

Preparing for War: US to boost weapons stockpile in Israel

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JERUSALEM: The United States is to significantly increase the amount of military equipment held in Israel as part of a move to upgrade security ties between the two allies, press reports said on Thursday.

The move, which will see an extra 400-million-dollars worth of smart bombs and other precision weaponry and equipment moved to Israel over the next two years, was approved last week by the US Congress, the Israeli correspondent of Defence News reported.

The upgrade will see the value of US military equipment stockpiled in Israel rise to one billion dollars in 2011, with another 200 million to be added in 2012, the paper said. In 2007, the stockpile was valued at 800 million dollars. Such equipment can be used by US forces throughout the world but also by the host country, under the terms of the US foreign aid law governing reserve stockpiles for allies.

Israel made use of the stockpile during the 2006 war with the Lebanese Hezbollah militia—a conflict which killed 1,200 people in Lebanon, most of them civilians, and around 160 Israelis, most of them soldiers, the Haaretz daily reported. afp

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