



War in Israel: Update on Current Situation

August 15, 2024 - Gaza War Day 314

Israel remains on edge this week as Iran continues to threaten a large-scale attack, possibly in conjunction with Hezbollah, in the wake of the twin assassinations of Hamas and Hezbollah terrorist leaders earlier this month. High-level negotiations for a ceasefire in the war between Israel and Hamas are taking place today between diplomats from the US, Qatar, and Egypt in Qatar's capital, Doha, along with representatives from Israel and possibly Hamas. If a ceasefire is reached, it is possible that Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, will shelve his plan to wage open warfare against Israel.

Israel Defense Forces (IDF)

- On Sunday night, Hezbollah again launched [missiles](#) from Lebanon into northern Israel.
- On Tuesday, Hamas [targeted](#) Tel Aviv with two long-range missiles; one fell into the Mediterranean and another failed to leave Gaza.
- According to a statement by the Pentagon on Sunday evening, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin [ordered](#) a nuclear-powered submarine armed with cruise missiles to head to the Middle East, as the US also sped up the arrival of a powerful aircraft carrier strike group.
- While the new Hamas chief, Yahya Sinwar, has signaled his desire for a ceasefire, Hamas said it has [withdrawn its participation](#) from today's negotiations. However, the terrorist group's chief negotiator, Khalil al-Hayya, is based in Doha and remains in communication with both Egyptian and Qatari negotiators. Hamas has also said that they would be willing to meet with negotiators after the talks take place.
- According to the Wall Street Journal, sentiment is growing in Israel that the country should preemptively [attack Hezbollah](#) to reduce the threat of a mass rocket attack and make it possible for displaced Israelis to return to their homes in the north.
- Hezbollah evacuated its offices in Beirut this week, presumably in anticipation of a significant attack by Israel.

Other IDF News

- The IDF has [responded](#) to criticisms of its missile strike last weekend against a school in Gaza by insisting that at least 31 terrorists who were embedded in that school complex, part of which housed a mosque, were killed in that strike. The IDF also said that they used small, precise munitions that could not have taken [100 civilian lives](#), as Hamas has claimed.
- Four IDF soldiers were [wounded](#) yesterday in Tubas in the northern West Bank after their armored vehicle was hit by an improvised explosive. As terrorist groups are becoming more active in that area, Israel is increasingly using [drone strikes](#) against them.
- On Sunday, Israeli citizen Yonatan Deutsch, 23, was [shot dead](#) by terrorists who opened fire on his car as he was driving on the Route 90 Highway. An additional civilian was injured.
- Also on Sunday, IDF soldier, Sgt. Omer Ginsburg, 19, [died in battle](#) in the southern Gaza Strip.

International

- The major speech that President Biden gave at the end of May that set out a framework for a ceasefire and hostage release deal was, the Times of Israel is reporting today, [not the one](#) he was slated to deliver on that day—he had planned to speak on how Israel could be integrated into the Middle East. The speech was changed because Israel had circulated a proposal a few days before for releasing the hostages and the Biden Administration decided to focus on that narrower set of goals.

- If he continues to support normalizing ties between Saudi Arabia and Israel, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, nicknamed MBS, has told a group of visiting Members of Congress from the US, that he is afraid that he may be [assassinated](#) as Egypt's Anwar Sadat was for signing a peace treaty with the Jewish State. Could this be some kind of [bargaining strategy](#)?

Conscription of Haredim

- In response to the violent opposition by haredi Jews who were sent conscription notices by the IDF, the army is considering asking them to report to different induction centers and spreading out the days when they need to report, among other changes to the usual operating procedures.
- In a more hard-line approach, Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara is suggesting that [funding be cut off](#) to daycare centers for children of those Haredim who are refusing to enlist; ultra-Orthodox leaders are responding that this would discriminate against the mothers of Haredi children.
- Only a dozen haredi Jews, out of 90 who were drafted, [showed up](#) at induction centers yesterday. A total of 3,000 conscription notices are being sent. Those who dodge the draft are subject to arrest.

Hostages

There are an estimated 111 hostages who are still being held prisoner in Gaza, 72 of whom are thought to still be alive.

- Israel's Defense Minister, Yoav Gallant, has said that between 20 and 30 live hostages would be [released](#) during the first phase of a three-stage deal with Hamas. These "humanitarian hostages," would include women, children, the elderly, and those who are sick and/or injured.
- Hamas has reportedly said that Fatah leader [Marwan Barghouti](#), who is seen as a hero to some Palestinians and has been frequently touted as a potential future leader of the Palestinian Authority, would need to be among the terrorists freed from Israeli jails in this first phase. Barghouti is currently serving five life sentences for murdering Israelis.
- Hamas reported this week that an unnamed male hostage was [killed](#) and that two female hostages were seriously wounded by its guards. Hamas has said that the male hostage was killed by a guard out of "revenge," and that this is [not in line](#) with their protocols and "ethics."

Israel at the Summer Olympics

- Israeli athletes [won](#) a total of seven medals at the Summer Olympics, which is a new record for the Jewish state.
- Three of the medals were won on August 4th, which is the highest number that Israel has ever won in a single day.
- Yael Arad, the president of the Olympic Committee of Israel, said on Monday that [many had been doubtful](#) that Israel could win even four or five medals, which had been set as the goal by Olympic officials because they thought that the war against

Hamas was a major distraction that compromised the Israeli athletes' ability to train and compete.

- Some commented that the seven-medal haul [showed the world](#) that Israel is not to be deterred from performing at the highest level and brought much-needed pride to their country and their people.



Further Reading

[The Hamas-Iran Relationship](#)

[Hezbollah's Deadly Rockets Aren't the Most Serious Threat to Israel's Northern Border](#)

[An Alliance of Autocracies is Deepening. One City \[Hong Kong\] Plays a Central Role](#)

Jewish Federations Resources

Jewish Federations have collectively raised over \$845 million and allocated more than \$450 million for humanitarian needs and economic support in Israel since October 7. For an updated list of allocations, click [here](#). Read this [JTA](#) story about our work: “The man allocating \$800M in post-Oct. 7 donations to Israel on where the money goes.”

Jewish Federations' Backgrounders:

[At-Risk Youth](#) | [LGBTQ Community](#)

[Young Children](#) | [Volunteers](#)

[Women](#) | [Pastoral Guidance](#)

[Bedouin Communities](#) | [Food Security](#) | [People with Disabilities](#)

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.

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

Read the latest communication from the **Community Mobilization Center** [here](#).

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