

# MEMMO

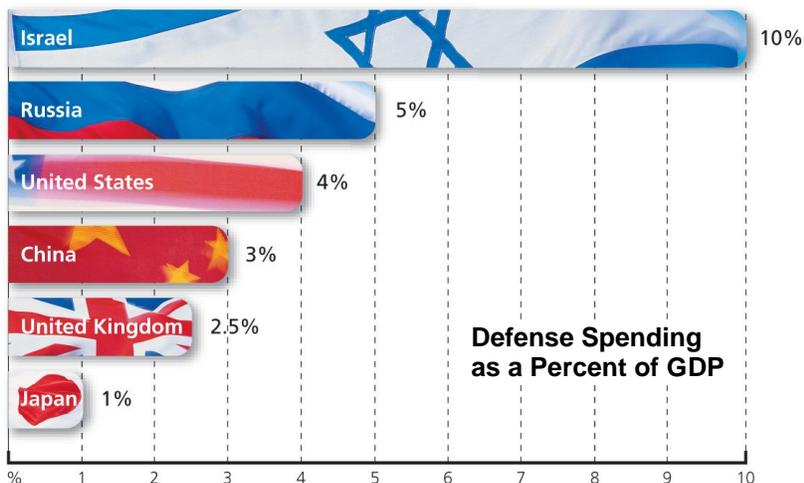
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## U.S. Aid to Israel Vital as Allies Face Growing Threats

**The United States and Israel face common and growing threats in the Middle East—terrorism, Islamic fundamentalism, the spread of sophisticated weaponry and a belligerent Iran pursuing nuclear weapons. U.S. assistance plays an indispensable role in ensuring that Israel, our democratic ally, remains secure against those seeking both its destruction and the defeat of American goals in the region.**

U.S. aid to Israel promotes vital American security interests in the Middle East.

- Aid to Israel has long been a cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy. It is a cost-effective way of serving America's national security interests in the Middle East, bolstering a reliable U.S. ally in a volatile and critically important region.
- Israel stands shoulder-to-shoulder with the United States in the global war on terror and in countering the most dangerous threats the U.S. faces in the region, including terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the spread of radical Islam.
- Israel plays a vital role in helping U.S. forces in the region by providing invaluable intelligence, sharing proven military tactics and contributing sophisticated military technologies.
- At less than one percent of the federal budget, the foreign aid bill provides the United States with the tools to pursue an active and engaged foreign policy.



*Due to increasing threats, Israel is forced to spend more on defense as a percentage of gross domestic product than any other major industrialized nation.*

U.S. aid to Israel represents an important manifestation of U.S. support for the Jewish state.

- Foreign aid to Israel—\$2.4 billion in military assistance in the president's fiscal year 2008 budget request—is the most tangible expression of U.S. political and moral support for the Jewish state.

- U.S. aid signals to Israel's adversaries that the U.S. commitment to the Jewish state remains unshakeable, strengthens our ally's deterrent capability and sends a strong message to those who wish to destroy Israel that there is no military option.
- U.S. support helps counterbalance the 10 to 1 disparity in military spending over Israel by the Arab states and helps reduce the risk of war.

The United States and Israel are facing an unprecedented array of threats from heavily armed terrorist groups and states such as Syria and Iran.

- Iran has pledged not only to destroy Israel, but the United States as well. Both Iran and Syria are actively seeking to undermine U.S. influence throughout the region directly and through their proxies, Hizballah and Hamas.
- Syria recently test-fired a Scud-D missile armed with a chemical warhead, while Iran is pursuing nuclear weapons and continues to improve its Shihab-3 ballistic missile, which is capable of hitting Israel and U.S. troops in the region.
- As last summer's war against Hizballah demonstrated, Israel faces threats from an unconventional army receiving sophisticated weaponry against which Israel has yet to develop an adequate means of defense. Hizballah, which fired more than 4,000 rockets into northern Israel during the war, also has longer-range rocket systems such as the Iranian "Zelzal," capable of reaching Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.
- Hizballah and Palestinian terrorist groups have acquired advanced anti-tank weapons. Russian-made guided weapons were used with deadly effect against the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) in Lebanon during the war with Hizballah.
- Palestinian terrorists continue to target Israeli towns and cities on a daily basis, firing more than 1,500 Qassams rockets into Israel from Gaza since Israel withdrew from the area in 2005.
- Palestinian terrorists are acquiring better short-range shoulder-launched anti-aircraft missiles while Arab states are upgrading their fleets of sophisticated combat aircraft, thus eroding Israel's aerial qualitative edge.

U.S. assistance will help ensure that Israel has the resources and equipment it needs to defend its citizens against these rising threats.

- The extreme nature of the threats faced by Israel forces the Jewish state to spend 10 percent of its gross domestic product on defense requirements, the highest percentage of any country in the industrialized world.
- The IDF today faces new challenges that have generated a wide range of modernization requirements. These include the need for defenses against Palestinian and Hizballah rocket attacks, replenishing munitions stockpiles with the latest precision weapons and securing the southern border against smuggling.
- While Israelis are bearing the burden of increased defense spending, Israel still requires American assistance to help it acquire the equipment it needs to defend the country and maintain its qualitative edge.