **National Defense Doctrine Integration**  
Align all branches with a single national defense strategy based on territorial defense, deterrence, and stability.

### 2. Structure of the National Defense Command (NDC)

The NDC will be the supreme military authority under civilian leadership. Its structure will be both functional and hierarchical, ensuring clarity of responsibilities while enabling inter-service cooperation.

## A. Civilian Leadership Layer

- **President / Head of State** — Commander-in-Chief.
- **Minister of Defense** — Civilian head of the defense establishment, responsible for policy, budget, and oversight.

## B. Military Leadership Layer

- **Chief of the General Staff (CGS)** — Highest-ranking military officer, principal military advisor to the civilian leadership, and overall commander of all armed forces.
- **Service Chiefs** — Commanders of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Strategic Forces, reporting to the CGS.
- **Joint Operations Command** — Integrated staff responsible for planning and executing multi-service operations.

## 3. Implementation Phases

### Phase 1 – Immediate Transition (First 6 Months)

- Legal dissolution of the IRGC as a separate military structure.
- Creation of a transitional joint command council to oversee all forces.
- Audit of all military facilities, equipment, and personnel to establish a unified registry.

### Phase 2 – Structural Consolidation (6 Months to 2 Years)

- Integration of rank structures, training systems, and military law codes.
- Transfer of all operational assets to unified service branches.
- Establishment of a permanent General Staff headquarters.

### Phase 3 – Full Operational Integration (2 to 5 Years)

- Implementation of unified communications, logistics, and intelligence systems.
- Annual joint exercises to ensure inter-service interoperability.
- Refinement of the national defense doctrine through operational testing.

## 4. Legal and Constitutional Foundations

To prevent any future fragmentation of command:

- The constitution will explicitly prohibit the creation of any armed force outside the unified national command.
- The law will require that all orders flow through the established chain of command, with penalties for unauthorized parallel commands.

## 5. Oversight and Safeguards

- **Parliamentary Oversight:** Regular briefings by the Chief of the General Staff to the national defense committee.
- **Inspector General's Office:** Independent audits and investigations of command decisions.
- **Whistleblower Protections:** Legal safeguards for personnel reporting breaches of the unified command principle.

## 6. Risks and Mitigation

- **Risk:** Resistance from former IRGC loyalists.  
*Mitigation:* Clear legal authority, early personnel integration programs, and strict penalties for insubordination.
- **Risk:** Confusion during the transition period.  
*Mitigation:* Detailed communication plans, training for all ranks on the new structure, and phased integration.

## 7. Illustrative Organizational Chart – National Defense Command

(Black-and-white chart to be inserted here in final document)

### Top Level

- Head of State (Commander-in-Chief)
- Minister of Defense (Civilian)

### Military Level

- Chief of the General Staff
  - Army Command
  - Navy Command
  - Air Force Command
  - Strategic Forces Command
  - Joint Operations Command

## 8. Long-Term Outcomes

A unified command will:

- Guarantee national defense policy consistency.
- Prevent political actors from using military force for partisan objectives.
- Maximize operational readiness and deterrence capability.

- Foster public trust in the armed forces as a single, apolitical institution dedicated to the defense of the entire nation.

## 8.4 Integration and Screening of Existing Forces

The integration and screening of existing armed forces personnel will be one of the most delicate and consequential processes in the transition to a unified, professional, and democratic military. While the new Iran must preserve the operational readiness of its defense forces, it must also ensure that no individuals who have committed human rights abuses, engaged in corruption, or shown loyalty to anti-democratic causes remain in positions of power or influence. This requires a careful balance between **security, justice, and national reconciliation**.

### 1. Strategic Objectives

1. **Preserve Core Military Capabilities**  
Avoid the destabilizing effect of disbanding large numbers of trained personnel without a plan for replacement.
2. **Remove Unfit Personnel**  
Exclude individuals whose service record demonstrates misconduct, corruption, or ideological extremism incompatible with democratic service.
3. **Foster a Unified Military Culture**  
Break down divisions between former separate forces (Artesh, IRGC, paramilitary units) and create a shared identity based on merit, professionalism, and loyalty to the constitution.
4. **Enable Peaceful Reintegration**  
Provide fair and dignified exit pathways for those leaving the service, reducing the risk of them becoming destabilizing actors in society.

