

## **Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update May 29, 2015**

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A gold menorah with seven branches and a silver watch with a Star of David on the face.

### **NETANYAHU CONFIDANT DORE GOLD TO HEAD FOREIGN MINISTRY:**

Former Israeli ambassador to the UN Dore Gold will head up Israel's Foreign Ministry, PM Benjamin Netanyahu announced Monday, 25 May, 2015. Gold, who heads the conservative-leaning Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, is considered to be one of Netanyahu's closest confidants. He has served as an adviser to the prime minister on various issues during Netanyahu's previous three terms in office, including most recently on foreign policy matters. I am aware of the various significant challenges facing Israel in this time, and my duty to protect the country's interests, Gold said. Gold's book *The Fight for Jerusalem: Radical Islam, the West, and the Future of the Holy City*, a New York Times bestseller first published in 2007, argues that the capital needs to remain united under Israeli sovereignty based on the Jewish people's historical rights and Israel's responsibility to safeguard the holy sites in the Old City. Gold maintains that Jerusalem was always a Jewish city, and says that its holy sites would be in danger of destruction if any authority other than Israel were to rule over the Old City. (Times of Israel)

### **EUROPEAN MPs CONDEMN PA AFTER WATCHDOG REPORT:**

Five European MPs from three separate parliaments have condemned the Palestinian Authority (PA), following a special report released by the Palestinian Media Watch on Monday 25 May, 2015, proving that the PA is still paying salaries to terrorists and their families. "British taxpayers will be appalled to discover that the Palestinian Authority is handing their hard-

earned money to convicted Palestinian terrorists," a joint statement released from British MPs Guto Bebb, James Morris and Andrew Percy states. "The PA should be strongly condemned for deceiving well-intentioned donor countries into thinking that it had ended this shocking practice. The British Government must seriously reconsider its provision of aid to the PA's general budget until it ceases this abhorrent practice of financially rewarding and providing incentives to terrorism," they added. "It is important that the sowing of hatred is stopped. We still find in the official Palestinian media numerous anti-Semitic statements, the glorification of violence and hatred, and honoring terrorists, Member of Dutch Parliament, C.G. van der Staaij said. "I have read the reports carefully. It should not be possible for anti-democratic terror organizations to murder Jews or Christians in the name of their religion," Member of German Parliament, Albert Weiler, added. "We must fight this strongly. And the whole world should be doing it together." (Arutz-7/PMW)

**INDYK: ABBAS IS UNINTERESTED IN NEGOTIATIONS:** Former USA envoy Martin Indyk - special envoy during the 10 months of Israeli-Palestinian talks led by Secretary of State John Kerry in 2013-2014 - said last week that PA leader Mahmoud Abbas is uninterested in negotiations. He told a Council on Foreign Relations panel discussion in New York, "What we discovered during the 10 months of the negotiations is that the parties really didn't want to be there, and were further away at the end of the negotiations than at the beginning." Indyk said that Abbas - having not held an election since 2005 - very strongly feels a lack of legitimacy, and that he does not have a mandate from the Palestinian people for the compromises that would be involved in any negotiated deal. "So he is paralyzed by that." This being the case, the internationalization of the conflict suits Abbas just fine. Rather than talks, which would at some point necessity compromise, he prefers to isolate Israel, go to the international organizations and let them do the work. (Jerusalem Post)

**IRAQ LAUNCHES NEW OPERATION AGAINST ISIS:** Iraq on Tuesday 26 May, 2015, said it was renewing its efforts to drive ISIS extremists out of western Anbar province, Iraqi state TV reported. Without providing details, authorities said a new operation was being launched in which Iraq's troops would be supported by Shiite and Sunni paramilitary forces. ISIS captured Anbar's provincial capital Ramadi earlier this month, marking a major defeat for Iraqi forces. On Sunday, 24 May, 2015 USA Defense Secretary Ash Carter said Iraqi forces "vastly outnumbered" ISIS troops, but "showed no will to fight." Iraq and Iran pushed back on that assessment with an Iranian general saying America had "no will" to fight the extremists. Gen. Qassim Soleimani, head of Iran's elite Quds forces in Iran's Revolutionary Guard, said the USA didn't do a "d - - n thing" to stop the advance on Ramadi. (USA Today)

**ASSAD STARTS HEAVY BOMBING OF ANCIENT PALMYRA:** Syrian regime aircraft launched at least 15 airstrikes in and around the ancient city of Palmyra on Monday, 25 May, 2015, following its fall to the ISIS group. The Syrian Observatory for

