

# Israel Expands Ground Invasion of Syria Despite Talks With HTS

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) — Israeli forces carried out a ground incursion into Syria’s southwestern province of Quneitra on Wednesday, despite ongoing direct negotiations between the ruling Hay’at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) faction and Israel aimed at reaching a “security agreement”.

Al-Mayadeen television reported that Israeli military vehicles advanced into the towns of Jubata al-Khashab and Ofaniya, located near the Israeli-occupied section of the strategic Golan Heights. Israeli troops reportedly conducted searches and deployed to rooftops as drones operated at low altitude over the area.

This latest aggression follows a temporary checkpoint set up by Israeli forces north of the village of Al-Rafid two days prior, according to the so-called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR). At that time, Israeli troops searched civilians, detained a young man, and subsequently withdrew to their base



Israeli forces inside southern Syria’s Quneitra province in February.

at Tal Ahmar Gharbi.

In a separate move, an Israeli convoy of 10 military vehicles moved to the outskirts of Ain Ziwan village while reconnaissance aircraft conducted surveillance flights overhead.

The incursions occur amid continued Israeli airstrikes targeting multiple sites in Syria, particularly around the capital Damascus. Israeli warplanes have recently struck

various military installations.

On Sept. 13, Abu Muhammad al-Jolani, leader of HTS and self-proclaimed president of Syria, announced the start of negotiations with Israel to restore the 1974 disengagement agreement established after the 1973 Arab-Israeli war.

Despite these talks, Israeli forces have repeatedly expanded their presence across Syrian territory following the collapse of Assad’s

government late last year. Israel has also extended its control over a buffer zone separating the Golan Heights from the rest of Syria, violating the 1974 agreement.

Human Rights Watch issued a report condemning Israel for forcibly displacing Syrians, demolishing homes, and restricting access to agricultural lands in southern Syria, particularly in the border village of Hamadiyah where Israeli military infrastructure is being developed. The watchdog described these actions as potential war crimes, accusing Israeli forces of deliberately clearing homes to consolidate their military foothold.

Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu has reportedly ordered further advances into Syrian territory to capture strategic locations. Analysts say the inaction and apparent normalization efforts by the HTS regime may have emboldened Israel to intensify its military operations and territorial control in Syria.

## Yemen Slams Doha Summit for No Decisive Action Against Israel

DOHA (Dispatches) — Yemen sharply criticized Arab and Islamic leaders for failing to take concrete measures in support of Palestine and against Israel following last week’s emergency summit in Doha, condemning the summit’s “disappointing” outcome amid rising Israeli aggression.

Yemen’s Foreign Ministry said the summit, convened after Israel’s missile strikes targeting Hamas leaders in Doha, fell short of addressing the existential threat posed by Israel to the Muslim world.

The ministry called for decisive steps, including severing diplomatic and trade ties with

Israel, imposing sanctions, lifting the Gaza blockade, and supporting the Palestinian people and resistance fighters.

“The failure to adopt practical and decisive decisions only emboldens the Zionist regime to continue its genocidal campaign against Gaza and aggression across the region,” Yemen said in a statement. It added that past experience shows Israel only responds to force, underscoring the need for concrete action to restore Palestinian rights.

The ministry reaffirmed Yemen’s full support for Gaza, pledging to use all available means and resources, includ-

ing sacrifices, to end the Israeli siege and attacks.

On Sept. 9, Israel launched missiles on a residential area in Doha targeting Hamas members discussing a U.S. ceasefire proposal. The strike killed five Gaza-based Hamas members and a Qatari security officer, while top Hamas leaders survived.

The attack drew widespread condemnation from regional and international actors, prompting Qatar to host the emergency Arab-Islamic summit, attended by leaders from the 57-member Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the 22-member Arab League.

In their final statement, participants condemned Israel’s assassination attempt and warned the strikes threaten regional peace and stability, reaffirming support for Palestine and condemning Israeli actions in Gaza. However, the summit concluded without significant new initiatives.

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian warned that no Arab or Muslim country is safe from Israeli aggression, urging Muslim nations to isolate Israel, cut off its weapons and funding, and hold its leaders accountable, emphasizing unity as key to effectiveness.

## Turkey’s Intel Chief Visits Damascus for Talks With Jolani

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) -- In a move reflecting Türkiye’s deepening ties with the new Syrian power structure, National Intelligence Organization (NIO) chief Ibrahim Kalin paid an unannounced visit to Damascus on Wednesday, where he held talks with Abu Muhammad al-Jolani, the current head of Hay’at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) which controls much of Syria.

