

# ***Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update June 20, 2019*** ***(17<sup>th</sup> Savin, 5779)***

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## ***For the Yachad Report Newsletter For June 2019***

**IRAN TO FURTHER SCALE BACK ITS COMPLIANCE WITH NUCLEAR DEAL:** Iran will announce moves this week to scale back compliance with the 2015 nuclear deal from which the United States withdrew last year, Reuters reported on Sunday 17 June 2019. “Iran’s Atomic Energy Organization tomorrow at the Arak heavy water site will announce preparatory steps that have been taken to further decrease Tehran’s commitments under the deal,” an Iranian news agency reported. The organization will announce its intention to increase stocks of enriched uranium and production of heavy water at Arak. Last month, an Iranian official said that the Islamic Republic has quadrupled its enrichment rate of low-enriched uranium and that it no longer accepts the restriction on uranium enrichment as it was written in the 2015 agreement.

**ISRAEL JOINS USA IN ACCUSING IRAN OF OIL TANKERS ATTACK:** After the USA accused Iran of being behind the attack on the oil tanker in the Strait of Hormuz on Thur. 13 June 2019 senior Israeli officials told Israel’s Channel 13 that they too believe that the Iranian Revolutionary Guards were the ones who carried out the attack on the oil tankers in the Persian Gulf. Meanwhile, the Iranian Foreign Ministry summoned the British ambassador after the British government accused Iran of the attacks on oil tankers in the Gulf of Oman. During a meeting with a senior Iranian Foreign Ministry official, Iran sharply criticized Britain's "unacceptable" position on the Gulf's tanker bombings. Iran was likely behind a coordinated attack on two tankers in the Gulf of Oman early Thur. morning 13 June 2019, the United States said, as “limpet mines” were spotted on one of the wrecked ships. USA Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said the attack on the two oil tankers was one in a list of Iranian and Iranian-backed assaults over the last month. It was a “clear threat to peace, security, and freedom of navigation,” he said. The attack comes a month after four tankers were sabotaged off the United Arab Emirates in May 2019 and will raise USA-Iran tensions to their worst point in years.

**SAUDI CROWN PRINCE BLAME IRAN FOR ATTACKS ON OIL TANKERS:** Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman accused Iran of being behind the attacks on oil tankers in a vital Gulf shipping channel. He added that the kingdom "won't hesitate" to tackle any threats, according to a media interview published on Sunday 16 June 2019. "We do not want a war in the region, but we won't hesitate to deal with any threat to our people, our sovereignty, our territorial integrity, and our vital interests." Prince Mohammed further said, "The Iranian regime did not respect the presence of the Japanese prime minister as a guest in Tehran and responded to his diplomatic efforts by attacking two tankers, one of which was Japanese," he charged. Thursday's assault on the Japanese-owned Kokuka Courageous that was carrying highly flammable methanol when it was rocked by explosions and the Norwegian-operated Front Altair came around the time Japanese PM Shinzo Abe was meeting with Iranian leaders in Tehran. USA President Donald Trump has said the twin attacks had Iran "written all over it", rejecting Tehran's vehement denial. USA Secretary of State Mike Pompeo similarly accused Iran of being behind the attacks in the Gulf of Oman. Saudi Arabia has repeatedly called on Iran to stop its "meddling" in the affairs of the kingdom's neighbors.

**JEWISH-ARAB RELATIONS IN THE JORDAN VALLEY:** David Elhaiini heads the Jordan Valley Regional Council, comprised of 21 Jewish communities, whose growth rate is an annual 6%, among the highest in the country. Elhaiini reports excellent relations between the Jewish communities and their Arab neighbors. "The only source of income for the Arab population in the Jordan Valley is the Jewish settlements," he explains. "We employ over 6,000 each day, and in the peak periods - June, July, and September - the number reaches as much as 12,000." Salaries paid by Jewish industries are three times higher than those from other local sources. "We live together. When you have a worker who has worked together with you for years, you have a relationship. You become his friend. They come to our weddings, and we attend theirs. When I worked in agriculture, my wife would tell me that I spend more time with Yusuf, my field manager, than I do with her. We would be together from 5 a.m. until 4 p.m. When you work together, sit together and eat together, you create relationships."

