



# Rabbinic Recap

The week of March 30, 2018

## U.S. CONGRESS

### **Critical Pro-Israel Provisions Contained in FY18 Omnibus Bill**

Congress included key provisions to help Israel address critical security challenges in the Fiscal Year 2018 Omnibus Appropriations bill. The bill provides \$3.1 billion in overall security assistance to Israel. The bill also includes the Taylor Force Act—bipartisan legislation that would eliminate funding that directly benefits the Palestinian Authority (PA) if it continues its abhorrent practice of paying salaries to terrorists or their families. The spending bill also contains a total of \$705.8 million for U.S.-Israel missile defense cooperation, representing \$105 million more than last year's adopted funding level. In addition, this legislation also contains a total of \$47.5 million for critical U.S.-Israel anti-tunnel cooperation. The bill includes an appropriation for the establishment of a U.S.-Israel Center of Excellence in energy and water technologies—the first new appropriation in a decade for a U.S.-Israel non-defense program. It also fully funds the U.S.-Israel BIRD-Energy program and enables it, for the first time, to fund natural gas projects.

Read AIPAC's full press release [here](#).

## IRAN

### **U.S. Charges, Sanctions Iranians for Global Cyber Attacks on Behalf of Tehran**

The United States on Friday charged and sanctioned nine Iranians and an Iranian company for attempting to hack into hundreds of universities worldwide, dozens of firms and parts of the U.S. government, including its main energy regulator, on behalf of Tehran's government, the [New York Times reported](#). The cyber attacks, beginning in at least 2013, pilfered more than 31 terabytes of academic data and intellectual property from 144 U.S. universities and 176 universities in 21 other countries, the U.S. Department of Justice said, describing the campaign as one of the largest state-sponsored hacks ever prosecuted. The U.S. Treasury Department said it was placing sanctions on the nine people and the Mabna Institute, a company U.S. prosecutors characterized as designed to help Iranian research organizations steal information.

## PALESTINIANS

### **3 Gazans with Grenades and Knives Captured Near Army Base 20 kms. Inside Israel**

The Israel Defense Forces captured three armed Palestinians on Tuesday morning after they crossed the Gaza security fence and traveled approximately 20 kilometers (12 miles) into Israeli territory, the army said, as [reported by the Times of Israel](#). The suspects were found in

possession of knives and grenades, the military said. The tools that were apparently used to cut through the fence were also recovered. A bomb disposal robot was brought to the area to disarm the grenades, police said.

## **Ahead of Mass Protest, Hamas Holds 1st Live-Fire Military Exercise in Gaza**

Hamas on Sunday carried out an unprecedented military exercise in the Gaza Strip, including the test-firing of a rocket, as Israel boosted its forces along the border in preparation for a Palestinian planned mass march on Passover eve, the [Times of Israel also noted](#). Eyewitnesses said the terror organization fired at least one rocket towards the Mediterranean and practiced attacking several models of Merkava tanks, similar to those used by the IDF. On Saturday, the group's military wing, the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, warned residents ahead of the drill, claiming that the exercise was "defensive" only. Hebrew media reported that the Israeli military was completing preparations for a planned Palestinian "day of rage" on Passover Eve this coming Friday, when thousands of Palestinians in the Strip, encouraged by Hamas, are expected to try to march to the fences marking the borders with Israel.

## **UNITED NATIONS**

### **U.N. Rights Council Scorecard: 5 Israel Resolutions, Syria 2**

Nine months ago, U.S. Ambassador Nikki Haley stormed the United Nations' top human rights body demanding an end to what she said is its bias against Israel and raising the prospect of a U.S. pullout if it didn't, the [Associated Press reported](#). But the 47-member body ended its first and longest session of the year Friday by adopting five resolutions critical of Israel's behavior toward the Palestinians or throwing support behind their long, fruitless cause for statehood. Another two "country-specific" resolutions focused on Syria, where hundreds of thousands have died in a seven-year civil war. South Sudan, Myanmar, Iran and North Korea garnered one each. Haley railed Friday that the Geneva-based Human Rights Council every March sets aside only two sessions to debate rights violations and abuses — one for Israel and one for the rest of the world. "When the Human Rights Council treats Israel worse than North Korea, Iran and Syria, it is the council itself that is foolish and unworthy of its name," she said. Haley said it is time for "the countries who know better to demand changes," saying many agree the council's agenda "is grossly biased against Israel, but too few are willing to fight it." "When that happens, as it did today, the council fails to fulfill its duty to uphold human rights around the world," she said.

## **ISRAEL IN THE NEWS**

### **A Big Chunk of Israel's Tech Scene is Actually Based in New York**

More than 350 startups with Israeli founders have set up shop in New York, up from 60 five years ago, says Guy Franklin, who runs a local tech hub for his countrymen and has cataloged the phenomenon, [Bloomberg News noted](#). Three of the five biggest funding rounds in New York last year were for companies run by Israelis or Israeli-Americans: co-working business WeWork, real estate app Compass and ride-sharing company Via. As Israel's tech scene matures from a focus on cybersecurity and the military to larger consumer and business software companies, more of what could be considered "Israeli tech" is actually happening in New York, where it's easier to find the sales and marketing talent to build businesses. The cross-pollination is getting help from U.S. venture firms, which have participated in more than 60 percent of investment rounds in Israeli startups so far this year, according to research firm PitchBook.