



## Operation Iron Swords Updated to 1 p.m., December 6, 2023

### Northern Arena

- 374 attacks
- 89 Hezbollah operatives killed
- 14 other terrorist-organization operatives killed
- One Lebanese army soldier killed

### Israeli Casualties

- Approximately 1,200 military and civilian dead (unofficial estimate)
- 138 abducted remain in the Gaza Strip

### Rocket Fire

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

## Overview<sup>1</sup>

► **The combat arena:** During the past day, IDF forces continued to attack Hamas terrorist strongholds in Jabalia and Shejaiya. IDF fighters surrounded the Khan Yunis area and entered the center of the city. According to IDF sources, it was the day of the heaviest fighting seen since the beginning of the war. Hamas claimed that during almost two months of war, Israel had made no significant achievements, given the scope of the military campaign it was waging against the Gaza Strip.

► **According to an unofficial estimate, since October 7 approximately 1,200 Israeli civilians and security personnel have been killed, 410 of them soldiers and officers; 138 civilian and military abductees are still being held by the terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip, 17 of them women and children; 113 hostages have been returned to Israel.**

► **The issue of the hostages:** Hamas continues to state that there will be no negotiations without a ceasefire and that the terms of the negotiations for the return of the soldiers will be different from those for the return of the women and children.

<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.

► **Accusations against Hamas:** Hamas continues to criticize the accusations of sexual violence committed by its terrorist operatives during the war, claiming that the United States has adopted the Israeli narrative.

► **The Gaza Strip:** The Palestinians report that the situation continues to deteriorate, especially regarding medical care. IDF activities led many Gazans to concentrate in the Rafah area in the southern Gaza Strip, where the mosques were opened to house the evacuees.

► **The northern sector:** Hezbollah continued attacking IDF positions on the Lebanese border. IDF fire killed one Lebanese army soldier and wounded three. The IDF apologized for the incident. Hezbollah and al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya, a Palestinian terrorist organization operating in Lebanon, attacked in response.

► **Judea and Samaria:** The Israeli security forces continued their counterterrorism activities. Hamas issued a strong protest over a march planned for the first eve of Hanukkah (December 7, 2023), which will pass through east Jerusalem.

## The Combat Arena

► During the past day, IDF forces continued their activity in the heart of the Hamas terrorist strongholds in Jabaliya and Shejaiya, where fierce battles took place. Meanwhile, IDF fighters surrounded the Khan Yunis area and entered the center of the city. According to IDF sources, it was the day of the heaviest fighting seen since the beginning of the war (IDF spokesperson, December 5, 2023).

► **IDF activity on the ground** IDF fighters continue locating and destroying weapons, underground tunnel shafts, IEDs and other terrorist facilities. They located and destroyed an underground shaft and other terrorist facilities located near a school. One of the largest stockpiles of weapons found so far in the Gaza Strip was located near a clinic and another school in the northern Gaza Strip, consisting of hundreds of anti-tank missiles and various types of RPG launchers, dozens of anti-tank missiles, dozens of explosive charges, long-range missiles aimed at the center of Israel, dozens of grenades and UAVs (IDF spokesperson, December 6, 2023).



**Right: IED found in a school in the northern Gaza Strip. Left: A stockpile of weapons located in the northern Gaza Strip (IDF website, December 6, 2023)**



**IDF forces in the Gaza Strip (IDF website, December 6, 2023)**

► **Aerial activity:** During the past day, the Israeli Air Force attacked about 250 targets in the Gaza Strip, killing Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) terrorist operatives and destroying terrorist facilities (IDF spokesperson, December 6, 2023).



**Aerial attack on a terrorist squad (IDF spokesperson, December 6, 2023)**

► The Palestinian media reported the expansion of ground activity in the southern Gaza Strip and heavy exchanges of fire along several axes in the east and northwest of Khan Yunis. There was also heavy fighting in eastern Gaza City (Ma'an, December 6, 2023). According to reports, IDF forces operated in the Bani Suheila area to the east of Khan Yunis and encircled a neighborhood where several families remained; the Red Cross was called on to coordinate the



families' departure from the site (Hassan Aslih's X account, December 6, 2023). **Ibrahim Qanan, a correspondent for al-Ghad TV in Khan Yunis**, reported loud explosions in the Khan Yuns region, adding that IDF tanks were operating in the Bani Suheila area (al-Ghad TV , December 6, 2023).

