

Mr. Riki Ellison:

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, from a beautiful day here in Washington D.C., the azaleas blooming and the smell and the feel of victory is in the air. We're here on our 59th Congressional Roundtable, on this historic watershed moment for missile defense that happened this week, we've got the best of the best to give us and to describe, from their each perspectives, of what this proved, just an immaculate. It's a perfect game, it is a perfect missile defense architecture that was implemented, coming across everything, from the early warning parts of it, from the joint services parts of it, from the allies parts of it, from the Israel part of it. It just all came together and nobody died. It's amazing. It was a massive, massive attack by Iran, with intent to kill, with intent to destroy infrastructure, and nothing happened. And that stability came forward.

There was rational decision making, there's time, there's pause, there's no emotional response. That stabilized this and prevented a war. It is a phenomenal victory for the missile defense enterprise, which started way back, I can go right back into 1980, my classrooms, with Teller, Van Cleave, in creating that academic critical thinking for SDI, and SDI came out with Ronald Reagan right here. Better to save lives than avenge lives. It's what we just did. And in 1983, or excuse me, 1980, he signed an MOU with Israel. In 1986, Ronald Reagan signed an MOU with the SDI, with Israel, which the systems today that are being deployed, they came from that MOU.

It is a phenomenal story. It's a phenomenal story of what would have been, and all the arguments that have been posed against the missile defense community as being unstable, as being not creating an arms race because of it. All those things that we had to deal with in the 80s, 90s, 2000s, where we are today. I had an opportunity to be in Israel back in 1984 on the northern border with Lebanon, stayed at Kibbutz, and saw those rockets coming in. I was able to be back there in the 2000s, in Sderot, when we had to make a decision to deal with that and created the concept of Iron Dome, was created there, and Arrow was created there and you were there, Shachar. That movement, that purpose, that intent to get these capabilities in play has all been there, been evolving on it. And this weekend, we have seen the display of an integrated, layered perfection of missile defense that is extraordinary and that nobody can say that it doesn't work. It's not stable.

It's a phenomenal thing and we should celebrate it. We are celebrating it, but we need to understand it. In today's session, we're going to go through, phase by phase, on it. And I think we want to start it off with Tal Inbar, who is our MDAA fellow in Tel Aviv, one of the world's best analysts on threat missiles from North Korea, Iran. He's been with us for, I don't know, 15, 20 years and he's live with us today from Tel Aviv, Israel, and he can give us, first hand, from his perspective, what that threat was, what the feeling was over the weekend with the population and with the success that happened. Ladies and gentlemen, Tal Inbar.

Mr. Tal Inbar:

Good evening from, actually, north of Tel Aviv, and it was, indeed, an amazing display of missile defense, jointness, and so on. Some parts you will describe later. But we dealt with a massive attack from Iran against Israel, combining several assets of Iran offensive forces. First wave was UAVs, some of them are Shahed, the 136 that we know... Piston engine, we know those very well, and the world knows them also from the massive use in the hands of the Russians against Ukraine. Some UAVs were jet-powered, the Shahed 238, but the UAVs are slow, so it took them several hours to reach Israel. Then Iran launched a massive barrage, I think it was the largest that I can recall anywhere, of cruise missiles. The Paveh, which is mass-produced in Iran in the recent years and it is also used by the Houthis in Yemen, as the Quds-1 and 2. And it is, of course, faster than the piston-engined Shahed 136 UAVs. But again, it takes several hours to reach Israel.

And the third wave of weapons that were used by Iran was a salvo of a lot of ballistic missiles. Again, I think it is the most powerful display of using ballistic missiles operationally. We got in one night more than double the missiles that Saddam Hussein fired against Israel in more than two months. In that regard, we can speak a little bit about two models that can be confirmed. One was the Emad missile, which is derivative of the Shahab-3, then it became the Qader and Qader-F, and now it is called, since 2015, when it was first introduced, this is the Emad. Almost 2000 kilometers range, with a warhead, which is... Actually, it's a MIRV, it's a maneuverable warhead re-entry vehicle. They use those, which is, of course, a method of Iran of using accurate ballistic missiles. And it is liquid propelled. Basically, it's an extension and evolution of the Shahab-3, which in turn is the North Korean Nodong missile, which in turn based and relied on Soviet technology. All in all, it is an evolutionary missile. Nevertheless, heavy warhead of several hundred kilograms of high explosive. A unitary warhead. No submunition in this missile.

Another missile that can be confirmed, even though all of them were shot down, but some fragments, I saw some pictures from Syria mostly, and some in Iraq fell due to technical malfunction, which is another important issue. This is the Kheibar Shekan, which is almost 1500 kilometers range solid propelled, single-stage, no separation of the reentry vehicle from the missile. And this is one of the newest in the Iranian arsenal of accurate ballistic missiles. All in all, Iran tried to coordinate the attack in order that the three types of attackers will come simultaneously to make the missile defense, the discrimination to create the accurate, let's say, and coordination between Israel and its allies much harder.

But we now can say that all of the cruise missiles were stopped before reaching Israeli airspace and almost all of the UAVs, and Israeli fighter pilots flying east of Israel shot them down from the sky and we know of several other air forces using this method of just circling a specific area and waiting to see those targets. And for a modern fighter, it could be F-15, could be F-35, whatever, it is a very interesting mission, and it was a phenomenal success.

Also, regarding the ballistic missile interceptions, Israel used all the layers of missile defense. Most of the ballistic missiles were engaged far from Israeli airspace using the Arrow 2 and Arrow 3. Just to remind you, or the viewers, that the Arrow 3 is an exo-atmospheric missile with kill vehicles. It is designed to hit the target directly. And on the lower tier, the David's Sling, which is, of course, a Rafael product, together with Raytheon, and we heard some reports, I cannot confirm all of them, of course, but we heard that other countries also shut down several missiles, ballistic missiles, perhaps some of them came from Yemen. Just to make it more interesting, we have a lot of ballistic missiles, a lot of cruise missiles and UAVs coming from at least eight points in Iran and from several points in Yemen in a coordinated attack.

It was a great challenge to all the active defense systems, coordination, cooperation between several countries. You can imagine that fighters had to be refueled in air. This is also something that could be a challenge. And of course, the support of US assets to locate specific areas from which the ballistic missiles were launched using satellites and so on. All in all, it was a very, very successful mission of missile defense with several nations cooperating and it is a culmination of years of planning and a lot of exercise. We all participated in several joint drills like, the Juniper Cobra and other drills. It is a demonstration of what a joint effort of several nations could do to engage such a threat.

And of course, the lessons will be learned, not only in Israel and its allies, but also in Iran. And we have to keep it in mind that the enemy is always learning and evolving. We cannot just sit down and relax and hope for the same thing happens once again. We have to improve our capabilities and to prepare, in advance, to the next generation of threats, like more sophisticated ballistic missiles, perhaps more sophisticated, even hypersonic, missiles that we know that Iran is now engaged in development. Iran didn't demonstrate all its capabilities last Saturday, and all of the ballistic missiles were launched above the ground from trucks. And Iran didn't use the underground, what they call, the missile cities, actually very sophisticated array of silos beneath the mountains and so on.

