

Letters to the Editor: Iran

Verdict on Iran needed in elections

Israel will go to elections for the Knesset and a new government on April 9. The topic of Israel's defense has never been a major election campaign issue because all parties in the past have agreed that where and when it is necessary, Israel will act to protect the state and Jews. Therefore it is unlikely that Iran will be mentioned in the election campaigning to attract votes. But that doesn't distract from reality. The next prime minister and defense minister, together with the new chief of the Israel Defense Forces, will have to decide on a preemptive or preventive war against Iran, and this so far has been lacking. Iran is constantly working on its missile program, nuclear ambitions and gaining the upper hand in controlling all territories north of Israel. The situation in Israel's north has deteriorated; there are Hezbollah tunnels and the United States is withdrawing from Syria, scrambling the geopolitics of the Middle East. Iran could now link Shi'ite partners in Iraq, Syria and Lebanon in one long and large geographical front and menace Israel. In Syria, Iran and Hezbollah could strengthen a military presence near the Golan Heights. All actors will be forced to reassess their relationships. The result could be a series of new balancing acts: Israel trying to tilt Russia against Iran, Turkey playing Russia and the United States off each other, and Syria balancing the Kurds against Turkey. President Trump's decision to withdraw from Syria shows that Israel can only rely on its own national security credentials. And that means the end of the rule of the ayatollahs, for there is no other option that could ensure Israel's security. The Knesset elections need to place this on the table.

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