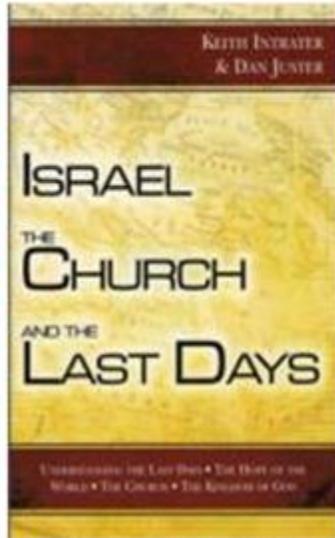


## **Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update May 1, 2015**

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**HAMAS PLANNED MAJOR TUNNEL ATTACK ON KIBBUTZ IN 2014 WAR:** Citing Israeli intelligence sources, Israel Army Radio reported Wednesday, 29 April, 2015 that just after the outbreak of the Gaza war last summer, Hamas military commander Mohammed Deif planned to deploy dozens of armed terrorists trained for the operation to carry out a large-scale terrorist attack on Kibbutz Kerem Shalom near the Gaza border. They were to infiltrate the kibbutz through an underground tunnel, slaughter a number of civilians, and take others alive as hostages before returning through the tunnels to Gaza. Such an event would likely have precipitated a massive ground incursion that would have entailed hundreds of Palestinian casualties as well as IDF losses. When the plan was finalized and brought before Mashaal, the political bureau chief rejected it for fear of the Israeli response. (J. Post)

**995 ATTACKS ON JERUSALEM BORDER POLICE SINCE 2014:** Violence in Jerusalem continues to snowball, according to a report this week - and most of the incidents are in what is defined as peacetime. A total of 995 terror attacks against the Border Police, SWAT teams, and undercover officers were recorded throughout 2014 and through April 2015. Hundreds of police have been injured in these clashes, and one policeman - Border Police Superintendent Jedan Assad - died in a car rampage attack last

year. The police are the new front lines in the war on terror, according to this report. In the 16-month period, 814 Molotov cocktails and 142 explosive devices have been thrown at Border Police. Seventeen shooting incidents have unfolded involving the Border Police. A total of seven stabbing attempts or attacks have been made, and a total of 15 "car rampage" attacks have been launched. (INN)

**SHAS LEADER GIVES UP DEMAND FOR INTERIOR MINISTER POST:** PM Benjamin Netanyahu's efforts to form a governing coalition continued on Thursday, 30 April, 2015 with progress reported in talks with the religious party, Shas. In a conversation between Netanyahu and Shas leader Aryeh Deri, the prime minister agreed to accept Deri's condition to cancel Value Added Tax on basic consumer items. Netanyahu's move came after Deri said earlier that day he was backing off his demand to serve as interior minister in the next government. Speaking on Army Radio, Deri addressed the petition which 40,000 people signed demanding that he be denied the interior minister's post, a job which he has held in the past. His previous term in office there resulted in a conviction for bribery. "I don't want to cause people to gossip and I don't want to start my next job on the wrong foot," Deri told Army Radio. Deri had been seeking the interior minister position for months. (Jerusalem Post)

**MORTAR ROUNDS ON ISRAEL'S GOLAN HEIGHTS WERE FIRED BY ISIS:** The two mortar rounds fired on Israel's Golan Heights from Syria on Tuesday, 28 April, 2015 in an estimated "spillover" were launched by the brutal ISIS terrorist organization, which is the closest it's ever been to the Israeli border with Syria. The ISIS-linked Jaish al-Jihad has captured the border town of Qahtaniya on the Syrian Golan, thereby taking up its closest position to Israel yet at a distance of just 1.5 miles. Qahtaniya had been in the hands of the Free Syrian Army and the Al Qaeda affiliate Nusra Front which had kept the status quo vis-a-vis Israel, concentrating their efforts against the Syrian regime of President Bashar al-Assad. Now that the town has fallen to ISIS, it may turn into a base of attacks against the Jewish state. On Tuesday morning 28 April, 2015 Nusra Front launched an operation to try and recapture the town, with clashes between it and ISIS including machine gun fire, anti-tank missiles and mortar rounds. During the clash two mortar shells slammed into Israel near Kibbutz Ein Zivan. The "spillover" repeated the next day, as machine gun fire hit the same area near Ein Zivan. Golan has been heating up lately, with four Arab terrorists being eliminated by the IDF earlier this week as they tried to place an explosive on the Israeli border. Unrest in the area is unlikely to quiet down any time soon due to increasingly heavy Iranian influence. (Arutz-7)