### 2. Comprehensive Screening Process

The screening process will be **systematic, transparent, and impartial**, applying to all active and reserve personnel regardless of rank or branch.

#### Screening Criteria

- Record of human rights violations.
- Participation in politically motivated repression.
- Proven corruption or misuse of military resources.
- Verified involvement in illegal economic activities.
- Demonstrated loyalty to anti-democratic movements or foreign hostile powers.

## Screening Tools

- **Service Record Review:** Examination of official files and performance evaluations.
- **Background Checks:** Cross-referencing with human rights reports, legal case files, and intelligence databases.
- **Interviews & Testimonies:** Structured interviews and witness statements to corroborate service history.

## 3. Phased Implementation

### Phase 1 – Initial Audit (First 6 Months)

- Establish the **National Military Screening Authority** under joint civilian-military leadership.
- Compile a master list of all serving personnel with complete service records.
- Freeze promotions and transfers until screening outcomes are finalized.

### Phase 2 – Vetting and Probation (6 to 18 Months)

- Conduct formal evaluations of all personnel.
- Place those with minor but concerning issues into a probationary status with retraining requirements.
- Remove and process for separation those who fail screening on grounds of major violations.

### Phase 3 – Full Integration (18 Months to 3 Years)

- Merge vetted personnel into the unified force structure.
- Align all personnel under the new rank system, training programs, and codes of conduct.

## 4. Reintegration into Civilian Life

For those leaving the armed forces:

- **Vocational Retraining Programs** in engineering, logistics, IT, public safety, and other civilian sectors.
- **Transitional Stipends** to prevent economic desperation and instability.
- **Counseling Services** for mental health and reintegration support.

## 5. Oversight and Appeals

- **Independent Appeals Board:** Allows individuals to contest screening decisions, ensuring fairness and preventing political abuse.

- **Transparency Reports:** Annual publication of anonymized statistics on screening outcomes.
- **International Observers:** Invite neutral third parties to monitor the process to enhance credibility.

## 6. Risk Analysis and Mitigation

- **Risk:** Resistance or unrest from dismissed personnel.  
*Mitigation:* Provide economic alternatives, social reintegration programs, and security monitoring.
- **Risk:** Screening process used for political revenge.  
*Mitigation:* Independent oversight, clear legal criteria, and the presence of civilian and international observers.

## 7. Screening Process Table

Phase	Duration	Key Actions	Responsible Authority
Initial Audit	0–6 months	Personnel registry, freeze promotions/transfers	National Military Screening Authority
Vetting & Probation	6–18 months	Background checks, interviews, probation assignments	Screening Authority + Branch Commanders
Full Integration	18–36 months	Merge vetted personnel, adopt unified codes	Chief of the General Staff + Ministry of Defense
Civilian Reintegration	Ongoing	Vocational retraining, stipends, counseling	Ministry of Veterans Affairs + Labor Ministry

## 8. Long-Term Outcomes

A transparent and fair integration and screening process will:

- Build public trust in the reformed armed forces.
- Remove the influence of politicized and corrupt elements.
- Foster a unified culture of professionalism and national service.
- Reduce the risk of instability from marginalized ex-military personnel.

## 8.5 Modernization of Defense Capabilities

The modernization of Iran's armed forces is essential to ensuring that the nation's defense system can effectively deter threats, respond to crises, and operate in cooperation with international partners in the 21st century. Modernization is not limited to acquiring new weapons; it encompasses **doctrine, technology, infrastructure, organization, and human resources**. It must be **phased, cost-conscious, and strategically aligned** with Iran's national defense priorities.

### 1. Strategic Objectives

- 1. Develop a Capable and Agile Force**  
Build forces capable of responding to both conventional and asymmetric threats.
- 2. Ensure Technological Relevance**  
Equip the military with up-to-date systems in areas such as communications, intelligence, cyber defense, and unmanned operations.
- 3. Build Domestic Capacity**  
Foster a national defense industry to reduce reliance on foreign suppliers and strengthen self-reliance.
- 4. Promote Interoperability**  
Ensure that the armed forces can coordinate effectively with regional and international partners when necessary.

