

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update February 3, 2022 (2th Adar-A, 5782)



[For the Yachad Report Newsletter For February 2022](#)

Nearly 2,000 Children Recruited by Houthi Rebels Dead; Thousands of children recruited and taught to fight by Yemen's Houthi rebels have been reported dead as a result of ongoing fighting. A four-member panel of experts released a report to the United Nations Security Council detailing that almost 2,000 children had been reported dead between January 2020 and May 2021, according to the Associated Press. Lists obtained by the panel showed that 1,406 children died fighting during 2020, and 562 died between January and May of 2021. "They were aged between 10 and 17 years old," the panel said. A large portion of the children had been killed in places such as Amran, Dhamar, Hajjah, Ibb, Saada, and Sanaa. The panel said that they had investigated several schools and mosques where Houthi rebels were running summer camps. At these camps, children "as young as 7" were taught how to "clean weapons and evade rockets," along with learning Houthi ideology. "The children are instructed to shout the Houthi slogan 'death to America, death to Israel, curse the Jews, victory to Islam,'" said the panel. Several cases were discovered by the panel in which children had either been promised false rewards, denied aid, or sexually violated. Ten cases involved children taken to fight after being told they would be enrolled in courses, nine involved children and teachers denied humanitarian aid based on whether they "participated in fighting" or "taught the Houthi curriculum," and one involved an act of sexual violence on a child during training. The Yemeni civil war has progressed into a proxy war between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Neighboring Arab states have intervened in the conflict weeks after Houthis seized Yemen's capital city of Sanaa. Houthi rebels have recently been firing ballistic missiles toward the United Arab Emirates, with two intercepted on Jan. 24, a week after rebels fired a drone strike that left at least three people dead in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the UAE.

Ukraine's Jews Warned to be Ready for Evacuation if Russia Invades; Ukrainian Jews were warned on Wednesday, January 26, to be ready to be evacuated to Israel as the threat of a Russian invasion looms over the country. While Russia denies that it intends to invade, military drills have taken place along the border with Ukraine and in the Russian-annexed Crimea. These drills continued even as de-escalation talks were held among Ukraine, Russia, Germany and France. Alongside growing tensions between the countries, Ukraine has been preparing for war and has received aid from the US in the form of weapons and military equipment, although according to Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba, Russia has not yet amassed enough troops on the border to attack. He did not rule out the possibility that they might later on. While the Jews were told to prepare to leave, one leader in the Ukrainian Jewish community said he did not yet see

cause for concern. Meanwhile, the US delivered written replies to sweeping Russian security demands on Wednesday, a key step in a fragile diplomatic process as Russia staged new military drills on land and sea near Ukraine. Washington has made clear that Russian demands for NATO to pull back troops and weapons from eastern Europe and bar Ukraine from ever joining are nonstarters. It says it is ready to discuss other topics such as arms control and confidence-building measures. Whether Russia is prepared to accept that limited agenda will determine the next phase of the crisis, which has seen Moscow mass around 100,000 troops near the Ukraine border while denying that it plans to invade.

Time Running Out to Decide Whether Iran Can Make a Deal; Negotiations for the US and Iran to return to the 2015 nuclear deal are nearing the point where a decision must be made or that agreement will no longer be salvageable, European diplomats said on Friday, January 28, as the negotiating teams returned to their capitals for consultations. “January has been the most intensive period of these talks to date,” negotiators from the US State Department and the E3 – France, Britain and Germany – said in a statement at the end of the eighth round of talks in Vienna. “Everyone knows we are reaching the final stage, which requires political decisions.” Brett McGurk, the White House’s national Security Council Middle East coordinator, said on Thursday that “we’re in the ballpark of a possible deal... [but] there’s also a very real chance that these talks could collapse very soon.” Western diplomats have said that Iran is moving too slowly in the talks to revive the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action while it enriches and stockpiles uranium, and that weeks, not months, remain until the restrictions of that deal will have been irreversibly hollowed out. Nearly 10 months after the negotiations started – with a five-month break imposed by Iran – the hardest issues remain, they say.

