

**KFIR**

# MIDDLE EAST UPDATE

Week of October 13, 2017



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# THIS WEEK'S HEADLINES

U.S. President Donald Trump said in an interview broadcast on Saturday that he wanted to try to achieve peace between Israel and the Palestinians before making good on a campaign promise to relocate the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

Hezbollah 'determined' to add attack inside US. National Counterterrorism Center Director Nicolas Rasmussen details terror attacks carried out and planned by Hezbollah. He says the State Dept's work to counter Hezbollah is "every bit as much priority" as its work against Al Qaeda.

The United States announced Thursday that it is withdrawing from the United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), citing financial considerations, the need for reform and the organization's "continuing anti-Israel bias."





# BREAKING NEWS

## **Fatah, Hamas sign Palestinian reconciliation**

Palestinian negotiators from rival Hamas and Fatah factions signed a reconciliation deal on Thursday, ending a decade-long split following talks mediated by Egypt in Cairo, with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas calling it a “final” accord.

Under the agreement, the West Bank-based Palestinian Authority is to resume full control of the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip by December 1, according to a statement from Egypt’s government.

One of the key sticking points will be the fate of Hamas’s 25,000-strong military wing, the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades.

Reconciliation could also pose a dilemma for international efforts to reach an Israeli-Palestinian peace deal since Hamas has not recognized Israel, and is vowed to its destruction, unlike the Abbas-led Palestine Liberation Organization.





# ISIS IN GOLAN

Several senior commanders from Islamic State who recently fled from Iraq and northern Syria are now based in southern Syria, just across the Golan Heights border with Israel, and are training hundreds of new recruits there, an Israeli television report said.

Israel's Channel 2 said the commanders have made their way to an Islamic State-controlled enclave "close to the border" with Israel. They have set up a training camp to which they have recruited 300 local youths, said the report, which showed footage apparently of the camp and training sessions.

Among the commanders is one of Islamic State's most notorious recruiters, Abu Hamam Jazrawi, the TV report said.





# PRIESTLY BLESSING & SIMCHAT TORAH

Approximately 50,000 people gathered at the Kotel (the Western Wall) on Sunday to receive the priestly blessing from hundreds of *Kohanim* (Jewish men of the priestly caste) during the festival holiday of Sukkot. Jews and non-Jews, religious and secular, people from all over the world, filled Jerusalem for the holiday that, in Temple times, was a universal celebration honoring the God of Abraham.

Simchat Torah (Dancing with the Torah) also falls within this week. This marks the beginning of the new Torah cycle. Our KFIR readings schedule follows the weekly Torah readings as well.



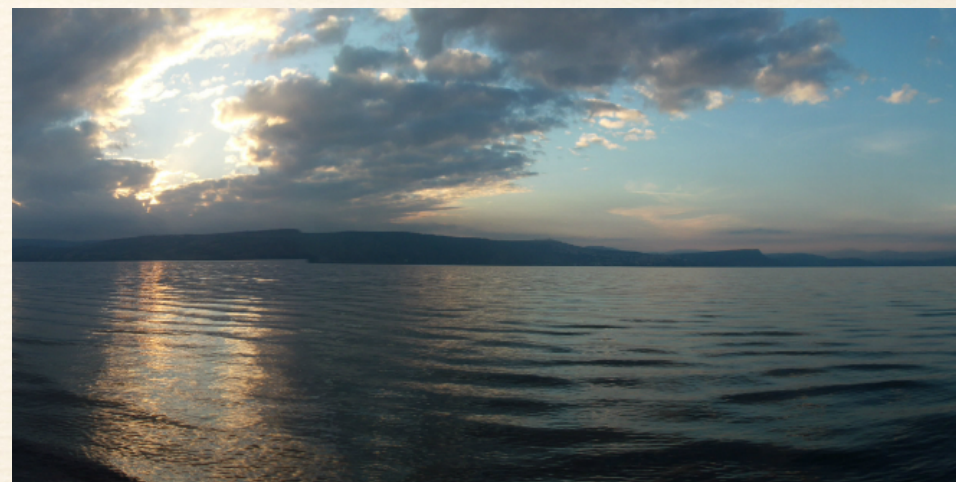


# RAIN ON SUKKOT

In the first rain of the season, prayers were answered as thousands huddled into President Reuven Rivlin *sukkah*, a temporary dwelling used during the week-long Jewish festival of Sukkot.

The President of Israel opened his sukkah for the public on Monday, October 9, for Israeli families and guests from overseas to enjoy educational displays about Sukkot, theatrical and musical performances, arts and crafts, and exhibitions. However, the grand plans were temporarily disrupted by a virtual downpour on the sukkah, soaking guests, many of whom saw the rain – the first of the season – as the fulfillment of prayers.

According to the sages, on Sukkot, God judges the people and determines how much rain will fall in the coming year. The *mishna* in *Rosh Ha-Shana* (1:2) establishes: "At four seasons [Divine] judgment is passed on the world... And on the festival [of *Sukkot*] judgment is passed in respect of rain."





# BIBI'S BIBLE STUDY

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu continued a longstanding tradition when he hosted a Bible study group at his residence in Jerusalem. This tradition has deep roots in the first-family and has Biblical significance for leaders of Israel.