In the future, if there is going to be another exchange of ballistic missiles and other aggressors from Iran, we might see the use of other types of ballistic missiles, more sites and this is just a demonstration from both sides, but this is a very efficient way to say that, what we always talked about, and Riki also with several roundtables for years, about the jointness and the cooperation between the allies, it works. This is just preliminary remarks and back to you, Riki.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

Thanks, Tal. You did talk a little bit about Iron Dome, but just to make sure, because we saw some video on it and how that played with it, and really, from our perspective, what is the population? Are they confident? They must be pretty excited and confident in your capabilities to defend themselves as we knew what happened earlier, last October, when there was a surprise on it. Is there a new feeling in confidence with Israel's ability to defend its population?

Mr. Tal Inbar:

Yeah, I was very calm. I was running out of patience because we know, for several hours, you can just sit in your living room watching TV and using the cell phone and social networks and so on. And you know that, in several hours, it will come. And even though I'm not living so close to the targets in Israel, but I saw in the sky several interceptors, and it was actually a magnificent sight.

Many people in Israel were quite relaxed. And I know that some people went to sleep because it was about to happen around between one to two AM, at least the first wave, so some people just went to sleep and they relied on the early warning and the sirens and so on, and rightfully so. And a lot of documentation from people that just went to see all the interceptions because it was a massive use of upper tier assets, like the Arrow 2 and 3 and David's Sling, many people saw it even from a very large distance.

All in all, I think most of the people were very calm and they relied on our capabilities. And of course, the day after was a day of euphoria, I think. Not only for the general public, but also for some echelons in the armed forces, and of course, the politicians.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

Thank you, Tal. All right, we want to look at the bigger strategic picture, the political picture of what the impact this has shown to the world and to the confidence in missile defense. And I want to bring on one of our board members, John Rood, former OSD Policy Undersecretary, been involved with missile defense for 30 years, have been in the ideological fights in the 90s, the 2000s. What this victory stands for now, John. The table's yours and we'll enjoy hearing them.

Mr John Rood:

Thank you, Riki, for having me and for putting together this great event on short notice. I would say, for starters, the broader conflict is what this attack from Iran occurred within. It's easy, I think in some of the media coverage to chalk it up to there was an Israeli strike on a building in Damascus that killed some members of the IRGC and, therefore, there was an Iranian counterattack. But this occurs in the context of, frankly, an undeclared war that Iran has been waging against the US, its interests, as well as Israel and its interests, throughout the region for some time, literally hundreds of attacks this year and last year alone as part of this low-grade conflict. And so, it's within that context that that occurs.

And while we, our allies, Israel certainly, and the United States and our allies, have spent many years preparing for just such an event, the other side, the Iranians, have spent many years and decades and enormous sums of money creating this so-called Axis of Resistance that's the context in which this occurs. And that Axis of Resistance stretches all the way from the regime's

ambitions in Tehran to create themselves as the dominant player in the region, and certainly virulently anti-Israel, anti-Semitic, to foster militias in Iraq, in Syria, to support Hezbollah in Lebanon, Hamas in Gaza, the Houthis in Yemen, and to systematically equip, arm, train these forces to one day pose an Axis of Resistance that could make it very difficult for Israel to survive an attack that's a multi-axis attack.

Now, what we saw on Sunday was just such a manifestation, only at a much, much larger scale and the defensive systems and the years and effort that we've spent together working on these systems, but most importantly, exercising them. Tal mentioned things like Juniper Cobra. These are very large scale exercises, very seriously done, and a lot of times, the hard work to create the interoperability and the ability to share information at the speed of relevance and missile defense, which is very quick, took a long time to do and it's a wonderful testament to success that so many have played.

Now, within the context of missile defense, I think the other thing that, I hope, the activities on Sunday will finally dispel is that this massive drone and missile attack that Iran launched really is a historic day in the history of missile defense. It's also, I hope, the latest and last refutation that we need to see of these myths and misconceptions that critics have used to oppose missile defenses over the past few decades. Again, these capabilities were decades in the making. And after all, Israel's missile defense program began with the Arrow system and the US systems that were used, things like Patriot, Standard Missile 3, those began under Ronald Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative.

Those were the initial funding efforts. Those were part of the SDI program and his critics, at that time and since, have derided those as a fool's errand, things that would never work, that would not be reliable, that would be too porous to be relied upon, that our populations could not feel confident in their effectiveness and who described them as provocative, destabilizing, and instead, things like arms control, reliance on the ABM Treaty and purely on diplomacy, or in some cases, deterrence, but deterrence in the sense that no attacker would dare launch a large scale attack knowing that a nuclear armed state or a state with a large offensive capability, like the United States or others, because they would be met with instant retaliation. And you see the events over the last few days, that's simply just not the case.

These some 300 and so missiles and drones that were launched by Iran show what we did see: Missile defenses do work. They are reliable, they are effective. Missile defenses are stabilizing, they're not destabilizing. They provide options to de-escalate. They provide options to not be provocative. They provide options instead of preemption. And at a time when missiles and drones have become the primary methods of warfare, air and missile defense forces need to be a large component of our overall military force, a larger component than they were before. Why? Because our adversaries are using missiles and drones and other things to an extent they have not before. We need to respond accordingly.

It was very disappointing, I think, for a lot of us to see President Biden's budget proposal to the Congress cut missile defense in the United States just a short time ago, at a time when there are thousands of missiles being launched by Russia against Ukraine, the Houthis are using missiles in large numbers, and as we saw, Iran is, and that's not to mention China and North Korea and the other threats we face.

The successful missile defense operations on Sunday by Israel, the United States, and our allies dispelled so many myths and misconceptions. The first, as I said, critics have said for years, "Missile defenses are unnecessary and provocative." You go back to the arguments that McNamara made as Secretary of Defense, that Senator Ted Kennedy stood on the Senate floor decrying missile defenses as things that would never work, far better these critics said to rely on arms control and diplomacy, but of course, arms control and diplomacy have been tried to great effort by this administration and previous ones with Iran, but they've been unsuccessful at deterring this kind, of preventing this kind of attack. And it just shows the deep flaws of this dangerous approach that's been advocated by missile defense critics for decades.

Critics said missile defenses could easily be overwhelmed. "If you could make them work on a small scale, it's very easy," they said, "For the attacker to simply launch more missiles." We saw the opposite on Sunday. What we saw is the Iranians employ the playbook that Russia has used to great effect in Ukraine, launching waves of slow-moving drones, which saturate the air defense picture. Following those up with a timing of things like cruise missiles and ballistic missiles to time the arrival to coincide where the attacker simply could be overwhelmed.

The Israelis, aided by the United States and our allies, really showed that the opposite was true, that with the right kind of planning, with the right kind of defenses, you can be effective. Critics have said for many years, "Missile defenses are not cost-effective. After all, offensive missiles are cheaper to produce than defensive missiles. Hence, missile defenses are simply too expensive." Some of these critics have taken what is a decent argument to say, "You should shoot the archers. Don't worry about the arrows. Don't worry about defending against the attack." Saying, "Simply can't afford the missile defenses needed to protect against large-scale attacks."

