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*Press Section*

*American Embassy*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

*Tel Aviv*

# *Press Release*

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude for the warm hospitality I received during my visit to Israel this past week, my first visit to your country as the Commander, United States European Command.

I had excellent meetings with your Minister of Defense, Ehud Barak, and the Israeli Chief of Defense, Lieutenant General Gabi Ashkenazi, to discuss a broad range of topics as we continue to improve U.S. and Israeli military-to-military collaboration. We shared a clear vision about the future as well as many ideas about how we can move our alliance forward together.

A good example of our alliance is the military exercise Juniper Cobra, which is a bi-annual collaborative training event that prepares approximately 1,000 personnel from the Israeli and U.S. air, sea, and land forces to work together to protect against missile threats. You can be proud of the superb efforts by the men and women of your armed forces in what was an intense and in-depth three-week training endeavor.

Years of progress and strength show our shared commitment towards a stable Middle East.

Thank you again for such a warm reception. All the best to you and I look forward to returning to Israel soon.

Sincerely,

James G. Stavridis  
Admiral, United States Navy  
Commander, United States European Command

**Public Affairs Section**

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