

Briefing for Parliamentarians on Israel's Weapons of Mass Destruction May 2005

Israel is thought to have between 100-400 nuclear weapons and is recognised as having a production capability for chemical and even biological weapons.¹ She has refused to join, not only the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty [NPT] and that covering biological weapons [BTWC]² but also that covering the production of new sources of fissile material for nuclear weaponry – the so called fissile material cut off treaty [FMCT]³. Although she has signed both the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, she has not ratified either.⁴ Every other state in the Middle East is a member of the NPT.

Table 1

Nuclear

- Sophisticated nuclear weapons program with an estimated 100-200 weapons, which can be delivered by ballistic missiles or aircraft.
- Nuclear arsenal may include thermonuclear weapons
- 150MW heavy water reactor at Dimona, not under IAEA safeguards
- Plutonium Processing Plant not under IAEA safeguards

Chemical

- Active Weapons program
- Production capability for mustard and nerve agents.

Biological

- Production capability and extensive research, reportedly conducted at
- Biological Research Institute in Ness Ziona but no publicly confirmed evidence of production
- Not a signatory of the BTWC

Center for Proliferation Studies Monterey Institute Ref <http://cns.mus.edu/research/wmdme/Israel.htm>

Delivery Systems

The actual threat from Israel's weapons of mass destruction is markedly increased by recent acquisitions in delivery systems, which can be used for weapons of mass destruction including nuclear threats.⁵ The state now possesses approximately 50 Jericho 2 missiles with 1,000 kg capacity, as well as Cruise missiles and bombers, which could be used to drop nuclear weapons. A further generation of Jericho may even be capable of a range up to 4,800 km according to the Monterey Institute of International Studies.⁶ Shavit space launchers with an estimated 4,500km range also have a place in Israel's programmes and some even estimate that the range could be as high as 7,000 km.⁷

Furthermore, Israel has recently acquired Dolphin submarines from Germany which could serve as a basis for a second strike nuclear capability.⁸ Some Israeli policy makers have argued that Israel should develop a pre-emptive nuclear strike capacity.⁹ In addition, Israel is developing military space nuclear technology, the so called 'star-wars'¹⁰

There should be no doubt that an Israeli military doctrine which is based either on First-Use or First Strike is very dangerous and threatens many of the surrounding regions, including Europe, as well as the Middle East. Therefore, the key to controlling Israel's military capabilities lies in denying it access to advanced delivery systems and restricting its ability to develop a counter-force strategy. The situation is complicated by Israeli development of Military Space technology. [See table 2 below]

The possible range which could be used to deploy WMD is significant. As can be seen from the Figure 1 on p3, some delivery systems could theoretically threaten many cities in Europe and Asia.

The provision of delivery systems has not been all one way. Indian nuclear capacity has been aided by Israeli firms upgrading Indian Jaguar Bombers to allow them to carry nuclear weapons, a policy which runs directly counter to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.¹¹ Following the invasion of Lebanon in 1982, an arms embargo was placed on Israel by the UK government. Since the Oslo Accords, however, the UK has sold Israel many items of equipment, including submarines, combat helicopters, combat aircraft, tanks, bombs, torpedoes, rockets, missiles, mines, machine guns, ammunition and electronic equipment.¹² As the *Campaign Against the Arms Trade* has demonstrated, the British government allowed UK military export licenses to Israel to almost double from \$12.5 million in the year 2000, to \$ 22.5 million in 2001.¹³

Table 2 : Delivery Systems that could be used to deliver Israel's WMD

Aircraft Capable of carrying nuclear bombs held by Israel		Comments	Numbers
F- 4 Phantoms			unknown
A-4 Skyhawks			unknown
F-16s <i>only a small fraction of F16s of any type will be nuclear capable</i>			
Israel has bought			260, F-16
			103 F-16A
			22 F-16B
			81 F-16C
			54 F-16D
		and on order / being delivered	50 F-16 I
F-15E <i>in USA forces, these models [Strike Eagle] are nuclear capable</i>			25 F-15E
Land Missiles	Range	Comments	
Jericho Missiles	1 235-500km	approx	50
Jericho Missiles 11	1,450 km [1989]-1,800]	approx	50
Shavit	up to 7,000 km	unknown numbers	
Sea-based Missiles and submarines		Comments	
Dolphin Class Submarines		Very Flexible	
		Could be converted for WMD	3
		US has refused to supply	
		Tomahawk Cruise Missiles	

Ref Norris RS Arkin W, Kristensen HM, Handler J [2002] Israeli Nuclear Forces Bulletin of Atomic Scientists pp 73-75 [Vol 58 no 05]

