



War in Israel: Update on Current Situation

September 25, 2025 - October 7 War, Day 720, 48 hostages remain in captivity

LATEST UPDATES

As Prime Minister Netanyahu heads to New York with other world leaders, two soldiers have fallen in Gaza, and the possibility of a ceasefire deal is yet again gaining momentum.

Watch Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's [video message to global Jewry](#) for Rosh Hashanah.

Gaza

- Last night, IDF Staff Sergeant Chelchao Shimon Damalesh, 21, was **killed in the Gaza Strip**, where he was guarding a building in which fellow soldiers were sleeping. The shooter escaped and remains at large. Damalesh is the 912th IDF soldier killed since October 7, 2023.
- On the first day of Rosh Hashanah, IDF Major Shachar Netanel Buzaglo, a platoon commander in an armored brigade, was **killed by an RPG** (rocket-propelled grenade) in Gaza City.
- The IDF has now **significantly expanded its ground offensive in Gaza City**, deploying three divisions – the 98th, 162nd, and 36th – as part of Operation Gideon's Chariots II. These forces have taken control of key areas, including 40% of Gaza City, and struck over 850 targets, including high-rise buildings used by Hamas for surveillance and command operations. See photos and video [here](#).
- According to the UN, **over 450,000 Palestinians have fled Gaza City** in recent days – around half of the city – most heading to the humanitarian safe-zones set up by Israel in the south of the Strip.
- **Negotiations between Israel and Hamas have intensified**, with Egypt, Qatar, and the United States attempting to mediate a new phase of talks aimed at ending the war and securing the release of the remaining hostages. Some reports suggest that Hamas will agree to a 60-day ceasefire and the release of half the hostages on condition that President Trump give his personal assurance that Israel will respect the ceasefire during that time.
- The **Global Sumud Flotilla**, a so-called “civilian aid convoy” of over 50 vessels en route to Gaza, has made little progress due to bad weather, internal disagreements and other factors. Strong internal tensions have been reported, and climate activist Greta Thunberg was removed from the flotilla's steering committee due to arguments over strategy. Additionally, several Muslim participants resigned in protest over the inclusion of LGBTQ+ activists, accusing the organizers of concealing participant identities and pushing “unrelated agendas.” Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs [announced](#), “We have another proposal for the Hamas-Sumud flotilla: If this is not about provocation and serving Hamas, you are welcome to unload any aid you might have at any port in a nearby country outside Israel, from which it can be transferred peacefully to Gaza. Israel will not allow vessels to enter an active combat zone and will not allow the breach of a lawful naval blockade. Is this about aid or about provocation?”

Houthi Attacks

- A drone launched by Iran-backed Houthi militants in Yemen **struck a shopping area in Eilat** yesterday, the second day of Rosh Hashanah.
- The attack **injured at least 22 people**, including two who are in serious condition.
- The Israeli Air Force **failed to intercept the drone** with Iron Dome missiles and other means, prompting investigations and renewed calls for stronger defensive measures.
- As a result of the numerous drone attacks on Eilat, Israel's **new Laser Beam Defensive System will be deployed for the first time**, to protect the city.
- While missile launches from Yemen continue to send millions of Israelis dashing to shelters every few days, such attempts by the Houthis have never been successful. Conversely, the Iran-backed group's pinpoint drone (**UAV**) **attacks continue to challenge Israeli defenses**.

Diplomacy

- Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin **Netanyahu departed Israel last night for the UN General Assembly** in New York. As he boarded the plane, he said, "At the UN, I will tell our truth.... I will condemn those leaders who, instead of condemning the murderers, rapists and burners of children, want to give them a state in the heart of Israel. This will not happen." Netanyahu then added, "In Washington, I will meet – for the fourth time – with President Trump and I will discuss with him the great opportunities our victories have brought, and our need to complete the war objectives: To return all of our hostages, to defeat Hamas and to expand the circle of peace that has occurred for us in the wake of our historic victory in Operation Rising Lion and the other victories that we have achieved."
- Prime Minister Netanyahu's flight to New York took an unusually long route, deliberately **avoiding the airspace of most European countries** – including France and Spain – due to concerns over the International Criminal Court (ICC) arrest warrant issued against him for alleged war crimes in Gaza. Although France had granted permission for Netanyahu's plane to fly over its territory, his office opted for a safer path over Greece and Italy, purportedly to avoid the risk of an emergency landing that could trigger enforcement of the warrant. The detour added hundreds of kilometers to the journey. Some Israeli reporters have suggested that the changed route was not the result of a genuine threat, but rather a choice made by the Prime Minister to snub France.
- Yesterday, President Trump held a **high-stakes meeting with leaders from eight Arab and Muslim-majority countries** – Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Egypt, Turkey, Jordan, Indonesia, Pakistan and the UAE – on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, to discuss ending the war in Gaza. According to many media reports, Trump presented a 21-point peace plan that includes a proposed Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, deployment of Arab and Muslim forces for stabilization, and reconstruction funding, while explicitly excluding Hamas from any future governance. He also pledged to prevent Israeli annexation of the West Bank, a move Arab leaders warned could collapse the Abraham Accords and derail regional diplomacy. While the meeting was described as "fruitful" by participants, no formal ceasefire agreement was reached. Israel was not directly involved in the talks.
- Israel has acknowledged that it is engaged in **advanced negotiations with Syria**, aimed at reaching a security agreement following the collapse of the Assad regime and escalating violence in southern Syria. The talks, mediated by the United States and supported by Jordan, focus on demilitarizing southwestern Syria, safeguarding the Druze community and establishing buffer zones modeled on the 1979 Egypt-Israel peace treaty. Israel has proposed a phased withdrawal from recently seized territories (excluding Mount Hermon, which it considers strategically vital). Syria, led by President Ahmed al-Sharaa, insists on restoring the 1974 disengagement agreement and securing international monitoring. While both sides have expressed cautious optimism, some gaps remain, particularly over airspace control and

