Iran to UN: Israeli Defense Minister Threatened to Nuke Us

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Iran on Wednesday accused Israel of threatening the Islamic Republic with a nuclear strike, telling the UN Security Council that recent comments by Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Ya’alon were proof of “the regime’s aggressive nature,” according to Iranian media.

Ya’alon’s comments, made earlier this month at a conference hosted by a Tel Aviv-based nonprofit that seeks justice for victims of terror, mentioned “certain steps” Israel could take if it were out of other options, and referenced the US’s use of atomic weapons in Japan.

Iran’s ambassador to the UN, Gholam Ali Khoshrou, sent a letter on Wednesday to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon as well as to the UN Security Council in which he wrote that Ya’alon’s comments were tantamount to an admission that Israel has nuclear weapons and is willing to use them against other countries, the semi-official Fars news agency reported.

“Moshe Ya’alon’s recent remarks and the Zionist official’s implied reference to the possibility of using nuclear weapons against the Islamic Republic like what happened in Hiroshima and Nagasaki…shows more than ever the regime’s aggressive nature,” Khoshrou wrote.

“The impudent remarks have challenged the primary principles ruling the armed conflicts and the international humanitarian rights and weaken the international peace and security and therefore, the UNSC is expected to condemn these irresponsible remarks and clear threats of using nuclear bomb and massacre of civilians,” the letter added.

Israel has complained to the United Nations several times over explicit comments made by Iranian officials it says threaten the country’s extermination, as it has lobbied for world pressure to prevent Tehran from gaining nuclear capabilities.

While Jerusalem has engaged in saber-rattling against Iran in the past, and top officials still say they maintain the right to defend the country using whatever means necessary, most analyses estimate an Israeli strike would consist of conventional weapons used to thwart the country’s nuclear program.

Ya’alon’s comments, made in Jerusalem on May 5 at a conference hosted by the Shurat HaDin Israel Law Center, do not explicitly mention Iran or nuclear weapons. Instead the defense minister, speaking in English, made vague comments about “certain steps” Israel might consider against tyrannical regimes threatening the nation’s security.

Referring to “cases in which we feel like we don’t have the answer by surgical operations,” the defense minister said “we might take certain steps that we believe…should be taken in order to defend ourselves.

“Of course, we should be sure that we can look at the mirror after the decision, or the operation. Of course, we should be sure that it is a military necessity. We should consider cost and benefit, of course,” he said. “But, at the end, we might take certain steps.”

He then said he was reminded of US president Harry Truman who “was asked, How do you feel after deciding to launch the nuclear bombs, Nagasaki and Hiroshima, causing at the end the fatalities of 200,000, casualties? And he said, When I heard from my officers the alternative is a long war with Japan, with potential fatalities of a couple of millions, I thought it is a moral decision.

“We are not there yet,” Ya’alon then added.

Israel maintains a policy of what it calls nuclear ambiguity regarding its reported stocks of nuclear weapons, which it does not officially admit to having. Foreign reports, however, claim the country is in possession of thousands of atomic warheads.

A top adviser to Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said Wednesday that over 80,000 Iranian missiles “are ready to rain down on Tel Aviv and Haifa” should Israel attack the Islamic Republic, in apparent response to Ya’alon’s comments.

Yahya Rahim Safavi, a former commander in the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps, told Fars Iran would “ruin” Israeli cities if faced with aggression by the Jewish state.”

“The Zionists and the US are aware of the power of Iran and Hezbollah,” Safavi said, referring to the Lebanese terror organization backed by Tehran. “The Zionists have many problems and they know that Iran is too powerful for them grapple with.”

“We have displayed part of our military capabilities while we have kept many of our achievements and capabilities hidden to outsiders,” Safavi warned. “Our response will be crushing not just to the Zionist regime, but to any other aggressor who intends to take action against us.”