

1. **Subject Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei's August Decrees**

2. **Purpose** This paper addresses Iran's post-war leadership consolidation under Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei's recent decrees.

3. **BLUF** Iran's leadership is using the postwar period to rebuild and centralize authority around veteran IRGC and security figures. Iran is consolidating power through its core power centers, the Supreme Leader's office, the Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), and the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC). Moreover, it is positioning Iran for sustained confrontation with the U.S. through stronger military integration, domestic surveillance and mobilization, and maritime leverage in the Strait of Hormuz (SoH).

4. **Introduction**

During the recent U.S.-Iran conflict, Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and numerous senior Iranian officials and commanders were killed. In March 2026, Iran's Assembly of Experts announced the selection of Mojtaba Khamenei as the Islamic Republic's third Supreme Leader. Long before his succession, Mojtaba Khamenei had been regarded as a low-profile but influential figure within the Office of the Supreme Leader and related security networks.

However, Mojtaba Khamenei has not been publicly seen, nor has he appeared in a verifiable video or audio recording, since taking office. Iranian officials have said that security concerns and injuries sustained during the conflict account for his absence, but the lack of direct public evidence has generated continuing uncertainty over his health, whereabouts, and degree of day-to-day control.¹ The August orders discussed below were publicly attributed to him, but their issuance and authorship cannot be independently confirmed.

If the directives do reflect Khamenei's decisions, they suggest a leadership response shaped by personal loss, reported wartime injuries, and the collapse of much of the previous senior command structure. In that reading, the August appointments appear designed to reconstruct authority rapidly, increase dependence on trusted revolutionary and security veterans, and impose tighter vertical coordination over political, military, and security decision-making.

Amid a relative pause in reciprocal military exchanges, the leadership has used this interval to formalize a new governing structure. The measures seek to consolidate previously fragmented policy and military headquarters into a more coherent command architecture, while preparing the state for a possible renewed confrontation with the U.S. The August 2026 decrees represent the clearest expression of this consolidation to date.

5. **Mojtaba Khamenei Centralizing Power for Long-Term Confrontation**

On March 8, 2026, Mojtaba Khamenei (57) assumed office. Prior to succession he served as a key gatekeeper in the Supreme Leader's office, maintained longstanding ties to the IRGC and intelligence organs, and held no formal elected or ministerial post. According to Iranian media, at the age of 17, Khamenei participated in the Iran-Iraq War. He later taught in Qom seminaries. Analysts had long viewed him as a leading succession candidate despite questions about his formal clerical rank, which was elevated to ayatollah upon selection.²

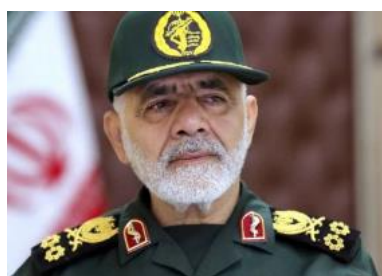
Khamenei's decrees appointing senior security officials signal a strategy of centralizing command and preparing Iran for a prolonged confrontation. The appointments prioritize offensive readiness and counter escalation, while integrating military planning with economic resilience, control over the Strait of Hormuz (SoH), and domestic surveillance and mobilization. They do not rule out diplomacy, rather, they suggest Tehran seeks to negotiate from a position in which it allows them to extract maximum concessions from the U.S., making a durable settlement preferable to continued conflict or renewed coercion.³

6. Key Personal Changes, by Mojtaba Khamenei's August Decree's



Mohsen Rezaee was appointed as Mojtaba Khamenei's personal representative on the Supreme National Security Council, replacing Mohammad Bagher Zolghadr (who was reassigned as political adviser to the Supreme Leader).⁴

Background: Rezaee Joined the IRGC after the 1979 Revolution; commanded the IRGC from 1981 to 1997 (including most of the Iran-Iraq War); long-time Secretary of the Expediency Discernment Council (1997–2021); Vice President for Economic Affairs under President Raisi (2021–2023); unsuccessful presidential candidate; military adviser to Mojtaba Khamenei in 2026 prior to the SNSC appointment.⁵



