

Newsweek

Israel Denies Envoy's Claim of Patriot Defenses Given to Ukraine

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Israel has contradicted a statement by its ambassador to Ukraine, who said the country sent Patriot missile systems to Kyiv to help it fight against Russian aggression.

The row back from the Israeli Foreign Ministry followed Ambassador Michael Brodsky's comments, which prompted a request for clarification from Moscow.

Emmanuel Navon, senior fellow at the Jerusalem Institute for Strategy and Security (JISS), told *Newsweek* that Israel helps Ukraine discretely and Brodsky's comments showed disregard for Israeli national interests.

Newsweek has contacted the Israeli and Ukrainian foreign ministries for comment.

Why It Matters

Kyiv has repeatedly called on its allies for more air support, and Patriot air defense systems [are critical for Ukraine's defense](#) because of their ability to intercept Russian ballistic missiles and hypersonic Kinzhal missiles.

Ukraine and the U.S. have discussed the possible transfer of eight Patriot systems from Israel, according to reports from last year. In May, *The New York Times* reported that Kyiv was expected to [receive one Patriot](#) air defense system from Israel this summer.

Ukrainian media reported that Brodsky's comments confirmed what had only been a rumor. However, Israel's refutation of his statements highlights its complicated diplomatic relations with Ukraine and Russia.



This image from July 7, 2023, shows Patriot long-range air defense systems of the German Bundeswehr armed forces deployed at Vilnius Airport. **PETRAS MALUKAS/Getty Images**

What To Know

The Patriot (MIM-104), developed by the U.S. defense firm Raytheon in the late 1970s, costs at least \$1 billion when brand new and requires about 90 personnel to operate.

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Brodsky said in an interview with YouTuber Marichka Dovbenko that Israel had agreed to transfer to Ukraine retired Patriot missile systems that had originally been supplied by the U.S. in the 1990s.

He added, in light of the Patriot systems delivery, that Israel couldn't be accused of not helping Ukraine fight Russia.

The Israeli Foreign Ministry, however, told the news outlet Ynet on Tuesday that Israel had not transferred any Patriot air defense systems to Ukraine.

Ynet said Russia had demanded clarification from Israel following the report, prompting the country's official denial.

Navon told *Newsweek* that the policy of Israel has always been to help Ukraine discretely but Israel also has interests with Russia.

While Israel supports Ukraine's right to defend itself, it does so discreetly, and by making it too public, the ambassador is not helping anyone, said Navon, who added that it was not the first time that Brodsky had made statements that Israel would not appreciate.

Heorhii Tykhyi, a spokesperson for the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry, neither confirmed nor denied the delivery of Israeli Patriots, telling a press briefing that Kyiv welcomed signals from Israel about its willingness to help militarily.

In the interview, Brodsky did not specify how many systems were transferred or when the delivery took place. *The New York Times* reported on May 4 that at least one Patriot system previously deployed in Israel would be refurbished and sent to Ukraine.

Under U.S. export laws, even third-party transfers of Patriot systems must be approved by Washington, and it was not clear whether the purported decision had been taken before President [Donald Trump](#) returned to office in January.

What People Are Saying

Israeli Ambassador to Ukraine Michael Brodsky said in an interview: "The [Patriot](#) systems that we once received from the United States are now in Ukraine. ... When people say that Israel did not help militarily, that is not true."

The Israeli Foreign Ministry told Ynet: "Israel has not transferred such systems to Ukraine."

Emmanuel Navon, senior fellow at the Jerusalem Institute for Strategy and Security: "While Israel supports Ukraine right to defend itself, it does so discreetly and by making it too public, the Ukrainian ambassador is really not helping anyone."

Ukrainian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Heorhii Tykhyi said in a press briefing: "We welcome signals from Israel about its readiness to provide military assistance."

What Happens Next

Russia is likely to continue its aerial assaults on Ukraine, which said almost 500 aerial weapons had been fired overnight Monday. Ukrainian President [Volodymyr Zelensky](#) has repeatedly called for more air defenses, saying in April that Kyiv was [prepared to buy 10](#) Patriot batteries for \$15 billion.