

# Publisher's Commentary on the Mideast Situation

Monday, 08 February 2010

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From The Publisher's Desk

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Commentary on the Mideast Situation

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Our Website Coverage Changes

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The Alpha-Omega Report has gone into a "Yellow Alert" mode for purposes of news coverage. This yellow alert coverage will continue through out the week and most likely end on Friday unless a military conflict develops at

which time, the website will switch to a &ldquo;Red Alert&rdquo; with near-continuous coverage as information develops for immediate posting.

The Yellow Alert is issued based on an increasing possibility that a military clash will occur during this week between Israel and her neighbors. As publisher of the website, I&rsquo;ve concluded that there is enough material information developing to prompt publication of news articles related to a possible military clash (or war) between Israel and either Hezbollah, Hamas & Syria or Iran or all four entities.

As noted in our newly posted news coverage of Sunday, February 7, 2010 &ndash; Syria and Hezbollah have put their military forces on &ldquo;high alert&rdquo; for possible action against Israeli forces. For several weeks, Syria and Hezbollah have been shifting forces and continuing to receive incoming arms shipments from Iran. Syria has stepped up training of new anti-aircraft missile systems with Hezbollah forces.

Hezbollah is also now receiving very large and heavy payload ballistic missiles that are solid-fueled. This means that such missiles do not have to take 2-days of preparations before launch. Instead these missiles can be fired on a few minutes notice and then returned to a sheltered hiding spot inside mountains along the Bekaa valley in Lebanon.

For its part, intelligence reports indicate Israeli forces continue to be positioned for a military clash. Israel has been conducting military maneuvers and civil defense drills. Israeli civil defense forces are passing out gas masks to all Israeli citizens this month.

The Israeli Navy has just dispatched 2 warships &ndash; missile corvettes &ndash; to the Red Sea via the Suez Canal.

Rumors are rampant throughout the Mideast in expectation that &lsquo;something&rsquo; is likely to develop militarily in the near future. Even diplomatic circles are engaging in speculation about &ldquo;when&rdquo; military action might unfold.

Some of this talk of imminent war is being fuelled by speculation concerning a warning issued by Iran&rsquo;s President last week. President Ahmadinejad warned the West that on February 11, Iran would make a strike against &ldquo;global arrogance.&rdquo; His vague comments have triggered intense speculation that he was referring to some sort of military action.

Meanwhile, Iran has crossed a &ldquo;red line&rdquo; with Israel by starting high-enrichment production of uranium. Previously, Israeli officials warned that such a move would cross a &ldquo;red line&rdquo; which Israel would not tolerate.

Additionally, Israel had warned Syria against training Hezbollah forces on an anti-aircraft defense system as well as allowing heavy missiles to be transported into Lebanon. The rhetoric for war heated up substantially during the course of last week with both sides issuing increasingly bellicose statements and warnings.

As a result of this increasing, high-level tension and military movements and intelligence chatter, it seems appropriate for The A-O Report to shift news coverage from weekly articles to ongoing news updates on a daily basis. Should hostilities break out, we&rsquo;ll shift to a &ldquo;Red Alert&rdquo; in which we&rsquo;ll update continuously as needed.

While I personally do not anticipate any military clashes this week, I cannot rule out the possibility, based in some

measure on warning by Iran President Ahmadinejad for February 11, or Thursday of this week. While I don't take much stock in what he would say, especially in the notion that he'd be stupid enough to risk hinting at a secret pre-emptive strike plan being prepared by his military. I know would readers might argue to the contrary, and while I tend to agree with you about Ahmadinejad's intelligence, I just don't think he'd be "that" stupid. Regardless of his intelligence, I do give enough credence that he made such an announcement and chose that date, to not ignore it. So, his remarks are part of the consideration for our move to Yellow Alert and a War Watch.

The primary reasons include just what you've read in our news coverage, concerning military movements. The primary basis for the Watch is not so much that either side is planning to strike the week, but rather that an unintended action might spark an escalation into most likely a brief clash that quickly cascades unintentionally into something major.

From what we can gather, both sides are not quite "ready" to take action this week. Perhaps one side or the other will be ready later in the month or more likely in March or April or May. We do understand from intelligence sources that the Israelis have reconsidered their timing for a strike action on their northern border based upon new intelligence concerning their enemies plans to use WMD's.

So, while we're doubtful that anything significant will take place, the tension levels are so high that any little event could mushroom unintentionally and so we're prepared to jump into a daily round of news coverage until something either happens this week or it doesn't at which time we'll probably return to normal, weekly news coverage. In the meantime, look for daily postings on the public website and "intelligence updates" with the donor's section at "The A-O Insider Report. If war breaks out, we'll shift to "Red Alert" and provide ongoing daily postings as developments warrant, on the hour if needed, around the clock.

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