

# **Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update January 29, 2024 (Sh'vat 19, 5784)**



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## **Israel-Hamas War, Day 115**

### **Qatar: Progress Made Towards Israel-Hamas Hostage Deal; Netanyahu Denies**

- **UNRWA:** Israel gave the U.S. information about 12 UNRWA employees who were involved in the October 7 Hamas attack, including one employee who kidnapped an Israeli woman, another who took part in the attack on Kibbutz Be'eri and another in the massacre at the Nova music party, the New York Times and Reuters reported. About 10 percent of UNRWA employees in Gaza have ties to Hamas or Islamic Jihad, an intelligence document obtained by the Wall Street Journal estimated.
  - Soldier seriously wounded in attack in Haifa
  - Two soldiers lightly wounded by Hezbollah rocket fire in northern Israel
  - Austria, Romania join countries suspending UNRWA funding amid allegations of involvement in Hamas massacre

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***In Deadliest Incident of Gaza Combat, 21 Soldiers Killed as Buildings Collapse in Blast;*** Twenty-one Israeli soldiers were killed Monday, January 22, when they came under attack in the southern Gaza Strip, triggering a blast that collapsed two buildings with soldiers inside them, the military said Tuesday morning. The buildings were being rigged for demolition by troops when Palestinian gunmen fired an RPG at a tank securing the forces. A second blast then occurred in the buildings, possibly as a result of a second RPG, leading to their collapse. It was the single deadliest incident since the start of Israel's ground offensive in the enclave and raised the military death toll in the operation to 219. At a press conference on Tuesday morning, IDF Spokesman Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari said that troops were operating in an area around 600 meters from the border, across from the southern Israeli community of Kissufim. They were destroying structures and Hamas sites as part of the army's efforts to establish a buffer zone to allow residents of Israeli border communities to return to their homes. According to military sources, two of the soldiers were killed by the RPG fire on the tank. Several other soldiers were wounded in the blast, including one in serious condition. Hagari said the explosion in the buildings was likely a result of mines planted by troops to later demolish the structures, but the cause of the detonation was still under investigation. The buildings may have been hit by a second RPG. Rescue forces described the scene as reminiscent of the aftermath of an earthquake. (TOI / VFI News)

***Fallen Bedouin Soldier: ' Hamas Makes No Distinction Between Jew and Arab';*** Sergeant First Class (res.) Ahmad Abu Latif, 26, from Rahat, is remembered as a man with endless pride for his service in an IDF Bedouin battalion, which gained renewed vigor after the October 7 massacre. He left behind his wife and one-year-old daughter. He was among the twenty-one soldiers killed in the recent building collapse in southern Gaza. In a Facebook post, which went viral, he told Israeli media about his determination to fight Hamas. "I am proud to be an Israeli Bedouin. As far as I am concerned, the people that I live with and work with are my brothers and sisters, and we all live together and respect one another in our land." "Since the war broke out, we have heard much about the involvement of Arab civilians, and that the fallen include Bedouins, Druze, Muslims, and Christians, who died as heroes defending the state, and there is nothing greater than that," he added. "The Bedouin community mourns the civilians killed despite having done no wrong, Jews, Christians, or Muslims. I would like to take this chance to wake up everyone who read this - we are all part of the same destiny, and we all need to be together and united." "Unfortunately, there are those who do not believe in cooperation between races, and attempt to intimidate, incite, and destroy our relationships, our trust. Do not believe them, and do not let that happen. Gaza is completely different today. There are murderous terrorist organizations that make no distinction between Jew and Arab." (INN / VFI News)

***ISIS Attack in Jerusalem Thwarted: Terrorists Caught Carrying Bomb-Making Material;*** For the second time in a month, the central unit of the Jerusalem District Police, Border Police, and the General Security Service, have thwarted terrorist attacks planned by two ISIS terrorists. The two had sworn allegiance to the terrorist organization, purchased chemical materials to prepare the bombs, and planned to prepare other explosive devices to carry out attacks on civilians and the security forces in the Jerusalem area. The police and Shin Bet discovered their plans and arrested them before they carried out the attacks. The two were also arrested nearly a month ago in their homes in Jerusalem. During the police's search, they seized various chemical substances that were suspected to be used for preparing the explosives, flags of the ISIS and Hamas terrorist organizations, a notebook detailing how to prepare explosives, and other findings. Just ten days ago, indictments were filed at the end of the investigation by the Jerusalem police and Shin Bet against two other ISIS-supporting terrorists, who also planned to carry out terrorist attacks with explosives. (INN / VFI News)

***Hamas Releases Propaganda Doc Denying Atrocities, Blaming Israel for Civilian Deaths on October 7;*** Hamas published a 16-page document presenting a justification for its actions on October 7. The document denies that the terror group committed atrocities against civilians, and calls for an international investigation into the events of the day, branding Hamas a "national liberation" group, battling "colonialism." On its front and back covers, the document features pictures of Gazans on an Israeli tank, as well as images of paragliders reminiscent of the early phases of the assault. The document, titled "Our Narrative: Operation Al-Aqsa Flood," is addressed to "Arab and Islamic nations" and "free peoples worldwide." The first section of the document presents the conflict as a 105-year battle by Palestinians against "colonialism." The document levies accusations against Israel related to the Six Day War, Judea and Samaria settlements, and the supposed "Judaization" of the al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. The document avoids any mention of the bloody raids on Israeli towns and Kibbutzim. It also avoids any mention of the approximately 240 people that Hamas took captive on October 7 as hostages, only implying their captivity in a claim that Israeli operations in Gaza were responsible for their deaths. The document boasts of the Hamas terrorists' "religious and moral commitment," claiming that the "Al-Qassam Brigades fighters...avoid[ed] harm to civilians, especially children, women, and elderly people." It adds that "if there was any case of targeting civilians; [sic] it happened accidentally and in the course of this confrontation," and "maybe some faults happened during... implementation due to the rapid collapse of the Israeli security and military system." (JPost / VFI News)

