



Operation Iron Swords Updated to 1 p.m., February 11, 2024

Northern Arena	Israeli Casualties	Rocket Fire
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 811 attacks• 187 Hezbollah operatives killed• 29 operatives of other terrorist-organization killed• One non-affiliated operative• One Lebanese army soldier killed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approximately 1,300 military and civilian dead (unofficial estimate)• 132 hostages remain in the Gaza Strip	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approximately 11,000 rockets and mortar shells• Approximately 9,000 rockets and mortar shells launched from the Gaza Strip• Approximately 2,000 rockets launched from Lebanon and 30 from Syria

Overview¹

- **The southern arena:** The IDF forces continued their integrated ground maneuver in the Gaza Strip, focusing on the Khan Yunis area, with additional activities in the northern Gaza Strip. In Gaza City, the forces uncovered a tunnel used by senior Hamas members. It passed under the UNRWA headquarters building, which was also the source of its electricity. Israel's statements regarding the IDF's preparations to expand operations to the Rafah area provoked sharp criticism from the Palestinians, Egypt, and other Arab and international parties, which noted that more than a million Gazans who had been displaced from the northern and central Gaza Strip were staying in the area. Hamas threatened to cancel the negotiations for a hostage deal.
- **According to unofficial statistics, since October 7, 2023, approximately 1,450 Israeli civilians and security personnel have been killed, 564 of them soldiers and officers; 132 civilian and military hostages are still being held by the terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip; 121 hostages have been returned to Israel.**

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

► **Negotiations for a hostage deal:** A Hamas delegation arrived in Cairo for talks with the head of Egyptian intelligence and Qatari officials regarding the movement's answer to the terms of the deal. After two rounds of talks, the delegation left for consultations in Qatar. Hamas continues to state it will not change the terms of its answer and is waiting to hear from Israel.

► **The situation in the Gaza Strip:** The Freedom Fleet Coalition announced plans to renew the aid flotillas to the Gaza Strip. The chairman of the International Committee for Breaking the Siege of Gaza said that the first two ships would be dispatched at the beginning of Ramadan, which begins during the second week of March 2024.

► **The northern arena:** Over the weekend, Hezbollah claimed responsibility for 24 attacks, including rocket barrages targeting Kiryat Shmona and the use of a new type of advanced anti-tank missile. The IDF responded by attacking Hezbollah targets. In an attempted attack on a senior Hamas member north of Sidon, two people were killed, but the Hamas terrorist apparently survived. The Iranian foreign minister visited Lebanon and met with Lebanese government members, the Hezbollah secretary general and representatives of the Palestinian terrorist organizations. The Syrians reported a UAV attack on the al-Dimas area near Damascus.

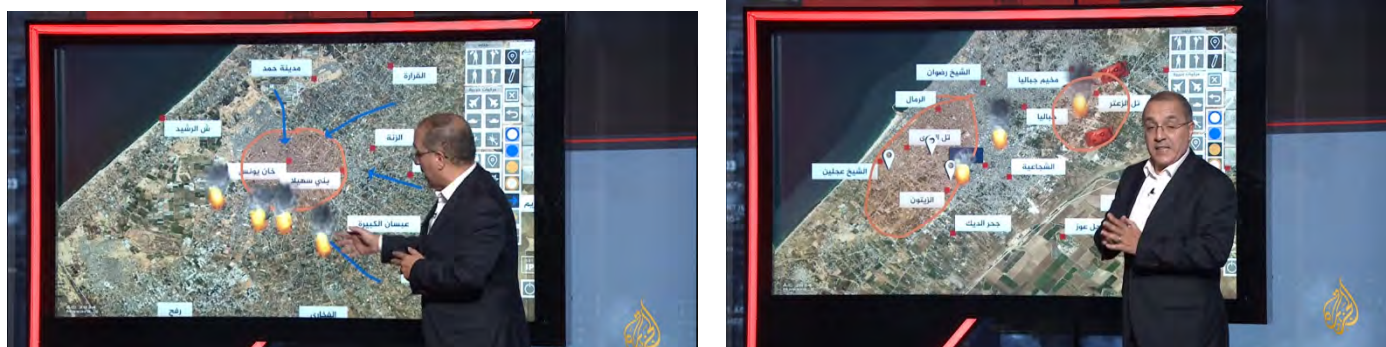
► **Judea and Samaria:** The IDF forces continued counterterrorism activities. The security forces of the Palestinian Authority (PA) detained a number of operatives from the Jenin Battalion. Demonstrations of solidarity with the Gaza Strip were held in Ramallah and al-Bireh.

► **The pro-Iranian militias:** The Houthis reported several American-British strikes on targets in Yemen. Germany sent a frigate ahead of the launch of the European Union's naval force in the Red Sea, which will begin operating in mid-February 2024.

