

Washington and Tel Aviv to Reach Military Aid Deal Soon



Washington, August 4 (RHC)-- A senior U.S. official says Washington and Tel Aviv have closed many of the gaps in negotiations over a new 10-year military aid package worth tens of billions of dollars. The senior U.S. official said that the two sides hope to reach a final deal soon.

U.S. national security adviser Susan Rice and Jacob Nagel, acting head of Israel's national security council, met on Wednesday after three days of talks ended between the two negotiating teams.

Tense and lengthy negotiations over the new military deal have highlighted continuing tensions between U.S. President Barack Obama and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu over the nuclear agreement with Iran last year.

Last month, the White House said it had offered to substantially increase U.S. military aid to Israel following months of wrangling between Washington and Tel Aviv.

The new deal would involve the largest military aid package the United States has ever given any country. Washington has been providing the Israeli regime with \$3.1 billion annually since a 2007 agreement with the former president George W. Bush's administration.

Tel Aviv has indicated that it wants \$4 billion to \$4.5 billion in aid to fund its missile projects as part of a new agreement that will go into effect from 2018, but the U.S. officials had offered a lower figure of about \$3.7 billion.

Israel is the largest cumulative recipient of U.S. foreign assistance since World War II. Washington's military assistance to Israel has amounted to \$124.3 billion since it began in 1962, according to a recent congressional report.

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