**EU SAYS IRAN SHOULD PLAY A "MAJOR ROLE" IN THE MIDDLE EAST:** Despite being the leading state sponsor of terrorism, Iran should play a "major role" in the Middle East according to EU foreign affairs chief Federica Mogherini on Tuesday, 28 April, 2015. Mogherini spoke to reporters ahead of a meeting in New York with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif focused on finalizing the nuclear deal reached this month and regional crises. A final nuclear deal with Iran "could open the way to a

different role for Iran in the region," Mogherini said. Arguing that it would be "naive" to ignore the Islamic republic, Mogherini said the best approach would be to "call on Iran to play a major but positive role in the region."

Iran has been expanding control across the Middle East via terrorist proxies, such as Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Shi'ite Houthi terrorists in Yemen, Shi'ite militants in Iraq and its own troops as well as Hezbollah terrorists in Syria. In Syria in particular, Iran can "encourage the regime to participate in a Syrian-led transition," Mogherini said. Iran has been spending \$35 billion a year to prop up President Bashar al-Assad's regime, with experts revealing it does so to maintain a route by which to deliver weapons to its Hezbollah terror proxy in Lebanon and expand its regional hegemony. Mogherini said work on finalizing the framework nuclear agreement with Iran was moving forward. "I'm confident that we can proceed with the good work," she said of the deal which is to have all sanctions lifted on Iran, while leaving it with all of its nuclear facilities and allowing it to continue enriching uranium. (INN)

#### **IT'S OFFICIAL: OBAMA 'THE WORST USA PRESIDENT FOR ISRAEL:**

Israelis overwhelmingly view Barack Obama as the worst USA president for Israel in the last 30 years, a poll has shown. And while that result may come as no surprise, the degree to which respondents viewed Obama negatively is certainly remarkable. The survey was conducted by veteran pollster Menachem Lazar of Panels Politics. The poll asked Israelis who they thought were the best and worst presidents for the State of Israel in the past 30 years. A full 63% of Israelis voted for Barack Obama as the worst-ever president. Trailing at a distant second was former president and current outspoken anti-Israel activist Jimmy Carter, with 16%. Carter's repeated attacks against Israel earned him the cold shoulder from senior Israeli officials, with both PM Netanyahu and President Reuven Rivlin refusing to meet with him during a planned visit to Israel. But Israelis apparently agreed with the assessment recently offered by one New York Assemblyman that Obama is far worse than Carter. 12% of respondents said they didn't know, while George Bush Senior came in at third place, with 4% of the votes. (Arutz-7)

**ISRAELI PARAMEDICS IN NEPAL:** Israeli Magen David Adom paramedics who arrived in Kathmandu early this week are dealing with a sea of serious injuries following the 7.8 earthquake in Nepal that has killed and injured thousands. "We treated children with abdominal and chest injuries, and lots of broken legs and arms," Ravit Martinez, 35, from Kibbutz Erez, said. "We did stitches everywhere, stitches in places like ears, eyes and faces. It's not very sanitary, but this is the field, and this is what we have." Martinez continued that "Everyone is outside sleeping in the streets, everything is dark, and everywhere you can see ruins of houses that are partly broken or vanished." Martinez is part of a delegation of eight doctors and paramedics working in cooperation with the International Red Cross. An Israel Defense Force field hospital is being built nearby. Some 5,489 people were confirmed dead as of 30 April, 2015 as a result of the massive

earthquake, with another 11,440 injured. Officials have warned the death toll is expected to rise. (Times of Israel)