►In the northern Gaza Strip, **Muhammad Arab, a correspondent for al-Arabi TV in the Jabaliya refugee camp**, reported an IDF attack on a residential complex in Block 2 of the Jabaliya refugee camp, a densely populated area whose residents had not evacuated to the southern Gaza Strip. He reported that six buildings had been completely destroyed and there were many casualties. He claimed Israel was trying to empty the northern Gaza Strip of residents and thereby gain full control of the region. It was also reported that IDF tanks were inside the Jabalia refugee camp, where there was heavy fighting (al-Arabi's YouTube channel, December 6, 2023).



**Right: The aftermath of the IDF attack on Block 2 in the Jabaliya refugee camp (QudsN X account, December 6, 2023). Left: The IDF attack near Nasser Hospital in Khan Yunis (QudsN X account, December 5, 2023)**

## Reactions to the fighting

►**Walid al-Kilani, Hamas spokesman in Lebanon**, claimed Hamas could hold out for many months, adding that the Hamas leadership was together with the Palestinians inside Gaza [sic], and there would be no repeat of what happened in 1982, when the PLO was expelled from Beirut. He claimed that this time Israel's defeat would not be its destruction, but rather in preventing it from achieving its goals. He admitted that the Israeli army had entered several areas in the northern Gaza Strip, but, he alleged, the IDF "set a deadline to achieve the objectives of the ground campaign within 24 days and had been unable to achieve anything." He added that the Israelis "withdrew" and resettled in the northern Gaza Strip, and

failed to release a single hostage; rockets were still being fired from northern Gaza and there was "resistance" throughout the Strip (Arab World News Agency (AWP), December 5, 2023).

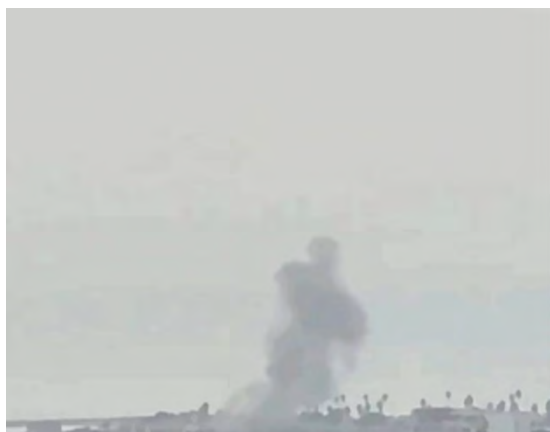
► **PIJ spokesman Musab al-Breem** claimed that after two months of "aggression" the Palestinians were still fighting and standing firm, and the "resistance" [terrorist organizations] had forced Israel to change its plans and retreat. He added that Israel would be forced to stop the aggression if it cared about the hostages. Asked if it was possible say the [alleged] "failure" of the IDF maneuver in the southern Gaza Strip was similar to its [alleged] "failure" in the northern Gaza Strip, he answered that it was. He said the IDF met surprises in the south because the "resistance" had learned from its experiences in the northern Gaza Strip and in Gaza City [and had learned to how counter the IDF], and the resistance the IDF encountered would eventually force it to stop its "aggression" (al-Mayadeen TV website, December 5, 2023).

### Rocket fire from the Gaza Strip

► During the past day, the terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip continued firing rockets and mortar shells, mainly attacking the cities, towns and villages surrounding the Gaza Strip. On the afternoon of December 5, 2023, a barrage of rockets was launched towards central Israel, damaging buildings, including schools. Later in the afternoon. another barrage was launched at the Ashdod area. An Israeli Air Force fighter jet, directed by ground forces, destroyed the two launchers from which the barrage was fired at the center of the country (IDF spokesperson, December 6, 2023).



**A direct rocket hit by a rocket on a residential building in Ashkelon (Right: Magen David Adom spokesperson's unit. Left: QudsN X account, December 5, 2023)**



Smoke rises in the Tel Aviv area following a rocket hit (QudsN X account, December 5, 2023)

## Israeli casualties

►According to an unofficial estimate, since October 7 approximately 1,200 Israeli civilians and security personnel have been killed, 410 of them soldiers and officers; 138 civilian and military abductees are still being held by the terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip, 17 of them women and children; 113 abductees have been returned.