Us Reps Question Withdrawal of US Support for EastMed Pipeline from Israel; Withdrawing US support for the EastMed Pipeline undercuts US allies and the European Union’s push for energy independence, US representatives Gus Bilirakis (R-Florida) and Nicole Malliotakis (R-New York) wrote to US Secretary of State Antony Blinken. “The administration must realize the significant economic, environmental, and national security implications that are at stake in this matter and reconsider its decision to withdraw support for this critical project,” Bilirakis said this week. The US Biden administration informed Israel, Greece and Cyprus in recent weeks that it no longer supports the proposed EastMed natural-gas pipeline from Israel to Europe, in a reversal of US position from that of the Trump administration. The project was announced in 2016, and several agreements on it have been signed between the three countries that aim to complete the €6 billion (\$6.8b.) project by 2025, though no financing has been secured. Europe is facing a surge in energy prices, the representatives pointed out, arguing that the continent will primarily rely on natural gas for energy for decades. They noted that the EU considers the EastMed pipeline a “special project.” The change in policy is “hypocritical and offensive,” because of “the administration’s continued tacit approval of Russia’s Nord Stream 2 pipeline, deepening Europe’s energy dependence on an adversary... Biden’s announcement last May to suspend sanctions on the Russian pipeline and his continued fight against sanctions shows clear preference toward Russia over our allies.” Russian President Vladimir Putin “is once again using Europe’s reliance on Russian gas to seek concessions from Europe... preparing to invade Ukraine in the middle of winter when energy demand is highest,” they argued.

Anti-Semitic Incidents in France Increased by 75% in 2021; Reports of anti-Semitic incidents in France increased by 75 percent in 2021, according to the French Jewish community’s main watchdog group. SPCJ recorded 589 hate crimes against Jews last year, including a 36% increase in physical assaults over 2020. The group released its annual report Wednesday, January 26. Incidents targeting people – as opposed to communal buildings and institutions – accounted for 45% of all incidents in 2021. Of those, 10% were physical assaults. A quarter of all incidents happened inside or just outside the victims’ homes, typically perpetrated by a neighbor, SPCJ wrote, adding this was a new and worrisome phenomenon. Use of weapons, mostly knives and guns, in anti-Semitic incidents was also unusually high in 2021, occurring in 20% of all assaults and 10% of all cases of intimidation, the report said. Dozens of incidents happened within the space

of 11 days in May, when Israel and Hamas were exchanging fire amid rioting by Israeli Arabs and attacks on Arabs by Israeli Jews. During that period, SPCJ documented on average five anti-Semitic incidents per day.

Israel Home to 165,800 Holocaust Survivors; Israel is home to 165,800 Holocaust survivors, according to data released on Wednesday, January 26, by the Ministry for Social Equality and Pensioners ahead of International Holocaust Remembrance Day. Israeli state agencies define as survivors anyone “exposed” to the Nazi regime, including those who lived in countries conquered by Nazi Germany or were under direct Nazi influence in 1933-1945, as well as refugees who fled those areas due to the Nazis. Today’s survivors are all over 75 — World War II ended 75 years ago — and around 19% of them are over the age of 90. Over 950 Holocaust survivors living in Israel at the end of 2021 were aged 100 or more. As women generally outlive men, they make up 60% of the survivor population. The percentage of women rises as each cohort ages. Nearly two-thirds, or 64%, of those hail from Europe. Of these, 59,900 were born in the former Soviet Union, 19,100 in Romania, 8,900 in Poland, 4,500 in Bulgaria, 2,400 in Hungary and 2,300 in Germany. The other 36 percent immigrated from Asia and North Africa, with 30,600 born in Algeria and Tunisia and 18,000 from the Iraqi capital of Baghdad. Those from the Muslim world fled Nazi-inspired pogroms, such as the 1941 Farhud pogrom in Iraq, or Nazi-controlled or Nazi-allied territories where they faced restrictions on daily life, such as in Vichy-ruled Morocco and Tunisia. About 40% of the survivors had immigrated to Israel by 1951, and more than a third in the last wave of immigration in the 1990s from the former Soviet Union. The past year saw 15,324 survivors pass away, a daily average of 42 fatalities, with many being victims of the coronavirus pandemic.

