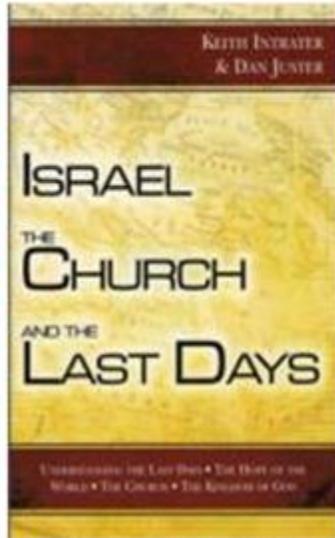


Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update April 3, 2015

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PASSOVER 2015: Passover, a seven day commemoration of the Jewish Exodus from Egypt, begins this year in Israel at sunset Friday, April 3 and concludes at nightfall on Friday, April 10. Families and friends across the country will gather in homes, halls and hotels to celebrate the annual Seder meal. Together the nation will recall in song and story the biblical deliverance, under the leadership of Moses, from the slave pits of Egypt, the ten plagues preceding it, and escapes from death because of the blood of the Passover lamb. Unleavened bread called matzos will be eaten throughout the holiday, and sweets made with matzo, corn and potato flour will accompany daily meals. Our Vision for Israel team extends warmest holiday greetings to our friends near and far.

SLING' MISSILE DEFENSE TEST SUCCESSFUL: A series of experiments for the "David's Sling" missile defense system were successful, the Homa Directorate at the Defense Ministry and the American Missile Defense Agency (MDA) announced Wednesday, 1, April, 2015. "David's Sling," is designed to intercept medium range missiles from nearby Gaza, Syria, and Lebanon. It is part of a large-scale multi-layered missile defense project which includes the Arrow 1, 2, and 3 systems and the Iron Dome missile defense systems. During the tests, David Sling's MMR radar successfully identified targets shot from the air and from the ground and submitted reports on the

targets to the firing center, to calculate a defense strategy. "This is a unique weapons system: the interceptor is small and agile," Homa Directorate chief Yair Ramati said. "The system should be introduced to the Israeli Air Force by next year." (INN)

IDF SCENARIO FOR NEXT HEZBOLLAH WAR: 1,500 MISSILES PER DAY:

The IDF has updated its worst-case scenarios for the next possible war with the Iran-proxy Hezbollah terrorist group in Lebanon, according to Army Radio. The Home Front Command will be sending local authorities its assessments of the numbers of casualties and the degree of damage they can expect in the next conflagration. This is the first time the assessment has been updated since 2007. IDF experts estimate the number of missiles to hit northern Israel on a given day would be 1,000-1,500, and the number of people killed daily will be in double or even triple digits. Army Radio reported that, for example, the relatively small Haifa suburb Kiryat Biyalik can expect to be hit by dozens of missiles per day. Several people will be killed, thousands of homes will be hit, and hundreds of them will suffer medium to heavy damage. Strategic facilities will be targeted. At the same time, Israel will be striking disproportionately at Lebanon, including its civilian infrastructures. The job of preparing civilians for a possible war falls on the shoulders of incoming Head of Home Front Command, Maj. Gen Yoel Strik. Meanwhile, a senior Defense Ministry official warned this week that Iran is placing guided warheads on its rockets and smuggling them to Hezbollah in Lebanon. (Arutz-7)

PA OFFICIALLY JOINS THE ICC TO SUE ISRAEL FOR 'WAR CRIMES': The Palestinian Authority's (PA) request to join the International Criminal Court (ICC) took effect on Wednesday, 1 April, 2015 paving the way for it to sue Israel for "war crimes," even as one Palestinian Arab source noted the move will almost certainly backfire. In 2009 the PA similarly tried to join the ICC but was rejected because it doesn't have the status of a state. However, after the UN granted the PA non-member state status in November 2012, the PA used the move to levy a renewed ICC bid, even though experts have pointed out UN recognition does not constitute statehood under the international legal definition of a state.

