

The week ending September 5, 2014

ISRAEL & THE PALESTINIANS

Israel shows evidence of rocket fire from Gaza schools

According to [Reuters](#), the Israeli military has provided its most detailed assessment yet of the conduct and impact of the Gaza war, including photographs indicating that militants stored and fired rockets from schools and a breakdown of the toll inflicted on Hamas. Among the evidence laid out by a senior military officer were details of the ranges and number of rockets fired by Hamas and Islamic Jihad, photographs showing how rocket launchers were hidden in graveyards and a school playground, and how tunnels were used to carry out and escape from the site of attacks. One set of photographs showed a school by day, its central yard empty. By night, rockets looked to be stockpiled in the yard. At another school a canopy, where a hole had been torn for a rocket launching, was further frayed after a projectile was fired from underneath, he said. "We're dealing with a carefully structured and in many cases well trained terrorist force," said the general staff officer, who spoke on condition that his name not be used. "Hamas has at least 16,000 operatives organized into six brigades across the Gaza Strip, each with its own commander, while (Islamic Jihad) has a similar structure and a total of around 6,000 operatives." On the day before the war began, the IDF said it estimated militants held 10,000 rockets in Gaza, including 350-400 with a range of up to 80 km (50 miles) and a few dozen with a range of 160 km, reaching Jerusalem. On top of that, the intelligence officer said, there were "thousands upon thousands" of mortars. "We're a moral military. We want to learn from our mistakes," he said, adding that civilian casualties were "a big issue in the world" and one that Israel was keen to address.

For the latest information on Israel's defense against terror from Gaza please click [here](#).

ISRAEL & JORDAN

Israel signs \$15 billion gas deal with Jordan

Israel signed a memorandum of understanding with Jordan Wednesday, under which it will supply the Hashemite Kingdom with \$15 billion worth of natural gas from its Leviathan energy field over 15 years reports [The Times of Israel](#). The new deal is the largest collaboration with Jordan to date, and will make Israel its chief supplier. "At this time, Israel is becoming an energy superpower, which will supply the energy needs of its neighbors and strengthen its standing as a central source of energy supply in the region, and I welcome it," Israeli Energy Minister Silvan Shalom said in a statement. The Jordanians turned to Israel because their supply of natural gas from Egypt had been halted by repeated terrorist attacks on the gas pipeline from Egypt, a Channel 2 report said. The finds are expected to transform Israel from an energy importer to a major world player in the gas market. The latest deal to date comes after Prime Minister Benjamin

Netanyahu promised a “new diplomatic horizon,” and improved regional ties, in the aftermath of the recent military campaign in the Gaza Strip.

IRAN

Iran Nuclear Talks to Continue in New York

[The Wall Street Journal](#) reported that a new round of talks to seal a comprehensive nuclear deal between Iran and six major world powers will start Sept. 18 in New York, Western diplomats said Wednesday. The two sides had said negotiations would resume ahead of the U.N. General Assembly meeting in New York. For the past six months, the talks have taken place in Vienna. One of the Western diplomats said the first full session of formal negotiations between Iran and the six "power group" nations will take place on Sept. 19 with various preparatory meetings to be held the previous day. Iran and the six-nation group—the U.S., the U.K., France, Germany, China and Russia—are seeking to reach a comprehensive nuclear deal by Nov. 24 that would offer Tehran a time frame for reducing sanctions in exchange by Iran to curtail their future nuclear activities. Last year's General Assembly meeting proved a watershed in the nuclear talks, with U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry sitting down with his Iranian counterpart and President Barack Obama holding a historic 15-minute phone call with his Iranian counterpart, Hasan Rouhani. On Monday, Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif said he remains "quite optimistic" the two sides can reach a deal following talks he held that day with Catherine Ashton, the European Union's foreign policy chief. Iran has denied that it has sought to or is seeking to build nuclear weapons. The International Atomic Energy Agency is due to send a report to member states on Thursday or Friday that diplomats say could warn of stalled progress in the talks with Tehran on Iran's past nuclear work. The IAEA has listed more than a dozen issues it wants to pursue with Iran but so far there have only been meaningful discussions on one of those, three Western diplomats said this week. U.S. and European officials have warned publicly that a failure by Iran to derail its past nuclear activities could jeopardize the comprehensive nuclear deal.

ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

Apple's marketing and sales office will be in Herzliya.

According to [Globes](#), technology giant Apple will soon open an official office in Israel for marketing and sales. Nir Ayalon, who has been handling Apple's business in Israel from the company's London headquarters, will manage the office. Ayalon also worked off and on in the company's offices in Herzliya. The new office is expected to boost Apple's business, mainly in sales of its mobile computers, which have not had much success in Israel. Samsung, LG, Asus, and Toshiba have opened offices in Israel in recent years. Apple regards the Israeli market as important, mainly for research and development. The company has 600 employees in its offices in Ra'anana, Herzliya, and Haifa. Apple will soon open new offices in Herzliya Pituah, where most of its employees will work. The company's new marketing and sales office will also be in Herzliya. Apple has been making Hebrew-language versions of its products for a long time. In addition to its operating system for computers, smart phones, and tablets, it has also launched a word processor in Hebrew (Pages). It is also the only company with a special store with music and movies for Israeli customers. A few months ago, Apple CEO Tim Cook met with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. He was briefed on the Israeli market before the meeting, which helped him better appreciate Israel, and helped move Apple's business in Israel forward.