Tel Aviv Ranks Second after Silicon Valley on 2021 Global Startup Ecosystem Report; Tel Aviv has ranked second globally as a Cleantech ecosystem on the Global Startup Ecosystem Report (GSER): Cleantech Edition from Startup Genome, launched on Monday, January 24, at the CleanTech Forum San Francisco. Tel Aviv came in at a close second after Silicon Valley and before key global hubs in the field such as Stockholm, London and Los Angeles. The Global Startup Ecosystem Report (GSER) is the world's most comprehensive and widely read research on startups with 280 entrepreneurial innovation ecosystems and 3 million startups analyzed. The Cleantech Edition looks into the "the globally competitive landscape of technology-based startups focused on reducing environmental impact and solving the scaleup gap in Cleantech." The report includes startups "dedicated to renewable energy, transportation, logistics, and more."

UAE Intercepts 2 Ballistic Missiles Over Abu Dhabi Fired by Iran-Backed Houthis; The United Arab Emirates intercepted two ballistic missiles targeting Abu Dhabi early Monday, January 24, its state-run news agency reported, the latest attack to target the Emirati capital. Defense officials said the missiles were fired by Iran-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen. The attack on Abu Dhabi, after another last week killed three people and wounded six, further escalates tensions across the Persian Gulf as Yemen’s years-long civil war grinds on. That war, pitting Iranian-backed Houthi rebels against a Saudi-led coalition, has become a regional conflict as negotiations continue over Tehran’s tattered nuclear deal with world powers. The collapse of the accord has sparked years of attacks across the region. The state-run WAM news agency said that missile fragments fell harmlessly over the capital, Abu Dhabi. The Emirates “is ready to deal with any threats” and “takes all necessary measures to protect the state from all attacks,” WAM quoted the UAE Defense Ministry as saying. Videos posted to social media showed the sky over the capital light up before dawn Monday, with points of light looking like interceptor missiles in the sky. The videos corresponded to known features of Abu Dhabi. The missile fire disrupted traffic into Abu Dhabi International Airport, home to the long-haul carrier Etihad, for about an hour after the attack. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack. However, the attack came a week after Yemen’s Houthi rebels claimed an attack on the Emirati capital that killed three people and wounded six others.

Iran Says Will Consider Direct US Talks for ‘Good’ Nuclear Deal with Firm Guarantees; Iran will consider direct talks with the US during ongoing nuclear negotiations in Vienna, if that is required for a “good agreement,” the Iranian foreign minister said on Monday, January 24. “Iran is not currently talking with the US directly,” Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said in televised remarks. “But, if, during the negotiation process, we get to a point that reaching a good agreement with solid guarantees requires a level of talks with the US, we will not ignore that in our work schedule,” he added. The 2015 deal — agreed by Iran, the US, China, Russia, Britain, France, and Germany — offered Tehran sanctions relief in exchange for curbs on its nuclear program. But the US unilaterally withdrew in 2018 under then-president Donald Trump and reimposed biting economic sanctions, prompting Tehran to begin rolling back its commitments. Talks aimed at salvaging the deal started last year in Vienna between Iran and countries still part of the accord. The US has been taking part indirectly in negotiations. Iran had previously stated that the US must “change course” and return to the nuclear deal, prior to any direct talks between the two arch-foes in Vienna. “Our direct talks are with P4+1,” said Amir-Abdollahian, referring to Germany and permanent Security Council powers France, China, Britain and Russia. The negotiations, which seek to bring Washington back to the accord and ensure Iran returns to its commitments under the deal, started in April, and resumed in late November after they were suspended in June as Iran elected ultraconservative President Ebrahim Raisi. Last week, United States Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin warned that while Washington is committed to a diplomatic solution to the standoff with Iran if Tehran is not serious about saving the 2015 pact, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the US will look at “all of the options” to prevent it from obtaining nuclear weapons.

