



ISRAEL MATTERS!

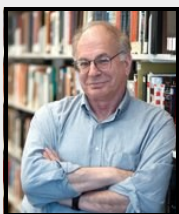
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Kerry Reassures Israel on Deal to Rid Syria of Chemical Weapons

US Presidential Medal of Freedom Awarded to Israeli Psychologist



President Obama awarded Daniel Kahneman, a Princeton psychologist known for his application of psychology to economic analysis, the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Professor Kahneman previously won the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences in 2000.

After escaping Nazi occupation in World War II, Dr. Kahneman immigrated to Israel, where he served in the Israel Defense Forces and trained as a psychologist.

President Obama said, "The Presidential Medal of Freedom goes to men and women who have dedicated their own lives to enriching ours. This year's honorees have been blessed with extraordinary talent, but what sets them apart is their gift for sharing that talent with the world."

Kahneman responded, "This is a great honor. I am completely surprised. It is a medal that only very few civilians, who are not presidents, receive. The chance of receiving such an honor is the same as being struck by lightning." He added, the idea behind this medal, is "American" in its democratic spirit. "The idea is that there are several ways to contribute to democracy."

Among the 16 people receiving the award this year is Sen. Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii), a staunch supporter of Israel. Past Israeli recipients of the award include President Shimon Peres and Jewish Agency chairman Natan Sharansky. [theguardian]



U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry assured Israel a U.S.-Russian deal to remove Syria's chemical weapons would be effective, addressing concern that a lack of resolve would embolden Iran in its nuclear drive.

"We cannot have hollow words in the conduct of international affairs, because that affects all other issues, whether Iran or North Korea or others," Kerry said after talks with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Kerry briefed Netanyahu on what he called "the most far-reaching chemical weapons removal ever", after the Israeli leader said the deal would be judged on whether it achieved the arsenal's "complete destruction".

Israeli officials had privately expressed dismay about U.S. President Barack Obama's handling of the Syria crisis, fearful that any failure to follow through with threatened military action would encourage Iran to press on with its nuclear work.

"The Syrian regime must be stripped of all its chemical weapons, and that would make our entire region a lot safer," Netanyahu said after his talks with Kerry. "The determination the international community shows regarding Syria will have a direct impact on the Syrian regime's patron Iran. Iran must understand the consequences of its continual defiance of the international community by its pursuit towards nuclear weapons," Netanyahu added.

Kerry said the framework agreement he reached with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in Geneva "has the full ability ... to strip all of the chemical weapons from Syria". Kerry reiterated that the military option remained should Syrian President Bashar al-Assad fail to comply with the deal.

The accord called for Assad to account for his chemical arsenal within a week and let international inspectors eliminate it all by the middle of 2014.

"The egregious use of chemical weapons by the Assad regime against innocent men, women, children, their own citizens, all indiscriminately murdered in the dead of night is unacceptable," Kerry said, refer-

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Israel: The Little Giant of Military Exporters

Despite decades of Arab boycotts and pressure on countries to not deal with it, military exports from Israel continue to grow.

In the last year, Israeli firms sold \$1.8 billion worth of weapons to the Americas (mostly the United States, but a third of that to South America), \$1.6 billion to European customers, and \$200 million to African nations.

Four years ago Israel became one of the top four arms exporters on the planet, shipping \$7.2 billion worth of military equipment. The year before Israel had exported \$6.9 billion. The U.S. is the largest exporter, followed by Russia and Germany.

About half the sales are for anti-aircraft systems. Israel has a wide range of anti-aircraft and anti-missile systems, many of them using successful Israeli air-to-air missile designs for ground based systems. Israeli air defense technology has proved itself in combat, is famous for its reliability and technical excellence, and is priced to sell.

Israel is a major exporter of military space satellites, night vision and surveillance gear, and all manner of military communications equipment. Israel is also second only to the U.S. as a UAV exporter and was first to develop key UAV technology on which the U.S. has built.

Israel has also pioneered the development of add-on armor for combat and non-combat vehicles. It is also one of the premier developers of electronic warfare equipment (for aircraft and ground vehicles). Israel exports warships, warplane upgrades, and all manner of technical service.

Israel is holding on to the number four despite being much smaller than the top three (the U.S. has a population of 310 million, Russia 142 million, and Germany 82 million people, compared to 7.8 million in Israel). Israel defense exports account for about three percent of their GDP, compared to .7 percent in Russia and even less in the United States and Germany.

Israel and Germany have been gaining more sales because of reliability and quality. Israel has a major advantage in that many of its weapons and military equipment have proved their worth in combat.

Often subject to arms embargoes, Israel learned to design and build a lot of its own weapons and equipment. With a highly educated and motivated workforce, Israeli gear was often world class, while also less expensive and more reliable (and often combat proven) than similar equipment coming from the United States and Europe.

[StrategyPage]

Tel Aviv Deploys Free Wi-Fi Network

Tel Aviv-Jaffa has completed deployment of its Wi-Fi network, with the establishment of 60 hotspots in the city, a process that took two years. 20 more hotspots will be established at the Exhibition Grounds, the Florentin neighborhood, Cinemateque, and Kiryat Hasefer, to link residents to the municipality's Facebook page.

The Wi-Fi network is the largest in Israel, covering an area of 3,660,920 square meters. The area includes commercial centers, main commercial streets, boulevards, parks, and the beach.

Use of the public Wi-Fi network is free. Each user will receive a half-megabyte bandwidth. Each hotspot will have 20 megabytes bandwidth for downloading and 3 megabytes bandwidth for uploading.

"Tel Aviv-Jaffa continues to be an especially attractive environment for innovative ventures," said city councilman Alon Solar, who began the Wi-Fi project. "In our communications era, free online access is a basic service that should be provided to residents and local and foreign visitors. This is another step toward positioning 21st century Tel Aviv as one of the world's leading cities." [Globes]

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ring to an August 21 attack that Washington says killed more than 1,400 people. "And we have said in no uncertain terms that this should never happen again. This country (Israel) understands the words 'never again' perhaps more than any other," he said, a reference to the Nazi Holocaust in which six million Jews were killed, many of them in gas chambers.

Netanyahu reiterated his call for a "credible military threat" to back up sanctions and diplomatic efforts aimed at curbing Iran's nuclear program. Iran says its nuclear work is entirely peaceful.

In an interview on ABC's "This Week with George Stephanopolous", Obama defended his handling of the Syrian crisis.

Obama also said he and new Iranian President Hassan Rouhani had exchanged letters about the Syrian situation and that Tehran understood that a potential nuclear-armed Iran "is a far larger issue" for the United States.

Earlier, Netanyahu again hinted at possible Israeli military strikes on Iran should he deem diplomacy a dead end. "In any case, Israel must be poised and ready to defend itself, by itself, against any threat - and this capability and readiness are more important now than ever," he said. [Yahoo!News]