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U.S. may not be able to defeat Iran quickly

Trump doesn't appear eager to attack, but may feel pressed to do so in the near future

Analysis **Amos Harel**

In his current term as president of the United States, Donald Trump is in the public eye almost daily: delivering speeches, holding press conferences, giving interviews. Judging by his body language, as well as by the way he talks about the crisis with Iran, Trump

doesn't appear to be eager to attack. He may resort to military action, perhaps in the near future. The Israeli defense establishment is definitely ready for this, and is in an extremely high state of readiness. Meanwhile the president looks as though every bone in his body is shout-

ing: Don't fall into that trap. Embarking on a major, and possibly lengthy, war in the Middle East goes against Trump's instincts and everything he's preached for years. He saw the United States become entangled in protracted and expensive wars in distant lands - in Vietnam in the 1960s, in Afghanistan and Iraq early in this century. To date, Trump has preferred sharp, quick resolutions that allow him to declare victory and demand credit and compliments accordingly.

And the only thing that's lower than the president's popularity rating at the moment - even after a reasonable and quite disciplined performance, by his standards, in the State of the Union address to Congress this week - is the percentage of Americans who support a war in Iran. Most Americans have no idea what it's all about, and they're more concerned about the cost of living and the domestic chaos.

That's apparently the explanation for the demonstrative lack of desire with which Trump talks about a war, and for the repeated postponements of its launching. Time after time lately,

Omani minister: 'Significant progress' in Iran-U.S. talks

Liza Rozovsky,
Ben Samuels and Reuters

"Significant progress" was made during the talks between Iran and the United States in Geneva, Oman's foreign minister said.

According to Foreign Minister Badr Albusaidi, technical discussions are set to take place next week in Vienna.

Earlier Thursday, U.S. Special Envoy Steve Witkoff and Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi held "direct talks," CNN reported.

An Iranian official told Reuters the talks have been "intense and serious," adding that they raised "new ideas" that require consultation with the leadership in Tehran.

According to the official, reaching a framework is possible if Washington "seriously separates nuclear and non-nuclear issues" in its talks with Iran.

The United States has previously insisted on including additional issues,

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India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi paying respects at Yad Vashem on Thursday, accompanied by Benjamin Netanyahu. See story, Page 4.

Itay Cohen

Serbia refuses to cooperate with Israeli authorities on arrest of PM adviser Einhorn

Gidi Weitz
and Bar Peleg

Serbia is refusing to cooperate with Israeli law enforcement regarding Israel Einhorn, an adviser to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is a key suspect in the Qatar and Bild affairs and charged with harassing state witness Shlomo Filber. Serbian authorities have

ignored Israeli requests to provisionally arrest Einhorn until an extradition request is filed.

Several months ago, in an unusual step, a senior official in the international department of the State Prosecutor's Office was sent to Serbia to persuade her counterpart to cooperate. But a source said that Serbia would not even hold a

substantive discussion with her on the subject. "Serbia slammed the door in her face," the source said. "They simply brushed her off."

The Serbian Justice Ministry declined to comment.

Moreover, the police have not yet officially asked Interpol to attach to Einhorn's name a red notice, a formal request to all member states to locate and provisionally

arrest a suspect. A source said that another source with ties to Interpol told Israeli enforcement officials in unofficial talks that Interpol had no intention of doing so, because of the political aspects of the cases in which Einhorn is involved. Interpol did not respond to a Haaretz request for comment.

In last week's hearing on the harassment of state wit-

ness Shlomo Filber, Petah Tikva Magistrate's Court Judge Dror Kleitman asked whether there was any prospect of Einhorn being brought to Israel for trial. There have been four hearings since the indictment was filed in the case a year ago. Einhorn's counsel didn't attend any of them.

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'No treason': Shin Bet chief rejects conspiracy theories on Hamas' Oct. 7 attack

Yaniv Kubovich

Shin Bet security service Chief David Zini rejected conspiracy theories alleging the Hamas-led attack on October 7, 2023, was helped by Israeli forces or operatives, the agency said on Thursday.

According to the agency's spokesperson, Zini said during a Shin Bet executive conference on Tuesday, attended by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, "It is clear and known that there was no treason or collaboration on the part of the Shin Bet or any member of the security establishment."

Zini said he accepted the conclusions of the agency's



Shin Bet Chief David Zini

Olivier Fitoussi

probe into the massacre, saying they are unquestionable.

