

2018 HERZLIYA CONFERENCE

The Simulation Scenario



Israel and the Middle East by 2025

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Iran

Iran's President declares that Iran strongly rejects the demands for a modified Nuclear deal. The President accuses the United States of violating the nuclear deal and declares that Iran will respond in the place, time and manner that it chooses. He says his country is committed to the nuclear agreement with the P-5+1, and that the time has come to lift all sanctions and limitations on Iran.

In a speech concluding a large-scale maneuvering exercise, the commander of the IRGC declares that Iran is a regional power that no enemy can threaten. He adds that North Korea has proven that the United States is a "paper tiger" and its threats are not credible.

Jordan

King Abdullah survives an assassination attempt, but two of his bodyguards are killed. An unknown terror group claims responsibility for the attack. The Jordanian security forces carry out widespread arrests; most detainees are Palestinians from the refugee camps. Demonstrations and violent riots break out in Amman and other cities around the Kingdom. The Jordanian army is called to support the Police in restoring law and order across the country.

Iran announces that it will never allow Jordan to repeat the Palestinian massacre of September 1970 ("Black September"). Iranian-backed Shia militias in Syria are advancing towards the Jordanian border.

The Palestinian Arena

In April 2025, a young Israeli man, resident of one of the settlements in the West Bank, is kidnapped. No organization takes responsibility for the kidnapping. Israel demands that the PA take the necessary steps to return the kidnapped civilian. The Palestinian Interim Leadership Council announces its decision to stop security cooperation with Israel and thereafter demands the immediate release of Marwan Barghouti from Israeli prison and a halt to IDF's activities in the West Bank.

As a result of the IDF's operational activities, violent riots erupt in different hotspots across the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Both the IDF and the Palestinians suffer casualties. The Palestinian media outlets label these events as "*Intifadat al-Tahrir*" (the "Liberation Intifada").

The wave of "lone wolf" terrorism (stabblings, vehicular attacks on pedestrians, and shootings) intensifies. Hamas commits a suicide attack in a bus in Jerusalem, causing a high number of civilian deaths and injuries.

Hamas announces that it will not restrain itself in light of the Israeli acts of aggression against the Palestinian people. Rockets are fired from the Gaza Strip to Israeli territory, but cause no damage or injuries. The IDF responds to the rockets fired by attacking Hamas strongholds in the Gaza Strip.

Cholera outbreak in the Gaza Strip

The World Health Organization (WHO) reports a cholera outbreak in the Gaza Strip. WHO claims that 120 cases of death have been reported by the hospitals in Gaza, with about 1,000 new suspected cases reported daily, more than half of which are among children under 18.

The Northern Front: Syria

Assad's forces, together with Hezbollah, Shia militias, and elements of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard have taken control over the Syrian Golan Heights – from Mount Hermon's lower parts to the area of Quneitra. These forces start building fortifications and transferring weapons to the area (rocket launchers and anti-tank missiles).

Hezbollah's leader, Hassan Nasrallah, announces that the liberation of Quneitra is an important step towards the liberation of the Golan Heights and threatens that Hezbollah will not stand by while Israel "slaughters the Palestinians".

Terrorists open fire from Syrian territory near Quneitra on an IDF patrol. IDF returns fire.

Iran deploys 12 Su 27 fighter jets and S – 300 battery in T -4 military airport.

In addition, as part of the rehabilitation process of the Syrian army, three Shiite brigades are integrated into the Syrian army. These brigades are planned to be deployed along the Golan Heights front.

Russia provides the Syrian army with an unknown number of S-400 missiles. The systems are being operated by a joint Russian-Syrian team, until the Syrian army is capable of operating the systems on its own.

Lebanon

Hezbollah increases its forces in South Lebanon using units of the organization that returned from the fight in Syria.

Lebanon's Government announces negotiations with a Chinese company to finance gas exploration and production from the disputed gas field with Israel. The Chinese company announces its intention to lay a gas pipeline from the production site to Lebanon.

