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## **Iranian Military Threatens War, 'Heavy Damage' for U.S. Again**

**August 30, 2018** Breitbart.com reported: "Gen. Rasoul Sanayee Raad, deputy commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), on Wednesday became the latest Iranian military commander to threaten military action against the United States and confidently predict Iran would emerge victorious from such a conflict.

Raad's bluster was quoted by Iran's state-run Fars news service: 'War against Iran will have nothing for the US but heavy costs and the Islamic Republic of Iran's deterrent power can inflict heavy damage on the US,' General Sanayee Raad said on Wednesday. He noted that US President Donald Trump does not enjoy the capability to form a consensus and coalition for a war against Iran, and said, "If a war happens today, increased energy prices will inflict heavy expenses on the European states."

"The US has understood that there will be no ultimate victory in case it opens war against Iran and that it cannot guarantee avoiding it from becoming a war of attrition," General Sanayee said...."

## **Russia's fleet to counter U.S. moves ahead of Syrian offensive**

**August 29, 2018** Asia Times Online reported: "Russia has beefed up its naval presence in the Mediterranean amid claims by Moscow that the United States is poised to launch a strike at Syrian forces preparing for a major offensive in Idlib. Up to 11 Russian warships have crossed the Bosphorus as tensions between the US and Syria continue to rise.



'It included at least 10 vessels and two submarines – with more on the way,' the Russian daily newspaper Izvestia stated, adding that most of the flotilla is carrying Kalibr cruise missiles.

If the reports are correct, this would be the biggest task force sent by President Vladimir Putin's government since Russia's intervention in the Syrian conflict in 2015..."

## **'We will not allow Iran to remain in Syria'**

**August 29, 2018** Arutz Sheva 7 reported: "Israel blasted a newly-inked agreement between Syria and Iran, deepening the cooperation between the two rogue states in defiance of calls for Tehran to withdraw its forces from the war-torn country.

On Wednesday, Israeli Intelligence Minister Yisrael Katz (Likud), who also serves as Transportation Minister, spoke on Israeli public radio, warning that Israel would not permit Iranian forces to use Syria as a base of operations for military activities.

Just two days earlier, Iran's Defense Minister, Amir Hatami, signed an agreement with the Assad government, expanding cooperation between Damascus and Tehran. During his visit to Damascus, Hatami rejected calls by the US and Israel that Iran pullout its Quds Force from Syria..."

## **Mattis puts Iran 'on notice'**

**August 29, 2018** Arutz Sheva 7 reported: "U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis on Tuesday said Iran has been 'put on notice' and warned that its 'continued mischief' in the region will not be tolerated by President Donald Trump's administration.

Speaking at a press conference at the Pentagon with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Joseph Dunford, Mattis called Iran the 'single biggest destabilizing element' in the Middle East.

'Iran has been put on notice that the continued mischief they've caused around the area, murder they have caused,' and the regime's support of Syrian President Bashar Al Assad, said Mattis, according to The Independent.

He warned Iran is 'going to be held to account for it' but did not going into detail about what that entailed.

While he acknowledged he felt there was "less willingness to be confrontational" on Iran's part, Mattis added they are still "fundamentally" a destabilizing factor in the region.

Mattis also clarified, "Our problem is not with Iran, it's with the Iranian regime leadership, not the Iranian people. I just want to separate those two as well."

One of the sticking points for Mattis and the Trump administration is Iran's involvement in the Syrian conflict.

"What are they doing in Syria in the first place?" said Mattis, before adding Iran was "propping up" Assad, who has "committed mayhem and murder on his own people."

Answering his own question, the Defense Secretary said Iran "has no business" being in the middle of the "civil war". He added that the Trump administration is working with Russia, who may have the "traction" and "persuasiveness" to ask Iran to leave, but did not address the issue of Assad asking Tehran to be involved in the first place..."

## **NKorea still 'serious and imminent threat': Japan**

**August 28, 2018** spacedaily.com reported: "North Korea still poses a "serious and imminent threat", Japan said Tuesday in its first annual defence review since tensions eased on the Korean peninsula.

Japan's 2018 defence white paper also took aim at China's rise as a military power, saying Beijing was sparking "strong security concerns in the region and international community, including Japan".

