

The week ending April 19, 2013

U.S.-ISRAEL RELATIONSHIP

US Senate: Will back Israeli attack on Iran

Members of the US Senate's Foreign Relations Committee have adopted "Senate Resolution 65," according to which the US will support Israel in case it is compelled to take military action and actualize its right to self defense in the face of an Iranian threat. [Ynet](#) reported that the resolution stipulates that Israel will enjoy Washington's diplomatic, economic and military aid. According to the resolution, sponsored by Sen. Robert Menendez and Sen. Lindsey Graham, the US's policy is to halt Iranian nuclear ambitions. Senate Resolution 65 has successfully gained the support of 70 of the 100 senators. In a statement issued by AIPAC it was noted that "The Senate Foreign Relations Committee has sent a very clear and enormously important message of solidarity with Israel against the Iranian nuclear threat—which endangers American, Israeli, and international security." President Barack Obama sent his holiday wishes to Israel on its 65th Independence Day, stating: "On this date 65 years ago, the Jewish people realized their dream of the ages—to be masters of their fate in their own sovereign state." "The strong and prosperous Israel we see today proves Herzl's vision – 'if you will it, it is no dream.'"

Kerry: Sequestration will force cuts in Israel aid

U.S. aid to Israel will be cut next year if the sequester goes into effect again, Secretary of State John Kerry [testified](#) Wednesday. "Israel got a plus-up in the budget, I think to \$3.1 billion total. But that is subject to sequester, as is everything, and we're not able to undo that," Kerry testified before the House Foreign Affairs Committee. "So there will be a plus-up, but then there will be a reduction from the plus-up. It's still a net plus-up, but there is a sequester that will apply to everything, including Jordan, Egypt, Israel."

ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINIANS

Rockets fired at Eilat in southern Israel

Militants in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula [fired at least two rockets](#) at Israel's southern resort town of Eilat early Wednesday, highlighting what Israel says is a dire security situation across its border. Nobody was hurt in the attack, although one rocket exploded near the courtyard of a house. A shadowy hard-line Muslim group, likely based in the Gaza Strip, claimed responsibility for the attack. Egypt was the first Arab country to sign a peace treaty with Israel but relations are cool. Israeli officials have grown increasingly jittery about the situation in Egypt since the ouster of President Hosni Mubarak in 2011. Islamic militant groups, some believed to be affiliated with the al-Qaeda terror network, have taken advantage of a power vacuum in the lawless Sinai and have carried out a string of rocket attacks and other operations along the border. Israel believes militants from the Gaza Strip, which also borders Sinai, are also operating in the area. Israel's military chief, Lt. Gen. Benny Gantz, has said security in southern Israel from threats in Sinai is a high

priority. The regime change in Egypt, now governed by the Muslim Brotherhood, has not damaged cooperation between the countries' security forces, he added.

GREATER MIDDLE EAST

Turkey Deputy PM sees full normalization with Israel

Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Bülent Arınç told Hebrew daily Ma'ariv that he expects the relationship between Turkey and Israel to return to its former strong alliance. Arınç said that the [crisis with Israel](#) did not affect the historic close relations between the Turkish and Jewish people, and that the Islamic government in Turkey returned two synagogues to the Jewish community. Arınç confirmed that he will head a delegation for next week's talks with an Israeli delegation to discuss compensation for the families of the nine Turks killed on takeover by the IDF of Mavi Marmara, which was trying to run the blockade of Gaza in May 2010. Israel's apology for the Mavi Marmara incident and its acceptance of Turkey's other demands for compensation and easing the Gaza blockade, ended the crisis in Turkish-Israeli relation said Arınç. He added that the statements by Obama and Netanyahu about the Israel-Palestinian peace process were positive and encouraging, and that Turkey continues to support the rights of the Palestinian people, just as it did when it voted in the UN General Assembly to recognize Palestine as a non-voting member state. This information is an update to the information contained in this week's [Sermon Tidbits](#). To subscribe to Sermon Tidbits, click [here](#).

Hezbollah-backed Lebanese Shiites fight in Syria

[Associated Press](#) reported that Hezbollah-backed fighters from Lebanon are patrolling both sides of a porous border stretch with Syria. The gunmen on the edge of the border village of al-Qasr say their mission is to protect Shiites on the Syrian side who claim their homes, villages and families have come under attack from Sunni rebels. Hezbollah chief Sheik Hassan Nasrallah, leader of many of Lebanon's Shiites and a staunch ally of Syrian President Bashar Assad, has said his group is supporting the cadres of fighters who call themselves Popular Committees. It is confirmation that the powerful Lebanese militant group is playing a growing role in the civil war just across the border. This information is an update to the information contained in this week's [Sermon Tidbits](#). To subscribe to Sermon Tidbits, click [here](#).

ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

Israel Police chiefs head to U.S. after Boston bombing

Israel Police chief Yohanan Danino and other senior police officers left Israel late Tuesday night, heading to the U.S. to meet with FBI officials and other law enforcement officials in the aftermath of the Boston Marathon bombing, [The Times of Israel](#) reported. Discussions will center on the Boston bombing and deepening professional cooperation between the law enforcement agencies of both countries. At least three other senior officers are accompanying the police chief, in what the paper described as the highest-ranking police delegation Israel sends overseas. The trip had been planned before the Boston blasts, but was refocused in the light of the bombings, the report said, without elaboration. On the day of the bombings, a top emergency medicine doctor at the Boston hospital where many of the wounded were being treated credited Israel with training the hospital's first-response team and readying it to deal with mass-casualty incidents.