## The issue of the hostages

►Senior Hamas terrorist Osama Hamdan claimed that Israel would not free a single Israeli unless it met the conditions of the "resistance" [terrorist organizations]. He reiterated that there would be no negotiation or exchange unless the "aggression" against the Gaza Strip stopped. He claimed Netanyahu was responsible for the lives of the hostages because he had prevented the exchange deal from being completed and renewed the "aggression" against the Gaza Strip, adding that the IDF attacks endangered the hostages. He also claimed that on December 5, 2023, Netanyahu had "euthanized" the efforts to release the hostages when he met with their families and told them that the hostages would not return soon. He also said that the number of soldiers they were holding was under the authority of the military[-terrorist] wing and now was not time to discuss it (al-Jazeera Mubasher YouTube channel, December 5, 2023).

►Senior terrorist Bassem Na'im, chairman of the international relations department of Hamas in the Gaza Strip, denied they were currently discussing the release of the hostages. He said that Israel, in its "arrogance and stupidity," had not learned its lesson from the first

round, since for 53 days it destroyed the Gaza Strip, killing thousands to free one of its hostages, but had not been able to free any of them except by meeting the terms of the "resistance," and now it wanted to repeat the attempt. He claimed Israel would not achieve anything except on "resistance" terms, adding that he did not think there was still room for negotiations. Na'im said the "resistance" had prisoners in Israeli jails, and the Israeli hostages, and especially the soldiers, would not be released unless all the Palestinian prisoners were freed. He claimed Hamas had offered to release "everyone in return for everyone," and the offer still stood, but it was impossible to negotiate while under attack (Arab World News Agency (AWP), December 6, 2023).

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## The Gaza Strip

### Palestinian casualties

►The Hamas-controlled government media information bureau in Gaza reported that as of 8:00 p.m., December 5, 2027, the number of dead since the beginning of the war stood at more than 16,248 and the number of wounded at more than 43,616 (QudsN X account, November 27, 2023).

### The situation in the Gaza Strip

►**Muneir al-Barash, director of the ministry of health in Gaza**, claimed that the fuel reserves for operating [Hamas] ambulances and civil defense rescue vehicles had run out, and therefore they could not evacuate casualties (Shehab X account, December 6, 2023). Doctors Without Borders stated that the fuel and medical equipment at Shuhadaa al-Aqsa Hospital in Deir al-Balah had run out, and they called for the hospital to be supplied with the necessary reserves as soon as possible (Hassan Aslih's X account, December 6, 2023).

►The ministry of health in Gaza reported that the IDF forces operating in the northern Gaza Strip had stopped the functioning of Kamal Adwan Hospital in Beit Lahia, the only hospital active in the northern Gaza Strip. According to the ministry of health, about 400,000 residents of the northern Gaza Strip currently had no access to medical care (ministry of health in Gaza Facebook page, December 5, 2023).

►The Palestinian media reported on the continued influx of residents and evacuees into the Rafah region from all parts of the Gaza Strip, due to the expansion of the IDFs attacks (QudsN



X account, December 5, 2023). Given the large numbers of evacuees arriving in the Rafah area, the waqf (Muslim endowment) administration in Rafah opened the mosques in the city as shelters (Hassan Aslih's X account, December 5 2023).



**Right: Gazans from every area of the Strip in the Rafah region (QudsN X account, December 5, 2023). Left: A notice issued by al-Jazeera TV after the arrival of Gazans in the Rafah area: "Rafah...not one [square] meter is available" (al-Jazeera TV Facebook page, December 5, 2023)**

►The Palestinian media issued a video documenting life in Rafah. Stall owners can be seen laying out their produce, and shoppers can be seen buying vegetables (Wafa YouTube channel, December 6, 2023).



