



### [Netanyahu Expected to Press Trump During Their Upcoming Meeting on Possibly Initiating Fresh Hostilities with Iran](#)

Next week, on December 29th, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is scheduled to meet with U.S. President Donald Trump. The lead-up to the meeting has elicited unease among many peace activists due to the belief that Netanyahu is planning to push Trump towards renewed hostilities against Iran. Observers have long accused Netanyahu of seeking to drag the United States into a wide-scale conflict with Iran under the guise of Tehran's "threatening nuclear capabilities" and thus there is understandable concern that this could be the latest attempt to do so. They have also noted that these recent efforts are driven by Netanyahu's desire to perpetuate regional tension as a means of shifting attention away from both domestic and international criminal charges against him, in addition to the array of global criticism. All told, analysts are imploring Trump not to take part in potential new Israeli hostilities against Iran, pointing out that U.S. involvement would contradict his "America First" ethos on avoiding harmful foreign entanglements.

Experts have warned that possible U.S. acquiescence with Netanyahu's lobbying for aggression risks a destructive regional war, undermining Trump's vows to end and prevent overseas conflicts. Furthermore, as many had outlined this past summer during the 12-day outbreak of hostilities between Israel and Iran, attacks against Iran's nuclear facilities could in actuality prove counterproductive and instead drive Tehran towards real nuclear proliferation. As such, only a negotiated agreement through means of diplomacy, not belligerence, can provide a viable long-term resolution to questions over Iran's nuclear program. If Netanyahu does indeed press Trump for new military actions against Iran as expected during their upcoming meeting next week, the American president should push back in favor of pursuing renewed diplomatic engagement with Tehran.

On top of discussions over Iran, Trump and Netanyahu are also expected to focus on a few other main topics including the prospects of moving to phase two of the Gaza ceasefire plan. The upcoming meeting on December 29th comes after the White House recently scolded Netanyahu for blatant violations of the Gaza ceasefire. While rights groups have documented that these have been taking place repeatedly since the initiation of the agreement back in October, the Israeli airstrike that killed a top Hamas commander a couple of weeks ago drew particular ire from the Trump administration. The White House sent what was referred to as a

“stern private message” to Netanyahu acknowledging that the strike constituted a direct violation of the ceasefire agreement while also expressing frustration over Israel’s failure to meet the mandate of agreed-upon aid – with much of this still restricted or delayed despite the terms of the deal. Given all of this, it remains to be seen how discussions between Trump and Netanyahu transpire and whether or not any concrete progress can be made towards the transition to phase two of the agreement – especially when so many of Israel’s actions signify an intent to derail this.

In advance of the scheduled December 29th meeting between Trump and Netanyahu, it has become apparent that the two are at odds when it comes to Syria as well. The U.S. has made it clear that it views the new Syrian government as a critical and emerging partner and has therefore grown increasingly frustrated with Israeli military activities in Syria – which they and others view as undermining efforts to stabilize the country. The Trump administration has publicly rebuked Israel for continued airstrikes and ground raids, with Israel refusing to withdraw from areas that it has illegally occupied since the fall of the Assad regime. In light of these circumstances, it is also expected that Trump will use the December 29th meeting to press Netanyahu to halt aggressive and destabilizing posturing in Syria. Israel has continued to conduct daily attacks inside the country in a blatant violation of Syria’s sovereignty and an effort to try to spur instability, with Syrian officials looking to Trump to help curtail this moving forward.