

# Israel's Nuclear Missile Threat against Iran

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“What troubles me is that perhaps the Americans will attack Iran. (...) That would thrust us [Israel] into a war and the home front [in opposition to Lebanon, the Palestinian Territories, and Syria] is not ready [yet].”

Major-General Ze'evi-Farkash, former Chief of Israel Military Intelligence (March 4, 2007)

In the former Yugoslavia, militarily the NATO campaign was a failure in defeating the Yugoslav military. It was because of the harsh targeting of civilian infrastructure and the slaughter of civilians that Yugoslavia decided to surrender.

The Iranians have learned a great deal from watching the indiscriminate bombardment of Belgrade and Baghdad. The Yugoslavs and the Iraqis did not possess air power or strong air defences, but the Iranians have been working precisely on this matter through the development of their domestic missile industry. It is Tehran's missile technology, which distinguishes Iran from Yugoslavia and Iraq.

## **Syria: A Strategic Objective for Israel**

It was the Iranian missile arsenal, along with the fact that the Israelis did not penetrate far enough into Lebanese territory, which prevented the Israelis from expanding their July 2006 war on Lebanon into Syria.

Syria was one of the three strategic objectives for the Israelis and the international mainstream media was preparing the public for an outbreak of war between Israel and Syria. [1] The Syrian government was also openly bracing itself for war. [2] Israel wanted to invade Damascus through the vulnerable Lebanese-Syrian border instead of the heavily fortified Israeli-Syrian frontier. However, the Israelis underestimated the strength of the Lebanese Resistance and were not prepared to confront Iran and the Iranian missile arsenal during July of 2006.

In March 2007, thousands of U.S. and Israeli troops amassed in the Negev Desert of Israel in their fourth joint exercise, code-named “Juniper Cobra.” This exercise was designed to test U.S. and Israeli air defence systems.[3]

The exercise was portrayed as routine, but the purpose of the Israeli air defence system was originally created in the 1990s on the assumption of an eventual military confrontation with Syria, Iraq, and Iran.

These 2007 Israeli-U.S. war games were in response to a series of Iranian military exercises and missile tests conducted since 2006. Iranian missile and rocket technology has developed to a level where Iran has successfully launched its first space rocket into orbit and is preparing its own satellite launches. [4]

The Israeli-U.S. tests and war games seem to be geared towards consolidating Israeli air defences in relation to Iranian missile capabilities, prior to a possible and long anticipated showdown with Iran and Syria.

By the same token, Israel is also preparing for war with Syria, which has been upgrading and advancing its missile arsenal and technology with the help of both Iran and Russia.

### **Israel's Nuclear Missile Test: Veiled Nuclear Threat against Iran?**

Is Iran threatening Israel or is it the other way around?

The Israeli government has said that all options at Israel's disposal are legitimate in crippling Iran. According to *Reuters*, Israel stated on January 17 that a missile tested by Tel Aviv was "capable of carrying an 'unconventional payload' — an apparent reference to the nuclear warheads Israel is assumed to possess, though it has never publicly confirmed their existence." [5]

Israel Radio (which is the object of censorship regarding military issues), claims that according to unidentified foreign sources, Israel was developing its Jericho III long-range surface-to-surface missile and that Jericho III has a range which can reach Iranian territory. [6] Are these statements intended to intimidate Tehran and its regional allies in the Middle East?

According to another *Reuters* report, "Israel is believed to have atomic arms and foreign analysts have said for many years that its Jericho I and Jericho II missiles can carry nuclear warheads." [7] Without giving its sources the same report also stated, "Amateur photos posted on Israeli news Web sites showed a white plume in the sky above central Israel." [8] This appears to be a reference to some form of a nuclear weapons test.

### **NOTES**

[1] The Strategic objectives of the Israeli bombardment of Lebanon were the following;

- .1. Neutralizing the Lebanese Resistance and finlandizing (pacifying) Lebanon, while empowering Lebanese fractions collaborating with the governments of America, France, and Israel to control Lebanon as a proxy state.
- .2. Engage Syria in a devastating war that would open the door for possible U.S. and NATO involvement and eventually result in controlling the Syrian coast and regime change in Damascus.
- .3. Militarizing the shores of the Eastern Mediterranean and giving NATO forces valid rationale for their naval and troop presence in the region.

[2] Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya, *The March to War: Syria Preparing for US-Israeli Attacks*, *Centre for Research on Globalization*, [May 24, 2007](#); Syria will intervene if Israeli troop

approach, *Xinhua News Agency*, [July 24, 2006](#); “Syrian Information Minister Mohsen Bilal said on Sunday that Syria will not sit tight if Israeli ground troops invade Lebanon and approach his country, the official SANA news agency reported. ‘If Israel invades Lebanon over ground and comes near to us, which threatens the national security (of Syria), Syria will not sit tight,’ Bilal was quoted as saying in an interview with a Spanish newspaper.”

[3] Aron Heller, Israel, U.S. Test Missile Defense, *The Guardian* (U.K.), [March 18, 2007](#).

[4] Iran Lunches First Space Rocket, *Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty* (RFE/RL), [February 25, 2007](#); Iran rocket claim raises tension, *British Broadcasting Corporation* (BBC), [February 25, 2007](#).

[5] Firouz Sedarat, Israel “would not dare attack Iran”: Ahmadinejad, *Reuters*, [January 17, 2008](#).

[6] Ori Lewis and Daniel Williams, Israel says carried out missile launching test, *Reuters*, [January 17, 2007](#).

[7] *Ibid.*

[8] *Ibid.*

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An award-winning author and geopolitical analyst, Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya is the author of *The Globalization of NATO* (Clarity Press) and a forthcoming book *The War on Libya and the Re-Colonization of Africa*. He has also contributed to several other books ranging from cultural critique to international relations. He is a Sociologist and Research Associate at the Centre for Research on Globalization (CRG), a contributor at the Strategic Culture Foundation (SCF), Moscow, and a member of the Scientific Committee of Geopolitica, Italy.

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