

Israeli Minister's Nuke Comment 'Raises Huge Number of Questions'

Israel has nuclear weapons but does not acknowledge they exist

By [Dave DeCamp](#)

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Russia's Foreign Ministry [said Tuesday](#) that an Israeli minister's comments about nuking Gaza raised questions about Israel's unofficial nuclear arsenal.

Israeli Heritage Minister Amichai Eliyahu made the comments on Sunday, saying there are no innocent civilians in Gaza and that dropping nuclear weapons on the enclave is an option for Israel.

Israel is estimated to have somewhere [between 90 and 300 nuclear warheads](#) but does not acknowledge its arsenal. Eliyahu's comments appeared to confirm that Israel has nuclear weapons, going against the Israeli government's policy of ambiguity on the issue.

"It raised a huge number of questions," Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said about Eliyahu's comments. "The number one question is, did we hear an official declaration that [Israel] has nuclear weapons? Consequently, the next questions that everyone had were: Where are the international organizations, where is the IAEA, where are the inspectors?"

Zakharova also asked where Israel has conducted nuclear tests.

"If this program exists and existed, where were the tests conducted, at what testing grounds? Obviously, apparently not in the region, then where? And isn't the United States behind all this?" she said.

The US also maintains a policy of ambiguity concerning Israel's nuclear weapons program. In 2021, [Axios reported](#) that President Biden and then-Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett

renewed a decades-old informal agreement on Israel's nukes.

Every US president since Nixon has agreed not to press Israel to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and in return, Israel agrees not to declare its nuclear arsenal and operate the program covertly.

The ambiguity allows the US to give Israel aid, [which is technically illegal](#) due to the existence of Israel's nuclear arsenal. Under foreign assistance laws, the US cannot provide aid to nuclear-armed states that refuse to sign the NPT.

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Featured image: File photo provided by Wikipedia shows Israel's nuclear-capable Jericho II missile carrying the Shavit rocket, which is used for launching satellites into orbit.

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