

Candidate to Lead Israeli Military Wants to Ramp Up Assassinations of Iran's IRGC Leaders

Israel recently has stepped up assassinations and other covert operations inside Iran

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One of the leading candidates to take over as the chief of the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) [has called for Israel to step up assassinations](#) of leaders of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).

IDF Maj. Gen. Eyal Zamir made the case in [a 74-page paper for the Washington Institute for Near East Policy](#), a pro-Israel American think tank based in Washington. He said the assassinations were necessary to stop Iran from further entrenching itself in Syria.

Israel frequently bombs Syria and frames the strikes as attacks on Iranian assets in the country, although the airstrikes often kill Syrian soldiers or [target civilian infrastructure](#). Zamir said if Israel invades Lebanon to fight Hezbollah, Iran could launch attacks from Syria to hit Israeli forces.

Zamir described the IRGC as the "backbone" of Iran and "the main means by which it seeks to dominate the region." He outlined several ways Israel could work with allies to target IRGC leaders, including what he called the "Soleimani model," referring to the January 2020 assassination of Qasem Soleimani, the former head of the IRGC's Quds force. Soleimani was killed by a US drone strike in Baghdad.

In recent months, Israel has [stepped up its covert attacks inside Iran](#) and is suspected of several killings, including against scientists working for Iran's military. US officials have said Israel was behind the killing of IRGC Col. Hassan Sayyad Khodaei, who was gunned down in Tehran at the end of May.

Zamir is a candidate to replace Avi Kohavi, the current IDF chief of staff. Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz has said he plans to appoint a new chief of staff before the upcoming

Israeli election in November. Gantz has named other candidates, but whoever is appointed will likely agree to put more pressure on Tehran.

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