

pugwash.org /2025/06/14/pugwash-condemns-israeli-attack-on-iran-and-warns-of-grave-e...

# Pugwash Condemns Israeli Attack on Iran and Warns of Grave Escalatory Risks

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14 June 2025

Pugwash strongly condemns the military attacks by Israel against Iran which began on June 13, resulting in the killing of civilians, scientists, and senior commanders, as well as damage and the destruction of nuclear facilities with the attendant risks posed to IAEA inspectors present. This action represents a dangerous and unacceptable violation of international law and the norms of State sovereignty which significantly escalates tensions in a region already engulfed in multiple conflicts.

The strike is in flagrant breach of the UN Charter articles prohibiting the threat or use of armed force and regulating the right of self-defence, enshrined in Articles 2.4 and 51. Strikes on nuclear facilities also violate the spirit of Article 56 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions, which prohibits attacks on installations if such attacks may cause the release of dangerous forces from the installations and consequent severe losses among the civilian population. Pugwash furthermore deplores the assassination of nuclear scientists as civilians who cannot lawfully be made the object of an attack.

The attacks also are in contradiction to numerous IAEA resolutions on military attacks against nuclear facilities, in particular, GC(XXIX)/RES/444 and GC(XXXIV)/RES/533, which provide, inter alia, that “any armed attack on and threat against nuclear facilities devoted to peaceful purposes constitutes a violation of the principles of the United Nations Charter, international law and the Statute of the Agency ... [and that] armed attacks on nuclear facilities could result in radioactive releases with grave consequences within and beyond the boundaries of the State which has been attacked”. Both Iran and Israel are

members of the IAEA.

As the leaders of Pugwash, we are also deeply concerned that Israel, as a nuclear weapon State outside the global NPT regime, has carried out military strikes against nuclear facilities under full-scope IAEA safeguards of a non-nuclear-weapon State party to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). These attacks undermine ongoing diplomatic solutions to the Iran nuclear issue. Further escalation will fuel and prolong regional conflagration, threaten the NPT, and risk nuclear proliferation in the Middle East region.

We strongly call on all parties to exercise maximum restraint, to cease all acts of aggression, and to commit to immediate de-escalation. Further military actions will only deepen the crisis. We appeal to Iran to fully cooperate with the IAEA in the implementation of its NPT safeguards agreements. Above all, we call for the resumption of negotiations aiming at a diplomatic agreement concerning Iran's nuclear programme, taking into account security concerns and peaceful development aspirations of all parties involved. In addition, we call upon Israel to join and support the UN Secretary-General's ongoing process to achieve a zone free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction in the region of the Middle East.

Pugwash, rooted in the lessons of history and the imperative of scientific responsibility towards humanity inspired by the Russell-Einstein Manifesto, reaffirms that there is no military solution to the complex conflicts plaguing the Middle East. Only a renewed, sustained, and good-faith commitment to diplomacy and dialogue, respecting the sovereignty and security concerns of all States in the region, peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with the principles of the UN Charter, can offer a path towards lasting peace and stability.

**Hussain Al-Shahristani**, President

**Karen Hallberg**, Secretary General

**Tatsujiro Suzuki**, Chair of the Executive Committee

**Götz Neuneck**, Chair of the Pugwash Council