***In Anti-Hamas Protest, Gazans Call for Release of Israeli Hostages;*** Avichay Adraee, the IDF's Arabic-language spokesman, on Wednesday, January 24, published rare footage of a spontaneous anti-Hamas protest that broke out in Deir al Balah, Gaza. In their protest, the Gazans called for the release of the Israeli hostages, to bring about an end to the Hamas-Israel war. "Hamas-ISIS leaders, led by [Yahya] Sinwar, listen to the cries of your people - your children, your women - who are expressing their outrage over the situation you have caused Gaza," Adraee wrote on X, formerly Twitter. "They demand that you return the Israeli hostages home so that the war will end and they can return home. Do these cries and demands reach the hiding places of the Hamas leaders?" he queried. (INN / VFI News)

***Major South African Banks Provide Platform to Fund Hamas;*** Research conducted by Israeli media and several sources uncovered what appears to be a network of several South African organizations and straw man companies deeply involved with funding Hamas activities through the Al-Quds Foundation, an international group sanctioned by the US and outlawed by Israel, using accounts registered in major local South African banks: Standard Bank, Nedbank, and Absa. The Al-Quds International Foundation (a.k.a. Al-Quds International Institute or QII) was established in Beirut in 2001 by Hamas members to raise funds for the terror organization through the guise of charity. According to the US Department of Treasury, the Hamas leadership runs all of the foundation's affairs through Hamas members who serve on

the board and other administrative committees, while all documents, plans, budgets, and projects are drafted by Hamas officials. The foundation is part of the extensive network of Muslim Brotherhood affiliated organizations and was chaired until recently by sheikh Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, the most prominent Islamic scholar of the Sunni world in the past decades, who was also aligned with the Muslim Brotherhood axis, and who was made notorious in the West for his infamous fatwa (an Islamic legal ruling) endorsing, and commending suicide bombings. Sanctioning by the US and Israel notwithstanding, the foundation continues its operations across the globe, featuring roughly thirteen branches in different countries, sometimes holding different names. In South Africa, a registered organization named “Al-Quds Foundation SA” also exists which openly admits on their new website that they are “a branch of Al-Quds foundation with headquarters in Lebanon.” The organization itself boasts about its fundraising activities, claiming funds would be transferred to the needy in Gaza. The foundation’s website lists Sheikh Ebrahim Gabriels as its director, leading the South African branch since 2019. (JPost / VFI News)

### ***Iran-Backed Narco-Terrorists Are Making Billions and Widening the War in the Middle East;***

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken toured the Middle East this month in an effort to prevent a wider regional war. But while Blinken was there, Jordanian jet fighters struck Iran-backed militias and narco-traffickers in Syria. Iran-backed Hamas has provoked the war with Israel, while Iran-backed Hezbollah attacks Israel daily from across the Lebanese border. The Iran-backed Houthis are striking ships in the Red Sea. And Iran-backed militias in Iraq and Syria have attacked American bases there more than 130 times since mid-October. The lure of immense profits drives the drug trade, but Iran and its proxies also sense an opportunity to destabilize Jordan, a country that serves a vital role — geographically and politically — in sustaining a regional order favorable to US interests. By infiltrating Jordan with large hauls of the amphetamine-like drug captagon — whose trade was estimated in 2021 at \$5.7 billion and has only grown since — as well as explosives and other arms, the narco-traffickers pursue both objectives. Jordanian troops have been clashing regularly with smugglers at the Syrian border for more than two years. Amman is now escalating its campaign by taking military action inside Syrian territory. Amman is under no illusions about who it’s fighting in this war: the Islamic Republic of Iran. Former Jordanian minister Samih Maayteh said so explicitly after dozens of narco-traffickers attempted to infiltrate Jordan on December 18 with explosives and 5 million captagon pills. “It’s Iran sponsoring these militias,” Maayteh said. “These are hostile military actions against Jordan on its territory.” (NYP / VFI News)

### ***UNRWA Complicit in Indoctrinating Gazans with Antisemitism – Opinion;***

As of June 2022, there were an estimated 40.7 million people denominated as “refugees” in the world, 35.3 million of whom fall under the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The remaining estimated 5.4 million are Palestinians in Judea and Samaria and Gaza. The latter however, fall under their own exclusive refugee agency. The UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) is the United Nations agency for Palestinian refugees and their descendants only. UNRWA is the only refugee agency in the world that caters to third- and fourth-generation refugees (Palestinians), millions of whom have never lived in the territories they are considered refugees from. UNRWA data says it has set up 706 schools, employs 19,725 educational staff, and works in over 320,000 medical facilities. UN Watch and IMPACT-SE published a report in March 2023 revealing that 133 UNRWA educators and staff were found to promote hate and violence on social media. Since 2015, UNRWA staff have published incitement to antisemitism and jihadi terrorism on their own Facebook pages. The report also revealed that 82 UNRWA teachers in 30 schools were involved in drafting, supervising, approving, printing, and distributing hateful material to Palestinian students. Since October 7, the true colors of UNRWA staff came out in a telegram channel with 3,000 UNRWA teachers in Gaza. The UNRWA teachers wrote messages in support of Hamas’s massacre on October 7, calling the Hamas infiltrators “heroes.” They shared images of dead or captured Israelis and called for the execution of hostages. One “teacher” even urged Gazan civilians not to move out of harm’s way following IDF warnings and instead become human shields. (JPost / VFI News)

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