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Netanyahu at AIPAC: Palestinians Must Join Israel on the Side of Peace and Hope

Israel: Iran Missile Shipment in Red Sea a “Game-changer”

Israeli naval forces say a ship from Iran that its military forces recently boarded was heading to Gaza with advanced rockets to turn the territory into a much greater terror threat to Israel and others. Iran has already provided the anti-Israel terrorist group Hezbollah tens of thousands of missiles in southern Lebanon despite the presence of United Nations peacekeepers there, say Israeli military analysts.

The shipment intercepted by Israeli naval commandos Wednesday in the Red Sea, more than 1,000 miles from Israel, was carrying Syrian-made M-302 rockets with a range of up to 125 miles and would have significantly improved the capabilities of Gaza terrorists to put nearly all of Israel in their range. The Israeli Ministry of Defense said the Syrian missiles would have been a “game-changer.” It is a missile with significantly longer-range than now in Gaza, with a bigger warhead, that could hit Haifa in the north, and Tel Aviv and Jerusalem in the country’s center.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the shipment showed how much worse things would become if Iran is allowed to keep developing nuclear technology. “At a time when it talks with the world powers, that same Iran is sending lethal weapons to terror organizations and it is doing it with an elaborate network of covert global operations with the aim of streaming rockets, missiles, and other lethal weapons to harm innocent civilians,” he said. [USAToday]

Peace will begin when PLO leader Mahmoud Abbas recognizes Israel as a Jewish state, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu told AIPAC’s 2014 Policy Conference recently.



“Abbas must recognize the Jewish state,” Netanyahu, the last major speaker of the three day, 14,000-person event, said. “In doing so, he’d be telling the Palestinians that, while we have a territorial dispute, the right of the Jewish people to a state of their own is beyond dispute. “Recognize it. No excuses. No delays. It’s time,” he told the audience. “The Palestinians need to stop denying history.”

Netanyahu said, peace is Israel’s highest aspiration and that he’s prepared to make a historic peace with the Palestinians -- “a peace that would end a century of conflict and bloodshed.” He went on to say, “peace would be good for us. Peace would be good for the Palestinians. But peace would also open up the possibility of establishing formal ties between Israel and leading countries in the Arab world.” Many Arab leaders today already realize that Israel is not their enemy, that peace with the Palestinians would turn our relations with them and with many Arab countries into open and thriving relationships, he added.

“Peace is Israel’s highest aspiration,” the prime minister said, reiterating that Israel was doing its fair share in trying to bring about an end to the conflict. “We are prepared to make a historic peace agreement with our Palestinian neighbors that will end a century of conflict.”

Joking about how much he likes to draw lines, he said, “I hope the Palestinian leadership will stand with Israel and the US on the right side of the moral divide. On the side of peace, reconciliation and hope.”

Netanyahu spoke with warmth and appreciation for his extremely supportive audience, a day after his tense meeting in the Oval Office, in which the prime minister sternly told US President Barack Obama that Israel was pulling its weight in the peace process while the Palestinians were not.

Netanyahu spent the bulk of his speech addressing the Iranian threat, especially in relation to the crisis in Syria. He recalled a visit to the Golan Heights field hospital that is treating Syrian refugees. He met two

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such Syrians, a shell-shocked father and his badly wounded 5-year-old boy. Netanyahu recounted, “a few days earlier the man’s wife and baby daughter were blown to bits by Iranian bombs dropped by Assad’s air force. Now the grieving father was holding his little boy in his arms, and Israeli doctors were struggling to save the boy’s life. I heard from them and from the other patients there what all the Syrians who’ve come to be treated in Israel are saying. They all tell the same story. They say, all

Assad lied told us that friend and our enemy. killing us, Israel is

**“As prime minister I will do whatever I must do to defend the Jewish State of Israel.”
- Benjamin Netanyahu**

these years, to us. He Iran was our Israel was But Iran is and Israel, saving us.”

The Prime Minister said that while Israel is exporting humanitarian workers all over the world to aid in disasters, “The only thing Iran sends abroad are rockets, terrorists, and missiles. “Iran continues to stand unabashedly on the wrong side of the moral divide,” Netanyahu said. He reiterated his call for America to keep the economic pressure on with sanctions until Iran dismantles its nuclear program.

“I’m often asked whether Israel truly wants diplomacy to succeed,” Netanyahu said. “The answer is of course we want diplomacy to succeed. But this threat will not be eliminated by just any deal; only a deal that allows Iran to fully dismantle its nuclear capability.”

