



December 6, 2023

Join a **special webinar** with the Jewish Agency for Israel: **Israel's Fight for Survival - A Discussion with Dr. Einat Wilf and Dan Elbaum** tomorrow, **Thursday, December 7, at 10 AM ET**. Register [Register here](#).

This week, Jewish Federations announced the [10/7 Project](#), a new collaboration with AJC, AIPAC, ADL, and the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. The 10/7 Project is a coordinated effort to counter the disinformation about the attacks of October 7th and Israel's response; it is especially aimed at the key media and government influencers. [See here](#) for more information about the 10/7 project, as well as [this news bulletin](#).

Thursday, December 7th is the first night of Hanukkah and it also comes two months since the massacres of October 7. [Join with Jews across the world](#) to "defeat the darkness, light a great light and take part in setting a Guinness record, by lighting the first Hanukkah candle at the local time where you are and thus convey a powerful and determined message of unity and victory to the world."

The Latest

- As fighting continues, following the collapse of the ceasefire, three more **soldiers have been killed**, bringing the total number of IDF casualties since the ground offensive began to 84, (and to 410 IDF since October 7). One of those killed in recent days was an American-Israeli man, Ben Zussman. His mother's moving [eulogy](#) has been widely viewed in Israel. See details of all the fallen soldiers [here](#).
- By late Tuesday afternoon, the IDF said that its **troops had reached** the center of Khan Younis, the largest city in southern Gaza.
- **Hamas rocket attacks** on Israel remain far lower than earlier in the war, but continue to strike Israeli cities daily. Yesterday, as a result of a particularly large barrage, several people were lightly injured by shrapnel from rockets in Tel Aviv and other locations. One rocket hit a [kindergarten](#); thankfully, all the children were in the safety of the shelter at the time. **In the north**, Hezbollah also continues its medium-level rocket and other fire against Israeli targets.

Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Operations

- The IDF reports that "**fierce battles**" with Hamas operatives in the Gaza Strip

continue, as the Air Force carried out strikes against more than 250 targets over the past day (see [footage](#)).

- According to the IDF, yesterday saw some of the [harshest battles](#) in Gaza since the ground operation began. The Head of IDF Southern Command said, “This is the most intense day [of battles] since the start of the [ground] maneuver, in terms of terrorists killed, the number of engagements and the use of fire from the ground and the air.”
- IDF troops are said to have surrounded a home in Khan Younis belonging to **Hamas’s Gaza chief Yahya Sinwar**. There is no indication that Sinwar is in the building, as he owns multiple homes, and is believed to be in hiding. Earlier, the IDF had described the terror chief as “a dead man walking.”
- The IDF has also announced that there will be a tactical pause in fighting for **humanitarian purposes** until 2 pm today in the Ash Shaboura area in the Rafah district. The pause will permit urgent supplies to be delivered, and for civilians to evacuate areas of fighting.
- The IDF has discovered **one of the largest caches of weapons** yet during operations in the northern Gaza Strip. The cache (watch footage [here](#)), located near a health clinic and a school, included hundreds of RPGs, dozens of anti-tank missiles, tens of explosives, long-range rockets, dozens of grenades, and several drones.
- CNN has reported that the US government believes that Israel could wrap up large-scale military operations in the southern Gaza Strip by January, and then shift to more targeted attacks on specific Hamas terrorists and leaders.
- Hamas insists that the Israeli military campaign has **killed more than 15,900** people, mostly civilians. The numbers have not been independently verified and are believed to include combatants as well as Palestinian civilians killed by errant rockets launched by terror groups. Israel says it has killed at least 5,000 armed militants in the fighting, adding that the IDF was deploying high-tech [mapping software](#) to try to reduce noncombatant deaths.

Hostages

- Under a week-long truce deal that expired on Friday, 105 civilians were released from Hamas captivity in Gaza: 81 Israelis, 23 Thai nationals, and one Filipino. Earlier, four hostages were released one was rescued, and at least three bodies have been recovered. It is believed that **138 hostages remain in Gaza**, including approximately 20 women and two young children. Read [the stories](#) of those who are still missing.
- Watch [this video](#) of released hostage, five-year-old Amalia Aloni, **returning to her kindergarten** yesterday, for the first time since being released.
- Israel’s Health Ministry said that the hostages recently freed **were given tranquilizer pills** by Hamas before their release. It is claimed that the drugging was aimed at making the hostages appear calm and happy despite their having suffered physical abuse, deprivation, and psychological terror in Gaza for more than 50 days.
- Hanna Katzir, who was released from Gaza last month, is in **serious condition** after her health deteriorated while she was held hostage in the Strip.
- **Amazon silent**: Sasha Troufanov was taken hostage on October 7. He was abducted along with his parents, Yelena and Vitali, his grandmother Irena, and his partner Sapir Cohen. His father has since been murdered, while his partner, mother, and grandmother were all returned to Israel last week. Troufanov has

worked as an engineer in Amazon's AWS Cloud Division for more than a year and, although he has been held in captivity for almost two months, Amazon has remained silent on the matter.

