



November 8, 2023

### The Latest:

- As the second month of the war begins, the IDF has struck more than 14,000 targets in the Gaza Strip, destroyed over 100 tunnel entrances, and captured 4,000 weapons — including rockets — hidden in civilian infrastructure, since fighting began.
- It is confirmed that 32 Israeli soldiers have been killed since the ground offensive began, and that 240 hostages are still being held by Hamas in Gaza.
- During a call with Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, US President Joe Biden called for a humanitarian "pause in fighting." Netanyahu has said that there will be no ceasefire of any kind before the hostages are released; however, he has added that short term pauses for humanitarian reasons will continue.
- More details on these developments, and more, below.

### Key Resources From Jewish Federations

- **March for Israel:** Join the [March for Israel](#) on November 14th in Washington DC to show our support for Israel, stand in solidarity with the hostages and condemn antisemitism.
- **Jewish Agency Webinar:** Federation partner the Jewish Agency for Israel will also be holding a webinar on "Antisemitism on College Campuses Since October 7." It will take place tomorrow, **Thursday, November 9, at 11am ET**, and will feature Adam Lehman, CEO of Hillel International; Amira Ahronoviz, CEO & Director General of The Jewish Agency for Israel; Campus Leaders; Jewish Agency Israel Fellows & American Jewish student leaders. Register [here](#).
- Listen [here](#) to Rabbis Angela Buchdahl and Shlomo Nisanov's testimony during a UJA New York mission to Israel.
- Please listen to and share this [video](#) essay from Jake Tapper on how Hamas frames the civilians who are dying in Gaza as "martyrs."
- **Knesset:** The heads of Jewish Federations of North America have received a letter from the Knesset, thanking the community for its unprecedented support during the country's dark hour. See the letter [here](#).
- **Resources:** Readers can access a Jewish Federations toolkit of resources [here](#), and can refer to the Community Mobilization Center [Resource Hub](#) for the latest talking points, tools and other resources.
- **Map:** [This](#) site shows a map of the October 7 massacre with a red dot for every

person killed and a black dot for every person abducted by Hamas. Clicking on any dot will show the name and picture (if available) of the victim with age and last known location.

- **Details:** For full details about the home front and military operations, see [this](#) update. And for information on the latest overall numbers from the conflict, see [here](#).
- Additional resources can be found at the end of this update.

### **Israel Defense Forces Operations**

The ground operation continues in full force. In its attacks overnight, the IDF killed Mohsen Abu Zina, Hamas' Head of Weapons and Industries in its manufacturing department. See video footage [here](#) and photos [here](#), of IDF activity in Gaza yesterday. Read comments made by the general overseeing the war in Gaza, the IDF's Head of Southern Command, [here](#).

The IDF has confirmed that 32 soldiers have been killed in the battles in Gaza, and 240 people remain hostages. See an official IDF page (in Hebrew) listing all those who have fallen since October 7, with photos and details, [here](#); and more on the latest fighting [here](#).

Yesterday, the Paratroopers Brigade led an operation in northern Gaza, during which the soldiers completed taking control of the area. During the mission, soldiers exposed and then destroyed the shaft of an underground tunnel adjacent to an amusement park. In addition, in cooperation with soldiers of the Armored Corps, an underground tunnel shaft and a weapons warehouse were found near a university, containing chemical materials, RPGs, Claymore mines and more. See video [here](#) and [here](#), and the destruction of tunnels discovered [here](#).

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Tuesday the IDF has been reaching deeper into Gaza "than Hamas ever imagined," and said that the terror group "is discovering that we are reaching places they thought we would never reach." Netanyahu also warned Lebanon's Hezbollah terror group that it would be making the "greatest mistake of its life" if it opens a new full-on war front. See Netanyahu's full remarks [here](#).

Defense Minister Yoav Gallant added that the IDF was now operating "in the heart" of Gaza City and "tightening the noose" around Hamas there.

Israel again opened a humanitarian corridor to allow those civilians who have remained in the north of Gaza to escape to the southern part of the Strip. Israel continues to urge Gazans to head to the south of the enclave, as close to 900,000 have already done.

