

Iran, Syria, Turkey, Israel and NATO: The Dangers of Military Escalation

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

Global Research, October 10, 2012

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

by Stephen Lendman

Days of Syrian/Turkish border incidents threaten further escalation into something more serious. Free Syrian Army (FSA) militants fired mortar rounds on Turkish territory from Syrian locations they control.

Assad was wrongfully blamed for their provocation. Syria has been very circumspect. It wants tensions cooled. Turkey's Erdogan made hostile threats. Events bear watching.

On Sunday, Israel launched air strikes on Gaza. It wasn't the first time, and won't be the last. One death was reported. Around 10 Palestinians were wounded. Injuries affecting two victims are serious.

In response, Hamas and Islamic Jihad fired rockets into southern Israel. No casualties were reported. Israel retaliated in force. Its provocation started things. It wrongfully blamed Palestinians. It bears full responsibility for its crimes.

On October 8, [Haaretz](#) headlined "IDF strikes Gaza sites in response to Hamas rocket fire," saying:

Multiple Gazan sites were struck. At least five more Palestinians were wounded.

In a statement released Monday, an IDF spokesperson said "a number of terror cells and targets of the terrorist organization Hamas in the Gaza Strip (were attacked), in response to the rockets fired this morning toward territory of the state of Israel."

A mosque was struck. Israel called it "part of the use (Hamas) makes of religious sites for terror activities."

Take all Israeli claims with a grain of salt. They lack credibility. Israel's Sunday raid was lawless and provocative. Palestinians responded in self-defense. It's their right. International law affirms it.

Gazan Health Ministry spokesman Dr. Ashraf al-Kodra said Israel shelled areas east of Khan Younis. Five civilians were injured. One is in serious condition. As a precaution, five Gazan schools were evacuated.

Mossad-connected [DEBKAF](#) (DF) reported the same story. It takes some effort separating its accuracy from allegiance. It headlined "Israeli air, tanks pound Gaza after massive Palestinian barrage. Hamas, Jihad threaten to broaden attacks."

DF said Hamas and Islamic Jihad responded to Israel's provocation. It avoided saying doing so is lawful. It called both Palestinian groups "terrorists." It claimed they're affiliated with Iran.

Their so-called "barrage" was about 20 or 30 mortars and homemade rockets. They harmed no one. Israel attacks with tanks, artillery, and air strikes. Great harm is caused. Civilians suffer most.

"Israel also suspects that the pilotless helicopter sent by Iran to breach Israeli air space Saturday, Oct. 6, which flew in from the Mediterranean over the Gaza Strip, was jointly orchestrated by Tehran, Hizballah and Hamas as part of a war exercise Hamas conducted in the Gaza Strip on that day."

In a previous article, this writer suggested it was an Israeli false flag. It's a Mossad/Shin Bet specialty. Many incidents occurred previously since before Israel's creation. It's hard keeping track of how many. They generally occur at strategically timed moments. They point fingers the wrong way.

The Middle East pot now is boiling. This incident turns up more heat. It bears watching what's coming. Tinder boxes have a way of erupting out of control.

[Stratfor](#) global intelligence also issues suspect reports. Again, separating accuracy from its agenda takes some effort. WikiLeaks calls it "a company that fronts as an intelligence publisher, but provides confidential intelligence services to large corporations" and other clients.

It added that it's "a money-making scheme of questionable legality. (Its) material shows how a private intelligence agency works, and how they target individuals for their corporate and government clients."

The organization's reputation is mixed at best. One observer calls it The Economist a week later. It employs researchers/reporters, not intelligence operatives.

That said, its late September report headlined "Curious US and French Military Deployments," saying:

What's going on is unclear. Deployments are common. They mostly attract little attention. Given heightened tensions across the Middle East, perhaps this one bears closer watching. Who can know for sure.

Stratfor reported "at least a dozen MC-130H, HC-130N, HC-130P and AC-130U military transport planes and gunships crossed the Atlantic Ocean on Sept. 13 heading eastbound. These aircraft are typically used for a variety of special tasks, including in close cooperation with special operations forces."

When last spotted, they were in Souda Bay, Crete. It's not clear if they left. Days later, reports indicated that 12 Marine F/A-18 Hornet fighter jets arrived at Moron Air Base, Spain.

It's not known where they're heading. They could be en route to Afghanistan. The Harrier squadron stationed at Britain's Camp Bastion suffered heavy mid-September losses. Another Harrier unit replaced it.

Perhaps the newly deployed squadron has another mission. It's also possible that "the F/A-18s are heading to the Gulf Cooperation Council region."

"A number of air superiority squadrons, including an F-22 Raptor squadron, have already deployed to the region. If that is the case, the squadron is intended simply as reinforcements or replacements for assets currently deployed there."

In late September, it was learned that hundreds of US forces and security personnel will remain in Iraq despite no congressional funding for them.