Russia Conducting Joint Patrols of Syrian Border Airspace; Syria and Russia held joint military jet patrols of the airspace along Syria’s borders on Monday, including in the Golan Heights area, according to a Russian Defense Ministry statement reported by Interfax. According to the report, Russia’s Defense Ministry said such joint patrols are expected to be a regular occurrence moving forward. The news came amid tensions along the Russia-Ukraine border as Western powers scramble to counter an implied threat by Russian President Vladimir Putin to invade the neighboring country. Putin is considered one of few allies of Syrian President Bashar Assad, and Russia is seen as using its presence in the war-torn country to gain a foothold in the Middle East. Israel’s close relations with Russia and Putin are often seen as linked to the two countries’ close military coordination in Syria, in particular when the IDF carries out purported strikes on sites within Syria.

Israel Preparing for Potential Need to Evacuate Ukrainian Jews in Case of War; The Israeli government is preparing for the possibility that thousands of Ukrainian Jews will want to immigrate to Israel in the event of a Russian invasion of the country, according to a report Sunday night, January 23. According to Haaretz, representatives of various government offices and groups met on Sunday to discuss such an eventuality, among them the Prime Minister’s Office, Foreign Minister, Defense Ministry, Diaspora Affairs Ministry and the Jewish Agency. The report said some 75,000 people living in eastern Ukraine are believed eligible for Israeli citizenship. It noted that Israel has long had plans for the mass evacuation of Jews from various countries should the need arise, and has updated those plans for Ukraine due to the rising tensions. A Foreign Ministry official on Monday said Israel is not currently expecting a surge in immigration from Ukraine and also noted that the Jewish Agency handles such immigration issues. However, the official said the ministry was looking into issues relating to the estimated 10,000 Israeli nationals in Ukraine. On Sunday the US State Department said Washington had ordered the families of its diplomats in the Ukrainian capital Kyiv to leave the country “due to the continued threat of Russian military action.” Washington has also authorized the “voluntary” departure of its embassy employees and urged US citizens in the Eastern European country to “consider departing now using commercial or other privately available transportation options.” The State Department announcement came amid tensions between Russia and the West over European security and concerns over a possible invasion by Moscow of Ukraine. Russia has been massing tens of thousands of troops on its border with Ukraine, along with an arsenal of tanks, fighting vehicles, artillery and missiles. The

movements have ignited stern warnings from Washington and Europe — but so far intense diplomacy has yielded little results.

Herzog to Make First Visit to UAE by an Israeli President; For the first time in history, the President of the State of Israel will conduct a presidential visit to the United Arab Emirates. During the visit on January 30-31, 2022, President Isaac Herzog will meet the de facto ruler of the United Arab Emirates, Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan; the ruler of Dubai; senior government officials; and the Jewish community. He will also open Israel's national day at Expo 2020 Dubai. President Isaac Herzog and First Lady Michal Herzog will depart on Sunday, January 30, 2022, for a presidential visit in the United Arab Emirates at the invitation of the de facto ruler of the UAE, Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. The President will visit Abu Dhabi and Dubai and will hold official meetings with Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed; UAE Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed; Vice President, Prime Minister, and Defense Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum; and representatives of the Jewish community. During the visit, President Herzog will open Israel's national day at Dubai Expo 2020. President Herzog said ahead of his departure: "We have the privilege of making history by making the first visit of an Israeli president to the United Arab Emirates. This important visit comes as the Israeli and Emirati nations are busy laying the foundations of a new shared future. I believe that our bold new partnership will transform the Middle East and inspire the whole region. We are a peace-loving nation, and together we will expand the historic circle of peace of the Abraham Accords and create a better, more tolerant, and safer world for our children. I thank Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan for this gracious invitation to deepen our nations' bonds of friendship."