### 2. Priority Areas for Modernization

#### A. Technology Acquisition and Integration

- Modern armored vehicles and mobility systems.
- Upgraded air defense and anti-missile systems.
- Advanced fighter aircraft with modern avionics.
- Modern naval vessels with multi-role capabilities.
- Expansion of unmanned aerial and maritime systems.

#### B. Cyber and Electronic Warfare

- Establish dedicated Cyber Command units.
- Invest in defensive and offensive cyber capabilities.
- Integrate AI and machine learning in intelligence and threat analysis.

#### C. Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR)

- Satellite-based reconnaissance systems.
- Modern drones for tactical and strategic intelligence.

- Secure, real-time battlefield communication networks.

#### D. Logistics and Mobility

- Rapid deployment capabilities, including strategic airlift and sealift assets.
- Modernized logistics hubs and supply chains to ensure operational readiness.

### 3. Modernization Phases

#### Phase 1 – Foundation (Years 1–3)

- Replace outdated small arms and personal equipment.
- Upgrade basic communication and command systems.
- Conduct infrastructure assessments of bases, airfields, and naval ports.

#### Phase 2 – Capability Expansion (Years 3–6)

- Acquire new air, naval, and land combat platforms.
- Develop indigenous production for key equipment.
- Expand cyber defense and ISR capabilities.

#### Phase 3 – Full Integration (Years 6–10)

- Achieve interoperability across all branches with advanced joint command and control systems.
- Establish international training and exercise programs.
- Complete modernization of logistics networks and support infrastructure.

### 4. Modernization Table

Phase	Duration	Key Objectives	Examples
Foundation	Years 1–3	Upgrade personal gear, communications, base infrastructure	New rifles, secure radios, runway repairs, base fortifications
Capability Expansion	Years 3–6	Acquire platforms, develop domestic production	New fighter jets, frigates, APCs, drone factories
Full Integration	Years 6–10	Joint command integration, full logistics modernization	Integrated C2, multinational exercises, automated supply chains

### 5. Defense Industry Development

Building a self-sufficient defense industry will:

- Reduce procurement costs.
- Strengthen economic resilience.
- Provide export potential to friendly nations.

### **Actions**

- Partner with universities for R&D.
- Offer incentives for private-sector innovation.
- Establish state-owned enterprises for critical systems production.

## **6. Budgeting and Cost Control**

Modernization must be balanced with fiscal responsibility.

- Conduct cost-benefit analyses before procurement.
- Prioritize systems with multi-role capabilities.
- Avoid over-reliance on a single supplier or country.

## **7. Risks and Mitigation**

- **Risk:** Overstretching the budget.  
*Mitigation:* Prioritize in phases, avoid “prestige projects” with low strategic value.
- **Risk:** Technology becoming obsolete mid-program.  
*Mitigation:* Invest in modular, upgradeable systems.
- **Risk:** Dependence on foreign suppliers.  
*Mitigation:* Maximize domestic production and technology transfer agreements.

## **8. Long-Term Outcomes**

By the end of the 10-year modernization plan, Iran’s armed forces will be:

- Equipped with advanced, interoperable systems.
- Supported by a robust domestic defense industry.
- Integrated into regional security frameworks.
- Capable of rapid, decisive response to any threat.

## 8.6 Professional Military Education and Human Capital Development

Modern military power is not measured only by the sophistication of its equipment or the size of its forces, but by the **quality, competence, and leadership** of the people who serve. A reformed Iranian armed forces must therefore place human capital at the center of its defense strategy. Professional Military Education (PME) will be the foundation for developing officers and enlisted personnel who are not only tactically skilled but also ethically grounded, strategically minded, and adaptable to rapidly changing operational environments.

The **goal** is to cultivate a force that is highly trained, intellectually agile, and capable of working seamlessly with domestic agencies and international partners while remaining firmly committed to democratic principles.

