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Israel's Operation Swords of Iron Update April 1, 2024

JINSA's [Israel at War](#) webpage is a dedicated resource for analysis, commentary, webinars, and media coverage about the 10/7 attacks and the ensuing Israel-Hamas conflict. JINSA will release the Swords of Iron Update on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. An update with the latest information and analysis about the war is below.

Analysis

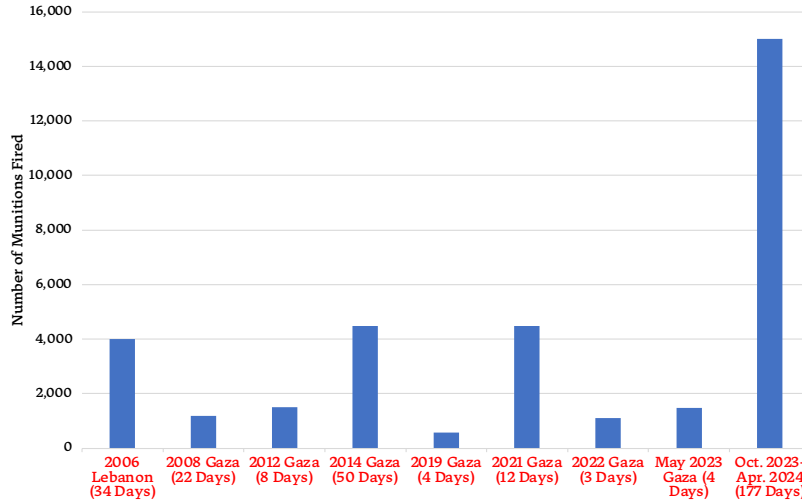
- A [report](#) in *Axios* on April 1 indicating that U.S. and Israeli officials will meet virtually today to discuss the Biden administration's alternative plan for a Rafah operation could signal a slight repair of the relationship between the two governments following the rift last week. Prime Minister Netanyahu had canceled a delegation visit to Washington scheduled for last week after the United States abstained from voting on a United Nations Security Council resolution that called for a ceasefire and the release of the hostages but did not condition the former on the latter.
 - » However, the Biden administration has pushed Israel to conduct only targeted strikes instead of a full-scale offensive. Any U.S. pressure on Israel to delay its operation in Rafah or to avoid a ground operation into Hamas's last stronghold in Gaza could allow the terrorist group to survive and continue to hold hostages.
- Although reports have indicated that the United States has slow-walked or avoided providing some weapons to Israel, the United States has reportedly continued to provide it with powerful munitions.
 - » While Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen Charles Q. Brown [indicated](#) on March 28 that the United States was not "willing" to provide certain weapons to Israel, *The Washington Post* [reported](#) that the Biden administration approved a new weapons transfer to Israel worth billions of dollars, including over 1,800 MK84 2,000-pound bombs and 500 MK82 500-pound bombs.

Last 72 Hours

Attacks Against Israel

- At least 15,000 rockets, mortars, drones, and other projectiles have been fired at Israel from all fronts combined during the war, according to JINSA data.