HTS, an offshoot of A-Qaeda with past affiliations to Daesh, now serves as the ruling authority in large parts of Syria following the collapse of the Bashar al-Assad government in late 2024. Jolani, once a commander within both Al-Qaeda in Iraq and Daesh

in Iraq, now leads a regime that has gained Ankara’s open political and security backing.

According to Turkish media citing security sources, Kalin’s visit centered on advancing intelligence and security cooperation between Türkiye and the HTS-led administration, particularly in light of renewed Israeli airstrikes targeting southern Syria.

One of the focal points of the Damascus talks was the faltering process of integrating the YPG-led SDF Kurdish group of militants into the new Syrian military — a process Ankara insists is essential for maintaining the country’s territorial integrity.

The meeting came just two

days after Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Jolani met in Doha on the sidelines of an extraordinary Islamic summit called in response to Israeli aggression against Qatar. Speaking to reporters on his return flight, Erdoğan revealed details of his discussion with Jolani.

“Our position on the YPG is clear,” Erdoğan said. “Efforts to bring them into the new Syrian army are key to ensuring unity and a functioning national military structure under the new administration.”

Erdoğan also emphasized the need to shield Syria from further fragmentation, accusing Israel of trying to exploit the transitional

period to divide the country.

Türkiye, once the main gateway for thousands of foreign takfiri militants entering Syria, was a major sponsor of the armed insurgency that led to a decade-long war and ultimately the downfall of President Bashar al-Assad. Now, Ankara has emerged as a staunch supporter of the HTS-led regime, offering military training and reconstruction aid to stabilize the post-Assad order.

As part of the March 10 agreement, Türkiye has urged the YPG to fully merge its forces with the HTS-led military before year’s end — a move seen as central to solidifying control and suppressing external threats.

## Pakistan’s Defense Minister Proposes Muslim NATO to Counter Israel

ISLAMABAD (Dispatches) — Pakistan’s Defense Minister Khawaja Asif condemned the recent Israeli airstrike on Qatar, accusing Washington of prior consent and urging Muslim countries to form a NATO-style military alliance to address shared security challenges.

Speaking in an interview with Geo News following the Arab-Islamic emergency summit held in Qatar, Asif criticized the Israeli attack on Hamas leaders in Doha on Sept. 9, describing it as a serious threat to regional stability. The strike targeted Hamas leadership reportedly meeting to discuss a U.S.-proposed Gaza ceasefire. Asif said the attack, carried out by Israeli

F-35I and F-15I jets, exposed vulnerabilities in Persian Gulf defenses and Israel’s reliance on stealth technology. He warned that the operation was launched “with the consent of Washington” and predicted serious consequences in the near future.

Highlighting shifting public opinion in the West, including in the United States, Asif called for Muslim nations to “recognize friendly enemies” and unite in an Islamic military alliance similar to NATO. He stressed the alliance’s purpose should be mutual defense rather than targeting any specific country. The minister also criticized U.S. policies

in the region, pointing to American involvement in the rise of Al-Qaeda and ongoing regime changes in Syria as evidence of tacit support.

The Israeli strike in Doha killed five Gaza-based Hamas members and a Qatari security officer, while key leaders survived. Qatar, alongside the U.S. and Egypt, has played a mediation role in efforts to end the Gaza war, which has resulted in nearly 65,000 Palestinian deaths since October 2023.

The Arab-Islamic summit condemned the strike, calling it a “serious threat” to peace and security in the region.

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what the UN Commission of Inquiry has now concluded is a genocide,” read the statement from the aid groups. “States must use every available political, economic and legal tool at their disposal to intervene. Rhetoric and half measures are not enough. This moment demands decisive action.”

The message was signed by leaders of over 20 aid organizations operating in Gaza, including the Norwegian Refugee Council, Anera and Save the Children.

Also Wednesday, Qatar’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs released a statement saying it condemned “in the strongest terms” Israel’s ground invasion of Gaza. The ministry wrote on X that the operation marked a “extension of the war of genocide” against the Palestinians.

An Israeli military graphic suggested its troops hope to occupy all of the Gaza Strip except for a swath along the coast by the end of the current invasion.

Israeli forces have carried out multiple large-scale raids into Gaza City over the course of the war, causing mass displacement and heavy destruction, only to see resistance fighters regroup later. This time, Israel has pledged to fully occupy the entire city, which experts say is experiencing famine.

## Minister ... (Continued From Page One)

between the two neighbours that predates modern trade institutions.