**Morning pictures from Rafah. Vegetables and shoppers  
(Wafa YouTube channel, December 6, 2023)**

►According to **senior Hamas terrorist Osama Hamdan**, Israel is not satisfied with the "massacres" and is also starving the Gazans with the blockade and by preventing humanitarian aid from arriving. He claimed that anyone who prevented humanitarian aid from reaching the Strip was complicit in the crime of starving the Palestinians. He warned of an increase in the number of deaths caused by disease, hunger and thirst, and called on the Arab and Islamic countries and people around the world with "a live conscience" to take their human and moral responsibility. He also called on UNRWA and the World Health Organization to meet their responsibilities, continue providing services to the Gazans and not submit to



Israel's dictates. He claimed UNRWA's position was incomprehensible, since it responded to all of Israel's demands and was neglecting its responsibilities (al-Jazeera Mubasher YouTube channel, December 5, 2023).

## Statements from senior terrorists

► **Senior terrorist Bassem Na'im, the chairman of the international relations department of Hamas in the Gaza Strip**, claimed the statement by the head of the Israeli Security Agency regarding the elimination of Hamas leaders had been made for internal purposes. He claimed the leaders of Hamas had chosen the path of jihad and "resistance" [terrorism] knowing they would pay a high price for it, even with their lives. He said he was the father of a shaheed, part of his family was killed in the war and their homes were destroyed, however, they knew their chosen path was the price of "freedom" and they were prepared to pay it. He claimed that over the decades, Israel and its leaders had killed dozens of Palestinian leaders from Hamas, Fatah, the PIJ and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, but it did not change anything on the ground (Arab World News Agency (AWP), December 6, 2023).

► Interviewed by the Iranian media, **senior terrorist Daoud Shehab, in charge of the PIJ media information office**, claimed there were "important, active forces" in the "axis of resistance"<sup>2</sup> which were participating in war in Gaza, the most important of which were Yemen and Hezbollah, as well as the Islamic resistance in Iraq. He said their participation was one of the most important forms of support that the Palestinian resistance received, and it was support of "strategic importance" and a significant increase in the support the "axis of resistance" gave "Palestine." He added that Iran provided "broad, important political backing" and played an important role, whether through the actions of the Iranian foreign minister or the statements of leader Khamenei and the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC). As to the end of the war in the Gaza Strip, he claimed that Operation al-Aqsa Storm was an important station on the path of jihad and the Palestinian "resistance," on their way to "liberating their land." He also claimed they were certain they would be victorious, adding that at the end of the second month of fighting, the resistance was still in peak condition, a clear indication of what it had prepared (Fars Agency in Arabic, December 6, 2023).

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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.

## Accusations of sexual violence and Hamas responses

► At a conference in Boston, **American President Joe Biden** condemned the sexual violence committed by Hamas terrorist operatives on October 7 and said that the world could not simply look away from what happened. Everyone, he said, had to strongly and unequivocally condemn the sexual violence committed by Hamas (Agence France-Presse, December 5, 2023).

► Hamas condemned Biden's remarks, accusing him of adopting Israel's accusations. According to Hamas, it was "a new moral failure" of a president who was supposed to be objective, and that the repetition of the "lie" was intended to obscure the war crimes and genocide committed by the IDF against the Palestinian people with the backing of the United States and American weapons. Hamas called on the international media to be precise and expose the [allegedly] false Israeli claims (Hamas Telegram channel, December 5, 2023).

► **Senior Hamas terrorist Osama Hamdan** said the American administration continued to embrace the Israeli narrative, whose latest example was the statement by the American national security advisor that the IDF did not deliberately harm civilians in Gaza. He claimed it was a lie and a denial of reality, because more than 70% of the dead were women and children. He claimed that Israel's [alleged] lies about women who were raped were designed to hide the good treatment [sic] the hostages received in Gaza, which emphatically refuted the claims. He added that the "false claims were only in the sick imagining of extremist Israelis, who [allegedly] allowed IDF soldiers to sexually attack gentiles, based on the incitement of the Chief Military Rabbi, Eyal Moshe Krim, who [allegedly] allowed soldiers to rape non-Jewish women during times of war. Hamdan then showed a video, purportedly of a rabbi saying it was obligatory to kill children as well (al-Jazeera Mubasher YouTube channel, December 5, 2023).