### 1. Strategic Objectives

- 1. Build a Professional Officer Corps**  
Create leaders with a balance of operational experience, academic knowledge, and ethical leadership skills.
- 2. Enhance Skills Across All Ranks**  
Ensure that enlisted personnel, NCOs, and officers have access to continuous training throughout their careers.
- 3. Align Education with Democratic Values**  
Integrate the study of civil-military relations, rule of law, and human rights into all military curricula.
- 4. Foster Innovation and Adaptability**  
Encourage creative problem-solving, critical thinking, and adaptability to new technologies and tactics.

### 2. National Defense Academy and PME System

#### A. National Defense Academy (NDA)

- Flagship institution for senior-level education in strategy, defense policy, and leadership.
- Offers graduate-level programs for officers transitioning into high command roles.
- Includes civilian students from government ministries to promote interagency understanding.

#### B. Branch-Specific Academies

- Army, Navy, and Air Force war colleges to provide advanced operational training tailored to each service.
- Integration of joint training modules to foster inter-service cooperation.

### C. NCO and Enlisted Development Schools

- Leadership academies for non-commissioned officers to strengthen mid-level leadership.
- Technical schools for specialized trades such as engineering, cyber defense, logistics, and medical services.

### 3. Continuous Education and Training

- **Annual Training Cycles:** Mandatory refresher courses for all personnel, including tactical drills, physical fitness, and ethical conduct.
- **Simulation and Wargaming:** Use of modern simulators and scenario-based training for decision-making under stress.
- **International Exchange Programs:** Partner with allied military academies for joint training and officer exchange.
- **Civil-Military Exercises:** Regular collaboration with police, emergency services, and disaster relief agencies.

### 4. Civil-Military Education Integration

Civilian officials who interact with the armed forces — in ministries, parliament, and provincial administrations — will be offered short PME courses to understand military structures, planning, and limitations. This mutual understanding strengthens civilian oversight and coordination during crises.

### 5. Ethical and Leadership Development

- Embed **ethics and leadership** modules at every stage of training.
- Include case studies of both successful and failed military leadership worldwide.
- Promote mentorship programs pairing junior officers with experienced senior leaders.

### 6. Research and Innovation Centers

The armed forces will establish research hubs within PME institutions to:

- Study emerging threats and technologies.
- Develop new operational doctrines.
- Partner with universities and private industry for defense innovation.

### 7. PME Implementation Table

Level	Institution	Focus	Duration
Senior Leadership	National Defense Academy	Strategy, defense policy, joint operations	1–2 years
Mid-Level Officers	Branch War Colleges	Operational planning, service-specific doctrine	6–12 months
NCOs	NCO Leadership Schools	Leadership, technical skills, ethics	3–6 months
Enlisted	Technical Training Centers	Trade skills, tactical training, military law	Variable (3–12 mo.)

## 8. Risks and Mitigation

- **Risk:** Resistance to new educational requirements.  
*Mitigation:* Link PME completion to promotions and career advancement.
- **Risk:** Shortage of qualified instructors.  
*Mitigation:* Use retired professionals, foreign advisors, and academic partnerships.
- **Risk:** Budget constraints.  
*Mitigation:* Prioritize cost-effective training technologies and online learning platforms.

## 9. Long-Term Outcomes

By embedding professional military education into every career path, the reformed armed forces will:

- Maintain a continuous pipeline of capable, ethical leaders.
- Stay ahead of technological and doctrinal changes.
- Strengthen civil-military relations and public trust.
- Enhance Iran’s reputation as a responsible and professional defense partner internationally.

## 8.7 Civilian Oversight and Budget Transparency

A democratic defense system is founded on the principle that **the military serves under the authority of the people, through their elected representatives**. In Iran's future democratic structure, civilian oversight and budget transparency will not be symbolic measures but operational realities, embedded in law and enforced through robust institutional mechanisms.

The armed forces, no matter how professional or well-equipped, must remain fully accountable to civilian leadership and the broader public interest. This requires **transparent governance, public reporting, and the active participation of parliament** in defense planning and expenditure review.

