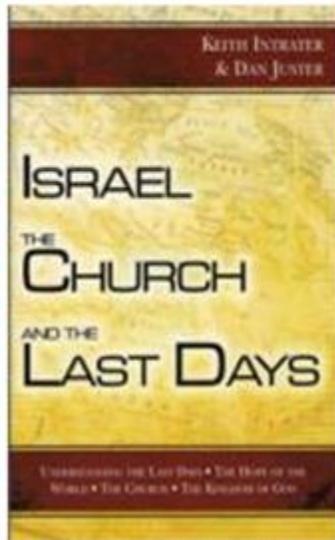


## **Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update February 27, 2015**

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**PROMINENT LEADERS AND ANALYSTS ON THE ISRAELI LEFT ARE CONCERNED THAT THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION WILL AGREE TO A BAD DEAL WITH IRAN.** While there is debate in Israel about whether Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's speech to Congress is the proper tactic, there is a consensus across the Israeli political spectrum that the P5+1 may be headed towards an agreement with Iran that will be detrimental to Israeli security. Last Friday, in an interview with CNN, Opposition Leader and Labor Party candidate Isaac Herzog said "I'm worried about a bad deal and about caving into all sort of Iranian pressure as well." Amos Yadlin, former head of the IDF Military Intelligence and the Labor Party's candidate for Defense Minister, criticized the Obama administration's goal of leaving Iran with a break-out time of one year, stating that the break-out time "must be measured in a number of years" and that Israel "will view a deal that leaves Iran up to a year from a nuclear bomb as a bad deal." Additionally he has warned that the US government's mentality that an agreement is preferable to the alternatives to an agreement is "liable to justify signing an extremely bad agreement." Yadlin has previously cautioned the West not to be fooled by the Iranians, who have a cunning strategy of agreeing to only limited, reversible compromises. Regarding preliminary reports about a potential deal with Iran, Yair Lapid, leader of the centrist party Yesh Atid, has stated in an interview, "We think this is not

harsh enough, or strong enough towards the Iranians.” Former Labor Prime Minister Ehud Barak has expressed disappointment that the Obama administration has “changed its objective from no nuclear military Iran to no nuclear military Iran during the term of its administration.” Leading Haaretz columnist and author Ari Shavit observed that “Obama’s desire to appease Tehran... could destroy his own vision of nuclear disarmament.” Moreover, there is concern about American rapprochement with Iran. In an article published on Tuesday, Amos Yadlin insisted that a shift away from the traditional alliances with Israel and moderate Arab states, and towards Iran would be “a big mistake. Iran is a source of instability, terror, regime change, and Islamic revolution all over the Middle East.” Furthermore, Ehud Barak, who supports a robust campaign against ISIS, has also asserted that “allowing Assad and the ayatollahs in Iran...to be the real winners- that doesn’t make sense.”

**TEL AVIV IS THE THIRD BEST PLACE IN THE WORLD FOR TECHNOLOGY BUSINESS, ACCORDING TO A NEW REPORT BY PROPERTY CONSULTANTS SAVILLS.** Austin took the top spot, followed by San Francisco. Savills surveyed 12 global cities with strong tech environments. The scores were measured according to five metrics: business environment, tech environment, quality of life, talent pool and property affordability. New York, Stockholm and London came fourth, fifth and sixth respectively in the overall ranking. Multinational R&D centers located within the Tel Aviv-Yafo metropolitan area include Google, Barclays, Motorola, BMC Software, Broadcom, EMC, Microsoft, GM, Amdocs, SAP, Applied Materials, Marvell, Oracle, HP, and CiscoIsrael. (via Israel21c)

**AT A HEARING TODAY AT THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE WITH SECRETARY OF STATE JOHN KERRY, DEMOCRATIC MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE RAISED CONCERNS WITH REGARDS TO CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS WITH IRAN.** Ranking Member Congressman Eliot Engel (D- N.Y.) said that “we’re hearing troubling reports on the scale and duration of the program that Iran may be allowed as part of a deal.” He referred to recent reports that the U.S. would allow Iran to ramp up its nuclear activities towards the end of an agreement as “very disturbing,” and said that the “longest amount of time preventing Iran from gearing up to have a nuclear weapon is preferable.” Engel insisted on making sure “that any deal we sign is a good deal.” Members also voiced concern about the number of centrifuges the P5+1 have reportedly been willing to accept as well as skepticism regarding Iran’s willingness to adhere to its international commitments. Ranking Member of the Middle East and North Africa Committee Congressman Ted Deutch (D-Fla.) referred to numerous UN Security Council resolutions that demand that Iran suspend enrichment and explained that the “frustration” about a deal that would “include as many as six or seven thousand centrifuges is trying to understand why Iran would need that many... There is just some concern on how we’ve gotten to this point.” Deutch also pointed out that Iran has refused to provide the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) with information about the potential military dimensions of their nuclear program. Regarding a potential

