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Israel fires at Syria after attack on soldiers



Israel's army fired artillery into Syria on Friday night after gunshots and shells were directed at soldiers on the Israeli-occupied sector of the Golan Heights, the military said. "A short while ago, artillery and shots were fired at IDF (Israel Defense Forces) soldiers along the security fence between Israel and Syria," it said in a statement. "No soldiers were injured and no damage was caused. IDF soldiers responded with artillery fire towards the source of the shooting." The statement said "a direct hit was identified" and that the army had informed U.N. authorities about the incident. Earlier this month, Defense Minister Moshe Yaalon reiterated Israel would respond to any attacks on its territory, after a previous incident of a Syrian mortar shell and small-arms fire on the Golan. "We shall not allow in any form the establishment of a routine of sporadic firing at our civilians or our forces," Yaalon said. There has in recent months been an uptick in stray fire on the Golan from the two-year civil war raging in Syria, with Israeli forces firing back at the source of the shooting. Israel is closely monitoring the ceasefire line with Syria out of concern that jihadist elements among the rebels fighting President Bashar al-Assad's regime could attack the Jewish state. Israel seized the Golan from Syria in the 1967 Six-Day War and annexed it in 1981, in a move never recognized by the international community. Since 1974, the United Nations' Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) has been monitoring the Syrian side of the armistice line.