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Israel in talks with USA over F-22 orders

By [Arie Egozi](#)

Israel has approached the USA about acquiring **Lockheed Martin F-22s** as concern mounts about new threats to the country's regional air superiority.

Sources say that the issue was raised during a one-day trip by US defence secretary Robert Gates to Israel last week.

Washington has so far not authorised the export of the Raptor stealth fighter, but sources in Israel say this is the first time a "reasonable" request has been made.

Among the subjects discussed with the country's prime minister and defence minister were Israel's concerns about the USA's possible sale of advanced weaponry to Saudi Arabia and the Israeli intelligence assessment of the Iranian nuclear programme.



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F-22 Specifications:

Primary function: Air dominance fighter

Official nickname: Raptor

Airframe builders: Lockheed Martin (Marietta, Georgia, and Fort Worth, Texas) and Boeing (Seattle, Washington)

Engine builder: Pratt & Whitney (East Hartford, Connecticut)

Power plant: Two Pratt & Whitney F119-PW-100 turbofan engines with afterburners and two-dimensional thrust-vectoring nozzles. Each engine is in the 35,000-lb-thrust class.

Length: 62 ft. 1 in.

Wingspan: 44 ft. 6 in.

Height: 16 ft. 5 in.

Top speed: Mach 2 class

Supercruise speed: Mach 1.5+

Ceiling and weight: Classified

Armament: Internally, six radar-guided AIM-120C advanced medium-range air-to-air missiles (or two 1,000-pound class GBU-32 joint direct attack munitions in place of four of the AIM-120Cs) in main weapons bay; two heat-seeking AIM-9 Sidewinder short-range air-to-air missiles in side weapons bays (one in each bay). One M61A2 20 mm multi-barrel cannon. Four external stations can carry additional stores (weapons or fuel tanks)

Crew: Pilot only

First flight: September 7, 1997

Flight test aircraft: Nine

Initial operational capability: December 15, 2005

Planned production: Current USAF requirements: 381 aircraft

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