



Rabbinic Recap

The week ending March 4, 2016

IRAN

Bipartisan Senate Letter Urges Treasury to Impose Sanctions on Companies Aiding Iranian Airline

On Feb. 29, a bipartisan group of senators sent a letter to U.S. Secretary of Treasury Jack Lew urging him to impose sanctions on companies conducting business with a private Iranian airline that funneled weapons to the terrorist organization Hezbollah and to the Assad regime in Syria.

Authored by Sens. Kelly Ayotte (R-NH), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Chris Coons (D-DE) and Lindsey Graham (R-SC), the letter focused on Mahan Air's international business expansion, which comes despite the airline being sanctioned by the U.S. Mahan Air continues to fly into European countries including Denmark, Sweden, United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Italy, the airline has recently expanded into Russia.

"Mahan Air often flies its planes to commercial airports within hours of their return from an arms delivery to Damascus aiding in the death of thousands of Syrian civilians or to equip Iran's terror-proxy Hezbollah with weapons aimed directly at Israel. It regularly delivers IRGC military personnel to and from Iran and Syria, as well as providing covert flights for IRGC senior officers into and out of Iraq to work with sectarian militias," wrote the senators. "We urge you to immediately identify to us all known entities engaged in commercial transactions with Mahan Air and take action now to sanction those companies, including freezing all assets of those entities found under U.S. jurisdiction."

The senators also underscored that "strong and swift sanctions enforcement is vital to hold Iran to account for its ongoing support of terrorism and human rights violations."

[Click here to read the full text of the Bipartisan letter.](#)

Congress Urges Iran to Help Find Former FBI Agent Robert Levinson

On Feb. 29, the House of Representatives approved resolution H.R. 148, which calls on Tehran to provide information regarding the location of Robert Levinson, a 67-year old former FBI agent who went missing in Iran nine years ago. Introduced by Rep. Ted Deutch (D-FL) and joined by Reps. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL) and Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL), the resolution urges "the government of Iran to fulfill their promises of assistance in this case of Robert Levinson, the longest held United States civilian in our nation's history." The Florida native, whose career in federal law enforcement spanned three decades, disappeared from Iran's Kish Island in March 2007. "For the families of the four American prisoners released by Iran earlier this year, the nightmare is finally over. But it is not over [for] my constituents, the Levinson family," said Rep. Deutch in a press statement. "Bob Levinson is a patriot who loves

this country dearly and devoted his life to public service. It is now time for this country to come through for Bob, and do everything in our power to bring him home.” On Feb. 11, the Senate passed companion resolution S. Res. 99, sponsored by Sens. Marco Rubio (D-FL) and Bill Nelson (D-FL). “Bob and his family deserve much better,” said Sen. Rubio in a press release. “This sends an important message that America stands with the Levinsons and we want to see the Iranian regime provide information regarding the whereabouts of Bob so that his wife and their seven children can get the answers they deserve.”

U.S. – ISRAEL RELATIONSHIP

Defense Ministry begins installing David’s Sling missile defense

The Defense Ministry said Tuesday it had started delivering the David’s Sling missile defense system to the Israel Air Force ahead of the full deployment of the weapon, which is designed to protect Israel from medium-range rockets, reports [The Times of Israel](#). “After a series of concluding trials of the David’s Sling aerial defense system, Israel’s Missile Defense Organization at the Defense Ministry, together with the U.S. Missile Defense Agency, began delivering major components of the system to the Israeli Air Force,” the ministry said in a statement. “David’s Sling will allow Israel to more effectively defend against the wide range of current and future threats to its civilians,” the ministry added. During the tests, multiple simulated targets were intercepted by the system’s Stunner interceptor missiles in realistic, real-time engagements. Those targets included ballistic missiles, which are fired with a set trajectory, as well as more maneuverable aircraft. The David’s Sling System is the middle tier of Israel’s multi-layer defense layer. The lowest layer is the Iron Dome system, capable of intercepting short-range missiles. David’s Sling is intended to engage missiles with a range of 70-250 kilometers. David’s Sling was manufactured primarily by Israeli company Rafael, with the U.S.-based Raytheon Missile Systems as a subcontractor.

ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

Forbes cites 4 Israeli companies to watch in 2016

A new list of [10 innovative companies to watch in 2016](#), published on Forbes.com, includes four Israeli companies. Illusive Networks, InSightec, AudioBurst and Real are highlighted for the impact they’re making and expected to make in cybersecurity, cancer treatment, radio and real estate. Illusive Networks is one of Israel’s hot cybersecurity startups. Founded in 2014, the company makes life tough for cyber attackers by covering a client’s network with a deceptive layer of code. InSightec’s FDA approved ExAblate OR procedure uses MRI-guided focused ultrasounds to destroy tumors and uterine fibroid cysts without surgery. The company, founded in 1999, is included on the list because its “technology could eliminate the need for surgery for many patients with tumors. That potential led to a recent funding round of \$22 million.” AudioBurst is helping the radio scene stay updated. The Israeli company says it’s the first-of-its-kind curation site that makes talk radio searchable and shareable in real-time. Think the Google of radio. And finally, [Israel21c](#) reports that the technology-powered real estate brokerage company, Real, is cited for its role in the real estate agents’ revolution. The company was started by real estate professionals and software engineers to empower agents “with all the technology, licensing and operational tools they need, without having to be associated with a physical office.”