



Rabbinic Recap

The week ending July 15, 2016

U.S.-ISRAEL RELATIONSHIP

Bipartisan Senate Letter to Obama: Enforce Non-Nuclear Sanctions Against Iran

On July 11, a group of 35 senators sent a bipartisan [letter](#) to President Barack Obama urging him to guarantee that Iranian sanctions for illicit, non-nuclear activities are strictly enforced. Authored by Sens. Susan Collins (R-ME) and Bill Nelson (D-FL), the letter pressed the administration to maximize the strength of existing sanctions in order to halt Iranian illicit activity including “its material support for terrorism, development of ballistic missiles, and human rights abuses.” The existing sanctions fall outside the scope of those lifted following the implementation of the Iran nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). “Iran’s nefarious activities remain a threat to the integrity of the international financial system today,” the senators wrote. “It is one of two countries on the Financial Action Task Force’s blacklist of high-risk, non-cooperative countries for refusing to assist in the global fight against money laundering and terrorist financing. Iran remains the number one state sponsor of terrorism in the world.” “We urge you to ensure the maximum strength of existing sanctions on Iran, including the restriction on dollar-based transactions for Iran, until Iran changes its nefarious behavior,” the senators continued. “If Iran wants direct or indirect access to the U.S. financial system Iran can cease money laundering, proliferating weapons, developing ballistic missiles, and supporting terror.”

IRAN

Iran’s Extremism Persists Despite JCPOA

July 14 marks the one-year anniversary of the announcement of the Iran nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Since then, Iran has shown no signs of moderating its extreme behavior. It has defiantly advanced its ballistic missile program, expanded support for terrorist organizations, stepped up efforts to destabilize the Middle East, escalated involvement in regional conflicts, and increased domestic repression—all while continuing to threaten Israel and the United States. Congress must demand robust enforcement and the expansion of sanctions targeting Iran’s illicit behavior. As the past 12 months have shown, failure to hold Iran accountable will encourage further aggression.

- Iran has stepped up [meddling](#) in regional conflicts since the JCPOA took effect, heightening sectarian tensions throughout the region.
- Iran has significantly increased its involvement in Syria’s civil war, reversing a number of the Assad regime’s setbacks.
- Iran executed nearly 1,000 people in 2015, the most since 1989. Since the deal, it has stepped up summary arrests of journalists, dissidents, ordinary citizens accused of ‘morality’

crimes, and dual-nationals perceived as threatening the IRGC's political and economic control.

- Iran has made clear that, from its perspective, the JCPOA does not signify a broader rapprochement with the West.
- Iran has [provoked](#) multiple direct confrontations with the U.S. military.
- Iran has escalated its threats toward Israel. Over the past year, Iranian officials have [stated](#), "Israel should be annihilated," "God willing, there will be no Zionist regime in 25 years," and "We will raze the Zionist regime in less than eight minutes."

HEZBOLLAH

Ten Years On: Hezbollah Since the Second Lebanon War

On July 12, 2006, Hezbollah attacked an Israel Defense Forces (IDF) patrol killing eight soldiers and kidnapping two, provoking a bloody 34-day war. Ten years on, the northern border is relatively quiet, but Hezbollah has been diligently expanding and preparing itself for future conflict with the Jewish state. Today, the terrorist group has become the preeminent political power in Lebanon with a military arsenal stronger than many sovereign states. In a future conflict, Hezbollah could launch well over 1,500 rockets per day (compared with 120 per day in 2006). While Israel's Iron Dome and David's Sling rocket defense systems are effective against limited attacks, a significant barrage could severely strain Israel's missile shield.

ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINIANS

Knife Carrying Palestinian Shot by Police in Shuafa

A Palestinian man approached officers with a knife and was shot by police Thursday morning in the East Jerusalem refugee camp of Shuafat, police said. Police and Border Police officers came to the refugee camp to arrest a suspect. During the arrest, residents of Shuafat attempted to hinder the arrest, and at one point the Palestinian approached the officers holding a knife and was shot, police said. No police officers were injured in the incident. The Palestinian man, identified by local media as Yihya Hijazi, was slightly injured and taken to a Jerusalem hospital after being treated by Magen David Adom medics, a police spokeswoman told [The Times of Israel](#). A wave of Palestinian attacks in Israel and the West Bank since October last year has killed 37 Israelis, two Americans, an Eritrean and a Sudanese.

ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

Israelis Open World's First Bird Blood Bank

Every November and March, hundreds of millions of birds of all sizes and types [arrive in Israel](#) after migrating thousands of kilometers. Some of the visitors are in need of medical treatment from exhaustion, illness or injury. [Israel 21c](#) reports that a couple of months ago, veterinarians at the Wildlife Hospital at the Ramat Gan Safari, in cooperation with the Israel Nature and Parks Authority, established a bird blood bank to help them treat more of these feathered friends. So far, they have collected 16 samples from bird patients, separating out the plasma for long-term storage. "Now we're considering taking a blood sample from every bird we treat, to help us save the next bird that may come," said hospital director Dr. Yigal Horowitz in a statement from the facility. "We're proud to be the first hospital in the world with such a blood bank."