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Iran Warns of Retaliation after Any US-Israeli Strike

By John Glaser

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Iran has [warned Washington that it could retaliate](#) after any unilateral attack it sustains and destroy US military bases across the Middle East and target Israel within minutes following an uptick in threatening postures from the US and Israel.

“These bases are all in range of our missiles, and the occupied lands (Israel) are also good targets for us,” said Amir Ali Haji Zadeh, commander of the Revolutionary Guards aerospace division.

Haji Zadeh said 35 US bases were within reach of Iran’s ballistic missiles, some of which can reach targets 1,300 miles away. “We have thought of measures to set up bases and deploy missiles to destroy all these bases in the early minutes after an attack,” he added.

Iran’s bluster, such as it is, is in response to a recent increase in rhetoric and military postures from the US and Israel, following a partial breakdown of nuclear talks last month.

The United States has [moved significant military reinforcements into the Persian Gulf](#) in order to intimidate Iran and increase the number of fighter jets capable of striking the Islamic Republic. And Israeli leaders have restarted their bombast about Iran’s supposedly contested nuclear program, which US intelligence asserts [has yet to have any weaponization](#) aspect to it.

A US-led sanctions regime is due to get considerably more restrictive this month, approaching a virtual embargo on Iranian oil which is sure to devastate their economy even further. Incidentally, the sanctions are so hurting the population that [recent polling found](#) 60 percent of

Iranians would give up their peaceful nuclear program in exchange for an easing of the economic warfare.

Iran's warnings about retaliation to any US-Israeli strike ought to be taken seriously. A Pentagon war simulation, [details of which were reported](#) in March, forecasted that a "strike would lead to a wider regional war, which could draw in the United States" and would immediately get at least 200 Americans killed in Iran's retaliation.

Not only would a unilateral strike provoke a dangerous and escalatory Iranian response, but [many experts agree](#) that a preemptive attack would drive the Iranian nuclear program underground and make weaponization inevitably.

As Thomas Pickering, former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs and former U.S. Ambassador to the UN under George H.W. Bush, [told Congress in March](#), "[A military strike] has a very high propensity, in my view, of driving Iran in the direction of openly declaring and deciding, which it has not yet done according to our intelligence, to make a nuclear weapon to seemingly defend itself under what might look to them and others to be an unprovoked attack."

Meir Dagan, former head of Israel's secret service [has explained](#) several times as well, "If Israel will attack, there is no doubt in my mind that this will also provide them with the justification to go ahead and move quickly to nuclear weapons."