► **Jordan:** The chairman of the Jordanian Bar Association said that the Association, together with other Arab bar associations and organizations, had submitted a complaint to the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) against senior Israeli officials. Reportedly, the complaint will be examined by the chief prosecutor's office and a meeting will be held with the chief prosecutor and the court during the next two to three weeks to follow up on the complaint.

The Southern Arena

► Over the weekend the joint Israeli ground, air and naval forces continued fighting in the Khan Yunis area and the central and northern Gaza Strip, attacking armed terrorist squads and destroying terrorist facilities; the Palestinian media reported on the attacks. In **Gaza City**, aerial attacks were carried out in the Zeitoun neighborhood, and IDF tanks withdrew from the western area of the city towards the south after an operation lasting about two weeks. In the **central Gaza Strip** the IDF attacked the area of Deir al-Balah and the Nuseirat refugee camp. In **Khan Yunis** IDF forces surrounding Nasser Hospital in the west of the city continued shooting at the area next to it. In **Rafah** attacks were carried out throughout the city (Wafa, Ma'an, February 11, 2024).



An al-Jazeera TV correspondent describes the IDF attacks (al-Jazeera YouTube channel, February 10, 2024)

► The **southern Gaza Strip**: IDF forces operated mainly in western Khan Yunis, attacking terrorist facilities and armed terrorist squads and locating large quantities of weapons. The forces located and destroyed rocket launchers placed near a kindergarten and a mosque, which were loaded and aimed at Israeli territory. They also located a shaft leading to a tunnel inside a civilian water facility. Israeli Air Force aircraft attacked other terrorist targets, including a weapons storehouse (IDF spokesperson, February 9-11, 2024).

► The Palestinian Red Crescent reported the entry of IDF forces into al-Amal Hospital in West Khan Yunis. According to the organization, IDF forces took the keys to vehicles, detained nine people and [allegedly] destroyed medical equipment. The organization [falsely] denied that the IDF had brought medical equipment into the hospital (Shehab X account, February 11, 2024). It was also reported that on the night of February 9, 2024, the IDF carried out heavy attacks in the center and north of Rafah, and the Navy fired at the beach of Rafah (Wafa, February 10, 2024).



Right: A rocket launcher located near the kindergarten. Left: The water facility (IDF spokesperson, February 9, 2024)



Right: A controlled explosion in the Khan Yunis refugee camp. Left: Tanks surround Nasser Hospital in Khan Yunis (Shehab X account, February 10, 2024)

► **The central Gaza Strip:** IDF activity focused mainly on armed terrorist operatives remaining in the area, a large number of whom were killed or detained (IDF spokesperson, February 10, 2024).

► **Gaza City:** IDF forces operated in the area of the al-Shati refugee camp and the Tel al-Hawa neighborhood, killing approximately 120 terrorists and destroying approximately 20 Hamas terrorist facilities. The fighters located a shaft near an UNRWA school which led to a tunnel used by Hamas military wing's combat intelligence, which housed computer servers and other intelligence equipment. The tunnel was 18 meters under the ground (about the same distance as the height of a five-story building) and 700 meters long (about 4/10 of a mile), and was equipped with blast doors. The route of the tunnel passed under UNRWA's central Gaza Strip headquarters and its electrical system was connected to the UNRWAs headquarters building. The forces searched the UNRWA offices and found large quantities of weapons, intelligence and documents showing that offices had been used by Hamas operatives. The

intelligence collected will make it possible to carry out activities against additional Hamas targets (IDF spokesperson, February 10, 2024).



The tunnel under UNRWA headquarters (IDF spokesperson, February 10, 2024)

► In response to the exposure of the tunnel, **UNRWA commissioner Philippe Lazzarini** said that they were aware of reports in the Israeli media about the existence of important tunnels under the UNRWA headquarters building in the Gaza Strip and but claimed they had not been aware of the activity taking place below the surface. He claimed the UNRWA teams had left the area on October 12, 2023 following IDF orders, had not used the facility since and were unaware of any activity that took place. He claimed the Gaza Strip was an active war zone where Israeli forces were deployed, therefore they were unable to respond or confirm the reports. Moreover, he claimed UNRWA had no military expertise or capabilities to conduct inspections of what might be underground. He further claimed the headquarters' last inspection had been in September 2023 (Philippe Lazzarini's X account, February 10, 2024).

Note: Constructing a tunnel of such a magnitude takes years, and UN commissioner Lazzarini's the response is inconsistent with the facts.

► The **northern Gaza Strip**: In the Beit Lahia area armed terrorists were detected near a Hamas military wing post. Israeli Air Force aircraft attacked and killed the terrorists (IDF spokesperson, February 9, 2024).