Some even have exaggerated to say, "99% effectiveness would simply not be enough with missile defense. The leakers would be just too severe." Well, what we saw in Israel is exactly the opposite. Roughly 99% effectiveness claimed by the IDF was effective enough, and the few leakers did not cause a destabilizing situation.

And I think for those in Israel whose lives were saved by these missile defenses, I don't think they think they were too expensive. Just think also, and this somehow never gets included in the calculus of those that say, "The defensive missile is too expensive," think of the tremendous damage that would've occurred to cities, to people, to the military infrastructure, and to key parts of the Israeli Defense Forces, like say taking out their fleet of F-35 aircraft or negating the ability of the Israeli Air Force to operate after a successful missile strike. Just think of the cost that all of

those things would've cost in lives, money, and capability, and in the security feeling and the terror, the absolute terror people would feel if a country like Iran could inflict that kind of damage.

So, that has to be taken into consideration. Somehow these critics of missile defense don't include that. For decades, critics of missile defense have argued any large-scale missile attack after all will be immediately met with a large-scale missile attack in response. And therefore, who would dare conduct a large-scale offensive missile attack against a well-armed opponent. Sunday's missile defense operations from Israel just show how deeply flawed these misconceptions are.

I fought this argument myself against well-meaning budgeteers in the Pentagon saying, "Well, the key is to have effective intelligence. If we simply know beforehand when missiles are going to be launched, any sane person would preempt those launches rather than try to deal with these targets in the air." Well, this is yet another example of where that's simply impractical thinking. Certainly Israel, the United States, others did have advance warning, did have strong intelligence that missile attacks were imminent. But you see from the circumstance, had we all mounted a large-scale preemptive strike on Iran, we would not be sitting here today in the relative peace and calm that we find ourselves in. Would that have made us safer? Would that have saved money? Would that have saved lives? I think it's obvious. These are bad arguments.

It's insufficient also, in my view, to think you can simply rely on the threat of retaliation to deter an attack. That does not mean that's not a component of deterrence, but it's just insufficient. And it's insufficient, I think, to think you can simply shoot the archers. Of course, that is a good method during a large-scale conflict or a time when you're engaging fire with your adversary, but this isn't the first time we've been in this situation.

For example, in January 2020, the United States conducted a strike that killed the commander of Iran's Quds Force, Qasem Soleimani. Now, we had strong indications that Iran was about to conduct a retaliatory strike, and that did ultimately occur when Iran launched a dozen ballistic missiles at U.S. bases. Those ended up injuring about a hundred U.S. soldiers, by the way. But here too, out of a desire to avoid escalation, a U.S. preemptive strike was simply not a practical option, given our overall policy objective after the strike on Soleimani was to de-escalate the situation.

Unfortunately, some well-known leaders have themselves been missile defense critics. And again, it's deeply disappointing for me to see President Biden's administration propose to cut the missile defense budget recently. But President Biden has been a critic of missile defenses over the years.

For example, just to refresh my memory in getting ready for this discussion, I looked up one of President Biden, then Senator Biden's speeches he gave at the National Press Club on September

9th in 2001, and the Washington Post article covering that long speech I thought summarized it quite well. Their article in the Washington Post was titled Senator Biden Attacks Missile Defense Plans as Costly and Risky. The first paragraph of the article I thought summed it up well, saying quote, "In a spirited attack on plans to deploy a national missile defense, Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Joseph Biden said yesterday the administration was risking a new arms race and draining money from other domestic and military programs for a porous system that would never add to U.S. security." In his speech, the Post goes on to say President Biden gave, then Senator Biden, "Gave spirited arguments in favor of arms control instead of missile defenses. He argued deterrence was superior to missile defenses and missile defenses could never be reliable enough to be relied upon."

Now, obviously, we only need to look at the last few days to see how outdated these arguments are by critics of missile defense. The reality is we need much larger missile defenses and capabilities than we have had before. We're behind the threat that we face from countries like China. And in fact, the brilliant execution of missile defenses by Israel, the U.S., and our allies was something to admire. But even that display of defenses is insufficient if we're in a protracted war to counter much larger scale offensive missile capabilities that Iran possesses.

We need to do more. And that starts with getting serious about the missile defense budget. We have to be serious about restoring the influence of authorities of a central organization in the United States, like Israel's done with the Israel Missile Defense Organization. And that's been so ably led by people like Uzi Rubin and Aria Hertzog and now Moshe Patel, who just deserve tremendous credit for the defenses that save lives and prevented large scale damage.

There are so many people that are responsible for getting us in this area. Over the years, I'm very proud of the role I've played in chipping in, for example, as a staffer to then Senator Kyl. It was a Senator Kyl amendment that I wrote to get the funding for another battery of Arrow II to provide to Israel. There are so many people along the way that contributed to this, and we all ought to take a minute to say we've managed collectively, and principally the Israelis and the talented IDF in executing this defense plan, but certainly other backers who have helped make this day possible. We ought to take a moment to reflect on that, but don't pause too long because we're not yet out of the woods in this situation.

Thanks again, Riki, for getting us together.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

Thanks, John. This is well articulated. John, is this a watershed moment for us to re-look at the funding of missile defense, at the roles and responsibilities of missile defense, because this really proves now system works is at capacity. We don't have enough capacity across the board. So, is this time to readdress the services budgets, the MDAs budgets to get more resources into this? Because that's what the world is looking like, China, Russia, what we saw. Is it this time to be

able to make movement in our Congress with our president to go forward and change the way we're doing things?

Mr John Rood:

Yes. One, the magnitude of effort's not enough, and two, we're not being efficient and effective in how we're organized to go after it. We're losing some capability as a result of not being more unified and effective.

But I will say, just to start with, the nature of warfare has changed and is changing before our eyes. We see several large conflicts around the world. We need to be students of that and observe the tactics and capabilities and the evolution of technology and what that has enabled. And so, number one, take for example, we in the last few decades in the United States and our military have really benefited from emphasizing precision. And you saw the brilliance that the United States Air Force and what someone like General Corcoran could do in the air or in commanding forces with precision. But today, technology advances have gotten to the level where precision is not only merely by advanced forces like Israel and the United States. We all have iPhones, we all have other capabilities that provide tremendous capability.

You're seeing in conflict how that's being applied. These very cheap drones, these relatively inexpensive cruise missiles are very accurate. The Iranians demonstrated this in disabling Saudi oil refineries and hitting very precise locations. We've seen also the ability to move information and to provide in-flight and other updates in ways that were the province only of very advanced militaries.

But even at the headline level, the conflicts we're seeing, whether they're in the Middle East or they are in Ukraine or Russia, don't look anything like what we observed before. People are employing modern tactics and missiles, drones, cruise missiles are primary instruments. So, you can't just keep adding to every part of the defense budget, because after all, no country can afford an unlimited budget. But you have to make relative prioritization decisions.