final agreement with Iran, he asked, "How can we be assured that Iran will comply with it if they're not willing to come clean on what they've done in the past?" Finally, both Congressmen Deutch and Congressman Brad Sherman (D-Calif.) asked Secretary Kerry if he would commit to demanding intrusive inspections as part of any final deal. Congressman Deutch asked Kerry if he could "confirm that any deal can only be agreed upon if it provides for anytime, anywhere inspections." Congressman Sherman asked if the Obama administration would "accept an agreement in which the IAEA does not have the right to go anywhere on short notice to look at... undeclared nuclear sites."

**USA AMBASSADOR INVITES ISRAELIS TO INVEST IN AMERICA:** The USA's Ambassador to Israel Dan Shapiro has issued an invitation to Israeli companies to sign up for the SelectUSA Summit 2015, which aims to increase foreign investment in the American market. Shapiro is to lead a delegation of up to 20 Israeli companies to the Summit, which will take place outside Washington DC from March 23 to 24, 2015. The call comes as Israeli exports to Asia continue to grow, while the percentage of exports to the USA remains the same. (Israel National News)

**HISTORIC US TERROR VERDICT CHARGES PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY WITH OVER \$655m. IN DAMAGES:** Ending a saga dating back to the end of the Second Intifada in 2004, a USA jury on Monday, 23 February, 2015, handed down a historic verdict against the Palestinian Authority for involvement in six terror attacks from that time period, charging them with \$655.5 million in damages. Lead trial counsel Kent Yalowitz said that "The Palestinian Authority and the PLO have been found liable by an American jury for six heinous terrorist attacks that killed and injured hundreds of civilians." He continued, "The PA and PLO policies of financial inducements and rewards for terrorism that are at the center of this case unfortunately continue today, more than a decade later." Shurat Hadin (Israel Law Center) Director, Nitsana Leitner said, "We started out more than a decade ago with the intent of making the defendants pay for their terrorist crimes against innocent civilians and letting them know that there will eventually be a price to be paid for sending suicide bombers onto our buses and into our cafes." Israel's PM Bibi Netanyahu called on the international community to follow the court's example and continue to punish those who support terrorism. Foreign Minister Avigdor Liberman said the verdict is first and foremost a moral victory for Israel and victims of terror. He called the verdict a "wake-up call" for the Palestinians and their supporters around the world, who should now realize that terrorism is an integral part of the Palestinian Authority's makeup. In order to change that norm, the PA leadership must stop idealizing terrorists and change the way it educates its people, he added. (Jerusalem Post)

**JERUSALEM HITS BACK AT CLAIMS IT IS CAUSING COLLAPSE OF PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY:** Assertions that the Palestinian Authority is on the verge of collapse because Israel is withholding the monthly tax revenue it collects and transfers to Ramallah are exaggerated, Israeli officials said Sunday, 22 February, 2015.

The officials were responding to consistent claims from top US and EU officials, including USA Secretary of State John Kerry, that if the money is not transferred soon the PA may fall apart or stop its security cooperation with Israel. One Israeli official said Jerusalem, which has held up two monthly payments and the transfer of some \$200 million since the beginning of the year in response to the PA joining the International Criminal Court and initiating proceedings against Israel, has done an assessment and concluded that while “there is pressure on the PA,” there is “time” and the PA is not on the verge of collapse. “We believe that people should focus on what brought about this situation, which is the PA breaking fundamental commitments to the peace process by going to the UN Security Council and the ICC,” the official said. He added that Israel could not be expected to sit idly by as the PA wages “diplomatic warfare” against it. According to the official, Israel’s response has so far been “very measured,” adding that the funds are being held in escrow and not being used to pay the PA’s outstanding water and electricity bills, a move that would be “irreversible.” The current steps, however, are reversible, he said, without indicating what steps the PA would have to take to ensure the renewed flow of tax revenue. (J. Post)

