

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update January 1, 2026 (Tevet 12, 5786)

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Happy and Bless New Year!**



For the Yachad Report Newsletter For January 2026

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Israel-Hamas Cease-fire;

Somaliland Rejects Claims That It Will Resettle Gazans in Exchange for Israeli Recognition

- *Ben-Gvir orders multi-agency crackdown on suspected legal violations in Bedouin town*
- *Somaliland rejects claims that Gazans will be resettled on its territory in exchange for state recognition by Israel*
 - *IDF says it shot three Palestinians in West Bank; key IDF intelligence chief dies at 47*
 - *Four Arab Israelis charged with espionage, arms smuggling, wiretapping IDF*
- *Israel to revoke licenses of 37 NGOs, including OXFAM, Doctors Without Borders, citing terror links*
 - *Three settler activists suspected of attacking pregnant woman in Jaffa released to house arrest*
 - *Saudi Arabia bombs Yemen port over weapons shipment from UAE, issues warning to Abu Dhabi*

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If you are interested in having Yachad Ministries to come your church and share about what is going on in Israel and the Middle East, and how the Bible is unfolding right in front of our eyes.

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Trump Orders Christmas Day Strikes on Islamic State Targets in Nigeria; President Donald Trump announced that US forces carried out what he described as a powerful and deadly strike on Islamic State–linked militants in northwestern Nigeria on Thursday, December 25, saying the targets had been primarily attacking Christians. Trump framed the operation as a direct response to escalating violence and warned that further attacks would follow if the killing continued. He emphasized the timing of the strike on Christmas night, presenting it as both a military and moral response to atrocities he said had reached intolerable levels. US Africa Command confirmed the strike was conducted at the request of Nigerian authorities in Sokoto State and said multiple ISIS terrorists were killed. Nigerian officials described the operation as part of ongoing security cooperation with international partners, including intelligence sharing and coordinated targeting. The strike occurred against the backdrop of Nigeria’s widening security crisis, where extremist groups exploit remote terrain and limited government presence to attack villages and religious communities. Trump’s statement marked the first acknowledged US military action in Nigeria during his current term. In recent months, he had sharply criticized Nigeria’s leadership for failing to protect Christian populations from Islamist violence. Nigerian officials and analysts have argued that the violence involves a mix of religious extremism, criminal banditry, and regional instability, but Trump’s remarks elevated the persecution of Christians as a central theme of his foreign policy posture toward Africa. (*NYP/VFI News*)

Iran’s President Says Tehran is in “Total War” with US, Israel, and Europe; Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian declared on Saturday, December 27, that Iran is engaged in “total war” with the United States, Israel, and Europe, accusing Western powers of attempting to break Iran through military action, sanctions, and diplomatic pressure. He described the current confrontation as more complex than the Iran-Iraq War, claiming Iran now faces a coordinated, multi-front campaign aimed at weakening the regime and destabilizing the country internally. Pezeshkian pointed to the reimposition of UN sanctions tied to Iran’s nuclear program and blamed European governments for abandoning diplomatic engagement. He said talks earlier in 2025 collapsed after military escalation and insisted that Iran does not seek nuclear weapons, a claim rejected by the US and its allies. The rhetoric followed months of heightened tensions, including Israeli and American strikes on Iranian military and nuclear facilities. Referring to the June 2025 conflict between Israel and Iran, Pezeshkian said Iran suffered more than a thousand casualties and accused Washington of reviving a maximum-pressure strategy designed to cripple Iran’s economy and oil

exports. His remarks signaled Tehran's view that the confrontation is a prolonged struggle rather than a temporary crisis, raising concerns of continued escalation across the Middle East. (*NYP/VFI News*)

Italian Police Arrest Nine over Alleged Hamas Funding through Charities; Italian prosecutors announced on Saturday, December 27, that nine individuals were arrested on suspicion of financing Hamas through charitable organizations operating in Italy. The investigation, led by anti-mafia and counterterrorism units, focused on networks accused of funneling millions of euros under the guise of humanitarian aid while allegedly directing funds to Hamas-linked entities. Authorities said approximately €7 million was transferred through complex financial routes designed to avoid detection, including the use of foreign organizations and layered transactions. Investigators stressed that the case targeted misuse of charities and was not intended to criminalize legitimate humanitarian assistance. The probe reportedly involved cooperation with European and international partners. Among those arrested was Mohammad Hannoun, described by prosecutors as a central figure in the alleged funding network. Officials said the operation aimed to dismantle financial pipelines that support terrorism while preserving lawful aid structures. The arrests fueled public debate over oversight of charitable organizations and the balance between security enforcement and civil society protections. (*JPost/VFI News*)