**Israeli Air Force attack in the Tel al-Hawa neighborhood, in the west of Gaza City
(Shehab X account, February 10, 2024)**

Palestinian perspective on the fighting

► **Muhammad Nizal, a member of Hamas' political bureau**, said the reports stating that 18 of the 24 battalions of Hamas' military wing of Hamas had been destroyed and that four of the remaining battalions were in Rafah were false. He claimed the Rafah Brigade had not yet joined the campaign because it had received orders to remain in Rafah. The Rafah Brigade, he claimed, would fight if Rafah was attacked. He claimed the "proof" that the reports were "imaginary and false" was that the Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades in the northern Gaza Strip were operating again (al-Jazeera Mubasher YouTube channel, February 11, 2024).

Rocket fire from the Gaza Strip

► On the afternoon of February 8, 2024, rockets were launched at Sderot, Ivim, Nir Am and Nahal Oz. According to the Sderot municipality, the city was attacked by three rockets; one was intercepted and the others fell outside the city limits (Kan TV website, February 8, 2024). Close to the time the sirens were sounded, the al-Mujahideen Brigades announced they had begun launching rocket barrages at IDF outposts and the cities, towns and villages surrounding the Gaza Strip to mark the 24th anniversary of the establishment of the al-Mujahideen Movement (al-Mujahideen Brigades Telegram channel, February 8, 2024). They announced that they had launched rocket barrages at Sderot, Nahal Oz and the Gaza Division headquarters in Re'im, etc. They later claimed they had launched several S40 rockets at Ashdod (al-Mujahideen Brigades Telegram channel, February 8, 2024). **In reality, no launches at Ashdod were detected.** A video was later published allegedly documenting the firing of rockets at Re'im and Kissufim, showing the launch of two rockets (al-Mujahideen Brigades Telegram channel, February 8, 2024).



A photo from the video showing two launchers from which the rockets were allegedly fired (al-Mujahideen Brigades Telegram channel, February 8, 2024)

- ▶ On the morning of February 9, 2024, aerial defense fighters intercepted a suspicious aerial target flying over Israeli maritime space in the Haifa area (IDF spokesperson, February 9, 2024).
- ▶ The Islamic Resistance in Iraq claimed responsibility for attacking a vital Israeli target on the shores of the Dead Sea (Islamic Resistance Telegram channel, February 9, 2024). **In reality, no such attack was detected.**

Israeli casualties

- ▶ **According to unofficial statistics, since October 7, 2023, approximately 1,450 Israeli people have been killed. According to the IDF spokesperson, 564 of them are soldiers and officers (225 since the start of the ground maneuver on 27 October, 2023); 132 civilian and military hostages are still being held by the terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip; 121 hostages have been returned.**

Extending the integrated ground maneuver to Rafah

- ▶ The Israeli prime minister's statement about IDF preparations for an operation in Rafah provoked a wide wave of reactions. In addition to criticism, the reactions noted that the activity in Rafah would require the displacement of over a million residents who had arrived from across the Strip and were living in the area in tents.
- ▶ Given the possibility of expanding Israeli military operations around the city of Rafah, "two Egyptian security sources" reported that in the past two weeks Egypt had sent approximately 40 tanks and APCs to the northeastern Sinai Peninsula to strengthen security along the border with the Gaza Strip (Reuters, February 9, 2024). Additional sources stated that Egypt had significantly increased security patrols along the border and sent night vision goggles to the forces stationed in the area (al-Arabiya, February 9, 2024).



**Barbed wire recently installed by the Egyptian army between Egypt and Rafah
(Shehab X account, February 11)**

► **Hamas** called on the Arab countries and the UN Security Council to take "urgent and serious action" to prevent Israel and its leaders from committing "murder" in Rafah (Hamas' Telegram channel, February 10, 2024). A "source" in Hamas threatened that any attack on Rafah would mean the end of negotiations for a ceasefire. He also said that what Israel had not achieved for more than four months, it would not achieve at all, no matter how long the war lasted (al-Aqsa, February 11, 2024). **Muhammad Nizal, a member of the Hamas political bureau**, said that "the invasion of Rafah had been discussed during the visit of the Hamas delegation to Cairo not only with the Egyptian officials, but also with officials of Arab, Islamic, regional and foreign countries. He said Hamas would not remain silent and would do everything in its power to prevent Israel from carrying out its plan (al-Jazeera Mubasher YouTube channel, February 11, 2024).

► The **Palestinian Authority** (PA) condemned the Israeli government's statements, calling them "a genuine threat" and the preamble to uprooting the Palestinian people from its land. According to the PA, the Israeli government and the United States administration bore full responsibility. The PA called on the Security Council to take responsibility because such an activity would threaten regional peace and security (Wafa, February 9, 2024). **Fatah spokesman Hussein Hamail** said they would consider the United States administration responsible for any escalation in Rafah (al-Qahera, February 10, 2024).

► Arab countries also expressed their concern:

- ◆ **Sameh Shoukry, the Egyptian foreign minister**, held a press conference with the Bulgarian foreign minister where he said that the developments in Palestinian Rafah heralded further deterioration in the Gaza Strip. He added that UN and EU

representatives had given warning about the situation in Rafah, and there was an international consensus that Rafah would not be able to withstand an attack (al-Qahera Network, 10 in February 2024).

