



# Rabbinic Recap

The week of January 13, 2017

## U.S. - ISRAEL RELATIONSHIP

### United States Denounces Terrorist Attack in Jerusalem

The United States led the international community in condemning a fatal truck ramming attack in Jerusalem that killed four Israel Defense Forces (IDF) soldiers and injured at least 16 others. On Jan. 7, Fadi al-Qunbar, a 28-year-old Palestinian resident of East Jerusalem, [plowed a large truck](#) into a group of IDF soldiers touring the Haas-Sherover Promenade. The assailant then reversed the vehicle and struck the soldiers a second time before being shot and killed by Israeli security forces. The four slain victims were identified as Lt. Yael Yekutiel, 20, Cadet Shir Hajaj, 22, Cadet Shira Tzur, 20, and Cadet Erez Orbach, 20. The White House responded with a [statement](#): “The United States condemns in the strongest terms today’s horrific terrorist attack in Jerusalem, which killed four Israeli soldiers and wounded many others. We offer our full support to our Israeli partners as they work to determine who was behind the attack. Such cowardly acts can never be justified, and we call on all to send a clear and unequivocal message that terrorism must never be tolerated. We extend our deepest condolences to the families of the victims and our hopes for quick and full recovery for those who were wounded.” “We condemn in the strongest possible terms today’s horrific vehicular attack by a terrorist in Jerusalem,” [echoed](#) the U.S. State Department. “There is absolutely no justification for these brutal and senseless attacks. We condemn the glorification of terrorism now or at any time and call on all to send a clear message that terrorism must never be tolerated. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of the four Israeli soldiers who were killed, and we hope for a full and fast recovery of those injured.” The U.S. Defense Department also denounced the attack, stating, “We condemn in the strongest terms possible today’s terrorist attack that targeted Israel’s defense forces and express our deepest condolences to the victims. The United States remains committed to Israel’s security and will stand with Israel to combat all forms of terrorism.” U.S. Ambassador to Israel Dan Shapiro said in Hebrew that he “vehemently condemns the terrorist attack in Jerusalem in which IDF troops were killed. Condolences to the families of the deceased and prayers for recovery to those injured.” The [European Union and the United Nations](#) also joined the United States in condemning the terrorist attack.

### Rex Tillerson: Two-state solution must remain the ‘aspiration’

President-elect Donald Trump’s nominee for secretary of state, Rex Tillerson, endorsed the two-state solution Wednesday and denounced Palestinian terrorism as an obstacle to a peace deal, but said both sides in the decades-long conflict had failed to seize past opportunities to clinch an accord. According to [The Times of Israel](#), during his confirmation hearing with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the former CEO of ExxonMobil laid out his views on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict for the first time. Tillerson singled out the Palestinians’ failure to stop violence as a cause for the stalemate between the sides. “I would say in the case of the Palestinian leadership, while they have renounced violence, it is one thing to renounce it and another to take concrete action to prevent it,” he said. “I think until there is a serious

demonstration on their part and they are willing to do more than just renounce violence, [until] they are willing to do something to at least interrupt it or interfere with it, it is very difficult to create conditions at the table for parties to have any productive discussion around [a] settlement,” he added. But Tillerson also lamented what he described as the inability of both Israeli and Palestinian leaders to make the compromises and risks necessary to reach an agreement,

## HEZBOLLAH

### United States Issues New Sanctions on Hezbollah Operatives

On Jan. 9, the U.S. State Department imposed new sanctions on two individuals for their connection to the Iranian-backed terrorist organization Hezbollah. The State Department [designated](#) Ali Damush and Mustafa Mughniyeh as Specially Designated Global Terrorists pursuant to [Executive Order 13224](#). As a result, all of their U.S. property and interests are frozen, and U.S. persons are prohibited from engaging in transactions with them. According to the State Department, Damush and Mughniyeh are both members of Hezbollah’s senior leadership and play key roles in organizing Hezbollah’s international terrorist infrastructure. Damush [oversees](#) Hezbollah’s Foreign Relations Department, which coordinates the group’s international covert operations. Mughniyeh leads the Iranian proxy’s military operations in the Golan Heights. Mughniyeh is also closely related to two deceased, former Hezbollah commanders: his father, Imad Mughniyeh, and his uncle, Mustafa Badreddine. “The imposition of sanctions by the United States against terrorists like Damush and Mughniyeh is a powerful tool. Today’s action notifies the U.S. public and the international community that Ali Damush and Mustafa Mughniyeh are actively engaged in terrorism,” [said](#) the State Department.

## ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

### Israeli high-tech raises record high \$4.8 billion in 2016

According to [Israel21c.org](#), Israeli high-tech companies raised an all-time annual high of \$4.8 billion in 2016, 11 percent above the \$4.3 billion raised in 2015, according to a new report by [IVC Research Center](#). The IVC-ZAG Israeli High-Tech Capital Raising Survey shows the average financing round last year reached \$7.2 million, 19% above the \$5.1 million five-year average. “As expected, 2016 ended as a record year in Israeli high-tech capital raising,” says Koby Simana, CEO of IVC Research Center. The IVC-ZAG Survey showed that while capital-raising reached new heights in 2016, the number of financing rounds were fewer than expected, with 659 deals closed in 2016, marginally above the five-year average of 657 deals, and 7% below 2015’s record 706 deals. “When we looked into the numbers to try and explain the trend, we found what I would call a ‘B Crunch’ – a 30% drop in the number of second rounds closed in 2016 compared to 2015, while the number of earlier rounds slightly increased. This is a troubling trend for the Israeli VC funnel, since the majority of capital goes into later rounds – if there are no companies lined up for later investments, there could be a more serious issue later on,” said Simana. Software companies led capital-raising in 2016 with \$1.7 billion, up from 2015 when the sector attracted \$1.4 billion. Internet capital raising decreased in 2016, when the sector attracted only \$744 million compared to \$1.12 billion raised in 2015. There was also a 14% decrease in life science capital raising in 2016.