**NEW AUSTRALIAN SECURITY MOVES COULD STRIP POTENTIAL TERRORISTS OF PASSPORTS, WELFARE MONEY:** Australian PM Tony Abbott on Monday, 23 February, 2015 announced a national security crackdown that could deny welfare payments to people seen as potential threats, strip the passports of those with dual nationality and curb travel overseas. Abbott unveiled the measures in the wake of a hostage siege in a Sydney cafe that left three dead in December 2014. He said some personal freedoms would have to be curtailed to fight what he called a rapidly growing threat from radical groups such as ISIS. "For too long, we have given those who might be a threat to our country the benefit of the doubt," Abbott said. The conservative Abbott said new laws would remedy failings exposed in the areas of immigration, welfare, policing and intelligence by clamping down on those who supported radicals, especially recipients of welfare. The laws will also target so-called "hate preachers," he said, citing as an example the radical but non-violent Islamist group Hizb-ut-Tahrir. (Jerusalem Post)

**EX-SENATOR JOE LIEBERMAN TO CONGRESS: “HEAR NETANYAHU OUT!”** Joseph Lieberman, a former leading Democratic Party USA Senator, challenges the incumbent Democratic president and says that PM Netanyahu should be heard in Congress. In an op-ed in the Washington Post on Monday, 23 February, 2015, Lieberman – who was nearly elected Vice President of the USA in 2000 – addresses members of Congress and outlines several reasons for them not to boycott Netanyahu's speech on March 3, 2015. Firstly, Lieberman says that the upcoming speech "is about determining how best to stop Iran from getting nuclear weapons, and not just another Washington test of partisan and political loyalty." He therefore appeals to Congressmen - who are undecided as to whether or not to attend - to go and hear what the prime minister has to say. "Israel is one of our closest and most steadfast allies and you should feel a responsibility to listen to its leader speak about developments that he believes could

threaten the safety, independence and even existence of his country, as well as that of our closest allies in the Arab world. It is not just the security of Israel and the Arab nations but the security of the United States that will be threatened if a bad agreement is made with Iran that enables it to build nuclear weapons it could put on its increasingly capable long-range missiles. At this very unstable moment in history, we cannot and must not avert our attention from what remains the greatest threat to the security of America and the world." (Arutz-7)

**‘IRAN SENDS ARMS OF RUTHLESS TERROR ALL OVER THE WORLD:’** Israel’s Defense Minister Moshe Ya’alon on Monday night, 23 February, 2015, warned of the dangers the emerging agreement between Iran and Western powers poses to Israel’s security. "The agreement with Iran, as it is being formulated now, is a great danger to world peace and threatens Israel's security," Ya’alon stressed. Calling it the main cause of instability in the Middle East, Ya’alon noted that Iran "send arms of ruthless terror all over the world in order to attack Western and Israeli interests. Therefore any agreement signed between the West and this messianic and apocalyptic regime will severely hurt Western and Israeli interests, as well as allow Iran to become a nuclear threshold state and carry on with its terrorist activities." Ya’alon continued that the Islamic Republic is the “most dangerous regime out there, and we must not blink or ease up. Iran has approached these negotiations during a time of great concern, as they struggle with weakness and economic collapse as a result of sanctions imposed on the country." But, Ya’alon warned, the "awful agreement being formulated now" could change all that. It will allow Iran "to extricate itself from an economic blockade and also continue to enrich uranium." The Defense Minister stressed that Israel was not willing to compromise the security of any of its citizens. (Israel National News)

**IRAN IS DEPLOYED, ‘PLANNING WAR’ ALONG ISRAEL’S NORTHERN BORDER:** Iran has built an active front from Israel's northern Mediterranean border adjacent to Rosh Hanikra, all the way to the Golan Heights. The goal: to undermine and wage war against the "Zionist entity" with conventional, powerful military means from within Lebanon and Syria. So says Yigal Carmon, Counter-terrorism Adviser to prime ministers Yitzhak Shamir and Yitzhak Rabin, and founder and president of the prestigious Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) "Iran has taken advantage of the chaos in the Middle East to form a united front from Tehran, through Baghdad, Syria and Lebanon," Carmon said Monday, 23 February, 2015. "It has turned Syria into a Hezbollah-state for this purpose, and is making inroads into the PA-controlled areas in Judea, Samaria and Gaza for this purpose. Their main goal is ultimately to destroy Israel." He said that what must be done now is, at least, to sound the alarm. Despite the tensions between Israel and the USA Carmon said, "the Americans listen very carefully to what Israel has to say in these areas. We must warn about this from every rooftop. Everyone knows already about the nuclear threat, but this is something new, and more immediate and acute." (Arutz-7)