And it seems to me, it's obvious when you look at what adversaries are emphasizing and the emphasis they are placing on offensive missiles, you have to pace a commensurate advantage or amount of your budget on defensive capabilities. And that doesn't mean simply producing exactly what we have in the inventory now. You have to have better systems that are more cost-effective. But A, the amount of budget devoted to missile defense needs go up. B, we're allowing ourselves where we had a unified approach, much like Israel's had with the IMDO, in the United States with a missile defense agency to allow that to be torn apart and watered down with a lack of authorities by a central organizing authority to make plans to implement them. You need an integrator in these very complex systems.

And third, we're seeing a loss with things like delays in approving budgets and continuing resolutions. We're seeing a loss in the way that we are inefficiently organized between our services, with roles and responsibilities where the same dollars more efficiently organized and spent would go much, much further. And we have to start acting like we're in a conflict. We are. We're in a conflict, whether it's supporting Israel or Iran attacking us, but also frankly, what China is doing in a very undeclared way. We have started acting like we're in a conflict and we've got to respond appropriately.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

Thanks, John. Like I said, it should be called the Department of Offense. We spend about 1.5% on defense on our entire budget. That's got to change. It's got to change. We'll flip it over to Karbler.

All right, ladies and gentlemen... Thanks, John. We have, I think, our nation's number one practitioner of missile defense, just retired. Great. I mean, the best. The smartest guy I think from our army on missile defense. Just unbelievable career he's had. He just retired as the former commander of the Army Space Missile Defense Command. Just a great human being, a leader, and he can think through all of it. That we've gotten through the policy, now we're going to go right into the U.S. practicality of employment and operations of our missile defense capabilities. And he's very familiar with Israel, doing a lot of those exercises during his time through the years. Ladies and gentlemen, retired Lieutenant General Dan Karbler.

LTG (Ret.) Dan Karbler:

Hey. Thanks very much, Riki. Thanks for having me on the panel. So, if you'll allow me just to kind of go from the strategic down to the tactical, and I'll try not to reiterate all the great comments that have been said already. First thing that we should take credit for and look at is the important decision that was made when we put Israel underneath Central Command and took them out from underneath European Command. To me, that was a watershed moment when we made that decision, because anybody will tell you, Dave probably knows from his time in tent, and anybody that was in EUCOM, and you had the Israeli responsibility, you did not have a true unity of command and unity of effort because you had EUCOM, you had CENTCOM, but the area of responsibility that Israel played in was really the CENTCOM area of responsibility.

So, bringing Israel up under the Central Command AOR was critical. I would argue that all this integration, everything that we were able to accomplish in the past couple of years, which then came to fruition this past weekend, it would not have been as nearly as effective had we still had the old command structure where Israel was up underneath the EUCOM. Why? Because now this allows the Central Command commander to go visit Israel. He can make sure that all the exercises tie in all his U.S. and other partner nations within CENTCOM to do integrated air and missile defense exercises.

So, to me, watershed moment. And then, if you take it down into the next level, so then you have the 32nd Army Air and Missile Defense Command commanded by Rich Harrison. Now, he who has all the forces that are in Central Command, all the U.S. Air Defense Force and Central Command, he can now also operate with the IDF and Israeli Air Defense Forces, relationship building exercises, setting up the architectures, doing defense design, all those things that we do to help make a true integrated robust defense.

And then, he's also, I'm quite sure that Rich is working behind the scenes with all the other allied partners there within Central Command to make sure that we're all on the same sheet of music, that we all understand that those threats are coming from Iran and that everybody has to be there to counter them. So, making that change from EUCOM to CENTCOM, it enables the 32nd Army Air Missile Defense Commander to really do his job much more efficiently. Watershed moment there.

And then, if you just take it down to the next level, and I really got to give a shout-out to the Army air defenders who have been on station in the Middle East for a long time. I would give credit first to Joe D'Antona back in '08 when we started establishing that footprint again back in Central Command. I was very fortunate being the benefactor of Joe's work when I brought in the 31st brigade and we made it more robust and had our Army Air Defense Forces all throughout the Central Command.

And now today, I mean, we've got Alpha-4 THAAD there, we've got the 17 ADA there. You got to give a shout-out to those batteries there who I know participated in this weekend's attack, 32 ADA, 1-62 ADA, Echo 3-4. We've got National Guard C-RAM, we've got the Coyote weapon system doing UAS engagements. So, just a tremendous layered capability that we're providing from THAAD all the way down to C-RAM and Coyote for the Central Command commander. And having that integrated with our allies and partners, having it integrated with the IDF and the Israeli Air Defense Force is critically important.

The other thing too that you've got to take your hat off to to those soldiers is the high operational readiness rate that our air defenses have over there. It's crappy conditions. I can remember bringing a skipper from an Aegis BMD ship, and I took him to our site at Al-udeid and he saw a Patriot radar wide open, dust blowing. It was 100 degrees. And he said, "That's the Patriot radar?" I said, "Yes, sir, it sure is." And he said, "Aegis, 62 degrees, climate control." He could not believe that our weapons system was able to perform like it did. So, the credit to our soldiers who are in extremely austere conditions, terrible conditions, who are keeping those operational rates for very sophisticated weapons systems, keeping it going. And again, some of them, like Coyote, we don't have a whole lot of experience with it yet, but they're making it work all the time there. So, super important.

Then the other thing is just the planning, and we alluded to the plan a little bit, but Patriot gets a bad rap about being, "Hey, it's a sectored system." Well, those great innovators, those great

planners there within the 32nd AAMBC and the 31st brigade and the 69th brigade and brigades previous to them, they figured out how to take what they had and make 360 coverage. So, that complex coordinated attack that came in from Iran, we were able to counter it. Not worried about really our sector defenses anymore, but being able to provide that 360 degree coverage and protection, and I think we saw that manifest itself over the weekend.

I'm going to take just a little issue with John Rood's point on attack ops, and I agree, we don't want to just have preempt to just go out there and start swacking people, but attack operations has a role in integrated air and missile defense, it absolutely does, and I would hope that right now, that the IDF is looking at the facilities, launch facilities, launcher garrisons, wherever we think that the next missiles or drones or cruise missiles are going to be launched from. Hopefully, that's a pretty high on a target list, so that we can help thin the bows. I call them bows, by the way. If we shoot archers, that's going to get in a political decision. I like to call them, we shoot the bows, we shoot the arrows, and we shoot the archers. That starts to get in the Soleimani thing a little bit. But nonetheless, there is a role for attack operations, offensive counter air in part of the overall integrated air and missile defense planning that we do.

So with that, because I want to be respectful for the other panelists' time, I'm going to just leave it at that. Subject to any Q&As or comments that you might have, Riki. Thank you.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

Thank you, Dan. I do want, from your position in this watershed moment of the capacity and the cost, what's the future for the Army to get stuff out there urgently? Cruise missile defense, all of that stuff that we've been working on, is this a watershed moment to change the urgency with the MDA acquisition community, or is this not going to do anything, but the same old, same old?

LTG (Ret.) Dan Karbler:

So, I would say that really in the last four years, that sense of urgency has been there. When Joe McConville was the chief, Secretary McCarthy was secretary of the Army, they recognized the fact that we had gutted air and missile defense 20 years ago, and we took all the divisional SHORAD AD battalions out of the force and left ourselves wide open to drone attack.

