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U.S-Israel Homeland Security Cooperation: Benefits and Opportunities

The reality of life in Israel during the past 60 years has forced Israelis to defend against constant terrorist threats, driving the Jewish state to become a leading force in homeland security and counter-terrorism. Since 9/11, the United States and Israel have intensified their homeland security cooperation. Israel shares priceless information about terrorist organizations with the United States and is working with U.S. government and private entities to develop technologies and equipment aimed at thwarting terrorism and safeguarding citizens from both nations.

- Over the past 60 years Israel has been forced to develop cutting-edge technologies and techniques for preventing terrorism and mitigating the effects of natural and manmade disasters.
- Israel has developed advanced technologies in areas including: critical infrastructure protection, border security, biometric, explosives detection, mass transit security, and command, control and communications.
- American law enforcement agencies are increasingly studying Israel's battle against terrorism to glean lessons for U.S. efforts to protect us here at home.
- Israel frequently hosts delegations of American police chiefs, sheriffs and emergency responders from across the country. These U.S. lawmen have returned to infuse their departments' training with lessons on how Israeli security forces prevent terrorist attacks such as suicide bombings.
- With Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion International Airport being recognized as one of the world's most secure airports, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and airport officials from Massachusetts, California, Florida, among other states, have been working with Israeli experts on improving American airport security.
- In the public safety realm, Israel is a leader in implementing security measures for malls and commercial areas. American security officials from some of America's largest retail malls, including the Mall of America, have recognized Israel's techniques and sought to learn from Israel's experience.
- Israel's experience in dealing with emergencies has forced it to develop effective first response policies and methods. As the U.S. develops an all-hazards approach, Israel has provided valuable expertise in emergency preparedness and response.

- With this increasing level of cooperation, Israeli Minister of Public Security Avi Dichter and American Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff last year signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) formalizing homeland security cooperation between the two allies. This MOU opened a new realm of possibilities for cooperation in homeland security.
- Congress has also passed legislation to expand the U.S.-Israel homeland security relationship. In 2007, Congress passed the Promoting Anti-Terrorism Through Science and Technology (PACTS) Act, which created an office within the Department of Homeland Security to boost international homeland security cooperation. Israel was one of only five foreign countries mentioned in the legislation as an American partner in homeland security.

Additional Resources:

Strategies for Countering Terrorism: Lessons from the Israeli Experience

<http://www.homelandsecurity.org/journal/Articles/tucker-israel.html>

United States and Israeli Homeland Security: A Comparative Analysis of Emergency Preparedness Efforts

<http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/cpc-pubs/pockett.pdf>

Lets Use the Tools Congress Gave Us

http://www.hstoday.us/Archive/0801_Frontlines_Lets_use_the_tools_Congress_gave_us.cfm