



October 30, 2023

### Key Points:

- More than three weeks into Israel's War with Hamas, a ground offensive has begun but has not, as yet, taken the exact form that many had expected.
- The IDF has updated its numbers and now says that 309 soldiers have been killed and that 234 people have been confirmed to have been taken hostage, with 4 released, leaving 230 now in Hamas captivity.
- Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of Muslim rioters stormed a Russian airport trying to find "Israelis and Jews" they believed had landed on a flight from Israel. No Israelis were hurt.
- Full details on these developments and more are below.

### Key Resources From Jewish Federations

- Join our partner, the Jewish Agency for Israel, for a webinar, **Israel at War: Media, the War, and Helping the Victims, October 31, 2023, 11am ET**, featuring Avi Mayer, Editor-in-Chief of The Jerusalem Post, and Yehuda Setton, Chief Operating Officer of The Jewish Agency. Register [here](#).
- Jewish Federations have produced a document answering questions about funding-impacted localities and municipalities in Israel. See [here](#).
- Readers can access a Jewish Federations toolkit of resources [here](#). For full details about the home front and military operations, see [this](#) update.
- Read [this](#) Jerusalem Post piece on efforts by Jewish Federations of North America, who have announced that we have collectively raised \$554 million for the Israel Emergency Campaign. The campaign was launched on October 12th with an initial goal of [\\$500 million](#). To date, [\\$121 million](#) has been allocated to over 60 organizations in Israel to support frontline communities, the Fund for Victims of Terror, trauma relief, medical equipment, support for first responders, and volunteer efforts. One hundred percent of all funds raised are making it into the hands of the organizations that can do the most good on the ground.
- Read [this](#) joint message from Jewish Federations' Chair Julie Platt and President & CEO Eric Fingerhut.
- Julie Platt appeared on Jewish Rock Radio's "Unity in Harmony" virtual solidarity concert for Israel, sponsored by Jewish Federations, which featured David Broza, Rick Recht, Rabbi Josh Warshawsky, and many other artists. To watch the concert, click [here](#).
- Watch [this](#) special video by the Maccabeats and other groups singing a tribute

with the prayer for Israel's armed forces. The video includes a call to donate to the Jewish Federations' Israel Emergency Fund.

- Additional resources can be found at the end of this update.

### **The Home Front**

Funerals continue for many of the 1400 Israelis killed by Hamas:

- On Shabbat, a nine-year-old Israeli girl died after she suffered cardiac arrest when an incoming rocket siren was activated in her home city of Ashdod.
- Read [this](#) account of how a 19-year-old Israeli soldier died on October 7, shielding his friends from a Hamas grenade. The soldier, Matan Abergil, a resident of Hermesh in Samaria and the youngest of four children, saved six fellow soldiers from certain death.
- Watch [this](#) moving video about three of the hostages, called "Bring Keith, Aviva, and Vivian Home!"
- Read [this](#) article about a religious American woman who is an Israeli Air Force reservist who flew back to the Jewish State when the war began to help keep Israel's F-35 jets in the air.
- Three men returned to Kfar Aza yesterday. They were among the first defenders of the Kibbutz on October 7 and were part of the team who killed over 100 Hamas terrorists. When they entered the Kibbutz in a tank that day, they ran over a tree and destroyed it. Yesterday, the three soldiers planted a new orange tree in the same spot, a sign of the rebuilding that will yet come. See the picture [here](#), including the felled tree in the background.
- See [this](#) piece about the experiences of a first-responder medic on October 7.

The level of rocket fire from Gaza remains low compared to the early days of the war, but there has been a barrage against Tel Aviv and the center every day. Since October 7, approximately 7,800 rockets have been fired toward Israel. Rocket fire from the north is ongoing. Yesterday, a house in Kiryat Shmone suffered a direct hit, but no injuries were reported.

For information on the latest overall numbers from the conflict, see [here](#).

In the North, rockets and other attacks continue to take place from both Lebanon and Syria. Israel's retaliatory strikes also continue, and the U.S. military has hit numerous pro-Iranian targets in Syria.

### **Israeli Response**

The IDF has launched a ground offensive into Gaza. Over the weekend, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced that the "second stage of the campaign to destroy Hamas" had begun. Sitting next to Defense Minister Yoav Gallant and fellow war cabinet minister Benny Gantz at a Tel Aviv press conference, Netanyahu announced: "This is the second stage of the war whose goals are clear—to destroy Hamas' governing and military capabilities and to bring the hostages home." He stressed that the decision to begin ground operations had been made unanimously, both by the war cabinet and the security cabinet.

Read the Prime Minister's full remarks [here](#). And watch [here](#) a statement on the new phase of the war by the IDF Chief of Staff, Herzl Halevi.

Many had expected a mass incursion, with perhaps tens of thousands of troops entering Gaza at once. Instead, so far, the invasion is taking the shape of smaller forces entering

strategic locations, completing specific missions, and, in many instances, withdrawing again. These missions include removing anti-tank weaponry, directing aerial strikes with real-time intelligence, and other tasks that could be preparing for a larger-scale incursion.

