

US, Israel Hold Joint Aerial Drills Simulating Attacks on Iran

The Israeli military published pictures of the exercises on Wednesday

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The Israeli military on Wednesday [published pictures of joint aerial exercises with the US that were held this week and simulated attacks on Iran](#).

The drills were held over Israel and the Mediterranean Sea. According to the *Times of Israel*, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) said the exercises involved four Israeli F-35 fighter jets that joined four US F-15s and a US KC-135 tanker aircraft that refueled two Israeli F-16s.

While Israel often threatens to bomb Iranian nuclear facilities, it's not clear if they have the capabilities to pull off the operation on its own. Israel currently relies on aging tankers for mid-air refueling, which [aren't expected to be capable of supporting the strikes on Iran](#).

The drills came after the head of the IDF, Aviv Kohavi, was in Washington and urged US officials to [step up planning for joint attacks on Iran](#). Upon his return to Israel, Kohavi said that the US and Israel agreed to "significantly expand" joint military activity.

The IDF said that during this week's drills, Israel's Intelligence Directorate "conducted an extensive simulation that replicated a campaign against distant countries," referencing Iran.

"These exercises are a key component of the two militaries' increasing strategic cooperation in response to shared concerns in the Middle East, particularly those posed by Iran," the IDF said.

Israeli officials have been hyping up the threat of Iran's nuclear program, but the US recently acknowledged in its Nuclear Posture Review [that Tehran is not making a nuclear weapon](#). That conclusion hasn't stopped the threats from Israel or the US as Robert Malley, President Biden's special envoy for Iran, [warned in October](#) the US would use a "military

option” against Iran as a “last resort” to prevent it from acquiring a nuclear bomb.

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Featured image: Photo of the drills released by the IDF

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