### 1. Strategic Objectives

- 1. Ensure Civilian Control**  
Maintain the supremacy of elected civilian authorities in all matters of defense policy, strategic direction, and resource allocation.
- 2. Strengthen Public Trust**  
Demonstrate openness in the management of military affairs to ensure that the armed forces are seen as responsible stewards of public resources.
- 3. Prevent Corruption and Abuse**  
Reduce opportunities for mismanagement, illegal enrichment, and misuse of military assets.

### 2. Core Structures for Civilian Oversight

#### A. Ministry of Defense

- Led by a civilian minister appointed by the head of state and confirmed by parliament.
- Responsible for defense policy, strategic planning, and procurement oversight.
- Serves as the primary bridge between military leadership and civilian governance.

#### B. Parliamentary Defense and Security Committee

- Permanent body in parliament with the authority to:
  - Review defense budgets and major procurement contracts.
  - Summon military leaders for testimony on operational matters.
  - Conduct closed sessions for sensitive security briefings.

#### C. Independent Inspector General for the Armed Forces

- Office with investigative authority over fraud, waste, abuse, and misconduct.
- Reports directly to parliament, with public release of non-classified findings.

### 3. Budget Transparency Mechanisms

1. **Annual Defense Budget Publication**
  - Public release of the non-classified defense budget, broken down into personnel, operations, procurement, R&D, and infrastructure.
  - Detailed justifications for major programs.
2. **Competitive Procurement Process**
  - Mandatory open bidding for all contracts above a set value threshold.
  - Prohibition of no-bid contracts unless authorized by parliamentary emergency legislation.
3. **Independent Audits**
  - Annual audits conducted by both the State Audit Office and independent civilian audit firms.
  - Audit results submitted to parliament and made publicly available.

### 4. Budget Oversight Table

Oversight Mechanism	Responsible Body	Frequency	Public Reporting
Annual Budget Review	Parliamentary Defense Committee	Annually	Yes
Independent Financial Audit	Civilian Audit Firms	Annually	Yes
Inspector General Reports	Inspector General's Office	Quarterly	Summary Report to Public
Procurement Oversight	Ministry of Defense + Parliament	Ongoing	Yes (non-classified items)

### 5. Public Accountability Measures

- **Annual Defense Report:** A publicly available summary of defense goals, achievements, and spending.
- **Public Hearings:** Regular open sessions where defense officials address citizens' questions through parliamentary channels.
- **Transparency Portal:** Online database of non-classified budget information, contract awards, and progress updates on major programs.

### 6. Risks and Mitigation

- **Risk:** Politicization of oversight processes.  
*Mitigation:* Clear non-partisan rules for committee membership and decision-making.

- **Risk:** Resistance to transparency from within the military.  
*Mitigation:* Legal penalties for obstruction and clear constitutional provisions guaranteeing oversight powers.
- **Risk:** Budget leaks compromising security.  
*Mitigation:* Dual-level reporting — classified details remain restricted, while non-classified summaries are made public.

## 7. Long-Term Outcomes

If implemented effectively, civilian oversight and budget transparency will:

- Build sustained public confidence in the armed forces.
- Ensure military spending aligns with strategic priorities.
- Create a culture of accountability that resists corruption.
- Strengthen the democratic legitimacy of the defense establishment.

## 8.8 Military Diplomacy and Regional Stability

In the modern era, **military power is not defined solely by battlefield capability** but also by the ability to engage in constructive, transparent, and confidence-building relations with other nations. For a democratic Iran, military diplomacy will serve as both a defensive tool and a proactive mechanism for promoting peace, reducing tensions, and integrating the country into regional and global security frameworks.

Military diplomacy will be conducted under the direction of the civilian leadership, aligned with national foreign policy goals, and executed in a manner that reinforces **mutual respect, sovereignty, and peaceful coexistence**.

### 1. Strategic Objectives

1. **Promote Regional Stability**  
Use defense diplomacy to de-escalate conflicts, prevent misunderstandings, and build trust with neighbors.
2. **Support National Foreign Policy Goals**  
Ensure that military engagement aligns with diplomatic strategies and reinforces Iran’s credibility as a responsible international actor.
3. **Enhance Interoperability**  
Participate in joint exercises and training to ensure that Iranian forces can operate effectively with partners in humanitarian, peacekeeping, or defensive operations.
4. **Counter Hostile Narratives**  
Use transparent, cooperative military engagement to counter propaganda portraying Iran as an aggressor.