The PA is to sue Israel for "illegal settlements" in Judea & Samaria, despite the fact that the Jewish presence in the region is legal under international law as was conclusively proven in the 2012 Levy Report. Likewise it is to sue Israel for "war crimes" in last summer's counter-terror Operation Protective Edge in Gaza. That move will likely backfire, as not only the PA's "unity partner" Hamas but also PA Chairman Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah faction took part in war crimes by firing rockets at Israeli civilian centers during the war. A Palestinian Arab source admitted to the possibility of the ICC bid backfiring noting, "Palestinians can make a claim against the settlements, but it's doubtful that a claim regarding the recent war in Gaza won't bring about a counter-suit from Israel, which is preparing for this. The Israelis have prepared stacks of paperwork on conduct during Operation Protective Edge, including claims of Hamas rocket fire and Palestinian groups shooting from schools and other civilian buildings. This could lead to a suit against Hamas leaders who control the Gaza Strip," the source added. Indeed, Shurat

HaDin – Israel Law Center has already launched law suits against Abbas and Hamas leaders at the ICC. (Arutz-7)

MICHAEL OREN: PA IN THE ICC A ‘STRATEGIC THREAT’ TO ISRAEL’: MK Michael Oren, formerly Israel's ambassador to the United States, called the inclusion of the Palestinian Authority on the International Criminal Court “a strategic threat.” Mahmoud Abbas did not join the ICC in order to advance the establishment of a Palestinian state, Oren argued, but “to use as a strategic threat against Israel, in the form of international boycotts and sanctions.” The PA’s request to join the ICC took effect this week, paving the way for it to sue Israel for “war crimes.” Oren said the ICC “hammer” that the PA could now use would be no less of a threat than the rockets and missiles fired at Israel by Hamas and other terror groups. The move “is designed to take from us the right to defend ourselves and the right to exist as a Jewish and democratic state,” said Oren. Despite that, Oren added, “Israel will know how to defend itself and its soldiers in the face of the immoral and cynical complaints the PA will file in the Hague.” (Arutz-7)

THE UN’S WAR ON ISRAEL: The once great global body - the United Nations - has been overrun by repressive regimes that violate human rights and undermine international security. Since 2012, the 120-member-strong bloc known as the Non-Aligned Movement has been chaired by Iran, which has used its position to bolster its allies and marginalize Israel. Later this year, chairmanship of the Non-Aligned Movement will transfer to Venezuela, Iran's ally. In 2013, Iran was elected to the committee responsible for disarmament - even as it continued its nuclear expansion, support for terrorism and the destruction of Israel. In the 2014-15 session alone, the General Assembly adopted about 20 resolutions critical of Israel, while the human rights situations in Iran, Syria and North Korea merited just one condemnation apiece. (NY Times)

ISRAEL’S TOP ALLY IN AFRICA LOSES IN ELECTIONS: Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan, a staunch ally of Israel, was defeated in elections this week by his contender Muhammadu Buhari, in a turn of events feared to have a negative impact on Nigeria's support for the Jewish state. The 72-year-old Buhari was formerly the military ruler of the African nation between December 1983 and August 1985 and is a Muslim from the north of the country as opposed to Jonathan who is a Christian from the south. In the current elections concerns have been raised that Buhari may intend to pursue a radical Islamist agenda. Many fear that the change of rule in Nigeria may spell problems for Israel, given that since Jonathan took power in 2010, Nigeria has transformed into Israel's strongest ally in Africa. In late December of last year the Nigerian abstention in the vote on the Palestinian Authority (PA) unilateral bid for statehood recognition at the UN Security Council is seen as being responsible for defeating the move, leading the PA to angrily criticize Nigeria. Thanks to the flourishing relations under Jonathan, Nigeria is in the top 20 destinations for Israeli exports. (Israel National News)

