

Israel News
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PM to present Trump with 'concrete ideas' on Iran deal

As PM Benjamin Netanyahu prepares to discuss Iranian threat with U.S. President Donald Trump in New York, Israeli media reports that the IAEA failed to investigate undisclosed, suspected nuclear sites in Iran • Netanyahu meets with U.S. Jewish leaders.

Gideon Allon

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu welcomes U.S. President Donald Trump during the latter's visit to Israel | Photo: GPO

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was busy Monday making final preparations for his meeting with U.S. President Donald Trump later in the day, where he was expected to lobby against the Iran nuclear agreement.

Netanyahu was scheduled to meet Trump at 1 p.m. (8 p.m. Israel time), where the Israeli premier is expected to reiterate his call on the American president to amend or scrap the agreement reached between Iran and Western powers in July 2015.

As another deadline to certify that Iran is adhering to the agreement looms – by law, Iran's compliance must be certified every 90 days – it appears that Trump may be amenable to Netanyahu's demands. Trump has declared in the past that he did not wish to certify Iran's compliance next month, putting the future of the deal in question.

Netanyahu's office said Sunday that the prime minister planned to present Trump with "concrete ideas" as to how to change or reverse the nuclear agreement.

Netanyahu was also preparing for his address to the United Nations General Assembly, scheduled for Tuesday. Efforts have reportedly been made to coordinate the key arguments of Netanyahu's address, which will also focus on the Iranian threat, with those of the American president's address, to avoid any obvious contradictions. This effort was a result of the gaps that emerged between the positions expressed by Netanyahu and Trump's predecessor Barack Obama at last year's general assembly.

Netanyahu's address is expected to be shorter than in previous years, and include a direct appeal to Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei.

Netanyahu was preparing his address when Israeli paper Haaretz reported Sunday that International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors failed to investigate information

regarding a number of undeclared, suspected nuclear sites in Iran. The paper quoted officials as saying that "almost all the suspected sites have not been visited by IAEA inspectors – either because of Iran's refusal to grant entry or U.N. officials' reluctance to confront Iran on the issue."

Besides his strong opposition to the nuclear agreement with Iran, Netanyahu was expected to relay Israel's concern over Iran's presence in Syria, close to Israel's northern border.

Upon landing in New York last week, Netanyahu reiterated the message that "Israel will not tolerate an Iranian presence at our northern border. It is a military presence that poses a threat not only to us, but also to our Arab neighbors and we will be forced to act against it."

Meanwhile, Netanyahu met on Sunday with leaders of the U.S. Jewish community. Representatives of the Reform and Conservative Jewish movements voiced disappointment at not being granted meetings with Netanyahu, wanting to discuss Jerusalem's recent decision to scrap plans for an egalitarian prayer plaza at the Western Wall – a decision that drew the ire of many Reform and Conservative Jews in the U.S.