He points out that the Jewish farmers share their agricultural expertise with their Palestinian neighbors. "We teach them the best ways of growing dates. They ask questions and work with us. Our instructors visit them unofficially because the PA does not want any connection." Elhaiini says that the quality of life for Palestinians in the Jordan Valley has improved dramatically. "You can see it in the number of their children who attend university. Their profits and benefits have increased. We want to transform these good relations into more concrete areas, but the Palestinian Authority is preventing us from doing anything, and their BDS supporters don't understand that they work to prevent peaceful relations."

**TECHNION STUDENTS HAVE CREATED OVER 2,000 COMPANIES:** Entrepreneurship fever has made the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology, Israel's oldest university founded in 1912 in Haifa, one of the main fuses for the country's roaring tech sector. "Many of our graduates are running the economy," said university president Peretz Lavie, who is stepping down in Oct. 2019 after 12 years. Technion students have created over 2,000 companies. The record for a single student is 21. In a country known as a start-up nation, failure isn't the end, Lavie says. "Israelis don't stop asking questions. In some countries, if you fail, that's the end of it. I know people here who succeeded in their 10th attempt. In Japan, there is the same level of ambition as here but it's the failures that they cannot tolerate. In Brazil, if you have a failed start-up, you can't apply for more grants."

**GAZA FACTIONS MAKE INCENDIARY BALLOON SENT TO ISRAEL MORE LETHAL:** The terror groups in Gaza appear to have found a new method of launching incendiary balloons in order to ignite as many fires as possible on Israeli territory, thereby maximizing the damage. The latest upgrade in what has become an entire arsenal of terror tools for the Palestinian factions in Gaza is to soak a slow-burning fuse in explosive liquids and attach it to an incendiary balloon. The balloon drips fireballs as it flies, creating several ignition points from just one device. The new method has been discovered by the Israeli military after no

remnants of actual balloons had been recovered at several ignition zones in the Gaza border region. For instance, on Tue.11 June 2019 there were three fires in three different locations (relatively close to each other) in Kissufim Forest in the Eshkol Regional Council, but the firefighters found no traces of physical balloons in the affected area. "The Palestinians see this upgrade as a success story. This should not be taken lightly, and although it sounds non-threatening, it is certainly dangerous and can be lethal," said one of the security coordinators of the communities bordering the Strip. Last week, the IDF took the rare step of completely closing the Gaza Strip's offshore waters to Palestinian fishermen until further notice in response to incendiaries launched into Israel in recent days. Soon afterward, Palestinian terrorists fired a rocket into southern Israel from Gaza that was intercepted by the Iron Dome aerial defense system, the Israeli military said. *Everything; all resources, goals, hopes, educational tools, and endeavors of the ruling Gaza Strip terrorist organization are always and ever focused on the "destruction of Israel." Hamas wastes hundreds of millions of financial aid dollars, donated by world governments, on unending incitement, attacks, inventing new destructive devices, and hopeless wars against the Jewish state. When Israel finally needs to defend its citizens against ongoing rocket fire and terrorist attacks, Hamas then cries to the world for funds to rebuild structures and areas shattered - by whom they call the "oppressor"- Israel. Such funds, instead of being used for construction, are then put into the terrorist coffers once again to start reequipping the arsenals for the next round against Israel. Albert Einstein is broadly credited with exclaiming, "The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, but expecting different results".*