MUSLIM GROUPS ATTACK EGYPTIAN COPTS OVER CHURCH HONORING CHRISTIANS KILLED BY ISIS: Relatives of the Coptic Christians beheaded last month by jihadists in Libya – their deaths immortalized in a gory video set against the backdrop of a Mediterranean beach – are facing new extremist-Muslim violence as they seek to build a church to honor their murdered loved ones. An angry mob in the Upper Egyptian village of Al Our – the proposed site of the church because it was home to 13 of the 21 Christians murdered in the mass “beachfront” decapitation – descended on the community’s current church after the midday Islamic prayer Friday, 27 March, 2015 and chanted that they’d never allow construction of the new place of worship to begin, witnesses told Egyptian activists in the USA. Things turned far uglier after nightfall, the witnesses said, as a smaller number of individuals threw Molotov cocktails and stones at the church, injuring several people, and setting cars ablaze, including one that belonged to a relative of one of the victims of the Libyan massacre. “The police came, but after the attack,” said a witnesses to the events in Al Our. “There were already cars on fire. People had been bloodied. Stones and bricks had been thrown.” Copts are the native Christians of Egypt, accounting for about 10 percent of the country’s 88 million people. (Fox)

NETANYAHU: WORLD CLOSING ITS EYES TO IRANIAN AGGRESSION: PM Binyamin Netanyahu has once again waved the red flag regarding the deal currently in discussion with Iran over its nuclear program. "The agreement being formulated in Lausanne sends a message that there is no price for aggression and on the contrary – that Iran's aggression is to be rewarded," the prime minister said in a statement. "The moderate and responsible countries in the region, especially Israel and also many other countries, will be the first to be hurt by this agreement," he added. Admonishing western powers for what he claimed amounted to willful blindness to Iran's real intentions, he continued: "One cannot understand that when forces supported by Iran continue to conquer more ground in Yemen, in Lausanne they are closing their eyes to this aggression," he said, referring to Tehran's backing of Shia Houthi rebels. "But we are not closing our eyes and we will continue to act against every threat in every generation, certainly in this generation." (Israel National News)

EX-INTELLIGENCE CHIEF: USA DISPLAYING ‘WILLFUL IGNORANCE’ REGARDING MIDDLE EAST: Retired Lt. Gen. Michael Flynn, the former director of the Defense Intelligence Agency under President Obama, says there is "incredible policy confusion" in Washington regarding the Middle East, where the United States sides with Saudi Arabia and Sunni Muslims in some cases, but then sides with Iran and the Shi'ites in other cases - all while trying to strike a nuclear deal with Iran, a country he said can't be trusted. Flynn said USA policy in the Middle East is not only confusing the American people, but "it's probably confusing to many in government. It is a state of confusion," he repeated. “I can't say it any stronger: I almost feel like our policy is a policy of willful ignorance rather than facing the reality that we actually have right now." Flynn noted that the old order has completely broken down in the Middle East, and "a new Middle East is

essentially struggling to be born." Meanwhile, Iran is "clearly on the march," advancing its interests in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen and elsewhere in the region. Flynn when asked by media sources how close we are to seeing a sectarian regional war in the Middle East, responded, "We're not close, we're there. I mean, this is what's going on." He said the United States has to "face reality" and not expect its policies to be carried out just because we "say something." Flynn made it clear that he doesn't trust Iran, and he opposes a nuclear deal. "One of the things that we have to keep in mind on Iran is, Iran is also a country with ballistic missiles, cyber capabilities. They are also still a state-sponsor of terrorism. And here we are dealing with them as though we're going to give them a carte blanche," he said. "I think it's dangerous. I think it's very dangerous." (CNS)

IRAN'S BASIJ COMMANDER: ISRAEL MUST BE WIPED OFF THE MAP: As talks over Iran's nuclear weapons program neared their deadline Tuesday, 31 March, the Commander of Iran's Basij Force, Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Naqdi, was quoted as saying that "wiping Israel off the map is not up for negotiation." In a conference in Iran, Naqdi also threatened Saudi Arabia and said that the counterattack it is waging in Yemen, against Iran-backed Houthis, "will end up like Saddam Hussein." The report was carried on Israel's Kol Yisrael radio. World powers were meeting for Iranian nuclear negotiations on Tuesday morning, 31, March, 2015 for the final day of talks in Lausanne, Switzerland. (Arutz-7)

