

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update February 19, 2026 (Adar 1, 5786)



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Israel-Hamas Cease-fire; As Trump Signals Strike on Iran to Ignite Prolonged Conflict, Israel Ramps Up Defense

- *Arab Israelis Look to Ramadan to Restore Calm Amid a Soaring Homicide Toll*
- *Justice Minister Slams 'EU-funded' Legal Challenge to Boycott of Chief Justice*
- *After the IDF announced that Ssgt. Ofri Yafe was killed by Israeli fire in Gaza after being mistakenly identified as a terrorist.*
 - *A day after Israel's High Court of Justice heard petitions filed against the government for not delivering on its years-long commitment to renovate a plaza designated for egalitarian prayer at the Western Wall,*
 - *Satellite Images Show Iran Repairing and Fortifying Sites Amid U.S. Tensions*
 - *From Hamas to Iran, Israel's Disarmament Demands Reveal a Strategy of Perpetual Threat*
 - *Palestinian Authority Forces Killed Two Children While Arresting Their Father in West Bank*

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US Military Preparing for Potentially Weeks-Long Iran Operations; The US military is preparing for the possibility of sustained operations against Iran that could last for weeks if President Donald Trump orders an attack. Two US officials described planning that could lead to a far more serious conflict than previously seen between the countries. The preparations come as diplomacy continues, with military moves in the region adding urgency. The disclosure raised the stakes for efforts aimed at addressing Tehran's nuclear program. US and Iranian diplomats held talks in Oman in early February as Washington built up forces in the region. US officials said on Friday, February 13, that the Pentagon was sending an additional aircraft carrier to the Middle East. The deployment would add thousands more troops, fighter aircraft, guided-missile destroyers, and other capabilities for both attack and defense. The force posture has intensified attention on whether diplomacy can hold. Trump, speaking to US troops on Friday, February 13, said it has "been difficult to make a deal" with Iran. He added that fear can be necessary to "get the situation taken care of." White House spokesperson Anna Kelly said Trump has all options on the table regarding Iran. With planning advancing alongside talks, the next US decision point carries immediate regional implications. (*JPost/VFI News*)

'They Will Fire Every Missile': Israel Braces for Worst-Case Iran Scenario; As the diplomatic channel between the United States and Iran continues, Israel is preparing for war. Jerusalem's red lines are far from Tehran's, which refuses even to consider limits on its missile program. The same missiles caused destruction in Israel during the 12-day war, shaping current planning for Israel's home front. Israel is preparing for scenarios that could shift rapidly from negotiation to confrontation. Iran views its ballistic missile program as a supreme strategic asset and a central tool of deterrence. Assessments described the missile array as capable of paralyzing Israel's home front and inflicting significant damage despite advanced defenses. Lessons from the war reinforced in Tehran the idea that Israel can be worn down through attrition that strains interceptor stockpiles. That experience has kept the missile program at the center of Iran's hard line. Intelligence assessments conclude Iran will not relinquish its missile array even under US pressure in negotiations. Officials described a collision course: an agreement that leaves Israel facing a significant ongoing threat, or a slide toward all-out war. Israel's air defense system—built around seven battalions and five layers—is preparing alongside the US military and possibly an international coalition. Defense planners are positioning capabilities for a fast-moving escalation if talks break down. (*YNN/VFI News*)

Lindsey Graham Attacks Gulf Leaders, Compares Iran's Khamenei to Hitler; Republican US Senator Lindsey Graham criticized Gulf leaders during an interview at the Munich Security Conference on Friday, February 13. Speaking with Christiane Amanpour, he expressed sharp frustration as discussions focused on Iran's future. The comments came during a period of heightened regional tension and renewed

debate over how to confront Tehran. Graham framed the moment as one that demands decisive action. Graham appeared alongside Iranian Crown Prince Reza Pahlavi and European Parliament President Roberta Metsola. He argued that Iran's regime is at its weakest point and said the time has come for US military intervention that he tied to President Donald Trump's January message that "help is on the way." He compared Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei to Adolf Hitler and described the ruling system as driven by fanaticism. He positioned the regime—not the Iranian people—as the source of instability and threat. Graham likened Trump's "help is on the way" statement to Ronald Reagan's 1987 Berlin Wall appeal. He said he and Trump would prefer a diplomatic resolution, but insisted the Iranian regime must fall "one way or another." His remarks placed pressure on regional partners and Washington alike to treat the current window as a turning point. The interview underscored how openly regime change is being discussed in high-level forums. (*JPost/VFI News*)

250,000 Rally in Munich Against Iran's Regime as Pahlavi Urges 'Global Day of Action'; About 250,000 people joined a demonstration against Iran's government in Munich on Saturday, February 14, police said. The protest took place as world leaders gathered nearby for a major security conference. Crowds rallied on the Theresienwiese fairgrounds to voice support for sweeping political change in Iran. The turnout exceeded what organizers had expected. Demonstrators denounced the leadership of Iran's Islamic Republic in the aftermath of the deadly repression of nationwide protests in January. The rally unfolded alongside appearances at the Munich Security Conference by Reza Pahlavi, the exiled son of Iran's former shah. Pahlavi publicly called on US President Donald Trump to help the Iranian people. The timing linked street pressure with international diplomatic attention. Pahlavi urged an outside "humanitarian intervention" aimed at preventing more civilian deaths in Iran. He described the Munich gathering as part of a "global day of action" and called for rallies in Los Angeles and Toronto as well. German police said the crowd reached roughly 250,000, highlighting the scale of mobilization. The demonstrations signaled continued momentum among activists calling for regime change following the January crackdown. (*TOI/VFI News*)

