



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on November 14, 2011

## U.S. Worries Israel May Attack Iran Without Notice

For weeks, nations across the world have speculated over a potential Israeli attack on Iran. While there have been a number of indications that Israel could be considering a military strike on Iran, the conjecture has been exacerbated by Israel's unwillingness to inform the United States of its intentions.

Early last week, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) [released](#) a report that allegedly proves Iran is in fact pursuing a nuclear weapons program. The UPI writes:



A report by the International Atomic Energy Agency released Tuesday provided the strongest evidence yet that Iran is close to developing nuclear weapons, including clandestine procurement of equipment and design information needed to make nuclear arms, high explosives testing and detonator development to set off a nuclear charge, computer modeling of a core of a nuclear warhead, and preparatory work for a nuclear weapons test — powerful evidence that refutes the regime's specious claims that its nuclear program is peaceful.

The report listed a number of findings, including that Iranian scientists are attempting to mount a nuclear payload into their missiles which would enable them to reach Israel.

Some have agreed with the report's conclusions. Ephraim Asculai, a former IAEA official, said, "It is my personal opinion that, if the Iranian regime decides to do so, it can produce a nuclear explosive device within a year, plus or minus a few months." Others contend that Iran would need significantly more time as a result of Israeli, British, and American sabotage efforts.

Meanwhile, there have been talks that an Israeli attack on Iran is imminent. Two weeks ago, Israeli officials conducted a drill simulating a missile attack in the center of the country, which involved a variety of emergency services.

Likewise, a British official advised last week that an attack on Iran by Israel could take place as [early](#) as next month. That source indicated a level of urgency in the matter as there is a limited amount of time before Iran may move its nuclear processing equipment underground.

That announcement came one week after British Chief of Staff, General Sir David Richards, took part in



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a secret meeting with Israeli officials which was followed by Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak's visit to London to meet with British military chiefs.

Once it became clearer that Israel might be considering an attack on Iran, U.S. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta flew to Israel on what was deemed a routine trip to address the prospect of peace in the Middle East. However, the *Telegraph* [writes](#) that the "most important part of his mission was a private meeting with [Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu [pictured above] and ... Ehud Barak." According to the *Telegraph*, Panetta took the opportunity to ask Barak to issue an unshakeable guarantee that Israel would "not carry out a unilateral military strike against Iran's nuclear installations without first seeking Washington's clearance."

But Israel refused to offer any such guarantee. One of the officials involved in the private discussion explained, "[Israeli officials] did not suggest that military action was being planned or was imminent, but neither did they give any assurances that Israel would first seek Washington's permission, or even inform the White House in advance that a mission was underway."

When the American officials returned to Washington without the guarantee they sought, President Obama reportedly ordered U.S. intelligence agencies to increase their monitoring of Israel.

As noted by the *Telegraph*, the Israeli people do not believe their country will attack Iran, certainly not within the next few months: "Few in Israel believe that it is likely and the difficulty of mounting an operation over winter, when cloud cover hampers aircraft targeting systems, means that if military action is being considered it will not come before the spring or summer of next year."

Some skeptics contend that the Israeli leaders are merely attempting to bluff the international community into imposing significantly harsher sanctions on Iran that would ultimately force its economic ruin if it elected to continue pursuing its nuclear ambitions.

Israel has already declared that military action would not be necessary if the international community would sanction Iran's central bank and place a ban on Iranian oil exports. Barak has also stated, however, that it seems unlikely that the Western nations would be able to overcome Russian and Chinese opposition to the sanctions, which may leave a military strike as Israel's only option.

According to the *Telegraph*, there may be another reason for Israel to bluff:

In recent months, Meir Dagan, who retired as director of Mossad at the beginning of the year, has made a series of unprecedented speeches countenancing against Israeli military action — describing it as "the stupidest idea I've ever heard."

His comments have infuriated the Israeli establishment — senior officials have said they would like to see him behind bars — because they fear it could convince Iran's Mullahs that Israel's sporadic talk of war is a fiction.

Yossi Melman, a leading Israeli intelligence analyst and journalist, believes this may be the case. "Meir Dagan made a laughingstock of military action," he commented. "Netanyahu believes he damaged the deterrent and he wants to repair it."

Panetta and the Obama administration are demanding to know about a potentially impending attack on Iran, however, because they fear the ramifications of such an endeavor. Panetta asserts that a strike could have a "serious impact," as Iran could respond by blockading the Straits of Hormuz, through which 25 percent of the world's oil is shipped, causing oil prices to skyrocket.

Likewise, Iran has threatened to take its anger out on Israel and its allies if such a strike is launched.



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“Israel is not big enough to launch a military strike on Iran, but if it takes such a foolish decision, the Iranian military will fight with the Zionist soldiers in Tel Aviv streets... and will force them out of the Palestinian soil,” insisted Seyed Hossein Naqavi, head of the Iranian Parliament’s National Security and Foreign Policy.

Naqavi also declared that the street war will not be limited to Israel, but to the “entirety of Europe and the U.S.” as well.

Overall, experts believe it is unlikely that Israel will launch a strike against Iran without talks with the United States first. “I think personally that if such action is taken, there will be some kind of consultation with the United States,” said Ilan Mizrahi, Mossad’s former deputy director and Israel’s national security adviser until 2007.

Some contend that it is even unlikely Israel would launch such a military strike by itself. “If Iran breaks all the rules, then military action will be needed, but definitely not alone by a tiny country like Israel,” added Uzi Eilam, a retired general who held senior positions at the Israeli defense ministry

According to Republican presidential contender Ron Paul, however, Israel [should](#) be permitted to deal with its neighbors as it deems fit: “[The Israelis] should have their sovereignty back, they should be able to deal with their neighbors at their own will.” Paul has used that argument to defend his position that the United States should cut off all foreign aid, including to Israel, contending it would be the best thing for Israel as well as for the American people. And many [Israeli economists agree](#) that U.S. foreign aid to Israel is not helpful to their country.



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