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## The Northern Arena

### Hezbollah's activity

► Hezbollah continued attacking IDF posts and forces on the Lebanese border. Hezbollah claimed responsibility for carrying out 11 operations, including attacking IDF posts and

launching missiles and UAVs. The IDF responded by attacking Hezbollah targets in Lebanese territory with artillery fire and fighter jets (IDF spokesperson, December 5, 2023).

## The Lebanese army

- ▶The Lebanese army announced that Israel had attacked a military center in the al-Nabi Uweidah-al-Adeisa area in south Lebanon, killing one soldier and wounding three others (Lebanese Army X account, December 5, 2023). The fatality was reportedly Sergeant Abd al-Karim al-Miqdad, born on May 7, 1996, who began his service in the Lebanese army on October 25, 2018 (Lebanese Army X account and website, December 5, 2023).
- ▶The IDF spokesperson said in response that IDF fighters had operated in the area to neutralize a threat from a Hezbollah launching and observation compound, and that several Lebanese Army soldiers had been reported to have been wounded in the attack. The IDF spokesperson clarified that Lebanese army forces had not been the target of the attack, saying the IDF regretted the incident and it was being investigated (IDF spokesperson's X account, December 5, 2023).
- ▶Following the attacks on the soldiers, there was contact between **Joseph Aoun, commander of the Lebanese army, Najib Mikati, the interim prime minister, and Nabih Berri, speaker of the Lebanese parliament**, to discuss the implications of the latest developments. Contacts were also held with ambassadors of Western countries in an attempt to avoid escalation (MTV Network, December 5, 2023).
- ▶**Lebanese Foreign Minister Abdallah Bou Habib** said they would report to the UN that the army had been attacked by Israel and that their response would be diplomatic since they did not want war. He said Lebanon was a victim of Israel's actions in south Lebanon and the Gaza Strip and claimed Israel violated Resolution 1701 (al-Arabi, December 5, 2023).
- ▶UNIFIL noted that this was the first time that a Lebanese army soldier had been killed since the beginning of the tension on the border, and that the Lebanese army had not started a confrontation with Israel. According to UNIFIL, over the past few days, they had witnessed a rapid and alarming increase in the level of violence, and called on both sides to stop the cycle of violence, which could lead to catastrophic consequences for residents on both sides of the border (UNIFIL Telegram channel, December 5, 2023).
- ▶Hezbollah announced that in response to the death of a Lebanese army soldier and as a sign of support for the Palestinian people, its operatives had attacked a gathering of IDF soldiers

in the Manara area with guided missiles (Hezbollah's combat information Telegram channel, December 5, 2023).

►The al-Fajr Forces, the military-terrorist wing of al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyya (operating in Lebanon), claimed responsibility for firing two barrages of rockets at IDF posts near Kiryat Shmona in response to Israel's continued "aggression" in south Lebanon, including an attack on a Lebanese army position in the vicinity of al-Adeisa, which had caused the death of a soldier (al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyya website, December 5, 2023).

## Establishment of a Palestinian organization in Lebanon

►Following Hamas' announcement in Lebanon of the establishment of an organization called Pioneers of Operation al-Aqsa Storm, calling on young and adult Palestinians in Lebanon to join, "sources" reported that Hamas had not coordinated the publication of the organization's establishment with Hezbollah and that "intense contacts" had been held between senior Hezbollah and Hamas figures after the publication.

**Ahmed Abd al-Hadi, Hamas representative in Lebanon**, said the announcement about establishing the organization had been "misunderstood" and that they had no intention to establish a military organization but rather a general project of the "resistance." He denied the objective was to take over the Palestinian camps in Lebanon, saying that Hamas had no intention of establishing "Hamasland," and there was no need for fear (al-Nashra website, December 5, 2023).

►**Senior Hamas terrorist Osama Hamdan** said their policy was clear and they did not interfere in Lebanon's internal affairs, and had ties with all elements of Lebanese politics and society. He added that it was a cultural and ideological recruitment program designed to attract young Palestinians so that they would not be tempted by ideas that might not be compatible with the interests of the Palestinian cause and the resistance to Israel (al-Jazeera Mubasher YouTube channel, December 5, 2023).

