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## Israel, US test upgraded Arrow 2 missile, capable of intercepting incoming nukes

*August 13, 2020* timesofisrael.com reported: "Israel and the United States completed a successful test of the advanced Arrow 2 air defense system late Wednesday night, shooting down a simulated long-range missile high over the Mediterranean Sea, defense officials said.

The system successfully intercepted the target, which behaved in a way similar to the types of weapons that Israel anticipates could be fired at it someday — like those made by Iran — and was affixed with an explosive warhead, according to Boaz Levy, vice president and head of the Systems, Missiles and Space Group at Israel Aerospace Industries, which manufactures the Arrow 2.

The platform was tested by the Defense Ministry's Missile Defense Organization, the Israeli Air Force, IAI, and the US Missile Defense Agency. The test was carried out late Wednesday night from the Palmachim Air Base in central Israel..."



## Nigeria: Singer Sentenced to Death for 'Blasphemy'

*August 11, 2020* voanews.com reported: "An Islamic court in northern Nigeria on Monday sentenced a singer to death for blasphemy against the Prophet Mohammed, judicial officials said.

An Upper Islamic Sharia court in the city of Kano ordered 22-year-old Yahaya Aminu Sharif to die by hanging for derogatory expressions against the Prophet in one of his songs, spokesman for the Kano region justice ministry, Baba-Jibo Ibrahim, told *AFP*.

Sharia courts in majority Muslim northern Nigeria have handed down death sentences for adultery, murder and homosexuality before but to date no executions have been carried out.

'The court handed down the death sentence as enshrined in Islamic laws based on irrefutable evidence and the convict's admission of guilt,' Ibrahim said.

Sharif was accused of blaspheming the Prophet in a song he shared on social media in March, which caused riots in the city. Mobs burnt the singer's family home and took to the streets demanding his prosecution, leading to his arrest..."

## Putin claims Russia has developed 'first' coronavirus vaccine



*August 11, 2020* timesofisrael.com reported: "Russia has developed the first vaccine offering 'sustainable immunity' against the coronavirus, President Vladimir Putin announced Tuesday.

'This morning, for the first time in the world, a vaccine against the new coronavirus was registered' in Russia, he said during a televised video conference call with government ministers. The Health Ministry said that the vaccine is expected to provide immunity from the coronavirus for up to two years.

*Pres. Putin* 'I know it has proven efficient and forms a stable immunity, and I would like to repeat that it has passed all the necessary tests,' Putin said, emphasizing that vaccination will be voluntary. 'We must be grateful to those who made that first step very important for our country and the entire world.'..."

## Space Force defines 'spacepower' as essential to U.S. security, prosperity

*August 11, 2020* spacewar.com reported: "The U.S. Space Force published Monday its first capstone doctrine, Spacepower, eight months after its creation, outlining what the new military branch calls a guidepost for its mission.

The doctrine 'elevates spacepower as a distinct formulation of military power on par with landpower, seapower, airpower and cybepower,' according to the Space Capstone Publication, called Spacepower.

'One of the principles of an independent service is the creation of doctrine,' Gen. Jay Raymond, chief of space operations at U.S. Space Force, said in a statement.

'The Space Capstone Publication explains why spacepower is a vital element of U.S. prosperity and security — now and in the future — and guides its employment in multidomain operations. As the USSF continues to grow and mature, we will continue to evolve our doctrine to stay on the cutting edge of defending our interests in space.'

According to the statement, space was once regarded as a 'benign domain,' for exploration of the cosmos, but that has changed.

'Humankind has changed, and our potential adversaries' actions have significantly increased the likelihood of warfare in the space domain,' the doctrine said..."

### **Islamic Jihad threatens response to 'Israeli terror' after border incident**

*August 10, 2020* ynetnews.com reported: "Palestinian Islamic Jihad on Sunday threatened to respond to 'Israeli terror' after IDF troops fired mortar shells into the Gaza Strip following gunfire targeting the soldiers patrolling the border.

Several shots were fired earlier at an IDF force brought in to reinforce the border after gunfire was heard near the perimeter fence in the morning hours. No Israeli troops were hurt in the incident.

Israeli troops fired several mortar shells in response, to obstruct the view of the perimeter fence. As a result, the IDF ordered to stop all construction work of an underground barrier along the border and later blocked the main roads in the area.

The Islamic Jihad terror group called the incident 'the continuation of Israeli terror,' which will bring about a 'Palestinian response'.

'The scenes of random shootings by the army forces at the residents of the Gaza Strip continue to repeat themselves,' said the terror group in statement. 'This is a clear threat that endangers the residents' lives. Israel will bear the consequences of anything that happens to the residents or farmers as a result of the escalation.'..."

### **Hamas fires rockets into sea in 'message' to Israel**

*August 10, 2020* Arutz Sheva 7 reported: "Hamas terrorists in the Gaza Strip fired rockets into the sea on Monday after repeated exchanges of fire with Israel in recent days, Gaza security sources and eyewitnesses said.

At least eight rockets were seen in the sky, heading toward the Mediterranean Sea, said *AFP* journalists in the coastal strip. The Gaza Strip's interior ministry called the rocket launches 'an act of resistance'.

The rockets were a 'message' to Israel to let it know that terrorist groups in Gaza will not 'remain silent' in the face of an Israeli blockade and 'aggression', a source close to Hamas told *AFP*.

The source noted that Monday's rocket fire coincided with the recent launch of incendiary balloons into Israel. In the past week, such balloons have flown three times from Gaza into Israel, each time triggering retaliatory strikes against Hamas positions..."

### **UN set for showdown over US Iran arms embargo push**

*August 8, 2020* spacewar.com reported: "The UN Security Council is set next week to roundly reject a US resolution to extend an Iranian arms embargo, diplomats say, setting up a lengthy showdown with repercussions for the Iran nuclear deal.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced on Wednesday that the United States would put forward its long-awaited resolution despite ardent opposition from Russia and China.

But UN diplomats say opposition to the resolution's current form is so widespread that Washington is unlikely even to secure the nine votes required to force Moscow and Beijing to wield their vetoes.

"The resolution takes a maximalist position on Iran," one diplomat told *AFP*. Another said the draft "goes beyond the current provisions" of the ban on conventional weapons sales to Iran that ends on October 18.

The embargo is due to expire under the terms of a resolution that blessed the Iran nuclear deal, signed in July 2015 and officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Under the deal, negotiated by then US President Barack Obama, Iran committed to curtailing its nuclear activities for sanctions relief and other benefits.

President Donald Trump pulled America out of the accord in May 2018 and slapped unilateral sanctions on Iran under a campaign of "maximum pressure."

Iran has since taken small but escalating steps away from compliance with the nuclear accord as it presses for sanctions relief.

European allies of the United States -- who along with Russia and China, signed the deal with Iran -- have voiced support for extending the conventional arms embargo but their priority is to preserve the JCPOA. The US text, seen by *AFP*, effectively calls for an indefinite extension of the embargo on Iran and uses hawkish rhetoric." ..."



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