Others may join them. Authorization for US troops to train and assist Iraqi security forces expired on September 30. According to Pentagon spokesman Lt. Col. Wesley Miller:

"No personnel will return immediately to the United States on October 1, 2012 while DoD is reviewing the effect of not being authorized under the Continuing Resolution to continue the training of Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) following expiration of the Iraqi Security Forces Fund (ISFF) authority on Sept. 30, 2012."

America's Iraq war never ended. Obama's claim otherwise was false. Stratfor reported that US General Robert Caslen said Army special forces were sent to Iraq to advise on counterterrorism and intelligence related matters.

Perhaps MC-130 aircraft transported them there. In late September, Le Figaro said 100 French special operations troops were sent to sub-Saharan Africa to engage northern Mali militants.

"Le Figaro also reported that maritime patrol aircraft that can be used to collect intelligence will be deployed to the region and that commandos of the French navy will reinforce the French special operations troops."

In September, Italian journalist Guido Olimpio said US unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) currently track Cyrenaica-based militants. It's eastern Libya's historical name.

He claimed "reliable sources" confirmed the presence of US special forces carrying out intelligence and perhaps counterinsurgency operations. It could be related to pending North Africa surgical strikes in Libya and Mali.

Stratfor said these and other deployments could be "previously scheduled movements for training or part of ongoing operations." They don't necessarily relate to upcoming missions.

Perhaps Washington and France are "positioning military assets in a region that is rife with conflict and that may eventually require rapid military intervention or action."

Whatever is happening, they deserve mention. At the same time, it's important to note that pending military operations aren't pre-announced. Targets aren't alerted in advance.

What's ongoing may be nothing out of the ordinary. With the Middle East on a boil, however, it's best to pay close attention to whatever may suggest otherwise.

Imperial Washington never sleeps. Neither does Israel. Both countries are belligerent, nuclear armed and dangerous. America targets all independent states.

It demands pro-Western ones subservient to US interests. Nations unwilling to surrender their sovereignty to America are targeted for regime change. North Africa, the Middle East, and Central Asia are infested with US forces.

Saber rattling supplements contingents waging war. New conflicts can erupt anyway, anytime. America has a permanent war policy. Syria and Iran are prime targets.

Troop movements warrant close monitoring for good reason. They can attack targeted countries on short notice. Their presence menaces nearby states. Forewarned is forearmed.

A Final Comment

On October 8, [AP](#) said the Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS) said Iran can produce a nuclear warhead in two – four months.

No evidence whatever suggests an Iranian nuclear weapons program. Headlining the threat is scurrilous. The source lacks credibility.

David Albright heads ISIS. He impersonates a nuclear expert. He's a former pseudo-UN weapons inspector. Former Iraq chief weapons inspector Scott Ritter called him a "nuclear expert who never was."

His "track record (reveals) half-baked analyses derived from questionable sources....He breathes false legitimacy into these factually challenged stories by" claiming fake credentials.

Albright founded ISIS. It's self-serving. It shuns truth. He fronts for power, privilege, and war profiteers. He's part of Washington's anti-Iranian agenda. In Iraq, he played the same role. He's an imperial opportunist.

In June 1996, he appeared once as as a pseudo-Iraq weapons inspector. His role was political, not scientific. He observed and regurgitated what Washington wanted to hear. He's doing it now on Iran. His credibility is sorely lacking. He has none.

Months earlier, he claimed Iran's "stepped-up....output of low-enriched uranium and total production in the last five years (could produce) at least five nuclear weapons if refined much further."

That claim and his newest are inflammatory and spurious. All nations with commercial reactors produce enough uranium and plutonium for bomb-making. Only a handful, in fact, do it. Iran isn't one of them. No evidence whatever suggests it.

ISIS stopped short of claiming that's Iran's intention. It said enough to further heighten tensions. Cooling them should be prioritized. Washington, go-along media scoundrels, and suspect think tanks advance the ball closer to more war. The threat is real and frightening.

Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago and can be reached at lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net.

His new book is titled "How Wall Street Fleeces America: Privatized Banking, Government Collusion and Class War"

<http://www.claritypress.com/Lendman.html>

Visit his blog site at sjlendman.blogspot.com and listen to cutting-edge discussions with distinguished guests on the Progressive Radio News Hour on the Progressive Radio Network Thursdays at 10AM US Central time and Saturdays and Sundays at noon. All programs are archived for easy listening.

<http://www.progressiveradionetwork.com/the-progressive-news-hour>

The original source of this article is Global Research
Copyright © [Stephen Lendman](#), Global Research, 2012

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Stephen Lendman](#)

About the author:

Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago. He can be reached at lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net. His new book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III."
<http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanIII.html> Visit his blog site at sjlendman.blogspot.com. Listen to cutting-edge discussions with distinguished guests on the Progressive Radio News Hour on the Progressive Radio Network. It airs three times weekly: live on Sundays at 1PM Central time plus two prerecorded archived programs.

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca