

# ISRAEL REPORT

To provide greater exposure to primary Israeli news sources and opinions in order to become better informed on the issues, and to gain a better understanding of the wide range of perspectives that exist in Israeli society and politics.  
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## 'IF HEZBOLLAH ATTACKS, WE WILL BURY IT IN THE RUBBLE OF LEBANON' (Arutz-7 12/19/18)

On Wednesday, the United Nations Security Council held a special session to discuss Hezbollah's violation of Resolution 1701. The discussion took place at the request of Israel and the United States following the diplomatic efforts of Israel's ambassador to the UN, Danny Danon, after the beginning of Operation Defensive Shield.

Ambassador Danon revealed to the Security Council members an aerial photograph of a "private compound" in the southern part of Kfar Kila about 80 meters from the Blue Line, from which an attack tunnel crossed the border into Israel, passing close to a UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) observation post.

Danon said that "Israel gave UNIFIL precise information about the location of the tunnel, but UNIFIL told the Lebanese army, which then was stopped when it tried to reach the area. This enabled Hezbollah to continue with concealing the tunnel's operations."

Ambassador Danon said: "Hezbollah has built a terror base in the region against Israel, and inside a civilian population. This not only clearly violates Resolution 1701, but also uses Lebanese civilians as human shields. If Hezbollah dares to attack Israel, it will be buried in the rubble of Lebanon."

## NETANYAHU: IN SYRIA, IDF IS FIGHTING AGAINST IRAN ALONE (Israel Hayom 12/19/18)

Israel needs economic strength to maintain its military might, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told an economic conference on Monday, adding that the Israeli military was the only army currently fighting against Israel's archenemy, Iran.

Speaking at the Globes Business Conference, Netanyahu said that "without military strength, they'll just slaughter you. With or without an economy they'll slaughter you. There's no choice – you need military might. And that costs money. Therefore, we need power in the form of economic strength."

"My plan is to strengthen Israel because the strong survive," Netanyahu said. Netanyahu also said that to fund its military requirements, Israel needed a free market. "You can't do it without liberalizing the economy," he said. "We've made important reforms that have increased equality. In the past, Israel was ranked second to last in measurable equality, and now we're improving [in the rankings]."

Turning to the question of Iran's nuclear program, the prime minister said that Israel had a "combination of a strong economy and strong [military] technology, and that gives us the ability to fulfill our needs, and of course, our main objective is to keep Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons."

"Iran is trying to keep developing nuclear weapons, in secret. Thanks to their deal with Obama, it can enrich uranium without restraint. And they have built an empire: Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon, so we must fight," Netanyahu said. "Our efforts to topple this empire are being conducted largely alone," he continued. "Because Iran wants to transfer much of its army to Syria, and we are operating to prevent that. We want to block this imperialistic vision and poke a large hole in their plans."

Addressing another northern front, Netanyahu said that the Lebanese terrorist group Hezbollah has "at most, a few dozen" precision-guided missiles, having shut down factories for converting such weapons in Lebanon after Israel exposed them in September.

"Those sites near the Beirut airport, the underground sites for precision conversion of missiles, which [Israeli] military intelligence gave me, to

expose, those sites were closed," he said.

"They are trying to open other sites. But through these measures, we are denying them precision arms."

Netanyahu discussed Israel's recent contact with Sunni Arab nations.

"A strong people makes alliances and a strong people makes peace," he said, explaining that Sunni Arab countries understood that Israel was not their enemy, and was, in fact, an ally in their fight against Islamic State and Shiite terrorism.

"When we founded the State of Israel, no one ... made the development of the state conditional upon peace with the Arabs. We aspired to peace. I'm not willing to make the country's development conditional upon peace with the Palestinians. There will be other [Arab] states with which we will make peace," he said.

Netanyahu said he did not believe that the Palestinians were awaiting a peace offer from Israel.

"If we once thought that a deal with the Palestinians was a breakthrough, that's changing. We are forming a base for ties with Saudi Arabia. We are developing a Jewish, democratic nation-state that protects the rights of the individual and wants to include everyone, [including] the Arab population."

## RIVLIN PAYS HIS RESPECTS TO FAMILY OF FALLEN HAREDI SOLDIER YOSEF COHEN (JPost 12/20/18)

President Reuven Rivlin paid his condolences on Wednesday as he visited the family of Yosef Cohen, the Haredi soldier who was killed last Thursday at Givat Asaf in the West Bank.

"When we were children protecting our homes during the War of Independence, there wasn't a kid in Jerusalem who wasn't part of the battle. Bombs fell all over Rechavia, Shaarei Chesed and Mea Shearim,

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distinguishing between none of them," Rivlin said. "We all stood courageously against Sheikh Jarrah, and all those other places that wanted to take our lives to protect our homes and families. Your son Yosef, z"l, proved that it is, indeed, possible to maintain your identity while serving our nation."

Turning to Cohen's mother, Rivlin said, "Only a mother can instill her child with such abilities."

Jerusalem Mayor Moshe Leon also visited the bereaved family.

Rivlin is the first Israeli president to ever visit the brigade, David Hager, who is the founder and a main patron of Nahal Haredi Organization said. Hundreds mourned the 19-year-old at his funeral last Friday. Speaking to the Post on Thursday night, Rabbi Eliyahu Meirav, Cohen's step-father, described the family's grief and related Yosef's comments from last Shabbat. "We lost the most beloved thing of all, what can I say. We are broken and crushed. But we are also very strong. We are believing Jews," said Meirav. "Last Shabbat, we sat together and we have a custom of saying what we are thankful for."

#### **AMBASSADORS FROM ASIA AND THE PACIFIC MEET IN JERUSALEM** (YNet 12/19/18)

Ten Israeli ambassadors and consuls general in Asia and the Pacific met Monday with their foreign counterparts in Jerusalem.

The meeting, held as part of a diplomatic conference organized by the Foreign Ministry, was attended by senior diplomats from China, Japan, India, Vietnam, Nepal, Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Australia and Myanmar.

Deputy Director General for Asia and the Pacific, Gilad Cohen, said that he would be happy to host the envoys in Jerusalem, the capital of Israel, and hoped that Asian countries would follow Australia's example and recognize Jerusalem as a capital. "Jerusalem's origin is King David's time, not Camp David," he stated.

The Israeli and foreign ambassadors discussed deepening cooperation between their respected countries and the Jewish State.

The Indian ambassador to Israel and his Israeli counterpart spoke about their cooperation in education; the Australian ambassador spoke about establishing Australian trade and defense offices in Jerusalem; the Philippines envoy discussed future visits of Philippines' president in Israel; and the Japanese ambassador talked about promoting tourism between the two countries.

Two months ago Morrison said he was open to moving the embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, but did not mention that Australia will only recognize the western part of the city.

Despite his announcement, the Australian premier noted that the move will only take place once an agreement has been reached on a two-state solution.

"Australia now recognizes West Jerusalem, being the seat of the Knesset and many of the institutions of government, is the capital of Israel. We look forward to moving our embassy to West Jerusalem when practical," he told reporters in Sydney.

According to Morrison, after a settlement has been reached between Israel and the Palestinians, the Australian government will also recognize the aspirations for a future state of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Although the embassy's move to West Jerusalem is unlikely to happen soon, in the meantime, Australian trade and defense offices would be set up while the country examines a future site for its embassy.

#### **ISRAEL AIR FORCE GETS FIRST ETHIOPIAN PILOT** (JPost 12/19/18)

The Israel Air Force will have its first Ethiopian pilot, as Lt. Y completes the military's prestigious pilots course later this week.

After the three-year intensive course, Lt. Y will now serve as a navigator on IAF jets, the IDF Spokesperson's Unit confirmed to *The Jerusalem Post*.

Close to 140,000 Ethiopian Jews live in Israel, most having been flown to

Israel in Operation Moses and Operation Solomon in the mid-1980s to early 1990s. But Ethiopian Israelis have struggled to integrate into Israeli society.

While 89% of Ethiopian boys and 62% of Ethiopian girls join the IDF, one third of them end up in IDF prisons, making up 13% of the military prison population, despite making up only 3% of IDF soldiers.

Dishonorable discharge rates for Ethiopian Israeli soldiers is well above the national average, with 22.8% for men (compared to 16.5%) and 10.6% for women (compared to 7.5%).

Last year, hundreds of Ethiopian-Israeli combat reserve soldiers declared that they would refuse to report for reserve duty, because of institutionalized racism, with signatories to the letter including combat fighters in the Golani, Givati and Paratroop brigades as well as from the Maglan unit.

#### **SENIOR RABBI IMPLEORES FAMILY NOT TO CREMATE RONA RAMON, WIDOW OF FIRST ISRAELI ASTRONAUT** (Ha'aretz 12/20/18)

The chief rabbi of Be'er Sheva, Rabbi Yehuda Dery, asked the family of Rona Ramon to reconsider their decision to cremate her.

Ramon died on Monday of pancreatic cancer at 54. Her husband, Ilan Ramon was Israel's first astronaut and he died in 2003 when the Columbia Space Shuttle blew up on reentry, killing all on board, after space mission.

Ramon also lost her son Asaf, an Israel Air Force fighter pilot, who died in 2009 when his F-16 crashed in a training accident.

Ramon requested to be cremated to spare her family another funeral. Dery, the brother of Interior Minister Arye Dery, said he shocked to hear of her request and offered to hold a small, closed funeral without the family.

In a letter he penned to the family, Dery wrote that he first wanted to express his condolences to the family and "along with all of Israel, we are suffering along with their pain and joining in their deep sorrow."

He said that cremation of Ramon's body "would have severe Halakhic implications" and that Jewish law clearly states that even if someone requests to be cremated and not buried, "they are not listened to."

Rona Ramon should be given a Jewish burial "in the clods of the earth she loved so much and for which she also sacrificed those dearest of all to her," said Dery. "There she shall lie in rest in peace, and also on behalf of her descendants over the generations to commune with her memory in front of her grave, which will become a monument and memorial forever that they had an illustrious ancestress in Israel."

Dery wrote to the family that he was the their service if they chose "to hold a modest funeral, and all the arrangements, even without the participation of the family members, as she requested, and in doing so her last request would be fulfilled in a more appropriate and respectful manner."

Ramon is survived by her three other children.

#### **PLAN TO PROMOTE FRENCH ALIYAH TO ISRAEL** (Arutz-7 12/19/18)

Education and Diaspora Affairs Minister Naftali Bennett and National Economic Council Chairman Avi Simhon will on Sunday submit to the weekly Cabinet meeting the team outline to formulate an Aliyah increase plan for French Jews. This follows the Prime Minister's directive at last week's meeting for Minister Bennett to lead the program in cooperation with the National Economic Council and other bodies.

As part of the proposed resolution, the Government will approve establishment of an inter-ministerial national task force to formulate a plan for submission within 60 days to promote immigration of Jews from France and better facilitate their absorption in Israel.

The team, headed by the Diaspora Minister and National Economic Council head, will include representatives of the following ministries: the Prime Minister's Office, the Finance Ministry, the Education Ministry, the Labor, Welfare, and Social Services Ministry, the Housing and Infrastructure Ministry, Immigration and Absorption Ministry, the Economy Ministry, and the Diaspora Affairs Ministry. In addition, also participating will be representatives of the Jewish Agency for Israel, the World Zionist Organization, KKL-JNF,

and Qualita, the umbrella organization of the French Olim community in Israel.

The plan is currently being formulated following last week's Cabinet meeting where Minister Bennett presented an overview of Diaspora Affairs Ministry work. During the ensuing discussion the Minister highlighted the importance of immigration from France, and noted that data presented to him indicated that 43% of the French Jews - as many as 200,000 - had stated their desire to immigrate to Israel, but that in practice the State of Israel was not ready or prepared to absorb them in an efficient manner.

Minister Bennett commented, "The Israeli Government is taking a giant step in the right direction towards an historic move. After years of overlooking the wonderful Aliyah of French Jews, we'll embrace them." He added, "Immigration to Israel doesn't end on the day of arrival, that's just the beginning. The State should assist in absorption in all areas - language, education, housing, employment, and more. We'll do it. Every Jew in France should know, as should Jews anywhere in the world, the State of Israel awaits them with open arms."

### **INTEL TO EXPAND OPERATIONS IN ISRAEL (YNet 12/18/18)**

Intel has announced Monday a global expansion of its manufacturing capabilities, as part of its shift from a PC-centric company to a data-centric company. The company is now in the early planning stage regarding the expansion of its sites in Israel, Ireland, and Oregon, and expects to start construction in 2019, with the process spanning several years.

Intel has not provided financial details about the planned expansion, nor additional information about the scope and nature of the expansion. Final details could depend on incentives given by the Israeli government, as in the case of Intel's already planned \$5 billion overhaul of its fab facility in Kiryat Gat, a small town in southern Israel, announced in May.

The company stated it is now "competing to win in an estimated \$300 billion total addressable market for silicon" and thus needs a wider range of offerings. "Intel is not just the CPU inside your personal computer. We are the safety features in your car, the wireless connection in your phone, the intelligence in the cloud and more," the company wrote.

Intel employed around 11,000 people in Israel according to its annual report for 2017. That number includes the 1,000 employees of Mobileye, the Jerusalem-headquartered automotive chipmaker Intel acquired for \$15.3 billion last year. Its export from Israel was valued at \$3.6 billion, up from \$3.3 billion in 2016, and it is the largest multinational in terms of investments in Israel—its total acquisitions and investments amounting to \$35 billion. Over the past decade, Intel paid local suppliers a total of \$10 billion.

### **ISRAELI SPACECRAFT GETS FINAL ELEMENT BEFORE 2019 MOON LAUNCH (Israel Hayom 12/18/18)**

Israeli engineers on Monday added the final element to a spacecraft destined for the moon – a digital time capsule – saying they aim to send the craft up early next year and land it between the landing sites of Apollo 15 and 17.

It will be the first attempted moon landing since 2013, and if successful, will make Israel the fourth country to carry out a controlled "soft" landing of an unmanned vessel on the moon.

Since 1966, the United States and the former Soviet Union have landed around a dozen vessels on the moon, while China carried out the last "soft" landing, in December 2013.

"The spacecraft is completely built, tested ... and will be ready to ship to Cape Canaveral in a few weeks," said Ido Anteby, CEO of Spacell, the non-profit organization that has led the project.

Israel has launched satellites before, but this is the first longer-range Israeli spacecraft of its kind.

The craft, called "Beresheet" ("Genesis"), is shaped like a round table with four carbon-fiber legs. It stands about 1.5 meters tall and weighs 585 kilograms (1,290 pounds), with fuel accounting for two-thirds of the weight.

The time capsule is a single, space-resilient disc, roughly the size of a CD, that holds digital files of children's drawings, photographs and information on Israeli culture and the history of humanity.

"The capsule will remain on the moon and stay in the environment of the moon and maybe in a couple [or] tens of years someone will send a spacecraft to bring it back," Anteby said.

The spacecraft also carried a device to measure the moon's magnetic fields. Spacell is backed mainly by private donors, including from the United States. It was founded in 2011 by a group of engineers with a budget of about \$95 million. State-owned defense contractor Israel Aerospace Industries has collaborated in the project.

Beresheet will blast off from Florida on a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket early in 2019, after an initial December date was pushed back. At 60,000 kilometers (37,000 miles) above Earth, it will split off from the Falcon launch vehicle. It will at first orbit Earth in expanding ellipses until, about two months later, it crosses into the moon's orbit. It will then slow and carry out a soft landing designed to cause no damage to the craft.

"Our landing site is located somewhere between the landing sites of Apollo 15 and Apollo 17," Anteby said. "It's a flat area, but it still has small craters and a lot of boulders."

### **THE HUMAN SPIRIT: THE PARADOX OF JERUSALEM (Barbara Sofer, JPost 12/19/20)**

A young and talented journalist colleague from Tel Aviv consulted me recently about possible stories in Jerusalem that showcased Jews and Arabs interacting together. I paused a moment, not knowing where to start. The paradox of life in Jerusalem is that while we live our lives forever alert to possible terrorism, our daily human interactions are becoming more and more integrated.

I'm not only talking about institutions like our hospitals where teams of Jews and Arabs routinely work together – from the kitchen staff to the transplant surgeons healing Jewish and Arab patients; from the delivery room to geriatric departments. Kidney and liver transplants go from Jews to Arabs and vice versa. You can't get more integrated than that.

But I'm thinking about our everyday lives, the commonplace interactions that weave the texture of daily Jerusalem.

So exactly how integrated is my life as a religious, head-covering Jewish woman who lives in a middle-class neighborhood in what the Australians would call Western Jerusalem?

My choice for recreation is the Sylvan Adams Sports Center at the YMCA on King David Street. The 85-year-old YMCA, with its historic swimming pool, summer camp and choir, has always been a venue for Jewish, Christian and Muslim residents and tourists. It has become even more so with the opening of the new 9,290-square-meter sports complex.

The name of the new facility is that of Canadian immigrant, Jewish philanthropist and sports aficionado Sylvan Adams. He heard that "the most important YMCA in the world in the most beautiful city in the world" had long struggled to open a modern sports club in the ancient city. Adams had already sponsored sports centers in Montreal and Tel Aviv when he stepped in to make possible the completion of the Jerusalem center.

At the recent festive launch (a year after the actual opening), Adams said he didn't even have to complete the tour of the facility before he signed on. He foresaw children and adults of all backgrounds swimming and working out together in an upbeat, congenial atmosphere. Indeed, the pool's swimming lessons draw hundreds of kids, whose ethnicity you can only tell by the way their moms tie their head scarves. There's even a Junior NBA League.

The best moment of the launch was when trainers demonstrated a variety of gymnastics on stage. Think of men and women dressed in blue-and-white YMCA T-shirts, doing push-ups and somersaults to the 1978 hit song "YMCA," with its heartening message: "Young man, you can make real your dreams/ But you got to know this one thing/ No man does it all by himself."

The trainers were, of course, a mix of Jews and Arabs. Among the latter was the personal trainer who works with a friend and me, making sure we don't injure ourselves lifting weights in the hi-tech, multicultural gym. I go after work. My day-job office is in Hadassah University Medical Center, so I go from one totally integrated environment to a second.

On Monday nights, after swimming, I do my food shopping at the Osher Ad ("Happiness Up") supermarket. The discount chain caters to those who, like me, keep a mehadrin (strictly kosher) home kitchen. However, because of the store's low prices and super-sized packaging, it draws large families of both Jews and Arabs. We queue up together at the checkout and compare the bargains in our carts.

Above the supermarket is a mall, where I frequently buy clothing for my grandchildren at the American-like chain stores. My favorite saleswoman is a young woman who wears a hijab.

At my branch of Super-Pharm, the pharmacist who takes a personal interest in my medications wears a hijab. The health fund nurse who takes my blood pressure and keeps tabs on my inoculations wears a hijab.

My gynecologist at Hadassah Medical Center is a female Arab doctor. When she's not at the hospital, she runs a clinic for religious Jewish women in Beit Shemesh, and another on Saturdays, for Palestinian women.

The manager and mechanics at the garage where I have my car serviced are Arab. So is my hairdresser.

My Tel Aviv colleague, far to my Left politically, is surprised and impressed. I tell her that she needn't be impressed. None of the above derives from a political agenda. I never choose the professionals and service personnel out of a desire to be ethnically diverse. That's just the way life is in Jerusalem. Any Jerusalemite can tell you a similar story. After all, Tel Aviv is 95% Jewish; Jerusalem, only 64%. Somehow in our relatively poor, supposedly right-wing, hyper-religious city, integration is everywhere. We have paradoxically managed to create an extraordinarily mixed society despite our history and the ongoing threat of terrorism.

"That's not the way we live in Tel Aviv," my colleague admits.

Not that everything in Jerusalem is dandy. Rumor has it that our new mayor will be walking the streets of Jerusalem early in the mornings to become better acquainted with the challenges of the city. He should make sure to visit Arab neighborhoods as well as the Jewish ones.

An afternoon recently spent interviewing a family in Silwan made me aware of how neglected the neighborhood is. Likewise, I hate knowing that 50% of Jerusalem's Arab women who are my age have diabetes, despite national health care. I don't know any Jerusalemites – Left, Right or center – who don't think municipal services and health initiatives should be extended to all neighborhoods: rich and poor, Jewish and Arab.

My Tel Aviv colleague created a superb profile of two Jerusalem nurses, close as sisters, who go beyond their shifts in the depth of their friendship. She altered her view of Jerusalem.