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Last year's defence review was published at the height of the tensions with North Korea, amid nuclear and missile tests and with US President Donald Trump threatening to rain down "fire and fury" on Pyongyang if it kept up its threats.

But since then, a spectacular diplomatic detente has taken place, culminating in the historic summit between Trump and the North's leader Kim Jong Un in Singapore on June 12.

Nevertheless, Tokyo insisted on Tuesday: "There is no change in our basic recognition concerning the threat of North Korea's nuclear weapons and missiles."..."

#### **Agreement between Hamas and Israel – ‘over my dead body’**

*August 28, 2018* Arutz Sheva 7 reported: "Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas reportedly expressed outrage that a ceasefire agreement between Hamas and Israel was being formulated without his participation.

Channel 10 reported that it had been informed today, Tuesday, by a senior Fatah official in Ramallah that Abbas had said, 'Over my dead body will there be a ceasefire and agreement for calm between the sides.'

The official cited in the report also quoted Abbas as saying that the signing of an agreement without the consent of the PA was 'illegal' and constituted 'a betrayal.'

Abbas reportedly expressed outrage at Egypt, which is mediating Gaza ceasefire talks, for its readiness to hold talks with Hamas without his presence..."

#### **Pence Reaffirms Vision for ‘American Dominance in Space’**

*August 27, 2018* SpaceDaily.com reported: "Vice President Mike Pence is in Houston, Texas, to reaffirm the Trump administration's plans to establish an American Space Force by 2020, return Americans to the moon, and set its sight on Mars and beyond.

During a speech Thursday at NASA's Johnson Space Center, Pence said that recent Pentagon reports have shown that China is 'aggressively weaponizing space' and that Russia is developing weapons to 'counter America's space capabilities.'

Pence said the Department of Defense is moving forward to 'strengthen American security in space' and that the administration will work with Congress to secure funding and authorization to establish Space Force as a new and separate branch of the armed forces..."

#### **EU security must no longer depend on US, says Macron**

*August 27, 2018* AFP reported: "French President Emmanuel Macron on Monday called for Europe to stop relying on the United States for its military defence as he pushed for fresh EU integration in the face of rising nationalism around the continent.

Relaunching his diplomatic agenda after the summer break, the 40-year-old president said he would put forward new proposals in the coming months for the EU to boost defence cooperation, as well as talks with Russia on their security relationship -- an issue of concern for countries on Europe's eastern edge.

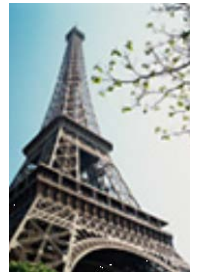
"Europe can no longer rely on the United States for its security. It is up to us to guarantee European security," Macron told an audience of some 250 diplomats, lawmakers and international relations experts.

His comments follow US President Donald Trump repeatedly distanced himself from the NATO military alliance, which groups the United States with most of Europe and has underpinned European security since World War II.

Macron's comments are likely to find support in EU powerhouse Germany after Foreign Minister Heiko Maas made a similar call for boosted military cooperation last week.

Writing in the Handelsblatt newspaper, Maas called for Europe to "take an equal share of the responsibility" and "form a counterweight" to Washington as Europe-US relations cool.

France and Germany have both backed the idea of a small joint European response force over the last year, and have announced plans to develop a fighter jet together."..."



#### **US Navy marks return of Cold War-era fleet**

*August 24, 2018* spacewar.com reported: "The US Navy on Friday marked the official resurrection of a disbanded, Cold War-era fleet that was scrapped in 2011 and is returning amid heightened tensions with Russia.

In May, the Navy announced it was bringing back the 2nd Fleet, which played a key role during the Cold War years with operations in the North Atlantic and supporting US naval forces in the Mediterranean.

The fleet, first stood up in 1950, was scrapped for cost-saving reasons during a time of reduced tensions with Moscow.

It played a key role during the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, when its ships set a blockade to stop Soviet ships reaching the island.

The fleet will be responsible for US naval forces along the US East Coast as well as the North Atlantic region.

"This is the United States' and the US Navy's dynamic response to a dynamic security environment," Chief of Naval Operations Admiral John Richardson, said at a ceremony aboard the USS George H.W. Bush.

"The 2nd Fleet will be our spearhead... for the Atlantic, maintaining America's maritime superiority that will lead to maintaining our security, our influence and our prosperity around the world."..."