Projectiles Fired Against Israel During Major Conflicts



- *The Times of Israel* [reported](#) on April 1, citing unnamed defense sources, that police and Shin Bet internal security agency operatives arrested Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh’s sister for allegedly communicating with Hamas operatives and supporting terrorism.
- Israel’s *Makor Rishon* outlet [reported](#) on April 1 that Prime Minister Netanyahu urged lawmaker and coalition chairman Ofir Katz to ensure that a law authorizing the government to shut down *Al Jazeera*’s broadcasting in Israel is voted on that day.
 - » According to the report, the legislation, which gives the Prime Minister unilateral authority to shut down the channel, is expected to pass.
 - » Several Knesset members released a statement contending that the network “serves as the mouthpiece of the Hamas movement, broadcasts from within the territory of Israel while transmitting information to our enemies, [and incites] against the State of Israel.”
- On March 31, Israeli authorities [reported](#) that 23 individuals were arrested on March 29 and March 30 for incitement, support for terrorism, and disorderly conduct pertaining to pro-Hamas rhetoric and literature distributed during sermons on the Temple Mount and in al-Aqsa Mosque on March 29.
 - » According to reports, hundreds of worshippers chanted praise for Hamas military wing leader Mohammed Deif, including, “we are the people of Mohammed Deif,” and “in the spirit of blood you are redeeming al-Aqsa.”
- On March 31, Israel’s Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) agency [posted](#) on X, citing a newly discovered Hamas document, “about 11% of the rocket [launches] carried out by the terrorist organizations towards Israel since October 7 fell within Gaza, resulting in the deaths of Gaza civilians. Hamas covered it up.”
 - » Avichai Adraee, an IDF spokesperson, said that documents date to 2020 and that high-ranking Hamas operatives signed them. Israel’s *i24 News* outlet reported, “rather than admitting responsibility, Hamas sought to attribute these casualties to Israeli airstrikes, thereby manipulating public perception and garnering sympathy.”
 - » The outlet also reported, “Hamas urged the [Palestinian Islamic Jihad] to take ownership of failed rocket launches and hide their repercussions to maintain the image of resistance. However, Hamas neglected to prevent rocket launches near civilian residences, underscoring its disregard for the safety of Gazan citizens.”

- On March 31, a 25-year-old man, 20-year-old man, and 17-year-old boy were seriously [wounded](#) in a stabbing terrorist attack in a [mall](#) in Gan Yavne in southern Israel. Security officers shot and killed the attacker, a 19-year-old Palestinian. Hamas subsequently called the stabbing attack a “heroic operation” and urged Palestinians to “escalate” terrorism targeting Israelis.
- On March 31, an attacker from Rahat in Israel, a Bedouin city, wounded an IDF [officer](#) in a stabbing [attack](#) targeting people at a bus station in Beersheba in southern Israel. An IDF soldier shot and killed the terrorist.

Gaza

- On March 31, Israel’s Foreign Ministry released a [statement](#) alleging new claims about the ties between Hamas and UNRWA.
 - » According to the statement, approximately 20 percent of the principals and deputy principals in Gaza’s UNRWA-run schools are members of Hamas.
 - » The statement also alleged that “tunnels or other terrorist infrastructure were found in 30 UNRWA facilities.”
 - » Israel’s *Makor Rishon* outlet [reported](#) that the Foreign Ministry has also revealed to UN investigators evidence showing that Hamas routinely used UNRWA schools and clinics to store weapons and fire rockets toward Israel.

Lebanon

- Rockets struck [Kiryat Shmona](#), and sirens [sounded](#) in [several](#) northern Israeli towns, including in the [Western Galilee](#) region and [Malkia](#).
- On March 31, Hezbollah [fired](#) numerous projectiles toward Mount Dov and Arab al-Aramshe in northern Israel. The IDF said that the Iron Dome shot down some of the rockets.
- On March 31, the IDF [said](#) that Hezbollah fired a drone that impacted an unpopulated area in Mount Dov in northern Israel, causing no injuries or damage.
- On March 31, an IDF soldier was lightly [wounded](#) in a rocket strike in Kiryat Shmona. The IDF said Hezbollah also fired projectiles at the Margaliot and Malkia areas.
- On March 30, Hezbollah [fired](#) several rockets and missiles toward northern Israel. No injuries or damage were reported.
- On March 30, a rocket [exploded](#) in an open area in the Upper Galilee near the Lebanese border. No rocket alarms sounded.
- According to a March 31 [report](#) from Israel’s *Channel 12* outlet, senior Hezbollah official Wafiq Safa recently traveled to the United Arab Emirates and told Emirati officials that Hezbollah is willing to stop fighting “on the southern Lebanese front” and declare the area along the Lebanon-Israel border demilitarized.
 - » The report further alleges that Israel has refused to agree to a diplomatic solution with Hezbollah until the terror group hands over its weapons to the Lebanese military and ceases militant activity throughout the entire country.

