

**HGE - MIDDLE EAST UPDATE - WEEK OF FEBRUARY 9, 2018**

**KFIR**



**YOUNG LIONS CLUB**

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# HEADLINES

*A London paper reports that Hamas believes an attack by Israel is imminent. Netanyahu responds that Israel "not interested" in war but will defend itself*

*U.S. Ambassador to Israel David Friedman tweets: "20 years ago I gave an ambulance to Har Bracha hoping it would be used to deliver healthy babies. Instead, a man from Har Bracha was just murdered by a terrorist, leaving behind a wife and four children. Palestinian "leaders" have praised the killer. Praying for the BenGal family." [[Twitter](#)]*



# SAEB EREKAT



Senior Palestinian official Saeb Erekat on Saturday accused the Trump administration of trying to depose the Palestinian leadership in a “coup” and told the “impudent” US envoy to the United Nations Nikki Haley she should “shut up” with her criticism of Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas.



“Nikki Haley needs to shut up and realize that the Palestinian leadership is not the problem,” the top PLO official added. “Instead, the problem is the Israeli occupation and the policies it continues to pursue. I’m not saying that we don’t make mistakes; every society and every government makes mistakes.”



# BIBI NETANYAHU



Amid tensions on northern front and Gaza border, PM says Israel is the 'main factor' hindering radical Islam in Middle East. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Sunday that his government "does not seek war" but will do "everything" to defend the country, amid rising tensions on the Lebanon front and the Gaza border. "We do not seek war, but we will do everything that's needed to defend ourselves," he said.



Housing Minister Yoav Galant, a former IDF major general and a member of the security cabinet, warned on Saturday that Israel would sent Lebanon "back to the stone age" should the Lebanese-based Hezbollah terror group take military action.



# EGYPT / ISRAEL



According to reports in major media outlets, Israel carried out more than 100 drone and airstrikes against Islamists in the Sinai Peninsula, with the approval of Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi.

"Once enemies in three wars, then antagonists in an uneasy peace, Egypt and Israel are now secret allies in a covert war against a common foe," *NYT* reporter David Kirkpatrick wrote. The Egyptian military has been struggling to control Islamic State (ISIS) affiliated forces in the northern Sinai Peninsula for the last five years. Israel stepped in to help after Islamist fighters captured a town in the northern Sinai and downed a Russian commercial airliner in 2014, killing 224 people.



# SCORE SETTLED



Defense Minister Avigdor Liberman praised security forces Tuesday for the killing of Ahmad Nasser Jarar, a resident of Jenin who is believed to have played a role in the January 9 murder of Rabbi Raziel Shevach near Havat Gilad.

"We have settled the score," Liberman said in a statement. "It was clear that it was only a matter of time until we got to the head of the cell that murdered Rabbi Shevach. "Let all terrorists who try to harm the citizens of this country that our security forces will find you and settle the score with you," added Yesh Atid Party Chairman Yair Lapid.



# RUSSIA / PA



When they meet on Feb 12, PA President Mahmoud Abbas and Russian President Vladimir Putin will discuss a new proposed peace negotiations mechanism meant to sideline the United States, a Palestinian diplomat in Russia told the Russian Interfax news agency on Wednesday.

Interfax reported the new mechanism would seek to replace the Middle East Quartet, established in Madrid in 2002, which is composed of the US, the UN, the EU and Russia.

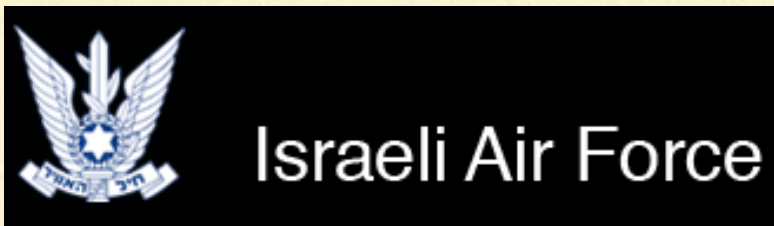
The announcement comes as the PA is trying to convince Russia to play a much more prominent role in the peace talks, having declared the US unqualified to act as an “honest broker” due to President Donald Trump’s recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital.



Official Website of President Mahmoud Abbas



# DAMASCUS



Israel struck targets in the Damascus area in the early hours of Wednesday morning, Syrian state television said. According to the report Syrian air defense systems "were employed against the latest Israeli aggression." The pro-regime Al-Masdar News website said the IDF had fired several missiles at targets in the countryside West of Damascus, "targeting the area around the Iranian base in the town of Jamraya."

Al Masdar quoted Syrian military sources as saying a number of missiles hit their targets, causing loud explosions that could be heard throughout Damascus, while several other missiles were intercepted by Syrian air defense systems.



# QUOTE

"Terrorists never need another reason to carry out attacks. The mere fact that we Jews have a state made us a target. They don't really need Trump to encourage them to wage terror against us. We suffered terror during the 1990s and during the 2000s without Trump. Trump is only a fig leaf to cover the real motivation to wipe us all out from this country." - [Dr. Mordechai Kedar](#)



# UPCOMING TOURS

ENGAGING ISRAEL - MARCH 8-16

EXPERIENCING ISRAEL - APRIL 22-MAY 1

OFF THE BEATEN PATH - OCTOBER 9-18

PETRA / JERASH / MT. NEBO EXTENSION OCTOBER 18-23

