



Written by [Angeline Tan](#) on October 20, 2023

U.S. to Send Shells Originally Meant for Ukraine to Israel

The United States is scheduled to supply Israel with tens of thousands of 155mm artillery shells that were initially earmarked for Ukraine, according to a [report](#) by Axios on October 19. The Israeli military supposedly informed the Pentagon that these shells were required for it to gear up for a ground invasion of Gaza, as well as a possible intensification of the Israeli-Hamas conflict by Hezbollah along the Israel-Lebanon border.

Notably, the United States maintains a collection of ammunition at a facility in Israel, which only U.S. troops can access. Earlier this year, the United States started to obtain shells from this stockpile and another facility in South Korea to fulfill Ukraine's huge demand for ammunition in Kyiv's combat against Moscow.

Based on the same Axios report, quoting Israeli officials, the United States would now be replenishing this stockpile with ammunition from its own stocks that had been originally set aside for Ukraine, at the direct request of the Israeli government. The officials added that the shells would reach Israel in upcoming weeks.

This report came a day after President Joe Biden visited Israel and met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Tel Aviv. Following the meeting, Netanyahu posited that Biden had pledged a "massive, unprecedented" package of military aid.

It remains uncertain if Netanyahu was alluding to the aforementioned artillery shells in his remarks after meeting with Biden.

Thus far, Israel has not yet relied heavily on artillery in its war against Hamas, choosing instead to pulverize Gaza with airstrikes while artillery and tanks conduct periodic rounds of fire with Hezbollah militants based in Lebanon and the Golan Heights. At the moment, Israeli troops have gathered along the Gaza border reportedly in preparation for a ground operation in Gaza, which Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant assured would take place "soon."

Artillery would be "urgently" needed for such an operation, Israeli officials told Axios.

Arguably, the outbreak of the conflict between Israel and Hamas came at a critical juncture for the Kyiv regime. With Kyiv's summer counteroffensive faltering at the expense of massive numbers of human lives, Kyiv has been busy garnering support among European nations that cannot produce the weapons Kyiv claims it needs, given the dwindling industrial supplies in those EU countries, based on [reports](#) by Bloomberg. On the other hand, U.S. officials have purportedly been focused on dispatching arms to Israel for the latter's combat against the Hamas terrorists.



Soldiers loading M777 155mm howitzer



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“We need some support from the leaders,” Zelensky declared during an [unplanned visit](#) to NATO headquarters in Brussels recently. “It’s important there are long-distance missiles, or long-distance weapons.... The problem: How to get it?”

Previously, *The New American* [reported](#) that U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen claimed that Washington could afford to fight foreign wars on two fronts, Ukraine and Israel.

Nonetheless, funds allocated to Ukraine by Congress are running out, and Biden is now reportedly hard at work attempting to persuade an increasingly Ukraine-war-fatigued House GOP to approve \$61.4 billion in aid aid for Kyiv by linking it a \$14.3 billion support package for Israel, which Republicans would traditionally be more open to backing.

Biden has announced that he would request Congress to authorize an “unprecedented” military aid package for Israel and Ukraine, contending that such funds would be a “smart investment” for Washington.

In an address from the Oval Office on Thursday night, Biden argued in favor of enhancing U.S. support for both Kyiv and Jerusalem, proclaiming that the United States is “the essential nation” that “holds the world together.” He [submitted a spending plan](#) to lawmakers on October 20.

“I’m going to send to Congress an urgent budget request to fund America’s national security needs, to support our critical partners, including Israel and Ukraine,” Biden stated. “It’s a smart investment that’s going to pay dividends for American security for generations, [and] help us keep American troops out of harm’s way.”

Elaborating, Biden claimed that military assistance to partners such as Israel and Ukraine was “vital” for U.S. defense interests. He then cautioned that “chaos could spread in other parts of the world” if Washington does not act against “terrorists” and “dictators,” claiming that both Hamas and Russia hope to “completely annihilate a neighboring democracy.”

The White House has strongly backed Israel since October 7, when the Hamas terrorist group brutally attacked and killed many Israelis, as well as took hostages. Biden compared the attack to “15 9/11s” during his visit to Israel. In turn, Israel has retaliated against Hamas with multiple airstrikes on the densely populated area of Gaza. At least 1,400 Israelis and about 3,500 Palestinians have been killed since the violent clashes erupted earlier this month, based on figures by officials from both sides.

Since Hamas’ attacks on October 7, the Biden administration has constantly tried to link U.S. support for Ukraine with support for Israel. In statements to *The Washington Post*, one unidentified official said the move would help to circumvent resistance from Republicans who vocally support Israel but oppose more aid for Ukraine.

Biden said the new aid package would be an “unprecedented commitment to Israel’s security,” and would help to bankroll the country’s Iron Dome missile defense system to give it a “qualitative military edge.” Funds for Ukraine would support continued arms mobilization to Kyiv and refill U.S. reserves.

Significantly, Biden has also urged Israel to abide by the rules of war and not engage in senseless “rage” during its ongoing conflict with Hamas militants. Biden also called on everyone to condemn outbursts of anti-Semitism and Islamophobia triggered by the Israeli-Hamas war.

“When I was in Israel yesterday, I said that when America experienced the hell of 9/11, we felt enraged as well,” Biden declared in a televised address on October 19. “While we sought and got justice, we made mistakes. So, I cautioned the government of Israel not to be blinded by rage.”



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Biden claimed he had cautioned Netanyahu against targeting Palestinian civilians during Israel's retaliatory airstrikes on the Gaza Strip.

"Netanyahu and I discussed again yesterday the critical need for Israel to operate by the laws of war. That means protecting civilians in combat as best as they can," Biden posited, stressing that the population of Gaza must get access to food, medicine, and other humanitarian aid.

Concurrently, Biden strongly denounced Hamas for killing Israeli civilians and said he would ask Congress to authorize additional security aid to Israel.

"We're going to make sure the Iron Dome continues to guard the skies over Israel," Biden said, alluding to Israel's air-defense missile system that could intercept rockets launched from Gaza. "We're going to make sure all the hostile actors in the region know that Israel is stronger than ever [to] prevent this conflict from spreading."

Meanwhile, the UN has [characterized the situation in Gaza](#) as "an unprecedented catastrophe," calling for the aid to be permitted there as soon as possible.



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