◆ **Saudi Arabia** warned of the dangerous consequences of attacking Rafah and emphasized the need for an immediate ceasefire. Saudi Arabia called for an immediate meeting of the Security Council to prevent Israel from "causing a humanitarian disaster" (Saudi Arabian foreign ministry X account, February 10, 2024).

◆ The **Jordanian foreign ministry** said that an immediate ceasefire had to be reached to ensure the protection of civilians and their return to their places of residence (Jordanian foreign ministry X account, February 10, 2024).

◆ The **UAE** said it was concerned about Israel's intention to launch a military operation in the Rafah area, which was full of displaced Palestinians, because it could lead to severe humanitarian consequences and worsen the regional situation. According to the UAE, it would be a violation of legal resolutions and international humanitarian law and therefore all the countries of the world should intervene (UAE news agency, February 10, 2024).

◆ **Muhammad Ali al-Houthi**, a member of the Houthi political bureau, said that any escalation in Rafah would be met with Houthi escalation and the expansion of their military operations. He said the best thing for the United States and Israel to do right now would be to stop the "aggression" against the Gaza Strip and introduce urgent humanitarian aid (Muhammad Ali al-Houthi's Telegram channel, February 10, 2024).

► Western countries also expressed their opposition. **David Cameron, the British foreign minister**, said he was very concerned about the possibility of an attack in Rafah, since more than half of the population of the Gaza Strip was in the area. He said the top priority was to immediately stop the fighting now and work towards a permanent ceasefire later (David Cameron's X account, 11 February 2024). **Josep Borrell, the EU foreign minister**, said that several EU member states warned that an Israeli attack on Rafah could lead to a humanitarian disaster and serious tension with Egypt. He said the only way to prevent bloodshed was the renewal of negotiations for the release of the hostages and the cessation of hostilities in the Strip (Josep Borrell's X account, February 11, 2024). **John Kirby, White House spokesman**, said that given the circumstances, any major military operation in Rafah, with more than a

million Palestinians seeking refuge in the city, without due consideration for their safety, would be a disaster and they would not support it (Reuters, February 8, 2024).

► **Tamara al-Rifai, UNRWA spokeswoman for Judea and Samaria**, said a military operation in Rafah would result in a high number of casualties and results similar to the IDF activity in Gaza City and the central Gaza Strip. She claimed about half of the residents of the Gaza Strip lived in Rafah, the number of residents but today there were about 1.5 million people there, of whom 270,000 were residents of Rafah, and there were also about 1.25 million residents who moved there from around the Gaza Strip. She said they had nowhere to go, in fact, the IDF forbade them to return to their homes in Gaza and the northern Gaza Strip (Sky News channel in Arabic, February 10, 2024).



UNRWA spokeswoman (Sky News channel in Arabic, February 10, 2024)

► Displaced Gazans who are currently staying in Rafah have expressed their concern about Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's statements regarding military action in Rafah. They said they did not know where to go after arriving in Rafah from the northern and central Gaza Strip because they had been told it was a safe place (Wafa YouTube channel, February 10, 2024). **Dr. Ahmed al-Sufi, the mayor of Rafah**, said they had not received notification from Israel regarding their intentions. He said military action in Rafah could endanger the lives of the 1.4 million people currently residing in an area of approximately 20 square kilometers (al-Jazeera, February 10, 2024).

► **Hashem Zaqout, correspondent for al-Jazeera TV in Rafah**, reported that the residents of Rafah had issued a statement claiming they did not intend to leave if the IDF conducted military activity in the city. They said they currently had no safe place to go to (al-Jazeera YouTube channel, February, 11, 2024).



Right: The mayor of Rafah (al-Jazeera, February 10, 2024). Left: Leaflets distributed by IDF forces to the residents of Rafah (Wafa, February 10, 2024)



Displaced persons' tent camp in the Rafah area (Wafa, February 10, 2024)

The issue of the hostages and a ceasefire agreement

- ▶As part of the efforts to promote the hostage deal, and after Hamas reiterated its position and conditions, a Hamas delegation led by **Khalil al-Haya, a member of the Hamas political bureau**, and with the participation of **Zaher Jabarin**, held two meetings in Cairo with **Abbas Kamal, the head of the Egyptian General Intelligence**. Also present was a Qatari delegation of mediators. Hamas' response to the Paris proposal was discussed and according to reports after the meetings, the parties agreed to continue consultations (al-Araby al-Jadeed, February 9, 2024).
- ▶After talks with the Egyptian mediators, the Hamas delegation left Cairo. A Hamas source said the delegation was expected to return to Cairo within a few days after consulting with members of the Hamas political bureau about the issues raised in Cairo regarding the ceasefire proposal and the hostage deal (al-Araby al-Jadeed, February 10, 2024).
- ▶According to a Hamas source, the delegation had discussed its position regarding the ceasefire agreement with the mediators in Cairo and were waiting for the Israeli response (al-Jazeera, February 9, 2024). Later, a Hamas source claimed differences of opinions in the Israeli

government had prevented them from reaching a definite position in the talks in Cairo (al-Aqsa TV, February 9, 2024).