**NEPAL: UNPRECEDENTED RELIEF EFFORT SHOWS ISRAEL'S TRUE FACE:** As the death toll in last weekend's deadly earthquake passes 4000, and with thousands more injured, Israeli aid teams are among the scores of international partners that are being rushed to Nepal, which is struggling to cope with the sheer number of casualties and scale of damage. The Israeli government has already dispatched its own team, including six IDF medical experts, a rescue team from the Home Front Command, a team from the IDF Medical Corps, and a representative from the Foreign Ministry. Those personnel have joined the general relief efforts, as well as seeking to locate dozens of Israelis currently either missing or stranded in the worst-hit areas. The devastating quake has also triggered an unprecedented joint-initiative by some of Israel's leading medical NGO's: United Hatzalah, Zaka and First are embarking on a joint mission to the disaster-hit country, adding their combined weight to the Israeli team, which also includes emergency workers from Magen David Adom. The team includes doctors, paramedics, Emergency Medical Technicians and of course search-and-rescue personnel to deal with the difficult task of locating survivors - and bodies. Israel's PM Netanyahu sent his condolences to the people of Nepal from the people of Israel on Saturday, 25 April, 2015. He assured that Israel would help in any way possible. (J.Post/Arutz-7)

**IDF HONORS FEMALE MUSLIM SOLDIER:** Among the 120 soldiers who received a "Medal of Excellence" at the President's Residence on Israel Independence Day Thursday, 23 April, 2015 was a Muslim woman who grew up in an Arab village and is currently a cadet in an IDF officer's training course. At age 19, she took part in the voluntary National Service program. "During my national service I realized that it was not what I wanted to do, because it is not that true connection to Israel. The connection to Israel comes from putting on the army uniform." Her family does not know she is serving in the IDF. The soldier says she knows her role will not stay a secret for long. "I think that in a matter of time a lot of people will know about it, and I would be really happy if a lot of people follow me and join the IDF." (Ynet)

**ISRAEL ELEVENTH HAPPIEST COUNTRY WORLDWIDE:** Israel was the eleventh happiest country in the world in 2014, according to the World Happiness Report released Friday, 24 April, 2015, outranking the US, UK, and numerous European countries. Just outranking the Jewish state, the world's top 10 happiest last year were Switzerland, Iceland, Denmark, Norway, Canada, Finland, the Netherlands, Sweden, New Zealand, and Australia. Closer to home, an Independence Day poll published revealed that 57% of Israeli Jews are proud of their country and satisfied with life in Israel. (Israel National News)

**ISRAEL'S DEFENSE MINISTER: IRAN IS CURRENTLY SEEKING TO SMUGGLE ADVANCED ARMS TO HEZBOLLAH:** Iran is in the midst of an effort

to arm terrorist groups, Hezbollah and Hamas, and Israel will not tolerate the transfer of advanced weaponry to its enemies, Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon said on Sunday, 27 April, 2015. His comments came a day after the Israel Air Force allegedly struck Assad regime military bases housing long-range missiles in Syria. Ya'alon said that "Iran is continuing to try to arm Hezbollah, including during these current days, and it is aspiring to equip the Lebanese terrorist organization with advanced and precise weapons." He continued that, "Hezbollah are seeking to smuggle weapons in every way and through every route, while being aware of the red lines set by the State of Israel. Israel has no intention of compromising over them. We will not allow the transfer of quality weapons to terrorist organizations, chief among them Hezbollah, and we will know how to reach those who send them the weapons at any time and place. We will not allow Iran and Hezbollah to set up terrorist infrastructure on our border with Syria, and we will know how to place our hands on anyone who threatens Israeli civilians, along the borders, or far from them." (J. Post)

**PALESTINIANS VOTE FOR IRAN'S NEW ALLY: HAMAS:** When you tell your people that Jews are awful, and do not want peace, and just want to kill Arabs and destroy their homes and holy sites, then people say, "This means Hamas is right. We should be killing the Jews and not making peace with them." Hamas has now apparently realigned with Iran, which is "rebuilding relations with the military wing of Hamas," and has recently sent Hamas "tens of millions of dollars." Hamas's crushing victory in the April 22, 2015, student council election at Bir Zeit University shows that the Islamist movement continues to maintain a strong presence in Judea and Samaria. Hamas supporters on campus won 26 seats, compared to 16 for their rivals in the Fatah faction, headed by Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas. The results of the election mean that Marwan Barghouti, who is serving 16 life terms in prison for his role in a series of suicide attacks against Israel, has become the "Honorary Chairman of the Bir Zeit University Student Council." The Hamas victory came less than 48 hours after its supporters scored a major achievement on another campus: Palestine Polytechnic University in Hebron. There, Hamas supporters won the same number of seats as their rivals in Fatah – a move hailed by leaders of the terrorist group as a "huge achievement." (PMW)

