

Ukraine Plans to Create ‘Israel-Like’ Arms Industry to Produce NATO-Caliber Weapons

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Global Research, November 15, 2022

[Antiwar.com](#) 11 November 2022

Region: [Europe](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#), [Militarization and](#)

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*Kiev is planning a buildup of its weapons industry to produce more sophisticated arms, with Ukrainian **Defense Minister Oleksii Reznikov** saying government takeovers of several companies will help Kiev to create an “army of drones” and other [NATO-caliber weapons](#). The defense chief noted that growing military ties between Kiev and the West makes Ukraine a de facto NATO partner.*

In an interview on Thursday, Reznikov told reporters Kiev was seeking to replicate Tel Aviv’s defense industry. “We are trying to be like Israel – more independent during the next years,” he said.

The defense head argued that Israel’s advanced defense industry helps it maintain its sovereignty, adding “I think the best answer [can be seen] in Israel ... developing their national industry for their armed forces. It made them independent.”

Ukraine has received tens of billions in security assistance from the US and its global partners. “We understood that [by] using Soviet weapon systems ... we are not independent. And it is better to have new systems with new ammunition of a NATO standard,” Reznikov went on.

On Friday, Reuters reported additional details of Kiev’s plans for its weapons industry. Reznikov said Ukraine was already in the process of making an “army of drones” and was looking at manufacturing NATO-caliber artillery. The official also said Ukraine needs to develop drone jamming capabilities, as well as unmanned vehicles for the air, land and sea.

Kiev’s plans to upgrade its defense sector could face several challenges given the complications of wartime. In recent months, the Kremlin has proven its ability to bypass Ukraine’s air defenses and has severely damaged the country’s electric grid. Additionally,

Kiev has already passed a 2023 budget with a [\\$38 billion deficit](#).

It's unclear how the Kremlin would respond if Ukraine were to produce NATO standard weapons. While Moscow repeatedly voiced concerns that Kiev could someday host NATO weapons before it invaded Ukraine last winter, Reznikov insisted his country's ties with the North Atlantic bloc would continue regardless.

"It doesn't matter when we become a member of the NATO alliance de jure. We have become a NATO partner de facto right now," Reznikov said. "That's why we need to develop our military industry together."

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