Maj General Pilot Ali Abdollahi, previously commander of Khatam al-Anbiya, was appointed Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces and tasked with:

- “1. Increasing the comprehensive, up-to-date defensive-security capabilities and readiness of the Armed Forces and the Basij (popular mobilization).
2. Preparing timely, revolutionary, effective responses to any level and type of conventional or modern threats, whether military, cognitive, or hybrid, against the sacred system of the Islamic Republic of Iran.
3. Completing the process of integrating the General Staff of the Armed Forces and the Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters following Ali Khamenei's outlined strategy.”⁶

Background: Iran-Iraq war veteran, provincial Quds Corps and Ground Forces commands; deputy IRGC air-force commander; former commander of Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters; prior roles in inspection, logistics, and coordination within the General Staff.⁷



Brigadier Kioumars Heydari was appointed as the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces. He was tasked to:

“Assist in enhancing defense and security capabilities, strengthening the spiritual foundation and jihadi spirit of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and attending to the needs of personnel, while giving due regard to the views of the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces.”⁸

Background: Former Commander of the Army Ground Forces (2016–2025); earlier deputy and coordinating roles in Army Ground Forces and the Khatam al-Anbiya Headquarters.⁹



Brigadier General Ahmad Vahidi was promoted to Major General and to Commander-in-Chief of the IRGC. He was tasked with:

- “1. A continuous, comprehensive increase in capabilities in order to achieve maximum deterrence, along with a readiness in intelligence in order to be able to execute powerful offensive operations against the enemy.
2. Cultural advancement within the IRGC organization and the strengthening of piety, insight, and a revolutionary spirit as an inner strength within all Guards and Commanders.
3. Developing a management and command throughout the organizational hierarchy, which is endowed with spiritual and scientific foundations and modern skills.”¹⁰

Background: Early IRGC member; former Quds Force commander (pre-Soleimani); Defense Minister, Interior Minister; deputy IRGC commander.¹¹



Major General Mostafa Izadi was appointed to Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the IRGC. He was tasked to:

“Take on a jihadi approach in enhancing the level of organizational readiness, through a division of roles and missions in line with the directives of the Commander-in-Chief of the IRGC.”¹²

Background: Former IRGC Ground Forces commander; commanded the Cyber and New Threats Headquarters within Khatam al-Anbiya; prior strategic and logistics roles in the General Staff.¹³



Rear Admiral Ali Ozmaei was appointed as the Commander of the IRGC Navy. He was tasked to:

“Improve training and skills, naval equipment and facilities, and comprehensive intelligence awareness; increase combat power and readiness; encourage a rise in spirituality and insight; and attend to the needs of personnel in order to create a Navy worthy of the Islamic Revolution. In addition, effective and synergistic interaction with other parts of the IRGC, the Basij, the Navy of the Army of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and other relevant military and civilian sectors is expected.”¹⁴

Background: Veteran commander in IRGC Navy; commanded the 1st and 5th Naval Region for over a decade; previously deputy IRGC Navy commander.¹⁵



Hossein Taeb was appointed to the Commander of the Basij. He was tasked with:

- “1. Deepening and expanding the culture of Basij and Resistance in order to realize the slogan ‘Every Iranian, one Basij’ by using the capacity of the people sent and millions of people who sacrificed their lives for a strong and united Iran and the protection of the Islamic Revolution.
2. Strengthening the public information network, increasing the necessary skills and training along with increasing insight, and using new technologies to confront the enemy's threats.
3. Constructive and effective interaction with other governmental, governmental and public institutions and organizations, and the expansion of jihadi groups, the mobilization of strata and neighborhoods in order to develop effective social services with a focus on the mosque.
4. Promoting the culture of the Basij as a model of popular resistance and perseverance around the world against the Zionist-American arrogance.”¹⁶

Background: Joined the IRGC in 1982, had multiple counterintelligence, and security roles; (deputy) commanded the Basij 2007/08–2009; headed the IRGC Intelligence Organization 2009–June 2022; longtime associate of Mojtaba Khamenei.¹⁷

7. Conclusion

After severe wartime attrition and rapid turnover, Mojtaba Khamenei is rebuilding authority around veteran revolutionary-security networks whose legitimacy rests on Iran-Iraq War credentials, long IRGC service, and personal loyalty.