## 2. Core Instruments of Military Diplomacy

### A. Bilateral Defense Dialogues

- Regular meetings between senior defense officials of Iran and neighboring states.
- Topics include border security, counterterrorism, disaster response, and maritime safety.

### B. Regional Security Forums

- Participation in regional conferences such as the Gulf security dialogues and Central Asian defense forums.
- Propose multilateral agreements on arms control, maritime cooperation, and joint crisis management.

### C. Joint Military Exercises

- Conduct cooperative drills focused on humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, counter-piracy, and search-and-rescue operations.
- Invite observers from non-aligned states and international organizations to increase transparency.

### D. Defense Attaché Network

- Place military attachés in Iranian embassies abroad to serve as liaison officers for defense cooperation.
- Host foreign defense attachés in Tehran with reciprocal access to non-sensitive military facilities.

### E. Peacekeeping Contributions

- Contribute personnel and resources to United Nations peacekeeping missions.
- Offer specialized capabilities, such as engineering units, medical teams, and logistics support.

## 3. Principles Guiding Military Diplomacy

- **Non-Interference:** Respect for the sovereignty and internal affairs of partner states.
- **Transparency:** Clear communication of intentions and limitations to avoid misinterpretation.
- **Mutual Benefit:** Ensure that cooperative activities advance both Iranian and partner security interests.
- **Defensive Posture:** Avoid participation in alliances or agreements that could be perceived as threatening to other nations.

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## 4. Implementation Phases

### Phase 1 – Immediate Engagement (Years 1–2)

- Establish defense liaison offices in key embassies.
- Initiate bilateral talks with all immediate neighbors.
- Join regional forums as a full participant.

### Phase 2 – Cooperative Capacity Building (Years 3–5)

- Begin joint exercises in humanitarian and disaster-response areas.
- Develop agreements on shared use of maritime and airspace monitoring systems.

### Phase 3 – Full Integration (Years 6–10)

- Expand defense cooperation to include training exchanges and technology partnerships.
- Take leadership roles in regional security initiatives.

## 5. Military Diplomacy Table

Instrument	Purpose	Example Activity	Frequency
Bilateral Dialogues	Build trust with neighbors	Annual border security talks	Annually
Regional Forums	Promote multilateral cooperation	Gulf and Central Asia security conferences	Semi-annual
Joint Exercises	Improve interoperability and readiness	Humanitarian relief drills	Annual/Biennial
Defense Attaché Network	Maintain constant communication	Assign attachés in embassies	Ongoing
Peacekeeping Missions	Support global stability	UN engineering or medical deployments	Case-by-case

## 6. Risks and Mitigation

- **Risk:** Misinterpretation of military cooperation as alignment against third parties.  
*Mitigation:* Maintain transparent, inclusive communication and focus on non-offensive cooperation.

- **Risk:** Domestic opposition to cooperation with certain states.  
*Mitigation:* Conduct public awareness campaigns explaining the benefits of military diplomacy.
- **Risk:** Overcommitment of resources to external missions.  
*Mitigation:* Balance international engagement with domestic readiness priorities.

## 7. Long-Term Outcomes

An effective military diplomacy strategy will:

- Strengthen Iran's position as a responsible and stabilizing force in the region.
- Reduce the likelihood of armed conflict through confidence-building measures.
- Open channels for intelligence sharing, training, and cooperative defense development.
- Enhance Iran's soft power and international standing.

## 8.9 Crisis Response and Disaster Assistance Role

The armed forces of a democratic Iran will not only serve as the guardian of national defense but also as a **reliable pillar of emergency response and humanitarian relief**. In many countries, the military's logistical capacity, rapid deployment capability, and organizational discipline make it uniquely suited to respond effectively to both natural and man-made disasters.

By institutionalizing this role, the armed forces will reinforce their bond with the civilian population, project a positive image of service to the nation, and contribute directly to public safety and national resilience.

