

MEMMO

Jan. 23, 2019

New Escalation: Iran Launches Missile at Israeli Civilians

On Jan. 20, Iranian forces in Syria [fired a missile](#) at a popular Israeli ski resort. Thankfully, Israel's Iron Dome missile defense system destroyed the projectile—saving lives and preventing major escalation. Congress should continue its bipartisan support for Israel's defense against Iran's blatant aggression.

What Happened?

- Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) fired an Iranian-made missile from Damascus, an area Russia had assured Israel was cleared of Iranian forces.
- The IRGC targeted Mt. Hermon, a popular ski resort in northern Israel.
- The Iron Dome missile defense system intercepted the missile in midair. America has helped fund procurement of Iron Dome.
- Israel responded to the attack by striking Iranian military targets in Syria, as well as some Syrian military sites. Israel has been forced to carry out numerous operations in Syria over the last two years to stop Iran's military entrenchment.

Why is it Important?

- The missile attack represents a continued escalation of Iranian aggression and threats against Israel. In May 2018, Iran fired 32 rockets at Israel—most failed to reach Israel and fell in Syria. In February 2018, Iran launched an armed drone into Israel.
- This week's Iranian attack, combined with continued Iranian arms shipments across Syria, indicates that Tehran remains determined to entrench its military in the country.
- Israel has vowed not to allow Syria to become a copy of Lebanon, where Hezbollah has hidden an estimated 150,000 rockets and missiles aimed at the Jewish state.
- Israel's use of Iron Dome to intercept the Iranian missile illustrates the value of joint U.S.-Israeli missile defense programs, which save lives and prevent escalation. The U.S. Army is procuring limited quantities of Iron Dome to meet U.S. defense requirements.

Congress Must Stand With Israel.

- Congress should continue to stand by Israel's right to defend itself and support Israeli operations to prevent Iran from establishing a permanent military presence in Syria.
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- In addition to funding for missile defense cooperation, Congress should ensure that both U.S. forces and our ally Israel have ample supplies of precision-guided munitions to strike key targets while minimizing collateral damage.