- Israeli military sources say that it may take **up to a month** for enough pressure to build on Hamas that a new window would open for a truce that would lead to the release of more hostages held in Gaza. A radio report says that military operations will need to continue in both the north and the south of the enclave for this to happen.

International Response

- The top diplomats from **China and the United States** discussed the war between Israel and Hamas in a call yesterday. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken "reiterated the imperative of all parties working to prevent the conflict from spreading." Beijing says Foreign Minister Wang Yi stressed in turn that, regarding the war, "the top priority is to cease fire and end the war as soon as possible."

Stories Of Heartbreak, Heroism, And Hope

- Watch these inspiring videos from Jewish Federations:
 - [Ashira](#) – The mother of a child with disabilities
 - [Yael](#) – Magen David Adom Call Center Dispatcher
- Read the [story](#) of 41-year-old Col. Asaf Hamami, wife of Sapir and father of Arbel, Alon, and Ella, who is being called by comrades "a hero of Israel." The commander of the Southern Brigade in the Gaza Division and a decorated officer, Hamami left his base early during the morning of October 7th to fight terrorists and save the residents of the Gaza envelope communities. He was killed in action, and his body is being held by Hamas terrorists.
- Watch [this](#) video of what happened at Kibbutz Nir Oz, based on text messages sent by Kibbutz members as events unfolded.

Sexual Violence On October 7

- Jewish Federations stood with the Israeli Consulate to the United Nations, the World Zionist Organization, and the National Council of Jewish Women earlier this week at the United Nations to call out the violence against women perpetrated by the Hamas terrorists on October 7th and since. Jewish Federations' National Women's Philanthropy, Advocacy Corps, National Young Leadership Cabinet, and leadership attended the session in full force, and many more thousands watched on livestream. Watch a recording of the [powerful event](#).
- Read Jewish Federations' [Action Dispatch](#): Israelis provide harrowing details of sexual violence on October 7th.
- Even as the attacks of October 7th were unfolding evidence was already being seen of acts of brutal sexual violence. [Subsequent investigations](#) have revealed the widespread extent of the violence; they include an in-depth report by [The Times of London](#) that found that perpetrating sexual violence was part of the stated mission of the Hamas terrorists.
- Watch Israel's satirical Eretz Nehederet program [poke fun](#) at what they term the UN's hypocrisy.

Further Reading

- [Antisemitism is 'new normal' at Columbia University](#)

- Read about the [IDF operational and doctrinal failures](#) that underlay the October 7 surprise attack and the lack of an immediate response.
- [After the war: A two-state solution?](#)

Additional Resources

- **Resources:** Readers can see links to resources, background, research, and other information on the current war [here](#); can access a Jewish Federations toolkit [here](#), and can refer to the Community Mobilization Center [Resource Hub](#) for the latest talking points and tools.
- See these newly produced resources by Jewish Federations that give insight into some areas of Federations' emergency allocations:
 - [Pastoral Guidance](#)
 - [Bedouin Communities](#)
 - [Food Security](#)
 - [People with Disabilities](#)
- **Details:** For information on the latest overall numbers from the conflict, see [here](#).
- **Webinar:** The Jewish People Policy Institute (JPPI): Daily webinars sponsored by Jewish Federations and the Jewish Agency are offered. A rotating team of analysts of Israeli military affairs, the US-Israel relationship, Israel's political system, and of the country's diverse society will speak every **Sunday to Thursday from 11-11:30 am ET**. No registration is required. Join [here](#).
- **Jewish Federations** have now raised a total of more than \$678 million system-wide and allocated over \$211 million to a wide range of humanitarian organizations in Israel. Click [here](#) for our latest allocations update.
- **Volunteering:** Read [this](#) updated Jewish Federations update on the latest volunteering opportunities in Israel right now.
- **Supporting Pastoral Guidance and Rabbinic Services.** Read [here](#) about the work to date that Federations are supporting in this field through collective Israel emergency dollars.
- **Local Authorities:** Jewish Federations have produced a document answering questions about funding-impacted localities and municipalities in Israel. See [here](#).
- **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.
- 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.
- **Previous updates** can be found [here](#). [Click here](#) to subscribe.

Jewish Federations

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.