► **Bassam Na'im, head of the political department of Hamas in the Gaza Strip**, who is in Doha, emphasized that Hamas had treated all the proposals it received during the last weeks "very positively." He reiterated Hamas' three basic conditions: the first was to reach a comprehensive ceasefire with multiple international guarantees; the second was the lifting of the "siege", the opening of the crossings and the introduction of all aid, shelter and reconstruction necessities into the Strip; and the third was an exchange deal that would eventually lead to "the emptying of the Israeli prisons of the Palestinian prisoners." He noted that a Hamas delegation had gone to Cairo to negotiate those issues. According to Na'im, Hamas offered "all the necessary flexibility" when it came to details in exchange for its conditions' being met. He explained that the Paris proposal was a working framework and not a final agreement (al-Arabi TV website, February 10, 2024).

► **Muhammad Nizal, a member of the Hamas political bureau**, said that the Hamas delegation had been in Cairo, met with representatives of the Egyptian and Qatari authorities, and held an in-depth discussion on Hamas' answer. The delegation left Cairo on the evening of February 9, 2024, knowing that the mediators would contact the Israeli side, and it was possible that an Israeli delegation had in fact arrived in Cairo to discuss Hamas' answer and deliver Israel's formal answer. He said they had made it clear that like Hamas, Israel had to submit a written answer. He said that if Israel was not serious about relating to Hamas' demands, Hamas believed there was no point in continuing the negotiations. Hamas, he claimed, was working "very hard" to continue the negotiations because it wanted to end the war and the "aggression," but would not sign an agreement for the sake of signing one. Asked if Hamas would waive some its demands, he said Hamas had presented the minimum, not the maximum, and added that they did not think they were exaggerating their demand for a ceasefire. He stated that they had intelligence and political information that the American administration was exerting pressure on Israel (al-Jazeera Mubasher YouTube channel, February 11, 2024).

► According to "a knowledgeable source," during meeting held by a delegation of Palestinian [terrorist] organizations with the Iranian foreign minister, **Osama Hamdan, a senior Hamas member**, said that the fact that Israel had not officially rejected Hamas' response to the Paris proposal or sent an envoy to negotiate in Cairo, were "evidence" that it was not prepared to

completely reject the response, but was using Rafah to exert pressure on Hamas for progress in the negotiations. He added that the Paris proposal did not mention "the day after," an indication that Israel's main goal was to rescue the hostages from Hamas (al-Mayadeen TV website, February 9, 2024).

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The Gaza Strip

Palestinian casualties

- ▶ **The Hamas-controlled ministry of health in the Gaza Strip** reported that as of 11:15 a.m., February 11, 2024, the number of dead since the beginning of the war stood at 28,176 and the number of wounded at 67,784 (ministry of health in Gaza Facebook page, February 7, 2024).
- ▶ According to reports, on February 10, 2024, a police vehicle was attacked in the al-Brazil neighborhood in Rafah. In the attack, police officers Sami Abd al-'Al and Munzer al-Fara were killed (Safa X account, February 10, 2024).



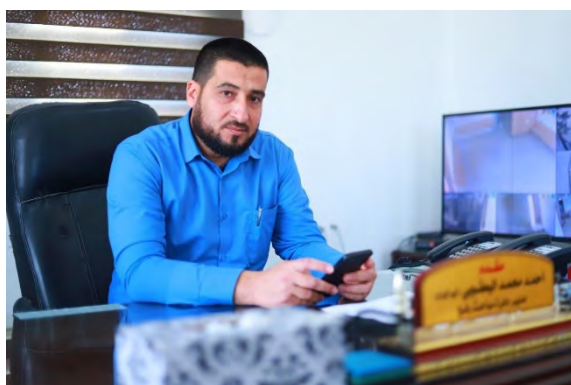
The police vehicle that was attacked (@palhand1948 X account, February 10, 2024)

- ▶ The IDF spokesperson stated that aircraft in the Rafah area, with intelligence guidance, had attacked Ahmed al-Yaqoubi, a Hamas operative who was responsible for the security arrangements for senior Hamas members and who served as a director of the Rafah district police. Ayman Rantisi, a military operative and a senior operative in the Hamas' general security investigations department, was also killed, as well as a police officer in the Rafah district police (IDF spokesperson's X account, February 10, 2024). The Palestinians reported that the commander of Rafah's investigation department, Ahmed al-Yaqoubi, his deputy, Ayman Rantisi, and the head of the supply investigations department, Ibrahim Shatat, were

killed in an attack on a vehicle in the Tel al-Sultan neighborhood in Rafah (Shehab X account, February 10, 2024).



