

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update May 27, 2021 **(16th Sivan, 5781)**



[For the Yachad Report Newsletter For May 2021](#)

Israel Agrees to Ceasefire with Hamas in Gaza; Israel has agreed to an Egyptian-brokered ceasefire with Hamas and Islamic Jihad in the Gaza Strip. Israeli officials have updated the Egyptian mediator brokering the negotiations that it agrees to end its military operation. Hamas officials also indicated to Arab media that a ceasefire with Israel is expected to take effect on Friday. The group further said that Hamas initially refused a ceasefire in which the organization stops firing rockets before the IDF ceases attacks. The security cabinet met on Thursday, May 20, to discuss a possible truce. The ceasefire began before dawn on Friday, May 21.

Israel Shot Down Armed Iranian Drone Near Jordanian Border; The drone Israel shot down near the border with Jordan on Tuesday, May 18, was Iranian, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Thursday. "While we were engaged in these hostilities a few days ago, Iran sent an armed drone from Iraq or from Syria," Netanyahu told German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas, who was in Jerusalem. "Iranian forces launched an armed drone, which our forces intercepted on the border between Israel and Jordan. "I think that says everything on the true patron of terror in the Middle East and in the world: Iran," Netanyahu added, showing Maas a piece of the drone

Bush: Iran 'Dangerous' for World Peace by Targeting Israel; Former President George W. Bush said on Wednesday that Iran is "dangerous" for stability in the Middle East and the world while warning that a two-state solution amid the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will be "very difficult at this stage." When asked about the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian violence, Bush said that what "you're seeing playing out is Iranian influence targeted toward Israel." When asked about how the U.S. should engage with Tehran, Bush said, "I think the best approach with regard to Iran is to understand that their influence is dangerous for world peace, that they are very much involved with extremist movements in Lebanon and Syria and Yemen, and they are aiming to spread their influence."

Pro-Palestinian Activists Storm UK Factory Co-Owned by Israeli Firm Elbit; Several members of the Palestine Action group on Wednesday, May 19, climbed up on the roof of the building in Leicester, a city located about 100 miles northwest of London, Newsweek reported. Others chained themselves to the gates.

The factory, which is also co-owned by the French firm Thales, is involved in the production of drones, they said. Police and the Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service were on the scene, a police spokesperson told the BBC. "A further group of protesters have since arrived on the ground," the spokesperson said. "Police remain at the scene and are attempting to engage with those on the roof."

Jordan's Parliament Calls for Expulsion of Israeli Envoy, Recall of Ambassador; On Monday, May 17, Jordanian lawmakers unanimously carried a motion urging the government to expel Israel's ambassador to Amman in protest against Israeli "crimes" against Palestinians. Parliament Speaker Abdul Monem Odat announced the move live on television after a parliamentary session devoted to "the situation in Palestine and the crimes committed against them in Jerusalem and Gaza." During a six-hour-long session, "the expulsion of the Israeli ambassador" was among the key recommendations carried, Odat said. Amir Weissbrod, the Israeli envoy, took up his post in 2018.

Some Sanctions Loosened on Iran; The countries involved in negotiations in Vienna on renewing the nuclear deal with Iran have agreed to lift all major sanctions on the Islamic Republic, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani announced on Thursday, according to the Iranian Fars News Agency. "All parties to the talks have agreed to lift all major sanctions on oil, petrochemicals, shipping, insurance, the central bank, and so on," Rouhani said. "We have taken the main step and discussed the details; the main agreement has been reached. There are issues we are discussing to reach a final agreement." Despite the claims by Rouhani, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi stressed that some key issues still have not been decided, according to Fars. Araghchi added that the US needed to unilaterally lift sanctions against Iran and return to the UN Security Council.

Israel Signs Free Trade Agreement with South Korea; Israel signed a free trade agreement with South Korea this week that is expected to increase trade between the countries to over \$3 billion. That makes South Korea, which has the 11th largest economy in the world, the first Asian country to sign a free trade agreement with Israel. The agreement was signed in Seoul by Economy Minister Amir Peretz and his South Korean counterpart, the Minister for Trade, Ms. Yoo Myung-Hee. Under the agreement, Israel will increase exports to South Korea and exempt from customs duties vehicles and spare parts, electrical products, and air conditioning systems imported into Israel.

PM Johnson Vows Support for UK Jewish Community; Prime Minister Boris Johnson said on Wednesday, May 19, the government would support Britain's Jewish community in any way it could after a spike in anti-Semitic incidents, including an attack on a rabbi, following the outbreak of hostilities in Gaza. The Community Security Trust (CST), which advises Britain's estimated 280,000 Jews on security matters, said it had recorded 106 anti-Semitic incidents since May 8 compared to 19 in the 11 previous days, a fivefold increase. Responding to a question in parliament from Keir Starmer, leader of the opposition Labour Party, Johnson said: "I share his horror at the outbreak of anti-Semitic incidents and the government has conveyed that message loud and clear to those who are responsible for enforcing the law against hate crime."

IDF Attacks Hamas Missile Launcher Inside a School; An IDF aircraft attacked a Hamas target in Shejaiya in Gaza immediately after it fired missiles into Israeli territory. The rocket launching station was also destroyed. "The position is located inside a school, which proves once again how Hamas deliberately places its military assets in the heart of the civilian population," the IDF said. Hamas and Islamic Jihad have launched over 3,000 rockets at Israel since last Monday. According to Magen David Adom, 12 people have been killed by the rockets and 134 injured. The Palestinian death toll is over 200.

