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Gantz warns of flare-up on Syrian front

40 years of border quiet could be ending, warns IDF chief; also says Iran 'artificially' manipulating diplomacy

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IDF chief Benny Gantz warned Monday that 40 years of quiet along the Syrian frontier could be in danger.

Speaking to the [Institute for National Security Studies](#), a Tel Aviv think tank, Gantz said the region could "lose its stability" with the fall of President Bashar Assad and a takeover by jihadi elements, resulting in "chaos" with violence turned toward Israel.

"Assad is losing his grip on power, and destabilizing elements are increasing. Iran and Hezbollah are neck-deep in an effort to uphold the Assad regime and/or in preparations for the aftermath of his fall," said Gantz.

Israel captured the Golan in the 1967 Mideast war. In 40 years since the 1973 war between the countries, the Golan has remained mostly quiet.

In the two years of Syrian civil war, errant fire has landed in the Golan a number of times. Israel has responded by firing at the sources.

Gantz also addressed the Iranian threat, saying the Islamic Republic was "artificially" taking advantage of diplomatic talks to carry out strategic activities bringing it closed to nuclear weapons. Gantz noted that international sanctions were having a "not insignificant" influence on Tehran's decision-making process.

Talking about the situation in Gaza, Gantz said that Israel cannot allow things there to return to how they were before last year's Operation Pillar of Defense, asserting that Israel would not hesitate to use force if things got out of hand.

“Our deterrence remains stable. Hamas is not interested in losing control. It is not the only player there. Terror organizations attempt to act and Hamas tries, not always successfully, to keep them in check,” said Gantz in the wake of sporadic rocket fire from the Strip over the weekend that resulted in no injuries or damage.

The IDF chief also expressed hope that relations with Turkey could be improved and security cooperation could go back to what it was three years ago.

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