



## Operation Iron Swords Updated to 1 p.m., November 23, 2023

### Northern Arena

- 310 attacks
- 85 Hezbollah operatives killed
- 14 other terrorist-organization operatives killed

### Israeli Casualties

- Approximately 1,200 military and civilian dead (unofficial estimate)
- Abducted – 236
- Five abductees returned

### Rocket Fire

- About 10,500 rockets and mortar shells
- About 10% failed launches

## Overview<sup>1</sup>

► **The hostage release deal:** Despite the announcements of a deal to release some of the abductees and a ceasefire on November 23, starting at 10 a.m., as of now the agreement has not been implemented and the timetable for its implementation is unclear. According to Isma'il Haniyeh's advisor Taher al-Nunu, the discussions are currently not about the agreement itself, but about the mechanisms for its implementation. Senior Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) terrorist figures were interviewed by various media where they discussed the agreement and its terms. The PIJ operatives noted its coordination with Hamas.

► **The southern arena:** IDF forces continued operations in Gaza City and the northern Gaza Strip. An extensive tunnel network was uncovered at Shifa Hospital, used as headquarters by Hamas terrorist operatives, and apparently Israeli hostages from the October 7, 2023, attack were held there. In the northern Gaza Strip, the headquarters of the northern division of Hamas were destroyed.

<sup>1</sup> Click <https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en> to subscribe and receive the ITIC's daily updates as well as its other publications.

►According to an unofficial estimate, since October 7 approximately 1,200 Israeli civilians and security personnel have been killed, 392 of them soldiers and officers; 236 civilian and military abductees are being held by the terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip.

►**Rocket fire:** While sporadic rocket launches were carried out from the Gaza Strip, in northern Israel an unusual barrage of 48 rockets was launched at the Galilee cities, towns and villages settlements and IDF positions. A ballistic missile was launched at Eilat from the region of Yemen and intercepted before it reached Israeli territory.

►**The Gaza Strip:** The difficult humanitarian situation continues. Many Gazans are pinning their hopes on the cease-fire agreement, which will lead to the entry of aid into the Gaza Strip.

►**The northern sector:** Hezbollah military-terrorist activity continued. On the morning of November 23, 2023, an unusual barrage of 48 rockets was launched at the Galilee and IDF posts.

►**Judea and Samaria:** Israeli security force counterterrorism activities continue. Hamas-affiliated terrorists claimed responsibility for launching a rocket at the settlement of Shaked.

►**Iran:** The Iranian foreign minister visited Lebanon and met with government officials, the secretary general of Hezbollah and representatives of the Palestinian terrorist organizations.

## The Issue of the Abductees

►Despite the announcements of a deal for the release of some of the abductees and a ceasefire on November 23, starting at 10 a.m., as of now the agreement has not been implemented and the timetable for its implementation is unclear. **Majed Mohammed al-Ansari, spokesman for Qatar's foreign ministry**, said that an announcement regarding the implementation of the ceasefire agreement would be made the next few hours. He claimed work continued to ensure that the parties complied with the ceasefire agreement (Qatar foreign ministry X account, November 23, 2023).

►**Mohammed al-Khalifi, minister of state at Qatar's foreign ministry**, said the deal prioritized the release of civilian women and children from both sides [sic] over four days. The deal includes the release of the abductees and the provision of humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip, with an emphasis on fuel. He claimed they would receive the list of names and make sure that the relevant parties were updated. Al-Khalifi added that Qatar's efforts continued and they were hopeful, despite the challenges (CNN, November 23, 2023).

► **Taher al-Nunu, advisor to Isma'il Haniyeh**, claimed Hamas was committed to the agreement and the current discussions were about the mechanisms for its implementation. He claimed there were "issues" that required the "regulation of mechanisms" to ensure the truce would not fail and would be applied in a "reliable and accurate manner." He also claimed that all "parties [terrorist organizations]" were committed to the truce (al-Ghad TV YouTube channel, November 23, 2023).

► Senior Hamas and PIJ terrorists were interviewed by various media and discussed some of the agreement's conditions. The PIJ noted its coordination with Hamas.

► **Bassem Na'im, a member of the Hamas leadership in the Gaza Strip and the chairman of the political bureau**, said their top priority was the opening of the crossings and the entry of aid, including fuel and gas, to both the southern and northern Gaza Strip, and it was one of the most important conditions. Regarding the return of Gazans to their homes in the northern Gaza Strip during the ceasefire, he said traffic from south to north on Salah al-Din Street would be restricted to humanitarian aid and medical teams, and not for civilians. He added that during the ceasefire, at least 200-300 aid trucks would enter the Gaza Strip bringing food, medicine, clothes, blankets, etc., as well as "fuel and gas for the hospitals [sic]" (al-Araby TV X account, November 22, 2023). Interviewed by al-Jazeera TV's "Hasakah" program, he was asked how Hamas would guarantee that released prisoners would not be detained again. He answered that the agreement was sponsored by Qatar, Egypt and the United States, which guaranteed they would not be re-detained (al-Jazeera TV, November 23, 2023).

