

Israeli General Calls for Providing Arms to Assad “to Save the Regime” against “Extremist Muslim Groups”

By [Middle East Monitor](#)

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A number of Israeli generals and political commentators have called on the Netanyahu government to provide military aid to Bashar Al-Assad's regime in Syria in order to prevent its downfall. It is an unprecedented campaign to “Save the Assad regime”.

According to General Azer Tsfrir, for example, allowing the Assad regime to fall would mean turning Syria into a “black hole” in which the border areas could become launch pads for operations against Israel. Writing in *Haaretz*, the former military intelligence officer suggested that the fall of Assad would subject Syria to the hegemony of extremist Muslim groups which have declared their desire to destroy the Zionist state. They would, he claimed, become a first degree strategic threat.

Tsfrir stressed that the most serious outcome of a Syrian takeover by extremists would be the undermining of stability in Jordan, the government of which is an important ally of both Israel and the West. Lebanon’s sectarian and ideological balance would also be disrupted, he said.

The Netanyahu government should provide military aid to the Assad regime directly or indirectly in order to guarantee that it does not fall, Tsfrir urged. “Israel should overlook the fact that the Assad regime is using the assistance of Iranian troops and elements from Hezbollah to help him in his battle for survival.” Indeed, he added, providing aid to Assad may lead to a rapprochement between Israel and both Iran and Hezbollah, as well as the Shia bloc in general.



Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu.

[File photo]

Arab affairs commentator Jacky Houki, meanwhile, said on the Yizrael Pulse website last Friday that the continuation of the Assad regime is the guarantee for calm on the Syrian border. Israel, he explained, could exert pressure and impose economic sanctions to deter the Assad regime in case it behaved in a manner deemed harmful to security, whereas military pressure and economic sanctions do not in any way deter the radical Sunni Islamic groups. Houki believes that Israel prefers the pragmatism of Hezbollah to such Sunni groups. The Shia militia may be fierce fighters, he argued, but they would not carry out brutal attacks like those perpetrated by the Sunnis. He accused the Netanyahu government of irresponsibility by not arresting the decline of the Assad regime. He warned that all settlers in Israel may end up paying dearly for the cost of the fall of the government in Damascus. Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu. [File photo][[/caption]

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