ON EVE OF POSSIBLE DEAL, ISRAEL SHOWS OFF LATEST SUB: The Israeli navy on Tuesday 31 March, 2015 hosted military reporters on a tour of its latest submarine, part of an underwater fleet reportedly armed with nuclear-tipped cruise missiles that will serve as Israel's major deterrent against a nuclear-armed Islamic Republic. The submarine, the INS Tanin (in English, "Crocodile") is one of five acquired from Germany in the past two decades. Cruise missiles aboard the vessels have a range of close to 1,000 miles and can carry nuclear warheads. Capable of extended stays at sea, one or more of submarines would likely always be within range of Iran. Although Israel is reported to have some 80 nuclear weapons, these are seen only as "doomsday" options. (Worthy News)

BOEHNER: OBAMA ADMINISTRATION'S 'ANIMOSITY' TOWARD NETANYAHU 'REPREHENSIBLE': In comments made on CNN's "State of the Union" Sunday, 29 March, 2015, Speaker of the House John Boehner, alluded to the ongoing rift between USA President Obama and Israel's PM Netanyahu. He said, "I think the animosity exhibited by our administration toward the prime minister of Israel is reprehensible." After a highly controversial speech to a joint session of Congress and recent comments made by Netanyahu during the Israeli elections, in which he assured his constituents he would prevent a Palestinian state from being established only to reverse himself after winning re-election, ties between Washington and Jerusalem have become strained. Boehner did not appear to be concerned with Netanyahu's back-tracking on the Palestinian issue. "He doesn't have a partner. How do you have a two-state solution when

you don't have a partner in that solution, when you don't have a partner for peace, when the other state has vowed to wipe you off the face of the Earth?" Boehner said. "So until there's a partner, willing to sit down and have peace talks, I think it's irrelevant whether we're talking about a two-state solution." Meanwhile, Republican senators met with Netanyahu this week, headed by Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY). The meeting centered on the current Iranian nuclear talks, which Israel has repeatedly referred to as a "bad deal." In a statement released to the press, Netanyahu said "we are very much concerned for our common interests by the developments in the Middle East. And as Israel and the Arab countries see Iran progressing with its aggression to conquer Yemen and the Bab el-Mandeb straits, talks continue as usual, and go on with a deal that paves Iran's way to the bomb." (Jerusalem Post)

HAMAS TO FACE WAR CRIMES SUIT IN US DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE:

Yet another lawsuit was levied against the Palestinian Authority on Tuesday afternoon, March 31, 2015 as 26 American citizens filed a complaint to the Department of Justice seeking restitution against the Hamas terrorist group for war crimes committed during Operation Protective Edge in Gaza. The lawsuit notes that Palestinian Arab terrorists deliberately fired rockets at Ben-Gurion Airport during the summer of 2014, as the USA citizens waited to board flights. Any person using any materials, illegally and intentionally, to wage a violent attack against an international airport, could be sentenced to 20 years in prison by USA law if American citizens were found to be present. The lawsuit is being filed against several Hamas leaders, including Khaled Meshaal, Sami Abu Zuhri, Hamdan Awad, and others. Hamas proudly took credit for the attacks leaving no doubt as to the responsible party. (Israel National News)

THOUSANDS ATTEND GRAND OPENING OF NATION'S FIRST URBAN PARK IN JERUSALEM:

A cross section of Jerusalem families enthusiastically gathered in the capital on Monday, 30 March, 2015, to attend the festive grand opening of Gazelle Valley Urban Wildlife Park, the nation's first urban nature reserve. As hundreds of carefree children ate cotton candy with the oversized Holyland apartment complex in the background, many visitors commended Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat for not relenting to developers in ensuring the area would not become another development. The park features five ponds, two streams, bird-watching areas, a man-made island accessible by wooden bridges, and dozens of wild gazelles roaming free. The park will remain open to the public free of charge, seven days a week, from 7 a.m. until sunset. (Jerusalem Post)

NETANYAHU: IRAN-LAUSANNE-YEMEN AXIS MUST BE STOPPED:

The nuclear agreement between the world powers and Iran apparently emerging from the talks in Lausanne confirm all of Israel's concerns, "and even more than that," PM Benjamin Netanyahu said at Sunday's March 29, 2015 weekly cabinet meeting. At the same time the talks are taking place in Switzerland, he said, Iran's proxies in Yemen are in the process of occupying large segments of Yemen and trying to gain control of the strategic Ba'ad el-Mandeb waterway which is critical to the free flow of the world's oil. "After the

