



TOP SECRET//TK//FGI ISR//RSEN/NOFORN

(TS//TK//RSEN//REL TO USA, FVEY) Israel: Air Force Continues Preparations for Strike on Iran and Conducts a Second Large-Force Employment Exercise, 15-16 October 2024

Report Title

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Report Details

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SIG	N	20241016CX0102360401

Report Summary

(TS//TK//RSEN//REL TO USA, FVEY) Israel: Air Force Continues Preparations for Strike on Iran and Conducts a Second Large-Force Employment Exercise, 15-16 October 2024

(TS//TK//RSEN//REL TO USA, FVEY) The Israeli Air Force (IAF) continued air-launched ballistic missile (ALBM) handling, covert UAV operations, and conducted a second large-force employment (LFE) exercise from 15 through 16 October 2024, according to imagery analysis. The IAF has handled at least 16 Golden Horizon ALBMs and at least 40 IS02 (Rocks) ALBMs since 8 October, according to imagery analysis.

-(TS//FGI ISR//NF) The IAF continued ALBM handling at Hatserim Airfield on 15 October 2024. The IAF placed concealment screens over six F-15I hardened aircraft shelter (HAS) entrances on an alert apron on 16 October, which indicated ALBM handling occurred in the HAS area. We cannot differentiate if this activity is related to IS02 (Rocks) or Golden Horizon ALBMs; however, three possible Golden Horizon ALBM-associated dollies arrived in a separate HAS adjacent to the F-15I alert HAS complex. We did not observe increased personnel at the ALBM handling area at Hatserim Airfield on 16 October.

-(S//REL TO USA, FVEY) The IAF likely handled air-to-surface missiles (ASM) at Ramat David Airfield and Ramon Airfield from 15 through 16 October. The IAF handled one probable unidentified ASM at Ramat David Airfield on 15 October. One unidentified ASM was in front of hardened aircraft bunker typically associated with precision-guided munitions generation. At Ramon Airfield, one munitions cart probably outfitted with missile handling equipment arrived within the ALBM area on 16 October, indicating ALBM handling likely occurred.

-(TS//TK//RSEN//REL TO USA, GBR) The IAF continued to conduct covert UAV flight activity at Ramon Airfield from 15 through 16 October. The IAF opened the RA-01 operations hangar screen and the gate to the RA-01 operations area, indicating an RA-01 airframe was transiting to or from the operations area at 1731Z 15 October. On 16 October, NGA observed personnel and ground equipment arrive within the RA-01 operations area, indicating pre or post-flight activity occurred.

(S//REL TO USA, FVEY) The IAF conducted an LFE exercise on 15 October, the second LFE exercise since 13 October, likely to practice air-to-air refueling and combat search and rescue operations with a large number of aircraft. The LFE exercise included at least three KC-707 tankers, one G-550 Gulfstream airborne early warning aircraft, and possibly fighter aircraft, according to SIGINT reporting. [1] The KC-707 tankers and G-550 Gulfstream aircraft involved in the LFE exercise is a similar package to what the IAF used to conduct long-range strikes in Yemen on 29 September 2024, according to imagery analysis

@Midde_East_Spectator (Telegram)

(U) Sources

(S//REL TO USA, AUS, CAN, GBR, NZL) [1] Originating Agency: NSA; Source ID Number: S/CY/227249-24; Date of Publication: 15 October 2024; Report Title: Middle East Hostilities: Israeli Air Force Aircraft Participate in a Large Force Employment Exercise Amid Possible Strike Preparations, 13 October 2024 (S//REL TO USA, AUS, CAN, GBR, NZL); URL: S/CY/227249-24 (ic.gov); (Source information available Classified S//REL TO USA, AUS, CAN, GBR, NZL).

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(S//REL TO USA, GBR) **The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) continued key munitions preparations and covert UAV activity on 16 October almost certainly for a strike on Iran.** We cannot definitively predict the scale and scope of a strike on Iran, and such a strike can occur with no further GEOINT warning.

(TS//REL TO USA, GBR//NF) The Israeli Air Force (IAF) continued long-range air-launched ballistic missile (ALBM) handling on 16 October. The IAF has handled at least 16 Golden Horizon ALBMs and at least 40 IS02 Rocks since 8 October, according to imagery analysis. The IAF also maintained the readiness of aerial refueling and support aircraft and likely conducted an aerial refueling exercise on 15 October.

(S//REL TO USA, FVEY) All Israeli mid- and upper-tier air defense systems remained deployed.

(S//REL TO USA, FVEY) The Israeli Navy continued to disperse from Haifa, and the IAF continued to partially disperse aircraft at Ovda airfield.

(S//REL TO USA, GBR) The IAF continued covert UAV operations on 16 October. Israel's covert UAVs enable long-range, covert surveillance in Iran and throughout the region.

(S//NF) We did not observe any Jericho II medium-range ballistic missiles (MRBM) activity on 16 October. Israel likely dispersed MRBMs on 1 October, and we lack indications that the dispersal has concluded. MRBM dispersal is almost certainly defensive; we have not observed indications that Israel intends to use a nuclear weapon.

(S//NF) Select GEOINT Indicators of Israeli Military Activity Oriented to Iran

			Indicator Observed	Predictive Ability				Indicator Observed	Predictive Ability
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Weapons Handling					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air				
Long-range ALBM handling			●	Medium	Covert UAV flight operations			●	Low
Rocks/IS02 ALBM handling			●	Medium	Combat search and rescue preparations			○	Low
Precision-guided munitions handling			●	Low	Aircraft defensive dispersal			●	Low
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Defense					<input type="checkbox"/> Nuclear and Missile				
Elevated missile and air defenses*			●	Low	Nuclear forces on alert			○	Low
Interceptor resupply			●	Low	Missile forces on alert			○	Low
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ground Forces					Nuclear or missile dispersal			●	Low
Change in IDF posture related to Iranian proxies in northern Israel*			●	Low	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Forces				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Navy					Special forces preparations for external operations**			○	Medium
Navy defensive dispersal			●	Low					

Table is classified SECRET//NOFORN

(S//NF) The indicators in this chart address Israeli preparation for attacks on Iran or the anticipation of Iranian attacks.

Category Threshold Met ☒ Yes ☐ No ☒ Change since 15 October

● Yes ○ No ● Change since 15 October ○

*(S//REL TO USA, FVEY) Israeli air defenses have been on a heightened readiness level since the 7 October 2023 attacks. Israeli ground forces have maintained an elevated defensive posture in northern Israel, primarily to defend northern Israel against crossborder incursions from Lebanon and Syria.

** (S//REL TO USA, FVEY) Israeli special forces have been active throughout the current conflict.