

# VITAL

The Importance of U.S. Security Aid to Israel

# SUPPORT



 **AIPAC**  
THE AMERICAN ISRAELI PUBLIC  
AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

**Israel,** the size of New Jersey with a population of seven million, is the only country in the world that must face daily calls for its elimination by neighboring countries and terrorist organizations. U.S. security assistance within the foreign aid bill is the most tangible manifestation of American support for Israel as the two allies work toward peace and overcome an unprecedented array of shared threats.

From a potential nuclear-armed Iran to the expanding military capabilities of Syria, Hamas and Hizballah, Israel is finding it increasingly difficult—and expensive—to prepare for these growing challenges. Today, these foes have the missile capabilities to hit all of Israel.

In 2007, the United States and Israel signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), in which America promised to provide \$30 billion in security aid to Israel over ten years. This MOU is vital to ensure that Israel—which will never be able to match its adversaries in the quantity of troops or weapons—maintains its qualitative military edge over those that threaten the Jewish state and seek to undermine U.S. interests in the region.



Then-Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns (right) said the 2007 U.S.-Israel security assistance agreement he signed with Bank of Israel Governor Stanley Fischer (left) is an “investment in peace.”

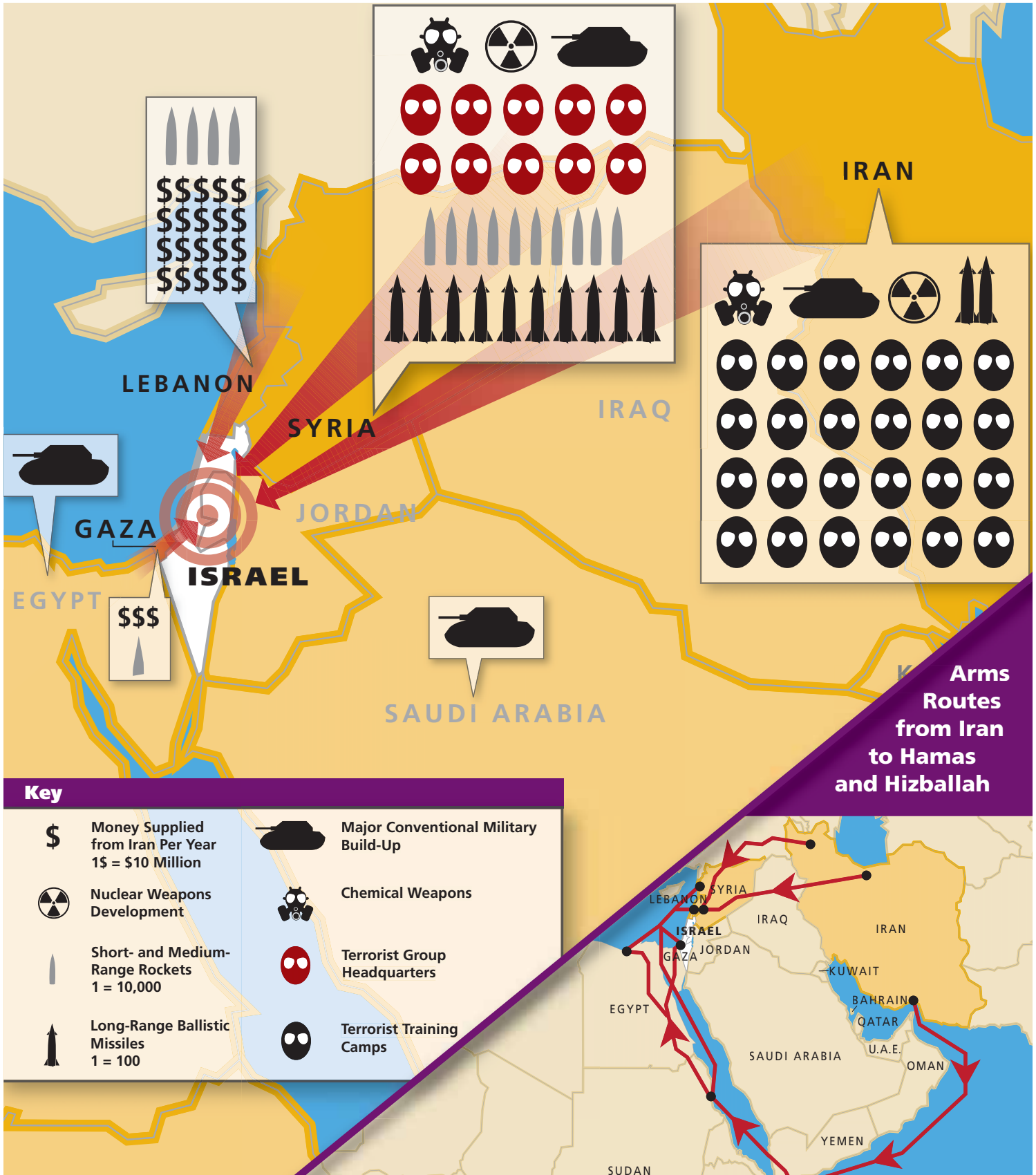
Israel spends a greater percentage of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on defense than any other industrialized country in the world (close to 7%)—almost double