**FROM GAZA TO IRAQ: FIRE IS A NEW WEAPON OF ISIS, HAMAS AND OTHERS:** In 2018 Hamas hit upon a new way to terrorize Israel. Its activists and supporters began attaching incendiary devices to balloons and floating them over the border from Gaza. In Iraq ISIS has also been burning fields across the center and north of the country to terrorize Iraqi farmers and to target various areas. More than 2,000 fires have been set in southern Israel and 8,700 acres burned between May 2018 and May 2019, according to the Meir Amit Intelligence and Information Center. The use of balloons to transport burning material over the border has increased according to the Meir Amit report. It is obviously an innovative strategy that Hamas set upon when it realized that its Great Return March mass protests and other activities, such as tunneling, had been thwarted. The relationship between ISIS using burning fields to terrorize people and Hamas using balloons is not clear, but in the past extremist groups have borrowed tactics from Hamas to use across the region and the world. For instance, suicide bombings, vehicular attacks, mass stabbings, and other means of assault, became common methods to attack Israel before they became as common abroad.

Thousands of acres have been burned in Iraq and Syria in the last months as ISIS began using fire as a weapon. The overall amount of land torched in Iraq is thought to be more than 8,000 acres. A man who goes by the Twitter name Tom Cat and follows the Iraqi security forces closely wrote that the fires have destroyed around 1.6% of Iraq's wheat and barley fields. Farmers are losing their livelihoods. So far Iraq has not found a way to confront the fires. The country is still recovering from ISIS and the destruction its war caused from 2014 to 2018. The ISIS goal is to make it inhospitable for rural people to live normally and to keep people terrified. The locals who wondered if ISIS would return and who might have wavered in their support of the central government are being sent a message that ISIS is coming back. For minorities, the message is also that their former villages are not safe to return to, that lurking in the night the arm of ISIS can still reach out.

**ISRAEL HONORS TRUMP WITH INAUGURATION OF 'TRUMP HEIGHTS':** The USA mission to Israel took part in a special naming ceremony in the Golan Heights on Sunday afternoon, 16 June 2019, marking the formal naming of a new town in the Golan after President Donald Trump. A sign at the entrance of the future town was unveiled during the ceremony for the yet-to-be-built community of Ramat Trump, or Trump Heights. The Israeli cabinet met Sunday 16 June 2019 in the Golan town of Kela Alon, near the site of the new community, to formally approve the establishment of Ramat Trump. USA Ambassador to Israel David Friedman joined Israeli PM Netanyahu and members of his cabinet at the ceremony. "This is a historic day," Netanyahu said. "We are about to approve construction of a new town in the Golan, something that

hasn't happened in quite a long time, and we'll be honoring a great friend of Israel, President Donald Trump, who recently recognized Israeli sovereignty over the Golan, the first foreign leader to do so." Following Netanyahu's comments at the special cabinet meeting in the Golan, Ambassador Friedman thanked the prime minister for the decision to name a new town after the American president, calling it an "extraordinary gesture that you and the State of Israel are making to the President of The United States."

**USA BLAMES IRAN FOR ATTACK ON OIL TANKERS:** Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Thur. 13 June 2019 blamed Iran for a "blatant assault" on two oil tankers near the Strait of Hormuz and said the USA would defend itself and its allies against Iranian aggression in the region. A coordinated attack damaged the hull of a Japanese-owned tanker and struck a Norwegian-owned vessel, which caught fire. The incidents were similar to acts of sabotage against tankers near the UAE port of Fujairah last month. Pompeo said that the USA assessment of Iranian involvement is based on intelligence, the type of weapons used and the level of expertise needed to carry out the attack. He added that no Iranian-backed terrorist group in the region has the resources or proficiency to pull off such a sophisticated operation. Senior USA officials showed photographs of one damaged tanker with what the Navy identified as a magnetic mine attached to its hull. The unexploded weapon was probably applied by hand from an Iranian fast boat; one official said and is thought to be the same kind of weapon used to blow a hole elsewhere in the same tanker. The USA Central Command released a video showing an Iranian IRGC patrol boat approaching the tanker. The patrol boat was observed and recorded removing the unexploded limpet mine.