Israeli Troops Fire Tear Gas at Palestinians at the Old City Walls, Two IDF Soldiers Shot; Pro-Palestinian protesters clashed with Israeli security forces in Jerusalem's Old City today, and two soldiers were

shot in Judea and Samaria, as widespread demonstrations turned into violent confrontations in Israel. The eleven days of violence in the region followed Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu's refusal to Joe Biden's calls for a cease-fire and continued airstrike on the Gaza strip. Elsewhere, tear gas was fired at demonstrators at Damascus Gate in Jerusalem's old city, around half a mile from Temple Mount where clashes last Monday at Al-Aqsa Mosque - Islam's third holiest site - provoked a barrage of missiles from Hamas in Gaza. A water cannon and mounted police were deployed as Palestinians were sent running from the flash of stun grenades close to the Old City. Meanwhile two Israeli Defense Forces soldiers were shot and wounded around ten miles north near the West Bank settlement of Beit El as hundreds of Palestinians rioted at the entrance to the nearby city of Ramallah. According to local reports, one of the soldiers was said to be moderately injured, while the other was only mildly hurt. They were shot in their legs.

Biden To Netanyahu: 'Wind Down' Bombardment of Gaza; Israel plans to continue Operation Guardian of the Walls to strike at more targets, even as the US, EU, and others push for a ceasefire, officials said late Tuesday night. Their comments came as the Biden administration continued to encourage Jerusalem to wind down attacks against Gaza. Among the targets was Hamas's Qassam Brigades commander Mohammed Deif, whom IDF sources said that they believe the military has a chance of killing if the operation continued. Military sources said Deif had been targeted more than once during the last week of fighting but had succeeded to get away at the last moment. Defense Minister Benny Gantz said in a call with US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin on Tuesday that the operation will continue until Hamas is deterred for the long-term.

Netanyahu "Determined to Continue" Operation Against Hamas; Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Wednesday brushed off President Biden's call for a "significant de-escalation" of the conflict in Gaza, saying he is "determined to continue" the operation against Hamas – just as Biden is facing pressure from the progressive arm of his own party on the issue. Biden spoke to Netanyahu early Wednesday, and the White House said the two "had a detailed discussion of the state of events in Gaza, Israel's progress in degrading the capabilities of Hamas and other terrorist elements, and ongoing diplomatic efforts by regional governments and the United States." "The President conveyed to the Prime Minister that he expected a significant de-escalation today on the path to a ceasefire," the White House said in a statement. But, after a visit to military headquarters hours later, Netanyahu said he "greatly appreciates the support of the American president," but said Israel will push ahead "to return the calm and security to you, citizens of Israel." He added that he is "determined to continue this operation until its aim is met."

Merkel Condemns Anti-Semitic Abuse and Attacks on Synagogues; Angela Merkel's spokesman has warned that Jews no longer feel safe in Germany as he condemned anti-Semitic abuse hurled at pro-Palestinian protests last week. Police were deployed outside synagogues across the country after protests against Israel's bombardment of the Gaza Strip descended into racial abuse. 'What has been heard in the last few days of hatred of Jews and anti-Semitic abuse is shameful,' Merkel's spokesman Steffen Seibert said on Monday. He called it 'particularly outrageous' that a Jewish journalist had been attacked on the sidelines of a demonstration in Berlin at the weekend. Seibert said this 'highlights the fact that Jews in Germany cannot move around as freely and safely in some areas and in some situations as is the right of every citizen in Germany. And that makes us angry and it is shameful for all of us.'

Violent Clash Between Pro-Palestinian, Pro-Israel Protestors in NYC; Violence erupted at a protest outside the Israeli consulate in New York City amid the conflict between Israel and Hamas in the Gaza Strip. On Tuesday, multiple arrests were made as protesters clashed with police and pro-Israel demonstrators as clashes continue between Israel and the Palestinian people. Hundreds of people took place in the 'Free Palestine' protest, chanting and holding Palestinian flags as they walked down Second Avenue and made their way downtown. Protesters could be heard chanting: 'Gaza, Gaza don't you cry, we will never let you die!' According to a flyer on Twitter, the demonstration was called an 'Emergency Rally to Defend Palestine .' It

was one of many that took place throughout the country on Tuesday. There were also protests in Atlanta, Washington D.C., Los Angeles, Boston, and Dearborn, Michigan, where President Joe Biden was visiting.

German, Czech, Slovakian FMs Head to Jerusalem; Three European foreign ministers are expected to visit Israel this week, days after the EU Foreign Affairs Committee failed to reach an agreed-upon statement on the fighting between Israel and Hamas. Foreign Ministers Heiko Maas, Jakub Kulhanek, and Ivan Korcok of Germany, Czech Republic, and Slovakia, respectively, plan to visit Israel on Thursday, on invitation from their Israeli counterpart Gabi Ashkenazi. The Israeli Foreign Ministry characterized the trip as a way to "express solidarity and support," and said more are expected to arrive next week for the same reason and as part of the ministry's efforts to strengthen Israel's international legitimacy in Operation Guardian of the Walls. The ministers are expected to meet with Ashkenazi and then visit sites where Hamas missiles struck.

Israel's Eden Alene Advances to Eurovision Final; Eden Alene, Israel's contest in the Eurovision Song Contest, advanced to the finals on the opening night of the 2021 event, which was held in Rotterdam on Tuesday night. While there was some concern that the current war would turn Eurovision audiences against Israel, Alene's flawless performance of the song, "Set Me Free," during which she hit the highest note ever achieved in a Eurovision performance, charmed voters. Alene, a rising star and Israel's first representative of Ethiopian descent, managed to contain her disappointment over the postponement of the 2020 contest due to the coronavirus pandemic and conducted herself with quiet grace throughout the year. In addition to her high note, her performance was notable for her dancing and the striking black-and-white Alon Livne costume she sported.



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