



Rabbinic Recap

The week ending October 28, 2016

HEZBOLLAH

U.S. State, Treasury Departments Designate Hezbollah Financiers and Operatives

On Oct. 20, the U.S. State Department designated one individual as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist and the Treasury Department imposed new sanctions on four individuals and one organization, all for their connection to the Iranian-backed terrorist organization Hezbollah.

As a result of these designations, all U.S. property and interests subject to these individuals are blocked, and U.S. persons are generally prohibited from engaging in transactions with them. The U.S. Treasury Department—pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13224—and Saudi Authorities jointly designated Yosef Ayad, Muhammad al-Mukhtar Kallas, Hasan Jamal al-Din, Muhammad Ghaleb Hamdar and Global Cleaners S.A.R.L. Ayad, Kallas, and al-Din all played key roles in providing financial services to Hezbollah and had ties to Hezbollah External Security Organization (ESO) member Adham Tabaja, whom American and Saudi authorities already sanctioned for his activities in support of Hezbollah. The ESO is responsible for planning and executing Hezbollah terrorist attacks around the globe. Global Cleaners S.A.R.L. was designated for being managed by Tabaja.

The company holds several contracts to provide sanitation services in Baghdad, Iraq. “Today’s joint action with Saudi Arabia underscores the strength of U.S. and Saudi cooperation in disrupting Hezbollah’s worldwide commercial and financial infrastructure,” said Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence Adam Szubin. “Hezbollah continues to plan, coordinate and execute terrorist attacks around the world, and Treasury will continue to aggressively target Hezbollah and those supporting its terrorist activities.” Hamdar, a member of Hezbollah’s ESO, was also designated by the Treasury Department for terrorist activities. He was arrested in Lima, Peru in October 2014 on suspicion of planning terrorist attacks on popular Peruvian tourist spots. In a coordinating effort, the U.S. State Department designated Haytham ‘Ali Tabataba’i as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist under E.O. 13224.

According to the State Department, Tabataba’i has commanded Hezbollah special forces in Syria and reportedly in Yemen. “The imposition of sanctions by the United States against terrorists is a powerful tool,” said the State Department in a press release. “Today’s actions by the U.S. government notifies the U.S. public and the international community that Haytham ‘Ali Tabataba’i and the individuals and entities designated by Treasury are actively engaged in terrorism.”

U.S. – ISRAEL RELATIONSHIP

Members of Congress to UNESCO: Reject Resolution Diminishing Jewish and Christian Ties to Jerusalem

On Oct. 24, Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) and Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX) led a bipartisan,

bicameral letter to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) World Heritage Committee urging it to oppose "The Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls" resolution, which denies Jewish and Christian ties to Jerusalem. The letter was also signed by Sens. Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), and Joe Manchin (D-WV); and Reps. Ed Royce (R-CA), Eliot Engel (D-NY), Ted Deutch (D-FL), Kay Granger (R-TX) and Nita Lowey (D-NY). "UNESCO's mission is to build intercultural understanding through protection of heritage and support for cultural diversity," wrote the lawmakers, "This unnecessarily divisive and selective resolution undermines the very purpose and integrity of UNESCO by seeking to rewrite Jerusalem's history, rejects Jerusalem's multi-cultural heritage, and undercuts Jerusalem's extraordinary diversity." Rep. Ros-Lehtinen and Sen. Cruz led a similar bipartisan, bicameral letter on Oct. 10 to UNESCO's Executive Board. The resolution, however, was adopted—24 countries voted in favor, 26 abstained and 6 voted against. Since then, Italy, Brazil and Mexico have voiced concern over the resolution's language.

IRAN

Iran unveils 'suicide drone'

Iran's elite Revolutionary Guards said on Wednesday they had developed a "suicide drone" capable of delivering explosives to blow up targets at sea and on land. The new drone is primarily for maritime surveillance and "has not been designed to be armed with missiles," the Tasnim news agency, which is close to the Guards, reported [AFP](#). "(But) it can carry heavy payloads of explosives for combat missions to launch suicide attacks. "Flying at a high cruising speed near the surface of the water, the aircraft can collide with the target and destroy it, either a vessel or an onshore command center." Tasnim said the drone was designed to fly as low as two feet (half a meter) above the water at a speed of around 250 kilometers (160 miles) per hour but could reach an altitude of 900 meters (3,000 feet). As with previous drone announcements by Iran, the news agency released photographs of the aircraft on the ground, but no footage of it flying.

ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

Gal Gadot promotes strong women at UN

Actresses Gal Gadot and Lynda Carter got big cheers—and a few jeers—for taking part in an event that named the Wonder Woman superhero character as an honorary ambassador for the empowerment of women and girls. Wonder Woman was chosen to highlight gender equality and women's empowerment—and simultaneously celebrate the 75th anniversary of the fictional demigoddess character. "Wonder Woman seeks to promote strength, wisdom, leadership, justice and love. Qualities that combined make us the very best that we can be," Gadot told the UN body. "Sometimes we need something or someone to inspire us . . . a character like Wonder Woman or a real live superhero in your own world." Championing women's rights is something this former Miss Israel has been doing since she was chosen to play Wonder Woman in the 2017 film. According to [Israel21c](#), she participated in a video clip celebrating accomplished young Israeli women. And the actress-model-mom has spoken publicly about shifting the princess role model into a strong, kindhearted role model who can stick up for herself. Gadot and Carter were guests of honor at the ceremony at the United Nations headquarters on October 21. Achieving equal rights and gender equality is one of the global body's 17 Sustainable Development Goals to better the world by 2030.