

# Israel's war with Iran will cause never-before-seen images

Former senior Air Force officer warns that while Israel's foes have no interest in war, they may try taking advantage of government-less Israel.



Hezbollah fighter walk near a military tank in Western Qalamoun, Syria August 23, 2017. -(photo credit: REUTERS)

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A war against Iran and Hezbollah will see Israel pounded by over a thousand rockets per day, causing never-before-seen images in the Jewish State, an unnamed former senior officer from the Israeli Air Force told *The Jerusalem Post*.

"It's a severe threat to the homeland, and there will be images that have never ever been seen in the past," he said.

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According to the anonymous source, if the population remains in shelters, the main damage will be to infrastructure that will be targeted by the barrages of dumb rockets and missiles fired toward Israel.

While the thousands of missiles are a real threat, it's not an existential threat like the precision missiles that Hezbollah is trying to obtain.

"It's a severe threat, but people tend to think in extremes," he said. "Israel will not be [at] zero at the end of the conflict. We have to put it in perspective - people think Tel Aviv will be leveled. Iran and Hezbollah can create damage, and for sure there will [be] strikes in many locations and the damage will probably be greater than in the past, but we have to put it in perspective.

“All of us should be prepared for the day after, which will be different in terms of what we see, but the State of Israel won’t be gone. We have to protect life and strategic sites and that can be done. Infrastructure can be rebuilt.”

Despite crippling sanctions, Iran has the largest missile force in the Middle East, with a substantial inventory of close-range ballistic missiles (CRBMs), short-range ballistic missiles (SRBMs), and medium-range ballistic missiles (MRBMs) that can strike targets throughout the region as far as 2,000 km. from Iran’s borders.

According to the former senior IAF officer, the lack of a government in Israel may be opening a window of opportunity for the country’s adversaries to take advantage of the situation.

“Not having a government has a lot of effects, some of which are obvious and some that are not,” he said. “What do our adversaries think [of] our situation? Will they try to take advantage and do something?”

While the officer stressed that all of Israel’s foes are not interested in initiating a full-scale war or conflict, Iran and Hezbollah remain the major threats, followed by Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

ACCORDING TO THE senior officer who left the military in 2017 after a lengthy career in the Air Force, Israel is already in a direct confrontation with Iran through its ‘war-between-wars’ campaign in Syria.

“There are rules clearly stated by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu,” he said. “Iranian targets have been struck and destroyed, and in every case, what Israel has done is a direct conflict, but both sides are trying to keep it in a box to handle it. It might escalate, that’s for sure. Both sides don’t want an escalation. But we cannot accept their threatening presence in Syria. This campaign will continue.”

While there are several restraining factors on Tehran such as the Russian presence in Syria and the unrest in Lebanon and Iraq, the American departure from the Middle East has given the Iranians “a lot of opportunities on which they will move forward very slowly and gradually.”

But despite Israel’s campaign against Iran that started in 2013, the Islamic Republic will continue with its aspirations to become a regional superpower.

“They will continue, there is no question about it,” he said. “But the question is

how steep is the trajectory? Right now they don't want to initiate an adventure that would lead to more unrest in neighboring countries and in their own country. We hear the sound of war drums all over, but I think it's a way of communicating their intentions."

Nevertheless, he said, Iran "hasn't stopped and they won't stop. They are patient and they want to continue." And with that continuation, "a miscalculation is a real thing in the Middle East. Because [it's] us or them."

According to the former senior IAF officer, while the Iranians might be tempted to launch a cruise missile, a full-scale conflict or war is unlikely.

"The chances of attacking Iran are very low unless the Iranians make a big mistake," he said. "I think they are smart, walking on the edge without doing totally foolish things. The rhetoric is quite high and sometimes you can be a slave to rhetoric, but countries act according to interests and right now the restraint factors are higher than the other factors."

According to the former senior officer, the international community - including the Gulf States - are also not interested in conflict with Iran, a country that he quoted Sunni Arab leaders as saying that it "strangles" their adversaries.

"Iran doesn't just move forward but flanks" their enemies, he said, adding that if push comes to shove, "Israel will defend itself."

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