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# IDF chief: Iran's strike on ISIS not as impressive as it says

• By YONAH JEREMY BOB

Iran's missile strike on ISIS in Syria this week was not as significant as Iran claims, IDF Chief of Staff Lt.-Gen. Gadi Eisenkot said on Tuesday.

"Their achievement was less than what was reported in the media. The strike manifested something, but it was far from a direct hit or what they have said," Eisenkot told the Herzliya Conference.

Iran is striving "to get more accurate rockets," which is "all part of their push for hegemony" in the region, he told the policy conference.

Regarding ISIS's terrorists attacks in Tehran on June 7 that triggered Iran's retaliatory missile strike on the Sunni organization on Sunday, the IDF chief said "the terrorist attacks were possibly part of the price for Iran's interventions in Sunni states," and against the ISIS and al-Nusra Sunni terrorist organizations.

Moving on to the 2015 nuclear deal with Tehran that Eisenkot has previously said has the positive effect of giving Israel breathing room regarding the Iranian nuclear threat, he warned that the breather is only for a "short period."

"The world must keep Iran from becoming the next North Korea. It



LT.-GEN. GADI EISENKOT, chief of the IDF General Staff, addresses the Herzliya Conference yesterday. (Hagai Frid)

must work hard to prevent Iran from building a nuclear weapon."

He said, "Iran feels its regional power [by] giving Hezbollah \$800 million per year... and \$70m. per year to Gaza."

Eisenkot briefly waded into the political battle that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Defense Minister Avigdor Liberman, Education Minister Naftali Bennett and others have been fighting over the cabinet approving thousands of housing units for Palestinians in Area C of the West Bank.

Area C contains all of the Israeli settlements and relatively few Palestinians.

With some on the Right attacking the IDF for facilitating the Palestinian construction in Area C, Eisenkot declared unequivocally that the "IDF must remain the army of the people," rejecting "criticism which has not been substantive," but expressing a readiness to "learn from... criticism which is substantive."

Next and despite an extensive dis-

ussion of Iran, Eisenkot emphasized that "Hezbollah is the greatest threat to Israel. It has built tens of thousands of rockets... also it has received advanced Russian weapons... [One in] every four or five homes in south Lebanon is hiding" weapons.

He said Qatar's expulsion of Hamas elements could wind up harming Hezbollah and Lebanon. He warned Lebanon against giving Hamas another base from which to attack Israel. Eisenkot said Lebanon should remember the internal chaos and Israel's intervention in Lebanon decades ago, which came after Palestinian terrorists were expelled from Jordan in 1970, made their way to Lebanon and increasingly attacked Israel from Lebanese territory, sparking Israeli retaliation.

Analyzing the dilemma facing Israel as it and the Palestinian Authority pressure Hamas in the Gaza Strip by reducing the amount of electricity it receives from the Israel Electric Corporation, he said, "We have an interest in Gaza having 24 hours of electricity per day," but also do not want to pay for electricity that Hamas uses to attack Israel.

Eisenkot also surveyed a number of other security challenges and said that Israel's defense doctrine and technologies against rockets and tunnel threats are the most advanced in the world.