

**Israel Today – January 22-24, 2016**  
**Rabbi Howard L. Apothaker, Ph.D.**

*Palestinians*

**Building the Future in Israel** - Yoav Gallant

Israel's Arab accounts for 1.7 million of our 8+ million citizens. We must preserve the rights and freedoms of an open democracy; maintain the respect and tolerance essential for a diverse and pluralistic society. Jews and Arabs must nurture a culture and a country where both peoples can thrive; must execute a plan to fight crime/poverty among our Arab population and build the community's social and economic institutions. We will build a new state-of-the-art Arab city in Israel's north. Jadeidi-Makr will be home to 45K people.

**Change in Israeli Arab Sector** - Amnon Rubinstein

For the first time in years, heads of Arab local authorities have voiced unequivocal support for cooperating w/ Israel, and have urged their publics to abandon the path of conflict. The mayor of the Bedouin town of Rahat: "I propose we change the conversation between us... Let's actually coexist instead of focusing on threats." In October, Nazareth Mayor Salam: "The truth is, there is no other option but to live together.... Coexistence is the only [option], in Israel - between Jews and Israeli Arabs, living side by side, in equality." "I have no problem living in peace in a state w/ a Jewish majority, and I'm telling you that 99% of the Arabs are like me. This is my country and I've never thought ill of Israel."

**Pal. Violence Is Waning** (*JPost*)

**Israel Slams Report on Pals' Rights** (*Xinhua-China*)

Israel's FM Tues. slammed a report which accused companies operating in or dealing w/ W. Bank communities of facilitating the violation of Pals' rights. Meanwhile, The PA's official daily *Al-Hayat* lauded Israeli employers of Pals for their positive employment ethics towards their workers. "Whenever Pal. workers have the opportunity to work for Israeli employers, they are quick to quit their jobs w/ their Pal. employers - for reasons having to do w/ salaries and other rights....The [Israeli] work conditions are very good, and include transportation, medical insurance and pensions. These things do not exist w/ Pal. employers."

**Call for Pal. State w/ East Jerusalem** (*RT-Russia*)

"China firmly supports the ME peace process and supports the establishment of a State of Palestine enjoying full sovereignty on the basis of the 1967 borders and w/ east J-lem as its capital," Chinese Prez Xi told the Arab League Thurs. *Times of Is.*: A member of the Fatah Central Co'ttee: "Don't think that there can be a solution to the Pal. issue by establishing a state the borders of which are limited to the W. Bank and Gaza."

**Prepare for Another War w/ Hamas** (*Ynet*)

Per Israeli defense officials, Hamas feels that it is prepared to wage another war against Israel, to penetrate Israel simultaneously via the air, sea and tunnels, accompanied by mortar fire and a rocket blitz. Booby-trapped tunnels penetrating inside Israel have been newly dug, w/ several openings for each tunnel. Hamas special forces and divers are training, their UAV strength was rebuilt, and their rocket arsenal has been partially restocked. Hamas has instructed its people in the W. Bank to carry out attacks inside the Green Line. Money is pouring into those terror cells as Hamas.

**Double Standards against Israel?**

US Amb. Shapiro asserted on 1/18 that "at times there seems to be 2 standards of adherence to the rule of law - one for Israelis and another for Pals." Indeed, according to the legal situation prevalent in the W. Bank, there are 2 legal frameworks. The one applied by Israel's Civil Admin. vis-a-vis the Pal. residents is based on the int'l norms regarding the administration of territory following armed conflict and pending a peace agreement. The 2<sup>nd</sup> legal framework covers the Israeli residents within the territory who are subject on an *ad-personam* basis to Israeli law. Both these legal systems require strict adherence to the rule of law and the concomitant rules of natural justice. Justice Min. Shaked: "[Mr. Shapiro] uttered a sentence that was, to say the least, incorrect from a factual and a moral standpoint.... We are subjected to a terrorist onslaught that is simply unfamiliar to the US, and to pass judgment on us in such a one-sided manner is wrong." US Amb. Dan Shapiro: "At times there seems to be 2 standards of adherence to the rule of law, one for Israelis, and another for Pals." PM's office: Israel enforces the law equally against Israelis and against Pals

**Sweden's Misunderstands Int'l Law** - Noah Feldman

Per the UN, the standard is that police "may only use lethal force when it is clear an individual is about to kill someone and cannot be detained by other means." Police are supposed to save the innocent and subdue the attackers, by lethal means if necessary. Sweden said that Israelis and Pals "were killed in connection w/ knife attacks." No, the Israelis were killed by Pals after they wielded the knives, attacking Israelis. There's a crucial moral difference between the two kinds of "connection" to the knife attacks.

