



Israeli firms to secure World Cup

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Over 30 Israeli companies are set to help South Africa secure this summer's Soccer World Cup, via hi-tech security products ranging from rocket-proof shields to cameras that can climb up poles and broadcast panoramic pictures to control centers.

"Israeli companies are already playing a huge role in South Africa," Marc Kahlberg, managing director of M.K. International Security Consulting, which represents several of the companies, said on Wednesday.

"They will help secure the stadiums, airport and parking lots, and their products will be used by private security firms and government in South Africa," Kahlberg said.

"One example is the Israeli ODF Optronics company, which makes tactical camera systems for government agencies [that] will protect the citizens of South Africa and the visitors to the World Cup," he said.

The tactical systems include a miniature robot with several cameras, that can move around an area and send back live footage.

"Another company, which cannot be named, deals with video motion detection, which automatically identifies unusual or suspicious activities, and alert its operator," said Kahlberg.

He noted that "South Africa has a high homicide rate, so it is used to violent crime. But these measures are designed to cope with the threat of terrorism. While there is no terrorism threat against South Africa, there is a threat against some of the visiting teams that have qualified [for] the World Cup."

A third type of camera, made by the Sherpa company and described by Kahlberg as a joint British-Israeli effort, can rapidly climb poles and send live images to a control

center.

“This saves the need to set up hundreds of cameras on the scene. Within 10 minutes, the camera is up and broadcasting,” he said.

In addition, a lightweight rocket- and bullet-proof material, developed jointly by US and Israeli engineers, will be installed at soccer stadiums to protect VIPs, and an Israeli-made water cannon will be available to security personnel so they can deploy non-lethal crowd-control means.

Kahlberg said the fruitful trade was underpinned by a relationship that began in 2007 between his own company; former South African ambassador to Israel Fumi Gjabi, a former general in the South African Defense Force; and Moshe Leder, head of Global Business Development for the Israel Export and International Cooperation Institute, as well as Israel's Industry, Trade and Labor Ministry.