Syria

- On March 31, the IDF [said](#) that a fighter jet pilot shot down “a suspicious aerial target” heading toward Israel from Syria.

Iraq

- On April 1, the IDF [said](#) that a “suspicious aerial target that entered Israeli territory from the east,” a drone, struck and mildly damaged a building in Eilat in southern Israel, causing no injuries. *The Times of Israel* noted that “the reference to the projectile’s origin being to the east appears to confirm a claim by the Islamic Resistance of Iraq that it fired on Israel.”
 - » The IDF [specified](#) later that day that the damaged building in Eilat was at a Navy base.

IDF Operations

- On April 1, Prime Minister Netanyahu called on Israel’s Knesset to [pass legislation](#) that would give the prime minister and communications minister the authority to close foreign media networks if they pose “an actual harm to the state’s security.” Netanyahu indicated that if the legislation passes, he would “immediately act to close Al Jazeera.”
 - » During February, the Knesset voted in favor of the legislation for its first of three required readings, and the legislation was approved for its second and third readings after a debate in the Knesset’s National Security Committee.
- Addressing the recent U.S. abstention from a UN Security Council vote on a ceasefire resolution, which passed, Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu [said](#) on March 31, “I told them [the United States], don’t do it. It will send an extremely grave message to Hamas: They don’t have to release a single hostage, and they can get a ceasefire.”
 - » Netanyahu also said, “we are still and always interested in hearing from our American friends, even when we have disagreements with them. They have things to say on the humanitarian issue and on the evacuation of the population. We hear it, we will hear it in the future.”
 - » He also said, “we will find the way to dialogue on this issue. But I thought it was important to send the message on that very day to the entire international community, and also to Hamas. And that was an important message that I stand behind.”

Gaza

- The IDF [announced](#) on April 1 that it concluded its operation in Shifa Hospital that commenced on March 18. According to the IDF, during the operation, soldiers arrested approximately 900 suspects and confirmed that over 500 of them were members of terror groups, and troops also killed over 200 gunmen. The IDF killed and arrested high-ranking Hamas and PIJ commanders.
 - » That day, the IDF also provided details of its ongoing operations in central Gaza and in Khan Younis in southern Gaza, which involved attack helicopter strikes and additional airstrikes against terrorist operatives, as well as eliminating several gunmen in the al-Amal neighborhood of Khan Younis.
- On March 31, Israel’s Defense Minister Yoav Gallant [said](#), “in the last week or two, hundreds of terrorists have been captured and what they say about what happened to them tells the whole story. They say that Hamas is collapsing from within. The prices they pay are very heavy.”
 - » He also said that information gleaned from arrested senior Hamas operatives is helping the IDF “eliminate everyone who was involved in the events of October 7, the junior [officials], the senior ones, and the very senior ones, who were inside [Israel] or who gave instructions.”

