



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on May 30, 2025

Report: Israel Might Attack Iran Even If Trump Reaches Deal on Nukes

Though President Trump “waved off” a planned strike on Iran’s nuclear facilities by Israel last month, it appears the plan to attack is back on.

[The New York Times](#) has reported that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu doesn’t agree with the president about the best way to squelch Iran’s putative atomic program. Thus, he might proceed with his original plan to obliterate the nuclear facilities.

If Israel attacks Iran, Israeli officials told American counterparts, the United States would be left with no choice but to support its “most reliable ally in the Middle East.” Or so Israel believes.



AP Images
Benjamin Netanyahu

BREAKING:

Israel had ordered to strike Iranian nuclear sites this month, but Trump refused and chose to continue negotiations with Iran instead.

Israeli officials informed US that Netanyahu might order an attack on Iran even if an agreement is reached – New York Times pic.twitter.com/U5tucptALL

— Current Report (@Currentreport1) [May 28, 2025](#)

Latest Trouble

Netanyhau “has been threatening to [strike] Iran’s main nuclear enrichment facilities, according to officials briefed on the situation,” the [Times](#) reported:

The clash over how best to ensure that Iran cannot produce a nuclear weapon has led to at least one tense phone call between President Trump and Mr. Netanyahu and a flurry of meetings in recent days between top administration officials and senior Israeli officials.

Mr. Trump said on Sunday that there could be “something good” coming about his effort to limit Iran’s nuclear program in the “next two days.”

Others familiar with the negotiations said that at best there would be a declaration of some common principles. The details under discussion remain closely held and would likely only set the stage for further negotiations, starting with whether Iran could continue to enrich uranium at any level, and how it would dilute its stockpiles of near-bomb-grade fuel or ship



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them out of the country.

The *Times* learned of what it called “the tensions” between Trump and Netanyahu from Israeli, European, and American officials “involved in the diplomacy and the debate between the American and Israeli governments.”

The newspaper reported that two Israeli officials, Strategic Affairs Minister Ron Dermer and Mossad chief David Barnea, met Steve Witkoff, Trump’s special envoy to the Middle East, in Rome last week, then landed in Washington, D.C., to meet with CIA chief John Ratcliffe. The meeting’s purpose was unclear, the [Times reported](#).

Trump officials, the newspaper continued, “pointed to Mr. Trump’s remarks this weekend, when he said he would ‘love to see no bombs dropped.’” After the *Times* published its story about the anticipated attack, Netanyahu’s people called it “Fake news,” the paper reported.

[Continued the Times:](#)

The central divide in the negotiations between Mr. Witkoff and his Iranian counterpart, Abbas Araghchi, focuses on the Trump administration’s position that Iran must halt all enrichment of nuclear material on its soil. Mr. Araghchi has repeatedly rejected that restriction, repeating in a social media post on Tuesday that if the Western powers insist on “ ‘zero enrichment’ in Iran” then “there is nothing left for us to discuss on the nuclear issue.”

In an effort to keep negotiations from collapsing, Mr. Witkoff and Oman, which is acting as a mediator, are discussing creative options. Among them is a possible regional joint venture to produce fuel for nuclear power reactors with Iran, Saudi Arabia and other Arab powers, as well as some U.S. involvement. But where the actual enrichment would take place is undetermined.

Mr. Witkoff, participants say, has also dropped his early objections to an interim understanding that lays out principles for a final deal. But that may not satisfy Israel, or Congress’s hawks on Iran. ...

Throughout his decades in government, Mr. Netanyahu has long been skeptical of diplomatic overtures to Tehran. He opposed, and sought to derail, the 2015 agreement, even addressing a joint session of Congress to argue for killing it.

This time, Israeli officials have dusted off an old playbook: threatening to strike Iran, even without American help. They insist they are not bluffing, even though they have made such threats and backed away several times over nearly two decades.

Israeli officials signaled to the Trump administration shortly before Mr. Trump’s first formal foreign trip, to the Middle East this month, that they were preparing to attack Iran’s nuclear sites, according to two people briefed on the discussions. U.S. intelligence also detected Israel’s preparations for a strike.

The *Times* also disclosed that Israel could rope the U.S. into a war. If it wants to attack it will, which would force Trump and his advisors to sail between [Scylla and Charybdis](#). Because Israel could attack Iran almost immediately, “little time” would be left for U.S. officials to pressure Netanyahu to stop the



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attack. Such a strike would almost certainly force U.S. officials to assist in the attack because it would otherwise fail:

Some Israeli officials close to Mr. Netanyahu believe the U.S. would have no choice but to assist Israel militarily if Iran counterattacked.

And, those officials say, Netanyahu might start dropping bombs even if a U.S-Iran deal is concluded.

Trump Stopped Previous Plan

As [The New American reported](#) of the *Times*' previous scoop, Trump "waved off" an earlier attack planned for this month.

Inside the administration, slavishly pro-Israel, pro-war officials not only pushed for the attack on Iran's nuclear facilities, but also moved American military assets to support it. Vice President J.D. Vance, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, and Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard pushed Trump to oppose the bombing.

[Reported the Times:](#)

Israeli officials had recently developed plans to attack Iranian nuclear sites in May. They were prepared to carry them out, and at times were optimistic that the United States would sign off. The goal of the proposals, according to officials briefed on them, was to set back Tehran's ability to develop a nuclear weapon by a year or more.

Almost all of the plans would have required U.S. help not just to defend Israel from Iranian retaliation, but also to ensure that an Israeli attack was successful, making the United States a central part of the attack itself.

Top American officials, including General Michael Kurilla, chief of Central Command, and then-National Security Advisor Michael Waltz, were ready to help Israel, the [Times reported](#). The USS *Carl Vinson* moved to the Arabian Sea. Two Patriot missile batteries and a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system also went to the area.

As well, the United States stationed "B-2 bombers capable of carrying 30,000-pound bombs essential to destroying Iran's underground nuclear program" at the U.S. base at Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean.

Officials also considered moving fighter aircraft to the area, possibly to Israel.

NEW — Israel planned to strike Iran's nuclear sites as early as next month but President Trump balked, opting for now to try to negotiate a deal with Iran instead w/[@julianbarnes](#), [@ronenbergman](#), [@maggieNYT](#) <https://t.co/5J3L3wC7IM>

— Eric Schmitt (@EricSchmittNYT) [April 17, 2025](#)

As the [Times reported](#):

All of the equipment could be used for strikes against the Houthis — whom the United States has been attacking since March 15 in an effort to halt their strikes against shipping vessels in the Red Sea.



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But U.S. officials said privately that the weaponry was also part of the planning for potentially supporting Israel in a conflict with Iran.

Even if the United States decided not to authorize the aircraft to take part in a strike on Iran, Israel would know that the American fighters were available to defend against attacks by an Iranian ally.

Upshot: Israel might well attack Iran in the hope of involving the United States in another unwinnable war in the Middle East.



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