

FACT SHEET

AUSTERE CHALLENGE 2012

Headquarters, United States European Command



Austere Challenge 2012 is a bilateral air-defense exercise between the U.S. and Israel involving more than 3,500 U.S. personnel in Israel and Europe and approximately 1,000 Israel Defense Forces personnel in Israel. The exercise, which begins in October and will last approximately three weeks, has been in planning for more than two years as part of a long-standing agreement between U.S. European Command and the Israel Defense Force to hold bilateral training exercises on a regular basis.

Overview:

- Purpose: Improve the combined missile defense training and overall interoperability of USEUCOM and the IDF.
- The sixth large-scale exercise our countries have held together and is the largest and most complex joint exercise ever conducted throughout our partnership.
- Designed to improve defensive capabilities between the U.S. and Israel against any threats.
- Exercise is driven by the overall situation in the Middle East, but not in response to any specific current incident or development.
- U.S. regularly conducts defensive exercises with allies and, on numerous occasions, has conducted large-scale exercises with Israel, notably those of the Juniper Cobra series.
- Concept: Unit field training and scenario-driven opportunities as well as computer-simulated exercises designed to improve interoperability.
- Personnel:
 - Missile defense elements, as well as combat-service support units and individual augmentees from across the four services and spectrum of U.S. military specialties
 - Approximately 1,000 of those U.S. personnel will be in Israel
- Equipment that will deploy and be integrated with Israeli assets as part of an overall comprehensive air defense network:
 - Elements of Patriot air defense batteries
 - Aegis ballistic missile defense ship
 - Related air defense systems
- U.S. Cost: Approximately \$30M
- Postponement:
 - Postponed from Spring 2012 to Fall 2012 at request of Israeli government
 - U.S. and Israeli governments agreed to modify the exercise, which included an inconsequential reduction in U.S. presence in Israel
 - Scale of the exercise and the number of forces participating is essentially unchanged