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Thread: [Israel's Growing Debate: Air vs. Ground-Based Missiles](#)

\$!uo2H%gE# - December 30, 2024, 9:39 am

Israel's defense budget is set to increase significantly in the next decade, sparking an open debate about its military strategy, particularly regarding long-range attack systems such as ballistic and cruise missiles.

Currently, Israel relies heavily on air power for its defense strategy, as seen in recent strikes on Iranian military sites and Yemen. These airstrikes, while effective, involve complex and time-consuming preparation, including coordination, refueling, and intelligence systems. For example, the October 26 strike on Iranian targets followed weeks of preparation after Iran launched hundreds of missiles at Israel. In contrast, experts suggest that using precision ballistic missiles could have allowed for a response within an hour, with cruise missiles reducing this to just a few hours.

However, Israel's reliance on air-launched missiles, such as the Golden Horizon and ROCKS systems, has raised questions. While Israel reportedly has ground-based ballistic missiles like the Jericho, they have not been used in recent strikes. This is because developing a surface-based missile system would require a significant financial investment, which could detract from funding for air assets. Moreover, air superiority in the region has made airstrikes a safer, more versatile option.

Yet, with the rise of advanced air defense systems, especially in countries like Iran, some experts argue that Israel should reconsider its strategy. While airstrikes remain the preferred method, ground-launched missiles could provide a faster and more cost-effective alternative in certain scenarios. As military technology evolves, Israel may eventually shift focus, possibly integrating ground-launched systems into its defense strategy to maintain its edge.

This ongoing debate underscores the need for a reevaluation of Israel's defense capabilities, balancing air superiority with new, more efficient missile options.

Article:

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/amid-idf-rethink-some-see-air-launched-missile-doctrine-moving-to-more-solid-ground/>