Thousands of additional residents of the north also made the journey yesterday, many of them waving white flags, as they passed through the evacuation corridor, with Israeli tanks protecting them from Hamas attacks (Hamas is trying to prevent civilians from leaving). See images and details [here](#), and video footage [here](#).

Israel says that there is no lack of food, water, or other humanitarian supplies in Gaza, and that inventories of critical supplies are being monitored on a daily basis. See more [here](#).

Read [here](#) about how Hamas is using hospitals in Gaza to hide troops, weapons and more.

The Hamas-run Gazan Health Ministry says that over 10,300 Palestinians have been killed since October 7, as a result of the war. Hezbollah says that 63 of its fighters have

been killed on the northern front.

## **The Home Front**

The country continues to mourn the massacre of October 7:

- Israel marked one month since the October 7 massacres yesterday. Read [here](#) about some of the events held in Israel, and [here](#) about how the date was observed by North American Jewish communities.
- Listen [here](#) to episodes of Wartime Diaries to hear the voices and stories of victims, heroes and many others, since October 7.
- Read [here](#) about May Hayat's journey back to the site of the Rave, where she worked at the bar, one month after the massacre that took place there.
- Trained to analyze ancient sites, Israel's archaeologists are helping locate victims among kibbutz ashes. Read more [here](#).
- Watch [these](#) survivor stories from October 7.

The level of rocket fire from Gaza remains low, although there has been at least one major barrage per day, sending millions to their shelters, and exposing them to the very loud iron dome interceptions above major cities. Once again, Tel Aviv and the country's center were targeted yesterday.

In the North, Hezbollah has continued its medium-intensity attacks across the border, without expanding its attacks significantly, while the IDF strikes at cells and the sources of fire.

## **International Response**

G7 foreign ministers, representing the most powerful western countries, are seeking to hammer out a common line on the war during their meeting in Tokyo. The ministers are expected to call in a joint statement for "humanitarian pauses" in Gaza, while stopping short of urging a ceasefire.

Earlier, US President Joe Biden called for a similar humanitarian "pause in fighting," during a call with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Netanyahu has said that there will be no ceasefire of any kind before the hostages are released, but has added that short term pauses for humanitarian reasons will continue. Israel fears that Hamas would try to use any long pause to regroup.

Meanwhile, Israel's President Isaac Herzog spoke by phone with US Vice President Kamala Harris about the war in Israel and the rise in anti-Semitism. Herzog said that "the immediate and unconditional return of the abductees is the main concern of the State of Israel," and that there will be no ceasefire without the release of the abductees held by Hamas.

President Herzog also wrote a letter to the presidents of American universities. In his letter, he

- asked for them to condemn the acts of terrorism by Hamas in a clear and unequivocal way.
- told them that this is a conflict between freedom and the forces of evil.
- suggested that this is a "teaching moment" that moves us either "toward constructive action or...irreversible decline."
- reminded them that they are "custodians of knowledge and culture" whose decisions will "shape history and be remembered."

Israeli Ambassador to the US Michael Herzog showed some of the graphic body camera footage from the October 7 Hamas massacres to a group of fellow ambassadors and foreign diplomats, during an event at Israel's Embassy in Washington commemorating 30 days since the attacks.

Ambassador Herzog said, "This was one of the worst terror attacks in modern history and the single deadliest day for Jews since the Holocaust. Every nation and human being must draw a line between those who uphold the values of humanity and those who desecrate them, and sound a clear moral voice. Israel has the right and the duty to defend itself and remove the Hamas threat while fighting for the unconditional release of each and every hostage. We will not rest until we bring them back home."

Israel's Foreign Minister Eli Cohen and new US Ambassador to Israel Jack Lew held their first official meeting yesterday, and discussed efforts to obtain the release of the hostages, maintaining regional peace, and the continued fight against Iran and its proxies.

With an unprecedented spike in antisemitic incidents across the world, Israel's Ministry of Aliya is seeing large increases in enquiries about Aliya (Jewish people immigrating to Israel). According to the Ministry, since October 7 there has been a 149% increase in enquiries from France and an 81% increase from North America.

### **Efforts on the Ground**

Israelis of all stripes have come together to support soldiers and bolster morale in the country, many sharing inspiring tales.