The attack on the operatives (IDF spokesperson, February 10, 2024)



Right: The attacked vehicle catches fire (Shehab X account, February 10, 2024). Left: Ahmed al-Yaqoubi (Maram Mayed's X account, February 10, 2024)



Right: Ayman Rantisi (Kamal Ghreib's Facebook page, February 10, 2024). Left: Ibrahim Shatat (Mahmoud Shatat's Facebook page, February 10, 2024)

►The al-Mujahideen Brigades announced the death of a number of operatives of the organization's military council who had been killed in IDF attacks: Commander Zaher Atta Allah (Abu Isma'il); Commander Fadi al-Agha (Abu al-Munzer); Commander Nimr Harez (Abu Muhammad); Commander Mahmoud Kafina (Abu al-Hanoud);² and the released prisoner Muhammad al-Najar (Abu Anas) (al-Mujahideen Brigades Telegram channel, February 8, 2024).

The situation in the Gaza Strip

►At a press conference held by **Bassem Na'im, the head of the political department of Hamas in the Gaza Strip**, at the end of a visit to Mauritania, he said that the situation in the Gaza Strip was very difficult, a lot of the infrastructure had been destroyed, and the number of wounded who had to go abroad for treatment had reached 70,000 wounded and 55,000 pregnant women, because of the acute shortage of medical equipment and supplies. He warned of starvation, noting that residents were forced to seek Islamic justification for eating the meat of prohibited animals (Mauritania website al-Saraj, February 8, 2024; Mauritanian al-Akhbari website, February 8, 2024).



Bassem Na'im at the press conference with Muhammad Subhi Abu Sakar, the Hamas representative in Mauritania (Mauritanian al-Akhbari website, February 8, 2024)

►According to reports, on Friday, February 9, 2024, for the first time since the beginning of the war, the Friday prayer was held in the heart of the Jabaliya refugee camp, in the northern Gaza Strip. It was reported that thousands of people gathered for prayer in the area from which rubble had been cleared for the prayer (al-Arabi TV website, February 9, 2024; home front platform of the ministry of interior in Gaza X account, February 9, 2024).

² On January 16, 2024, the al-Mujahideen Brigades announced the death of Mahmoud Kafina, who was a commander of the Central District Brigade.



Friday prayer in Jabalia (al-Arabi TV website, February 9, 2024)

The Rafah Crossing

►The office of the Egyptian president denied the claim made by President Biden in his last speech, that at the beginning of the war in the Gaza Strip Egypt had closed the Rafah Crossing fearing Israel would force the Palestinians to emigrate to Egypt. The office said in statement that Egypt had opened the Rafah Crossing for the introduction of humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip from the first moment of the war without conditions and restrictions. However, according to reports, the repeated Israeli attacks on the Gaza side of the Crossing had disrupted and stopped the process of transferring aid. It was also noted that 80% of the humanitarian aid delivered to the Gaza Strip was provided by Egypt (Facebook page of the spokesperson of the Egyptian presidency, February 9, 2024).

Organizing a flotilla to the Gaza Strip

►The Freedom Fleet Coalition, an umbrella organization for a number of civilian organizations (including the Turkish IHH, which organized the Mavi Marmara flotilla in 2010), announced on its Facebook page that it planned to renew the flotillas to lift the "siege" of the Gaza Strip. The decision was made at a meeting of representatives of the coalition's member organizations in Istanbul. According to the coalition, the flotilla will include thousands of tons of humanitarian aid which will be delivered directly to the Palestinians in Gaza. According to the announcement, the ship Handala will sail again from northern Europe to Gaza in May 2024. The announcement stated that representatives of the Freedom Flotilla Coalition 2's³ member

³ According to the announcement, they are Canadian Boat to Gaza (Canada), US Boat to Gaza (USA), Kia Ora Gaza (Aotearoa, New Zealand), Free Gaza Australia (Australia), Ship to Gaza (Norway), MyCARE (Malaysia), Ship to Gaza (Sweden), Palestine Solidarity Alliance (South Africa), IHH (Türkiye), Rumbo a Gaza (Spanish State), *Mavi Marmara* Association (Türkiye) and The International Campaign to Save Gaza (ICSG).

organizations had gathered in Istanbul to plan the campaigns ("Freedom Fleet Coalition" Facebook page, February 10, 2024). **Zaher Birawi, chairman of the International Committee to Break the Siege of Gaza**, a founding member of the Freedom Fleet Coalition, said the Coalition would send the first two ships at the beginning of the month of Ramadan, which begins the second week of March (Quds Press, February 10, 2024).

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The Northern Arena

Hezbollah attacks

► Between February 8 and 11, 2024, Hezbollah claimed responsibility for **24 attacks** using anti-tank missiles, including an electro-optical al-Mas missile, rockets, Katyusha rockets and a Falaq-1 rocket and a Burkan rocket (whose warheads weigh between 660 and 1100 pounds), and artillery fire (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, February 8-11, 2024).