Turkey

In response to the cholera outbreak and the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip, President Erdogan announces that his country is going to support the Palestinians in Gaza. Turkey sends a hospital ship to Gaza to assist in treating patients. Newspapers in Turkey report that a Turkish Naval supply ship with a hospital, medical teams, and medicines is sailing towards Gaza, accompanied by two Navy frigates.

Saudi Arabia

The Saudi Crown Prince declares that his country cannot accept a nuclear Iran. He calls on the U.S. and the international community to act decisively to prevent Iran from developing nuclear arms. The Saudi Crown Prince warns that if the international community fails, his country will find the way to respond to the Iranian nuclear threat. The comments are made during a visit of the Saudi Crown Prince to Pakistan.

Pakistan's Prime Minister declares during a press conference with the Saudi Crown Prince that his country is committed to the security of Saudi Arabia.

The Saudi Foreign Minister says his country will support King Abdullah in stabilizing the Hashemite Kingdom and declares that Saudi Arabia is willing to send troops to Jordan. The UAE declares that it will provide Jordan all the necessary support including military forces.

Iraq

The Iraqi government presents Turkey with an ultimatum: Turkish forces must leave Iraq by the end of May or else "all the options are on the table". The Iraqi government also appeals to the UNSC to deal with the illegitimate Turkish presence on its soil. The Iraqi Prime Minister is about to carry out the pilgrimage to Mecca (Hajj), and will use his visit to Saudi Arabia to meet with King Salman and Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman.

Anti-ship missiles attack north of Bab al Mandab straits

Yemen's Houthi fighters declare in a statement on their sabanews.net website that "Missiles targeted a U.S. warship as it approached the coast of Mokha on the Red Sea and it was completely destroyed".

A video posted on social media, purporting to be footage of the incident, showed a vessel being targeted at night.

US officials confirm that an American destroyer sailing off the coast of Yemen in the southern end of the Red Sea was attacked. However, according to the officials, the missiles, which were fired from territory under Houthi control, fell well short of the ship.

At the same time, a Chinese cargo ship near Bab al Mandab Straits was attacked. The attack did not cause significant damage to the ship, but a crew member was wounded.

Bab al Mandab Straits connect the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean through the Gulf of Aden, the Red Sea, and the Suez Canal. With more than 4.7 million barrels of oil shipped daily across this waterway, it is considered a strategic maritime chokepoint.

"The Renaissance dam" crisis between Egypt and Ethiopia.

Egypt's President accuses Ethiopia of violating international agreements on the allocation of water resources of the Nile River that provides more than 90 percent of Egypt's water supply. Egypt asserts that when Ethiopia begins filling the huge water reservoir of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, it will cut short Egypt's supply of water. The Egyptian President says that water supply is "a matter of life or death" for the people of his country and demands Ethiopia to stop the construction immediately and refrain from filling the reservoir until the international study commissioned by Egypt, Ethiopia, and Sudan, is completed. Egypt calls for an urgent meeting of the Arab League to discuss the crisis.

International media outlets report that Egypt has deployed fighter jets in Eritrea and that Eritrea has reinforced its military forces along the border with Ethiopia. The Egyptian helicopter carrier "Anwar Sadat", accompanied by two frigates, is bound south along the Red Sea towards Eritrea.

The Great Powers

U.S. President declares that his country will not allow Iran to become a nuclear state and warns that "all options are on the table". In his speech, the President also discussed the situation in Jordan and said that the United States is following the situation and will support its allies.

The United States requests an urgent meeting of the Security Council on North Korea's blatant violations of the UN Security Council resolutions.

Sergey Lavrov, Russia's Minister of Foreign Affairs warns that Russia will not allow any violation of Syria's sovereignty or threats to its stability during the rehabilitation and stabilization process of the Syrian arena.

North Korea

On May 1, 2025, North Korea successfully launches a satellite into orbit and on May 5, North Korea carries out nuclear experiments. North Korea's Supreme Leader, Kim Jong-un, praises the achievements of the scientists of his country and declares that North Korea is able to handle any threat and prevent any acts of aggression against it.