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The deal will double the value of military equipment kept in Israel

US to store more weapons, ammunition in Israel

US stresses that its weapons - which could be used by Israel - are not meant to strike Iran.

WASHINGTON - The US military plans to expand its stockpiles of weapons in Israel under a recent agreement with Tel Aviv, a Pentagon spokesman said Monday.

The deal will double the value of military equipment kept on Israeli soil from 400 million to 800 million dollars, Major Shawn Turner said.

Tensions with Iran over its nuclear program were not an impetus for the agreement, he said, noting that the US Congress initially authorized the expansion in 2007.

"This is not in any way related to Iran or the current situation as the authorization was from 2007," he said.

But US-Israeli tensions with Iran existed before 2007.

Israel could have access to the weaponry and ammunition in an emergency but only with US approval, said a defense official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The agreement was first reported in Defense News.

The stockpile in Israel, which dates back to the 1990s, includes missiles, armored vehicles and artillery ammunition.

The US military stores weapons in allied countries, including Israel, Gulf states and South Korea, as a precaution for possible operations.

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Both the US and Israel had previously threatened Iran with military strikes.

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