

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update January 19, 2026 (Tevet 29, 5786)



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Israel-Hamas Cease-fire

The leaders of Canada, India, Jordan, Pakistan and Paraguay were invited to join U.S. President Trump's Board of Peace, which is meant to manage post-war Gaza.

- ***Israel strikes Hezbollah 'terror targets' in south Lebanon; launches operation in West Bank's Hebron
Gaza medics: Three killed by IDF fire in past day***
 - ***Far-right minister Bezalel Smotrich calls for transfer of Gaza population, Israeli resettlement***
 - ***President of Kazakhstan to join Donald Trump's 'Board of Peace,' spokesperson says***
 - ***Israeli security forces launch multi-day operation in West Bank's Hebron***
 - ***Syrian government reaches cease-fire agreement with Kurdish-led forces***
- ***U.S. Senator Lindsey Graham meets with Netanyahu, Herzog, other high-level officials in Jerusalem***
 - ***Iran's president warns any U.S. attack on Supreme Leader Khamenei would mean 'all-out war'***
 - ***Iran's FM Araghchi's message to Trump prevented U.S. strikes, WSJ reports***

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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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IDF on Alert as US Considers Military Options Against Iran; Israeli defense officials said the IDF is preparing for unexpected contingencies as Washington deliberates its response to Iran's deadly crackdown and destabilizing activity. The report, published on Tuesday, January 13, 2026, noted that Jerusalem believes the White House could choose among military, cyber, or psychological operations, while also signaling to the region that the United States will not tolerate escalation by Tehran's proxies. Against this backdrop, the IDF emphasized vigilance along multiple fronts to preempt spillover or surprise moves. The article added that Israeli assessments read President Trump as determined to keep pressure on the regime, including new economic levers such as punitive tariffs on states working with Tehran. Security planners in Israel are therefore calibrating air defenses and intelligence collection to watch for rapid changes—anything from proxy rocket fire to attempts at retaliation through cyberattacks. The aim is to maintain readiness without telegraphing actions that could trigger further escalation. Officials stressed that while Israel coordinates closely with the US, it must also prepare for scenarios where Tehran or its partners attempt to exploit the uncertainty. That includes tightening cooperation among the IDF, police, and emergency services, and maintaining operational freedom to strike emerging threats. *(TOI/VFI News)*

European Officials Say US Action Against Iran is Imminent; European diplomats told reporters on Wednesday, January 14, that a US operation targeting the Iranian regime appears increasingly likely, with one source saying it could occur within a day. The evolving assessment tracks with stepped-up American force protection, including the precautionary evacuation of some personnel from Middle East facilities. US options reportedly range from cyber operations to strikes on security infrastructure tied to the crackdown on protesters. The same officials said Washington's decision is not final on timing or scope, but momentum is clearly toward action. An unnamed Israeli official was cited as seeing a high probability of intervention, even as the administration gauges regional risks and possible Iranian reprisals. Tehran's messaging has been defiant; a senior adviser warned of significant retaliation if attacked. Jerusalem is reviewing scenarios of proxy responses from Iranian-backed groups, maritime disruptions, or cyber activity targeting civilian infrastructure. Security analysts caution that any US move could prompt short-term turbulence but might also alter the regime's calculus if coupled with diplomatic pressure and economic isolation. *(INN/VFI News)*

US Treasury Chief Says Iranian Leaders are Moving Funds Abroad amid Crisis; The US Treasury Secretary said on Thursday, January 15, that senior figures in Iran are transferring large sums out of the country as unrest intensifies and the economy falters. He described a pattern of tens of millions of dollars being shifted into foreign accounts, interpreting it as a sign of declining regime confidence. The comment came amid severe currency depreciation and reports of nationwide protests facing lethal force. Human-rights monitors have documented thousands of casualties, with observers warning that the full scope of the violence is likely higher than official claims. Israeli officials likewise noted rising hostility toward the regime from within Iran's security ranks, even as leaders try to project control. Meanwhile, allied governments continue to coordinate pressure tactics meant to cut off funding streams to the Islamic

Republic's military and proxy apparatus. Financial flight by elites, if sustained, could further weaken Tehran's ability to stabilize the currency, pay security forces, and subsidize basic goods. Analysts caution that such signals can precede sharper infighting among power centers, creating windows for both reformist and hardline moves. (*JPost/VFI News*)

