

Ex-security figures in Israel urge Netanyahu to accept Iran deal, work with U.S.

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WASHINGTON (JTA) — Nearly 70 former Israeli top security officials urged Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to treat the Iran nuclear agreement as a done deal and to repair relations with the United States.

“Recognizing that the P5+1 Agreement with Iran is an accomplished fact, we, the undersigned, urge the Israeli government to adopt certain policies,” said the ad appearing Monday in the daily newspaper Haaretz’s Hebrew edition.

P5+1 refers to the six major powers, led by the United States, that reached the sanctions relief for nuclear restrictions deal with Iran on July 14.

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The letter called for the Netanyahu government to “renew the trust between and enhance the political and security cooperation with the U.S. administration in order to prepare for the challenges emanating from the agreement.”

The challenges cited in the letter included procedures for Israel and the United States to monitor Iran’s compliance with the agreement, planning actions should Iran breach the agreement and continue its disruptive activities in the region, and special military assistance to Israel so it can preserve its qualitative military edge.

Netanyahu vehemently opposes the agreement and wants the U.S. Congress to

exercise a law that would allow it to kill the deal before a deadline at the end of September. The Israeli leader has said he opposes any perception that he is accepting compensation for the deal from the Obama administration until he is certain that Congress has not stopped the deal.

The letter was spearheaded by Ami Ayalon, a former chief of Israel's Shin Bet internal security service, and includes a number of other retired senior officials of Israel's intelligence agencies and the military.

It also calls on Netanyahu to take steps toward Israeli-Palestinian peace so that Israel can coalesce with moderate Arab nations, "which will act against the extremist forces that foster instability in the region."