

## **The War on Iran Has Already Begun -- and Russia Must End It**

### **Opinion**

Posted by:

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[Editor's Note: We publish the following as interesting reading. However, we do so with the caveat that we have no way of adequately evaluating either the source or the information.] **The destruction of states such as Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Iran will isolate Russia when its own turn comes**

By [Dan Glazebrook](#) as published in the Russia Insider website, May 5, 2018 Things are escalating again in one of Syria's many wars. On 29 April, two massive strikes – [presumed to be Israeli](#) – reportedly hit the Syrian Arab Army's 47th Brigade military base and arms depots near Hama, as well as Nayrab Military Airport in Aleppo. The strikes reportedly [targeted Iranian surface-to-surface missiles](#) intended for deployment in Syria, and killed between 26 and 38 people, including 11 Iranians. **Red Lines Updated** The attack appears to have been coordinated with the US, coming just hours after US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo left Jerusalem – where, according to [Haaretz](#), he had "thrilled Netanyahu with hawkish talk on Iran". That same day, noted the [Times of Israel](#), "news also broke of a phone call between Netanyahu and US President Donald Trump", while Israel's defence minister, Avigdor Lieberman, was meeting his US counterpart James Mattis in Washington. This feverish activity came less than a week after General Joseph Votel, the head of the US army's Central Command, or Centcom, whose sphere of responsibility includes Syria and Iran, [made "a largely unpublicised visit to Israel"](#). The Times of Israel article concluded: "All this is beginning to look rather like a coordinated Israeli-American operation to limit Iran's military activities in Syria – simultaneously conveying the message to Moscow that Russia's green light for Iran to establish itself militarily in Syria is not acceptable in Jerusalem and Washington." The war on Iran, in other words, has begun. It has been brewing for some time. In January 2018, with the battle against Islamic State (IS) almost won, former US secretary of state Rex Tillerson announced [new goals](#) for US troops in Syria, vowing that they would remain until "Iranian influence in Syria is diminished, and Syria's neighbours are secure from all threats emanating from Syria". In February the International Crisis Group [warned](#) that Israel had "updated its red lines – signalling it would take matters into its own hands if necessary to keep Iran from establishing a permanent military presence in Syria". Since then, Israel has been directly targeting Iranian personnel and facilities. Its shooting down of an Iranian drone on 9 February led to one of its [own F-16s being downed by the Syrian army](#) after it bombed the drone's command center, the first time an Israeli warplane had been shot down since the 1980s. Yet, in a very rare admission of responsibility, Israel still called the mission a success, [claiming](#) that between one third and one half of Syria's air defences had been destroyed in the strikes. **Russia's Response** Two months later, on 9 April, Israeli missiles again struck the same "T4" military base they hit in February. The target was specifically Iranian installations and equipment, and 14 Iranian soldiers were killed. According to one [Israeli official](#), this was the first time Israel had attacked "live Iranian targets". It was also, apparently, the first time Israel had [failed to inform Russia](#) to provide advance warning of an upcoming strike, breaking the ["de-confliction" agreement](#) made between Israel and

Russia right at the start of Russian entry into the Syrian conflict in 2015. Russia's response was similarly unprecedented, with Russia immediately revealing Israel's role in the attack, and Russian President Vladimir Putin [calling Netanyahu](#) to warn him that Israel can no longer expect to be able to attack Syria with impunity. Then, following the US-UK-French air strikes on Syria on 13 April, the chief of the Russian General Staff's main operations directorate, Colonel General Sergey Rudskoy, [floated the idea](#) of providing Syria with the powerful Russian-made S300 air defence system. The S300, capable of tracking up to 100 targets simultaneously over a range of 200km, "would create a no-go situation for Israel if allowed to be made operational by the Syrian regime", according to former US naval officer [Jennifer Dyer](#), who added that: "The kinds of low-level, preemptive strikes (in Syria) the IAF [Israeli Air Force] has executed in the last few years, against Hezbollah targets and the special weapons targets of Iran and the Assad regime, would become virtually impossible." Israel would lose the ability to carry out pre-emptive strikes. Russia had originally signed a contract with Syria to deliver the S300 system in 2010, but this was [scrapped](#) after pressure from Israel. But, on 23 April, Russian newspaper Kommersant reported that the decision to reverse that suspension and supply the S300 had now been made, with only the technical details left to iron out. A few days later, the Israelis struck again, this time with their earth-shaking bunker busters, directly targeting Iranian troops and equipment for the second time. No S300, you see. [...] [https://russia-insider.com/en/war-iran ...-must-end-it/ri23373?ct=t](https://russia-insider.com/en/war-iran...-must-end-it/ri23373?ct=t) (Russia\_Insider\_Daily\_Headlines11\_21\_2014)&mc\_cid=df929caede&mc\_eid=22a5412d8c