And I can remember, if you were in the ADA school, 20, 25 years ago, we used to have a slide that said, "The poor man's air force," and it showed for \$10 million what you could get. And we would shown, you could get a whole ton of drones, you could get a bunch of cruise missiles, ballistic missiles, you might get one or two Fighters. So, we knew that drones were on the horizon, we knew that cruise missiles were going to be a threat, and we argued to keep the structure in there, but for reasons, the Army made the decision to cut the short-range air defense battalions from the divisions.

Well, recognizing that error, we are on a path to build it back up, and we are building back up. Is it going as fast as I want or you want or anybody wants? Absolutely not. But we are employing things. We have directed energy that we have deployed out to Central Command right now, a high-powered microwave. So, we are getting that capability out the door as quickly as possible, whether it's been fully tested or whether it's prototyping, we are getting it out there into the hands of the soldiers, in response to what the combat commander wants. So, we're getting there.

Are we doing it as fast as we want? No, but I will tell you what we are doing fast is the priorities within the secretary of the Army, the chief of staff of the Army, I would say air and missile, that there's nothing second at what Air and Missile Defense is doing right now.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

And resources are going to fall, right? And they got to put resources into this thing big time.

LTG (Ret.) Dan Karbler:

Yeah. I mean, as we see the growth in force structure right now for our short-range air defense, we stood up a brigade in Germany, we stood up a brigade in Japan. So, we are getting those resources. We can't just snap our fingers and immediately stand up a brigade or stand up another Patriot battalion, but we are working on standing - another patriot battalion, but we are working on standing those up and we've got the resources, we've got the prioritization for the funding to make that happen. And again, not just for Central Command, but when you look at the defense of Guam and what we're doing for the rest of the globe.

And then the last thing I'll say to get off the stage is that the most important resources are soldiers. And the Army recognize the stress, the high up-tempo of the patriot soldiers did a Health of the Force study and put a bunch of measures in place to help reduce the stress on the force. And I think we're seeing that manifested by 32d Army Air Missile Defense Command having the highest retention and re-enlistment rate of any division size unit within the army.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

Thank you. Thank you, Dan. All right, we'll get to go talk to the superstar, Israel, and what it did. We've talked about the American force, allied force, and now it's time to hone in on the exceptional, exceptional missile defense history, exceptional movement, and being able to execute a flawless mission. So with us today is Brigadier General Shachar Shohat. My Hebrew's not very good, sorry, but a great friend of ours. I've been with him since the early 2000s. He was the air force commander and air defense for Israel. He's active today with it and we really appreciate you taking the time to give the audience a perspective of what Israel did over a Sunday and over the past week.

Brig Gen (Ret.) Shachar Shohat:

Thank you very much, Riki. Thank you for letting me into this very professional conversation. Looking back to the last weekend event, we then, my 40 years of experiences as an air defense, I've never noticed such an event, such a challenging event with the hundreds of incoming threats synchronized simultaneously with the impact point of Israel trying to saturate all the multi-layered defense that Israel created in the last few decades. And still we were able to mitigate this challenge. And maybe this has sanitized your vision of the advocacy of yourself and the importance of the air and the missile defense threat along the years. It was, of course, a multi-directional threats that we are having in the last few months here in the conflict in Israel, threats from the Gaza border, from the Lebanon border, from the Syrian border, from the Iraqi border, from the Yemeni border, and in the last event, also from the Iranian border.

I know once President Roosevelt described the deterrence in the sentence of speak softly and carry a big stick, but we see that deterrence in few of the dimension, they probably failed while everybody is allowing himself to attack Israel, although we having a big stick and even challenging the US when President Biden say don't. And the Iranian are still aim to threaten us, but I think it was the peak of the capability of the effort that we made together with the MDA, with the US Armed Forces along the last two to three decades, augmenting the capability of Israel, creating the multilayer defense and everything was focused in this special night with the outstanding performance using every tool we had, we got from the US and our allied forces from the shared early warning through the TPY-2 radar, through the Aegis BMD ships, through the capability of the fighter air jet that dealt with the UAS, very, very big distance from the border of Israel.

And of course the multilayer system that we had here, the Arrow 3, the Arrow 2, and the David's Sling, and the Iron Dome augmented still by a good old Israeli Patriot that still exist in Israel and also shut down some UAS during this conflict. And everything was done in a few hours almost without any casualty except for one young girl that was not protected in the Israeli desert. And with the very minor damage to infrastructure, all the operational capability kept and still working. And I think the mutual training that we have done during the years between the forces, we mentioned the drills, the Juniper Cobra, but not only of that, it's the combined doctrine, it's the TTPs, it's the cohesion that we create between the forces. And of course not less important, the interoperability with the Link 16 with the US capability that they create a mutual air picture that gave the warriors the capability to be synchronized and be efficient and effective with the system.

So I think this is a very good moment to thank the US administration, the MDA, the US Armed Forces for the support along the years, especially at that weekend. I would like also to emphasize General Kurilla, the CENTCOM commanders. I totally agree with Edan that the move to the area of responsibility of the CENTCOM is also very essential for this mission. I think the mutual intelligence that we shared during and before the conflict was crucial to the success. And of course I really appreciate that. I just want to put things in perspective. We are not celebrating

here in Israel. We are still in the middle of a war. It hasn't ended yet. We have some casualty on a daily basis. So as a few of the previous people was mentioned, we have to take the lesson learned to keep improving ourselves, to be equipped in the top-of-the-art system. And hopefully we'll do it the best also in the near future if it will be necessary.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

Thank you, Shep. Is this the first time that you as a countryman have been able to use Arrow 3, Arrow 2, David's Sling, Iron Dome and I think at the JDM, you have a dew sensor, all of that together. Plus you've got your allies of Jordan. You've got Arab allies that are helping you on this. It's just unbelievable. But it couldn't have happened three years ago. It's happening now and it's just great to see this. But is this the first time that you've been able to implement all your weapon systems, including your F-15s and including the whole thing? Or am I right on that or are you right or ...

Brig Gen (Ret.) Shachar Shohat:

Yeah, it was the biggest orchestra that ever played here in the region. I don't know if you remember, but I mentioned in the last event that we were doing a few years ago that this is the time for the Middle East alliance to be created and this was a preview, and that is the preview, I hope, of the Middle East alliance led by the US administration trying to create some war within Saudi Arabia, within the Emirates, within Jordan, within all the Western civil world trying to prevent the evil here in the region. So again, thank you very much. Really appreciate by all the Israelis that are still living here in the normal life, if I can say it normal under these circumstances. You all have a lot of share on this success.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

Powerful to create that trust across the Arab nations with us. That is powerful and that was displayed. That is going to deter, is going to work. It was beautiful to see and beautiful to see all the systems that America's help invest in you and your technology to be able to create that to fight as one unit like you did over the weekend. So thank you very much.

