# French Consent to Drone Components Sale Raises Controversy in Gaza Conflict as Hezbollah Challenges Israeli Air Defences



**French Government Approves Drone Components Export to Israel Amid Gaza Strikes Controversy**

The French government has reportedly sanctioned the sale of electronic components used in Israeli drones involved in airstrikes in Gaza, according to a recent investigation by the nonprofit media outlet Disclose. The report revealed that export licenses for TSC 4000 IFF transponders, which are integral to Israel's Hermes 900 armed drones, received approval from high-level French authorities.

Documents obtained by Disclose indicate that at least eight transponders were scheduled for shipment to Israel between December 2023 and May 2024. However, only two were delivered in 2024, while French customs blocked the remaining six. The Hermes 900 drones have been linked to several deadly strikes on civilian targets in Gaza since October 2023.

Amid these developments, French Defense Minister Sebastien Lecornu stated in February that the exports consisted of "basic components" rather than weapons. The investigative report, however, criticized the French government for enabling the use of Thales equipment in the Gaza offensive, potentially breaching a 2014 arms trade treaty which mandates suspension of weapons exports in cases of alleged war crimes.

**Hezbollah Deploys Drones in Cross-Border Strikes, Challenges Israel's Air Defenses**

In a separate but related series of events, Hezbollah has increasingly utilized high-speed, low-flying drones to launch attacks on Israeli military targets and civilian areas. These drones, often commercial grade, have penetrated Israel's previously robust air defense system, the Iron Dome. A notable incident occurred recently when Hezbollah released drone footage capturing a critical Israeli military base in Haifa, raising alarms about the group's growing capabilities.

The footage and subsequent rhetoric from Hezbollah's leader, Hassan Nasrallah, underscored their claim of being able to strike deep within Israeli territory. Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Herzi Halevi acknowledged the threat and affirmed that preparations are underway to counteract these capabilities.

Tensions remain high, and regional actors including the United States have called for diplomatic solutions to avert a broader conflict. Meanwhile, both sides continue to prepare for potential escalation, with Israel revisiting its air defense strategies in light of Hezbollah's agile, radar-evading drone tactics.