



October 20, 2023

*As Shabbat approaches in Israel, Jewish Federations' Israel Office presents a shortened summary of the latest developments in the War with Hamas. Full updates will resume next week. Meanwhile, from Jerusalem, we wish all of Israel, and Jews around the world, a comforting, safe and peaceful Shabbat.*

#### **Key Points:**

- On day 14 of Israel's War with Hamas, tensions continue to build in the **north**, and Israel has begun to evacuate the city of Kiryat Shemona, which has a population of some 22,000. Residents will be taken to hotels and other venues.
  - Over thirty rockets were launched today from Lebanon to Israel. Most were intercepted, others fell in open fields. One rocket fell in Kiryat Shmona causing some injuries.
  - Israel still hopes to avoid further escalation in the north, but did strike several more Hezbollah sites overnight in response to yesterday's rocket and missile fire on northern Israel.
  - Separately, the IDF carried out a drone strike killing a terror operative in the area.
  - The US has warned Hezbollah to stay out of the war with Hamas, and the U.S. and Germany yesterday called on their citizens in Lebanon to leave the country immediately.

#### **Latest Developments**

- Once again, following another night without sirens, sporadic **rocket attacks** resumed this morning. Also again, there was a significant barrage fired at Tel Aviv yesterday evening.
- Overnight, **Israel struck** more than 100 targets in Gaza including one that killed a member of Hamas's naval forces, Amjad Majed Muhammad Abu 'Odeh, who was involved in the murder of Israeli civilians on October 7.
  - The military also hit an underground tunnel, a weapons warehouse and dozens of command centers.
  - Intelligence sources suggest that Israel is working on a rescue plan for the more than 200 hostages being held by Hamas. See details [here](#).

- **U.S. President Joe Biden** is expected to request \$14 billion in emergency aid to Israel from Congress today.
  - Another shipment of military supplies has arrived in Israel from the U.S., in the form of armored vehicles. See video footage of the arrival [here](#).
  - A US Navy warship traveling near Yemen intercepted multiple projectiles yesterday. The missiles, according to Israeli media citing the Pentagon, were launched at Israel.
  - Also, in an affirmation of Israel's stated goals, US State Department Matthew Miller said that the Jewish state's position that Hamas must be ousted from Gaza is "appropriate."
  - Thousands of pro-Israel demonstrators held a rally in New York's Times Square, calling for the release of the Hamas-held hostages. A number of speakers addressed the event remotely, including US Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and New York Mayor Eric Adams.
- The BBC has published an apology for broadcasting that Israel had struck a **hospital** in Gaza earlier in the week.
  - Israel has produced overwhelming evidence that the rocket was fired by the Islamic Jihad terrorist group.
  - Meanwhile, it is emerging that the number of deaths at the hospital was grossly misrepresented according to reports from a number of US intelligence sources as well as European news sources. Hamas said that 471 people were killed at the hospital; but foreign independent intelligence sources claimed instead that the number was under 50.
- According to Israel's Finance Minister Bezael Smotrich, the government is currently preparing an **economic aid** package for those impacted by the war, that will be "bigger and broader" than during the COVID crisis.
  - Yesterday, international credit ratings agency Moody's placed Israel's A1 ratings on review for a possible downgrade, due to the war with Hamas. The agency warned that a prolonged conflict with Hamas could drag down Israel's credit score.
- **Saudi Arabian** Prince Turki Al-Faisal issued a surprising statement condemning Hamas for the attack on Israel, saying this attack contravened the rules of Islam. He said Islam does not allow the killing of women, children and the elderly. At the same time, he also said that all occupied people have the right to fight against occupation.
- Read [this](#) account of a **Beduin bus driver** who saved 30 youth from the Rave on October 7; and [this](#) story of a Givati soldier who fought during the crucial battles that day.
- See [this](#) moving, and specially recorded message by the IDF Spokesperson to **global Jewish communities**. And also read [this](#) article in TIME Magazine "Sleep training my baby during war," written by the daughter of Yadin Kaufmann, an Israeli business and civic leader who is a frequent partner in Federation work.

### Key Resources From Jewish Federations

- Jewish Federations collectively have allocated \$55 million for immediate and

urgent needs, such as medical care, emergency services, evacuation, transport, housing, supporting victims of terror, trauma relief and psychological support, as well as preparing for medium- and long-term needs. [Read more](#).

- For those in Israel looking for help, critical information about the situation on the ground, or other assistance, see [this](#) resource page put together by Jewish Federations.
- See also [this](#) Jewish Federations information page on requests for personal protective equipment which are circulating and [this](#) update regarding volunteering.
- Readers can access a Jewish Federations toolkit of resources [here](#). For full details about the home front and military operations, see [this](#) update.
- Read the latest communication from the Community Mobilization Center [here](#).
- As many funders struggle to distinguish between the multitudes of organizations looking for important resources, the Jewish Funders Network has produced [this](#) thorough page of guidance.
- Over 120 communities have held solidarity gatherings. [Watch here](#). For a guidebook on hosting a gathering in your community, [click here](#).
- [Jewish Federations of North America](#) placed a full-page [ad](#) in the Jerusalem Post to welcome [President Joe Biden](#) to Israel on his mission of solidarity, thanking him profoundly for “his deep and sincere support of Israel during this dark hour.”
- Jewish Federations have launched [The Blue Ribbon Campaign](#), which symbolizes support and solidarity for the safe return of the hostages taken by Hamas. Wearing a ribbon publicly unites people of all religions, races, nationalities, ethnicities, ages, and generations and demonstrates for the people of Israel that they are not alone and that good people across the globe are with them and their families during this dark time.

**Our Israel Office, having activated emergency protocols, is working closely with our partners on the ground, and is close contact with the Government of Israel and the IDF. We will continue to update as the situation develops.**