► **Zaher Jabarin, who holds the prisoners' portfolio in Hamas**, said that exchanging the hostages for Palestinian prisoners would take place in four or five stages, one stage each day, within the agreed upon time of the truce. Asked about the possibility of extending the duration of the truce beyond what was agreed upon, he replied that currently the agreement was for four days and that so far it was not clear when the truce would go into effect. He claimed they had established several criteria for drawing up the lists of who would be part of the exchange deal. Jabarin said the cease-fire agreement dealt with the Gaza Strip, and the northern border was Hezbollah's concern, not theirs (Masrawy website, November 22, 2023).

► **Ali Abu Shahin, a member of the PIJ's political bureau and head of its media information department**, claimed they customarily coordinated with Hamas in all areas, including regarding the abductees' deal. He claimed the agreement had been jointly formulated through the mediators, adding that the PIJ was an "essential part" of the deal, agreed to its

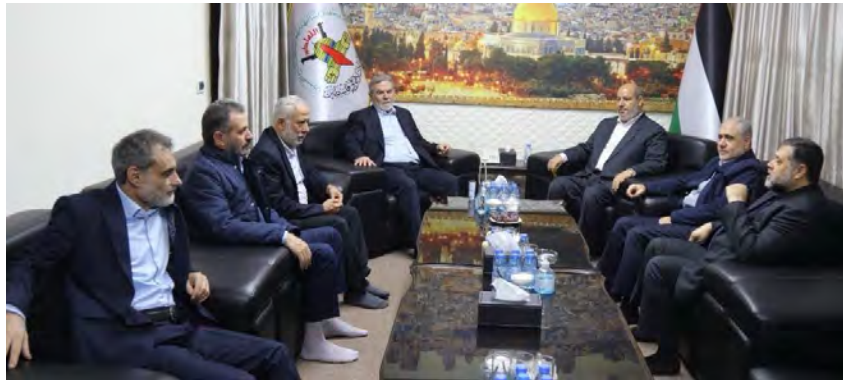
terms and was committed to it as long as Israel was committed. He claimed they were preparing the lists of the abductees who would be released, adding that the "resistance" [Palestinian terrorist organizations] had demonstrated "flexibility" by entering into a partial exchange deal for the kidnapped civilians, especially those with dual citizenship. He further said that at the beginning of the campaign the PIJ said it would release all the abductees only as part of an overall deal that guaranteed emptying Israeli jails of all Palestinian prisoners, and that a partial exchange was a step towards completing the overall deal later. He said the PIJ was aware of the situation and not a single civilian abductee or military prisoner would be returned except by negotiations with [the terrorist organizations] (al-Jazeera Mubasher, November 22, 2023; al-Shorouk, Egypt, November 22, 2023).

► **Tareq Salami, PIJ spokesman**, claimed the PIJ would not release a single Israeli hostage, not even a civilian, until after the release of all Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails. He threatened that any Israeli violation would stop the process of handing over the civilian abductees. Asked how many prisoners held by the PIJ would be included in the deal, he said the number could not be revealed "for security reasons." He added that the delivery mechanism was being prepared, and should begin on the morning of November 23, 2023. He said they would determine the time and place on the day of the exchange. He said the Israeli hostages would be released, and at the same time, the Israeli side would release the Palestinian prisoners. He said it was important to complete the current deal and evaluate the situation during the truce in terms of the Israeli side's commitment to the agreement (al-Shorouk, Egypt, November 22, 2023).

► **Muhammad al-Hindi, deputy PIJ secretary general**, said the agreement was reached after "Israeli procrastination" which had lasted for about ten days, adding that the PIJ was part of the deal. He said the names of the kidnapped civilians to be released and the names of the Palestinian prisoners had not been determined, and when there was an agreement regarding the name, the exchange deal would become valid (al-Jazeera Mubasher TV website, November 23, 2023).

