

A New Provocation: US Establishes First Permanent Military Base Inside of Israel

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In terms of US and Middle East geopolitics, something extremely significant has just taken place this week, but you wouldn't know it by looking at the Western mainstream press. This latest addition to the Pentagon's imperial portfolio of over 800 overseas military bases is sure to fuel even more resistance to what many see as a policy of global hegemony.

On Monday, the United States formally unveiled its plan to establish a permanent military installation *inside* of Israel.

The new US air defense base will be located in the Negev desert – a “base within a base” sharing the new location with an existing IDF facility at Mashabim Air Base located between the towns of Dimona and Yerucham. The base will fall under the umbrella of US [European Command](#) (EUCOM) headquartered in Stuttgart, Germany.

Plans for the new US Air Force base began under former US president Barack Obama, and transitioned to formation under President Donald Trump.

Visited Israel to thank US Soldiers serving & training with Israeli troops. US/Israel relationship is deep-rooted. [@USArmyEurope](#)
pic.twitter.com/DWVEw47qUI

— MG John Gronski (@MGGronski) [September 18, 2017](#)

According to the [Times of Israel](#):

Brig. Gen. Tzvika Haimovitch, head of the IAF's Aerial Defense Command, announced the establishment of the installation on Monday evening.

“It's nothing short of historic,” he said. It demonstrates the “years-old alliance between the United States and the State of Israel.”

Already, we have seen Israeli PM Benjamin ‘Bibi’ Netanyahu threaten Russian President Vladimir Putin regarding Iran's military presence in Syria, warning that [‘Israel may act to curb Iran's clout in Syria.’](#) Naturally, this new facility will be viewed by regional stakeholders as a counter weight to the new Syrian situation.

The US base may also be used to launch air sorties to defend Israel's recent illegal

annexation of the part of the Golan Heights, land which it has managed to take under the cover of the Syrian conflict. Recently, Israel has managed to pry away this contested land from Syria [with the help of Al Nusra terrorists](#) on the ground, after they previously [chased out UNDOF Peacekeepers](#) which had been positioned there since 1974. Amazingly, the UN still [has not updated its website](#) to express this new reality on the ground (still showing a mission photo from 2012).

Earlier reports clearly show how Tel Aviv has been [providing material assistance to Al Nusra terrorist fighters](#) – a policy which Israel has not apologised for.

This week's joint military announcement by the US and Israel also happens to coincide with the Jewish feast Rosh Hashanah. The *Times* says:

“It's a few days before Rosh Hashanah” — the Jewish new year — “and we are undergoing a renewal and growing in our abilities that are important and necessary for the State of Israel.”

According to the Israeli spokesperson, the establishment of a US base in Israel will send a “message to the region.”

Whether that's perceived as a positive message, or a message of US imperial expansion remains to be seen, but by most accounts, it's likely to be the latter.

If anything, the establishment of a US base in occupied Palestine could help to reinvigorate the international pro-Palestinian activist movement, which traditionally has had an anti-Imperialist message in its mission.

Generally speaking, it's hard to see how such a move by the US can be seen as a positive development for the region. Add to this other direct provocations by the US on behalf of Israel, and we have a recipe for potential disaster down the road. Earlier in his term, Trump also announced his desire to relocate the US Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem – seen by many as an aggressive move by Washington, which would be viewed as an affront to a long-established policy respecting the political and religious neutrality of Jerusalem. Note that the [Jerusalem Embassy Act](#) was passed into law in 1995, although successive US presidents have opted out of such a move in the interests of maintaining peace over this contentious issue.

Somewhat shockingly, Gen. Haimovitch went on to claim that this new base would somehow help to support an operation like the brutal Israel bombing of Gaza in the summer 2014, which saw the slaughter of some 1,500 Palestinian natives, many of them women and children. The *Times* explains:

He said that the importance of air defense was made clear during the 2014 Gaza war, when thousands of rockets were fired at Israel, as well as through “assessments of the threats we expect to face in the future.”

For decades, cohorts of US forces and technical advisors have been based in Israel, running joint exercises with the IDF, and also installing and operating military projects like the famous [Iron Dome](#) missile defense array (also run out of Stuttgart, Germany) which went

online in 2011.



The Arrow 3 missile defense system that was delivered to the Israeli Air Force on January 18, 2017
(Source: Israeli Defense Ministry)

It seems that this latest deployment is not only about defense, but about projecting power in the region – with neighbors Syria and Lebanon in its immediate sights. The new project will feature a new *long-range* missile system, the [Arrow 3](#), delivered by the US to Israel in January (image, left), and the medium-range “David’s Sling” missile system, and an expansion of the short-range Iron Dome missile defense system.

The nearby town of Dimona is also home to Israel’s notorious nuclear reactor, and its unaccounted for nuclear warhead arsenal.

Journalist [Richard Silverstein](#) explains the fundamental problem with Israel’s ‘undeclared’ nuclear weapons operation at Dimona:

“In 1959, Israel began construction on its reactor in Dimona. Eventually, there were thousands of workers both building the plant and, once it was constructed, working within it to build the arsenal of 200 nuclear weapons Israel is reputed to possess. An excellent short overall history of the project can be [found online](#).”

“The secrecy of the nuclear programme, one interviewee calls it a “KGB state,” goes hand in hand with the Israel’s overall opacity around all manner of security issues. It’s not surprising that Israel has put its fate in the hands of a few nuclear bureaucrats like those who run Dimona, because it runs its overall military apparatus in the same way. No civilian oversight to speak of. The generals get what they want. All in the name of protecting the state. It’s a devil’s bargain.”

Aside from being Israel’s alleged ‘nuclear deterrent’, many also regard Dimona as [a nuclear liability](#), and a giant ‘[dirty bomb](#)’ contamination risk to the region.

Now Israel has a US base on its soil – another perfect *Casus Belli*, or target. It goes without

saying that if anyone so much as *grazes* this sacred facility, or even threatens to do anything to it, this will undoubtedly be used by the US to step-up 'security operations' in the region and further inflaming an already tense situation in the Middle East.

All by design, of course.

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