► The attacks included:

- ◆ An attack on the headquarters of the Infantry Brigade 3 at the Ein Zeitim base, using dozens of Katyusha rockets. According to reports the attack was meant to support the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and in response to attacks on villages, and especially the attack on Nabatiyeh (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, February 9, 2024).
- ◆ On the evening of February 9, 2024, dozens of rocket launches from Lebanese territory targeting the Golan Heights were detected, many of them successfully intercepted by aerial defense fighters. No casualties were reported. Shortly after the attack, a rocket launcher in the Qalaat Debba area of Lebanon was attacked and destroyed (IDF spokesperson, February 9, 2024). Hezbollah claimed responsibility for attacking the IDF's Kela Camp in the Golan Heights with dozens of rockets (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, February 9, 2024).
- ◆ On February 9, 2024, Hezbollah claimed responsibility for launching an al-Mas electro-optical anti-tank missile to attack a Merkava tank at the al-Baghdadi post, and claimed the tank was destroyed. Hezbollah published a video of the attack. The missile makes it possible to hit a target not in the direct line of vision and can hit it from above without directly aligning the sights on the target.



**Right: The target area at the al-Baghdadi post, as seen from the missile's camera before launch.
Left: The target, a Merkava tank, a few seconds before it was hit (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, February 10, 2024)**

- ◆ Hezbollah claimed responsibility for the attack on the Soldiers' House in Kiryat Shmona (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, February 10, 2023).
- ◆ Hezbollah reported that it had taken control of an IDF Skylark surveillance UAV (al-Manar, February 11, 2024).



The IDF Skylark (al-Manar , February 11, 2024)

- In response to Hezbollah's attacks, Israeli Air Force warplanes attacked a series of Hezbollah military targets, including a munitions truck, a terrorist facility, and military structures in the al-Khiam, Nabatiyeh and Kafr Homs areas (IDF spokesperson, February 8, 2024), as well as three military headquarters in the al-Naqoura and Aita al-Shaab areas, and a terrorist facility in the area of al-Hiyam and Marwahin, a military structure in the Bint Jbeil area and an observation post in the Markaba area (IDF spokesperson, February 10, 2024).
- Lebanese media reported that a UAV fired a missile at the Matal al-Jabal area in al-Khiam, injuring three Syrians (al-Manar, February 10, 2024). It was reported that in an attack in Houla, about three kilometers west of Kiryat Shmona, one person was killed and nine were injured (al-Mayadeen Telegram channel, February 10, 2024). Radio Nur reported an attack in the Jibchit area (Radio Nur, February 9, 2024).



Right: Attack on a military site of the Hezbollah air defense unit. Left: Attack on the military headquarters of Hezbollah's air defense unit (IDF spokesperson, February 10, 2024)



Right: Attacks in Kafr Kila (Ali Shoeib's X account, February 8, 2024). Left: A floor of a house in Markaba which was destroyed in a UAV attack (Ali Shoeib's X account, February 9, 2024)



Right: Attack in Maroun al-Ras. Left: Attack in al-Khiam (Ali Shoeib's X account, February 9, 2024)



Attacks in Naqoura (Fouad Khreiss' X account, February 10, 2024)

Fatalities in the incidents

► According to media reports, Israel attacked a vehicle in Nabatiyeh. Citing a "security source," the al-Arabiya network reported that initial information indicated that two Hezbollah operatives were killed in the attack (al-Arabiya, February 8, 2024).

► Hezbollah reported the deaths of four operatives (Hezbollah's combat information Telegram channel, February 9-10, 2024):

- ◆ Muhammad Ali Fayyad, aka Liwa al-Hussein, born in 1997, from Ansar in south Lebanon.
- ◆ Hassan Hussein Khalifa, aka Ammar, born in 1989, from Sarafand, a resident of al-Ghazieh in south Lebanon.
- ◆ Khalil Muhammad Ali Fares, aka Hamza, born in 1969, from Aitaroun in south Lebanon, a resident of Jadra in Mount Lebanon.
- ◆ Imad Ahmad Melhem, aka Shibl al-Zahra, born in 1999, from Naqoura in south Lebanon.



Hezbollah fatalities (Hezbollah's combat information Telegram channel, February 9-10, 2024)

►Hussein Musa Hussein was killed in an airstrike in the Houla area. Ali Mohammad Nimr Mahdi, an operative in the Lebanese internal security forces, was wounded and later died (al-Manar; Fouad Khreiss' X account, February 11, 2024).



Lebanese internal security forces fatality (Fouad Khreiss' X account, February 11, 2024)

Attempted targeted killing of a Hamas operative

►Eyewitnesses reported that explosions had been heard during the flight of two unidentified aircraft in the Jadra area, about five kilometers north of Sidon (al-Akhbar, February 10, 2024). It was later reported that two people had been killed and two others wounded in an attack in Jadra, and that a "Palestinian personality" had survived the attack (al-Mayadeen, February 10, 2024). According to a "security source," senior Hamas figure Basel al-Salah, who was responsible for recruiting operatives in Judea and Samaria, survived the attack in the town of Jadra (al-Arabiya, February 10, 2024).