Human Rights said the raids on the city were the most intense since the ISIS jihadists overran it late last week. Observatory director Rami Abdel Rahman said the strikes targeted several areas of the city, including some close to the city's famed Greco-Roman ruins, a UNESCO world heritage site. Syrian state TV on Sunday reported that hundreds of civilians and Al-Assad troops had been massacred and executed by ISIS since last Wednesday, 20 May, 2015. The capture of Palmyra has raised fears that ISIS might try to destroy the well-preserved, 2,000-year-old Roman-era city on the town's edge as they have destroyed other archaeological treasures in Syria and Iraq. With the Syrian army retreat from Palmyra, there has been talk of the Assad's regime being forced to accept the de facto division of Syria. (Arutz-7)

**FORMER UK ARMY CHIEF CALLS FOR GROUND INVASION AGAINST ISIS:** Former UK Chief of Staff Lord Dannatt called for a ground invasion against ISIS on Monday, 25 May, 2015, claiming that the cultural and security impact of the group calls for an international armed effort to expand beyond the current airstrike campaign. Dannatt warns that ISIS could spread across Europe and the Middle East, returning to the "height of Islam" and Islamic conquest in Medieval times - and further. "Although the United States might think it enjoys the security of the Atlantic between itself and where ISIS wants to expand, it cannot forget the domestic terrorist threat," he stated. "In light of this terrifying scenario, how much longer can Britain and the USA continue to show such a lack of commitment to defeating ISIS militarily?" Dannatt insists that the airstrike campaign, has failed so far to prevent ISIS spreading. "We have now reached a point when we must think the previously unthinkable and consider that British troops, acting as part of an international coalition, may be required to mount a ground campaign in Iraq and Syria." He proposes an international fighting force of about 5,000 soldiers. The force would include "a fully- fledged brigade with infantry troops, attack helicopters, artillery, mortars, reconnaissance and surveillance assets," he adds, noting that a UN Security Council resolution would be necessary to facilitate such a move. ISIS has taken over roughly half of Syria. (INN)

**ARE BELGIUM'S JEWS ANY SAFER NOW?** Belgian Jews marked the first anniversary of a shooting attack on the Brussels Jewish Museum, which left four people dead, and many are asking if the community is any safer today. Violent anti-Semitism increased by 172 percent in Belgium in 2014, with 30 incidents recorded. During the same period, overall anti-Semitic violence worldwide surged 40% with a total of 766 violent incidents. Both France and Belgium have deployed large numbers of troops to guard Jewish sites across their respective countries. However, there is a sense that such efforts can only go so far. The increased police and military presence outside Jewish institutions is absolutely necessary but far from sufficient because security ultimately doesn't solve the problem, Ira Forman, USA State Department special envoy to monitor and combat anti-Semitism, said. A third of Jews polled in 2013 by the EU's Agency for Fundamental Rights admitted to refraining from wearing religious garb or Jewish symbols out of fear, with 23% saying they avoided attending Jewish events or going to

Jewish venues. Some Belgian Jews have said they are indeed uneasy, despite the beefed up security surrounding them. Hebrew University anti-Semitism expert Prof. Robert Wistrich said shortly before he passed away last week that he believed another attack was inevitable. Troops can only stay deployed for so long and once they go we will have another violent incident, he said. The fundamental causes have not changed in any way and that will surely happen. We can say with near certainty it will happen again there. (Jerusalem Post)

**STORES ON HOTEL GROUNDS IN MOSCOW CAUGHT SELLING ANTISEMITIC ITEMS:** Legal action is being urged after a number of gift stores on the premises of international chain hotels in Moscow were caught selling anti-Semitic and Nazi-themed items in its gift shop. The Simon Wiesenthal Center's Director for International Relations, Dr. Shimon Samuels, was the one who spotted the shocking items while in Moscow for a conference celebrating the end of the Second World War. A letter of protest notes that the items are targeted to tourists and some even cost 27,000 rubles (\$590 or NIS 2,317). One of the items he saw for sale was a Russian nesting "matryoshka" doll, painted with anti-Semitic stereotypes. The shock continued as he and colleagues also saw a chess set featuring Nazi Wehrmacht army figurines led by an Adolph Hitler figurine pitted against Red Army figurines led by a Joseph Stalin figurine. (Arutz-7)

