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## **Washington Times: Israeli Transferring Laser Technology**

(IsraelWire-1/28-14:00-IST) According to an Israel Radio report, the Washington Times of Wednesday accuses Israel of passing laser technology to China and making attempts to obtain US restricted military software. The Times article quotes the United States Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) as the source for the allegations.

The case refers to the \$131 million Nautilus program involving Israel and the US. The program, which includes the Tactical High-Energy Laser (THEL) which is being developed, and Israel is optimistic that it will be able to deploy the new system in 1999, as a response to Katyusha rocket attacks in the north.

The Times report alleges that an employee of the US-based "TRW" saw Chinese scientists working in the Israel Aircraft Industry facility sometime in 1997. The American employee was instructed not to mention the presence of the Chinese in the facility. It was later suspected that the Chinese were working on the THEL system, and later raised the issue at an international symposium on lasers.

Israel is reportedly working to obtain classified software, which would enable the new laser system to overcome its inability to deal with Katyusha rocket attacks. Spokespersons for Rafael and IAI denied the report, and insist no technology was being transferred to the Chinese illegally.