Brig Gen (Ret.) Shachar Shohat:

Sometimes we are good in the ROI.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

Our next guest, I want to move right into it because I don't think we appreciate CENTCOM and CENAF Mike Kurilla, but also bridge that air defense for the entire region falls under a flag officer at CENTCOM, Air Force officer that's able to do the C2 for all this and plug and play

what's out there to connect that. So we've got one of the best, I think he's the best F-22 pilot ever in the history of the United States-

Maj Gen (Ret.) Charles Corcoran:

Certainly on this panel.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

... but no, seriously on that. But he's a great fighter. He's a former assistant director to the Air Force joint operations. So ladies and gentlemen, Charles Corcoran.

Maj Gen (Ret.) Charles Corcoran:

Thanks. Thanks, Riki. In the interest of time and given this-

Mr. Riki Ellison:

We've pretty well gone over-

Maj Gen (Ret.) Charles Corcoran:

Give the superb comments by all the other panels and to make sure Dave gets a little time here, I'm going to keep it very high level and very brief, but I'll say ... You said this is perfect. No military operation is ever perfect, we know, and this will be debriefed and some mistakes will be found, but it is, I think, as close as to textbook as you can get with the execution of true Joint/Coalition Integrated Air Missile Defense. So my hat's off to the team for that.

But I think that the thing I've learned from you most over my years and when you, Riki, is that Super Bowl is not won on game day. It's on the off season. And this happened because of sort of a summary of what was already said here, but the coaches were in place, the players were in place, the system was in place. These missile systems were put in place, acquired over a number of years.

The soldier, sailor, marine, airman there and on the US side, all of our partners, they have trained together, they've rehearsed together, they got playbooks, they got a C2 system in place that's resilient. And so when kickoff happened for this game, the players were ready and knew what to do. The coaches knew how to make the in-game adjustments and the game was won. That did not happen at kickoff. It was all done ahead of time. So my hat's off definitely on the US side, General Kurilla to his area, area defense commander, as you said, Lieutenant General Grynkewich doing a great job coordinating across his US components and with the allies, partners, and ultimately Israel who were all trying to defend there. But you got to use the right assets for the right purposes. And yeah, there was a big use of fighter aircraft here to shoot down

a large number of drones at least, maybe some reasonable assist, I'm not sure of the details, but my hat's off to everybody on that.

And again, I don't want to go long but I want to just pick up on a couple of things. People are talking about a lot in the press now, what's next? And so to hit back on the defense versus the offense piece, I think Dan and John are rolling the line on this. Defense is invaluable. It's absolutely important, but it's also, yeah, it's not affordable just to do defense long term. You got to be able to repel that attack maybe a few more, but you got to be damn well ready to go punch the arrow or the archer, the bow in the face, whatever you want to call them. We cannot allow them to keep firing back, all right? So you got to be able to absorb that initial one. Israel and the team here did that. The real questions about what's next because it's not affordable to just keep letting them throw things at you.

Number two, you hear about why is Ukraine getting this low? Go back to the Super Bowl comment. The fight started and we didn't have the forces in play. We've been trying to put a piecemeal air defense network in there with a lot of different allies and partners for months under fire. You can't build a plane while you're flying it. I'm sure we'll continue supporting and dp when we can, but this is tough work.

And number three, you got to think about the importance of us having air superiority and really a lot of the information superiority, et cetera in the AOR, and think about this vis-à-vis a China kind of threat. Think about our sensor network we have in place and what China's going to do to try to take down our sensors, our C2 network, to target our individual systems to make them all have to work independently against a large barrage of hypersonic ballistic cruise missiles et cetera they can throw at. So that the defense that we have in place right now in Israel, we need to do that on steroids in the Pacific and other areas to make sure that they're resilient, redundant, there's enough of them, such that we will hopefully deter something from China. That's what I take away from those. Thanks, Riki.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

Cork, I want to just expand on the air to air because we don't rarely see that in coordination. Most of the public's just focused on army, Patriot and Aegis BMD. This has not been visible and it looked like we had aircraft from different nations, A lot of stuff going through the air, deconfliction, all sorts of stuff that people don't understand or think and how to coordinate your hits so the other ones don't have to reengage the same target, that with the complexity of this thing is huge with 300 targets coming at you with the air-

Maj Gen (Ret.) Charles Corcoran:

Yeah, I'd say -- Yeah, Riki, it's a great point, but deconfliction is probably something we did 20, 30 years ago, maybe longer. What we really want is coordination and integration. We want the

orchestra that was mentioned, right? And I believe that's what we had. We had the orchestra. Everybody knew their job just like they did when everybody did their job and the commander watched. And if he had to move assets around, he did. If he had to call all those, he did. But the fighter pilots in those fighters were trained for what they needed to do. They knew what their error responsibility was, they knew what their targets were, and they trusted their teammates to do the same.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

I'll trust in the numbers that came across with the other allies and for Israel to trust CENTCOM and Grynkewich for orchestrating this. And it's just, it's remarkable. That's how you win. We know that's how you win.

Maj Gen (Ret.) Charles Corcoran:

And you can't micromanage it during the game, right. These people were trained.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

And you got to have diversity. You can't have all the same weapons systems. You got to have it all. So you got to have some super stars. But that was great. We do have a little bit more time. So our next guest is the former 10th AAMDC commander that had Israel under his account. That was different a couple years ago. But ladies and gentlemen, Dave Shank, retired Colonel.

COL (Ret.) Dave Shank:

Yeah, thanks, Riki. And thanks to the colleagues and the entire MDAA gang. Great to be here and very difficult to follow my esteemed colleagues and all on point with their comments. I agree the fact that the responsibility now rests with the 32d Army Air Missile Defense Command, who has that Middle Eastern fight responsibility that General Karbler talked about is exactly where that responsibility needs.

But I've seen this as a long time coming. I've been to Israel many, many times during my command time with 10th Army Air Missile Defense Command. And I'll tell you the bottom line up front is this is about trust, mutual trust and relationships. I mean, it really is. And from my personal experience and the soldiers and the service members that serve with me, what I mean by that is those who came from Third Air Force at Ramstein Air Base as well that had the opportunity to train and rehearse constantly with the Israeli Air Defense forces, with the Israeli Defense Forces and with the homeland defense forces on a constant basis.

General Karbler mentioned, or I think actually Tal mentioned Juniper Cobra. That's a Tier 1 level exercise. So that's a significant, there's only so many Tier 1 level exercises across the Department of Defense. That is one of them. And the constant turn of rehearsals and training and updating

standard operating procedures and tactics, techniques, and procedures that were also mentioned is an ongoing process. I know this, again, has shifted from 10th AAMDC and a European command responsibility to a central command responsibility in the 32nd AAMDC. But truly my hat's off to all the players involved from not just a United States perspective and a joint warfighting perspective, but the allies and partners as well. And they've all been mentioned from the air components to the ground-based components to the space-based components. I think having the opportunity to recognize the indications and warnings, which gives us that head start and allows us to posture accordingly.

Again, as Corky just talked about, the coordination of aircraft from several nations, the Israeli, American ground surface-to-air capabilities and weapon systems that participated in this. A great deal of coordination. So all orchestrated as mentioned by the CAOC there in the CENTCOM area of responsibility.