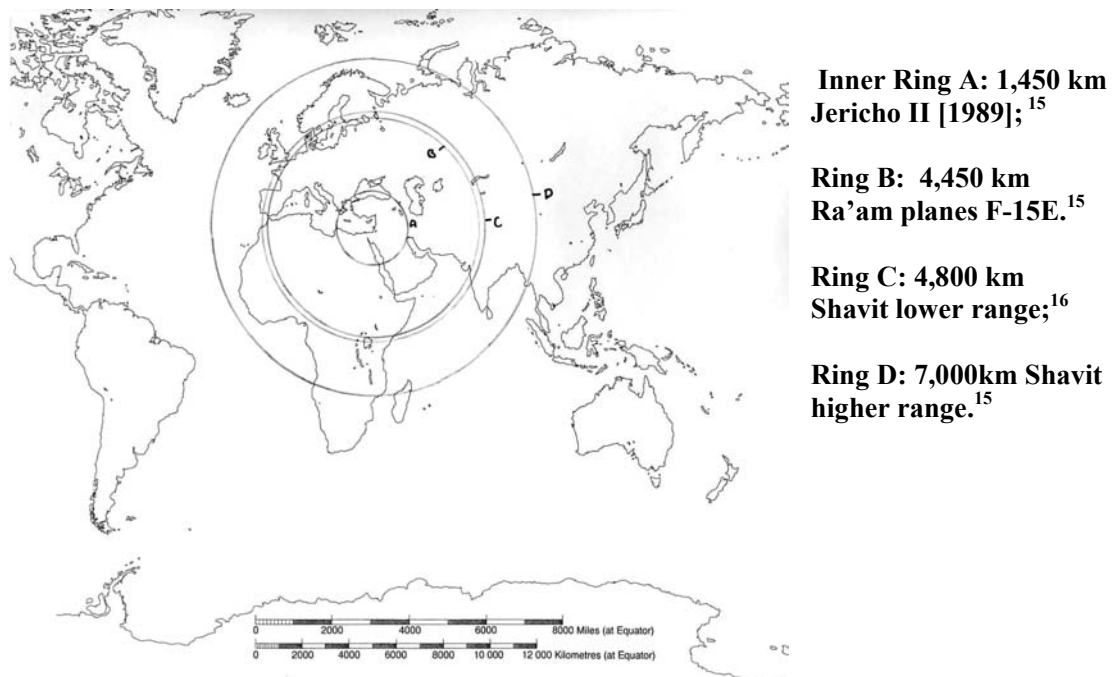
Partnership with NATO

Significantly, the cooperation with Israel leading to partnership, envisaged at the NATO Istanbul Summit in 2004, included contributing to the work of the Alliance on threats posed by weapons of mass destruction and their delivery is going ahead. However, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, the

NATO Secretary General has laid down several preconditions before envisaging any NATO contribution to security in the region i.e. ‘A lasting peace agreement between Israelis and Palestinians. Moreover the parties concerned must be in favour of a NATO role in its implementation; and there would have to be a UN mandate. These conditions do not exist. For the time being NATO lends its political support to the efforts of the Quartet to realise the goals of the "Roadmap"...’¹⁴

Israel continues to occupy Palestinian land and flouts international law. Israel continues to build a ‘security barrier’, that is a wall, on the land of the occupied Palestinian territories. The wall, however, was declared illegal on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice. The UN General Assembly has passed over 30 Resolutions, first proposed by Egypt and Iran in 1974 and renewed annually, for ‘the establishment of a nuclear-weapons-free zone in the region of the Middle East’.

Figure 1 Range of Israeli Delivery Systems



The British Government should promote policies to ensure that:-

- 1 The UN inspects facilities at Dimona and any other relevant sites in Israel for Weapons of Mass Destruction [WMD] and reports its findings to the Security Council with specific recommendations, on verification and monitoring.
- 2 The strategic objective is adopted by the British government and the EU of achieving Israeli compliance with, and ratification of, the NPT, CWC, BTWC and FMCT treaties.
- 3 A WMD- free zone in the Middle East, including Israel, is actively supported by the British government.
- 4 Israel's dangerous development of military space technology is not condoned by the UK government and the EU.
- 5 An embargo is imposed on the sale of all UK and EU relevant military equipment to, and purchases from, Israel as well as the breaking off all military contacts
- 6 The United Kingdom takes a lead in the Council of Ministers in Europe in demanding that Israel complies with its obligations under international law.
- 7 Full freedom for Mordechai Vanunu,

References

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- 2 Barak E [2004] Implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention in the Middle East after the Saddam Era: Is there a way out of the Deadlock , Paper at BISA Conference, University of Warwick Dec. and ref 1
- 3 See Barak ibid
- 4 See Barak ibid
- 5 Bulletin of Atomic Scientists [2002] Israeli Nuclear Forces Sept , Vol 58, no 05 on http://www.thebulletin.org/article_nn.php?art_ofn=so02norris **and** ref 1
- 6 Monterey Institute see ref 1
- 7 See ref 1 and 5
- 8 See ref 5 and Monterey Institute - Israel’s Nuclear Posture Review [http//](http://) as ref 1 **quoting** Sieff M [1998] Israel buying 3 submarines to Carry Nuclear Weapons Washington Times 1st July and also see Ref 5 Sea-based missiles and submarines
- 9 See Monterey Institute - Israel’s Nuclear Posture Review [http//](http://) as ref 1 **and** Opall-Rome B [1998] Israel Officials Hint at Cracks in Nuclear Code of Silence Defense News 14-20 Sept p 6
- 10 Jane’s International Defence Review [2002] Israel: Aerospace in Depth February
- 11 Campaign Against Arms Trade [2002] Arming the Occupation p8, London
- 12 Ibid p 14
- 13 Campaign Against Arms Trade[2002] Arming the Occupation
- 14 NATO Update[2005] NATO Secretary Visits Israel to discuss greater cooperation Feb 24th www.nato.int/docu/update/2005/02-february/e0224a.htm and Speech of Jaap de Hoop Scheffer in Israel 24th February 2005 <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2005/s050224a.htm>
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