

# Israel Update From David

## Dolan

### War With Syria?

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#### **SHALOM FROM JERUSALEM,**

Although I rarely send out other people's news articles to this large international Israel Update list, I felt the report below, published on Sunday in Israel's largest daily newspaper, *Yediot Ahronot*, merited that treatment. It concerns ominous Syrian war preparations, and contains some information that I had not previously seen. It comes as the Israeli government's Security Cabinet is preparing to hold a special session on Wednesday to examine growing evidence that Syria is preparing for war, and one day after rogue Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said yet again that Israel will soon be completely destroyed. I will include a short article about that below as well.

This Tuesday, June 5, marks the 40th anniversary of the start of the Six Day War, which significantly altered the face of the Middle East map and the course of history. Some Israeli commentators are concerned that Syria and its allies might attempt to erase the results of that war in the coming days or weeks, especially by launching an attack on the Golan Heights, captured from Syria by IDF forces on June 10, 1967. All of this obviously suggests an extra need for prayer and alertness at this time, and that is the main reason I decided to send you the following articles.

## Another Yom Kippur War?

**Assad advocates diplomatic talks, yet evidence shows he is preparing for war**

Guy Bechor

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The UN Security Council's decision to establish an international court to try Basher Assad and his relatives for the murder of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri has made the Syrian government frantic. This development may come at Israel's expense, as within the battle for his survival Assad may embark on a war against Israel sooner than expected.

It's difficult not to notice that the Syrians are heading for war since they are convinced that Israel has lost its former "killer instinct" and fears a conflict. The Syrians followed the suicidal attitude that prevailed here following the Second Lebanon War with gaping mouths. They view the public criticism prevalent in the Israeli press and culture, as well as the Winograd's Commission's testimonies, as their strategic assets.

As a result of the last war they understood that there is no need for a large ground force, but rather, missiles aimed at dense Israeli population centers. For the past two years the Syrians have been engaged in massive acquisitions from Russia. In the past they owed some \$11 billion to the Russians, yet in 2005 the Russians erased part of the debt and the rest was covered by the Iranians.

Syria began equipping itself with advanced anti-aircraft missiles in order to crush our Air Force, anti-tank missiles - as the last war demonstrated that our armored corps weren't prepared - and cruise missiles against our Navy. The Saudi London-based daily al-Sharq al-Awsat reported that Syria has completed the deployment of Chinese C-802 cruise missiles, which it acquired from Iran, and that the deployment of its Air Force has also been completed. Russia has expressed its willingness to also sell the Syrians its most advanced 280 kilometers (174 miles) range Iskander missile, more than enough to strike at any destination in Israel. Each such missile features an optical GPS navigational system that allows operators to guide missiles to their targets.

### **Wide-Scale Exercises**

Two additional developments of concern occurred recently: Al-Sharq al-Awsat reported that as of May the Syrian army has been engaged in a series of wide-scale military exercises. In 1973, as it may be recalled, these exercises turned out to be a de facto attack. Even the Israeli ambassador to the US, Salai Meridor, has officially confirmed that Syria has significantly boosted its military presence on the border with Israel. "Since the Yom Kippur War Syria hasn't deployed such a significant number of forces on the border," he said.

What can Israel do in face of these alarming developments? As the IDF has lost its power of deterrence, it must be reinstated, post haste. Israel must make it clear that if Syria launches a surprise assault, it may signify the end of Assad's regime. These moves must be coordinated with the US in order to place the option of an American-Israeli alliance on the table. As it may be recalled, large American forces are stationed on the Syria-Iraq border.

In addition, the positive relations between Israel and the Turkish army

should be taken advantage of so that Assad will understand that in the event of a surprise assault he would have to confront forces on the Turkish border as well.

And finally, we should explain to the world that this is how Assad is fooling Israel and the world: He advocates diplomatic talks, yet evidence shows he is preparing for war.

## Iranian President Predicts Israel's Destruction

**By VOA News - 03 June 2007**

Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad says the world will witness the destruction of Israel in the near future. Mr. Ahmadinejad made his remarks Sunday in a speech marking the 18th anniversary of the death of revolutionary founder Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. Iranian media quoted the president as telling foreign guests that last year's war between Israel and Hezbollah guerrillas in Lebanon had started the countdown to Israel's destruction.

Mr. Ahmadinejad sparked outrage shortly after coming to power in 2005 for saying that Israel should be wiped from the map. He then repeatedly predicted that Israel would disappear.

The Iranian president caused further controversy when he labeled the holocaust as a myth. He later invited several Holocaust deniers to a conference in Tehran, playing down the mass slaughter of Jews in World War Two.

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