

Bennett: Israel should target Iran, not just its terror proxies

Bennett termed his new strategy of focusing on Iran - rather than its proxies - the "Octopus Doctrine."

By [Gil Hoffman](#) / January 31, 2018 12:33



Education Minister Naftali Bennett speaks at the 2018 INSS Conference, 31 January, 2018. (photo credit: CHEN GALILI)

Israel must immediately change its strategy and hold Iran responsible for attacks from Hezbollah and Syria, security cabinet minister Naftali Bennett (Bayit Yehudi) said Wednesday at the **Institute for National Security Studies conference** in Tel Aviv.

Bennett said that for 30 years, Israel has made the mistake of targeting what he called "mosquitoes" and not "the swamp" and what he called "tentacles" and not "the octopus."

"Our message to Iran: the era of your immunity while you send others and use your national resources to hurt Israel is over," Bennett said.

"A rocket from Lebanon will be treated like an Iranian rocket. We will not waste our resources and energy fighting in Lebanese towns while you recline your chair and watch. We will also not sit idly and watch the accumulation of accurate missiles in Lebanon. Between 2006 and 2012, Hezbollah made a massive leap in the quantities of its rockets, and now has over 130,000. We will not allow it to make a qualitative leap. This strategy means Iran, the Quds Force and the host countries will pay a price."

Bennett said he was not necessarily referring to armed conflict with Iran and its Quds Force but a "war via diplomacy, intelligence, preemptive efforts, technological means, economic sanctions, and – if needed – other means."

He also called for different strategies with Lebanon and Iranian militias in Syria, He

said that unlike in the past, Hezbollah attacking Israel from Lebanon must be seen as a declaration of war by Lebanon against Israel and that "Assad will bear responsibility for actions taking place in and from his territory."

Bennett said Israel must make use of regional opportunities created over the past few years. He said the US and pragmatic Arab countries understand that the center of world terror is Iran, and based on this, Israel can create a regional coalition, if Israel makes drastic changes regarding its policy, the building and training of its armed forces, and regional alliances.

"I believe adopting the Octopus Doctrine, the core of which is acting against the Quds Forces and Iran, while weakening Iran's hold on Lebanon, Syria and Gaza, has the highest chances of preventing war, or shortening it if it breaks out," Bennett said.

Earlier, Public Security Minister Gilad Erdan (Likud), who is also in the security cabinet, said now was the time to persuade the US and other countries to recognize that Israel will permanently control the Golan Heights.

"In the Trump era, Israel needs to speak and do not what is politically correct, but what is correct," Erdan said.

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