

U.S. Delegation Visits Israel to Finalize New Military Aid Package



Tel Aviv, January 20 (RHC)-- A high-level U.S. delegation is expected to visit Israel next week to work out the final details of a new 10-year military aid package. The delegation, composed of members of the U.S. National Security Council, will hold meetings with Israeli security and military staff, Israeli media reported Tuesday.

The National Security Council assists the U.S. president on national security and foreign policies.

On top of the agenda is the technical details of an approximately \$41 billion 10-year military package, the Haaretz newspaper reported, citing a source involved in the talks. The new agreement would come into effect from October 2018.

Washington is currently providing Tel Aviv with \$3.1 billion in military assistance annually and the new deal would likely increase that amount to \$4.1 billion. Israeli officials have urged Washington to increase the aid to \$5 billion.

The current aid is separate from the nearly \$500 million in annual U.S. funding for Israel's missile system programs in recent years. It is also on top of the U.S. military equipment held in Israel, which is valued at \$1.2 billion.

Israel is the largest cumulative recipient of U.S. foreign assistance since World War II. Washington's military aid to Israel has amounted to \$124.3 billion since it began in 1962, according to a recent U.S. congressional report. Strong congressional support for Israel has resulted in Israel receiving benefits not available to any other country.

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