**Holy War Against Israel** (*Is. Hayom*)

Hamas' Haniyeh declared Tues. that the motive driving the recent wave of Pal. terrorism was the desire to

wage an all-out war against Israel. "This intifada is a *ji-had*, a holy war fought by the Pal. people against the Zionist occupation," Haniyeh said.

### **Stabbings to Death in West Bank Sunday**

(1) A Pal. terrorist entered the home of Dafna Meir and stabbed her to death in front of her teenage daughter. A mother of 6, she worked as a nurse in the Dep't of Neurosurgery at a medical center in Beersheba. (2) Mon: A terrorist stabbed a pregnant woman, moderately injuring her. The stabber was shot. (3)

### *ISIS*

### **The Islamic State: How Viable Is It?**

ISIS has been defeated after encountering organized, determined enemies, e.g., the Kurdish Peshmerga in Iraq, where ISIS's operational capability has been average to below average. Israel must assist the int'l coalition w/ intelligence sharing while focusing on prep for future escalation by ISIS and its allies, and on concerns of destabilization of neighboring countries. J. Neriah: After the US occupational force in Baghdad disbanded the Iraqi army (2003), thousands of trained Sunni officers were robbed of their livelihood, creating some of America's most bitter and able enemies.

### **ISIS's Double Standards, Growing Disillusion** - (AP)

Syrians who have recently escaped ISIS rule say public disillusionment is growing as ISIS fails to live up to its promises to install a utopian "Islamic" rule of justice, equality and good governance. Rather than equality, society has seen the rise of a new elite class - *jihadi* fighters - who enjoy special perks and favor in the courts. *Times of Is*: The West is neglecting the spread of ISIS in Libya, per Israel's head of Israel's Intelligence and Terrorism Info Ctr.

### **The Edge of the Islamic State** (*Ynet*)

An ISIS captive: "The sheikhs said all of the Western countries belong to the Jews. They say 'we'll finish w/ Syria and then go to foreign countries and annihilate them... We won't leave any Christians or Jews alive.... If you catch a Jew, immediately behead him w/ a sword. Call out Allahu Akbar and behead him.'"

### **Israel's Homegrown ISIS Threat** (*USA Today*)

The director of the Int'l Inst. for Counter-Terrorism: "The phenomenon of Israeli Arabs joining ISIS is relevant to the homegrown terrorist phenomenon." While a majority of Israeli Arabs condemn ISIS, there is a high level of sympathy for it, said a Haifa U. sociology prof. who focuses on Israeli-Arab public opinion.

### **Superpower for the Status of Women** (*JPost*)

Israel is a superpower for the status of women. Sexual harassment makes public officials liable to criminal charges. The number of female Knesset members is at an all-time high. Women head the Bank of Israel and the Supreme Court. They hold positions of power in banks, are directors of huge firms and their centrality is growing in the business world as well as in the public arena. In the IDF, a woman has reached the rank of general. Women are presenting and directing the main news broadcasts and determining the public agenda.

### **US Paratroopers Climb Masada** (*US Embassy*)

Paratroopers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade came to Israel to train w/ the IDF and to learn about the country.

### **Israel Warns UN of Hizbullah's Role in Syria**

Israel has warned time and time again that letting Hizbullah's actions go unchecked will result in more death, pain and suffering. Hizbullah indiscriminately fires rockets towards populated areas in Israel, while using the people of Southern Lebanon as human shields."

### *Innovative Israel*

### **Sony to Buy Altair Semiconductor** (*Times of Is.*)

Japanese conglomerate Sony is buying Altair Semiconductor for \$220 million. The Israeli company developed 4G chips, the standard considered by telecom pros to be the next big thing in cellphone data communications.

### **Israel Is a Nanotech Superpower** (*Times of Is.*)

In the past 9 years, Israeli nanotech researchers have filed 1,590 patents (769 granted so far), published 12,392 scholarly articles, and had 129 nano-success stories, which include establishing start-ups, selling ideas or technology to multinationals, or licensing a patent. Currently, there are 1,600+ ongoing research programs between Israeli universities and local or int'l companies studying the application of nanotech research conducted in Israel to a slew of industrial, infrastructure, and info tech issues. For example 3GSolar, which is using nanotech to develop photovoltaic energy cells to allow consumer devices to recharge themselves w/ ordinary lighting, thus eliminating a need for batteries.