Beirut-Damascus-Baghdad axis, Iran is carrying out a pincer movement from the south to take over and occupy the entire Middle East. The Iran-Lausanne-Yemen axis is very dangerous to humanity and it must be stopped," he said. Netanyahu further said the deal currently under discussion between Iran and world powers over Tehran's nuclear program is even worse than he had feared. "The dangerous accord which is being negotiated in Switzerland confirms our concerns and even worse," Netanyahu said. Talks intensified on Sunday, 29 March, 2015 in Lausanne, as foreign ministers gathered to discuss the possibility of a political framework. (J. Post)

ISRAELI TV: IRAN DEAL, LEAVING 6,100 CENTRIFUGES SPINNING TO BE SIGNED BY TUESDAY: The deal taking shape between Iran and world powers will leave Iran with 6,100 centrifuges spinning, will involve a phased lifting of economic sanctions, and will be reached as scheduled early this week, Israeli television has reported. Negotiators have yet to resolve several key issues, including the fate of some 13,000 centrifuges that Iran will be barred from using under the deal, whether Iran will be allowed to continue its R&D work on advanced centrifuges, and what will become of Iran's already enriched uranium. What has been agreed is that Iran will be allowed to continue to operate its secretive underground facility at Fordo, the TV station's well-connected Middle East analyst Ehud Ya'ari said. Ya'ari, echoed the widespread Israeli description of the emerging deal as "bad." An Israeli official told media sources this weekend that the terms of the looming agreement were "incomprehensibly" bad and rejected the Obama administration's contention that it would keep the regime a year away from accumulating enough fissile material for a bomb. Estimating that a framework deal would indeed be signed soon, this official lamented the USA-led negotiators' apparent readiness to remove sanctions without Iran being required to halt its global terrorist activities, and listed a host of areas in which Tehran was working against American, Israeli and moderate Arab interests without being made to pay a price. (Times of Israel)

RECOGNIZING IRAN AS A NUCLEAR THRESHOLD STATE: IMPLICATIONS FOR ISRAEL AND THE MIDDLE EAST: The Iranian leadership seeks an agreement that, in addition to leaving it with access to its nuclear technology, also rewards it with both removal of the sanctions and international recognition of its special status in the Middle East. The status of a threshold state will leave Iran with the possibility of arming itself with nuclear weapons within a short time span, when it decides to break out to military nuclear capability. Recognition of its status as a threshold state will help Iran expand and enhance influence in the region, enable it to provide a "defensive umbrella" to the allies and non-state proxies in the region that it supports, and grant it "blackmail power" vis-a-vis third parties. Removal of most or all of the sanctions imposed against it will provide Iran with resources to promote its regional goals and make it less economically vulnerable. Above all, the international community will likely fear that a challenging policy toward the Iranian regime in the face of its negative behavior in the Middle East and inside Iran could cause the ayatollahs to breach the

nuclear agreement and cross the nuclear threshold. (Institute for National Security Studies)

SAUDI MINISTER: DON'T GIVE IRAN DEALS IT DOESN'T DESERVE: Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister, Prince Saud al-Faisal, said last week that Iran should not be given "deals it does not deserve." He warned that Iran was conducting "aggressive policies, and interfering in the countries of the region and seeking to acquire a nuclear weapon that threatens regional and international security." Al-Faisal's remark echoes Israel's own reservations on the increasingly likely possibility of a very "bad deal" with Iran. Saudi Arabia, as well as other Arab countries, have expressed concerns over the impending deal with Iran and the West. The concern in Saudi Arabia over the nuclear deal with rival Iran is so great that a columnist in a Saudi-controlled government newspaper recently expressed support for PM Netanyahu's warnings against a pact with Iran. (Arutz-7)