**CONGRESS WANTS TO PROTECT USA FORCES USING ISRAELI DEFENSE SYSTEMS:** The House of Representatives introduced a bill last week that would have the Army purchase two Iron Dome missile defense batteries from Israel. The measure has bipartisan support. The USA Israel Indirect Fire Protection Act of 2019 was sponsored by Rep. Mikie Sherrill, a Jewish New Jersey Democrat, and co-sponsored by Joe Wilson, a South Carolina Republican. "Iron Dome is a proven defense system that will provide increased protection for our troops in the field," Sherrill said in a statement. "Access to this technology addresses critical gaps in our current capabilities." Since it was deployed in 2011, Iron Dome has intercepted over 2,000 rockets fired at Israel from Gaza.

**THOUSANDS OF ARABS RIOT ALONG GAZA BORDER:** Some 6,500 Palestinian Arabs demonstrated on Friday 14 June 2019 near the Gaza border fence and confronted IDF soldiers. According to the Hamas-run "health ministry" in Gaza, 49 Arabs were injured by IDF gunfire during the riots. Meanwhile, on the same day, several fires broke out as a result of incendiary balloons fired from Gaza toward southern Israel. The incidents come in the wake of the rocket fire from Gaza toward Sderot the previous evening and the subsequent IDF air strike on Hamas targets in the Gaza Strip. Following the tension in the Gaza envelope, the IDF will reinforce the Iron Dome system in the south.

**IDF NORTHERN COMMANDER: 'LEBANON WILL PAY HEAVY PRICE IN THE NEXT CAMPAIGN':** IDF Northern Commander Major General Amir Baram has responded to threats made recently by Hezbollah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah. "We saw Nasrallah's fury and shrieking in his recent speech," Baram said at a ceremony marking the 13th anniversary of the Second Lebanon War. "Hezbollah's loyalty was and remains to the supreme leader in Iran, not to the citizens of Lebanon," Baram said. "As a direct result, the Lebanese state is liable to pay a heavy price for its cooperation with Shiite terror in the next campaign." Baram added, "Hezbollah continues to consolidate power in southern Lebanon, contrary to a UN resolution, and is building an infrastructure of terror and rockets in the villages right here opposite, and intends to try to threaten us with offensive forces as well. Hezbollah must understand - we will not allow it to realize its plans and destructive ambitions and those of its patrons in Iran. We will continue to act to thwart his efforts to threaten our security covertly and overtly as required, and if war is imposed upon us, we will exact a heavy price from this organization and those who give it backing, wherever necessary."

**JEWXIT: COULD 300,000 JEWS FLEE THE UK?** “My kids are the only Jewish kids in their school and I fear for them more than myself. My husband and I are keeping a very close eye on the political situation and we are prepared to move to another country should it become necessary.” These are not the words of a 1930’s European Jew, but the present day sentiments of a London suburb mother. She is not alone. A 2018 Jewish Chronicle survey has revealed that 1 in 3 British Jews have considered leaving the UK due to rising anti-Semitism, whilst the ominous term ‘Jewxit’ has recently sprouted, referring to a doomsday scenario where the entire 300,000-strong Jewish community flees the UK following a Corbyn win. Jerusalem-based media sources have heard from British Jews whose concerns over Corbyn’s headline-grabbing anti-Semitism are so grave, that they have considered emigrating should the party leader come to power as prime minister. The anxiety level within Jewish circles is such that several months back, former chairman of the Conservative party Andrew Feldman had penned a sternly worded letter to Jeremy Corbyn saying, “I want you to know that many Jewish people in the United Kingdom are seriously contemplating their future here in the event of you becoming prime minister. This is because they can see that Labour, a party with a proud tradition of tolerance and inclusiveness, is now a hotbed of feelings against Israel and therefore the Jewish people. Quietly, discreetly and extremely reluctantly they are making their contingency plans, and this would be a tragedy.”

