

## Former Top U.S. Army Commander in Europe on Prospects for U.S. Missile System in Ukraine

Ben Hodges, former Commanding General of United States Army Europe: U.S. continues to provide military support for Ukrainian Armed Forces

By [Rick Rozoff](#)

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*In the new episode of the program “National Security Council,” Tetiana Popova discussed with **General Ben Hodges**, the former Commanding General of United States Army Europe, an agreement between Ukraine and the United States on strategic defense cooperation.*

POPOVA: What do you think about Zelensky’s trip to the United States? How successful was it?

HODGES: ...It highlights the need for a strategy for **the greater Black Sea region where Ukraine fits inside an American strategy for the Black Sea region**....It’s also important to remember that the United States, including the support of the Congress, continues to provide military support for the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

HODGES: ...the United States will continue to provide military equipment that Ukraine requests for land forces, for maritime forces.....I would anticipate we’re going to see increased cooperation on the defense industry side so that the American-Ukrainian industry is working together. It should include some intelligence-sharing agreements....There is **this idea of air and missile defense, supported by the Congress, to provide this system called Iron Dome**. I don’t know that that’s going to happen. I’m not sure it is....

POPOVA: Do you have a similar agreement with the United States in Georgia, or is Ukraine more advanced here? Because there were some agreements between Lockheed Martin and the Ukrainian Ministry of Defense. But I’m not sure that Israel’s protection is the same as that of Lockheed Martin.

HODGES: Of course, it is really a system that the United States has recently purchased and we’re not even sure that this is exactly what the United States needs. Either **the whole**

**concept of integrated air and missile defense is more than just the rockets of the interceptors. It's about exercises, it's about command-and-control, it's about the radar sensors** that have to be out there. That's why I have been reluctant to advocate too strongly for a particular system for Ukraine. Because you have to have the entire package, not just the launcher. And I think that Ukraine has the technology actually to move much of this already, but there must be ways how the United States can help in a key moment. **The key moment for air and missile defense is exercising, testing the ground system, sensor on the Black Sea, sensor in the air.** And practically integrating them is the only way sure if you can identify the gaps that you need to address.

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