"Unfortunately, we have failed as professionals and

must work day in and day out to correct ourselves and implement all the lessons and complete what remains to be

investigated," he said.

Earlier this month, five former Shin Bet chiefs and 31 former department heads slammed Netanyahu for discrediting the agency, demanding the current agency chief deny the allegations.

In a joint statement, the former agency staff cited "unprecedented attacks on former service chief Ronen Bar and on directors, combatants and employees who served in the organization on October 7."

A study conducted in late 2025 by Dr. Nimrod Nir revealed that 56.7 percent of coalition voters believe some Israelis knew ahead of time about Hamas' surprise at-

tack or enabled it.

Nearly 50 percent believe that former members of the country's security establishment helped Hamas, wanting to overthrow Netanyahu, while slightly more than 20 percent reject this theory.

Among opposition voters, 23 percent believe that Israelis enabled the attack. In the public as a whole, the rate of those believing in the "treason from within" theory is approaching 50 percent.

Points from the Shin Bet probe into October 7 were published last year. The agency said it did not underestimate Hamas, and had recommended proactive action against the group.

Dramatizing Gaza:

Egyptian Ramadan series accused of turning war into propaganda



A scene from "The Landowners."

YouTube

Naghm Zbeedat

An Egyptian Ramadan television drama set in Gaza during the war was intended to showcase humanitarian solidarity. Instead, "The Landowners" has sparked backlash across social media - not only from Israeli viewers accusing it of propaganda - but also from Palestinians and Egyptians who say the series risks turning a devastating war into symbolic nationalist theater.

Directed by Peter Mimi and produced by the state-linked United Media Services, the series began airing at the start of Ramadan

on Egypt's Al-Hayat and DMC channels, as well as the Watch It streaming platform. Like most Ramadan dramas, it runs daily throughout the festival. The story follows an Egyptian doctor entering Gaza as part of a medical relief convoy, and a Palestinian man struggling to rescue his nephew amid the war that erupted after October 7.

From its opening minutes, the show places Egypt at the center of the humanitarian narrative. The first episode depicts Egyptian medical convoys approaching Gaza through the Rafah crossing, passing rows of aid

trucks awaiting entry.

In one early scene, Egyptian officers inspect a doctor's luggage before reluctantly allowing her to bring a battery-powered ventilator into the enclave. Another sequence shows a soldier in an Israeli surveillance drone demanding identification before ordering the convoy to withdraw with a "final warning," establishing a dramatic framework in which humanitarian access, military control and civilian urgency intersect.

Egyptian media outlets close to the government

See RAMADAN, Page 6

Greece convicts ex-top officer and Intellexa founder over intel agency's spyware use

Omer Benjakob

A Greek court on Wednesday found four people guilty - among them a former senior Israeli intelligence officer - of wiretapping, invasion of privacy and unauthorized access to computer systems for breaching the confidentiality of telephone communications through the illegal deployment of spyware known as Predator, developed by Intellexa.

This is the first criminal conviction of executives at a commercial spyware firm

over the use of their surveillance technology by clients, exclusively state bodies such as intelligence organizations.

The Second Single-Member Misdemeanour Court of Athens - which tried the case as a misdemeanor after a separate official Greek state investigation into the alleged role of the country's intelligence service, the EYP, was closed without charges - handed down a combined sentence of 126 years and eight months.

Of that total, eight years are immediately enforceable

under Greek sentencing laws. The sentences have been suspended pending appeal, and the defendants - none of whom appeared in court during the trial's more than 40 hearings - remain free.

Those convicted include Tal Dilian, a former commander of Israeli military intelligence's technology unit, Unit 81, who founded the Intellexa consortium of cyber and intelligence firms; his ex-wife and business partner, Sara Aleksandra Fayssal Hamou; Felix Bitzios, a former deputy ad-

Shin Bet official charged in Gaza smuggling

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ministrator and shareholder of Intellexa who is linked to top Greek officials; and Giannis Lavranos, owner of the Greek firm Krikel, through which Predator was allegedly procured and deployed in Greece.

Presiding Judge Nikos

Askianakis said the evidence showed the defendants acted with "joint intent" to gain unauthorized access to "private communications and personal data," based on "witness testimonies but also documents that shed light on the truth."

The defendants were found guilty of intercepting the phone communications of Greek investigative journalist Thanasis Koukakis, Greek-American Meta employee Artemis Seaford

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