what the United States spends. Unfortunately, Israel will need to buy more sophisticated and expensive technologies to help defend its citizens and has committed to increasing its defense expenditures by nearly \$11 billion during the period of the MOU.

Beyond deterring war and supporting efforts toward peace, U.S. aid to Israel helps the United States in other tangible ways. Israel spends 75 percent of its aid in the United States, boosting America’s defense industry and employment. Israel regularly shares its cutting-edge technology and lessons learned with America’s military to help our soldiers accomplish their missions while protecting them from the dangers of the battlefield.

# The Importance of U.S.

## Increased Threats Facing Israel



# . Security Aid to Israel

## Israel's Urgent Defense Requirements

**Threat: Advanced Ballistic Missiles and Rockets.** Hamas and Hizballah can hit Israel's major population centers with Iranian-supplied systems, while Syria can strike with ballistic missiles with a chemical warhead. Iran continues expanding its ballistic missile capabilities—which could be used to deliver nuclear warheads—and are capable of striking Israel, U.S. troops in the region and much of Europe.



**ISRAEL'S RESPONSE: Improve Rocket and Missile Defenses.** Israel, with substantial U.S. financial assistance, needs to invest more than \$2 billion to urgently develop and deploy cutting-edge defense systems to combat short-range Qassam and Katyusha rockets, and medium- and long-range missiles, which are capable of hitting Israel's major cities.

**Threat: Sophisticated Anti-Aircraft Weapons.** Hamas and Hizballah are acquiring new anti-aircraft missiles, while Syria and Iran are fielding new Russian radar-guided air defense systems. Egypt and the Persian Gulf states are upgrading their fleets of sophisticated combat aircraft—eroding Israel's qualitative edge.



**ISRAEL'S RESPONSE: Enhance Aircraft Capabilities and Stockpile 'Smart' U.S. Munitions.** Israel is planning to purchase America's new premier combat aircraft, the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter. Israel plans to order 25 planes, with a goal to eventually field 75. Each plane will cost significantly more than \$100 million.

**Threat: Advanced Anti-Tank Weapons.** Syria, Hizballah and Palestinian terrorist groups are using advanced Russian and Iranian anti-tank missiles. Hamas and Hizballah are also building up their infrastructure of defensive positions, bunkers and fortified command posts to withstand Israeli army assaults.



**ISRAEL'S RESPONSE: Enhance Ground Forces.** As it increases the size and readiness of its armored units, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) is building dozens of Merkava IV tanks (\$4.5 million each) and deploying hundreds of heavy Namer armored troop vehicles (\$1.5 million each) protected with new "active defense" technology to replace a 30-year-old fleet.

**Threat: Increased Sea- and Shore-Based Threats.** Israel's ability to secure "strategic depth" on and under the water and protect vital nautical lines of commerce and transport has eroded. Arab states are modernizing their fleets, terrorist groups' are using maritime routes for weapons smuggling and Israel's adversaries are deploying sophisticated anti-ship missiles.



**ISRAEL'S RESPONSE: Upgrade Naval Fleet.** The Israeli Navy will expand and upgrade its fleet by purchasing new combat ships and submarines. When outfitted with the latest weaponry and electronics, these multi-hundred million dollar vessels will enhance Israel's ability to project power at sea and defend the Jewish state's coastline by blocking the flow of dangerous arms from Iran.

