

Syria: We fired at IAF jets

Written by Chris Perver

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A spokesman for the Syrian Army has claimed that Syria [fired](#) on Israeli Air Force aircraft last night. The Syrian army says that Israeli jets entered Syrian airspace and "dropped ammunition" (possibly empty fuel tanks), causing no damage or casualties. Syria then responded with anti-aircraft fire, forcing the Israeli pilots to retreat. The IAF have not yet responded to the claims.

Quote: *"We warn the Israeli enemy government against this flagrant aggressive act, and retain the right to respond in an appropriate way," the Syrian spokesman said. The Israel Defense Forces had no immediate comment Thursday on the report. "We have no knowledge of anything like this. We will get back to you," an IDF spokeswoman said by telephone from Tel Aviv.*

Israeli jets have entered Syrian airspace on previous occasions. The last such [occurrence](#) took place prior to the outbreak of the Second Lebanese War, in which Israeli pilots flew low over Syrian President Bashar Assad's palace. Israel wanted to send a warning message to Assad to end his support for Hamas, who had just kidnapped Israeli Corporal Gilad Shalit. It is believed that the kidnapping, which sparked the conflict last July, could not have taken place without the Syrian President's approval. Tensions between the two nations have been high of late. President Assad had threatened to

[launch a war](#)

if Israel did not hand over the Golan Heights to Syria by September. But Javier Solana, the High Representative for the European Common, Foreign and Security policy, has stated that there is

[no potential](#)

for war between Israel and Syria this year.

Quote: *"In an interview Sunday night with Haaretz, European Union foreign policy chief Javier Solana said he saw no reason for any forthcoming military conflict between Israel and Syria. After arriving in Israel last night, he met separately with Prime Minister Ehud Olmert in Jerusalem and Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas. Solana said that Israel took several measures recently aimed at reassuring Damascus, noting that the decision by the Israel Defense Forces to move the location of a major military exercise from the Golan Heights to the Negev was a sign that Israel does not want Syria to misinterpret its actions.*

Personally I think there is little chance of war with Syria, not unless some major development happens. Assad knows that international focus is currently on Iran, and it is doubtful that Olmert

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would have the public backing for another Middle East conflict, at least not after his performance in last year's war. Perhaps this latest spat is Assad's warning message to Olmert to remember the Golan Heights in the upcoming international peace conference in November of this year. The Bible does state that Syria will be dragged into a war with Israel, that will result in the destruction of Damascus (Isaiah 17). But I don't think this will happen just yet.

Source [Haaretz](#) , [Haaretz](#)