**CHINA WARNS N. KOREAN NUCLEAR THREAT IS RISING; IRAN DEAL COULD MIRROR N. KOREAN CASE:** China's top nuclear experts have increased their estimates of North Korea's nuclear weapons production well beyond most previous USA figures. North Korea may already have 20 warheads, as well as the capability of producing enough weapons-grade uranium to double its arsenal by next year. The Chinese estimates reflect growing concern in Beijing over North Korea's weapons program. An increase in North Korea's nuclear arsenal feeds international concern about proliferation from a country that, USA officials said, previously exported nuclear technology to Syria and missile components to Iran, Yemen and Egypt.

Some Washington lawmakers said the pending White House deal with Iran could mirror the 1994 nuclear agreement the Clinton administration made with North Korea. The deal was intended to halt Pyongyang's nuclear weapons capabilities, but instead, they allege, provided diplomatic cover to expand them. North Korea tested its first nuclear device in 2006. "We saw how North Korea was able to game this whole process," said USA Rep. Ed Royce (R-Calif.), chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. "I wouldn't be surprised if Iran had its hands on the same playbook." (Wall St. Journal)

**USA CONGRESS MARKS ISRAEL'S BIRTHDAY WITH ACTION AGAINST EU BOYCOTT EFFORTS:** Both chambers of Congress marked Israel's 67th birthday last week with action against efforts to boycott, divest and sanction the state. One day before the anniversary, the Senate Finance Committee unanimously agreed to attach an amendment to a bill that would "fast track" USA President Barack Obama's trade negotiations with Europe, which suggests any new trade deal should discourage the EU from promoting BDS. "Fast-track" authority allows Obama to negotiate trade agreements that still require the approval of Congress, but that Congress cannot amend. Another Senate amendment passed last week also requires the executive to report the participation of foreign companies in BDS activities. "We may not agree with every Israeli policy, but we cannot allow our potential trading partners in the EU to fall prey to efforts that threaten Israel's existence," said Ben Cardin (D-Maryland), a ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. "Economic tools and trade agreements have been used throughout world history to move governments and change policy, but when these actions seek to de-legitimize a country's right to exist, we need to draw a line." (Jerusalem Post)

**PRINCETON VOTES AGAINST BDS:** The Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement has experienced another failure on college campuses - this time, at Princeton University. The divestment referendum called on the prestigious school to divest from companies "that maintain the infrastructure of the Israeli occupation of Judea & Samaria and facilitate Israel's and Egypt's collective punishment of Palestinian civilians in that area and the Gaza Strip." But of the 2,032 students who voted over the proposal, 52.5% voted against divesting from Israel, with a close 47.5% voting for the boycott. The results surface days after the USA Senate's Finance Committee adopted measures to counter BDS - and amid a worrying trend of using BDS as an excuse to single out Jewish students on college campuses. (INN)

**FORMER SS GUARD: "I COULDN'T IMAGINE" JEWS SURVIVING AUSCHWITZ:** SS Sgt. Oskar Groening, 93, a former Auschwitz guard being tried on 300,000 counts of accessory to murder, told a German court last week that it was clear to him Jews were not expected to leave the camp in Nazi-occupied Poland alive. "I couldn't imagine that" happening, he said. Groening described in detail how cattle cars full of Jews were brought to the Auschwitz death camp, the people stripped of their belongings and then most led directly into gas chambers. Between May and July 1944, so many

trains were arriving that often two would have to wait with closed doors as the first was "processed," Groening testified. "The capacity of the gas chambers and the capacity of the crematoria were quite limited," he said. "For the sake of order we waited until train 1 was entirely processed and finished." (CBS News)