► **Ziyad al-Nakhalah, PIJ secretary general**, met with a delegation led by **Khalil al-Haya, a member of Hamas' political bureau**. They claimed the "firmness of the Palestinian people and the Palestinian 'resistance'" had forced Israel to implement the first phase of the prisoner exchange deal and temporary ceasefire. They also claimed the deal would "strengthen the Palestinian people" on the way to stopping Israeli "aggression" and releasing the prisoners

from Israeli jails. They also claimed the coordination between the PIJ and Hamas and their joint monitoring of the first phase of the deal would continue (PIJ Telegram channel, November 22, 2023).



**Al-Nakhalah meets with the Hamas delegation**  
(PIJ media information office Telegram channel, November 22, 2023)

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## The Combat Arena

### IDF activity on the ground

► **The integrated ground maneuver:** IDF forces continued their activity in the Gaza Strip (IDF spokesperson, November 22 and 23, 2023):

- ◆ **Gaza City:** The forces operated in the southwestern Tel al-Hawa area, where they raided Hamas' Gaza City Brigade post and its military intelligence office, collecting intelligence and technical material, including information about the Hamas tunnel infrastructure. Raiding Hamas posts and facilities, they located a workshop for the production of UAVs, a worksite for exploding drones, IEDs, mortar shells and other weapons.



**Attack on the Hamas intelligence headquarters (IDF spokesperson, November 22, 2023)**

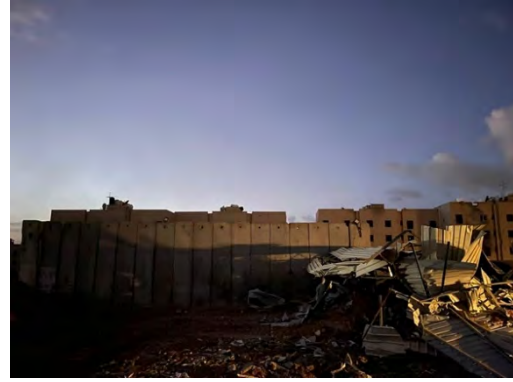


◆ **Shifa Hospital:** Israeli security forces revealed the continuation of the terrorist tunnel route found under the hospital. It appeared that this was a a branched tunnel dozens of yards long that ran under a building built with funding from Qatar in in the Shifa Hospital complex,. Fighting rooms, hiding places and evidence that could testify to the presence of the Israeli abductees were also found. Two additional tunnel shafts were uncovered near the hospital. Given the findings, IDF forces detained the Shifa Hospital director, who was taken for questioning (IDF spokesperson, November 23, 2023).

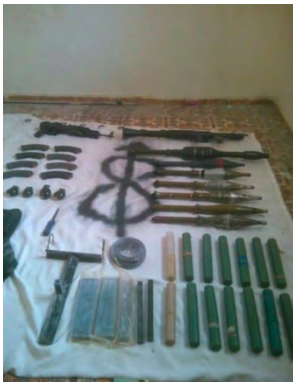


**Right: A tunnel exposed near the hospital. Left: A tunnel shaft hidden a hundred meters from the hospital (IDF spokesperson, November 22, 2023)**

► **The northern Gaza Strip:** IDF forces continued operating in **Jabalia and Beit Hanoun**, and raided the headquarters of Hamas' Northern Division in the Sheikh Zayed area, which is an upscale neighborhood where many senior Hamas terrorists live, and where there is a post used by the nukhba terrorist forces. The forces located several tunnel shafts in the post, including a strategic shaft 50 meters (about 55 yards) deep and seven meters (a little less than 8 yards) wide. A scaled-down model of an IDF armored vehicle and a wall simulating the border fence in Gaza were also located in the area. The forces located rocket launch complexes that included a lathe for the manufacture of rockets, underground launch pits and a large quantity of weapons. They destroyed the post. In another operation in the area, inside a mosque, the fighters located a vehicle with a large quantity of weapons that were apparently used by the nukhba terrorist operatives for the attack on October 7.



**Right: A simulated wall of the border security fence. Left: A model of an IDF tank (IDF spokesperson, November 22, 2023)**



**Right: Destroying a tunnel shaft in the Beit Hanoun area (IDF spokesman, November 23, 2023).  
Left: The weapons found in a residence in Beit Hanoun (IDF website, November 23, 2023)**

► **Aerial activity:** On November 22, 2023, the Israeli Air Force attacked approximately 300 Hamas targets, including operational headquarters, underground combat tunnels, sites for the production and storage of weapons, and anti-tank missile launch sites (IDF spokesperson, November 23, 2023).



**Right: Israeli Air Force strikes in the Jabaliya refugee camp (QudsN X account, November 22, 2023). Left: Air Force strikes in west Rafah (QudsN X account, November 23, 2023)**

►Ibrahim Qanan, a correspondent for al-Ghad TV, reported **the IDF continued to attack unceasingly in the Khan Yunis area and caused a large number of deaths.** He claimed evacuating the injured to Nasser Hospital continued all morning (al-Ghad TV , November 23, 2023).



