



As Iran cracks down, Trump faces three risky paths forward

After weeks of nationwide protests, Iran's Supreme Leader [ordered a violent crackdown](#) that left thousands dead. President Donald Trump, who had urged demonstrators to remain in the streets, ultimately did not intervene — a decision that now shapes the narrow set of options before him.

At the time, CNN reported that one reason the president may have pulled back on strikes was a lack of US military assets in the Middle East. That has now been addressed, with significant resources — what Trump has called a “Massive Armada” — flowing into the region and now positioned to strike into Iran should Trump issue an order.

Confrontation likely

What is the purpose of this force? If it were in place weeks ago, airstrikes might have made a difference before the regime instituted its crackdown. Since then, protests have been suppressed



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