### 1. Strategic Objectives

1. **Rapid Mobilization**  
Deploy personnel and resources quickly to disaster zones anywhere in the country.
2. **Comprehensive Coordination**  
Integrate seamlessly with civilian emergency management agencies, local governments, and international relief organizations.
3. **Resilient Infrastructure Support**  
Assist in restoring essential services — power, water, transportation — in the aftermath of a crisis.
4. **Public Trust and Unity**  
Demonstrate the military's commitment to safeguarding lives, not just defending borders.

### 2. Scope of Military Involvement in Crisis Response

#### A. Natural Disasters

- Earthquakes, floods, droughts, wildfires, and severe storms.
- Deployment of engineering units for debris removal, temporary shelter construction, and infrastructure repair.

#### B. Technological or Industrial Accidents

- Response to major transportation accidents, chemical spills, and infrastructure failures.
- Coordination with environmental agencies for containment and mitigation.

#### C. Public Health Emergencies

- Support during pandemics, including logistics for medical supply distribution and deployment of field hospitals.

#### D. Humanitarian Assistance for Displaced Persons

- Establishment of secure camps, provision of food, water, and medical services.
- Support for safe evacuation and relocation efforts.

### 3. Crisis Response Command Structure

- **National Emergency Operations Center (NEOC):** Civilian-led body that coordinates all crisis management.
- **Joint Civil-Military Crisis Response Task Force:** Activated during major emergencies, co-chaired by a senior military officer and a civilian emergency official.
- **Regional Response Units:** Pre-positioned units with personnel and equipment ready to deploy within hours.

### 4. Preparedness Measures

- **Annual Joint Exercises** with emergency services, simulating a variety of disaster scenarios.
- **Pre-Positioned Supply Depots** containing tents, medical kits, generators, and food stocks.
- **Specialized Training** for military personnel in disaster medicine, urban search and rescue, and hazardous material handling.
- **Public Information Campaigns** to educate citizens on the military’s role in crisis response.

### 5. Crisis Response Table

Type of Emergency	Military Role	Key Assets	Lead Civilian Partner
Earthquake	Search/rescue, debris removal, shelter	Engineering units, helicopters	Ministry of Interior (Civil Defense)
Flood	Evacuation, levee repair, relief distribution	Amphibious vehicles, field kitchens	Ministry of Water Resources
Pandemic	Medical support, logistics, field hospitals	Medical Corps, transport aircraft	Ministry of Health
Industrial Accident	Containment, evacuation, technical support	HAZMAT teams, mobile labs	Ministry of Environment

### 6. Integration with Civilian Agencies

The success of military crisis response depends on close integration with civilian agencies. Key coordination mechanisms will include:

- **Shared Communication Networks:** Secure systems enabling real-time information exchange.
- **Joint Planning Cells:** Permanent teams combining military planners and civilian experts.
- **Unified Incident Command:** Clear authority and role assignments to avoid duplication or conflict.

## 7. International Cooperation in Disaster Response

- Participation in **regional disaster response frameworks**, such as shared early-warning systems.
- Bilateral agreements with neighbors for cross-border assistance.
- Contribution to **international humanitarian missions** coordinated by the UN or Red Crescent.

## 8. Risks and Mitigation

- **Risk:** Over-reliance on the military leading to neglect of civilian capacity building.  
*Mitigation:* Maintain a balance, strengthening both civilian agencies and military support capacity.
- **Risk:** Misuse of crisis response role for political gain.  
*Mitigation:* Ensure transparency and parliamentary oversight of all major deployments.
- **Risk:** Inadequate readiness for simultaneous multiple disasters.  
*Mitigation:* Develop regional redundancy in personnel and resources.

## 9. Long-Term Outcomes

Institutionalizing the military's role in crisis response will:

- Save lives and protect livelihoods.
- Strengthen civil-military trust and cooperation.
- Enhance the armed forces' reputation domestically and abroad.
- Contribute to a more resilient and united nation.