# Israel's Growing Defense Burden

- Israel must devote close to 7% of its gross domestic product (GDP) to its defense—almost double that of the United States and the highest proportion in the industrialized world.

- Israel must also devote significant funding for civil defense and the industrial base required to maintain its qualitative military edge.
- Israel is on track to fulfill the recommendation of an

internal blue-ribbon review that stipulated in 2007 that the IDF needed nearly \$11 billion in increased budgetary funding over the next decade.

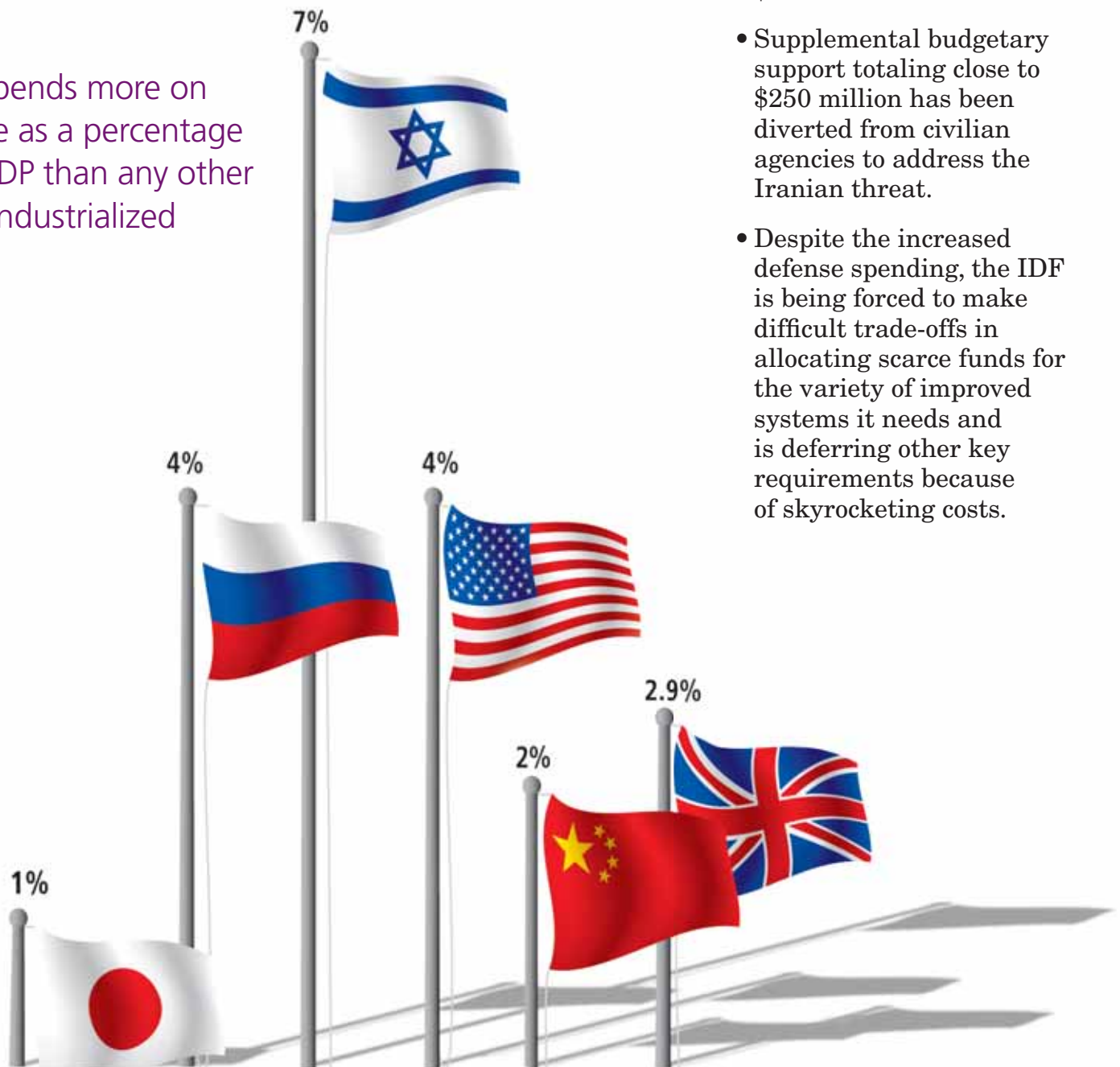
- Israel will spend a record amount on national security requirements this year. Its \$14 billion in expenditures represents an increase of \$500 million over 2009.