## The Lebanese government

►**Najib Mikati, prime minister of Lebanon's interim government**, announced that in the coming months, negotiations would be held through the UN to bring greater stability to the Lebanese border. He said one of the ways it would be done was by implementing Resolution 1701 and reaching an agreement with the help of the UN on the points in dispute with Israel. He noted that the main goal of the contacts conducted by Lebanon with the United States,



the UN and the European Union was to avoid a large-scale war in Lebanon (Najib Mikati's X account, December 5, 2023).

## Syria

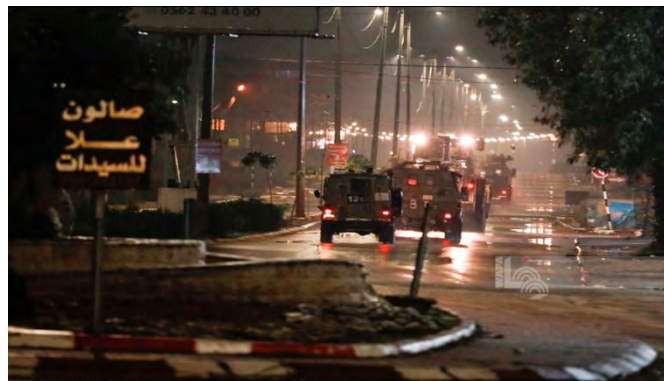
► According to a "local source", on December 6, 2023, at 3:40 a.m., the Syrian defense system intercepted a barrage of "hostile Israeli missiles" launched at southern Homs. The channel also reported that an Israeli drone and an American drone had recently been circling over Homs and Damascus (SAM SYRIA Telegram channel, December 6, 2023).

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## Judea and Samaria

### Preventive and counterterrorism activities

- ◆ The Israeli security forces continued their counterterrorism activities throughout Judea and Samaria. During the past day, a total of 16 wanted Palestinians were detained, three of them Hamas operatives (IDF spokesperson's Telegram channel, December 6, 2023):
- ◆ In the early morning hours of December 6, 2023, the Israeli security forces ended 24 hours of extensive activity in the Jenin refugee camp. The forces destroyed laboratories for making IEDs and underground shafts, and found large quantities of weapons and thousands of Israeli shekels, money intended to fund terrorist activity. Armed Palestinians shot at the forces and threw IEDs. An IDF soldier was reported superficially wounded (IDF spokesperson's Telegram channel, December 6, 2023).



**Right: The activity of the security forces in the Jenin refugee camp (QudsN X account, December 5, 2023). Left: Weapons seized in the Jenin refugee camp (IDF spokesperson's website, December 6, 2023)**

◆ In the early morning hours of December 6, 2023, the forces operated in the village of Tammun in northern Samaria and in the al-Far'a refugee camp. In both places, violent clashes broke out between armed Palestinians and the IDF who shot at them (IDF spokesperson's Telegram channel, December 6, 2023). The Palestinians reported two Palestinians killed, one in Tammun and the other in the al-Far'a refugee camp. The body of the fatality in Tammun was wrapped for burial in a Hamas flag and the other in a PIJ flag (Wafa, Palinfo X account, December 6, 2023). The Palestinians later reported on the activity of Israeli security forces to detain wanted persons in the Dheisheh refugee camp in Bethlehem (QudsN X account, December 6, 2023).



**Detention of wanted persons in the al-Dheisheh refugee camp in Bethlehem  
(QudsN X account, December 6, 2023)**

## **Hamas' reaction to a march in Jerusalem**

► On Thursday, December 7, 2023, the first night of Hanukkah, the "Maccabean March" is expected to take place in Jerusalem, described by its organizers as a protest march and a memorial ceremony for the murdered and fallen IDF soldiers who fell in Operation Iron Swords. The march will begin at Tzahal Square and end at the Western Wall and pass through the Damascus Gate and the Muslim Quarter.

► Hamas condemned the march, claiming that granting a license to Jewish extremists allowing them to hold a demonstration in Jerusalem called the "Maccabean March," in which they demanded full control over Jerusalem and the Temple Mount, and the removal of the waqf, was a dangerous attempt to impose Jewish control over al-Aqsa Mosque. Hamas claimed the Palestinians "would not allow it," whatever the cost, and called for a general mobilization of the Palestinians in Judea, Samaria, Jerusalem and Israel. It also called on the Arab and Islamic nations, and the "brothers in Jordan," a reference to the Hashemite custodianship of the Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem, to take immediate and urgent action. Hamas' military-

terrorist wing also issued an announcement stating that if they continued to remain silent, al-Aqsa Mosque and Jerusalem would be the next target (al-Ghad TV website, December 5, 2023).