The tasks assigned to the new leadership appear to include restoring operational coherence, filling critical vacancies, and reinforcing the organization’s ideological orientation, particularly its emphasis on revolutionary commitment, jihad, and spirituality. They also involve tightening vertical integration from the Supreme Leader’s office through SNSC strategic coordination, integrated military command, and Basij surveillance and mobilization. Finally, the leadership must strengthen domestic control amid public dissatisfaction and residual wartime stresses while signaling a continued hardline posture and preparing for either prolonged confrontation or managed diplomacy from a position of internal cohesion.

The changes imply a more centralized, experienced, and security-focused Iranian decision-making apparatus that may respond more rapidly and coherently to external pressure, with hard-lined legacy IRGC figures taking an even more prevalent role across the military leadership. Domestic intelligence and social-control capacity is likely to deepen, potentially reducing near-term vulnerability to internal unrest without necessarily resolving underlying economic or legitimacy problems. Maritime and hybrid-threat postures remain central tools of leverage, especially regarding the Strait of Hormuz.

Negotiations, if pursued, may confront a leadership that has deliberately elevated figures known for hardline credentials and personal wartime stakes. U.S. planning should account for reduced institutional friction inside Iran’s security apparatus, continued emphasis on asymmetric and multi-domain capabilities, and the possibility that consolidation buys the regime time to absorb lessons from the recent conflict. Continuous monitoring of the General Staff–Khatam al-Anbiya integration and the practical effects of Taeb’s Basij mandate will be essential.

Prepared by: CSAG

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ANNEX A – The Official Khamenei August Decrees¹⁸



Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, issued a decree appointing Dr. Mohsen Rezaei as his representative in the Supreme National Security Council.

The text of the Supreme Leader's decree is as follows:

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

Dear Brother, Dr. Mohsen Rezaei

In light of your valuable experiences, I hereby appoint Your Excellency, who is one of the pioneers of the glorious period of eight years of the Sacred Defense, as my representative in the Supreme National Security Council. I hope that you will achieve complete success in carrying out this important responsibility.

In addition, we would like to thank the efforts of our dear brother, Dr. Mohammad Baqer Zolghadr.

God willing, under the attention of our master, Hazrat Baqiyatullah Al-Azam (may Allah be pleased with him), you will always be a Mujahideen soldier for the proud nation of Iran.

Seyed Mojtaba Khamenei

Ayatollah Khamenei issued a decree

Appointment of IRGC Pilot Major General Ali Abdollahi to the position of Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces

۱۴۰۵/۵/۱۹

Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini Khamenei, the Supreme Commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), has appointed Major General Ali Abdollahi as the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces.

The text of the decree of the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces is as follows:

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

IRGC Pilot Major General Ali Abdollahi

In view of the honorable and honorable martyrdom of the Martyred Lt. Gen. Seyyed Abdolrahim Mousavi at the hands of the Zionist–American enemy, and in view of your meritorious services and valuable experiences, I appoint Your Excellency to the position of Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces.

The maximum realization of the following demands is expected:

۱. Improving the capabilities and comprehensive and up-to-date defense–security capabilities and preparations of the armed forces and the popular mobilization

۲. Providing the possibility of a timely, revolutionary and effective response to any level and type of conventional and new military, cognitive, and combined threats against the holy system of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

۳. Completion of the process of merging the General Staff of the Armed Forces and the Khatam al–Anbiya Central Headquarters based on the plan of the martyred Imam (may Allah be pleased with him)

It is hoped that with the blessings of God and in the light of the blessings of our Lord (may Allah be pleased with him), more successes and types of victories and victories will be achieved for all the armed forces of the Islamic system.

Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini Khamenei

Ayatollah Khamenei issued a decree

Appointment of IRGC Major General Mostafa Izadi as Deputy Commander–in–Chief of the Revolutionary Guards

۱۴۰۵/۵/۱۹

Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini Khamenei, the Supreme Commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), has appointed Major General Mostafa Izadi as the Deputy Commander–in–Chief of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).

The text of the decree of the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces is as follows:

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

IRGC Major General Mostafa Izadi

In view of your commitment, competence and valuable experience, and at the suggestion of the Commander–in–Chief of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), I appoint you to the position of Deputy Commander–in–Chief of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).

Playing the role of Jihadi in improving the level of organizational readiness by dividing roles and missions in line with the measures of the Commander–in–Chief of the IRGC is expected.

It is hoped that with the blessings of God and in the light of the blessings of our Lord (may Allah be pleased with him), more successes and types of victories and victories will be achieved for all the armed forces of the Islamic system.

Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini Khamenei

Ayatollah Khamenei issued a decree

Appointment of Amir Brigadier General Kiumars Heidari as Deputy Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces

۱۴۰۵/۵/۱۹

Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini Khamenei, the Supreme Commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), has appointed Amir Brigadier General Kiumars Heidari as the deputy chief of staff of the Armed Forces.

The text of the decree of the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces is as follows:

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

Amir Brigadier General Kiumars Heidari

In view of your commitment, competence and valuable experience, and on the recommendation of the Chief of the General Staff, I appoint you to the position of Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces.

Helping to improve defense and security capabilities, strengthening the spiritual strength and jihadi spirit of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and paying attention to the livelihood needs of the forces are expected to be taken into account by the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces.

It is hoped that the attention and prayers of our Lord (may Allah be pleased with him) will lead to increasing successes for you and the members of the Armed Forces.

Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini Khamenei

Ayatollah Khamenei issued a decree

Appointment of Rear Admiral Ali Azmaei as Commander of the Revolutionary Guards Navy

۱۴۰۵/۵/۱۹

Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini Khamenei, the Supreme Commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), has appointed Admiral Ali Azmaei as the commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) Navy.

The text of the decree of the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces is as follows:

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

Rear Admiral Ali Azmaei

In view of the honorable and honorable martyrdom of Rear Admiral Alireza Tangsiri at the hands of the Zionist-American enemy, and considering your commitment, competence and valuable experience, I appoint you to the position of Commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy at the suggestion of the Commander-in-Chief of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).

Promotion of naval training and skills, equipment and facilities, intelligence proficiency along with the growth of combat capability and readiness, spiritual excellence and insight, and attention to livelihood needs for the realization of the Islamic Revolution-level navy, as well as effective and synergistic interaction with other components of the IRGC, Basij and Navy of the Islamic Republic of Iran Army and other relevant military and national sectors, are expected.

It is hoped that the attention and prayers of our Lord (may Allah be pleased with him) will lead to the increasing successes of you and all the warriors of that force.

Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini Khamenei

Ayatollah Khamenei issued a decree

Appointment of IRGC Major General Ahmad Vahidi as Commander-in-Chief of the IRGC

۱۴۰۵/۵/۱۹

Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini Khamenei, the Supreme Commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), has issued a decree appointing Major General Ahmad Vahidi as the Commander-in-Chief of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).

The text of the decree of the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces is as follows:

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

Brigadier General of the Revolutionary Guard Ahmad Vahidi

In view of the honorable and honorable martyrdom of Lt. Gen. Mohammad Pakpour at the hands of the Zionist-American enemy, and in view of your meritorious services and valuable experiences, I appoint Your Excellency to the position of Commander-in-Chief of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) with the rank of Major General.