This sentiment is echoed by Jonathan for whom the choice is clear. “I have been worrying over Corbyn’s anti-Semitism for quite some time. Even with two children currently at school, my wife and I are confident that should Corbyn win, we are selling the house and moving to Israel.” Jonathan’s angst is two-fold: “There is the financial aspect of course,” he explained, “as we expect the economy to decline under Corbyn, and for our house to instantly lose a tenth of its value. That is just us, so I dread to imagine the impact on the UK economy if all 300,000 Jews left. This is not as far fetched a scenario as some might think. Thousands of French Jews have uprooted themselves over the past few years due to anti-Semitism, and settled in Israel,” he explained, “so I can certainly see a wave of UK Jews fleeing the country in response to a Corbyn win. Such an exit would cause great damage to the UK’s economy. We are talking billions of Pounds worth as people sell their property and take their money elsewhere. Add to that the brain drain effect and you get a sense of the huge potential loss.”

**MOLDOVA’S FILIP GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES TRANSFER OF EMBASSY TO JERUSALEM:** The Moldovan Filip Government last week approved the transfer of the Moldovan embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Moreover, the Cabinet of Ministers adopted a decision that approves the agreement on the sale of the land for the construction of the headquarters of the USA Embassy in Moldova. “We are in a situation in which we have to approve these decisions in an urgent manner, given the political instability and uncertainty in the country, as one of the political parties has been always blocking these two important decisions while trying to take over the power illegally”, mentioned PM Pavel Filip. Both decisions have been assumed by the Government of the Republic of Moldova, which ensured that these are not blocked for a long term due to the political crisis in the country. Two rival Moldovan governments days ago held simultaneous cabinet meetings and accused each other of trying to usurp power, deepening a crisis brought on by an inconclusive parliamentary election in Feb. 2019. The leaders of the pro-European Union ACUM bloc and the Russian-backed Socialist Party subsequently agreed to form a government aimed at fighting corruption and keeping a party run by tycoon Vladimir Plahotniuc. But Plahotniuc's Democratic Party refused to recognize the new government and insisted that Pavel Filip, the prime minister who led the government until the election, was still in charge. The crisis threatens more instability in one of Europe's smallest and poorest countries, where the West and Russia vie for influence.

**NATIONAL LIBRARY ANNUAL BOOK REPORT: 35% RISE IN ISRAELI BOOK PUBLICATION:** According to the National Library of Israel's Annual Book Report. 8,571 books were published in 2018, about 2,000 more than were published in 2008 (when 6,326 books were published) and 879 more books than in 2017. The report also showed that double the number of books relating to children with disabilities and special needs were published compared to the last decade. A steady rise was recorded in the

number of reference books published in 2018, including cookbooks, hiking guides and fitness guides. Over 400 biographies were published in 2018, of which 48 books were about Holocaust survivors and were written by second or third generation family members. This is about 20% more biographies than were published in 2017 when 320 biographies were published. 22 languages were present in Israeli publications in 2018. The majority of translated books published in Israel were originally published in English, followed by German (4.1%), French (4%), Arabic (1.1%) and Swedish (1%). The other 27.2% of translated publications represented 30 different languages, mostly European. 1,280 of the publications in 2018 were prose and poetry.

**NEW ISRAELI TECHNOLOGY FREEZES CANCER CELLS:** An Israeli company has developed a revolutionary minimally invasive technique to freeze cancerous tumors that only requires a local anesthetic. It is already used to treat breast cancer. A solution at a temperature of -274 degrees Fahrenheit is injected into the cancerous tumor to freeze it, rendering it inactive and enabling the body to dispense with it as it does with other dead cells naturally within a few weeks. Most patients can be treated within one hour, allowing them to go home the same day or the following day.

**ISRAELI STARTUP IS WORKING TO DEVELOP A FLYING ELECTRIC, AUTONOMOUS CAR:** An article published by the Israeli business site Calcalist reports that Netanya-based NFT Inc. is working to develop a flying electric, autonomous car. Owner Guy Kaplinsky said the vehicle, which he is calling Alaska (Japanese for flying bird) will be equipped with 14 propellers and collapsible wings. The car will be around 6.5-feet wide and 39-feet wide with its wings fully extended. It could hold up to three people and travel as far as 342 miles at up to 149 miles per hour. And the cost? Between \$200,000 and \$300,000. Kaplinsky told Calcalist that NFT should be ready to begin testing flights by next year. Kaplinsky believes autonomous flying cars will solve city road congestion.