- » Gallant said further, “in the last few days, we have also seen very great progress, both in the terrorists in the field, and with more senior commanders, even very senior ones.”
- On March 31, the IDF [said](#) that it discovered and confiscated mortars, explosive devices, sniper rifles, assault rifles, handguns, and additional weapons in the maternity ward of Shifa Hospital stashed in hospital beds and pillows, as well as in the walls and ceilings. The IDF also noted that it evacuated approximately 350 patients and hospital staff and that it provided humanitarian aid to the evacuees.
- On March 31, the IDF [detailed](#) its ongoing operations in Gaza City in northern Gaza, in central Gaza, and in Khan Younis in southern Gaza. The operations have involved airstrikes and sniper fire against terrorist operatives firing anti-tank missiles toward IDF troops, combat engineers demolishing terrorist assets, tank fire against terror targets, and seizing weapons.
 - » The IDF also noted that the Israeli Air Force launched strikes against approximately 80 targets in Gaza throughout the prior day.
- The IDF [said](#) on March 31 that its closed military zone will no longer encompass sections of the Re'im forest and agricultural sites in Yad Mordechai and Mefalsim. The Re'im forest was the site where terrorists massacred more than 360 people at a music festival on October 7.
- On March 30, the IDF [detailed](#) its ongoing operations in Shifa Hospital, in which it confiscated weapons and killed combatants, and in Khan Younis, where it killed gunmen and directed airstrikes against terrorist targets.
- On March 30, the IDF and Shin Bet [named](#) additional senior Hamas operatives killed at Gaza City's Shifa Hospital in recent days, including: senior Hamas commander Raad Thabet, the head of the terror group's recruitment and supply acquisition; Mahmoud Khalil Zakzuk, the deputy commander of Hamas's rocket unit in Gaza City; Fadi Dweik, a senior member of Hamas's intelligence division; and Zakaria Najib, a senior operative in Hamas's so-called West Bank headquarters, tasked with advancing attacks against Israel from the West Bank.

Lebanon

- On April 1, the IDF [published a video](#) of it striking 10 targets that day, including rocket launchers and a weapons depot, in southern Lebanon's Rachaya al-Foukhar.
- On March 31, the IDF [said](#) that it killed a senior commander of Hezbollah's Radwan force's anti-tank missile unit, Ismail Ali al-Zin, in a drone strike in Kounine in southern Lebanon.
 - » That day, Lebanese media sources [claimed](#) that Israel struck a vehicle in the southern Lebanese town of Kounine.
- On March 31, the IDF [said](#) that it launched strikes targeting Hezbollah buildings in Mays al-Jabal and Blida, rocket launchers in Markaba, and an observation post used by the terror group in Kafr Kila.
- On March 30, the IDF said it [conducted](#) artillery shelling and airstrikes against several Hezbollah launch sites and other facilities in the southern Lebanese towns of Hanine, Naquora, and Taybeh.
- On March 30, the IDF [released](#) a statement in which it denied carrying out a strike against United Nations Interim Force In Lebanon (UNIFIL) peacekeepers in Lebanon. Local Lebanese media sources had claimed that several UNIFIL peacekeepers were injured in an Israeli strike on a vehicle near Rmeish in southern Lebanon.

- On March 29, the IDF [said](#) that it targeted a Hezbollah rocket launcher with an airstrike only minutes after terrorists employed it to attack the IDF's Biranit base. The IDF also said that it launched strikes against a Hezbollah "military building" in Ayta ash-Shab, a Hezbollah "military facility" in Mays al-Jabal, Hezbollah buildings in Chebaa, and an observation post in Yaroun.

Syria

- According to a March 31 report from Israel's *Maariv* outlet, several people were [killed](#) or wounded in an Israeli airstrike on a facility in Jamaria, northwest of Damascus, that day.
- On March 31, Syrian sources [claimed](#) there was a strike in the Daraa area of southwestern Syria.
- On March 29, Israel's Defense Minister Yoav Gallant [said](#), alluding to Israel's purported recent airstrikes in Syria, that Israel will "expand the campaign [against Hezbollah] and increase the rate of attacks in the north" and that "Israel is turning from defending to pursuing Hezbollah, we will reach wherever the organization operates, in Beirut, Damascus and in more distant places."

West Bank

- On March 31, Hebrew-language media [reported](#) that a terrorist who had carried out a shooting attack in the West Bank on March 28 turned himself in to IDF troops who were searching for him. The terrorist had opened fire towards a school bus and other cars in al-Auja on Route 90, injuring three Israelis.
- On March 30, the Palestinian Authority's official news agency [claimed](#) that a 13-year-old was killed and two others were wounded during an Israeli operation in the northern West Bank.

