

# **Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update September 22, 2025 (Elul 29, 5785)**



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## **Israel-Hamas War 717 Days, Hamas Publishes Second Video of Israeli Hostage Alon Ohel**

- *IDF raids West Bank university; Israel says it will reinforce troops across all fronts*
- *U.K., Germany warns Israel not to annex West Bank in response to recognition of a Palestinian state*
  - *IDF bombs a civil defense group's headquarters in western Gaza City*
  - *IDF says it killed a senior official in Hamas' maritime police*
- *U.K., Canada and Australia formally recognize Palestinian state, urge two-state solution*

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***Gaza Hit by Telecoms Blackout as Israeli Tanks Advance;*** As the IDF pressed deeper into Gaza, phone and internet services were reported down across the Strip, severing communications for civilians and militants alike. The reported outage coincided with intensified armor movements and ongoing air activity, reflecting a broader operational tempo designed to dismantle remaining Hamas nodes and disrupt command-and-control. Local reports noted the blackout's immediate toll on humanitarian coordination and family contact as night fell and operations continued. The telecommunications loss complicated situational awareness on the ground, with relief organizations warning of cascading effects on medical evacuations and logistics. Israeli armor thrusts were observed probing urban corridors where militants have historically used dense neighborhoods as shields. By targeting infrastructure nodes used for coordination, the IDF aimed to limit the adversary's ability to synchronize, even as it publicized humanitarian corridors and urged civilians to distance themselves from combat zones. Regional capitals tracked the developments closely, weighing the operational necessity against calls for restraint. The blackout is one of several during the conflict as hostilities ebb and flow and combat surges into key strongholds. The IDF's messaging continued to emphasize the twin goals of degrading Hamas's military capacity and enabling space for hostage-related efforts, with forces maintaining pressure while attempting to minimize civilian harm in a complex battlespace. (JPost/VFI News)

***EU's Top Body Presents Proposal to Suspend Free Trade Agreement with Israel;*** The European Commission unveiled a proposal to suspend parts of the EU-Israel Association Agreement, a cornerstone of trade ties that has granted Israeli goods preferential access to the European market. The move, which will now be weighed by EU member states, cited alleged breaches of human rights and democratic principles tied to the war in Gaza and policies in Judea and Samaria. If adopted, Israeli exports could face standard tariff rates similar to countries without a free trade pact, potentially reshaping a relationship that totaled tens of billions of euros in recent years. The Commission's package also recommended halting certain bilateral supports, with carve-outs for civil society and Yad Vashem, while separately seeking sanctions on specific Israeli ministers and violent settlers, alongside Hamas figures. Israel's foreign minister vowed measures "in kind" if Europe proceeds, warning that punitive steps would harm shared interests. The proposal's trade component requires a qualified majority among member states, a threshold that may test intra-European divisions over how to approach the war and its fallout. Jerusalem pushed back against depictions of systematic humanitarian obstruction, stressing facilitation of aid deliveries and denying deliberate targeting of civilians at distribution points. Still, the Commission framed its plan as leverage to influence Israel's course in Gaza, as fighting remains active and diplomacy struggles to gain traction. The political and economic stakes are high: Europe is Israel's largest trading partner, and altering the rules of commerce would ripple across industries from tech and medical devices to agriculture and logistics. (TOI/VFI News)

***Europe and Iran Fail to Bridge Gap on Nuclear Safeguards;*** Talks between Iran and key European powers hit another impasse as ministers signaled that UN sanctions are likely to "snap back" absent concrete Iranian concessions and restored access for nuclear inspectors. Western diplomats said Tehran's limited cooperation with the IAEA lacks sufficient timelines and transparency. Iranian officials, for their part, hinted

at a willingness to seek a “balanced” solution but rejected curbs they view as infringing upon sovereignty. The E3 process launched in late August appears poised to culminate in sweeping economic penalties. At the core is the status of enriched uranium—quantities and locations clouded by prior strikes and restricted inspector access—as well as ballistic missile constraints. European capitals weighed whether to delay snapback if Iran reopens facilities and resumes full compliance, but messaging from Berlin and others suggested impatience with what they termed evasions. Tehran warned of retaliation if sanctions return, casting itself as responsive within its obligations while blaming adversaries for escalating demands. The stakes extend beyond diplomacy: revived UN measures would hit Iran’s financial and energy sectors, recalibrate regional risk and potentially influencing battlefield dynamics where Iranian-backed groups operate. For Israel, renewed pressure on Tehran intersects with ongoing defense priorities and threat assessments that span land, sea, air, and cyber. (INN/VFI News)

