

Israel's Chief of Staff: 'We Are Prepared'

Chief of the General Staff Lt. Gen. Benny Gantz addressed the 13th annual Herzilya Conference Monday, covering a wide range of topics by focusing on the specific threats in each of Israel's regional sectors and how the IDF deals with them.

Lt. Gen. Gantz said that the challenges facing the IDF demand measures to be taken in the present alongside preparations for the future. Referring specifically to the presence of Hezbollah along Israel's northern border he said that "Lebanon cannot claim that it is a sovereign state without holding itself responsible for actions that take place within its territory."

The Chief of Staff described the importance of analyzing the IDF's past in order to be best prepared for the future. "Some people say that to not look back is a valid philosophy; to not look back is not a valid philosophy. One must always learn from his past," he said, while maintaining that many changes have taken place in the ever-evolving Middle East.

"This year we are marking forty years since the [1973] Yom Kippur War; in the past forty years the battlefield has changed dramatically," he said, adding that that may have been Israel's last experience of battle against a conventional army.

Lt. Gen. Gantz said that the IDF's capabilities have also evolved dramatically in the past forty years. "Today we can strike at targets in one day that in the past took whole wars to strike," he said.

Referring to the different challenges posed by fighting against terror organizations, the Chief of Staff maintained that the IDF's superior intelligence, technology and firepower

will continue to grant it the upper hand long into the future. "Hezbollah does not have an air force like ours, and never will have one," he said.

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