**HOLOCAUST DRAMA 'SON OF SAUL' NAMED RUNNER UP AT CANNES:** The Holocaust drama Son of Saul received the Grand Prix award at the Cannes Film Festival. The film, which centers on the Jewish prisoners who were forced to help the Nazis run the concentration camps, took the second-place Grand Prix award behind French filmmaker Jacques Audiard's Dheepan, a drama about a group of Sri Lankan refugees in Paris. The awards were presented on Sunday 24 May, 2015. Sony Pictures Classics purchased the USA distribution rights for Son of Saul during the festival. No official release date has been announced. It is the first film for Hungarian director Laszlo Nemes, who said in accepting the prize: This continent is still haunted by this subject." (JTA)

**THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY REJECTED COMPROMISE** terms that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu outlined for restarting peace talks with Israel, The Times of Israel reported today. An earlier report in the Times characterized Netanyahu's terms for renewed negotiations with the Palestinians, which would involve territorial concessions and the delineation of boundaries between Israel and a Palestinian state, as "a marked departure from his long-held stance." Netanyahu made his proposal for the renewed peace talks in a meeting with European Union High Representative Frederica Mogherini last week. Citing the Israeli daily Haaretz, the Times reported that "Mogherini was 'very satisfied' with her meeting with Netanyahu and defined it a success." American-sponsored peace talks ended last year when Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas refused to accept a framework agreement presented by the United

States, signed fifteen international agreements in an effort to achieve statehood outside of bilateral negotiations (the premise of the peace process since at least 1993), and then announced a unity government with the terrorist group Hamas, which rejects Israel's right to exist.

**ISRAELIS CELEBRATE SHAVUOT WITH A LOT OF WATER:** As temperatures continue to rise, Israelis took advantage of the Shavuot holiday to cool off in rivers and streams, with some 100,000 visitors arriving at Israel's national parks and nature reserves on Sunday, 24 May, 2015. A total of 200,000 visitors went out to celebrate the holiday in nature over the weekend. Shavuot, a holiday celebrating the Israelites receiving the Torah from God at Mount Sinai, is strongly connected to water, presumably because the Torah is often likened to water. In many Israeli cities, children gathered for impromptu water-gun and water-balloon wars in the streets, public squares and parks. Another way to celebrate is taking a water hike along Israel's rivers. Many visitors over the weekend headed out to the Hermon Stream (Banias), Nahal Ayun, Tel Dan, and Majrase nature reserves, as well as the beaches of Palmachim, Beit Yanai and Ashkelon. Some 120,000 spent the long weekend on the shores of the Kinneret and resorts along the banks of the lake were at full capacity. (Ynet)

**OBAMA SIGNS LAW GIVING CONGRESS POWER TO REVIEW IRAN DEAL:** President Barack Obama on Friday 23 May, 2015 signed the legislation that would give Congress the power to review and potentially reject a nuclear deal with Iran. The legislation would bar Obama from waiving congressional sanctions for at least 30 days while lawmakers examine any final deal. Congress would have to pass a resolution of disapproval to reject an agreement, an action Obama likely would veto. Obama originally threatened to veto the bill, but later agreed to sign it. Just last week, the House of Representatives voted in favor of the measure by an overwhelming majority of 400-25. The House approval came a week after the Senate voted 98-1 to approve the legislation. Sen. Bob Corker, the Tennessee Republican who chairs the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and helped write the legislation, said the Obama administration must make sure it addresses concerns raised by Congress. "Our negotiators should take advantage of the added leverage to force further concessions from the Iranians so that any agreement reached is verifiable, enforceable and can assure the American people Iran will not be able to develop a nuclear weapon," he said. (Arutz-7)

**IRAN: INSPECTING OUR MILITARY SITES IS LIKE ESPIONAGE:** Iran on Friday 23 May, 2015 once again unequivocally rejected the West's call to inspect its military sites as part of a nuclear deal. The commander of the Revolutionary Guards Aerospace Force, Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh said that inspecting Iran's military sites is tantamount to espionage and that Iran's response to espionage is hot bullets. He further said that what he termed the ploys used by the White House and its allies to infiltrate into Iran have become worn out. Inspections of nuclear sites has been one of the points of contention between Iran and the six world powers in working out a

nuclear deal, which they are required to do by a June 30, 2015 deadline. Iran has categorically denied reports that it would allow inspectors as part of a final agreement. However, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) chief Yukiya Amano insisted that a nuclear agreement would give his experts the right to push for access to Iranian military sites. Meanwhile, France's foreign minister Laurent Fabius said days ago that Iran was seeking 24 days between the reporting of a suspected Iranian violation of the deal's terms and the time when IAEA inspectors would be allowed to visit the relevant nuclear site. Fabius cautioned that "a lot of things can disappear" in 24 days and added that another outstanding question is how international sanctions against Iran might be lifted. (Arutz-7)