Overnight, the military carried out strikes against some 600 Hamas targets in Gaza, including weapons storage sites, hideouts, and staging grounds. IDF troops also killed dozens of Hamas members who had barricaded themselves in buildings in Gaza and tried to attack IDF soldiers. In one incident, ground troops directed the Air Force to carry out a drone strike on a Hamas staging ground, killing more than 20 operatives. In another incident, an Air Force fighter struck an anti-tank guided missile launch position and a number of Hamas operatives who were identified by ground troops near Al-Azhar University in Gaza City. See video footage of IDF activities inside Gaza [here](#) and photos [here](#). And see [here](#) for photos of the IDF Chief of Staff on the ground near the Gaza front.

Read [this](#) analysis of whether Israel may actually topple Hamas during the war. And see [this](#) piece on the international legal aspects of the war.

Over the weekend, the IDF released footage showing an interrogation of Hamas terrorists, who confirmed that the terror group has a major center and hideout located under Shifa Hospital, the largest medical facility in Gaza. See footage of the testimonies [here](#) and [here](#). The IDF Spokesperson had earlier held a briefing for foreign media in which he presented proof that Hamas' main headquarters are in a vast underground complex below Gaza's most important hospital.

More than 30 aid trucks entered Gaza on Sunday, the largest convoy since deliveries began over a week ago.

The Hamas-run health ministry claims that at least 8,005 Palestinians have been killed and more than 17,000 others wounded. These numbers have not been substantiated.

### **International Response**

The U.S. has announced that it will be sending military advisers to Israel, including an expert in urban warfare from American fighting in Iraq. The U.S. has already sent two Navy carrier groups to the region, which it says are meant to deter Iran and Hezbollah from trying to enter the war. In addition, it has also sent a 2,000-marine quick-response force to the area.

According to a new poll, 88% of Americans think that Israel has a right to respond to Hamas militarily. See more results [here](#).

In harrowing scenes that spread across social media last night, hundreds of people stormed into the main airport in Russia's majority-Muslim Dagestan region and onto the tarmac in an apparent attempt to attack Israeli and Jewish passengers arriving on a Russian flight from Israel. According to local reports, many on the flight were Muslim Dagestani children who had undergone medical treatment in Israel. On video, the protesters can be seen chanting "Allahu Akbar" (God is great), storming the airport, rushing past security, breaking through doors and barriers, with some running onto the runway. Earlier, many of the protestors had overtaken a local hotel where they had been told Jews were staying. The rioters went room-to-room, demanding to see guests' passports in order to find Israelis, or those with "Jewish names." No Israelis or other Jews were hurt in the incidents, and 60 protestors were arrested. During the riots,

Israel's National Security Council was in close contact with Russian authorities, demanding that they intervene and protect civilians. Watch dramatic footage of the rioters [here](#).

Read [here](#) about the existential struggles that Lebanon will face if it becomes fully embroiled in the war.

As increasingly fierce protests against Israel – and local Jewish communities – take place across the world, read [this](#) opinion piece in the Times of Israel, “Shock at the October 7 catastrophe gives way to horror and fury at global immorality.” And [watch](#) actress Mayim Bialik speak out against growing anti-Semitism.

### **Efforts on the Ground**

Israelis of all stripes have come together to support soldiers and bolster morale in the country, many sharing inspiring tales. In [this](#) video, see details about an amazing operation to coordinate thousands of volunteers to help soldiers, evacuate citizens, and others.

In a curious trend, thousands of those called for reserve duty are growing mustaches in an apparent attempt to fashion a “retro-look,” harking back to the days of the Yom Kippur War when mustaches were in vogue. See more [here](#). And watch [this](#) fun video produced by some reserve soldiers, sporting their retro look.

One of the more emotional moments in any conflict, are scenes of soldiers returning from the front, and being reunited with family members, even if only briefly. See some footage [here](#).

Watch [this](#) video attempt to raise spirits with a “Hatikva Flash Mob” aboard the Jerusalem light-rail.

Across the country, citizens are increasingly concerned about their personal security. In Jerusalem, dozens of women have begun self-defense classes. Read more [here](#).

As far away as New Zealand, people have rallied for the hostages. Watch [this](#) video of a traditional Maori Haka Dance on behalf of those being held captive by Hamas.

Read [here](#) about how Ashdod Port, close to Gaza, continues to operate critical operations, even under intense rocket fire.

Jewish Federations' Israel Emergency Fund is supporting a new venture to support dozens of post-traumatic children aged six to seventeen who need informal, comprehensive, care for at least two to three months. Israeli philanthropist Ronni Douek has launched Yeladenu, the Resilience for Our Children, with several million dollars of his own funds and with Federations and other groups also contributing.

### **Other Resources**

- 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.
- 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 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.

### **Jewish Federations**

The Community Mobilization Center is monitoring major developments in Israel and North America related to Israel's war to defend herself against Hamas, and will rapidly disseminate resources to help mobilize and support our local communities as they work to build and sustain civic and political support for Israel in this conflict. Read the latest communication from the Community Mobilization Center [here](#).

**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.**