Humanitarian Efforts

- According to Israel's [COGAT](#) agency, from the beginning of the war to April 1, there have been 369,990 tons of humanitarian aid that entered Gaza in 19,776 trucks.
- On April 1, *The Guardian* reported that Israel's Chief of the General Staff Lt. Gen. Herzi Halevi sent a [proposal](#) to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres for dismantling the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) that would involve sending 300-400 employees to another UN agency, such as the World Food Program.
- On March 31, four U.S. C-130 aircraft [dropped](#) 50,000 meals into northern Gaza.
- On March 30, a second [shipment](#) of aid carrying almost 400 tons of food headed by sea from Cyprus to Gaza.
- On March 30, the Palestine Red Crescent [claimed](#) that five people were killed and dozens wounded during a stampede after an aid delivery in northern Gaza. The Red Crescent said that three of the five killed were shot.
 - » Eyewitnesses told AFP that Palestinians guarding the aid convoy shot in the air and that Israeli forces opened fire, but the IDF said it "has no record of the incident described."
- On March 30, Israel [contested](#) the findings in a report by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) that famine was imminent in Gaza.

- On March 30, Israel’s COGAT agency [posted](#) a photo on X showing large quantities of aid waiting to be collected from the Gazan side of the Israel-Gaza border after passing inspection.
 - » The agency alleged that “the content of 400 trucks worth [of aid] is waiting to be picked up and distributed from the Gazan side of [Kerem Shalom] post Israeli inspection.”
 - » The post further asserted that the United Nations and UNRWA “lack the logistic capacity for performing their jobs. [The United Nations] must enhance its logistic capacity and admit its failures.”
- On March 29, an anonymous State Department official [told](#) Reuters, “while we can say with confidence that famine is a significant risk in the south and center but not present, in the north, it is both a risk and quite possibly is present in at least some areas, which accounts for the urgency with which we need to move goods, food at scale into the north.”
 - » The official also said, “you need to address the full nutrition needs of the population of Gaza of all ages. That means more than just that minimal survival level feeding,” and “it has to be addressed by additional assistance coming and the right kind of assistance coming in.”
- On March 29, two U.S. C-17’s [dropped](#) 46,000 meals into northern Gaza.
- Citing Hebrew-language reports, *The Times of Israel* [reported](#) on March 29 that “Israel is pushing for the establishment of an international peacekeeping force to secure humanitarian aid deliveries to the Gaza Strip, with Defense Minister Yoav Gallant informing Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that he made headway on the matter during his visit to Washington this week.” Reportedly, soldiers from three Arab countries other than Saudi Arabia and Qatar will participate.
 - » The United States reportedly supports the plan, while Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is reportedly hesitant.

Ceasefire and Hostage Negotiations

- On April 1, Israel’s *Channel 13* outlet [reported](#) that Israel’s Mossad head David Barnea told Prime Minister Netanyahu that a ceasefire and hostage deal would only be possible if Israel compromised on allowing Palestinian civilians to return to northern Gaza.
- The report indicated that Netanyahu had not made a decision but that minister without portfolio Gadi Eisenkot thought that there was room to compromise.
- On March 29, Netanyahu’s office [announced](#) that he has permitted Israel’s delegation partaking in hostage negotiations to continue the talks, which will take place in Cairo and Doha. The Prime Minister told the head of the Mossad, David Barnea, and the head of the Shin Bet internal security agency, Ronen Bar, that they will have “room to operate” during the talks, but they are not likely to participate in the Cairo negotiations.

Casualties and Hostages

- Over 1,200 people were [killed](#) in Israel, and 13,000 Israelis have been [injured](#) in the war.
 - » 600 Israeli soldiers have been [killed](#).
 - 256 IDF soldiers have been [killed](#) during ground combat in Gaza so far.

