

Israeli Defense Minister: Tel Aviv Will Not Allow Iran to Build Military Bases in Syria

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Featured image: Israeli Minister of Defense, Avigdor Lieberman

On Thursday, Israeli Minister of Defense, Avigdor Lieberman said during a press conference at the Israel Institute of Energy and Environment that Israel will not sit and watch how the Iranian influence growing in Syria.

“Iran, via its Revolutionary Guard, is trying to create a new reality in the region with Iranian air force and naval bases in Syria, with Shiite militias numbering thousands of mercenaries and by manufacturing precise weaponry in Lebanon,” Lieberman said. “Israel does not intend to resign itself to these attempts and will not act as onlooker from the sidelines.”

Although Iranian presence in Syria is indeed growing Iran isn’t building any naval or air bases in Syria. Moreover, many experts doubt that the Iranian Air Force can handle a real deployment in Syria. However, Iran has multiple facilities used as logistic bases across the country.

In turn, Israel is likely trying to create a pretext that it may use later if it decides to intervene in the Syrian south or to conduct more air operations against the Syrian Arab Army.

The Lieberman statement was the second Israeli warning in two days. On August, 23 Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned Russian President Vladimir Putin that Israel is ready to defend its interests and to counteract the Iranian influence in Syria.

“Israel opposes Iran’s continued entrenchment in Syria. We will be sure to defend ourselves with all means against this and any threat,” Netanyahu said according to Reuters.

Furthermore, Netanyahu accused Iran of controlling Yemen and a large part of Lebanon, and working to take control of Iraq and Syria. Netanyahu also claimed that there is a bigger chance for a peaceful solution in Syria without Iran.

“I made it clear to Putin that Iran’s establishing itself in Syria will not aid

stability in the region, and I told him that we want to prevent a future war and therefore it is important to warn in advance," Said Netanyahu according to Haaretz.

Netanyahu also claimed that Israel is fighting terrorists in Syria.

However, the Israeli Air Force has conducted dozens of airstrikes against the SAA mainly.

So far Israel has not had any problems with Al-Qaeda former branch in Syria Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) or ISIS-affiliated Jaysh Khalid bin Walid who control large areas on the zone of separation in the Golan Heights.

As the SAA and its allies continue to gain momentum against militants, the chances of Israeli military actions against the Damascus government increase.

For sure, it will be very hard for Israel to see how the current Syrian government, the important ally of Iran, is re-establishing its control all around Syria.

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