**ISIS EXPANDS ITS "STATE":** Almost a year after the ISIS terrorist organizations shock capture of Mosul, Iraq's second city, the black flags of the jihadis have been raised over Ramadi, the capital of Anbar province to the west of Baghdad, seat of Iraq's increasingly theoretical central government. Nobody talks of Mosul or recapturing it from ISIS. It is a forgotten city. Now it is all about the fall of Ramadi, the neighboring ancient Syrian city of Palmyra in central Syria and beyond. Although many leaders dismissed ISIS as vainglorious when it declared its cross-border caliphate in eastern Syria and western Iraq last summer, in its cohesion and purpose it is now seen by some - particularly Iraq's minority Sunnis - as more of a state than the Iraqi government it is fighting. "Simply put, ISIS is, or is on the verge of becoming, what it claims to be: a state," wrote David Kilcullen who was a key player in the USA 2007-08 Iraq troop surge' and a close observer of the rise of ISIS. He argues that unless Washington and its allies urgently change their counter-terrorism strategy the threat will only get worse. "ISIS fights like a state. It fields more than 25,000 fighters, including a hard core of ex-Baathist professionals and Qaida veterans. It has a hierarchical unit organization and rank structure, populated by former regular officers of Saddam Hussein's military," added Kilcullen. It controls territory that includes major cities and covers a third each of Iraq and Syria. It has its own military and security force, an administration that runs daily life - schools, government offices, utilities, hospitals, taxation and a judiciary system that follows sharia law. Its resources are vast, including oilfields, refineries and agricultural land. It operates more like a regular army with a recruiting network, training camps and a propaganda machine. (J. Post)

**NASHRALLAH: THE USA CAN'T PROTECT ANYONE IN SYRIA, IRAQ OR LEBANON FROM ISIS:** Terrorist group Hezbollah's leader, Hassan Nasrallah, warned Sunday 24 May 2015 that the United State cannot protect anyone in Syria, Iraq or Lebanon from the radical Islamic ISIS group. News sources cited the leader of the Shi'ite Lebanese terrorist organization as calling on his country's population and that of the region to confront the threat posed by the group that seeks to reestablish a medieval caliphate in the Middle East. Nasrallah - a staunch opponent of ISIS - expressed his strident warning against the group that has taken control of swaths of land in Lebanon's

neighboring Syria and Iraq, saying silence over the threat would not ensure safety. (Jerusalem Post)

**NASHRALLAH: HEZBOLLAH IN WORST STATE SINCE 1982 ONSLAUGHT BY ISRAEL:** Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah said Hezbollah is in a dire state - its worst since the onslaught of the 1982 First Lebanon War with Israel- and is on the brink of mobilizing its troops for reinforcement in a battle for survival, Arab media sources reported Saturday, 23 May, 2015. Nasrallah said his party is in the midst of fighting an existential battle against ISIS and other extremist groups in Syria and on Lebanon's border. Also challenging Hezbollah's regime are Sunni Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar, which Nasrallah said have joined forces against Lebanon's Shi'ite group. He compared Hezbollah's current dire state to its condition in 1982, following Israel's occupation of southern Lebanon. Sheik Naim Qassem, deputy leader of the Shi'ite group, said the Middle East is at risk of partition and that he sees no end to the war in Syria. "Solutions for Syria are suspended. There is no political solution in the foreseeable period, and it is left to attrition, to the battlefield, and to wait for other developments in the region, particularly Iraq," he said. Nashralla said that now is the time for mobilization. He called on everyone "who enjoys a reputation of integrity" to contribute to that cause. (J. Post)

**GAZA EVACUATION PROGRAM LAUNCHED AHEAD OF FUTURE WARS:** The IDF and local Regional Councils are already preparing residents of the Gaza Belt area for another war, and have readied an evacuation plan following the mass exodus from the area during last summer's Operation Protective Edge, according to a weekend report. The Gaza Belt was hit hardest by Hamas rocket and mortar fire, sparking thousands to flee their homes. At the height of the war, up to 80% of Gaza Belt community families had fled inland due to the ongoing barrage, sparking concerns over the region's future. To solve this, the IDF has prepared an evacuation plan, code-named as "Safe Distance." The plan covers all communities within 4.3 miles of the Gaza border. It includes evacuating communities to areas agreed upon in advance, which means that each locality would know where to go and who will be hosting them. Preparatory communication between communities will take place after the distribution of evacuation maps, which are currently underway. The IDF's upper military echelon will be tasked with announcing the implementation of "Safe Distance" in the event of an emergency. The program will also provide the security system and the cabinet stamina for a longer conflict without casualties on the home front. (Arutz-7)

