



Rabbinic Recap

The week ending July 29, 2016

U.S.-ISRAEL RELATIONSHIP

Bipartisan Senate Letter Urges Full Missile Defense Funding for Israel

Thirty-six senators, including 19 Republicans and 17 Democrats, sent a bipartisan [letter](#) on July 26 to their colleagues working to reconcile the House and Senate versions of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) in support of fully funding U.S.-Israel missile defense for the 2017 fiscal year. Authored by Sens. Mark Kirk (R-IL) and Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), the letter states the senators' belief that "fully funding U.S.-Israeli missile defense programs at \$601 million, as funded in the House-passed NDAA, is a level that will allow Israel to fully meet its national security requirements." The bipartisan effort comes as lawmakers from both chambers strive to reconcile the Senate- and House-passed versions of the annual bill to authorize the Pentagon's military programs. The Senate-passed version of the bill only authorizes around \$281 million in missile defense funding, while the House-passed version includes \$601 million, \$320 million more than last year. The letter calls for the conferees to include the amount authorized by the House of Representatives in their final conference report. The letter also advocates for a "bicameral, bipartisan" approach to fund bilateral missile defense programs including Iron Dome, David's Sling and the Arrow Weapon System. "Amid growing rocket and missile threats in the Middle East, it is prudent for the United States and Israel to advance and accelerate bilateral cooperation on missile defense technologies," wrote the senators. "We therefore urge you to fully fund U.S.-Israeli joint missile defense programs so that Israel can continue to develop and improve the three cooperative missile defense programs, as well as to purchase sufficient Iron Dome systems, including co-production of these systems in the United States, for protecting Israel's population against growing missile and rocket threats in the region."

IDF commandos, U.S. Marines train together against terror threats

Elite Israel Defense Forces naval commandos and the U.S. Marine Corps last week conducted a joint military exercise in the Negev Desert aimed at preparing American forces for combating regional terror groups, including the Islamic State. [The Times of Israel](#) reports that the "Noble Shirley" exercise involved units from Israel's ground, air and naval forces, and focused on urban warfare and counterterrorism tactics. The soldiers took part in simulated helicopter landings in enemy territory, tunnel warfare scenarios and extractions under fire, a Channel 2 TV report said Thursday. Israeli commanders reportedly demonstrated IDF counterterrorism tactics to U.S. forces to be used in the U.S. campaign against the Islamic State and other jihadist groups in the Middle East. Israeli commandos from the elite naval unit Shayetet 13 trained alongside the U.S. Marines Corps Battalion Landing Team, the 6th Marine Regiment, and the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit. The exercise also tested the real-time response time of the joint U.S.-Israeli missile defense systems, and the yet-to-be-completed David's Sling missile interceptor system

was deployed. The U.S. has either jointly developed or financed all three tiers in Israel's missile defense program—Iron Dome, a short-range missile interceptor, David's Sling, a medium range missile interceptor and Arrow, a long range missile interceptor.

ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINIANS

Fatah, Hamas to hold talks in renewed bid to bury hatchet

Fatah and Hamas, the two leading Palestinian factions, are to hold another round of reconciliation talks in the coming weeks in a bid to mend fences after nearly a decade of hostility, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas said Wednesday. According to [The Times of Israel](#), in an interview with a Sudanese television station, Abbas said the two parties will hold a new round of negotiations to discuss measures for general elections to select a president and members of parliament, and the establishment of a unity government. "We are in need of national reconciliation as soon as possible, because without unity between the land and people of the West Bank and Gaza, there will not be a Palestinian state," Abbas said, according to the Palestinian news site Shasha. Palestinian parliamentary elections were last held in 2006, in the aftermath of which Hamas violently ousted Fatah from the Gaza Strip. Abbas's Fatah party controls the West Bank, where it has fended off Hamas attempts to increase influence. Presidential elections last took place in 2005 and Abbas has held onto the presidency since then. Hamas and Fatah recently agreed to hold municipal elections in both Gaza and the West Bank for the first time in 11 years, which are slated for October 8. Several reconciliation attempts over the years have yielded agreements between Fatah and Hamas in 2012 and 2014, but they've effected no substantive change in the status quo.

ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

Nanotech breakthrough prints human tissue from stem cells

[Israel 21c reports](#) that Israel's [Nano Dimension](#), which makes 3D printers, is taking the first step toward technology that can print a human organ. Through collaboration with another Israeli company, biotechnology firm Accellta of Haifa, Nano Dimension has been able to mix human stem cells into its 3D printer ink. When expelled through the more than 1,000 tiny nozzles of a Nano Dimension DragonFly 3D printer, the ink can form into human tissue. While the technology is still at the proof-of-concept stage, the possibilities for saving lives by "printing" a new liver or lung are staggering. CEO Amit Dror stressed that Nano Dimension is not the only company to offer biotech printing. The difference is the speed and print resolution. "No one else is using inkjet technology," Dror told Israel 21c. "We're the first to do it really fast and really accurately." Before Nano Dimension teamed up with Accellta, printing even a very small tissue would take overnight under careful lab conditions and was used mainly for research. "We showed how the same thing can be achieved in a few seconds," Dror explained. "That means this could eventually go into commercial use"—such as in a hospital during emergency surgery or for testing new pharmaceuticals on living tissue.