- The IDF [announced](#) the death of Sgt. First Class Sivan Weil, 20, from Ra’anana; [Sgt. First Class Alon Kudriashov](#), 21, from Modiin; and [Staff Sergeant Nadav Cohen](#), 20, from Haifa.
- As of March 15, 1,480 IDF soldiers have been [injured](#) during ground combat in Gaza, including 310 who have been severely injured.
- In the same attack that killed Sgt. First Class Kudriashov, 16 other IDF troops were [wounded](#), including six seriously, after a Hamas operative fired an RPG at a building used as an encampment near Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis.
- » Numerous foreign nationals have been killed in the war, including at least 34 [American nationals](#), 34 [Thai](#) nationals, 39 [French](#) nationals, 19 [Russian](#) nationals, 12 [British](#) nationals, 10 [Nepalese](#) nationals, 9 [Argentinian](#) nationals, 6 [Canadian](#) nationals, 4 [Philippines](#) nationals, 4 [Austrian](#) nationals, 4 [Romanian](#) nationals, 4 [Portuguese](#) nationals, 4 [Chinese](#) nationals, 3 [Brazilian](#) nationals, 3 [Belarusian](#) nationals, 3 [Italian](#) nationals, 3 [Peruvian](#) nationals, a [Cambodian](#) national, a [Chilean](#) national, an [Irish](#) national, a [Spanish](#) national, an [Australian](#) national, an [Azeri](#) national, a [Honduran](#) national, a [Swiss](#) national, a [Tanzanian](#) national, and a [Turkish](#) national.
- According to unverified figures from the Hamas-controlled Gaza Health Ministry, at least 32,845 people have been [killed](#) in Gaza, and 75,392 have been injured during the war.
 - » On October 25, 2023, President Biden [cautioned](#) against trusting Gaza Health Ministry casualty figures, stating: “I have no notion that the Palestinians are telling the truth about how many people are killed ... I have no confidence in the number that the Palestinians are using.”
 - » On March 21, Senator Josh Hawley (R-MO) [said](#) that during a virtual meeting that day with Senate Republicans, Israel’s Prime Minister Netanyahu assessed that the number of people killed in Gaza was approximately 28,000.
 - » Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu [said](#) on March 10 that Israel has killed approximately 13,000 Hamas operatives over the course of the war.
- According to the Palestinian Authority-run Palestinian Ministry of Health, 455 people have been [killed](#), and an additional 4,750 have been wounded in the West Bank.
- The IDF [claims](#) that it has killed at least 1,500 infiltrators from Gaza since the start of the war.
- So far, [105](#) hostages in Gaza have been released, [three](#) have been rescued by the IDF, [seven](#) have been [found](#) dead, three have been [mistakenly](#) killed by the IDF, and one was [killed](#) during an IDF attempt to rescue him.
 - » 81 Israeli hostages have been released.
 - » 46 hostages with foreign nationalities—some also holding Israeli citizenship—have been released.
 - Thus far, 23 [Thai](#) nationals, 6 [Argentinian](#) nationals, 5 [German nationals](#), 3 [French](#) nationals, 4 [Russian nationals](#), 1 [Dutch](#) national, 1 [Filipino national](#), 1 [Mexican](#) national, 1 [Uruguayan](#) national, and 1 [American](#) national have been released.
 - Hamas has released [36 children](#) and still holds two as hostages.
- Israel has said that terrorists in Gaza currently [hold](#) 134 hostages and deceased hostage bodies.

- » Israeli officials have confirmed the [deaths](#) of at least [34](#) of the 134 hostages captured on October 7, as well as two additional hostages who were abducted prior to October 7.
- » Many of the hostages are foreign or dual nationals, including up to 5 [American](#) nationals, 6 [German](#) nationals, 13 [Thai](#) nationals, 4 [Portuguese](#) nationals, 3 [British](#) nationals, 2 [Italian](#) nationals, 4 [Romanian](#) nationals, and 2 [Mexican](#) nationals.

Iranian Involvement and Response

- On March 30, at 8:30 a.m. local time, the Houthis [launched](#) one drone from Yemen toward the Red Sea. The United States later destroyed the drone.