**CANADA'S PM REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO ISRAEL:** Canada's PM Stephen Harper, a staunch supporter of Israel, on Wednesday, 22 April, 2015 reaffirmed his country's support for the Jewish state in a statement released in celebration of Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israel's Independence Day. "Tonight at sundown marks the 67th anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel – the realization of the Jewish people's longstanding dream to establish a modern Jewish state in their historic homeland," said Harper. "Israel's Independence Day follows Yom Hazikaron (Memorial Day), a day of remembrance of Israel's fallen soldiers and victims of terrorism. The integral link between the two days underscores the tragic losses that Israel has suffered in its efforts to achieve independence, peace and security. Israel continues to face existential threats, such as cowardly terror attacks against civilians, denials by some of its neighbors of its right to exist, and the new anti-Semitism, which includes campaigns for boycotts, divestment and sanctions to delegitimize and demonize the world's only Jewish state. The Government of Canada remains resolute in our commitment to defend Israel's right to exist. We believe this right is absolute and non-negotiable," said Harper. (Israel National News)

**ROUHANI PRESIDES OVER 'DEATH TO AMERICA' CHANTS:** As Israelis celebrated the Jewish State's 67th Independence Day this week, PM Binyamin Netanyahu's office released a reminder about the deal being negotiated between Iran and the West. The video shows Iran's President Hassan Rouhani, who has been touted by the West as a "moderate", presiding over chants of "Death to America" during a rally in Iran. "Now is the time to insist on a better deal that won't pave Iran's path to the bomb," said the Prime Minister's Office. Israel has more than once warned against Rouhani's charm offensive, which Netanyahu has described as a strategy carried out to woo the West at the behest of the country's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Iran and Western powers recently agreed on a framework in ongoing nuclear talks and are to hold fresh talks in Vienna in order to build on that framework and reach a permanent deal by June 30, 2015. (INN)

**WSJ EDITOR TELLS ISRAEL TO IGNORE WORLD AFTER OBAMA BETRAYAL:** In a Wall Street Journal op-ed, Pulitzer-prize winning journalist and deputy-editor of the paper Bret Stephens argued this week that due to President Barack Obama's irreversible actions, the USA doesn't have Israel's back anymore - and Israel should learn to stand on its own. In the opinion piece entitled "Israel Alone," Stephens reported that in his recent conversations with senior Israeli officials they have shown "a sense of incredulity. They can't understand what's become of United States foreign policy. They don't know how to square Barack Obama's promises with his policies," the

journalist noted, presenting a brief survey of how Obama is allowing Iran to push towards nuclear proliferation and spread terror in the Middle East. "In a word, the Israelis haven't yet figured out that what America is isn't what America was," wrote Stephens. "They need to start thinking about what comes next."

Stephens continued that Obama is "is marching us past the point of no return on a nuclear Iran and thence a nuclear Middle East. When that happens, how many Americans will be eager to have their president intervene in somebody else's nuclear duel? Elaborating his point, the WSJ editor noted that "Obama is bequeathing not just a more dangerous Middle East but also one the next president will want to touch only with a barge pole." Israel is left alone to face "thousands more missiles for Hezbollah, paid for by sanctions relief for Tehran; ISIS on the Golan Heights; an Iran safe, thanks to Russian missiles, from any conceivable Israeli strike," in a reference to the S-300 missile system. (Arutz-7/WSJ)

**OBAMA KEPT IRAN'S SHORT BREAKOUT TIME A SECRET:** The Obama administration has estimated for years that Iran was at the most three months away from enriching enough nuclear fuel for an atomic bomb, but only declassified this estimate on April 1, 2015. Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz acknowledged that the USA has assessed for several years that Iran has been two to three months away from producing enough fissile material for a nuclear weapon. (Bloomberg)

**TIMING OF SANCTIONS RELIEF A MAJOR ISSUE AS IRAN TALKS RESUME:** The timing of sanctions relief is the main sticking point in nuclear talks that resumed on Wednesday, 22 April, 2015 with a meeting between delegates from Iran and the European Union. Arriving in Vienna, Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi reiterated Iran's position: "All the economic sanctions should be lifted on the day that the deal is implemented," Iranian news agency Tasnim reported. The United States says the sanctions, imposed on Iran by countries concerned that its nuclear programme could be aimed at weapons development, would have to be phased out gradually. Referring to concerns that the USA Congress might try to delay lifting sanctions, Araqchi told state television that President Obama's administration was "responsible to ensure that its commitments, particularly sanctions-related ones, are fulfilled." Iran and the other countries in the talks - China, France, Russia, Britain, the United States and Germany - reached a tentative deal on April 2, 2015 and now aim to finalize the details by an end-June, 2015 deadline. (Reuters)

