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Amos Yadlin Photo:
Yaron Brener



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'Changes in Syria will benefit Israel'

Former MI Chief Amos Yadlin says unrest in Syria may push it out of radical axis naturally

Shiri Hadar

"The changes in Syria bear strategic benefits for Israel," former Military Intelligence Chief and Head of the Institute for National Security Studies Amos Yadlin said Thursday, at a seminar held at Tel Aviv University.

Yadlin said that "For many years defense and political officials recommended that [Israel](#) strike a peace deal with [Syria](#), even if it entailed paying a heavy price. The justification was to pull it out of the radical Syria-[Iran](#) axis.

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"This could happen today naturally, without us paying that price. Peace with Syria is needed regardless of recent events, but the process is positive," he said.

Yadlin further predicted that the Syrian economy is heading for tough times: "There's no tourism to speak of, investors are fleeing, there's a big public deficit – the situation is unstable and the only thing that can make Syria bounce back is a fat Iranian check, something in the neighborhood of \$3-\$5 billion. But even if they get that and even if Assad falls – Syria will never be the same."

Speaking of the Arab Spring, the former MI chief expressed hope that Iran will become part of the process: "The Arab Spring is cause for concern in Israel and we are willing to face the risks alongside the hope it arises.

"If the revolution finds its way to Tehran it could save Israel the huge dilemma of choosing between two alternatives – a viable nuclear Iran or preventing a nuclear Iran."

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