



## Where next for Iran now that its 'Axis of Resistance' is shattered

Caroline Hawley / Dec. 12, 2024

Amid the shattered glass and trampled flags, posters of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei lie ripped on the floor of the Iranian embassy in Damascus. There are torn pictures too of the former leader of Lebanon's Hezbollah movement, Hassan Nasrallah, who was killed in an Israeli air strike in Beirut in September.

Outside, the ornate turquoise tiles on the embassy's façade are intact, but the defaced giant image of Iran's vastly influential former military Revolutionary Guards commander Qasem Soleimani - killed on the orders of Donald Trump during his first presidency - is a further reminder of the series of blows Iran has faced, culminating on Sunday in the fall of a key ally, Syrian president Bashar al-Assad.

[...]

"It's clear that Trump will try to re-impose his 'maximum pressure' strategy on Iran," says Dr **Raz Zimmt, senior researcher at the Israeli Institute for National Security Studies and Tel Aviv University.**

"But I think he'll also try to engage Iran in renewed negotiations trying to convince Iran to roll back its nuclear capabilities."

Despite Israel prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu's stated desire for regime change, Dr Zimmt believes the country will bide its time, waiting to see what Donald Trump does and how Iran responds.

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