

Israel to Station German Nuclear Submarine in Persian Gulf

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Ahead of a Israeli-German cabinet meeting in Berlin, median reports indicate that Israel intends to station one of its German-made Dolphin submarines in the waters of the Persian Gulf.

“Israel’s use of the dolphin submarine in exercises in the red sea aroused fears that Israel may seek to maintain a continued presence in the Persian Gulf as soon as it receives its submarines form Germany in 2011-2012,” the tagesspiegel said on Sunday.

The meeting, delayed in November due to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s illness, is expected to focus on Israel’s push to buy a sixth Dolphin-class nuclear submarine from the Germans.

During the day-long trip by the centre-right government, Netanyahu seeks to expand Tel Aviv’s submarine fleet.

Israel has previously received three submarines as a donation form the government of the then German chancellor Gerhard Schroeder.

The German newspaper Berliner Zeitung in 2003 revealed that Germany`s leading shipyard company Howaldtswerke-Deutsche Werft was involved in negotiations with Israel to construct two additional Dolphin submarines.

The company confirmed the reports adding the German government had approved them. Days later the German Focus magazine reported that Tel Aviv will not be receiving the submarines as the German government had decided to halt the delivery of the two submarines to Israel.

The Dolphin submarines are among the most sophisticated and capable submarines in the world, that could be equipped with nuclear missiles. Built in German shipyards for the Israel Navy, the submarine is capable of carrying American-supplied Harpoon cruise missiles equipped with nuclear warheads.

This is while political groups opposed to Israel’s “occupation, settler and war politics” have announced plans to demonstrate near the Federal Chancellor’s Officer.

“Why is a joint cabinet session taking place with a racist, fascist, Zionist ideology?” one of the groups asked in its announcement.

After the United States, Germany is the principal donor of both economic and military aid to

Israel. While restrictive German export regulations bar the sale of weapons to crisis areas, the German government has justified its actions by describing the move as “special responsibility” towards Tel Aviv.

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