Report from the entrance to Nasser Hospital (al-Ghad TV, November 23, 2023)

## Rocket fire

►The sporadic launch of rockets towards Israel continued, most of them attacking the cities, towns and villages surrounding Gaza. **Since the beginning of the war, more than 10,500 rockets have been fired at Israel. About 10% of them were failed launches that fell inside the Gaza Strip or in the sea.**

►There was an alert in the Eilat region regarding the penetration of a hostile aircraft. An Israeli Air Force fighter jet successfully intercepted a cruise missile fired at Israeli territory (IDF spokesperson, November 22, 2023).

►On the morning of November 23, 2023, an unusual barrage of 48 rockets from Lebanese territory attacked Galilee cities, towns and villages, and IDF posts.

## Israeli casualties

►According to an unofficial estimate, since October 7 approximately 1,200 Israeli civilians and security personnel have been killed, 392 of them soldiers and officers; 236 civilian and military abductees are held by the terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip, 35 children and adolescents under the age of 18, 32 over the age of 65. Five abductees were released; four were released alive, one was extracted by IDF forces and two bodies were recovered by the IDF and brought to Israeli territory.



## The Gaza Strip

### Palestinian casualties

►The Hamas government media information bureau in Gaza reported that as of 8:00 p.m., November 22, 2023, the number of dead stood at 14,532 and the number of wounded at more than 35,000 (QudsN X account, November 15, 2023).

►**Dr. Ashraf al-Qidra, spokesman for the ministry of health in the Gaza Strip**, called on all parties to take advantage of the humanitarian pause to deliver medical aid and fuel to the hospitals in the Gaza Strip (ministry of health in Gaza Facebook page, November 22, 2023).

►The Palestinian Red Crescent reported the evacuation of about 190 wounded and sick, along with their attendants and a number of medical teams, from Shifa Hospital to the European Hospital in Khan Yunis. The dialysis patients were transferred to the Abu Yousef al-Najjar hospital in Rafah. He claimed that the transfer of the wounded took about twenty hours, because the "convoy was blocked and checked at the military checkpoint erected on the humanitarian axis" (al-Amsar, November 22, 2023).

### The situation in Gaza

►**Adnan Abu Hasna, UNRWA's media advisor in the Gaza Strip**, said that approximately one million residents who left the northern Gaza Strip were currently staying in 156 UNRWA shelter facilities in the south. He said UNRWA was the only organization providing them with a humanitarian response and consistent assistance. He said that before the war, 500 trucks would enter Gaza every day, but today, due to the war, the Strip needed 800 trucks every day for two to three months in a row (Ma'an, November 23, 2023).

### The Rafah Crossing

►The Rafah Crossing is scheduled to open on November 24, 2023, for the return of Palestinians from the northern Sinai Peninsula. On November 25, 2023, it will open for the return of Palestinians from other areas in Egypt (Rafah Crossing News Facebook page, November 23, 2023). It will be the first time since the beginning of the war that Palestinians will be able to return to the Gaza Strip through the Rafah Crossing.



**Diab al-Luh, the Palestinian Authority representative in Egypt (center), visits wounded people and their families from Gaza in hospitals in Cairo and Port Said (Rafah Crossing News Facebook page, November 23, 2023)**

## Palestinian organizations


► **Isma'il Haniyeh, head of Hamas' political bureau**, met with **Nasser al-Qidwa, a member of Fatah's Central Committee**, and with **Samir a-Mashrawi, deputy of Muhammad Dahlan, leader of the Democratic Reformist Party**. They discussed ways to stop "Israel's aggression" and introduce humanitarian aid to the Strip. They also discussed the internal Palestinian situation and how to deal with the war, and expressed their appreciation for the efforts of Egypt and Qatar in the ceasefire negotiations (Hamas Telegram channel, November 22, 2023).

► On November 21, the PIJ held a meeting in Beirut to discuss Operation al-Aqsa Storm, and "aggression against Gaza," and the role of the media in "combatting Zionist propaganda." The meeting was attended by representatives of Lebanon's ministers of public diplomacy and culture. **Ali Abu Shahin a member of the PIJ's political bureau and the head of the PIJ's media information department**, claimed Operation al-Aqsa Storm was a "strategic confrontation" which would redefine the headlines of the conflict with Israel and its Palestinian, regional and international dimensions. . He said the PIJ had participated in the fighting from the beginning as part of the "unity of the resistance" and continued to participate as a main partner, both with its armed battalions in Judea and Samaria and its "jihad activity" from south Lebanon. He said there was consistent coordination with Hamas on the ground and in the "political efforts" of the kidnapping deal.