### **Currency Converter Raises \$10M** (*Reuters*)

Israel's TravelersBox, which allows travelers to convert leftover foreign currency into digital currency, said Thursday it raised \$10 million. TravelersBox operates kiosks in airports throughout the world where travelers can convert foreign change and bills for deposit into a PayPal account, turned into gift cards for retailers or used to make charitable donations.

### **Cybersecurity Startup Gets \$76M** (*Bloomberg*)

The Israeli-US cyber startup ForeScout said Thur. it had raised \$76 million. Its technology allows companies to monitor all devices on their networks without requiring special software to be installed on each device.

### **Pest-Destroying without Pesticides** (*Times of Is.*)

EdenShield develops nontoxic insect-control solutions derived from natural plant extracts. In greenhouses in Italy where tomatoes are grown, EdenShield's GateKeeper prevented close to 100% penetration of pests and led to a reduction of over 80% in the use of pesticides. It sprays a natural pesticide product intermittently around the entrance and on the greenhouse netting - not on the plants themselves.

### **New Offshore Gas Find by Israel** (*Ha'aretz*)

An Israeli exploration group reported on the discovery of another large natural gas field w/ 8.9 trillion cubic feet of natural gas off Israel's Mediterranean coast.

#### *Encouraging Domestic/Diplomatic News*

### **Indian FM: Ties Israel of "Highest Importance"**

India attaches "the highest importance" to the full dev't of ties w/ Israel, said India's FM Monday. "Our bilateral cooperation has developed well in a number of areas over the past 2 decades, but the potential of our relations is much more." (*JPost*)

### **Israel Is Not Isolated; Sought After** (*Israel Hayom*)

### **Israel Quietly Courts Sunni States** (*WSJ*)

### **Israel, Indonesia Secretly Do Business** (*Times of Is.*)

### **Egypt Votes for Israel in UN** (*NYT*)

### **Israel's Amb. Welcomed in Islamic Rep. of Gambia**

### **Germany to Lease Israeli Drones** (*Reuters*)

### **Cyprus Correcting "Wrong Perception"** (*JPost*)

### **Debt Burden Falls in Israel** (*Globes*)

### **Plunging Oil Prices Raise Is. GDP** (*Globes*)

#### *BDS*

### **Supermarket Brings Back Is. Produce** (*Times of Is.*)

Slovenia's largest supermarket chain will not pull Israeli produce from its shelves. The Slovenian Embassy: "There is no boycott of Israeli products in Slovenia."

### **Re-affirming Opposition to BDSs** (*JTA*)

The Assoc. of Amer. Universities reaffirmed its opposition to boycotts against Israeli academic institutions. "The boycott ... clearly violates the academic freedom not only of Israeli scholars but also of American scholars who might be pressured to comply w/ it."

### **EU Again Criticizes Settlements** (*Times of Is.*)

The EU Mon. affirmed its decision to require products made in settlements be labeled as such: "All agreements

between the State of Israel and the EU must unequivocally and explicitly indicate their inapplicability to the territories occupied by Israel in 1967." The EU FMs emphasized that this stance "doesn't constitute a boycott of Israel which the EU strongly opposes." The Israel Min. of Foreign Affairs castigated the "double standard." "Out of 200 territorial conflicts in the world, the EU discriminates only against Israel. Israeli diplomats are working in Europe to soften the EU stance.

#### *Iran*

### **US's New Sanctions over Iran Missile Tests** (*NYT*)

The Administration announced Sun. that it was imposing new, more limited sanctions on some Iranian citizens and companies for violating UN resolutions against ballistic missile tests.

### **Oil Glut Dampens Iran's Hopes** (*WashPost*)

When int'l sanctions tightened in 2012 and took nearly 700K barrels a day of Iranian crude oil off world markets it sold @ \$109.45 per barrel. Now oil is @ \$25 a barrel, >25% lower. The result: Int'l oil companies are less likely new investments in Iran's oil fields.

### **US Finds Iran in Compliances** (*The Hill*)

The US Sat. lifted sanctions against Iran after the UN nuclear watchdog certified Iran has fulfilled its promises under the nuclear deal. Iran will receive at least \$50 billion of its own money held in restricted accounts. Existing US sanctions will remain in place on Iranians connected to the country's human rights abuses and support for terrorism.

### **Four Americans in Prisoner Swap w/ US** (*LA Times*)

For the 4 Americans freed from Iranian jails, Wash. agreed to pardon or drop charges against 7 Iranians trying to circumvent sanctions against Iran and dismissed charges and removed Interpol alerts against 14 Iranian fugitives. *WashPost*: Tehran said it would not be freeing another an Iranian-American businessman based in Dubai who was arrested in Oct., and were silent on the fate of former FBI agent Robert Levinson. The CIA ultimately concluded that it was responsible for Levinson while he was in Iran and paid \$2.5 million to his wife.