The Bible study group was a tradition begun by David Ben Gurion. "There is no Jewish existence without the Bible; it doesn't exist," the prime minister said. "In my opinion, there is also no Jewish future without the Bible."

The Netanyahu clan's connection to the Bible is strongly reminiscent of the Biblical commandment for a king of Israel to write a personal Torah scroll. The Torah mandates that the bond between the ruler and the Bible be constant and unbreakable, similar to the manner embodied by the Netanyahu family.





# TRUMP & N. KOREA

North Korea's leadership has told Russian lawmakers that it possesses a ballistic missile with a range of 3,000 kilometers (1,865 miles) that will be able to reach U.S. territory after modernization, the Interfax news agency reported on Tuesday.

North Korea aims to increase the range of its ballistic missiles to 9,000 kilometers (5,600 miles), North Korea has repeatedly threatened that its intercontinental ballistic missile can hit the mainland United States.

U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said Monday that the country's military leaders must "be ready" with military options for President Donald Trump to deal with North Korea should diplomacy fail.

Russia and China called for restraint on North Korea on Monday after U.S. President Donald Trump warned over the weekend that "only one thing will work" in dealing with Pyongyang, hinting that military action was on his mind.





# IRAN NUKE DEAL?

Iran has made numerous attempts to obtain illegal technology that could be used for its military nuclear and ballistic missile programs, according to three German intelligence reports obtained by *Fox News*.

According to Tuesday's *Fox News* report, the first German intelligence details "32 procurement attempts ... that definitely or with high likelihood were undertaken for the benefit of proliferation programs" after the 2015 nuclear deal was signed.

According to the report, all the attempts took place in the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia.

The intelligence report, which covered only the year 2016 and only in one province in Germany, calls into question Iran's compliance with the agreement.

In 2015, the agency recorded 141 attempts by Iran to purchase supplies for its illicit programs

In a second intelligence report obtained by *Fox News*, the German state of Hessen said Iran, Pakistan, North Korea and Sudan use "guest academics" in the country for illegal activities related to nuclear and other weapons programs.





# HEZBOLLAH

## **Hezbollah Still Pursuing 'Destruction of Israel,' Top US Congressman Warns at Iranian Threat Hearing by Ben Cohen**

The chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee issued a stark reminder on Wednesday that Hezbollah – the Lebanese Shia terrorist organization backed by Iran – is “well positioning itself to intensify its original mission: the destruction of Israel.”

Delivering introductory remarks at a committee hearing on “confronting the full range of Iranian threats,” Congressman Ed Royce (R-CA) said Hezbollah was now “ascendant in Lebanon,” with “thousands of fighters in Syria” as well.

“This terrorist organization is building a deadly rocket arsenal, ready to rain terror on the Jewish state,” Royce continued. “I was in Israel during the 2006 Hezbollah rocket campaign. Its capabilities then, quite substantial, are far more concerning today.”

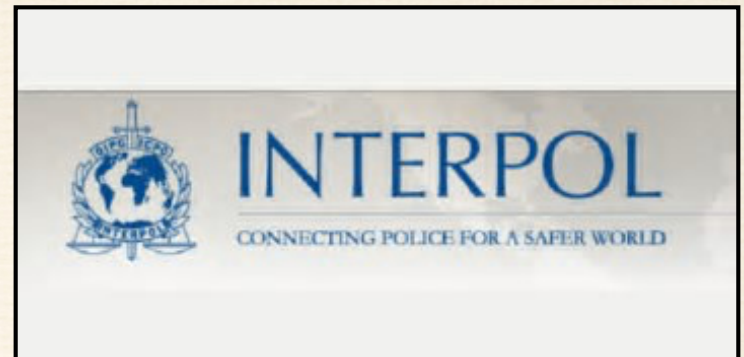




# THE ABSURDITIES

To say the news is filled with absurdities is an understatement. Consider the following:

1. How absurd is it that the terrorist entity known as the Palestinian Authority was voted into Interpol, an international police organization whose mission is to fight terrorism and crime?
2. How absurd is it that a US "peace delegation" arrived in Israel just as three Israelis were murdered by Palestinian Arab terrorists, and the head of the PA, Mahmoud Abbas, applauds their heinous act?
3. How absurd is it that the UN Human Rights Council, whose membership consists of fascistic, terrorist states, holds court on a regular basis solely to bash and malign Israel?



**"I will NEVER allow a single Israeli to live among us, on Palestinian Land"**



Mahmoud Abbas, to Egyptian media, 28 July





# QUOTE OF THE WEEK



*We need the Torah for everything in life! It shows us the way! It teaches us what's right! It brings meaning and fulfillment to our lives! Be sure to attend Simchat Torah services and dance with the Torah! (As Christians may we have the same passion with the Torah as well as with the whole of Scripture!)*





# HGE UPCOMING TOURS

## HOLY GROUND EXPLORATIONS ISRAEL TOURS



### **'OFF THE BEATEN PATH' TOUR**

**HIGHLIGHTS: Jeep Tours - Judean Desert and the Golan Border**

**Pre Tour - PETRA\***

**\*Nov 9-12 / Beaten Path -Nov 12-20, 2017**

### **2018 ISRAEL TOURS**

**'EXPERIENCE ISRAEL' - APR 22-MAY 1**

**'JOURNEY THRU ISRAEL' - MAY 2-10**

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