## Palestinian Authority (PA)

► **Nabil Abu Rudeina, spokesman for Mahmoud Abbas' office**, issued an announcement warning against the escalation of the "Israeli aggression" in the Gaza Strip, Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem, and called for international intervention to stop it before the situation exploded and became uncontrollable. Abu Rudeina blamed the American administration for the escalation and called on it to pressure Israel to stop its "aggression" against the Palestinians (Wafa, December 6, 2023).

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## Iran

► **Hossein-Amir Abdollahian, Iranian foreign minister**, said at the end of his visit to Moscow that no country could remain indifferent to the situation in Palestine. He said Hamas was currently extremely popular among the Palestinians and that Israel and the United States could not eliminate Hamas and the "resistance" or decide for the Palestinians and the Gaza Strip. He stressed that according to intelligence Iran had received from the leaders of the "resistance" in the region, the "resistance" had the ability to continue the current situation for months and respond to the "crimes of the Zionists" with daily attacks (Fars, December 5, 2023). **Ramazan Sharif, Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) spokesman**, who also serves as the head of the Intifada and Jerusalem Headquarters of the Islamic Propaganda Coordination Council, told a conference in Tehran that Israel had tried to force the Palestinians to emigrate from the Gaza Strip to Egypt and from the West Bank to Jordan, but the resistance of the Palestinian people had thwarted that plan. He said Operation al-Aqsa Storm had been a historic and unprecedented failure for the "Zionist regime." He noted the Zionists were not yet ready to stop their "crimes" because they were striving for victory in the Gaza Strip, but as time passed, everyone stressed more and more that Hamas could not be destroyed and that victory for the "Zionist regime" was impossible (Fars, December 5, 2023).

## Pro-Iranian militias

### Iraq and Syria

- ▶ The Islamic Resistance in Iraq claimed responsibility for a drone attack on the American base of Ayn al-Assad in western Iraq (Islamic Resistance Telegram channel, December 6, 2023).

### Yemen

- ▶ **Nasser Kanani, spokesman for the Iranian foreign ministry**, dismissed the British government spokesman's claim about Iran's support for the Houthis, claiming it was baseless. He said Iran had nothing to do with the Houthi attacks on the Red Sea, and that the "resistance groups" in the region did not receive orders from Iran to respond to the "war crimes of the Zionist regime" but made decisions and acted in accordance with their principles, priorities, and interests. He called on the British authorities to condemn the "crimes of the Zionist regime" instead of making baseless accusations (ISNA, December 5, 2023).
- ▶ The United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) announced that it had received a report about the incident in which a UAV was involved, taking place about 47 nautical miles west of the port of Hudayda in Yemen. The organization recommended that vessels in the area exercise caution and report any suspicious activity (UKMTO X account, December 6, 2023).

## The Arab Arena

### Egypt

- ▶ During his visit to the United States, **Sameh Shoukry, Egyptian foreign minister**, met with several Senate members and discussed the efforts to stop the fighting in the Gaza Strip, to deliver humanitarian aid to the residents of the Gaza Strip, and regional issues (Egyptian foreign ministry spokesman's X account, December 6, 2023).

## The International Arena

### Turkey

- ▶ **Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan** warned Israel against assassinating Hamas operatives on Turkish soil, saying Israel would pay a heavy price. He also said Turkey opposed plans to establish a buffer zone in the Gaza Strip after the end of the war, since the future of the Gaza Strip would be decided by the Palestinians (Reuters, December 6, 2023).



►Speaking at a press conference, **Turkish Interior Minister Ali Yerlikaya** also stressed that Turkey would not allow anyone to carry out an illegal act in its territory. It was a response to a Wall Street Journal report stating that Israel intended to assassinate senior Hamas terrorists in the various countries where they reside, including Turkey. He noted that preventing such incidents was their greatest mission, and that they were in contact with relevant ministries and the intelligence service on the subject (Anadolu News, December 6, 2023).