Three Men Jailed in UK Over Islamic State-Inspired Plot to Kill Hundreds of Jews; Three men were jailed in the UK for involvement in and knowledge of a plot aimed at killing hundreds of Jewish people, Greater Manchester Police said. The planned attack targeted the Jewish community in England and was described as Islamic State-inspired. Police said the plot, if carried out, would have been among the deadliest terrorist attacks on UK soil. The announcement was made on Saturday, February 14. Walid Saadaoui and Amar Hussein were convicted of preparing acts of terrorism after a trial at Preston Crown Court. They received minimum sentences of 37 years and 26 years, respectively. Saadaoui's younger brother, Bilel Saadaoui, was convicted of failing to disclose information about acts of terrorism and was sentenced to six years in prison. The convictions marked a major outcome in a long-running counterterror case. Police said Walid Saadaoui masterminded the plot and recruited Hussein to participate. In late 2023, Saadaoui connected online with an individual he believed to be an extremist and pursued plans for a significant attack targeting Jewish people. Investigators said exchanges made clear his intent to carry out a large-scale assault. The sentencing underscored the severity of the threat facing Jewish communities in the UK. (*JPost/VFI News*)

As Anti-Semitism Surges Worldwide, Israel Calls Jewish Diaspora to 'Come Home'; After a Hanukkah celebration on Sydney's Bondi Beach came under gunfire in December, Israel issued a blunt message to Jewish people abroad. Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar said Jewish people are being hunted worldwide and urged the Jewish community in Australia, Britain, France, Canada, and Belgium to return to Israel. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu echoed the call while pressing Western governments to do more to protect Jewish citizens. Israel was presented as the only place where the Jewish people can truly

be safe. The government is moving to back up the message with action. Officials have begun advancing an emergency immigration plan called Aliyat HaTekuma to fast-track immigration from countries seeing a surge in antisemitism. The proposal sets a target of absorbing 30,000 new immigrants in 2026. It includes shorter waiting times, financial support, employment placement, and housing assistance in designated cities. Alongside government efforts, prominent pro-Israel influencers have intensified their appeals for Aliyah. Some messaging has shifted from encouragement to harsher pressure aimed at Jews who remain in the Diaspora. The combined push reflects growing concern over the scale and visibility of anti-Semitism abroad. The plan's rollout signals an expectation that more Jews may choose relocation as threats rise.

(JPost/VFI News)

As 53% of Americans View Israel Unfavorably, Alliance Architecture Must Be Rebuilt;

Cooperation between Israel and the United States has reached new heights under US President Donald Trump. The two countries are working together to tackle Iran, and US troops are in Israel to help implement a plan for Gaza's future. The period has also included steps that Israelis across the political spectrum credit with advancing the release of hostages. Yet despite intense coordination, core assumptions about the relationship are being questioned. The "special relationship" between Israel and the United States is described as being at a crossroads and in need of recalibration. The changes required go beyond sorting out a Gaza ceasefire or defining an approach to Iran. The argument presented is that the architecture of US-Israel cooperation must be rebuilt. A stated goal is to reduce Israel's dependence on American taxpayer funding while preserving America's commitment to Israel's qualitative military edge and Israel's freedom of action. The relationship has long been rooted in shared values and common interests, but public attitudes are shifting. Polls cited from the Pew Research Center found that 53% of Americans view Israel "very unfavorably." The shift adds pressure to rethink how the alliance is sustained politically and strategically. The warning is that future cooperation will require new structures to endure under growing domestic strain in the US. *(JPost/VFI News)*

Direct Flights and Jerusalem Embassy Move Mark Historic Turn in Argentina-Israel Ties;

Argentina's relationship with Israel and the Jewish community is described as entering one of its strongest and most meaningful periods under President Javier Milei. The connection is framed as more than symbolism, tied to democratic values, the defense of freedom, and a firm stance against anti-Semitism. Milei has repeatedly expressed support for Argentina's Jewish community and its role in national life. The tone presented is one of strategic alignment rather than short-term politics. The relationship is also reflected in close institutional ties with DAIA, which represents Argentina's Jewish community in political and civic arenas. The partnership is presented as centered on defending rights, promoting coexistence, and combating discrimination. The emphasis is on a mature, respectful channel of engagement between the government and Jewish communal leadership. The shared approach is described as consistent and explicit since Milei took office. Two developments are highlighted as major milestones in bilateral ties. Direct flights between Buenos Aires and Tel Aviv are described as a long-awaited step expected to strengthen tourism, trade, and community connections. Argentina's decision to open its embassy in Jerusalem in April 2026 is presented as a politically significant move signaling alignment with Israel. Together, the steps are portrayed as concrete actions shaping a new phase in Argentina-Israel relations. *(JPost/VFI News)*

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