► He "saluted" Hezbollah for its role and the organization's dead "on the way to Jerusalem". He also congratulated the Yemeni people and the "Iraqi and Syrian resistance" [pro-Iranian militias] for attacking United States military bases ("the head of the snake"), in Iraq and Syria. He claimed that the media had played a central role in "exposing Israeli propaganda" from

the beginning of the campaign. He thanked all the local, Arab and international media and all those active in social networks for their part in "exposing Israel's lies" (Shams News, November 22, 2023).

► **Muhammad al-Hindi, deputy PIJ secretary general**, told the al-Masirah network [the Houthi media information wing] that the Palestinians rejoiced over the "actions of the armed forces of Yemen," the latest of which was the seizure of the "Israeli ship" in the Red Sea. He claimed "Yemen's language of force" was what the Palestinians and "the world" wanted to hear, and was the only language Israel understood. He added that Hamas carried out Operation al-Aqsa Storm, and when the PIJ learned about it, its military wing immediately joined "as part of their responsibility to protect [sic] the Palestinians." He said there was an undeclared war in southern Lebanon, and claimed a third of the IDF was "exhausted" on the northern front. He added that between 70,000 and 100,000 Israelis had been displaced by Hezbollah from northern Israel, and which was a burden for the country (Ansar Allah website, November 21, 2023).

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## The Northern Arena

### Lebanon

► Hezbollah continued attacking IDF posts and the cities, towns and villages along the northern border. Hezbollah claimed responsibility for 12 "operations" carried out on November 22, 2023 and for ten on November 23 until around 11 a.m. (Hezbollah combat information wing Telegram channel, November 22, 23, 2023 ) On November 23, 2023, an unusual barrage of 48 rockets was launched at the Galilee and IDF posts.

► On the night of November 22, 2023, a surface-to-air missile was launched from Lebanon at an IDF aircraft. The missile was intercepted; no casualties or damage were reported. In response, IDF aircraft attacked the missile launcher and a weapons storage position (IDF website, November 23, 2023).

► During the day, IDF fighter jets attacked Hezbollah terrorist facilities in Lebanese territory, a terrorist squad about to launch rockets at Israeli territory, a terrorist squad that fired at IDF forces, and a military-terrorist building from which shots were fired at Israel (IDF spokesperson, November 22, 2023).



**Right: The Israeli Air Force eliminates a terrorist squad about to launch rockets at Israel. Left: Eliminating a terrorist squad that shot at IDF forces (IDF spokesperson, November 22, 2023)**

## Hezbollah casualties

►Hezbollah announced the death of six terrorist operatives, all from southern Lebanon (Telegram channel of Hezbollah's combat information wing, November 23, 2023):

- ◆ Abbas Muhammad Ra'ed , aka Siraj, of Jabba'.
- ◆ Khalil Jawad Shahimi, aka Saraj, from Markaba.
- ◆ Ahmed Hasan Mustafa, aka Malach Khula, from Khoule.
- ◆ Muhammad Hassan Ahmed Shari, aka Karbala, from Khirbet Salem.
- ◆ Bassam Ali Kanju, aka Abu Hossein Tha'ar, from Shaqra.
- ◆ Ali Shabib Muhsen, aka Zein al-Abdin, from Haris.



### Hezbollah casualties

(Telegram channel of Hezbollah's combat information wing, November 23, 2023)

►All those killed on November 22, 2023, were commanders of the Radwan Force, Hezbollah's elite unit, and were killed in an Israeli airstrike on Beit Yahoun. Among the dead were the son of Muhammad Ra'ed, the chairman of the Hezbollah faction in the parliament, (MTV Lebanon, November 22, 2023), and Khalil Jawad Shahimi, a senior Radwan commander (al-Nahar, November 23, 2023).

## Palestinians

► Hamas announced the death of four of its terrorist operatives in Lebanon: Ahmed Awad and Khaled Minawi of Lebanese origin; and Bilal Awazturk and Yakoub Ardal of Turkish origin. Hamas said they were killed in an Israeli attack in south Lebanon on November 21, 2023 (Hamas Telegram channel, November 22, 2023).

► **Senior Hamas terrorist Osama Hamdan** claimed that Hezbollah secretary general Hassan Nasrallah spoke confidently of the victory in Gaza and claimed there was general satisfaction in the "axis of resistance"<sup>2</sup> regarding the course of the conflict. He reported they heard details from Nasrallah about the effort the resistance was investing in south Lebanon and they were seeing its effects (al-Manar, November 22, 2023).

