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US Leads Unprecedented War Games Exercise in Strait of Hormuz

By [John Glaser](#)

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Battleships, aircraft carriers, minesweepers and submarines from 25 nations [are swarming into the Persian Gulf](#), in the largest such military exercise ever undertaken in the region, as concerns of a looming Israeli strike on Iran still linger



Countries leading the massive war games exercise include the United States, Britain, France, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Fleets of warships will flood the Strait of Hormuz, the important waterway through which 40 percent of the world's seaborne oil passes, as a show of force to

deter Iran from trying to close the straits or retaliate against US assets in the region, even in response to an unprovoked Israeli strike.

Despite the unprecedented scale of the operations, chances of a US or Israeli strike on Iran have lessened considerably in recent weeks, as American refusal to back an Israeli strike have turned the tide of war-hawks in Israel. The Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu remains one of the few still advocating harsher postures, and he is [increasingly isolated](#).

A torrent of military and intelligence analysis rejecting the need or viability of a preventive strike on Iran have come out in recent days. [A report](#) by dozens of former government officials, national security experts and retired military officers released Thursday concluded military action would spark an uncontrollable regional war and have counterproductive results.

“We do not believe it would lead to regime change, regime collapse or capitulation,” the report says, adding that an attack would increase Iran’s motivation to build a bomb, in order to deter further military action “and redress the humiliation of being attacked.”

The US has made it clear to both Israel and Iran that a military strike is not imminent. “I suspect the Americans have given quiet assurances through indirect channels that they have no intention of moving into Iranian national waters,” Scott Lucas, an Iran expert at Birmingham University in England, [said](#).

“Both sides have good reasons to avoid a conflict – they have other issues to deal with right now.” Still, the war games do a good job of escalating tensions in a very uneasy region.