The prime minister addressed the anti-Israel boycott, divestment, and sanctions movement, saying it stood with Iran on the “wrong side of the moral divide,” and that “in this knowledge-based century, Israel’s best economic days are ahead of it. “Those who wear the BDS label should be treated exactly as we treat any other anti-Semite and bigot,” he said. “BDS is bad for peace and it is just plain wrong. It is morally wrong.”

Netanyahu paid tribute to US actress Scarlett Johansson, who starred in Israeli firm SodaStream’s Super Bowl ad, causing much controversy. “BDS stands for bigotry, dishonesty and shame. Those who oppose BDS, like Scarlett Johansson, should be applauded,” he said.

The prime minister offered a hearty thanks to AIPAC for its continued support. “Seventy years ago, our people were left for dead. We came back to life. We will never be brought to the brink of extinction again,” he said. “America and Israel stand for life. We stand together on the right side of moral history.” [JPost]

To read about the personal experiences of TBS members at the AIPAC conference, go to page 3.

Israel’s Commercial Jets Will Soon Be Fitted with Lasers

Israel will soon combat shoulder-launched missiles through the use of lasers. Israel’s Ministry of Defense announced that SkyShield, developed by Israeli defense contractor Elbit Systems, had successfully completed testing and is certified for commercial use to combat the threat of portable surface-to-air missiles by combining advanced laser detection and disruption technologies.

The system integrates laser technology with a thermal camera to deflect incoming threats by jamming. After detecting incoming missiles with an infrared sensor, it fires a laser that disrupts the missile’s navigation system, taking it off course and detonating the missile a safe distance from the aircraft.

“SkyShield has been validated under the most complex and sophisticated testing conditions ever conducted in Israel and is now ready to protect Israeli airlines,” said Israel Air Force Brig. Gen. Eitan Eshel, director of research and development at Israel’s Defense Ministry.

The system will first be implemented on all El Al airliners, but Elbit says it has contracts with several other countries around the world. [Wired.com]

Silicon Valley, Israel to Unleash New Innovations

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu recently discussed a newly-signed Israel-California business pact, saying the closer connection between the tech hubs will produce “unimaginable fruits of innovation.” “Israel is an innovation nation ... we have tremendous energy and vitality, and it’s my job to release that,” said Netanyahu.

The prime minister, who had toured Silicon Valley to meet with tech leaders, signed a strategic pro-business partnership with California Gov. Jerry Brown. The deal will enable Israeli companies to access the California Innovation Network, a system of business incubators that includes clusters of research parks, university and federal labs, economic development groups and venture capital funds. “Through this agreement, California and Israel will build on their respective strengths in research and technology to confront critical problems we both face, such as water scarcity, cyber security, and climate change,” Brown said in a statement.

When asked about water conservation, Netanyahu said “Israel should have a tremendous water problem,” but explained that it does not because the country “solved the water problem” through recycling, creek irrigation, and water techniques that help conserve water.

“Israel has demonstrated how efficient a country can be, and there is a great opportunity for collaboration,” Brown said. [FOXBusiness]

New Haven Delegation Attends AIPAC Policy Conference

By: Arthur Seltzer, Special Correspondent to *Israel Matters!*



The New Haven Delegation of AIPAC, including TBS's members Reena and Artie Seltzer [photo, back row, second and fifth from left], joined 14,000 enthusiastic and passionate supporters of the US-Israel relationship at the Annual Policy Conference of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee in Washington DC in early March. AIPAC is a bi-partisan group with members of all faiths and all political persuasions that supports the US's democratic ally, Israel. The Policy Conference included multiple presentations in the plenary sessions, the breakout sessions, and in the exhibition hall, all of which demonstrated Israel's significant contributions to health, technology, culture, and security.

A focal point of the conference was providing members with the ability to personally lobby Capitol Hill. In doing so, the New Haven delegation was able to present its lobbying agenda to Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro [photo, front row center], and Senators Richard Blumenthal and Chris Murphy. The purpose of the visit was to reinforce the need for continued security aid to Israel as part of the Foreign Aid budget and thereby to guarantee Israel's qualitative military superiority and defense in an increasingly hostile and uncertain region. In support of its mission, the group reminded the legislators that Foreign Aid to all countries represents but 1% of the annual US federal budget, while, importantly, approximately 90% of the security assistance provided to Israel is used to purchase American-made supplies, thus supporting American jobs.

The group also lobbied for support of the US-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2013, legislation that is intended to solidify a strong mutually-beneficial alliance and enhance cooperation in homeland security, trade, and energy cooperation.

AIPAC urges readers to consider joining other members in March 2015 for the Policy Conference experience in Washington. Participants' support for Israel among thousands of others similarly concerned about its well-being is described by those who have attended previous Policy Conferences as being a memorable and worthwhile experience.