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AP-98

ISRAEL-ARMS

JERUSALEM -- ISRAEL CONFIRMED TODAY THAT IT WAS DUE TO RECEIVE INCREASED ARMS SHIPMENTS FROM THE UNITED STATES.

INFORMATION MINISTER AHARON YARIV, A FORMER GENERAL, TOLD A NEWS CONFERENCE ISRAEL HAD BEEN "ASSURED OF AN IMPORTANT ADDITIONAL AMOUNT OF ARMS," AND THAT "AN IMPORTANT PART OF THIS HARDWARE WILL GET TO ISRAEL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE."

YARIV'S STATEMENT WAS THE FIRST CONFIRMATION FROM ISRAEL OF AMERICAN REPORTS OF A NEW ARMS DEAL. YARIV SAID THE AGREEMENT WAS REACHED WHEN PRIME MINISTER YITZHAK RABIN VISITED WASHINGTON LAST MONTH.

YARIV SAID ISRAEL WOULD HAVE LIKED MORE WEAPONS, BUT HAD TO ACCEPT "CERTAIN REALITIES AND RESTRAINTS."

U.S. DEFENSE SECRETARY JAMES SCHLESINGER SAID IN WEST GERMANY TUESDAY THAT THE NEW DEAL INVOLVED "NO DRAMATIC CHANGE" IN THE U.S.-ISRAEL MILITARY RELATIONSHIP. HE DENIED THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS STRIPPING ITSELF OF HARDWARE TO SUPPLY ISRAEL, BUT SAID SOME WEAPONS WERE TAKEN FROM ACTIVE RESERVE ARMY UNITS.

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