



Rabbinic Recap

The week ending June 13, 2014

ISRAEL & THE PALESTINIANS

Israel holds Palestinian president responsible for Gaza rocket fire

According to [The Los Angeles Times](#), a rocket fired from the Gaza Strip slammed into a main road in southern Israel on Wednesday morning, causing damage but no injuries, according to Israeli military reports. It was the first such fire since the new Palestinian government was sworn in last week and tested both Israeli and Palestinian response. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas formed the new government after reaching an accord reconciling his Fatah movement with Hamas, the group that ruled the Gaza Strip since a forceful takeover in 2007 and does not recognize Israel's right to exist. Israel rejects the new government due to Hamas, which it calls a terrorist organization responsible for firing thousands of rockets at Israel. Members of Abbas' new government were appointed in agreement with Hamas, but its members are formally political independents and technocrats. After the new government took office, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu convened a special security cabinet to discuss Israel's response. Among other things, the cabinet decided to hold Abbas directly responsible for "terrorism emanating from Gaza." A statement from Netanyahu's office in response to Wednesday's rocket attack read: "Israel holds Abbas responsible for the rocket fired today from Gaza." Several hours later, Abbas issued a statement carried by the Palestinian government news agency WAFA condemning the fire. He urged all factions to stay committed to the cease-fire understandings that ended Israel's 2012 military offensive in Gaza, as well as to the reconciliation accord. Abbas asked the factions not to give Israel any excuse to continue its attacks on Gaza. It was not immediately clear what Palestinian group had fired the rocket.

U.S.-ISRAEL RELATIONSHIP

Unified Senate sends President Obama a clear message on Palestinian Unity

[The Jerusalem Post](#) reports that The US Senate sent a united message of "grave concern" to US President Barack Obama on Thursday regarding the formation of a reconciliation government between Fatah and Hamas, and what the move might require of Congress in determining future US aid to the Palestinians. 88 senators from across party lines signed the letter sent to the White House, written by Senators Ben Cardin (D-MD) and Susan Collins (R-ME), which warns the new PA unity effort might "jeopardize direct negotiations with Israel to achieve a two-state solution." "The recent formation of a Palestinian Authority unity government supported by Hamas, a designated Foreign Terrorist Organization that has never publicly accepted the Quartet principles, represents a serious setback to efforts to achieve peace," the senators wrote. Citing recent appropriations law, which calls for an end to assistance to the PA

should Hamas share power in the government or exert "undue influence" over its government, the Senate said the law is clear and warned the president that the chamber would reconsider future aid. "Any assistance should only be provided when we have confidence that this new government is in full compliance with the restrictions contained in current law," the letter reads. The State Department considers the current government an interim body, occupied by technocrats unaffiliated with either Palestinian party. Given those circumstances, the Obama administration plans on monitoring the political developments while continuing aid, officials say. The American Israel Public Affairs Committee, which helped circulate the letter through the halls of the Senate, "commended" the bipartisan group in a statement. They have publicly called for a debate on Capitol Hill on the continuation of aid to the PA.

Obama Congratulates Rivlin on Election as Israel's President

The White House issued a [statement](#) on June 10 congratulating Reuven Rivlin on his election as the next president of the State of Israel. In the statement, President Obama praised Rivlin's "long and dedicated record of public service." Obama also touted America's "unique relationship [with Israel] based on shared democratic values, our unshakeable commitment to Israel's security, and our partnership in scientific research and innovative technology." Rivlin became Israel's 10th president after winning the votes of 63 out of 120 Knesset members in a runoff election. The president-elect is a member of the Likud party and a former Speaker of the Knesset, and has a long history in Israeli public life. Rivlin will be sworn in on July 24th and will replace outgoing president Shimon Peres, who will receive the Congressional Gold Medal in Washington later this month.

ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

Israeli companies ramp up Brazil World Cup security

As the [Times of Israel](#) reported, Israeli companies are supplying Brazil with key security and management technology that officials are counting on to keep the peace during the World Cup soccer tournament, taking place from June 12 to July 13. Twenty four government agencies will be using the NICE Situator to coordinate security, manage thousands of cameras and sensors, and correlate data from behavioral analytics software, social media analysis, access control, and fire and intrusion detection systems. Meanwhile, officials at the new Arena Pantanal in Cuiabal plan to use a similar system produced by the RISCO Group. Just as at any other mass event, managing safety at the month-long World Cup will require attention, dexterity and nimble responses to issues as they arise, and before they get out of hand. With games set to take place at different venues in multiple stadiums, security officials need a way to effectively deploy personnel as needed. The Situator is designed to help them do that, Brazilian officials said. NICE is supplying administrators in one of Brazil's main cities with a system called the Situator, a software system that integrates hardware, including access control systems, video systems, perimeter intrusion sensors, location tracking (RFID, GPS), panic buttons, environmental sensors and communication devices, into one unified platform. The NICE system collects and analyzes data from all these sources, checking location, threat level, incident seriousness and other factors against a pre-configured database of possible incidents. Security personnel will have instant access to real-time video from hundreds of video cameras, should an incident occur. When the system determines what kind of incident is taking place, such as a fire in the stands of a crowded stadium, the Situator will immediately produce a plan and coordinate forces to implement it. The system will tell police, firefighters and rescue workers how many staff are needed, where they need to go and what they need to do when they get there.