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By JPOST.COM STAFF

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Article's topics: [Iranian Threat](#), [Leon Panetta](#), [Binyamin Netanyahu](#), [Barack Obama](#), [CIA](#)

Israel knows it needs to coordinate its strategy on Iran with other nations and that attacking Teheran's nuclear facilities would mean "big trouble," CIA director Leon Panetta said on Wednesday.

Acknowledging that he had recently traveled to Israel to meet Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and warn him against a strike on Iran, the CIA chief told *Global Viewpoint* that he "felt assured" Israel would not break ranks with Washington's strategy.

"Yes," he said, "the Israelis are obviously concerned about Iran and focused on it. But [Netanyahu] understands that if Israel goes it alone, it will mean big trouble. He knows that for the sake of Israeli security, they have to work together with others."

Panetta said that the threat posed by Iran "has our full attention," asserting that despite the Obama administration's strategic decision to engage Teheran diplomatically, "no one is naïve about the challenges."

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Panetta reiterated the 2007 National Intelligence Estimate, which assessed that Iran had halted its active nuclear weaponization program in 2003, but warned that "at a minimum," the Islamic republic was "keeping open the option to develop deliverable nuclear weapons" and "continues to develop uranium enrichment technology and nuclear-capable ballistic missiles."



CIA Director Leon Panetta. Photo: AP

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The CIA head said assessing Iran's intentions was "a top priority" for the US. He added that Iran was "not an easy intelligence target."

According to Panetta, while the Iranian nuclear program was cause for significant concern in and of itself, there was also a real risk that if Iran went nuclear, other countries in the region would try to catch up.

"The last thing we need in the Middle East is a nuclear arms race," he said.

Panetta also said the US was trying to assess North Korea's nuclear weapons program and its long-range missile capabilities. He expressed great concern over North Korea's willingness to "sell technology and expertise to anyone willing to pay."

Panetta said the US had good intelligence on both North Korea and Iran, but added that "given [North Korean leader] Kim Jong-Il's health problems and issues of succession, North Korea remains one of the most difficult and unpredictable threats in that part of the world."




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221. #218 The holocaust didn't happen eather?
 Gil - (05/22/2009 18:10)

220. Dolly @ 198 Ultimate Defender
 E. D. Broker - United States (05/22/2009 17:23)

219. #218-You are Dead Wrong
 CSB - USA (05/22/2009 11:16)

218. Jerusalem IS NOT Israel's capital
 Alex Elderman - Canada (05/22/2009 06:29)

217. Panetta, Gates: disciples of the Baker anti-Semite
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Arthur - (05/21/2009 17:06)

215. Iran

Wayneman - USA (05/21/2009 16:54)

214. Just a matter of time

Tim - USA (05/21/2009 16:52)

213. Obama makes Israel the scapegoat, Israel beware #164 Friend of Israel?

Gil - Israel (05/21/2009 16:45)

212. Don't trust Empty Suit Obama

Dick Tuck - USA (05/21/2009 16:29)

211. Iran is controled by madmen.

David - USA (05/21/2009 16:04)

210. To #157 Bryan: Everyone is connected to an umbilical chord. The US is mortgaged to China. One third of the US economy is owned by China.

Sinclair - (05/21/2009 16:03)

209. #181 You are Correct about American Jews!!!

Fred - USA (05/21/2009 16:01)

208. Some harsh facts about Obama ...

Ed - USA (05/21/2009 15:57)

207. Israel vs. Iran

Brad - (05/21/2009 15:50)

206. Shivering little mouse

michael allerton - colorado (05/21/2009 15:38)

205. To Harry @ 178 - Yes, why is it always Israel?

Dolly - Israel (05/21/2009 15:36)

204. #118-You ned to re-examine the Bible yourself... and ask the Egyptians

Brian - nc (05/21/2009 15:33)

203. 117. Rob - Honestly, you should read your Bible

Bless Israel - (05/21/2009 15:05)

202. CIA Director Panetta

H. Cunningham - FL (05/21/2009 14:55)

201. The real problem

Eric in NJ - USA (05/21/2009 14:48)

200. Just for the sake of knowing. who are they who have been 'Friends of Obama'?

Agnes Cohen - Singapore (05/21/2009 14:28)

199. The same warning was given to PM Sharett by President Johnston in 1967 and Israel ignored the warning and went alone but with G-d instead.

Leslie Prendergast - (05/21/2009 14:01)

198. To E.D. Broker @ 179 - A Pro-emptive Defense

Dolly - Israel (05/21/2009 13:52)

197. Do what's best for Israel

John - USA (05/21/2009 12:58)

196. Israel Beware of Obama

Wesley Freeman - USA (05/21/2009 12:49)

195. Karen 182

Dave - USA (05/21/2009 12:21)

194. #110

CSB - USA (05/21/2009 11:46)

193. The US' Panetta-2

CSB - USA (05/21/2009 10:51)

192. The US' Panetta-1

CSB - USA (05/21/2009 10:34)

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