2021 Was the Worst Year in a Decade for Anti-Semitism around the World; Last year was the worst year for anti-Semitic attacks in a decade, seeing an average of ten incidents a day with the likelihood of many more incidents not being reported, according to an annual review published Monday, January 24, by the World Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency. The Antisemitism Report for 2021 was released ahead of International Holocaust Remembrance Day, which falls on Thursday, January 27. 2021 was "the most antisemitic year in the last decade," the two organizations said in a joint statement, "but at the same time, this year no Jew in the world has been murdered on anti-Semitic grounds." The average number of anti-Semitic incidents reported in 2021 was more than ten per day, the report found. "However, the actual number of incidents was significantly higher, since many are not reported by the victims out of fear, and due to the lack of surveillance and prosecution of local authorities and law enforcement agencies," the statement said. Europe was the leading continent in the number of anti-Semitic incidents during 2021, with close to 50 percent of all incidents globally taking place there. The UK recorded a 49% increase in the first six months of 2021, with 1,308 incidents compared to 875 in the same period in 2020. Austria also recorded a doubling of the number of incidents, while in Germany the rate stayed roughly the same, with 1,850 anti-Semitic incidents recorded in the first 10 months of 2021 compared to 1,909 cases reported in all of 2020, according to the report. In the German capital Berlin, 522 anti-Semitic incidents were recorded in the first half of 2021, an increase of about 27% compared to 2020, when there were 410 recorded incidents in the first six months. The next continent with the most anti-Semitic incidents was North America, with 30% of anti-Semitic incidents in the continent taking place in the United States, the report finds. Within the US, New York recorded a 100% increase in the number of anti-Semitic incidents in 2021, with 503, compared to 252 in 2020. In Los Angeles, there was a 59.2% increase in the number of anti-Semitic incidents in the first six months of 2021 compared to the same period in the previous year, LAPD data cited in the report showed. The incidents mostly included vandalism and property destruction, graffiti and the desecration of monuments. Physical and verbal violence accounted for less than a third of all anti-Semitic incidents. Such episodes and attacks peaked during May when Jewish and Muslim religious festivals led to clashes in Israel and a war with Hamas, the Islamist terror group ruling Gaza, the report said.

'Elders of Zion' Book Being Sold by Top Booksellers; The anti-Semitic text The Protocols Of The Meetings Of The Learned Elders Of Zion is being sold on popular book sellers' websites, Jewish social media users were outraged to learn on Tuesday, January 25. Top online booksellers such as Walmart, Book Depository, Thrift Books, Hudson Books, and Barnes & Noble are each selling dozens of versions of The Protocols of the Elders Of Zion. Of note, these retailers are also selling a version published by Book Tree in 1999 that is causing outrage on social media. The book cover features blurbs mocking attempts to stop the sale of the book. "Stop selling books" is attributed to a German publisher. "...Is calling on [on-line booksellers] not to sell the book...calling the disclaimers an insufficient half-measure," is attributed to "an American Jewish organization." Blackwell's, a UK bookshop, is also selling several dozen versions of the book, including the Book Tree version. The European Union of Jewish Students criticized Blackwell's for their continued sale of the book. EUJS tweeted that Blackwell's "'neither supports nor denies the message' of an explicitly anti-Semitic document forged with the sole intent of blaming Jews, justifying pogroms and mass murders. Shameful."

Repeated Quarantine Increases Violence Among Children; The 'Children in Israel' report of the National Council for the Child published Tuesday, January 25, indicates a significant increase in physical violence against family members and friends by children who were forced into quarantine. Parental reports indicated that among children who went into quarantine and especially when they went in more than once, tantrums or outbursts of anger were recorded that led to violence. According to the report, 31% of the children who went into isolation more than once experienced physical violence, compared with about 17% of those who went into isolation once or less. 59% of children who went into isolation more than once experienced tantrums, compared with 43% among those who were in isolation once and 36% of those who did not go into isolation at all. The data also show that during the third closure, along with the closure of the education system, there was a 43% increase in the number of treatments by psychologists for students who were at risk for suicide.



Robert I. Solomon: Messianic Rabbi, rabbisolomon@yachad.com

Jeffery Blalock: Ministries Coordinator, jeffery@yachad.com

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

E-mail: info@yachad.com, Web Page: <https://www.yachad.com/>

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

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