U.S. and International Response

- On April 1, *Axios* reported that U.S. and Israeli officials will [meet virtually](#) that day to discuss the Biden administration's alternative plans for an Israeli operation in Rafah.
 - » The attendees are expected to include U.S. National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan, Israel's Minister for Strategic Affairs Ron Dermer, who is a former JINSA distinguished fellow, and Prime Minister Netanyahu's National Security Advisor Tzachi Hanegbi, as well as other U.S. and Israeli officials.
 - » After the United States abstained on March 25 from a UN Security Council resolution that called for a ceasefire and the release of the hostages but did not condition the former on the latter, Prime Minister Netanyahu canceled a delegation of Israeli officials that was scheduled to visit the United States.
 - The *Axios* report indicated that Israel quietly began to seek to reschedule the meeting on March 26 but Netanyahu denied that the delegation would travel to Washington after that news became public.
 - » According to the *Axios* report, Israel's Minister for Strategic Affairs Ron Dermer told Netanyahu that the delegation needed to visit Washington soon in order to prevent further tensions with the Biden administration.
- On March 30, at 8:30 a.m. local time, the United States [struck](#) one Houthi drone in Yemen that was prepared to target ships in the Red Sea.
- On March 31, Israel's *Kan* news [reported](#) that during Israel's Defense Minister Yoav Gallant's visit to Washington last week, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Charles Q. Brown presented an alternative plan for an Israeli operation in Rafah.
 - » The plan reportedly involved preventing smuggling from Egypt into Gaza by using technologies to secure the border, isolating Rafah conducting targeted raids, and establishing a joint control center to coordinate those targeted operations.
- *The Washington Post* [reported](#) on March 29 that the Biden administration recently approved a new weapons transfer to Israel worth billions of dollars, including 25 F-35 fighter jets, over 1,800 MK84 2,000-pound bombs, and 500 MK82 500-pound bombs, according to anonymous State Department and Defense Department officials.
- *Politico* [reported](#) on March 29 that "the U.S. is near a deal with the Palestinian Authority [PA] to end its contentious 'martyr payments' for people who commit acts of violence against Israel, two Biden administration officials said."

- » The report also said, “drafts of the PA payments reform plans seen by U.S. officials indicate that Palestinian leaders will replace the current scheme with a general welfare program.”
- Israel’s *Makor Rishon* outlet [reported](#) on April 1 that pro-Hamas sentiments are significantly increasing in Jordan.
 - » The report cited a former Jordanian information minister as saying that Hamas has initiated “an attempt to set fire to the Jordanian street and put pressure on the Jordanian government” and undermine Jordan’s “political establishment, the army and the security forces.”
 - » According to the former minister, Samih Almaiita, Hamas has incited much of the activity, including nightly protests in the capital city of Amman in support of the Palestinian cause. Almaiita alleged that “Hamas’ incitement of the Jordanian clans is an attempt to exert pressure on the return of Hamas to the kingdom.”
- On March 31, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres [condemned](#) an explosion in south Lebanon that injured 4 UNIFIL peacekeepers and said that an investigation by UNIFIL was underway.
 - » Israel [denied](#) involvement in the incident.
- On March 31, Pope Francis said in his [Easter message](#) that he “appeal[s] once again that access to humanitarian aid be ensured to Gaza, and call[s] once more for the prompt release of the hostages seized on October 7 and for an immediate ceasefire in the Strip.”
- On March 31, France’s Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Stephane Sejourne claimed that his government will [submit](#) a draft United Nations Security Council resolution calling for a ceasefire, the release of the hostages, and “all the criteria for a two-state solution.”
- On March 29, Russia’s foreign ministry spokeswoman, Maria Zakharova, [said](#) of Israeli airstrikes in Syria, “such aggressive actions against the Syrian Arab Republic, which constitute a flagrant violation of the country’s sovereignty and the basic norms of international law, are categorically unacceptable.”

