



[Israel's Reckless Attack on Iran Could Cause a Regional War](#)

A recent Iranian retaliatory launch of more than 300 missiles against Israel has marked a significant escalation in tensions, and raised fears of a potential wider regional conflict. Military experts have weighed in, and it is believed that Iran may have calculated their strikes to display a show of force but prevent a serious confrontation with Israel. While observers pointed out that Iran's actions did not help the situation and could have triggered a broader conflict in the region, it is also important to note that the strikes were not unprovoked. The launch of Iranian missiles was in response to an Israeli attack against an Iranian consulate in Damascus which killed two senior Iranian generals, including a senior commander in the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). Analysts have argued that Israel's decision to attack the compound back in early April blew past a red line by attacking a diplomatic mission and a consulate, which is akin to an attack on Iranian soil and is in breach of the Vienna Convention. In response to the attack, Iran's foreign minister declared, "We consider this aggression to have violated all diplomatic norms and international treaties," pointing toward the seriousness of the strikes and warning of the consequences ahead.

Israel's attack on the Iranian consulate in Syria itself was the initial belligerent aggression and act of escalation. Some have speculated that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu carried out the strikes on Damascus in a deliberate attempt to illicit a response from Iran and create a wider conflict, thus diverting attention away from growing international condemnation towards Israeli human rights violations in Gaza while also prolonging regional conflict and delaying impending domestic challenges. They also contend that Israel may be trying to drag the United States into its potential direct conflict with Iran. There is certainly motivation for Netanyahu's government to provoke Iran, cuff the United States to the Middle East, and perpetuate conflict in the region. The effort to bring down the onslaught of Iranian drones and missiles received international support from Israel, Jordan, France, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United States, who all aided in repelling it – with reports indicating that the United States, not Israel, shot down most of the drones and missiles. The aforementioned countries are part of a network providing a dome over Israel and regional bases. Regrettably, it seems that geopolitics and countering Iranian ambitions are more important to these actors than halting Israeli human rights violations and war crimes in Gaza, as they have not enacted the same measures to stop the onslaught of Israeli attacks that have killed a disturbing number of Palestinian civilians and decimated the besieged enclave. These countries should be providing the same level of safeguarding and support to innocent civilians in Gaza no matter the geopolitics involved, as the protection of human life should trump any other considerations.

Several Israeli officials declared their intent to respond to Iran's attack. General Herzl Halevi, Chief of Staff of the Israel Defense Forces, stated that "Israel is considering next steps" and that "the launch of so many missiles and drones to Israeli territory will be answered with a retaliation." Then, early on Friday, Israel carried out a strike on an air base near the central Iranian city of Isfahan, which activated Iranian air defenses. However, Iran seemed to downplay the incident in the aftermath of it, and officials appeared to indicate that there were no plans for further retaliation. Previously, Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian had said that while Iran does not want further escalation, if Israel pushes back Iran's next response will be "immediate, stronger, and more extensive."

World leaders such as the United States have been urging for a quelling of tensions and escalations. In a statement targeted at Israel, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken advised that “strength and wisdom must be the two sides of the same coin.” The State Department is seeking a diplomatic response to the Iranian retaliatory strikes that will slow any possible further escalation. President Biden had also expressed that the United States will not support another Israeli attack against Iran, fearing that the U.S. could get dragged into an unwanted conflict in the region. However, some observers have argued that the conflict has already spilled over into other countries like Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Yemen, with the early April Israeli attack, Iranian retaliation, and latest Israeli strike only serving to exacerbate regional tensions. Still, the United States purports that the conflict has not spread past Gaza in an attempt to conceal the extent of U.S. military involvement, as well as prevent the possibility of wider U.S. involvement in the region. To this end, the United States had made efforts to try and mediate the Israeli response to the retaliatory strikes, but has not always been able to dictate Israeli action. Netanyahu defiantly stated that Israel will make its “own decisions” on responding to Iran’s aerial strikes – par for the course. In a situation where the parties involved have engaged in reckless behavior, it is important for measures to be taken to de-escalate any potential further spiraling.