

Video: Missiles Explode in Skies over Riyadh. US Boasts to Deploy “Iron Dome” Missile Defense System in Gulf

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The situation in the Middle East is slowly, but steadily moving towards critical mass.

An advent of ISIS is being observed in central Syria where the terrorists have carried out over 40 attacks on various targets since the start of the year. Most recently, on January 24, ISIS cells ambushed a bus carrying Syrian Army troops on the Homs-Deir Ezzor highway. 3 soldiers were killed and at least 10 others were injured. Pro-government sources say that the ISIS units came from the area of al-Tanf.

This coincides with the increase of activity of radical militant groups hiding in Idlib. The terrorist threat has been spreading out of this Turkish-protected jihadi paradise and Idlib groups have already started carrying out terrorist attacks across the country. Recently, Huras al-Din released a video of a suicide bombing attack on a checkpoint of the Russian Military Police near the town of Ain Issa in the province of Raqqa. The attack took place overnight on January 1, but the released video confirms that it was carried out by the Idlib-based group. The usage of Idlib-based terrorists against Russian troops based in the north of the country may become a new trend in the Turkish strategy in the region.

https://southfront.org/wp-content/uploads/video/27.01.21_IMR_Middle_east.mp4

Feeling a sense of urgency, Russia is also bolstering its positions. Several cargo planes delivered reinforcements to northern Syria, and more ships were sent on patrol off Syria's coast. The Russian 'readiness' is likely a symptom of the “unknowns” represented by the presidential transition in Washington.

Washington's stance on the situation appears to be taking a turn compared to the Trump presidency, with the US military once again openly boosting its presence in the country. A major US deployment was carried out on January 24th, after **Joe Biden** came into office. A convoy of at least 40 trucks loaded with weapons and logistical materials entered Syria. According to local media reports, it is moving towards US bases in the Hasakah countryside. US heavy equipment was observed going toward building up US positions at the Conoco oil

and gas field. The troop withdrawal proclamations seem to have vanished from the White House agenda.

However, there is a permanent factor in the US policy – the confrontation with Iran and support to Israel and the Gulf monarchies. Washington is expected to deploy recently procured Israeli-made Iron Dome missile defense systems to the Persian Gulf states to reinforce the defense of its positions in Bahrain and the UAE.

Back in December 2020, Israel also signaled that it was ready to skip the middleman in the face of the US and deal directly with its supposed enemies in the Arab states of the Persian Gulf.

On the Israeli side, there appears to be permanent activity that includes regular drills simulating wars with Lebanon and Syria, public threats against members of the Axis of Resistance and strikes on Syria. The most recent strike took place on January 22nd killing a family in Hama. On January 25th, for the first time ever an Israeli fighter jet – a F-35 Joint Strike Fighter was seen in the skies above Lebanon.

The IDF frequently encroach on Lebanese airspace and use it to launch airstrikes on various targets in Syria. Israel is concerned that the U.S. will be softer against Iran, but it appears dead set on improving its grip on Syria's oil resources.

Saudi Arabia is likely to begin feeling a sense of urgency soon, as well. A missile was intercepted above Riyadh on January 23rd and another one on January 26th. The Kingdom immediately pointed its finger at the Iran-aligned Houthi movement. Responsibility, however, was assumed by a brand-new Iraqi group – the Righteous Promise Brigades [Alwiyat Al Wa'ad Al Haq]. The group, potentially affiliated with Iran, said that it is just beginning its actions against Riyadh and its coalition. According to a recent report by Kuwait's al-Qbas, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps deployed precision-guided rockets and drones in southern Iraq. Iran may opt to use these weapons against its regional advisories by other hands.

These developments came as more and more US convoys in Iraq are being attacked by the various pro-Iranian groups.

The situation is nearing a fully chaotic state, in which one wrong movement can send the entire region spiraling. The tension can be cut with a knife and every side is bolstering its positions and holding tight. When a misstep is made, which leads to a catastrophic escalation, every party will look to further its interests in the ensuing madness.

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