Israel a 'Mighty Aircraft Carrier' of the US, Netanyahu Says

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu visited the USS George H.W. Bush docked outside of Haifa.

The destroyer had just returned from five months of battling Daesh. Netanyahu spoke of Israel's contributions to fighting the militant jihadists in Syria and Iraq, hailing the ongoing efforts of the US-led coalition.

"We are here on a mighty aircraft carrier of the United States and a few miles from here, there is another mighty aircraft carrier of our common civilization – it's called the State of Israel," he said, adding that Israel and the US "are both peace loving people, while we recognize that sometimes you need to fight those enemies of peace, those that want to chop the head off our common societies … This is what we do together."

The prime minister also thanked US Naval Forces Europe Commander Admiral Michelle Howard called US Ambassador to Israel David Friedman "a proud American and a great champion of the America-Israel alliance."

USS George H.W. Bush commanding officer and Navy Captain William Pennington pointed out the long history of strategic cooperation and intelligence sharing between Israel and the US, saying the two nations are "very tightly linked with our colleagues and partners and allies from the Israel Defense Forces and have been for many, many years," according to Defense News.

Pennington added, "There is a tremendous network of shared intelligence. As you are aware, the airspace in this region is very, very busy with lots of different actors, so the need to deconflict that and make sure that everyone understands their mission is very, very important."

Friedman pointed out that this was the first time a world leader had been aboard the Bush, saying the event "speaks volumes to the unbreakable bind ties between the United States and the State of Israel."

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