

U.S. to Store \$800m in Military Gear in Israel

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The U.S. Army will double the value of emergency military equipment it stockpiles on Israeli soil, and Israel will be allowed to use the U.S. ordnance in the event of a military emergency, according to a report in Monday's issue of the U.S. weekly Defense News.

The report, written by Barbara Opall-Rome, the magazine's Israel correspondent, said that an agreement reached between Washington and Jerusalem last month will bring the value of the military gear to \$800 million.

This is the final phase of a process that began over a year ago to determine the type and amount of U.S. weapons and ammunition to be stored in Israel, part of an overarching American effort to stockpile weapons in areas in which its army may need to operate while allowing American allies to make use of the ordnance in emergencies.

The agreement was signed by Brig. Gen. Ofer Wolf, who heads the Israel Defense Forces' technology and logistics branch, and Rear Adm. Andy Brown, the logistics director of U.S. Army European Command.

The United States began stockpiling \$100 million in military equipment in Israel in 1990, 12 years after it first began storing weapons within the territory of key allies, starting with South Korea.

An American defense official told Defense News that the U.S.-Israel agreement reflects the Obama administration's continued commitment to Israel's security and the understanding that changes in U.S. economic conditions and inflation have limited the weapons available to Israel.

The deal allows Israel access to a wider spectrum of military ordnance, and the U.S. official said his government was considering which forms of military supplies would be added to stores in Israel. Missiles, armored vehicles, aerial ammunition and artillery ordnance are already stockpiled in the country.

The agreement is expected to aid Israel in its effort to bolster its weapons stockpiles for use in an emergency. Israel's stores of aerial and artillery ammunition were depleted during the Second Lebanon War in 2006, nearly reaching levels the IDF considers dangerously low.



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