**ISRAEL FORMS PARTNERSHIP WITH ARAB NATIONS TO PROTECT RED SEA CORALS:** Israel will partner with neighboring Red Sea countries, including Saudi Arabia and Sudan, to establish a research center for the study, monitoring, and protection of coral reef ecosystems. The Red Sea Transnational Research Center in the Swiss city of Bern will include partners from Israel, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, Eritrea, Sudan, Yemen, and Djibouti. Facilitating partnerships between stakeholders without diplomatic relations, the center will be led by the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne (EPFL). Coral reefs, a critically important home to millions of marine species, are threatened and dying as a result of global climate change and more local factors, including pollution, over-fishing, and physical destruction. Recent studies have shown that coral reefs in the Red Sea are extremely resistant to stress induced by global warming and rising seawater temperatures. The corals are still threatened, however, by fish-farming, agricultural run-off, industrial and urban waste discharge, and future seawater desalination activities. According to the researchers, however, these threats can best be overcome through knowledge-sharing and regional coordination through the establishment of the Red Sea Transnational Research Center. The center will bring together scientists from each country from a wide range of disciplines, including oceanography, biology, genetics, ecology, geology, nature conservancy, and civil and environmental engineering.

**TEAMS WHO EXPOSED HEZBOLLAH TUNNELS AWARDED ISRAEL DEFENSE PRIZE:** The 2019 Israel Defense Prize will be awarded to the intelligence and engineering teams that uncovered and neutralized a grid of six Hezbollah tunnels in northern Israel, the Defense Ministry has announced. The Mossad intelligence agency team that broke into the Iranian nuclear archive and successfully transferred the information to Israel has also been honored, as were two other teams whose work is classified.

**IRAN-LINKED TERRORISTS CAUGHT STOCKPILING EXPLOSIVES IN LONDON:** Hezbollah terrorists linked to Iran were caught stockpiling tons of explosive materials on the outskirts of London in a secret British bomb factory, the UK Daily Telegraph revealed. The plot was uncovered by MI5 and the Metropolitan Police in late 2015, just months after the UK signed up to the Iran nuclear deal. Three metric

tons of ammonium nitrate were discovered - more than was used in the Oklahoma City bombing that killed 168 people. For years, the incident has been kept hidden from the public. The discovery followed a tip-off from a foreign government. An Israeli official confirmed that it was the Mossad that informed UK intelligence agents. It became clear, according to well-placed sources, that the UK storage was part of an international Hezbollah plot to lay the groundwork for future attacks.

**ISRAEL IDENTIFYING ACCELERATED URANIUM ENRICHMENT BY IRAN:** Israeli intelligence has identified a huge acceleration in Iran's preparations for the resumption of uranium enrichment, Israel's Channel 13 News has reported. The report comes ahead of a trilateral national security advisers' summit that will take place in Jerusalem this month, involving the national security advisers of Israel, the USA, and Russia. The summit, which is an unprecedented event, will focus on Syria as well as on Iran's activities in Syria, Lebanon and the rest of the region. The USA has indicated it plans to stress to Russia during the summit that Iranian forces and their proxies have to leave Syria. The report comes amid ongoing tensions between the USA and Iran. Last month, an Iranian official said that the Islamic Republic has quadrupled its enrichment rate of low-enriched uranium and that it no longer accepts the restriction on uranium enrichment as it was written in the 2015 nuclear agreement.