## The Lebanese government

►The Lebanese foreign ministry announced that Lebanon had submitted a complaint to the UN Security Council against Israel "following the attack that led to the death of three civilians, including two employees of the al-Mayadeen network." According to the complaint, the attack was carried out at a distance from the border and therefore constituted a flagrant violation of international law. It was also noted that the targeted attack on journalists was intended to prevent the media from "conveying the truth" (Lebanese foreign ministry X account, November 22, 2023).

► **Najib Mikati, prime minister of the transitional government in Lebanon**, met in Beirut with Hossein-Amir Abdollahian, Iranian foreign minister. Abdollahian commented positively on the four-day ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, but said efforts to reach a permanent ceasefire were more important, because without a ceasefire the situation would worsen and the region would not return to the war's status quo ante. Mikati said that countries with influence had to apply pressure to stop the aggression against south Lebanon, and especially stop the attacks

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<sup>2</sup> Iran, Syria, Hezbollah, the Palestinian terrorist organizations, the Shi'ite Houthis in Yemen and the pro-Iranian militias in Iraq.



on civilians and journalists (Account X of the office of the prime minister of Lebanon, November 22, 2023).

► **Samir Geagea, chairman of the Lebanese Christian Forces Party**, said Hezbollah refused to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1701, hand over the border area to the Lebanese army and prevent a war that none of the Lebanese people wanted. He emphasized that Hezbollah's use of the villages along the border was unacceptable because it exposed the residents, endangered their lives and threatened to displace them from their homes (Samir Geagea's X account, November 22, 2023).

► Regarding the ceasefire between Israel and Hamas, **Elias Bou Saab, the deputy speaker of the Lebanese Parliament**, said that the American envoy, Amos Hochstein, had taken action to keep the war from spreading. He claimed Hezbollah would stop shooting if Israel ceased to attack. Hezbollah acted in accordance with the decision of the [government] ministers and the decision was up to the Lebanese army. He issued an alert for the hours before the ceasefire goes into effect and claimed that if Israel continued its attacks, it would drag the region into war (al-Nashra, November 22, 2023).

## Syria

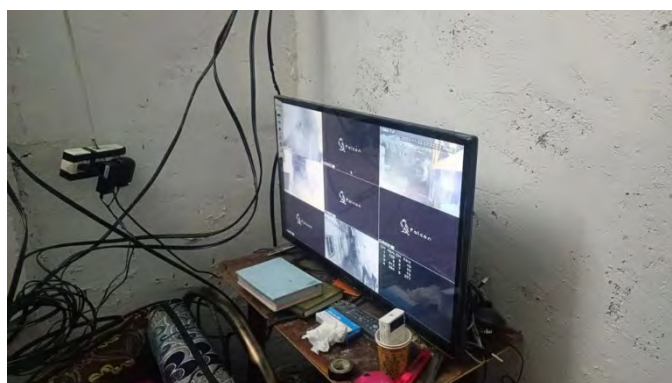
► A "military source" reported that on November 22, 2023, at around 2:10 p.m., Israeli aircraft, using two missiles launched from the direction of the Golan Heights, attacked several targets in the Damascus area. The source added that the aerial defense systems had intercepted one of the missiles and that there had been material damage (SANA, November 22, 2023). The Saber News Telegram channel reported Israel had attacked in the area of the Shi'ite shrine of al-Sayyidah Zaynab, to the south of Damascus..

► The Syrian foreign ministry stated that "the Zionist entity's" continued aggressive approach was a result of "international disregard for its crimes," including its "aggression" in the Gaza Strip. The ministry added that such actions threatened regional security and stability and noted that it was their right to protect Syria's sovereignty and independence in every way as determined by international law (Telegram channel of the Syrian foreign ministry, November 22, 2023).

## Judea and Samaria

### Preventive and counterterrorism activities

► On the night of November 22, 2023, Israeli security forces operated throughout Judea and Samaria, detaining wanted Palestinians. In the Tulkarm refugee camp, the forces destroyed an observation post monitoring the forces' activity. A UAV fired at militants who threw IEDs and fired at the forces. In the Dheisheh refugee camp and al-Khader (Bethlehem), the forces detained wanted Palestinians and seized weapons and incitement materials (IDF website, November 22, 2023).