Rising Antisemitism, Protests, and Attacks

- On March 31, three anti-Israel protesters were [arrested](#) after they disrupted the Easter Vigil Mass at St. Patrick’s Cathedral in New York City. The protestors got on the altar and raised a large banner that read “Silence = Death” while chanting “free Palestine.”
- On March 31, thousands of people [attended](#) an anti-Israel protest in London, at which four protesters were arrested for hate crime, public disorder, and terrorism offenses.
- On March 31, White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre was [confronted](#) by anti-Israel protesters outside of a hotel in New York City where a fundraiser for Israel was reportedly taking place, where one yelled, “why do you support Biden’s genocide in Gaza,” and “look me in the f*****g eyes and tell me you don’t care about dead children.”
- On March 31, a sign that read “Our community stands with Israel,” at the Beth Hillel/Beth El Temple in Wynnewood, Pennsylvania, was [vandalized](#) with a red swastika.
- On March 30 and 31, tens of thousands of protestors [demonstrated](#) in Israel following the Hostages and Missing Families Forum calling for a mass march for demonstrators to join the anti-government protesters.

- » On March 31, anti-government protesters and the [families](#) of the hostages [set up](#) more than 100 tents outside of the Knesset, following the large anti-government demonstration earlier that evening, preparing for a four-day protest event in Jerusalem that includes nightly rallies.
- » On March 31, protest organizers estimated that 100,000 people [rallied](#) in front of Israel's Knesset for what Hebrew media called the largest protest since the war began.
- » On March 30, roughly 200 protesters [demanding](#) a hostage deal breached police barriers outside of Prime Minister Netanyahu's home.
- » Overnight on March 30, Israel's police [arrested](#) 16 people during anti-government protests in Tel Aviv.
- On March 30, a large pro-Palestinian rally was [held](#) in Times Square, New York, organized by "Shut it Down 4 Palestine," in honor of "Land Day," which *The Times of Israel* described as an "[annual commemoration](#) of a deadly 1976 crackdown on protests against plans to seize land owned by Arab citizens."
- On March 29, videos [emerged](#) of protesters shouting antisemitic and misogynistic slurs and profanities at people who attended a fundraising event for President Biden in New York City.
 - » Video clips showed one woman being repeatedly [harassed](#) by a man whose face was covered with a keffiyeh, who called her a "f*****g murderous k**e," and told her to "f*****g die," among other profanities and slurs.
- On March 29, *The Jerusalem Post* reported that a rabbi was [struck](#) over the head in an antisemitic attack at a shopping center in Utrecht, Netherlands, according to local authorities. The attacker reportedly said, "Why are you dressed like a Jew?" before hitting the victim.
- On March 29, the *Telegraph* [reported](#) that the director general of the U.K.'s Passport Office had "apologized unreservedly [and] directly," to a Jewish family whose baby's birth certificate had been vandalized in February. The child's place of birth, Israel, had been scribbled out after the parents had sent it to the Home Office during a passport application.

Recent and Relevant JINSA Products About Israel at War

- Webinar: [The State of U.S.-Israel Relations](#), with Michael Makovsky, IDF MG (ret.) Yaakov Amidror, and John Hannah, March 28, 2024
- [Michael Makovsky](#), Rep. Don Davis, Rep. August Pfluger, "[Conditioning U.S. Aid to Israel Would Be a Mistake](#)," *The Washington Examiner*, March 27, 2024
- Jonathan Ruhe, "[The Biden Administration Has an Opportunity to Rein In Iran](#)," *The Dispatch*, March 27, 2024
- Sander Gerber, "[How is the PA's Agenda not Genocide?](#)" *Jewish News Syndicate*, March 26, 2024
- Ari Cicurel and Jacob Olidort, [U.S. Abstention at the UN Undermined Support for Israel—And Stated U.S. Policy](#), March 26, 2024