Israel Becomes First Country to Recognize Somaliland as Independent State; Israel announced on Friday, December 26, that it had formally recognized Somaliland as an independent state, becoming the first country to do so since the territory declared independence from Somalia in 1991. The agreement was signed by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar alongside Somaliland President Abdirahman Mohamed Abdullahi. Israeli officials described the move as a historic step in expanding ties with Africa and strengthening strategic partnerships in the Horn of Africa. Netanyahu praised the relationship as groundbreaking and pointed to future cooperation in agriculture, technology, and development. Somaliland officials said recognition could pave the way for joining the Abraham Accords and gaining broader international legitimacy. Plans were discussed for opening embassies and formal diplomatic representation between the two entities. The decision sparked immediate backlash from Somalia and several regional and international actors, including Egypt, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia, who reaffirmed support for Somalia's territorial integrity. The African Union warned that the recognition could destabilize regional borders. Somalia sought urgent discussion at the United Nations, highlighting how Israel's diplomatic move has introduced new tensions into an already volatile region. (*TOI/VFI News*)

Al-Shabaab Threatens Israel over Somaliland Recognition; Al-Shabaab issued a threat on Saturday, December 27, warning it would oppose any Israeli involvement in Somaliland following Israel's recognition of the territory as an independent state. The Somalia-based terrorist organization framed the decision as foreign encroachment and accused Somaliland's leadership of betrayal, using the announcement as propaganda to justify potential violence. The group has a long history of deadly attacks in Somalia and the region, including high-profile operations in Kenya. Although previous leaders were eliminated in US strikes, Al-Shabaab remains active and capable. Security analysts warned that diplomatic developments can become rallying points for extremist recruitment and threats beyond Somalia's borders. Somalia's government requested an urgent UN Security Council session on Monday, December 29, while the European Union reiterated support for Somalia's territorial integrity. The threat underscored the security risks accompanying diplomatic shifts in unstable regions and raised concerns for Israeli and Jewish interests abroad. (*INN/VFI News*)

Starmer Faces Backlash over Welcome for British-Egyptian Activist Released from Prison; UK Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer faced criticism after welcoming British-Egyptian dual national Alaa Abd El-Fattah back to the United Kingdom following his release from prison in Egypt. Starmer praised

campaigners and thanked Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sisi for granting a presidential pardon, calling the reunion with family a priority achievement of his government. The welcome drew backlash after resurfaced social media posts attributed to Abd El-Fattah appeared to advocate violence against “Zionists.” Jewish community leaders expressed concern over what they described as an overly celebratory tone at a time of rising antisemitism in Britain. Conservative figures urged clarification on whether Starmer was aware of the activist’s past rhetoric. Government officials emphasized Abd El-Fattah’s British citizenship and the principle of opposing arbitrary detention, while critics argued that support for human rights must be balanced with clear rejection of extremist language. The controversy highlighted tensions between civil liberties advocacy and the responsibility to confront antisemitic and violent rhetoric. (*GR/VFI News*)

NY Governor Steps In to Prevent Demolition of Century-Old Brooklyn Synagogue; New York Governor Kathy Hochul intervened in December 2025 to halt the planned demolition of a historic Brooklyn synagogue threatened by the redevelopment of the former Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center campus. Congregation Chaim Albert, also known as the Kingsbrook Synagogue, fought to preserve the building amid plans tied to state-backed redevelopment projects. Hochul described the synagogue as a testament to Jewish resilience and urged a solution allowing both the hospital redevelopment and synagogue preservation to move forward. Jewish community leaders welcomed the intervention, calling the building a symbol of faith, memory, and continuity. Founded in the early 1900s, the synagogue stands as a reminder of a time when Jews faced discrimination in medical institutions and built their own spaces for care and worship. The preservation battle became a broader statement about protecting Jewish heritage and sacred spaces in modern urban life. (*TOI/VFI News*)

Diaspora Jews Find Meaning and Community Volunteering in Israel during Hanukkah; Young Jewish adults from the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom, and Canada gathered in northern Israel during Hanukkah for a volunteer and educational program based in Safed. The initiative, run by Livnot U’Lehibanot, brought together participants already in Israel through Masa frameworks alongside others who traveled specifically for the week. The focus was on hands-on service, shared Jewish learning, and building genuine community during a season often marked by reflection and vulnerability for Jews worldwide. The program centered on practical volunteer work across northern Israel, including renovation and rebuilding projects aimed at supporting local residents affected by war and displacement. Safed’s Old City provided a spiritual and historical backdrop that encouraged participants to explore identity and purpose without pressure or slogans. Mornings and afternoons were dedicated to tangible work, while evenings emphasized Jewish rhythm through candle lighting, discussion, and communal gatherings that fostered connection across backgrounds and nationalities. Participants described the experience as deeply personal. For some, it was their first time celebrating Hanukkah, observing Shabbat, or volunteering in Israel. One participant said lighting candles together felt like an act of shared defiance against darkness, while others spoke of discovering a version of Jewish life rooted in warmth, belonging, and responsibility rather than fear or defense. Many noted how quickly strangers became a close-knit group through shared labor and spiritual moments. The week also included volunteering in communities such as Kibbutz Malkia, where participants helped repaint a kindergarten and assist elderly residents. These encounters, organizers said, were designed to transform service into relationships. By the end of the program, participants described leaving with renewed connection to Israel, a strengthened Jewish identity, and a conviction that unity is not only something Jews speak about in crisis, but something they can actively live out through service, community, and shared light. (*YNN/VFI News*)

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