

US Begins Huge Military Maneuvers Aimed at Iran

Battle-ready troops on standby

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Battle-ready troops on standby as tensions rise following dubious assassination plot

The United States will this week commence huge military maneuvers aimed at Iran, with a massive air fleet patrolling middle eastern skies ready to land at any time, in response to Iran's involvement in an alleged assassination plot that experts have labeled dubious, amidst fears that US and Israeli targets could be hit by attacks.



[As we reported last week](#), during US Defense Secretary Leon Panetta's October 3 Tel Aviv visit, Israeli hawks attempted to persuade Panetta to give the green light for a military strike on Iran. Within ten days, [details of an alleged assassination plot](#) against a Saudi ambassador emerged and the foiled attack was blamed on Iran. Innumerable experts immediately voiced their doubts about the authenticity of the plot, with 21-year CIA veteran [Robert Baer labeling the story](#) a truly awful Hollywood script.

The US military will respond this week with a series of significant military maneuvers designed to threaten Iran, including, an American air fleet in Middle East skies ready to land at any moment for any contingency, [reports DebkaFile](#).

The United States launches a large-scale exercise over the Middle East deploying 41 giant transports of the 22nd Airlift Squadron Monday Oct. 17, states the report, adding that the aircraft will be packed with fully equipped, battle ready troops.

A further seven warships from the Stennis Battle Group will also provide ground troops with combat support and strike land and sea targets.

The Israeli, Egyptian and Saudi armies have also been placed on maximum preparedness, echoing reports that U.S. troops being sent to the region have also been put on full alert. The maneuvers are also linked to the scheduled release of Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit by Hamas on Tuesday, an event that US intelligence officials fear could set off a chain of attacks in the region against US and Israeli targets. Should embassies be targeted, US troops will be in place to react swiftly.

Geopolitical experts have been consistent in their warnings that Israel was preparing to strike Iran this fall.

Back in July, [CIA veteran Baer told KPFK Los Angeles](#) that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin

Netanyahu was planning an attack on Iran in September to coincide with the Palestine bid for UN membership.

Whether the maneuvers are merely designed to be an act of belligerence against Iran or represent preparations for an actual military strike in support of Israel remains to be seen, but as Gulf News reporter Patrick Seale pointed out Friday, the window of opportunity for an attack on Iran is closing.

Some western military experts have been quoted as saying that the window of opportunity for an Israeli air attack on Iran will close within two months, since the onset of winter would make such an assault more difficult, [writes Seale](#), adding that the Israelis eagerness to launch the attack has caused considerable alarm in Washington and in a number of European capitals.

Both Republican and Democratic US lawmakers have issued strong statements against Iran in recent days, with several all but calling for war. Last week, New York Republican [Peter King called on the Obama administration](#) to put troops on standby, labeling the alleged Iranian assassination plot an act of war. [On Sunday, Democrat Dianne Feinstein](#), the head of the Senate Intelligence Committee, warned that the US and Iran were on a collision course.

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