**POLISH REGULATION TO COMPENSATE 20,000 HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS:** New Polish regulations entitle Holocaust survivors born in that country to monthly pension payments of \$130, restitution officials said. The regulations that went into effect last month are expected to benefit nearly 20,000 survivors worldwide who were not eligible for compensation. Greg Schneider, executive vice president of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims against Germany, said that his office is sending out 12,500 applications to those believed eligible worldwide. The forms have been translated into

English. The government of Israel is expected to send applications to another 7,000 of its citizens. The pension program offers the monthly payments to both Jews and non-Jews who were detained by the Nazis in ghettos and prisons, and to others considered veterans or victims of oppression. Julius Berman, president of the Claims Conference said, the payments can make a real difference helping elderly survivors meet their daily needs and provides them a long-delayed measure of justice. (J. Post)

**AT 65, HASSIDIC WOMAN BECOMES OLDEST IN ISRAEL TO GIVE BIRTH:** Haya Shahar, a 65-year-old Hassidic woman from Bnei Brak who was unable to have a baby during her 46-year marriage to 67-year-old Shmuel, gave birth this week to a healthy baby boy by cesarean section at a medical center in Kfar Saba. It made her the oldest woman in Israel to give birth not far behind the world record holder, Spain's Mariadel Carmen Bousada de Lara, who was a few days shy of 67 when she gave birth to twins. The Shahars, who were extremely grateful to hospital doctors and nurses, credited their rabbi's blessing three years ago for the success of the pregnancy. Her message to Israel after the birth was "Never give up." (Jerusalem Post)

**WHITE HOUSE STEPS UP WARNINGS ABOUT TERRORISM ON USA SOIL:** Alarmed about the growing threat from ISIS, the Obama administration has dramatically stepped up warnings of potential terrorist attacks on American soil. USA authorities also have raised defenses at military bases; put local police forces on alert and increased surveillance at the nation's airports, railroads, shopping malls, energy plants and other potential targets. Washington officials estimate the Sunni Muslim terrorist group has drawn 22,000 foreign fighters to Syria and Iraq, including about 3,700 from Western nations. About 180 Americans have gone, or tried to go. James Comey, the FBI director, warned this month that "hundreds, maybe thousands" of Americans are seeing recruitment pitches from ISIS on social media. "It's like the devil sitting on their shoulders saying, 'Kill, kill, kill,'" Comey said. ISIS extremists seized the ancient Syrian town of Palmyra on Wednesday 20 May, 2015 after government defense lines there collapsed. Palmyra is famous for its 2,000-year-old Roman-era colonnades. (LA Times)

**PM NETANYAHU: TERRORIST WILL SOON BECOMING TO A THEATER NEAR TO YOU:** Israel has been endlessly criticized for its defensive measures against Islamic terrorist groups that have built tunnels under its borders, killed and maimed innocent civilians, and repeatedly shelled or bombarded its border communities with projectiles. Israeli PM Netanyahu warned months ago that the same challenges he and other Israeli leaders faced in combating terrorism, would soon challenge the USA and other Western nations, unless strong stands were taken against those who revel in Islamic violence. He warned in a media interview 8 August 2014 that the threat from Islamic terrorists is real, and will spread to other countries if the terrorists are not stopped. "This is a danger I've been pointing to, it's not a spin, it's not a whim, it is a clinical diagnosis of a pathological movement that is sweeping our area but will soon come to a theater near you and it has to be stopped now." (JNN)

**UNESCO: PALMYRA DESTRUCTION ENORMOUS LOSS TO HUMANITY':**

The destruction of the UNESCO World Heritage site of Palmyra would be an "enormous loss to humanity," the head of the organization warned Thursday, 21 May, 2015 after ISIS seized the ancient Syrian city. "Palmyra is an extraordinary World Heritage site in the desert and any destruction to Palmyra would not be just a war crime but an enormous loss to humanity. At the end of the day, it's the birthplace of human civilization. It belongs to the whole of humanity and I think everyone today should be worried about what is happening," said Irina Bokova, the UNESCO chief. Earlier Thursday, ISIS terrorists seized full control of the city, putting the world heritage site and its priceless artifacts at risk of destruction. ISIS, notorious for demolishing archaeological treasures since declaring a "caliphate" last year straddling Iraq and Syria, fought its way into Palmyra on foot after breaking through in the city's north. Bokova urged the international community, including the UN Security Council and religious leaders, to launch an appeal to stop the violence. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said ISIS now controlled half of all territory in war-torn Syria. (Arutz-7)