USA RAISES PRESSURE ON ISRAEL OVER PALESTINIANS: The USA exerted new pressure against Israel by leaving open the possibility of letting the UN set a deadline for a Palestinian state, in what would be a departure from using American veto power to protect its close Mideast ally. The prospect of a UN Security Council resolution arose Friday, 27 March 2015, when French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius said Paris would introduce a measure setting a deadline for a negotiated settlement of the conflict and the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel, possibly within two years. On dozens of occasions in recent decades, the USA has lobbied against approval of such resolutions, using its veto authority as a permanent member of the Security Council as a last resort. In response to past resolutions concerning the Middle East, the White House has echoed Israel's contention that UN action cannot substitute for direct negotiations. But the White House took a markedly different tack this weekend. Press secretary Josh Earnest said the Obama administration was aware of Mr. Fabius' comments. While he didn't indicate whether the USA would actively favor such a resolution, the absence of any dissuasion was telling. If the USA were to abstain from voting on the resolution it could still pass if it gained the required nine-vote majority, further isolating Israel and fanning international criticism against it. How America might handle a new resolution on the matter in the wake of the Obama administration's unprecedented public break with Israeli PM Netanyahu has been a matter of intense speculation at the UN. (Wall St. Journal)

RECENT COMMENTS FROM WASHINGTON ARE UNDERMINING USA POLICY: The patronizing reaction in parts of the American media and from certain officials in Washington to the outcome of the Israeli elections is a slap in the face to Israel's democracy and its people's right to make up their own mind. The Palestinian position clearly indicates that compromise and concessions are to be made by Israel alone. Unfortunately, the recent comments emanating from Washington can only encourage PA chairman, Abbas, to persist in his strategic quest to achieve statehood not

by direct talks with Israel but through the UN and other international bodies. This would be in direct contravention of established USA policy. The president expressed his misgivings about "seeing a chaotic situation in the region" - but unfortunately that situation is already here, all over the Middle East - and it has nothing to do with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as President Obama himself admitted in his last year's UN speech. (J. Post)

PUTIN: RUSSIA READY TO HELP 'PALESTINE' BECOME REALITY: Russia plans to continue helping Palestinians achieve their goal of establishing an independent state in Judea & Samaria, President Vladimir Putin announced Saturday, 28 March 2015. Putin made the address to participants at the 26th Arab League Summit in Egyptian Red Sea resort Sharm el-Sheikh. "Palestinians have the right to establish an independent and habitable state with a capital in East Jerusalem," the Russian President argued. "Russia will continue contributing to the attainment of this goal of Palestine's independence, working through bilateral channels and through multilateral channels, Putin added. (Israel National News)

STUDY SHOWS ANTISEMITISM RAMPANT ON US COLLEGE CAMPUSES: At the University of California, swastikas have been found on Jewish buildings, as they have at Vanderbilt University, University of Oregon and Emory University. These incidents are increasing and are always linked to an anti-Israel campaign. More than 50% of American college students have been victims of anti-Semitism, according to research published by the "Center for Human Rights Under Law" at Trinity College. 1,157 Jewish college students over 55 campuses across the USA were surveyed for the Trinity College study over the 2013-2014 academic year. Despite the control variables of topics other than anti-Semitism, a surprisingly high number of students reported being a victim of discrimination or hate because they were Jewish. The level of religious observance and openness about being Jewish was not a significant factor, according to the study - with anti-Semitism being more or less universal by denomination. There are between 4.5-5.7 million American Jews, the largest Jewish community outside Israel. (Arutz-7)

IDF SOURCES: ISIS ACCUMULATING SUPPORT NEAR ISRAEL-JORDAN BORDER: Islamic State has recently found a following among Bedouin tribes in southern Jordan, tens of kilometers away from the border with Israel, sources from the IDF's Southern Command claim. Sympathy for the terror organization, IDF sources fear, may spur terror cells to be established along the border, from where terrorists will infiltrate into Israel's Arava region and carry out attacks. Concern is only amplified by the fact that there is no border fence between Jordan and Israel in that region, and the Arava Division of the IDF, responsible for border security, suffers from low manpower. Just last month, seven people entered Israel illegally from Jordan, made their way to the Yotvata Kibbutz on the border, and stole vehicles before disappearing. None of the infiltrators have been caught. Jordan, meanwhile, is dealing with waves of refugees pouring in from Syria. In addition to food and shelter concerns, Jordanian security forces

are also working to prevent terror cells belonging to both ISIS and Al Qaeda's Al-Nusra Front from springing up. (Israel National News)

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