

# *U.S. Delivers Two F-35 Fighter Jets to Israel*

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Tel Aviv, December 14 (RHC)-- U.S. Defense Secretary Ash Carter has visited Israel for a ceremony marking the United States' delivery to Israel of two U.S.-built Lockheed Martin F-35 fighter jets—regarded as the most advanced military aircraft in the world.

Israel now becomes the only country outside the United States to have operational F-35 fighter jets.

The head of the Pentagon, speaking at the Nevatim air base in the southern Negev Desert, said that the F-35 stealth fighters are the first of 50 aircraft that will be delivered to Israel. He noted that a memorandum of understanding was signed between Tel Aviv and Washington earlier this year, in which the U.S. pledged an unprecedented \$38 billion in security assistance over the next decade. He said that as of today, Israel is the first and only "friend" in the region that has F-35 fighters. And he noted that each Lockheed Martin F-35 jet costs more than \$100 million.

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