

## US and UK expected to be drawn in as Iran prepares retaliation against Israel

Response from Tehran, which blames Israel for killing of Hamas leader, could risk wider regional conflict

Dan Sabbagh / Defence and security editor / Mon 5 Aug 2024

As Israel braces for what appears to be a likely Iranian retaliation, it is almost certain western and regional powers will be drawn in. Overnight, Yoav Gallant, Israel's defence minister, briefed his US counterpart, Lloyd Austin, discussing according to Israel's readout "a series of scenarios" and corresponding "defensive and offensive capabilities" should Tehran attack.

Gallant held a similar discussion with the UK defence secretary, John Healey, on Friday, giving the new Labour minister "an operational situation assessment", Israel said. A day later Britain indicated it was moving military assets into Cyprus to prepare for a possible evacuation of UK nationals from Lebanon. The need for heightened readiness in the Middle East will not be lost on the RAF and its Typhoon pilots stationed at the Akrotiri airbase, either.

[...]

**Eldad Shavit** and **Chuck Freilich**, authors of the **INSS analysis**, argue that a fresh US military deployment of warships and a squadron of fighter jets, announced on Friday, is "intended to minimise as much as possible" the risk of Iran "landing a blow that would force Israel to respond harshly and put the United States in a dilemma of how to act". The argument has a clear logic, although Iran, too, has a better idea of the likely defence plan.

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