territorial sovereignty. The outcome of these negotiations could reshape regional dynamics and pave the way for a peace treaty between the two countries. An initial agreement may come soon.

- France, the UK, Canada, Australia, Portugal and Belgium are just a handful of the over 155 UN member states that now formally recognize the **State of Palestine**. The recognitions were announced during the opening of the 80th session of the UN General Assembly, co-chaired by France and Saudi Arabia; they are part of a renewed effort to achieve a two-state solution.
- A recent survey published by the UK's Telegraph newspaper reveals that only **13% of Britons support recognizing a Palestinian state** without any conditions, with support among Labour voters dropping to just 11%. A majority of 87% oppose unconditional recognition, and 51% specifically reject recognition while Hamas remains in control of Gaza, and hostages have not been released. The findings highlight a significant disconnect between Prime Minister Keir Starmer's anticipated move and public sentiment.
- Referring to the recognitions, **Israel's President Isaac Herzog** [said](#), "It will not help one Palestinian, it won't help free one hostage and it will not help us reach any settlement between Israelis and Palestinians. It will only embolden the forces of darkness. This is a sad day for those who seek true peace."
- While US President Donald Trump condemned the recognitions as a "**prize to terrorism**," most UN member states emphasized that recognition supports peace and excludes Hamas from future governance. Nonetheless, Hamas celebrated the recognitions, a point noted by Israel in arguing that the terror group is the principal beneficiary of the recognitions.
- Palestinian Authority President **Mahmoud Abbas** (Abu Mazen) was denied a US visa to attend the UN General Assembly in person. He delivered a televised speech condemning the October 7 attacks and affirming that Hamas will not govern the future Palestinian state.
- The Israeli government and coalition members harshly criticized the recognitions, calling for the **immediate annexation of parts of the West Bank** in response. Opposition figures in Israel also stated that they opposed the recognitions but insisted that annexation is not an appropriate response.

Other News

- To mark one year since the war in Israel's north (Operation Northern Arrows) against Hezbollah, the IDF has **released new footage** from the fighting in Southern Lebanon:
 - [IDF activities](#) during Operation "Northern Arrows"
 - IDF [nighttime activities](#) during the war
 - [Underground terror infrastructure](#) located and dismantled during the operation
 - Footage of [weapons located](#) and confiscated during the fighting
 - [Photos](#) of IDF activity during the operation
- The Jewish People Policy Institute's Annual Assessment for 5785 (2024–2025) was presented this week to President Isaac Herzog. Among its **main findings**:
 - **Antisemitism** is at record highs globally, contributing to a sharp decline in Jewish resilience.
 - Most indicators of Jewish well-being — cohesion, identity, resilience and geopolitics — show **negative or worsening trends**.
 - **Demography remains stable** and positive, led by growth in Israel, though emigration of young secular Israelis is rising.
 - **Cohesion weakened** after the initial unity post-October 7, with renewed polarization over the war and Haredi draft exemption.
 - Geopolitical **isolation is increasing**, with mounting criticism of Israel and international moves to recognize Palestine.
 - Israel-US relations remain strong but **politically fragile**.
 - Jewish identity among younger Jews has seen an overall decline; however, there are also higher levels of philanthropy and volunteering in that demographic.

- The JPPI report **recommended**:
- Define a clear political objective for Gaza's "day after," including rehabilitation and governance transfer.
- **Restrain extremist rhetoric** and halt inflammatory declarations.
- Launch **proactive diplomacy** with Europe, Asia, and moderate Arab states.
- Institutionalize **Diaspora involvement in Israeli decision-making**.
- Pursue pragmatic **constitutional reform** and resolve ultra-Orthodox conscription.
- Strengthen ties with the **new Israeli Diaspora** and improve immigrant absorption services.
- Develop a national plan, **led by Israel**, to **combat antisemitism**.
- Establish **international study tracks at Israeli universities** to attract Jewish students.
- Read the [full report here](#).

Further Reading

- [The implications of increased international recognition of a Palestinian State](#)
- [Israel Unites Against Hollow Recognition of Palestine, but PM Could Be Pushed Too Far](#)
- [The IDF's Learning Curve Following October 7 and Its Global Implications](#)
- [Five Years On: Are the Abraham Accords Here to Stay?](#)
- [College Campuses Have Gotten Scary. They Don't Have to Be](#)

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