



War in Israel: Update on Current Situation

August 29, 2024 - October 7 War, Day 328

Please see [this](#) updated FAQ document on current volunteer opportunities in Israel.

Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Activities

- Following the **major assault by Hezbollah** earlier in the week (see Jewish Federations of North America's update [here](#)) the northern border has reverted to its previous "lower level" of activity that still typically sees numerous airborne attacks from Lebanon, on Israel's cities and towns in the region.
- On Tuesday, the IDF and Shin Bet [rescued](#) 52-year-old Israeli Qaid Farhan al-Qadi after **326 days of captivity** by Hamas terrorists. Al-Qadi, a father of 11 from the Bedouin Arab village of Rahat, was working as a guard at a packing factory in Kibbutz Magen when he was abducted by terrorists.
- The IDF [said](#) that it could not immediately disclose full details of the **rescue operation** due to security concerns, but it is understood that al-Qadi was freed by a team led by Israel's elite Shayetet 13 commando unit, who found the hostage on his own, without guards, in a tunnel about 75 feet underground in southern Gaza. It is believed that al-Qadi was moved around several times during his time in captivity. He had witnessed the murder of one of his fellow Israeli

hostages, [Aryeh Zalmanovich](#), from Kibbutz Nir Oz, by their Hamas captors.

- Al-Qadi was flown to Soroka Hospital in Beersheba, where he [reunited](#) with members of his family for the first time in over ten months. In a conversation **with President Isaac Herzog** he [said](#), "All of a sudden I heard somebody speaking Hebrew outside my door. I could not believe it, I could not believe it."
- See this [footage](#) from the body cameras of the soldiers who rescued the hostage, and his first moments of return to Israeli soil.
- In addition, yesterday, **the body of an IDF soldier was located and extracted** from the Gaza Strip. At the request of his family, the soldier's name has not been published, but it is known that he was killed on October 7 and his body kidnapped to Gaza.

Hostages

- Earlier today, some relatives of hostages holding a protest event near the Gaza border breached the fence and attempted to "run toward their loved ones," according to the Hostages and Missing Families Forum. The group quickly heeded pleas by security forces to avoid crossing the border, and made their way back to Kibbutz Nirim.
- After crying out to the captives via powerful loudspeakers, "the families in their great pain breached the fence to Gaza and ran toward the Gaza Strip to get as close to their loved ones as possible," the Forum said.
- Negotiations over a deal that could see a ceasefire and a further hostage release continue. According to CIA Deputy Director David Cohen, it is Hamas's leader who holds the key to resolving the remaining issues.
- There are now **107 hostages still in Gaza**, and it is likely that around half of them are no longer alive.
- Master Sergeant (reserves) Yohai Hay Glam, 32, the father of two-year old twins, was killed in battle in Gaza yesterday. He is the 704th IDF soldier killed since the beginning of the war. See here for a complete list of [IDF soldiers killed](#) since October 7.

Humanitarian Aid

- There are reports that a **humanitarian convoy in Gaza** came under fire and a UN jeep was hit by bullets, but without causing serious injury. The IDF is currently investigating whether the shooting was carried out by its troops, or by terrorists. The IDF has reiterated that Israel will do its utmost to protect humanitarian convoys bringing aid to Gaza.

International

- As part of the airlift operation of US military aid to Israel, the **500th delivery aircraft has arrived** in the Jewish State. The large-scale logistical effort that began with the outbreak of the recent war has so far resulted in over 50,000 tons of military equipment delivered to Israel via 500 flights and 107 sea shipments. The equipment procured and transported includes armored vehicles, munitions, personal protection gear, and medical equipment, all of which are crucial for sustaining the IDF's operational capabilities during the ongoing war.

Partner Updates Following the Hezbollah Escalation

- **The Jewish Agency for Israel** says that its current priorities include ensuring that those populations living under Agency care throughout Israel are safe.
 - These populations include: Olim, Amigour residents, and participants in Israel programming.
 - There are approximately 3,500 olim and another 3,000 elderly residents in Amigour homes. So far, no one living under Jewish Agency care has been injured.
 - Many olim are currently staying outside of absorption centers to ensure that their mental health does not suffer as a result of the long hours many are forced to spend in shelters. The Agency is prepared to send additional olim away for temporary evacuations if the need arises. During the Hezbollah attacks, absorption centers and Amigour employees continued to work under fire to ensure that residents received proper physical and emotional care.

- The Jewish Agency's Fund for the Victims of Terror is in touch with all those who have been directly hit by terror strikes.
 - The Agency is also in touch with Masa and other Israel experience programming participants – and their families - to assure parents that their children are safe. Field trips and summer camp programs are constantly reassessed, with appropriate changes or cancellations made when needed.
 - The Agency has 11 partnership regions in the North (three in the immediate line of fire) who have been in touch with concerned Jewish communities around the world as they work together to determine how best to address the growing challenges for the region.
- Over the past few months, the **American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC)** has been preparing for numerous scenarios and working with communities in the north, especially with the most vulnerable Israelis, to ensure that they were ready for the recent escalation. To date, JDC has:
 - Purchased, assembled, and is delivering 30,000 emergency kits, benefitting over 120,000 people. The kits contain first aid supplies, flashlights, chargers, transistor radios, and emergency instruction guides in Hebrew, Arabic, and Russian. At-risk-family kits include therapeutic activities for children; kits for the elderly and people with disabilities include therapeutic exercise activities.
 - Provided nearly 366,000 pieces of emergency medical and hospital equipment and first aid supplies to local and volunteer medical units, hospitals, municipalities, and first responder groups across Israel, including vulnerable communities in the north.
 - Deployed trauma and social support for evacuees from the north who have been unable to return to their homes since October 7.
 - Led crisis training for local emergency response units in over sixty municipalities around the North, home to both Jews and Arabs.

Stories of Heartbreak, Heroism, and Hope

- [Unbearable joy](#): The magnitude of hostages coming home
- See this [story](#) of 30-year-old Avinatan Or, a Tel Aviv resident and the second of seven brothers. An electrical engineer, Avinatan is described by friends and family as an optimist who loves reading, hosting friends and having fun. Avinatan and his girlfriend of two years Noa Argamani were kidnapped by Hamas terrorists from the Nova music festival. Noa was rescued in an IDF mission in June. Noa recently shared, "wishing us many more kisses and days full of love - together and not apart."
- Read about [Staff Sgt. Omer Benjo](#), 20, who was an observation soldier said to be 'full of grace.' Benjo was killed by a rocket fired at Safed at the beginning of this year.