**CHRISTIANS IN THE MIDDLE EAST RANK HIGH ON PEOPLES UNDER THREAT:**

Countries in the Middle East have come to the forefront in an annual list of places where vulnerable minorities are most at risk of genocide, political killing and systematic repression, a human rights group said Wednesday 20 May, 2015. Syria tops the 2015 Peoples under Threat list, compiled by Minority Rights Group International (MRG). The civil conflict there, now in its fifth year, has killed more than 220,000 people and displaced millions. MRG said Christians and Kurds among those particularly threatened. "Extreme sectarianism has now infected much of the country," it said in a report released with the list. "Only in the Kurdish-held regions of the north has there been a serious attempt at establishing an inclusive democracy." Iraq, Libya, Yemen, Egypt, Lebanon and Afghanistan, countries where attacks attributed to the Sunni terrorist group ISIS have taken place in recent months, all rank high on the list. (J. Post)

**USA PRESSING ISRAEL TO RELINQUISH ITS NUKES:**

Assistant USA Secretary of State for International Security and Nonproliferation, Thomas Countryman, recently visited Israel and held talks with senior Foreign Ministry officials, about the possibility of making the Middle East nuclear-free. Washington seeks to advance the idea after reaching agreement with Russia about the matter. The State Department confirmed Countryman's visit and sources in the USA Administration said that Israeli agreement to the idea would be a catalyst for bringing additional countries into discussions on the matter. The Americans have been attempting to convene an international conference on the subject for some time, without success. Secretary of State John Kerry spoke about the idea with pessimism, and said it was "a very tough challenge. The Foreign Ministry did not want to respond to the report about Countryman's visit and reporters that the subject is a sensitive one, we will not talk about it." (Arutz-7)

**IRAN: 80,000 MISSILES POINTED AT TEL AVIV:** According to a top Iranian advisor, Tehran has tens of thousands of missiles pointed at Israel, and will not hesitate to use them. Yahya Rahim Zafabi, a top advisor to Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, said the tens of thousands of missiles will sow the seeds of destruction in Israel if they are to be fired. The Zionists and the Americans know what the powers of Iran and Hezbollah are, he added. They know that over 80,000 missiles are pointed at Tel Aviv and Haifa. Zafabi was apparently responding to remarks made this week by Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon, who said Israel will not allow for the opening of another war front against Israel. We will act strongly against those who act against us or plans to act against us. We will reach their bases, damage them, and destroy their weapons." Ya'alon emphasized that Iran is directly involved in all conflicts in the Middle East. Iran's bloody regime spreads terror and destruction throughout the entire area, and it expresses loudly its desire to destroy Israel. Unfortunately, the West is ready to make a deal with Iran on its nuclear program, which will shield Tehran from criticism." (Arutz-7)

**CAMPUSES ARE FLOODED WITH BOYCOTT; DIVESTMENT AND SANCTIONS (BDS)** Today, nearly every American campus is awash in double standards, efforts to delegitimize the Jewish state and rhetoric demonizing Israel. Campuses are flooded with Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) resolutions, which this year increased in both reach and intensity. Considering the absence of comparable calls to boycott the world's most egregious human rights violators, there is clearly a double standard at work in such campaigns. The danger of movements like BDS is not in the economic damage they could do to Israel; rather, it is in their ability to intimidate anyone who is ready to show sympathy to the Jewish state, an interest in traveling to it, or even a readiness to acknowledge his or her own Jewishness. Studies have shown that even Jews who are sympathetic toward Israel and feel positively about their own Jewishness choose to be silent in order not to defy mainstream opinion or damage their career. Israel's sympathizers have to shift gears, from playing defense to launching a confident offense. They have to take back the banner of human rights and liberalism, and not permit this rhetoric to be misused by those who are defending some of the world's most reactionary forces. The writer, Natan Sharansky, is a former prisoner of Zion in the USSR, a former Israeli cabinet minister, and currently Chairman of the Jewish Agency. (Jerusalem Post)

*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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