Khan also pointed to growing technical and engineering cooperation, particularly in agriculture and manufacturing sectors, citing opportunities in tractor production, automotive components, and industrial technologies.

“The private sector’s role is crucial in assessing commercial viability and promoting technology exchange,” he added.

Khan confirmed that the revised SRO will be issued soon to accelerate barter trade, following progress made by relevant departments after the recent visit of Iran’s president to Pakistan.

## U.S. ... (Continued From Page 2)

Baghaei spoke of growing consensus among West Asian countries regarding the “real, serious, and immediate threat” posed by Israel.

“The recent gathering of countries in Doha showed that this is a common and serious concern among all regional and Islamic countries,” he said, adding that the threat posed by Israel is “global” in nature.

Pointing to Israel’s military aggression, Baghaei said the regime is “the only regime simultaneously committing genocide in Gaza, occupying the lands of two neighboring countries, and attacking at least nine or ten other countries recently.”

He described Israel as violating “all principles and objectives of the United Nations Charter and international laws,” and said a regional and global consensus is forming to counter Israel’s “war-mongering and expansionism.”

Iran, he said, “has not and will not withhold any effort” to help build an “internally-driven security” mechanism in West Asia, sometimes referred to as an “Islamic NATO.” This agenda is “a fixed item in talks with regional partners.”

He emphasized that safeguarding stability requires “shared work and cooperation, without relying on external actors,” who he said have repeatedly demonstrated their primary concern is the security of Israel.

Baghaei warned that U.S. threats to continue supporting Israeli strikes demonstrate America’s direct responsibility for these acts.

“The U.S. threat itself is a clear message that the U.S. will be considered responsible for any military action by Israel against any regional country.”

The Iranian official said Israel’s disregard for “legal, ethical, and humanitarian limits” demands swift action from the region and international community to curb its “war-mongering.”

## Europeans... (Continued From Page 2)

illegitimate, citing the U.S.’s unilateral withdrawal from the agreement and accusing the Europeans of aligning with unlawful sanctions rather than fulfilling their commitments.

On June 25, the Iranian Parliament passed legislation requiring the government to suspend all cooperation with the IAEA. This came a day after Iran said it successfully halted Israeli and U.S. strikes targeting three of its nuclear sites, condemning these attacks as violations of international law and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Eslami also criticized the recent Israeli and U.S. attacks on Iran’s nuclear facilities, saying they “gravely harm the IAEA’s safeguards” and stressed the need for a new mechanism to protect nuclear sites from military aggression, a scenario not foreseen under current safeguards.

“Iran’s emphasis is on the necessity of defining a new procedure within the safeguards system,” Eslami said, adding that inspection regimes must be clarified in the event of military attacks.

Both Eslami and Araghchi emphasized Iran’s commitment to diplomacy. Araghchi noted Iran’s readiness for “any fair and balanced solution that ensures mutual benefits,” while Barrot voiced concern over rising tensions and stressed the importance of maintaining dialogue.

Eslami highlighted Iran’s presence at the IAEA General Conference as vital to counter what he described as psychological, media, and political pressure from “American and Zionist actors.”

On Monday, Iran proposed a resolution at the IAEA calling for a global ban on military attacks against nuclear installations, responding to unprovoked strikes by Israel and the United States.

## Iran’s... (Continued From Page 2)

Salman on the sidelines of the emergency Arab-Islamic summit in Doha. Both sides expressed satisfaction with the growing momentum in bilateral ties following the China-brokered détente in 2023.

Larijani’s visit to Riyadh is his third regional trip since assuming office on August 5, after visits to Iraq and Lebanon.

Iranian officials say the renewed diplomatic outreach aims to stabilize regional dynamics and enhance cooperation with neighboring countries.

## Man... (Continued From Page 2)

Shahbazi collaborated with another spy, Esmail Fekri, who was executed in June for similar offenses. Shahbazi reportedly asked Fekri to monitor Israeli social media channels and offered to sell information about high-ranking Iranian officials’ locations and movements in exchange for protection, permanent U.S. residency, and a payment of 120 million dollars or cryptocurrency.

In his weekly communications with Mossad handlers, Shahbazi provided precise details on project locations, operations, personnel numbers, entry and exit points, key figures, technical data, and vulnerabilities.

Following an appeal by Shahbazi’s defense team, the Supreme Court upheld the death sentence, leading to the execution.

The case marks a significant blow to Israeli espionage efforts within Iran, as Iranian intelligence forces recently apprehended 20 spies and Mossad operatives in Tehran and other provinces.