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U.S.-Israel Strategic Cooperative Programs

For decades, the United States and Israel have shared a deep strategic and military relationship aimed at confronting the common threats to both nations. During the Cold War, the United States and Israel formed a bulwark against the spread of Communism. Today, in the post-9/11 world, the two allies are working closely to defeat Islamic radicalism and terrorism.

Though Israel still relies heavily on the United States for a preponderance of its military hardware, America has derived enormous benefits from Israeli combat experience, advanced technologies, and cutting edge research and development. Israeli components and designs are incorporated in and have improved the performance of many systems procured by the U.S. Department of Defense. Many of these systems are currently operational and have actually saved American lives on the battlefield.

The following programs were selected as a sampling of the success of the U.S.-Israel strategic and military partnership.

Bradley Reactive Armor Tiles (BRAT)



These tiles, developed by the Israel Defense Forces after the 1973 Yom Kippur War, protect U.S. Army Bradley Fighting Vehicles from crippling damage and save the lives of soldiers operating them. The tiles overlay the tank's armor and have explosives embedded in them that explode outward when hit by missiles. The explosion destroys and repels the incoming missile before it penetrates the tank's main armor. The reactive armor package is widely acknowledged for providing Bradley combat vehicles with a clear advantage on the battlefield, having successfully repelled anti-armor attacks on over 100 occasions in Iraq—preventing approximately 700 U.S. soldier casualties. Congress has ensured continuous funding for the program during the past decade.

Litening Pod



The Litening Pod is a multi-sensor device attached beneath an aircraft to provide it with enhanced precision strike and navigation capabilities. The Litening transforms older planes into round-the-clock fighters capable of flying and designating targets in bad weather and at night. The Litening is equipped with two cameras, one using heat sensors to identify targets during indistinct visibility conditions and a second one providing superior images from long-range positions for daytime use. Additionally, the Litening possesses infrared laser tracking for advanced targeting capabilities of sophisticated weaponry. The dramatic success of the Litening was demonstrated when its integration with the U.S. Air Force F-16 provided the necessary target acquisition technology to kill Abu Musab al Zarqawi, al-Qaeda's top terrorist in Iraq.

Joint Helmet Mounted Cueing System (JHMCS)



The JHMCS allows fighter pilots to target enemy aircraft by using a display within their helmet to guide the missiles at the target they are looking at, rather than by maneuvering their aircraft into an attack position. The system is unique in that it provides virtually 360 degrees of coverage and increases the margin of safety for tactical and formation flying by providing the pilot with continuous critical flight information. The JHMCS was successfully deployed in Operation Iraqi Freedom, used to automatically choose targets that the pilots previewed and selected from the eye on a cluttered battlefield. The air-to-air capability of the JHMCS was translated into a new way of supporting air-to-ground engagements.

Pioneer and Hunter Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs)



UAVs are used to identify targets and assess bomb damage without putting pilots at risk. Pioneer and Hunter UAV's have proven records in intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, providing its operators with surveillance during any variety of weather or time of day. The Pioneer UAV's color daylight imagery served as the only intelligence source for many U.S. Marine ground units during Operation Iraqi Freedom. The only deployable UAV available to the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps, Pioneer has proven uniquely capable in shipboard operations. The Hunter UAV has successfully assisted in tracking refugee movement and documenting human rights abuses. In addition, the UAV has the ability to detect chemical agents on the battlefield, keeping troops out of harm's way.