***Netanyahu Denounces Rumors of Israeli Involvement in Kirk Murder;*** Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu condemned rumors alleging Israeli involvement in the assassination of Charlie Kirk, calling them “insane,” “false,” and “outrageous.” In a video address, he lauded Kirk’s outspoken support for Israel and the Jewish people, recounting a recent exchange in which Kirk encouraged making the strategic case for Israel directly to the American public. The prime minister decried what he termed a “monstrous big lie,” comparing its spread to classic propaganda tactics. Netanyahu emphasized Kirk’s independent judgment and willingness to disagree respectfully, portraying him as a champion of shared Judeo-Christian values. He urged an end to baseless rumors in the wake of the tragedy and called for honoring Kirk’s memory. The message also referenced chatter online, attributing some of the narratives to political agendas and foreign funding, while US Ambassador Mike Huckabee criticized profiteering from disinformation. The remarks come amid a tense information space surrounding the war and broader regional dynamics, where misinformation can ignite diplomatic friction and inflame communities abroad. Israel’s leadership framed the rebuttal as both a defense of truth and an appeal for dignity toward the deceased and his family. (INN/VFI News)

***Israel’s Population at the Start of the New Year: 10,148,000;*** On the eve of the Jewish New Year, updated data from Israel’s Central Bureau of Statistics placed the population at 10.148 million by the end of 2024, with Jews at roughly 78.6% and Arabs at 21.4%, alongside a small cohort of foreign residents. The annual birth rate moderated compared to the previous year, while emigration rose and immigration fell from 2023 levels, contributing to demographic shifts that officials and analysts will watch closely in the coming year. Marriage and divorce figures, household counts, and fertility rates rounded out the snapshot: an average of 3.18 persons per household, 2.87 children per woman, and tens of thousands of marriages and divorces recorded in 2023. The statistics portrayed a society balancing growth with the strains of conflict, mobilization, and economic uncertainty, even as communities prepared for Rosh Hashanah and the customary reflections on continuity and resilience. The figures also intersect with long-running debates over the social fabric—religious affiliation across the Jewish public, the city-to-periphery distribution of families, and the draw of opportunities abroad versus the pull of home. Policymakers are likely to weigh incentives for returnees, integration strategies for new immigrants, and cost-of-living measures to stabilize trends. (INN/VFI News)

***After Allenby Attack, Questions Mount Over Aid Convoy Protocols;*** Hours after the deadly assault at the Allenby Crossing, new scrutiny fell on the rules governing aid trucks transiting from Jordan toward Gaza. Early statements suggested certain cargoes moved under expedited arrangements that limited inspection—an understanding now likely to be revisited. Security officials detailed the sequence of the attack, including gunfire near the cargo terminal and subsequent stabbing before the assailant was neutralized, underscoring how quickly a routine convoy can become a lethal incident. Border architecture and vetting processes are central to the debate: authorities must keep lifelines of food, medicine, and fuel

flowing while ensuring armed infiltrators cannot exploit humanitarian cover. In practice, that means layered checks, intelligence-led screening, and coordination across ministries and with Jordan's security services. The incident also cast a spotlight on responder readiness, with MDA medics arriving under fire-risk conditions and IDF units rapidly securing nearby approaches. As families grieve, decision-makers weigh tightening protocols against potential bottlenecks that could slow aid deliveries and fuel diplomatic friction. The public conversation will likely include technology upgrades, randomization in inspections, and stricter driver accreditation—all aimed at preserving both compassion and security. (INN/VFI News)

***A Nation's Demographic Ledger in a Time of Trial;*** Fresh figures capturing marriages, divorces, households, and fertility rates offered a sober ledger of life cycles continuing amid war. With total fertility at 2.87 children per woman and an average of just over three people per household, Israel's demographic engine remains relatively robust compared to peer nations. Yet the year-over-year dip in immigration and rise in emigration spotlight cost-of-living pressures, wartime disruptions, and shifting personal calculations. Social planners see both warning signs and strengths: a diversified labor force; a culture of volunteerism that surged since October; and municipal networks adapting services for evacuees, reservist families, and special-needs communities. The coming months will test how schools, clinics, and local councils absorb these patterns, especially where housing tightness and infrastructure limits converge with budget constraints. Even as macro numbers dominate headlines, each line item represents real families mapping futures in a demanding season. Policy remedies—targeted tax relief, workforce retraining, and immigrant integration—can translate statistics into stability. (INN/VFI News)

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