- Watch [this](#) video of a bus that travels from base to base, repairing army uniforms and equipment for soldiers.
- See [this](#) touching photo of Tamar Lavie, a mother of four, who months ago arranged to donate a kidney to save another's life. Tamar had no way of knowing that by the time the date of the operation arrived, her husband would be serving on the front, having been called up with hundreds of thousands of other reserve troops. Lavie decided to go ahead with the operation, saying that "If my husband can give so much at the front to save lives, I can do the same." The children are staying with their grandparents, and in the photo, Tamar's two brothers (also drafted to the reserves) can be seen visiting her after they were given some time off.
- Another new IDF trend: With Houthi rebels firing rockets at Israel, some soldiers have joked that they may end up fighting in Yemen. As a result, multiple videos are circulating of soldiers doing traditional Yemenite dances. (See, for example, [here](#)).
- An Israeli tech executive passionately answers Irish tech icon Paddy Cosgrove's criticism of Israel in [this](#) eye-opening video.
- Reports continue to emerge that the motivation among IDF troops remains extremely high. See some video [here](#).

### **Additional Background Reading**

- Read [this](#) piece on why Hamas attacked now.
- CNN: [Israel is upholding the Laws of War](#)
- ["Left, Right, Haredi: Three Great Awakenings of the Gaza War."](#)

### **American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC)**

JDC is working with government ministries, municipalities, and organizations across Israel to respond to the immediate needs of Israel's most vulnerable, while also beginning to addressing mid and long-term needs.

Recent activity includes:

- 400 foreign caregivers for the elderly participated in an English-language webinar on strengthening emotional resilience. JDC is working to empower caregivers to provide preventive care for elderly citizens during times of crisis in order to strengthen or maintain cognitive and physical ability, push off deterioration, and maximize independence.
- 9,900 unique users have benefited from Kol Sherut, a centralized online resource for citizens' rights and benefits in times of emergency, and which offers guidance on how to actualize these rights.
- 2,570 young-adults at risk and families in financial distress received vouchers for food and essential needs.
- 170 employment professionals (employment councilors and welfare coordinators) participated in the launch of a unique website that provides employment resilience tools. The platform will serve employees who are struggling to remain in their jobs in a war environment, and assist the newly unemployed in seeking new opportunities.
- 1,500 children at risk in the southern city of Ofakim, confined to their homes due to the ongoing threat of rocket fire, are receiving JDC kits with toys and craft supplies.
- 180,000 evacuees are benefiting from a digital communications platform, which JDC partnered in developing for the government. Evacuees enter their personal details and specify their needs, and the system connects them with the appropriate government service department. Data collected from the platform allows national agencies to monitor and address immediate and long-term needs and requests in a timely and efficient manner.
- 728 youth movement counselors responsible for more than 25,000 children and youth, received trauma counseling training.
- 550 teachers and education professionals within the secondary school system participated in the first of a series of JDC and Ministry of Education webinars aiming to empower them with tools to support students grappling with emotional distress.
- JDC expanded its home visitation program for Bedouin families with children aged 0-3 from 160 to 460 families. Visitation professionals are mentoring parents on parent-toddler activities amidst the war, maintaining healthy nutrition, safety precautions, and addressing trauma and anxiety in the home.
- Watch [this](#) JDC video about October 7.

### Other Resources

- **Local Authorities:** Jewish Federations have produced a document answering questions about funding impacted localities and municipalities in Israel. See [here](#).
- **Volunteering:** Birthright Israel has opened [a volunteering program](#), where people from outside of Israel can come to Tel Aviv and take part in food rescue operations to prevent shortages in the Israeli market, including work to sort, pack and distribute goods for civil and military personnel.
- **Critical Information:** 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.

- **Supplying Protective Equipment:** 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](#).
- **Funders:** 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.
- **Solidarity Gatherings:** Over 120 communities have held solidarity gatherings. [Watch here](#). For a guidebook on hosting a gathering in your community, [click here](#).
- **Hostages:** 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**

Jewish Federations of North America's Israel Emergency Fund has surpassed \$600 million, \$148 million of which has already been allocated to the most pressing needs on the ground through 116 partner organizations and NGOs. [Read more](#). And [click here](#) for the latest allocations report.

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 in close contact with the Government of Israel and the IDF. We will continue to update as the situation develops.