

Morocco in talks with Israel to buy air defence system



Israeli Defence Minister Benny Gantz (R) and Moroccan Defence Minister Abdellatif Loudiyi (L) in Morocco on 24 November, 2021 [@gantzbe/Twitter]

December 30, 2021 at 11:50 am

Morocco is currently in talks with Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) to purchase the Barak-8 Missile air defence system, the Hebrew language *Israel Defense* revealed on Tuesday.

The Barak-8 surface-to-air missile system was jointly developed by Israel and India and can be launched from sea or land, and it protects sensitive targets against various aerial threats over a radius of 150 kilometers.

Israel Defense reported that Colonel Sharon Bitton, IAI's marketing director for the Gulf countries, is carrying out

the negotiations with Morocco.

The talks on this issue began during the visit of Israeli Defence Minister Benny Gantz to Morocco on 23 November, Israeli media reported.

During Gantz's visit to Rabat, he signed with Morocco several military agreements to strengthen security cooperation.

READ: Morocco, Israel to build 2 drone factories

The agreements are related to the development of a project to "manufacture" Israeli drones in Morocco, with recent reports that the two countries intend to cooperate in the production of Kamikaze drones.

In November, the Israeli news outlet *Globes* reported that a contract had been concluded between the Israeli firm Skylock Systems to supply Morocco with the Skylock Dome anti-drone system which detects, verifies and neutralises drones.

In the wake of Gantz's visit, Rabat also ordered a batch of Israeli drones, the Harop type, also known as unmanned aircraft Kamikaze, from IAI. The drones' contract value is around \$22m.

In recent years, Morocco has acquired several pieces of military equipment to strengthen its Royal Armed Forces' (FAR) operational capabilities amid rising regional tensions and to combat extremist or insurgent groups in the Western Sahara.