**SOMALI TERROR GROUP THREATENS WESTERN MALLS:** Jeh Johnson, the USA's homeland security chief, on Sunday, 22 February, 2015, warned shoppers in one of America's biggest malls to be on their guard, after the Al-Shabaab terrorist group posted a video calling for attacks on Western malls. "I would say that if anyone is planning to go to the Mall of America today, they've got to be particularly careful," Johnson said on CNN's "State of the Union" program. The Al-Qaeda-linked Al-Shabaab group also threatened Canada's massive West Edmonton Mall, London's famous Oxford Street shopping hub and two malls in France. The video shows six minutes of graphic images and the terrorists celebrating the 2013 Westgate Mall attack in Nairobi, Kenya, that killed 67 people. The narrator, ended the video by calling on Muslim men to attack other shopping malls in Western countries. "If just a handful of mujahideen fighters could bring Kenya to a complete stand-still for nearly a week, just imagine what the dedicated mujahideen could do in the West to American or Jewish shopping centers across the world," the terrorist in the video said. The Mall of America, located in Minnesota and the country's largest with 40 million visitors a year, said it had taken extra security measures in response to the terrorist threat. Johnson warned that the threat was indicative of a new type of home-grown menace and requires careful tracking of people suspected of supporting terrorist groups. (Arutz-7)

**UNWELCOME MAT: OBAMA TEAM WEIGHTS STRATEGY TO BLUNT NETANYAHU'S VISIT, MESSAGE ON IRAN TALKS:** In what is becoming an increasingly nasty grudge match, the White House is mulling ways to undercut Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu's upcoming trip to Washington and blunt his message that a potential nuclear deal with Iran is bad for Israel and the world. Administration officials have discarded the idea of President Barack Obama himself giving an Iran-related address to rebut the two speeches Netanyahu is to deliver during his early March visit. But other options remain on the table. Among them: a presidential interview with a prominent journalist known for coverage of the rift between Obama and Netanyahu, and multiple Sunday show television appearances by senior national security officials. The administration has already ruled out meetings between Netanyahu and Obama, saying it would be inappropriate for the two to meet so close to Israel's March 17 elections. But the White House is now doubling down on a cold-shoulder strategy, including dispatching Cabinet members out of the country. Vice President Joe Biden will be away, his absence behind Netanyahu conspicuous in coverage of the speech to Congress, and Secretary of State John Kerry has conveniently found an excuse to be out of town that day as well. Other options were described by officials, who spoke only on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss internal deliberations. (US News)

**NETANYAHU: 'ASTONISHING' THAT TALKS CONTINUE WITH IRAN DESPITE IT HIDING INFO FROM IAEA:** PM Netanyahu criticized the international community on Sunday, March 22, 2015 for extending its talks with Iran without being troubled by that country's support for global terrorism. At Sunday's cabinet meeting, Netanyahu said Iran "continues its murderous terror activities around the region and it

does not, unfortunately, bother the international community - which is continuing to talk with Iran about a nuclear accord that will enable it to build industrial capabilities to develop nuclear arms.” Netanyahu's comments came as US Secretary of State John Kerry was set to begin talks that same day in Geneva with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif. Netanyahu said that it was “astonishing” that after the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) published a report last week that said Iran was continuing to hide military elements of its nuclear program that the talks will continue as regular. “Not only are they continuing,” Netanyahu said of the talks, “but there is an intensive effort to reach a nuclear agreement in the coming days and weeks.” (Jerusalem Post)

**POLL: ISRAELIS DON'T TRUST OBAMA ON IRAN NUKES:** A pre-election poll in Israel reveals that an overwhelming majority side with PM Netanyahu in not trusting the Obama Administration to prevent Iran from going nuclear. Conducted by the Times of Israel, the survey found that US President Barack Obama's approval rating amongst Israelis continues to plummet. As Netanyahu prepares to defiantly address the US Congress regarding the dangers of Iran's nuclear program against the wishes of the White House, 72 percent of respondents signaled that they share Netanyahu's distrust of a deal Obama is negotiating with Iran behind closed doors. (Israel Today)

**ARAB GOVERNMENTS EXPRESS CONCERN OVER IRAN DEAL:** Arab governments, not only Israel, are expressing concern over the development of a deal with Iran over its nuclear program, Wall Street Journal reported Friday, March 20, 2015. Talks with Iran over its nuclear program have instilled fear within some major Sunni states, such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates that a nuclear arms race will break out in the region. Concerned Arab states said that a nuclear deal allowing Iran to keep its nuclear-producing technologies would likely drive nations in the region to develop nuclear capabilities in order to match those of Iran's. An Arab official said that the collapse of negotiations with Iran is preferable to a bad nuclear deal - a comment similar to those previously iterated by PM Netanyahu. USA and Arab diplomats say that, although Arab nations have avoided matching statements made by Israel, they share many of the same fears regarding a nuclear deal with Iran. (WSJ/Jerusalem Post)

