

Israel Threatens War on Syria

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

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Washington and Israel demand regime change in Syria, along with removal of Iranian and Hezbollah forces involved in combating ISIS and other terrorists.

Despite most of Syrian territory liberated from US-supported terrorists, winning the peace remains a formidable challenge.

Washington, NATO, Israel, Saudi Arabia and their rogue allies won't tolerate conflict resolution unless their unacceptable demands are met.

Because of their battlefield successes, Syria, Russia and Iran should have a significant advantage in upcoming Geneva and Sochi peace talks.

US occupation of northern and southern areas, its determination to stay indefinitely, and its threats along with Israeli ones change the dynamic adversely.

In mid-November, Netanyahu addressed the Jewish Federation of North America's General Assembly. He repeated a long ago discredited canard, saying:

"Iran is scheming to entrench itself militarily in Syria with the declared intent of using Syria as a base from which to destroy Israel."

He called on the international community to counter a nonexistent Iranian threat – vowing to act alone if necessary, threatening war on Syrian and Iranian forces in the country.

On Sunday, Netanyahu again threatened war on Syria if Iran maintains a permanent military presence in the country – its legitimate right, invited by Damascus to be there.

America is an illegal occupier, a hostile invader, its presence in Syria authorized by no one. Yet Defense Secretary Mattis said US forces aren't leaving after ISIS is defeated – a prescription for continued conflict.

Netanyahu gave Damascus an ultimatum. If Iranian forces establish bases or use Syrian ones in the country, Israel will attack Syrian army positions and other military targets – a near-declaration of war.

His threat was relayed to Assad through Russian intermediaries, possibly Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Bogdanov and/or National Security Advisor Nikolai Patrushev – perhaps Vladimir Putin when he and Assad met earlier this month in Sochi, Russia.

Netanyahu failed to get Putin to agree on keeping Iranian forces in Syria far removed from Israel's border, along with their removal once ISIS is defeated.

Russia's objectives in the country and region are world's apart from US/Israeli ones. Putin told Netanyahu that Iran's presence in Syria is legitimate – coming at the invitation of its government.

They pose no threat to Israel or anyone else. As long as Damascus authorizes their presence, they're legally entitled to stay.

Will Israel follow through on its threatened response? Will it risk confrontation with Tehran and Moscow?

Will Washington intervene on its behalf, risking greater war than already? These and related questions remain unanswered.

What's clear is that resolving years of conflict in Syria has miles to go with no certainty of its outcome.

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