I don't see the challenges going away. You all have voiced it perfectly. It's a moment in time, but again, demonstrates that a layered air missile defense with a variety of weapon systems is what's needed. John Rood talked about the budget and the need to get back a greater amount of funding to support these defensive systems, which they are.

And then lastly, Riki, because I'll close it up and I do have a couple questions, but St. Barbara, she's definitely shining down on this moment for sure as we, integrated air missile defenders across the force, both active and retired. A big smile on my face recognizing that hard work does pay off. And so Riki, with that said, I'll turn it back over to you.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

Okay. Hey, thanks Dave. We've got a couple minutes. If you can just stand for questions, it'd be great and we can close up. But let's just, we forgot two groups here that need to be identified and praised. The US Navy, we got to give a little love to the US Navy because they shot their first SM-3 Block 1Bs first time in combat, and they were on the water. They're part of the team and Missile Defense Agency who's done extremely great work with Israel, Green Pine, the TPY-2 radars, all that stuff and all the work that those two groups have added to everybody else. I just want to make sure that they're recognized and being part of this team.

So we have time for a couple of questions, Dave, from the audience would be great. And then we'll just sum it up with a summary from each of you and then we'll leave it from there, if we can, just a couple.

COL (Ret.) Dave Shank:

Okay. Thanks, Riki. And we'll try to go rapid fire here. I got at least three. And if we have more time, I've got a fourth one.

What I'd like to do is start with John Rood, if I may, with a question from the audience. "Does the US have the will to defend freedoms in critical locations like Israel today and elsewhere around the globe?"

Mr John Rood:

Well, I think we've shown that the United States is committed to its responsibilities to Israel and elsewhere in the region. And we witnessed the fact that US Air Force fighters were up in numbers, the kind of intelligence sharing movement of other assets to allow the Navy to be in position to fire for the US, other ground-based systems to be there. And it takes time and effort. And as Dan talked about, it puts a strain on the force in the sense that these are very in-demand assets. And so candidly, there are more needs for them than there is dwell time for each of those individual units. So I think we showed that.

Now, my concern is mostly around the level of effort to do that. I think strategically signaling to the Iranians, signaling to our adversaries in the region, these various proxy forces that the Iranians have funded is not recognizing that the Iranian regime is in a conflict with the United States. I mean, a hundred some odd attacks did not occur over a three or four month period on American forces by accident. The act of funding, training, creating these proxy forces and in some cases directing them and orchestrating their attacks is all part of a broader plan, and it's all part of a broader plan again, it took many decades for the Iranians to create the amount of capability that Israel's enemies on its borders have. We shouldn't lose sight of the fact that's the conflict that we're in and the Iranian government, the fact that this was a very successful defense of a large scale attack, the conflict won't end there.

They're committed to their vision. This is part of their broader vision, and so we have to stand firm with our allies. I think sometimes the changes in modulation, which candidly it seems to me are driven by domestic political concerns here in the United States that we're entering election season and who you're speaking to, I think that often gets misinterpreted or I think sends the wrong signal of a lack of resolve to those in the region like the Iranians for example. Certainly no one wants to see civilian casualties in Gaza. However, I don't see Hamas being willing to surrender. I don't see Hamas avoiding that. This is a conflict after October 7th begun by Hamas and the Iranians I think are quite happy to see their proxies fight to the last man. I mean, that's an exaggeration of course, they would not want to see it that far, but they are happy to see their proxies do most of the fighting.

That's partly what was noteworthy here. They needed to show they were apparently the regime in Tehran that they were taking action themselves and attack would come from Iranian territory. I think it's noteworthy that the head of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps gave comments in public in the last 24, 48 hours in which he described that this is part of the new rules of the game. That from his perspective, Iran would no longer simply attack from proxies but also attack from Iran itself. Now, very interesting that the IRGC commander not feeling the need to hide the fact

that Iran has been orchestrating these various attacks. And one of the complaints I have about our current situation in the United States is that these various countries, their leaders or these groups including the Houthis, and others, often give comments where they describe their intentions and the reason for their intentions, but somehow because they don't speak English, because they're not necessarily easily reported, this gets under-reported here.

But if you read the Iranian media, if you read the statements from Iranian leaders, they're speaking a clear language. And so this conflict I think will continue to go on. I think the United States has the will to resist, but I do think we've wavered at times candidly, and I don't like the modulation and the messaging. I don't like the way it appears that the United States is somehow backtracking on a commitment to Israel or other things because in order for there to be peace and stability, our combined enemies need to understand that there is going to be a combined effort like what occurred here this weekend. I don't like the steps that some administration spokesmen took to quickly disassociate themselves from any potential offensive action. And I will say to Dan Karbler's comments earlier, I think attack operations and offenses and killing the archers, killing the bows, if you will, all of that is very important.

I just don't like when sometimes that's used as an excuse to say, as an alternative to missile defenses, we will suppress enemy fire. We'll conduct attack operations in a way and intensity the enemy cannot continue that rate of fire. The history of the 2006 war in Lebanon, the history of Israeli attacks to suppress rocket fire, which were successful, but never enough to eliminate the rocket fire. You have to have a capable defensive system. And this crutch that sometimes missile defense opponents say that we will preempt or will respond overwhelmingly with retaliation, I just don't think is practical in today's battlefield.

COL (Ret.) Dave Shank:

Thanks John. Hey, Corky, if I may, General Corcoran, I got a question here regarding the integration of Germany's Arrow 3. Do we think these events will help accelerate that process into a NATO IAMD architecture? And maybe not just the Arrow 3, but just systems being procured today?

Maj Gen (Ret.) Charles Corcoran:

Yeah, great question, Dave. I think, again, this operation illustrated that this is a team sport and John, many others have hit on, a lot of resources. No one country can do it alone. So I think we absolutely have to figure out a way to integrate the available systems that like-minded nations have in a coherent fashion so that we can execute this mission every time. So I can't answer if it will, but I'm certainly hopeful that it does.

COL (Ret.) Dave Shank:

Okay, thank you. And for General Karbler, if I may, sir, question with regards to elevated persistent ISR surveillance. The example used is an AeroStat, but even from, I would say even from a space-based perspective, if you could provide some of your thoughts on how those capabilities could increase and in this case, in a shared early warning detection aspect.

LTG (Ret.) Dan Karbler:

First at SMDC we have the Army capabilities manager for space and high altitude. So we've been working quite a bit with high altitude platforms, balloons, et cetera, and that's all part of helping us to have robust communications infrastructure responsive to the war fighter where some of the capabilities that the Space Force would provide might not meet the Army maneuver commander's priorities. To get to an elevated sensor, I'm a huge proponent for elevated sensors and we have to get over our modernization embarrassment that we had when JLENS Tether broke, that was a system that was JROC approved, all the AOAs approved it, it was undergoing tests.

