The United States is committed to supporting its ally Israel, especially against threats emanating from Hamas, Hezbollah, and the world’s leading state-sponsor of terrorism—Iran. Israel’s sophisticated missile defense programs have protected countless lives by shielding Israeli citizens from rocket attacks. The United States and Israel have made significant investments in the development of these technologies, which pale in comparison to the value of lives and property these systems protect.

**VITAL SUPPORT**

Together, Iron Dome, David’s Sling and Arrow make up a complex and effective missile defense system that will enable Israel to protect lives at home and on the battlefield, keeping its citizens and soldiers out of harm’s way.

In March 2016, the two allies conducted a joint missile defense drill as part of the biennial Juniper Cobra exercise.

**CLOSE COLLABORATION**

The United States and Israel have developed advanced systems and techniques for protecting the safety of innocent civilians in each country. The United States has provided $1.4 billion in procurement funding for Israel's Iron Dome system—a mobile short-range air defense system that intercepts and destroys short-range rockets aimed at civilian populations. Additionally, since 2006, the United States has contributed $1.3 billion for Israel’s David’s Sling system and $2.8 billion for Israel’s Arrow program.

“...very closely to Israel and what they've done with Iron Dome...that's good for them and it's good for the United States.”

— VICE ADMIRAL (RET.) JAMES SYRING
FORMER DIRECTOR OF THE UNITED STATES MISSILE DEFENSE AGENCY
IRON DOME

ROCKET DEFENSE SYSTEM

The Iron Dome rocket defense system is an Israeli-developed platform that has been tremendously successful at intercepting rockets aimed at civilian populations. The idea for Iron Dome arose after Israel’s 2006 war with Hezbollah, during which more than 4,000 rockets were launched into northern Israel, destroying civilian homes and lives. In 2014, Iron Dome proved invaluable, defending Israel’s population from Hamas rocket attacks.

Iron Dome uses missiles to destroy short-range rockets and artillery shells in midair. Each battery can protect an area roughly the size of a small city.

The system’s computerized radar and tracking system calculates where an incoming rocket or mortar shell is likely to land. If the projectile is headed for a populated area, Iron Dome fires a guided Tamir missile to intercept it midair. But if it does not appear to threaten life or property, the system does not deploy. This approach ensures that the system is as cost-effective as possible.

Since 2011, the United States has invested $1.4 billion in the Iron Dome system, helping to ensure the safety and security of its closest ally in the Middle East. During 2014’s Operation Protective Edge, Iron Dome successfully intercepted more than 730 rockets—90 percent of which were launched at Israel’s most populated cities—representing a substantial improvement over the previous operation in 2012. It has been called the most effective and combat-proven missile shield in existence.

“Israeli civilians are alive today because of Iron Dome, and American taxpayers can be extremely proud of the contribution we have made to this life-saving program.”

— SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN (R-AZ)
CHAIRMAN, SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
DAVID’S SLING

MEDIUM-RANGE MISSILE DEFENSE

David’s Sling missile defense system is designed to provide Israel and the United States with effective and affordable protection against short- to medium-range ballistic missiles, long-range artillery rockets, aircraft and low-flying cruise missiles. The system will close the current operational coverage gap between Israel’s lower-tier Iron Dome and higher-tier Arrow ballistic missile interceptor. Since 2006, America has provided more than $1.3 billion in research and development funding for David’s Sling. In January 2017, the U.S. Missile Defense Agency and Israel’s Missile Defense Organization successfully conducted a fifth series of tests of the system. On April 2, 2017, David’s Sling was officially declared operational at Hatzor Air Force base near Ashdod.

ARROW

LONG-RANGE MISSILE DEFENSE

Arrow is the first operational missile defense system specifically designed and built to intercept and destroy long-range ballistic missiles with WMD warheads. The centerpiece of the U.S.-Israel cooperative defense relationship, Arrow became the first theater missile defense system in the world to be deployed and is considered one of the most advanced defense technologies currently in active military service.

Arrow is the only operational system that has consistently proven that one missile can shoot down another at high altitudes and speeds. Arrow-2 has been operational since 2000, and in January 2017, Israel declared Arrow-3 operational. It builds upon the capability of Arrow-2 and is designed to intercept long-range ballistic missiles—including those that carry unconventional warheads—at altitudes above the earth’s atmosphere. The program has taken on an increased importance as Iran’s ballistic missile program continues to rapidly advance.

Compatible with U.S. missile defense systems, Arrow can intercept hostile missiles at ranges and speeds high enough to protect citizens and troops from the devastating impact of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons. The United States has invested $2.8 billion in the development of the Arrow program.
Israel is a democratic oasis in a neighborhood of hostile actors, many of whom have sworn to destroy it. Close vicinity to rocket fire from all directions makes it vulnerable to attack at all times.

Armed groups on Israel’s borders have thousands of rockets pointed at the Jewish state. The rockets held by Hamas and Hezbollah could strike every city in Israel.

**IRANIAN MISSILE THREAT**

Iran has made explicit its intention to wipe Israel off the map. Iran’s ballistic missiles have a range of 1,500 miles and are capable of carrying nuclear warheads. Together, the United States and Israel are working to develop the military technology and systems to defend against Iran’s missile threat.

**HEZBOLLAH’S ROCKETS AND MISSILES**

Hezbollah, an Iranian-backed terrorist group based in Lebanon, has used its proximity to Israel to launch rockets and missiles into Israeli cities. Today, Hezbollah’s extensive arsenal includes an estimated 150,000 rockets and missiles capable of reaching every part of Israel. Military planners estimate that Hezbollah will be able to launch more than 1,000 rockets per day in a future conflict.

**THE THREAT FROM SYRIA**

Israel routinely faces spillover attacks from the Syrian civil war. In addition, Israeli military sources assert that Iran is building underground missile factories in Syria and Lebanon to further support Hezbollah. Iran currently operates more than a dozen military bases in Syria, which comprise a command-and-control network covering most of the country.

**TERRORIST BUILDUP IN GAZA**

Since taking control of the Gaza Strip in 2007, the terrorist group Hamas has used the area to launch thousands of rockets and mortars into Israel. In July 2014, the Israel Defense Forces launched Operation Protective Edge to protect Israeli civilian populations from these attacks. Over the course of 50 days, more than 4,500 rockets were fired out of Gaza into Israel, forcing millions of Israelis to suspend daily life and seek emergency shelter. Hamas used these munitions, provided by Iran, to strike nearby communities as well as Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Eilat.