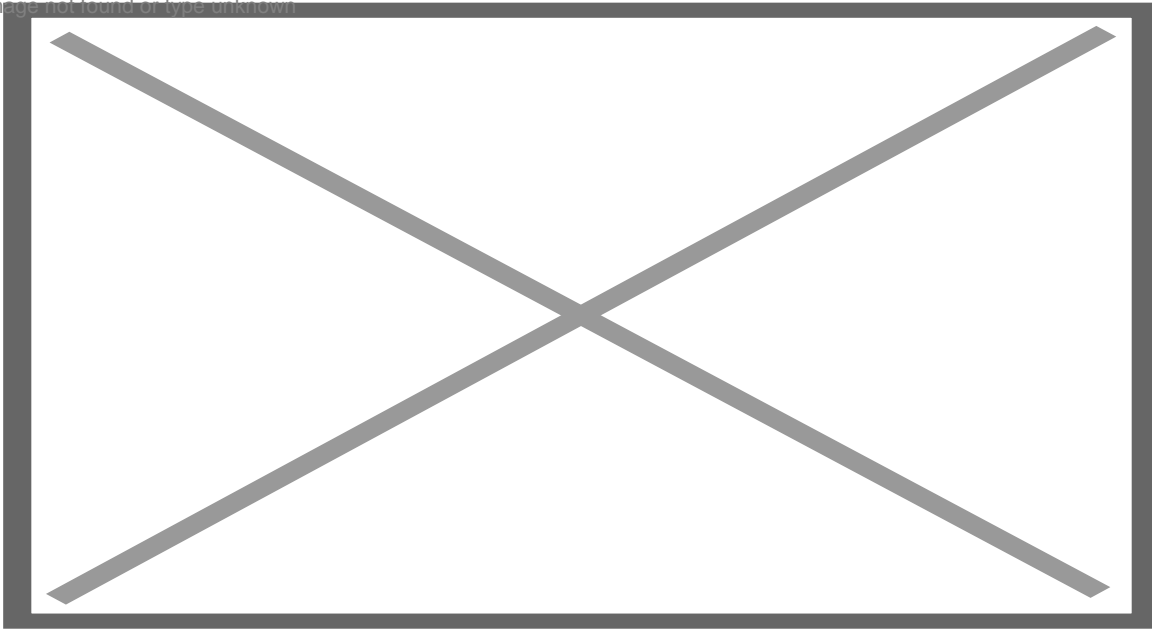


# *Growing commitment to war*

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**Photo: México Social**

By Alfredo García Almeida

The geopolitical chessboard of war is readjusting to welcome the new US administration. Washington is getting more involved in the war in the Middle East, sending anti-missile batteries and THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense) missiles to Israel, manned by around 100 US soldiers, while Ukrainian military intelligence assures that 11,000 North Koreans will enter the war on the side of Russia in November.

According to Pentagon spokesman Brigadier General Pat Ryder, President Joe Biden has ordered Defense Secretary Lloyd J Austin III to deploy the THAAD system and its crew to counter ballistic missiles from Iran. "This is part of a broader adjustment the US military has made in recent months to support Israel's defenses and protect Americans from attacks by Iran and its allied militias," Ryder said.

THAAD's precision can destroy missiles at an altitude of 150 kilometers, i.e. in the thermosphere, the highest layer of the atmosphere.

What is even more remarkable is that the missiles, flying at 10,000 kilometers per hour, do not carry an explosive charge, but are so accurate that they hit their targets directly. THAAD became operational a decade and a half ago, and its first objective was to defend Alaska, Hawaii and the US West Coast against a possible intercontinental missile attack from North Korea.

For years, the Pentagon has maintained a small number of soldiers manning a radar station in the Negev desert in southern Israel as part of the THAAD support network, and it has been reported that the THAADs will operate in coordination with those of the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, in addition to other similar systems on US ships in the Mediterranean, Red Sea and Sea of Oman.

The arrival of the THAADs and their crews in Israel, according to experts, is a sign that Israel's retaliation for the missile attack launched by Iran on 1 October is imminent.

Iran, for its part, has threatened missile strikes against countries allied with Israel and the United States. The Pentagon estimates that Iran has about 3,000 ballistic missiles and thousands of cruise missiles, which are slower and fly low to the ground.

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