**SA'AR: ONLY NETANYAHU CAN MANAGE ISRAEL'S SECURITY PROPERLY:** Although he resigned from the Likud – because of disputes with PM Netanyahu, some say – former interior minister, Gideon Sa'ar, fully supports his former boss for the office of Prime Minister, he wrote in a Facebook post Sunday, March 22, 2015. “Six years ago, when the Likud returned to power, the dangerous cycle of surrendering land came to a halt,” Sa'ar wrote. “We cannot allow the Left to renew its surrender of the Land of Israel in Judea & Samaria. Such surrender will endanger the security of Israel and bring direct threats to the population of the cities in the center of the country.” Sa'ar said further that Israel needed someone who knew security leading the country – and the only person of that stature currently in the race was Netanyahu. “With the developments in the north, we may soon be facing a three sided military front – in

Gaza, Lebanon, and the Golan,” he said, referring to recent reports that the Hezbollah terrorist organization was seeking to expand its war against Israel to the Golan. “The only party that can handle these issues is the Likud,” he added. (Israel National News)

**GERMAN JEWS HIDE JEWISH MAGAZINE FOR FEAR OF ANTISEMITIC ATTACKS:** Germany’s largest Jewish community in the capital city removed its logo on envelopes containing its monthly magazine to protect members from anti-Semitic attacks. In a statement Friday, the Berlin Jewish community spokesman Ilan Kiesling said, “Despite considerably higher costs, the community’s executive board decided to send the community magazine in a neutral envelope, in order to reduce the hostility toward our more than 10,000 members. Many community members were thinking about cancelling their subscription.” The security measure to send the magazine “Jewish Berlin” in an unmarked envelope was formulated as part of new security protocols with the police and the security department of the Berlin Jewish community. “It is a sad reality that a large part of Jewish life for years has taken place behind bulletproof glass, barbed wire and security access controls,” said Kiesling. He added the attacks in Paris and Copenhagen, which resulted in Islamic terrorists killing five Jews, have created a new situation leading to “great insecurity” among community members. In his Die Welt column titled “More protection for Jews means less dignity” on Thursday, 19 March, 2015, Henryk Broder, Germany’s leading expert on contemporary anti-Semitism, criticized the fortress-like security measures to protect Jews as an illusion. “It will not become better. It will become worse. Toulouse was the prelude to Brussels and Brussels led to Paris. Copenhagen will not be the final station. The list of attacks will become longer,” wrote Broder. (Jerusalem Post)

**ANTISEMITISM IN EUROPE: FEAR OF NEW DARKNESS:** At memorial rallies for victims of the Feb 14, 2015 shootings in Copenhagen, Helle Thorning-Schmidt, the prime minister, proclaimed that “an attack on the Jews of Denmark is an attack on Denmark.” Since medieval times, Jews have appealed to sovereigns for protection against violent bigotry. The police can provide physical security, but congregating inside heavily guarded synagogues, schools and community centers is not the same as openly exercising one’s religious identity. Meanwhile, on Friday 20 March, 2015, hundreds of people attended the Islamic burial of the gunman Omar El-Hussein, identified by police as the gunman who shot dead two people - a filmmaker and a volunteer Jewish security guard - in the Danish capital. El-Hussein, 22, was placed in an unmarked grave in the Muslim cemetery on the outskirts of Copenhagen, watched by around 500 people, mostly young men wearing thick black jackets against the cold and rain, the report said. El-Hussein had been identified by Danish media as a man “a history of violent crime” who had only been freed from jail two weeks before the attacks. A Lebanese website reported he was of Palestinian Arab origin and that his parents had resided in a camp for “Palestinian refugees” in Lebanon before moving to Denmark. (Economist-UK/Arutz-7)

**THE THREAT TO THE JEWS OF EUROPE:** Europe has been discovering to its horror that once again Jews are being made victims in its midst. The fact that every single UK Jewish communal event has to be guarded is accepted as a fact of life. The fact that there are Jewish schools that look like fortresses and Jewish schoolchildren being taught self-defense to protect themselves against street attack is considered normal. Jew-hatred is not a prejudice like any other. Jews are the conscience of the world. Those who want to destroy the Jews want to tear out their own heart, as Judaism's moral codes lie at the very core of Western civilization. Will Europe summon the will to identify, reaffirm and fight to defend the core values it has spent years undermining. The Jews gave it those values. If it fails to protect its Jews, it will have also failed to protect itself. The writer is a columnist for The UK Times. (Jerusalem Post)

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