Tehran Doctors Report Deliberate Blinding and Head Shots Against Protesters; Doctors in Iran's capital told reporters on Wednesday, January 14, that hospitals have treated hundreds of protesters with gunshot injuries to the eyes and head—patterns they say indicate intent to maim and intimidate. Medical personnel described the use of birdshot and other projectiles at close range, leaving many with permanent vision loss and severe trauma. They also believe the death toll from the crackdown is significantly higher than publicly acknowledged. These accounts, coming from inside Tehran, reinforce earlier reports of systematic use of force against demonstrators across multiple cities. Physicians said the sheer number and clustering of injuries at eye level cannot be accidental, and that patients often arrive with additional wounds consistent with crowd-control weapons deployed at short distances. Families are fearful about seeking care due to security presence in and around clinics and hospitals. The grim testimonies have galvanized diaspora communities and renewed calls for targeted sanctions on officers and units implicated in abuses. Rights advocates urge coordination among democracies to support independent documentation, medical protection, and secure passage for vulnerable activists. (*TOI/VFI News*)

Jerusalem Halts Cooperation with Seven UN Bodies, Citing Bias and Waste; Israel's Foreign Ministry announced on Tuesday, January 13, it is suspending ties with seven UN-related entities. The move targets offices and initiatives that officials say have enabled anti-Israel campaigns or maintained ineffective bureaucracies. The list includes the UN's office focused on children in armed conflict, UN Women, UNCTAD, ESCWA, the UN Alliance of Civilizations, UN Energy, and the Global Forum on Migration and Development. The ministry highlighted grievances with specific bodies, such as the IDF's inclusion on a "children and armed conflict" blacklist and what it called the neglect of sexual-violence cases from October 7, 2023. It also criticized repeated reports portraying Israel with entrenched bias and described certain programs as wasteful or misaligned with sovereign border enforcement. Officials said additional UN ties will be reviewed going forward. Jerusalem has for years accused UN frameworks of treating Israel unfairly and has already limited the operations of UNRWA. The latest withdrawals underscore a broader push to recalibrate engagement with international institutions while prioritizing bilateral diplomacy and regional partnerships. (*TOI/VFI News*)

Israel Designates Iran's Bank Melli a Terror Organization; Defense Minister Israel Katz signed an order on Thursday, January 15, designating Bank Melli—an Iranian state lender—a terror organization under Israel's Counter-Terrorism Law. Authorities described the bank as a key conduit for financing the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and the Quds Force, facilitating money laundering and sanctions evasion that channel funds to regional proxy groups. The step, initiated at the recommendation of the National Bureau for Counter-Terror Financing, empowers Israeli agencies to expand seizures and enforcement actions against assets linked to the bank. Officials say the move complements international efforts to restrict the regime's ability to underwrite terrorism, while signaling resolve as tensions mount over potential US action. Financial designations like this can complicate Tehran's networks and deter third-party institutions from risk-laden dealings. Jerusalem is urging allies to adopt parallel measures to amplify pressure and limit the flow of funds to violent actors. (*INN/VFI News*)

Dutch Tulips Bring Color and Comfort to Gaza Border Towns; More than 50,000 tulips are blooming across communities along Israel's border with Gaza, planted from bulbs provided by Christians for Israel, a Netherlands-based organization. Coordinated with the Tekuma Directorate overseeing regional recovery, the project engaged local kindergartens in Eshkol, Sdot Negev, and Hof Ashkelon—inviting

children and families to plant together amid ongoing resilience efforts. Organizers said the initiative reflects a message of deep roots and hope, pointing to biblical imagery about being planted securely in the land. This year's emphasis on the border area follows the trauma of the October 7, 2023, invasion, with flowering beds intended to lift spirits, beautify public spaces, and draw communities together. Visitors from abroad joined Israelis to help and to learn beyond the headlines. The simple act of planting has become a symbol of steadfastness—an expression that life, beauty, and neighborly care continue even after tragedy. As residents navigate recovery, tangible signs of renewal offer encouragement for the season ahead. (TOI/VFI News)

Ukrainian-Led Orchestra Returns to Israel for 11-Concert Tour; While many international acts have hesitated to visit during wartime, the “Lords of the Sound” orchestra—comprised mostly of Ukrainian musicians—has returned for performances across Jerusalem, Ashkelon, and Haifa from January 10–20. Promoters note strong local audiences eager for culture that uplifts, with programs spanning film and symphonic favorites from Hans Zimmer and *The Lord of the Rings* to concerts themed around beloved stories. Organizers said the musicians were encouraged by the calm they experienced in Israel's cities despite ongoing regional tension, and that the tour also reflects artistic solidarity forged since the invasion of Ukraine. For many attendees, the concerts provide a needed respite and a reminder of shared creativity that transcends borders. The return engagement underscores how art and community continue to thrive in adversity—offering moments of joy that strengthen morale and connection. (TOI/VFI News)



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