The observation post found (IDF spokesperson, November 22, 2023)

► In response to the IDF's activity in Tulkarm, **senior Hamas terrorist in Tulkarm Abd al-Rahman Shadid** said Operation al-Aqsa Storm, which began "to protect" the Palestinians and defend the holy sites, would continue throughout the occupied Palestinian land until the Palestinian goals had been fully achieved and Israel expelled. He called on the "free young people" in all the districts of Judea and Samaria to enlist, join in the "resistance" to Israel, confront Israel by all available means, and raise the cost of its presence on Palestinian land, no matter how many victims there might be (Hamas Telegram channel in Judea and Samaria, November 22, 2023).



**Protest march in Ramallah initiated by a group of youth organizations  
(Watan News Agency, November 22, 2023)**

►The Palestinian media reported that during the night, the Israeli security forces detained 76 Palestinians in Judea and Samaria (Wafa, November 23, 2023). As of the morning, it reported extensive activity by Israeli security forces in the Balata refugee camp in Nablus, including numerous detentions, and clashes between Palestinians and the Israeli security forces. The Palestinians reported one Palestinian killed and three wounded (Wafa and Ma'an, November 23, 2023).



**Right: Israeli security forces in the Balata refugee camp in Nablus. Left: Burning tires in the refugee camp during security force activity (QudsN X account, November 23, 2023)**

►The al-Ayyash Battalion, affiliated with Hamas' military-terrorist wing, claimed responsibility for firing a Qassam 1 rocket at the settlement of Shaked in response to "the enemy's crimes in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank and against our prisoners" (al-Ayyash Battalion Telegram channel, November 23, 2023).

## Palestinian Authority

► **Mahmoud Abbas, chairman of the Palestinian Authority**, spoke with **Finnish President Sauli Niinistö**. Abbas stressed the need to stop the war in the Gaza Strip and accelerate the entry of humanitarian aid. He expressed his appreciation for Finland's commitment to the

two-state solution based on international legitimacy and thanked the Finnish president for the humanitarian aid provided by the Finnish Red Cross and the Red Crescent, as well as the development assistance Finland provided to UNRWA (Wafa, November 22, 2023).

► **May al-Kayla, PA minister of health**, met with the Swiss representative in the PA and updated her on the state of the public health system in the Gaza Strip. Al-Kayla asked for Switzerland's intervention in protecting the medical facilities in the Gaza Strip and bringing in humanitarian aid and fuel (PA ministry of health Facebook page, November 22, 2023). Al-Kayla also met with the representative of the UN Development Program (UNDP) in the PA. She reviewed the state of the public health system in the Gaza Strip and examined ways to strengthen cooperation (PA ministry of health Facebook page, November 22, 2023).



**Al-Kayla meeting with the Swiss representative in the PA**  
(PA ministry of health Facebook page, November 22, 2023)

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## Iran

► **Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi** said in an interview with "axis of resistance" media that Israel had suffered a military, security and intelligence defeat in the Hamas attack on October 7. He said the reason for the attack, which he called "legitimate self-defense," was Israel's attack on the al-Aqsa Mosque and the killing of civilians, especially recently. He said Israel had so far not achieved its goals of conquering Gaza and eliminating Hamas. Raisi further said Iran did not give instructions to the "resistance groups" and they acted in accordance with their decisions and assessments (Fars, November 22, 2023).

### Iranian foreign minister's visit to Lebanon

► **Hossein-Amir Abdollahian, Iranian foreign minister**, arrived in Lebanon on November 22, 2023, and during his visit to Beirut met with **Lebanese Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri**,

**Lebanese interim prime minister Najib Mikati, PIJ secretary general Ziyad al-Nakhalah, and Khalil al-Haya, a member of Hamas' political bureau.** They discussed the latest developments in the Gaza Strip and the region, and the agreement for a temporary ceasefire (ISNA, November 22, 2023).

► **In a meeting with Hezbollah secretary general Hassan Nasrallah,** the parties reportedly discussed the latest developments in Lebanon and the region, as well as the war in the Gaza Strip, including the efforts invested in stopping the Israeli "aggression" and everyone's responsibility for the issue (Hezbollah's combat information Telegram channel, November 23, 2023). According to **Mojtaba Amani, Iranian ambassador to Beirut,** the two discussed the latest developments in "Palestine," Lebanon and the region, efforts to stop the Israeli attacks in the Gaza Strip, and "the responsibility of everyone in this historic and fateful event" (ISNA, November 23, 2023).

► Abdollahian warned that if the ceasefire did not continue, new conditions would be created in the region and the war would spread. He said the 48 days of fighting had proven that Israel could not liberate the abductees through war or eliminate Hamas in the Gaza Strip. He said "Palestine" and the "resistance" were the victors in the war (al-Mayadeen, November 22, 2023).