**ISRAEL SHUTTERS 30 BDS FUNDRAISING ACCOUNTS BY REVEALING ALLEGED TERROR TIES:** Israel has quietly waged a two-year financial campaign against organizations promoting a boycott of the Jewish state by revealing their connections to terror operatives, leading to the closures of dozens of fundraising accounts, the Ministry of Strategic Affairs said this week. The campaign targeted fundraising accounts for groups promoting the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement against Israel that were hosted on platforms like PayPal and DonorBox. Under the direction of the ministry, pro-Israel activists alerted the platforms to violations in their regulations banning fundraising activities connected to terrorism. The effort shuttered 10 accounts based in the USA and 20 in Europe, the ministry said. "For years, boycott promoters have disguised themselves as 'human rights activists,' managing to raise tens of millions of euros from Western countries and citizens who thought they were contributing to causes supporting justice and equality. Over time, though, we have revealed that the supposed 'human rights' NGOs are in reality filled with anti-Semitic operatives with deep ties to terrorist groups fixated on destroying the State of Israel," said Strategic Affairs Minister Gilad Erdan. "As a result of our actions, countries and financial institutions are now distancing themselves from these organizations. Our efforts have drastically undermined the boycott campaign, leading to it having less finances to operate, and barred from receiving financial services," Erdan said.

**VIOLENCE WITH GAZA CAUSING FAMILIES TO LEAVE SOUTHERN ISRAEL:** At least 10 families living in Gaza border communities have decided to leave the area following the repeated rounds of violence between Israel and terror groups in the Hamas-run coastal enclave. "These are dramatic numbers that we haven't seen since Operation Protective Edge," the report continued, adding that there is a fear that more families will follow suit and leave the area. During the past year, there have been 10 rounds of violent conflict, causing residents to interrupt their daily lives and remain close to bomb shelters since they only have some 15 seconds to find shelter from rocket and mortar fire. The last round of violence in early May 2019 saw over 700 rockets fired towards southern Israel, which killed four civilians. The Great March of Return protests, which began on 30 March 2018, has seen over half a million people violently demonstrating at various points along the Gaza Strip security fence. Between several thousand to 45,000 protesters have demonstrated every Friday. Rioters routinely burn tires, and target IDF forces along the border hurling stones, and firing marbles, ball bearings and other projectiles using high-velocity slingshots. Other forms of violence include throwing grenades and improvised explosive devices at troops. Palestinians launching kites, balloons, and condoms carrying Molotov cocktails or improvised explosive and incendiary devices have posed a problem for Israel since the beginning of the protests along the Gaza border fence. The devices have caused

over 2,000 separate fires resulting in over 35,000 dunams being burnt. According to the IDF, this has included over 13,000 dunams of nature reserves and over 11,000 dunams of forest.

**JORDAN: 'ABBAS REJECTS EVERY SOLUTION TO THE CRISIS':** Jordanian officials are fuming over Palestinian Authority (PA) Chairman Mahmoud Abbas' management of the PA's financial crisis. According to media reports, Jordan is concerned that a collapse of the PA will lead to violence, including towards Jordanians. Prior to the Six-Day War in 1967, Jordan controlled all of Judea & Samaria after occupying the area in Israel's 1948 War of Independence, with only the UK, Iraq and Pakistan recognizing that annexation. After Israel took over the area in June 1967, many Arab residents living in Judea & Samaria crossed the Jordan River and moved to what was - and remains - Jordan. Today, those Jordanian "refugees" and their children make up approximately half of the country's population. A senior Jordanian official said Abbas has rejected a proposal which would solve the PA's financial crisis. The source added that Abbas has ordered PA officials not to meet Israeli officials to attempt to solve the problem. This, he said, may lead to the PA's collapse. Several days ago, PA leader Mohammad Shtayyeh said the PA is closer than ever to bankruptcy, due to its refusal to accept taxes transferred to it via Israel. Meanwhile, the PA's debts to the Israel Electric Company and the local water company are estimated to be in the billions. Earlier this year, outgoing Finance Minister Moshe Kahlon signed an order to deduct \$11,578,350 - the amount paid to terrorists and their families - from the taxes transferred each month to the Palestinian Authority. The deduction is in accordance with a law passed last summer and will affect all payments made during 2019. Israel will cease deducting the payments when the PA ceases funding the murder and maiming of Israel's citizens. Meanwhile, the PA is paying its employees just 50% of their salaries in order to continue paying the terror salaries in full.



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