**IRAN SEES HOW THE WEST FAILS TO ENFORCE AN ARMS-CONTROL DEAL:** The UN Security Council last week watched video of medics failing to resuscitate the child victims of a chlorine attack in March, 2015 in northern Syria. The crime comes less than two years after a USA-Russia agreement to disarm Bashar Assad's chemical arsenal. The larger lesson of this episode is the failure of international arms control. Too many countries have too many reasons to deny or look away from violations

that don't directly affect them. The Russians want to protect an ally, and the Obama Administration doesn't want to admit that its chemical-arms diplomacy has failed. Get ready for more of the same after the same governments celebrate a nuclear deal with Iran. (Wall Street Journal)

**YEMEN FOES FIGHT ON - NO END YET TO SAUDI STRIKES:** Rival forces fought on in Yemen on Wednesday, 22 April, 2015 despite a declared halt to a Saudi-led bombing campaign, showing how tough it may be to find a political solution to a war stirring animosities between rival Gulf powers Saudi Arabia and Iran. Militiamen in southern Yemen said late on Tuesday they would continue fighting the Iranian-supported Houthis until they drove them out of the region. Later Wednesday, 22 April, 2015, the Saudi ambassador in Washington said the Saudi military will continue to use force to stop the Houthi rebels from making advances in Yemen. His comments come despite the announcement earlier this week of an end to the Saudi-led air campaign. "When the Houthis or their allies make aggressive moves there will be a response. The decision to calm matters now rests entirely with them," the ambassador, Adel al-Jubeir, was quoted as having told reporters. He said Saudi forces, which were reported to have carried out at least 12 airstrikes in southern Yemen on Wednesday, 22 April, 2015 and were ready to stop any Houthi advance into the port of Aden. (Arutz-7/Reuters)

**OBAMA SAYS US HAS WARNED IRAN NOT TO SEND WEAPONS TO YEMEN:** President Obama said days ago the United States government had sent "very direct messages" to Iran warning it not to send weapons to Yemen that could be used to threaten shipping traffic in the region. The Pentagon said the presence of a large convoy of Iranian cargo ships in the Arabian Sea was one factor in the USA decision to deploy additional warships in the waters off war-torn Yemen. In a televised interview Tuesday, 21 April, 2015 Obama said Washington had been "very straightforward" with Tehran about the issue. "Right now their ships are in international waters. There's a reason why we keep some of our ships in the Persian Gulf region and that is to make sure that we maintain freedom of navigation," Obama said. "What we've said to them is that, 'If there are weapons delivered to factions within Yemen that could threaten navigation, that's a problem,'" he added. "And we're not sending them obscure messages. We send them very direct messages about it." (Ha'aretz)

**MEDITERRANEAN MIGRANTS COULD SURGE TO 500,000 THIS YEAR:** The number of migrants crossing the Mediterranean could surge to 500,000 this year, with deaths at sea reaching thousands if no action is taken against the people who traffic them, the head of the UN's maritime agency warned this week. Koji Sekimizu, secretary general of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), called for a multinational effort to ensure not only the safety of the migrants but also to target those who smuggle them out for profit despite the risks. "This is a very serious issue," Sekimizu said in a keynote address at Sea Asia, a major maritime conference and exhibition in Singapore. "It is time

to really think about how to stop the very dangerous and unsafe passage of migrants on board small, very unsafe boats. (Yahoo)

*Robert I. Solomon: Messianic Rabbi, [rabbisolomon@yachad.com](mailto:rabbisolomon@yachad.com)*

*Jeffery Blalock: Ministries Coordinator, [jeffery@yachad.com](mailto:jeffery@yachad.com)*

*Yachad Ministries, 950 Pine Grove Road, Roswell, Georgia 30075*

*E-mail: [info@yachad.com](mailto:info@yachad.com), Web Page: [www.yachad.com](http://www.yachad.com)*

*Phone: 770-641-3000 (ext. 6)*

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