## 8.10 Long-Term Strategic Vision for the Armed Forces

The transformation of Iran’s armed forces is not merely a short-term political or organizational project; it is a **multi-decade national endeavor**. The ultimate objective is to establish a defense institution that is professional, apolitical, technologically advanced, and fully integrated into the nation’s democratic governance framework.

This vision must anticipate the **security, technological, and geopolitical challenges** of the next 20–30 years and position the armed forces to meet them with agility, confidence, and legitimacy.

### 1. Strategic Objectives for 2045 and Beyond

- 1. Permanent Democratic Alignment**  
Ensure the armed forces remain firmly under civilian authority and committed to constitutional principles.
- 2. Technological Superiority in Key Areas**  
Maintain advanced capabilities in intelligence, cyber defense, unmanned systems, and precision strike technologies.
- 3. Regional Stability Leadership**  
Position Iran as a leading contributor to peace and security in the Middle East and Central Asia.
- 4. Sustainable Defense Industry**  
Develop a robust domestic defense production and R&D capacity to achieve near-total self-reliance.
- 5. Global Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Role**  
Participate regularly in UN missions and regional stabilization efforts.

### 2. Core Components of the Strategic Vision

#### A. People-Centered Development

- Maintain a highly trained and educated officer corps with strong NCO leadership.
- Embed ethics, human rights, and civilian protection into the core military culture.

#### B. Technological and Industrial Base

- Invest in indigenous production of critical defense systems.
- Build partnerships between the defense sector, universities, and the private sector.

#### C. Doctrine and Force Structure

- Retain a defensive posture with flexible rapid-reaction capabilities.

- Develop modular, scalable force structures to respond to a range of threats from terrorism to cyberattacks.

#### **D. International Integration**

- Engage in continuous dialogue with regional partners.
- Adopt NATO interoperability standards for communication and joint operations (without formal alliance membership unless approved by national consensus).

### **3. 20-Year Capability Goals**

By Year 10:

- Full interoperability among all branches.
- 70% domestic production of key military equipment.
- Standing participation in at least one UN peacekeeping mission.

By Year 20:

- Complete modernization of all major weapons systems.
- Full operational integration of cyber, space, and unmanned forces.
- Recognized regional leader in humanitarian and crisis response capability.

### **4. Strategic Planning Mechanisms**

- **10-Year Defense Review:** Comprehensive assessment of capabilities, threats, and budget priorities every decade.
- **Annual Strategic Readiness Report:** Evaluation of operational preparedness for parliamentary review.
- **Defense Foresight Office:** Dedicated think tank within the Ministry of Defense to study future conflict trends, technology shifts, and geopolitical developments.

### **5. Resource Sustainability**

- Multi-year budgeting to ensure continuity of modernization programs.
- Investment in dual-use technologies to benefit both military and civilian sectors.
- Prioritization of cost-effective solutions to avoid overburdening the national economy.

### **6. Risk Analysis and Mitigation**

- **Risk:** Erosion of democratic oversight over decades.  
*Mitigation:* Constitutional entrenchment of oversight mechanisms and education of future generations on civil-military relations.

- **Risk:** Technological obsolescence due to rapid global innovation.  
*Mitigation:* Continuous R&D investment and technology upgrade programs.
- **Risk:** Regional instability disrupting long-term plans.  
*Mitigation:* Maintain strong regional alliances and diversified security partnerships.

## 7. Long-Term Strategic Vision Table

Timeframe	Goal Category	Key Milestones
Years 1–10	Integration & Modernization	Unified command, modernization, domestic production (70%)
Years 11–20	Technological Leadership	Full modernization, integrated cyber/space/unmanned forces
Years 21–30	Regional Stability Leader	Sustained peacekeeping, regional security leadership

## 8. End-State Vision

By 2045, the armed forces of Iran will:

- Stand as a **trusted guardian** of the nation’s sovereignty and democratic institutions.
- Operate with cutting-edge technology, supported by a self-reliant defense industry.
- Serve as a **model of professionalism** in the region.
- Be fully capable of addressing both traditional and emerging security challenges, while actively contributing to peace and stability beyond Iran’s borders.

August 16, 2025

# STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF IRAN'S ARMED FORCES



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**INSTITUTE FOR VOICES OF LIBERTY**

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