- Supplemental budgetary support totaling close to \$250 million has been diverted from civilian agencies to address the Iranian threat.

- Despite the increased defense spending, the IDF is being forced to make difficult trade-offs in allocating scarce funds for the variety of improved systems it needs and is deferring other key requirements because of skyrocketing costs.

## Defense Spending as Percentage of GDP

Israel spends more on defense as a percentage of its GDP than any other major industrialized nation.



# How Aid Benefits the United States and Israel

American leaders have long recognized that U.S. support for a strong Israel is essential to deter war, promote regional stability and achieve Mideast peace.

Following the 1973 Yom Kippur War, U.S. support for Israel through annual security aid has helped deter conflict by making it clear to potential foes that they could not defeat Israel militarily.

Israel has served as an anchor of stability in the region, helping thwart aggressors and preserve moderate regimes without the type of deployment of U.S. forces required in Europe or East Asia.

By helping the Jewish state maintain its military edge, American assistance has also promoted peace with Egypt and Jordan. This support has

provided Israel with the assurance necessary to make dramatic concessions in peace talks and has enabled it to take risks for peace through far-reaching offers to the Palestinians and Syria.

U.S. assistance to Israel serves other U.S. interests. By law, 75 percent of U.S. aid to Israel has to be spent in the United States, thus boosting America's defense industry.

Israeli battlefield use of American equipment and shared know-how has helped the United States improve both its equipment and tactics. Israel also has shared its cutting-edge defense technologies with the United States to help protect our troops and improve their performance.

## SOLID INVESTMENT: How Aid Benefits Israel and the United States



### Signal of Support

Assistance shows Israel's adversaries that American commitment to the Jewish state is unwavering.



### Qualitative Edge

U.S. aid helps Israel maintain military superiority and counter the great disparity in defense spending by Arab states and Iran.

### Defense Expertise

Joint U.S.–Israeli strategic cooperation helps develop new technologies for protecting Americans and Israelis.



### Industry Boost

The bulk of U.S. military aid is spent by Israel on procuring American defense products.



"I will ensure that Israel can defend itself from any threat from Gaza to Tehran. As president, I will implement a Memorandum of Understanding that provides \$30 billion in assistance to Israel over the next decade, investments to Israel's security that will not be tied to any other nation."

— President Barack Obama

"I support the agreement to provide \$30 billion in security assistance to Israel over 10 years because peace investments in Israel's security are investments in America's security."

— Assistant Senate Majority Leader Richard Durbin (D-IL)

"Aid to Israel is vital to the security interests of the United States. It ensures that one of America's closest allies has the tools it needs to survive in one of the world's toughest neighborhoods."

— Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY)



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## **ABOUT AIPAC**

The American Israel Public Affairs Committee is the only American organization whose principal mission is to lobby the U.S. government about legislation that strengthens the relationship between the United States and Israel.

Every day, the professional staff and members of AIPAC are hard at work helping to educate members of Congress, candidates for public office, policymakers, media professionals and student leaders on college campuses about the importance of the U.S.–Israel friendship. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., the organization has 10 regional offices focused on bringing our message to legislators throughout the country.

Today, AIPAC is broadening and deepening the U.S.–Israel bond by working to secure vital aid for Israel to help ensure Israel remains strong and secure. AIPAC is working to promote strategic cooperation between the two nations, to develop sound U.S. anti-terrorist policies and to stop rogue nations such as Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapons capability.

AIPAC is registered as a domestic lobby and supported financially by private donations. The organization receives no financial assistance from Israel, any national organization or any foreign group. AIPAC is not a political action committee. It does not rate, endorse or contribute to candidates. Because it is a lobby, contributions to AIPAC are not tax deductible.