In a situation where the sacred system of the Islamic Republic of Iran is facing a strategic and decisive confrontation with global arrogance, the fulfillment of the following demands is expected:

۱. Continuous and comprehensive upgrading of capabilities for maximum deterrence and intelligent readiness to carry out high-powered offensive operations against the enemy
۲. Cultural promotion in the IRGC organization and strengthening the piety, insight, and revolutionary spirit as the inner essence of the Revolutionary Guards and commanders
۳. Expansion of management and command with spiritual and scientific strength and new skills in the organizational hierarchy

It is hoped that in the light of the prayers and intercessions of our Majesty (may Allah be pleased with him), double successes and successive victories will be achieved by all the armed forces of the holy regime of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini Khamenei

Ayatollah Khamenei issued a decree

Appointment of Hojjatoleslam Hossein Taeb as Head of the Basij Organization of the Oppressed of the Revolutionary Guards

۱۴۰۵/۵/۱۹

Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini Khamenei, the Supreme Commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), appointed Hojjatoleslam Hossein Taeb as the head of the Basij Organization of the Oppressed of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).

The text of the decree of the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces is as follows:

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

Hujjatul Islam wal Muslimeen Hussain Tayeb

In view of the glorious and honorable martyrdom of General Gholamreza Soleimani at the hands of the Zionist-American enemy, and in view of your commitment, competence and valuable experiences, and at the suggestion of the Commander-in-Chief of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), I appoint Your Excellency to the position of Head of the Basij Organization of the Oppressed of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).

Considering the new requirements and conditions of the country, the realization of the following demands is expected considering the measures taken by the Commander-in-Chief of the IRGC:

۱. Deepening and expanding the culture of Basij and Resistance in order to realize the slogan "Every Iranian, one Basij" by using the capacity of the people sent and millions of people who sacrificed their lives for a strong and united Iran and the protection of the Islamic Revolution.
۲. Strengthening the public information network, increasing the necessary skills and training along with increasing insight, and using new technologies to confront the enemy's threats.
۳. Constructive and effective interaction with other governmental, governmental and public institutions and organizations, and the expansion of jihadi groups, the mobilization of strata and neighborhoods in order to develop effective social services with a focus on the mosque.
۴. Promoting the culture of the Basij as a model of popular resistance and perseverance around the world against the Zionist-American arrogance

It is hoped that the attention and prayers of our Lord (may Allah be pleased with him) will lead to increasing successes for you and all dear Basijis.

Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini Khamenei

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- ³ Sina Toossi, “Mojtaba Khamenei is Planning for a Long War,” *Foreign Policy*, August 13, 2026, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2026/08/13/iran-mojtaba-khamenei-rezaei-war/> (accessed August 14, 2026).
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- ⁵ Reuters, “Mohsen Rezaei Appointed as Secretary of Iran's Top Security Body,” August 10, 2026, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/mohsen-rezaei-appointed-secretary-irans-top-security-body-2026-08-10/> (accessed August 13, 2026).
- ⁶ Official Website of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, “Appointment of Major General Pilot Ali Abdollahi as the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces,” *Rahbar.ir*, August 10, 2026, <https://en.rahbar.ir/news/150560> (accessed August 13, 2026).
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- ⁸ Official Website of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, “Appointment of Brigadier General Kioumars Heydari as the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces,” *Rahbar.ir*, August 10, 2026, <https://en.rahbar.ir/news/150560> (accessed August 13, 2026).
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- ¹⁴ Official Website of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, “Appointment of Rear Admiral Ali Ozmaei as Commander of the IRGC Navy,” *Rahbar.ir*, August 10, 2026, <https://en.rahbar.ir/news/150560> (accessed August 13, 2026).
- ¹⁵ Mehr News Agency, “Who Are the Six Newly-appointed Iranian Commanders?”
- ¹⁶ Official Website of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, “Appointment of Hojjatolislam Hossein Taeb as Head of the Basij Organization of the Oppressed of the Revolutionary Guards” *Rahbar.ir*, August 10, 2026, <https://en.rahbar.ir/news/150560> (accessed August 13, 2026).
- ¹⁷ Iran International, “Protest Crackdown Veteran Taeb Returns to Lead Basij, Expand Intel Network,” August 10, 2026, <https://www.iranintl.com/en/202608108329> (accessed August 14, 2026).
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