

IAF Chief: We are Prepared

The Israel Defense Forces have been closely monitoring chemical weapons in Syria, remaining alert to the possibility that the dangerous weapons may end up in the hands of Hezbollah.

"We are called upon to prepare for any possible scenario or threat, even in dealing with non-conventional weapons," Israel Air Force Commander Maj. Gen. Amir Eshel said recently. "This decision is for the country's decision makers to deliberate. But we provide the relevant capabilities so that if it is decided to use them, we are prepared."

Eshel said Syria's disintegration was "a known fact" and pointed out that Syria was in Israel's backyard.

"We need to prepare a response, and the IAF has a central role in this," Eshel said. "Chemical weapons is one area in which we are planning a response."

The IAF is also preparing for the possibility that Hezbollah will continue to try to fly small drones into Israeli airspace. In October, the IAF intercepted over southern Israel an Iranian-produced drone that was launched by Hezbollah. The drone's small size makes it hard to identify, and Eshel said it would be impossible to develop an impenetrable defense against such drones.

"Iran is continuing on its nuclear path and the IAF is preparing itself so that all options are truly on the table," Eshel said.