### **Iran to Test New Missiles Despite US Sanctions**

Iran will unveil new missiles in defiance of new US sanctions over its missile program. "[Any] attempt to impose new sanctions [against Iran] under irrelevant pretexts is...a futile effort to undermine Iran's defense might," per Iran's FM. (*Press TV-Iran*)

### **Is It Iran's Middle East Now?** - Jonathan Spyer

Iran is well placed to roll back US influence in the region and to work towards Israel's destruction. Re: the export of chaos, it is difficult to see how it can result in

regional hegemony and leadership. Iran is a spoiler par excellence, but it does not look like the founder of a new ME order. *Dr. J. Spyer is Dir. of the Rubin Ctr.* Elliott Abrams: When the US appears unable to differentiate between enemies and allies, it gets fewer allies and its enemies grow stronger. America's friends are without doubt thinking, "If this is how the Americans react to their own humiliation through an aggressive act, how will they react when *we* are in danger? Bret Stephens: Iran will become a "normal" country only when it ceases to be an Islamic Republic. In the meantime, the only question is how far we are prepared to abase ourselves in our quest to normalize it.

#### **All Options Available to Counter Iran?** (*JPost*)

The lead US negotiator for the Iran nuclear deal, Wendy Sherman, told the Inst. for Nat' Security Studies in Tel Aviv that she believes that the deal "prevents Iran from having a nuclear weapon...forever." Sherman said that if Iran cheated, "all options that the US has, that we all have, remain completely available.

#### **UN Monitoring Arms Embargo on Iran** (*AP*)

The UN Security Council will increase its monitoring on an arms embargo on Iran and restrictions on its ballistic missiles and other programs. The deal keeps the UN's arms embargo on Iran for up to 5 years, while UN restrictions on the transfer of ballistic missile tech to Tehran could last for up to 8 more years.

#### **Economic Power in Post-Sanctions Era** (*Reuters*)

Iran's Rev. Guards did well under int'l sanctions. A Western diplomat estimated their activities had an annual turnover of \$10-12 billion from a wide range of industries, including energy, tourism, auto production, telecommunications and construction.

#### **Iranian Threats to Security** - Michael Singh

Iran's security strategy hinges on projecting power beyond its borders while creating a hostile security environment for the US and its allies. Iran has cultivated asymmetric capabilities to compensate for its conventional military weakness, building, training, arming, and funding proxies and allies - destabilizing activities upon which US and its allies must impose costs. The next Prez should seek ways to support human rights in Iran – likely only after a broader political shift within Iran itself. about. E. Lerman: This Iran is obsessed w/ destroying Israel, w/ Hizbullah in Lebanon; Hamas which it has armed for years; and Pal. Islamic Jihad. A. Fishman: To Israel, Iran remains #1 threat - not ISIS or al-Qaeda. The world will move on from Iran, but Israel hasn't that luxury. A. Issacharoff: For relatively moderate Sunni states, the removal of sanctions constitutes a grim day, deepening Iran's capacity to back destabilizing forces in Sunni

states and beyond. C. Krauthammer: Iran hasn't forfeited its status as the world's greatest purveyor of terrorism. M. Herzog: The IAEA's announcement to close the file on Iran's past military-related nuclear activities was motivated by int'l will to implement the deal while focusing on the future rather than the past. The file should remain open, lest the message: Brinkmanship works. Iran increased its annual defense budget by 30+% compared to the previous year. During the nuke negotiations the West avoided robust action to counteract Iran's aggressive meddling in regional conflicts for fear of undermining the deal. The West must invest more, not less, attention, resources and most of all resolve in deterring Iran.

#### **Core of Arak Reactor Removed** (*Fars News*)

Iran has taken out the heart of its heavy water reactor in Arak in compliance with the nuclear deal, an informed source told *FNA* on Monday.

#### Some Not-So-Great News

#### **Anti-Semitism Threatens French Jews** (*WashTimes*)

Reported anti-Semitic hate crimes in France stood at 851 in 2015. Comprising 1% of France's population, over half of the reported hate crimes in France were in 2014 were against Jews. 80+% of incidents are not reported.

#### **NGO Funding Data Base** (*NGO Monitor*)

Some 20 political NGOs in Israel receive 50+% of their funding from foreign gov'ts. The EU is the largest gov'tal donor to these political NGOs, followed by Norway and Germany

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