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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

The Memorandum of Understanding with Israel, copy of which I sent to you on the plane yesterday afternoon and another copy which I attach here, fulfills I believe the points you made to me on the telephone Saturday and Sunday in that it does not contain anything which a moderate Arab nation could logically or accurately contend is directed against it.

The agreement is specifically designed for the sole purpose of deterring "all threats from the Soviet Union" to the whole region, and is limited to threats caused by the Soviet Union or "Soviet controlled forces from outside the region introduced into the region." Finally, the agreement provides that "it is not directed at any state or group of states within the region. It is intended solely for defensive purposes against the above mentioned threat." The only military exercises mentioned are "naval and air exercises in the eastern Mediterranean Sea." This does not specifically exclude land forces, but after a considerable negotiating struggle, it also does not specifically identify land exercises, which we were told would have been seized on by the Arab nations as something inevitably directed against them.

The other items in the agreement are mostly procedural and all are limited to activities designed to deter Soviet threats against the whole Middle East.

After some very intense bargaining, the atmosphere was very good, and at both the luncheon and the dinner which we gave for Minister Sharon he seemed pleased, relieved and, to some extent, happy.

As I mentioned, we had dispatched a team to Saudi Arabia to emphasize to Prince Sultan the narrow scope of the agreement, and our Ambassadors in Egypt and Jordan will perform the same function there. Our background press briefing will also emphasize that we have joined up with Israel in this agreement solely for the purpose of deterring Soviet threats against the whole region.

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16 SEP 1997

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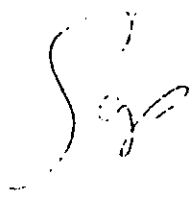
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The same agreement will be offered to any moderate Arab state that wishes to sign or enter into oral agreements to the same effect. While it is doubtful that any will accept, it should be further evidence to them that the military security arrangement is not unique nor is it directed against them.



Attachment

cc: Secretary Haig
Ed Meese

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MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN
THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES
AND
THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL
ON
STRATEGIC COOPERATION

PREAMBLE

This Memorandum of Understanding reaffirms the common bonds of friendship between the United States and Israel and builds on the mutual security relationship that exists between the two nations. The Parties recognize the need to enhance Strategic Cooperation to deter all threats from the Soviet Union to the region. Noting the long-standing and fruitful cooperation for mutual security that has developed between the two countries, the Parties have decided to establish a framework for continued consultation and cooperation to enhance their national security by deterring such threats to the whole region.

The Parties have reached the following agreements in order to achieve the above aims.

ARTICLE I

United States-Israeli Strategic Cooperation, as set forth in this Memorandum, is designed against the threat to peace and security of the region caused by the Soviet Union or Soviet-controlled forces from outside the region introduced into the region. It has the following broad purposes:

- a. To enable the Parties to act cooperatively and in a timely manner to deal with the above mentioned threat.
- b. To provide each other with military assistance for operations of their forces in the area that may be required to cope with this threat.
- c. The Strategic Cooperation between the Parties is not directed at any State or group of States within the region. It is intended solely for defensive purposes against the above mentioned threat.

ARTICLE II

1. The fields in which Strategic Cooperation will be carried out to prevent the above mentioned threat from endangering the security of the region include:

a. Military cooperation between the Parties, as may be agreed by the Parties.

b. Joint military exercises, including naval and air exercises in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea, as agreed upon by the Parties.

c. Cooperation for the establishment and maintenance of joint readiness activities, as agreed upon by the Parties.

c. Other areas within the basic scope and purpose of this agreement, as may be jointly agreed.

2. Details of activities within these fields of cooperation shall be worked out by the Parties in accordance with the provisions of Article III below. The cooperation will include, as appropriate, planning, preparations, and exercises.

ARTICLE III

1. The Secretary of Defense and the Minister of Defense shall establish a Coordinating Council to further the purposes of this Memorandum:

a. To coordinate and provide guidance to Joint Working Groups;

b. To monitor the implementation of cooperation in the fields agreed upon by the Parties within the scope of this agreement;

c. To hold periodic meetings, in Israel and the United States, for the purposes of discussing and resolving outstanding issues and to further the objectives set forth in this Memorandum. Special meetings can be held at the request of either Party. The Secretary of Defense and Minister of Defense will chair these meetings whenever possible.

- 2. Joint Working Groups will address the following issues.
 - a. Military cooperation between the Parties, including joint US-Israeli exercises in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea.
 - b. Cooperation for the establishment of joint readiness activities including access to maintenance facilities and other infrastructure, consistent with the basic purposes of this agreement.
 - c. Cooperation in research and development, building on past cooperation in this area.
 - d. Cooperation in defense trade.
 - e. Other fields within the basic scope and purpose of this agreement, such as questions of prepositioning, as agreed by the Coordinating Council.

3. The future agenda for the work of the Joint Working Groups, their composition, and procedures for reporting to the Coordinating Council shall be agreed upon by the Parties.

ARTICLE IV

This Memorandum shall enter into force upon exchange of notification that required procedures have been completed by each Party. If either Party considers it necessary to terminate this Memorandum of Understanding, it may do so by notifying the other Party six months in advance of the effective date of termination.

ARTICLE V

Nothing in the Memorandum shall be considered as derogating from previous agreements and understandings between the Parties.

ARTICLE VI

The Parties share the understanding that nothing in this Memorandum is intended to or shall in any way prejudice the rights and obligations which devolve or may devolve upon either government under the Charter of the United Nations or under International Law. The Parties reaffirm their faith in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and their aspiration to live in peace with all countries in the region.

For the Government of the United States

For the Government of Israel

Caspar W. Weinberger
Secretary of Defense

Ariel Sharon
Minister of Defense