► From Lebanon, Abdollahian went to Doha, the capital of Qatar, to discuss developments in the Palestinian arena and the region with senior Qatari officials (Tasnim, November 23, 2023).

## Activity of pro-Iranian militias

### Iraq and Syria

► The Islamic Resistance in Iraq claimed responsibility for drone attacks on an American Army base near Erbil Airport and the Harir base in northern Iraq (Islamic Resistance Telegram channel, November 23, 2023).

► Popular Mobilization sources strongly condemned the American attack that killed eight militia operatives, saying it was a blatant violation of Iraqi sovereignty. They also stressed their full commitment to the instructions of the commander-in-chief of the Iraqi army, noting that they would not hesitate to take any step to defend Iraq and its sovereignty (Popular Mobilization Telegram channel, November 22, 2023).

► **Iraqi Foreign Minister Fouad Hussein** met in Baghdad with **Alina Romanowski, the United States ambassador to Iraq.** Hussein noted he opposed the recent escalation in Iraq, which



violated Iraq's sovereignty, and stressed that the government condemned the attack carried out by the Americans, which, he claimed, was carried out without the knowledge of the authorities (Iraqi foreign ministry Telegram channel, November 23, 2023).

## Yemen

►The American Army Central Command (CENTCOM) reported that the destroyer USS Thomas Hudner had intercepted several drones launched from Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen. It was also reported that the ship and its crew sustained no damage and no losses (CENTCOM X account, November 23, 2023).

► **Yahya Saria, spokesman for the Houthi armed forces**, said they had fired several cruise missiles at various military targets in Eilat. He also said they would continue their military operations until Israel stopped its aggression against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip, Judea and Samaria (Yahya Saria's Telegram channel, November 22, 2023).

► **Muhammad Fadl Abdul Nabi, commander of the Houthi naval forces**, and other senior officials visited the hijacked ship anchored off the coast in Yemen. Abdul Nabi said the forces would continue their military operations against Israel's ships and interests until the "aggression" against the Gaza Strip and the Palestinian people stopped. He noted the naval activity would focus on ships bearing the Israeli flag, owned by an Israeli company, or owned by Israelis. He called on all ships passing through the Red Sea not to sail near Israeli ships and not to turn off their identification devices (Houthi military media wing, November 22, 2023).

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## The Arab Arena

### Egypt

► **Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi** met in Cairo with King Abdullah II of Jordan and discussed the continuation of the current activity to provide aid to the residents of the Gaza Strip (al-Qahera, November 22, 2023).

► **Dhiya al-Din Daoud, a member of the Egyptian parliament**, tore up a copy of the 1979 peace agreement between Egypt and Israel in front of the other representatives in parliament to protest the restrictions it imposes on Arab and Egyptian national security." He said the agreement had to be torn up to ensure the interests of Egypt and the Arab world (Akhbar al-Balad, November 23, 2023).

## Saudi arabia

► **American Secretary of State Antony Blinken** spoke with his **Saudi counterpart, Faisal bin Farhan**, to discuss ways to stop the "dangerous military escalation in and around Gaza" and to abide by a ceasefire agreement. Bin Farhan stressed Saudi Arabia's total rejection of forced emigration of Gaza residents and the importance of the international community dealing with Israel's violations of international law (Saudi foreign ministry X account, November 23, 2023).

## The International Arena

### United States

► **American President Joe Biden** spoke with **Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi**. President Biden said the United States would not allow the resettlement of Palestinians from the Gaza Strip or Judea and Samaria. It would also not allow a siege on the Gaza Strip or a redrawing of its borders (Reuters, November 22, 2023).

### Foreign ministers meeting

► On their way back from China, foreign ministers of several Arab and Muslim countries, including Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the Palestinian Authority met in Britain with British Foreign Minister David Cameron (Jordanian foreign minister's X account, November 22, 2023). French President Emmanuel Macron and French Foreign Minister Catherine Colonna also met in France. At the meeting, Macron told the ministers that everyone had to take into account Israel's security considerations and that there would not be a lasting ceasefire without very solid guarantees for Israel's security (Agence France-Presse, November 23, 2023).

### Turkey

► **Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan**, speaking at the G20 leaders' summit held online, said anyone with a conscience knew that what was happening in the Gaza Strip could not be justified and that under the guise of self-defense, it was a crime against humanity. He also noted they were prepared to take responsibility, along with other countries, for everything related to the new security apparatus that would be established at the end of the war. Erdoğan also said Turkey continued to transfer wounded people from the Gaza Strip to its hospitals for treatment (Anadolu News, November 22, 2023).