If those who live in Tel Aviv have a skewed image of Jerusalem, we shouldn't be surprised that those who live outside of Israel can't imagine how closely Jews and Arabs live together. Nonetheless, accusations that we practice apartheid, which often come from foreign friends who live in exclusive gated communities on mountaintops, still rankle. Apartheid – the staple charge of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement against Israel – is repeated so often, even friends have begun to wonder what we've become. I invite them: Come to work with me, come grocery shopping with me, jump in the YMCA pool with me. And do Zumba to that YMCA song. As it says, "You can make real your dreams... No man does it all by himself." In Jerusalem, we're doing it all together.

**WHO BENEFITS AS US WITHDRAWS FROM SYRIA? NOT ISRAEL** (Ron Ben-Yishai, YNet, 12/20/19)

Islamic State is still present in Syria and Iraq, and yet US President Donald Trump is withdrawing his forces from Syria. He intended to do so long ago,

but US Defense Secretary James Mattis deterred him. The stated reason for keeping American troops in Syria was their Kurdish allies, since if American consultants abandon the Kurds—the betrayal would decimate American standing and credibility. Such a move will also invalidate Israel's insistence that Syria, Iran and Turkey should not be given carte blanche to do as they wish in the strategically located country.

But Trump wanted out of Syria, mainly for economic reasons, and therefore he declared victory over IS. The White House was quick to state that the US departure does not signal that the Americans are leaving the coalition against IS, but rather, now that IS lost its strongholds, the White House is "transitioning to the next phase of the campaign."

It is not clear what it means to "transition." Will the US withdraw its military advisers from Syria and transfer them to Jordan? Or will it be satisfied fighting IS with its troops in Iraq? Will the Americans use their airpower from the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean instead of military bases in Syria? Whichever way this goes, this is not good news for Israel.

The White House's announcement means that the US is letting Russia and Iran, and to a certain extent Turkey, shape both their own interests and the new order that will form in Syria at the end of the civil war.

As a result, Iran will cement its foothold in Syria more easily and Putin's influence in the Middle East, including Iraq, will grow. The Syrian Kurds, who are losing the support of a protector and adviser, will have to seek shelter in Assad's arms while, once the US forces leave the area, Turkey is free to attack them at will.

The United States had about 2,000 military personnel in Syria. They were stationed there to assist the Syrian Democratic Forces, a prominent opposition group, to fight in rebel enclaves in the desert east of the Euphrates River. Despite what Trump claims, IS has not yet been completely destroyed—the American troops and their Kurdish allies were successfully wiping them out. Until now.

The American presence in Syria, therefore, is still necessary, even though they are small in numbers. In fact, this force, together with its Kurdish allies, holds all territory to the east and north of the Euphrates River—about a quarter of the entire territory of Syria. When the American military advisers return home, the US will lose an important asset that would grant it influence over whatever surfaces in Syria after the civil war.

Another American military asset in Syria is a Special Forces base in Al-Tanf, near to the Syrian-Iraqi-Jordanian border triangle. From this military base, US air and intelligence forces operate against IS enclaves in the Deir ez-Zour area. But more importantly, these troops prevent Iran from transferring militias, missiles and other weapons through the land corridor from Iran through Iraq to Syria, and onto Hezbollah in Lebanon.

Therefore, the American departure from Syria does not bode well, both from an Israeli and a Jordanian perspective. It is this American presence that currently blocks the establishment of the Quds Force of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards and the Shiite militias it brought into Syria, near its borders with Jordan and Israel.

More importantly, this withdrawal erodes the status of the United States as a world power and as an influencer in the Middle East. The Russians want the American military advisers out so that Washington wouldn't be able to demand a share of the spoils once the civil war is over.

Worse yet, the US will be perceived as abandoning the interests of its allies in the Middle East, not just Israel and Jordan, but also Saudi Arabia, which is considered the patron of the Sunni Muslims in Syria. In addition, by withdrawing its forces, Washington is losing a negotiating card in their dealing with Russia.

When Trump takes his soldiers from Syria, you can be sure Qasem Soleimani, the commander of Iran's Quds Force, will be cheerfully rubbing his hands together and gleefully informing Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei that another obstacle has been removed from their path in Syria, and a second front against Israel is now ripe for opening.