And yes, unfortunately the tether broke. But tragically we lose test pilots when we're testing aircraft when they crash, but we don't stop the development of the aircraft. We continue with the development. When the JLENS tether broke, nobody died, but for some reason we had this modernization embarrassment and we just mothballed it. And where we see the success of elevated sensors in Israel and other countries, it is a game changer. It provides us with extended battle space, integrated fire control capabilities where you can take advantage of kinematic ranges of missiles that are no longer restricted by the terrain, by earth curvature, et cetera. So we have got to continue to pursue that and just take advantage of what industry has done in the past 10 years since the army mothballed or actually just stopped its JLENS program.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

Can I just go off that with Shachar, on the Dew? Did you guys use that, your overhead persistent dirigible, was that part of the architecture on Sunday?

Brig Gen (Ret.) Shachar Shohat:

We used all the means that and all the tools that we have in Israel in this weekend.

COL (Ret.) Dave Shank:

Last question, Riki, if I may, and it is for both Tal and Shachar, and Shachar if you could go first and it's regarding really lessons learned. And I know the jury's still out and we're still collecting that data and it might take a period of days and weeks and even months, but what are your thoughts, both of you, both from an operator, Shachar and then from an intelligence expert Tal, what are some of your thoughts with regards to future testing, training at all levels from the

tactical to the strategic level of war fighting? Maybe provide some of your thoughts with regards to that please.

Brig Gen (Ret.) Shachar Shohat:

I believe it emphasized again the importance of the exercise, the mutual risk that we used to have and we had a little bit luck of exercise in the last few years regarding budget and some other issues. And I think the lesson learned that we already learned and that we will learn in the near future is that if we would like to improve the performance and the capability of the warriors, we should train them more intensively. I think it was an intense salvo sometimes when I was there that night, it looked like a very difficult scenario of simulation, but of course it was for real. When you see hundreds of targets, it's a very small country and very dense area and try to put everybody together on the same spot, the alliance aircraft, the Israeli aircraft, the GBAD the naval system together and create an efficient capability while maintaining a safety area and not doing any friendly fire during this, let's say four hours of intense salvo. That was a very impressive performance, but still we have to shape it up.

Mr. Tal Inbar:

Yeah, I think that we should of course further study Iran's future capabilities in all types of threat, UAS, cruise and ballistic missiles. And we also have to remember that Iran exports those types of systems to other countries. Just recently, several hours ago I saw some pictures from Venezuela where you can find anti-ship missiles provided by Iran, and of course we heard about exporting missiles in the U.S. to Russia. So it's not just our problem in the region. Iran is a pivotal point of exporting those types of systems and not just the system themselves, but also the doctrine because Iran also got some operational experience from this coordinated attack. And we also have to remember that it was a limited attack even though it was a large-scale attack. But Iran designed this whole attack as a limited one and they announced to the United Nations that well, from our point of view, it's now over.

You can just imagine if it was conducted for several days and if the first salvo would have been the ballistic missiles, and then they will incorporate other assets and aggressors into that first strike. So I don't know if the correct phrase is the worst is yet to come, but in future conflicts, it could be days, it could be months, it could be years. But a future conflict with Iran directly from Iran won't be the same, won't be the same in quantities and in quality. And it'll be much more challenging for us and for the allies to mitigate. So just a final note, we should keep an eye on Iran's hypersonic ambitions.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

All right, this is great. I want to just go around the room real quick, just a summary of any comments you'd like to make on this and we'll close it up. You want to go first, Dave?

COL (Ret.) Dave Shank:

Sure, I can. Thanks Riki. Thanks again to everyone for that matter in the MDAA. Just to follow Tal's comments there, that region of the world will continue to be a dynamic and complex environment, and I think a precedent has been set from an Iranian perspective. And so what Shachar and Tal alluded to about continued training and efforting, whether it's through soldiers and boots on the ground or sailors or the procurement of more modern weapon systems and what lies ahead. The only thing I didn't mention during my short pitch was the counter drone fight. We've seen how that's taken shape around the globe for that matter, and the changes of course in the character of war that's provided with those capabilities. So it's a continuing effort and challenge to not only procure those type of equipment sets as well, but then train, rehearse and train. The enemy doesn't sleep, so we can't either. Thanks Riki. Thanks for letting me participate.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

Yeah, Shachar. Do you want to close?

Brig Gen (Ret.) Shachar Shohat:

I mentioned the deterrence in the offensive means, but I think we can also see it as from the defense perspective that if the enemy knows that his attack will be stopped and successfully by that and that he might be retaliated hardly after that. So there is also a donation of the defense means to the total deterrence of a country.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

Tal?

Mr. Tal Inbar:

Yeah, I follow you Riki. I would like to see a formal organization like the Middle East Missile Defense Alliance to be recognized officially with more countries that could incorporate their own capabilities and not only sharing in the active defense in time of need, but also to prepare for future attack and perhaps to share their forces in the technological aspects as well.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

Dan?

LTG (Ret.) Dan Karbler:

Proud of my Army Air Defenders, Riki, and team, thank you for letting an old retired guy join the panel. Thanks.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

John?

Mr John Rood:

Well I'll just say it's great to get this group together and it's great to talk about the significance of these amazing events over the last few days. Unfortunately, I agree with Tal that I think more is to come and we should not forget that as we pause to reflect on the significance of what occurred. But we're going to have to keep pace with the enemy who no doubt is going to school on the tactics and procedures used and trying to exploit seams next time around. But I do think that it does in a way stabilize the situation and give us time and give our Israeli allies time to reflect on next steps. And I do hope above all winning teams play as a team and stay united. And so I think more than anything, we've got to stay united here with our close allies that brought this success and always be true to the tenets of that alliance so that we can deter these attacks so we can be successful together. And in fact, in your vernacular, Riki, win championships together. So back to you. Thank you Riki for bringing us all together.

Maj Gen (Ret.) Charles Corcoran:

Thanks to my fellow panel members, thanks to you Riki, for your leadership on this very important issue. And then I'll just close with the phrase from my dear friend and longtime mentor, General Tod Wolters retired. He's leading by this one, "Trust, training and teamwork". Let's all come through.

Mr. Riki Ellison:

As Winston Churchill said, "Earn your victory". This victory was earned. We have to look that this is not just a regional conflict, this is a global conflict. And the amount of resources and capabilities we are spending here is an advantage to Russia, to China, to North Korea. They're all watching this. And it is just amazing to me that Israel and this coalition of the willing is the leader of IMB in the world today. You wouldn't think that, you'd think Korea, you would think Europe, you would think other places. But it's unbelievable that Israel with its GCC countries and U.S. are the leader of how to do this, the reflection of how to do it. And it shows now that you're going to have to put capacity and it has to go in other regions of the world. And we are a tipping point of changing our mentality of resourcing, allowing policy to put missile defense first and foremost for the world's population.

This is going to be a world fight. And we know that. Ukraine's on the verge of losing and they're fighting this and the lessons learned and the impetus of what happened is a world signal that's going to be taken seriously, that's going to change policy. Our MDA budget's going to be plus. That's coming. That's coming. But we got to do more than that. We got to come together and lead

this. This is a revolution and it is just so fun to watch. So thanks all of you, thank all our services, our nations coming together to get this done, to show the world how to do this and this trust. So thank you for your time today to recognize that victory that has been accomplished for so many reasons. It's a victory. So thank you everybody for chipping in and being part of this whole movement. So thanks again. Thank you.