Right: The attack area (al-Akhbar, February 10, 2024). Left: The car that was attacked (hamid mutasher's X account, February 10, 2024)

Statements by senior Hezbollah figures

►Hezbollah deputy secretary-general Na'im Qassem said the United States was responsible for Israel's military capability and was therefore solely responsible for stopping the fighting.

He said it was enough to exert pressure on the Israeli government, which was only a tool handled by the United States according to its will (al-Ahed, February 10, 2024).

UNIFIL

►UNIFIL announced that intensive efforts were being invested to prevent the conflict from spreading amid the daily exchanges of fire (UN, February 10, 2024).

►A "security source" revealed that residents living on the Abu al-Aswad – Mazraat Kauthariyet al-Rez road had halted two vehicles belonging to UNIFIL's Spanish Battalion. It was also reported that there had been a confrontation between the residents and the force after it moved along a route outside the UNIFIL mission area south of the Litani River and its movement was not approved. The Lebanese army worked to resolve the incident and escort the UNIFIL vehicles (al-Akhbar, February 8, 2024).

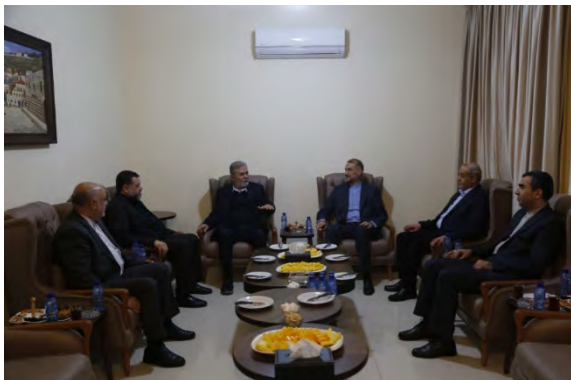
The Lebanese government

Iranian foreign minister's visit to Beirut

►**Hossein Amir Abdollahian, Iranian foreign minister**, arrived in Beirut on February 9, 2024. He held a press conference where he said that Iran would continue its support for the "resistance" in Lebanon and it regarded Lebanon's security as its own and as the security of the region. He praised Hezbollah, saying it had played its role of "deterrence" with "courage and wisdom." He claimed that American support for Israel and Prime Minister Netanyahu would end in complete failure and that Israel was trying to drag the United States into the swamp of war in the Middle East. He also said that after four months of "genocide and Zionist attacks" in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, Israel had not achieved any of its declared goals (Tasnim, February 9, 2024).

►Abdollahian met with **Najib Mikati, prime minister of Lebanon's interim government, Abdallah Bou-Habib, the Lebanese foreign minister, Nabih Berri, speaker of the Lebanese parliament, and Hassan Nasrallah, secretary-general of Hezbollah**. He and Nasrallah discussed political and security developments in the region, especially in south Lebanon and the Gaza Strip. Abdollahian said that any political solution had to be based on the rights of the Palestinian people and praised the conduct of the "resistance" [terrorist organizations] in the negotiations. Nasrallah expressed his appreciation for the positions of the Iranian supreme leader regarding developments in the Palestinian arena, saying that there was no doubt about the victory of the Palestinians and the "resistance." Meeting with Mikati, Abdollahian said there were those who had tried to cause differences of opinion

between the Lebanese government and people and the "resistance," but they failed. He said developments in the Gaza Strip were moving toward a political solution, but Netanyahu continued to see the solution in the war in order to save himself (Fars; ISNA, February 10, 2024).



Right: Hossein Amir Abdollahian meets with Hassan Nasrallah in Beirut (al-Manar, February 10, 2024). Left: Abdollahian meets with Ziad al-Nakhalah and senior figures from other organizations in Beirut (Iranian foreign ministry Telegram channel, February 10, 2024)

► Abdollahian also met with a delegation of heads of the Palestinian terrorist organizations, including **PIJ secretary-general Ziad al-Nakhalah, senior Hamas figure Osama Hamdan, and Jamil Mazhar, deputy secretary-general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)**. Also present at the meeting were **Mojtaba Amani, Iranian ambassador to Lebanon, and Mehdi Shooshtari, Iran's assistant foreign minister for West Asian and North African affairs**. Abdollahian thanked the heads of the "organizations" and stressed the need for a united Palestinian position. He noted that only the Palestinian people had the right to determine its fate. Ziad al-Nakhalah reviewed the developments in the Gaza Strip and said that time was on the side of the "resistance" while the "Israeli enemy" had not achieved any of its goals and was under pressure. He expressed appreciation for the role of Iran and the "resistance axis"⁴ in the campaign in the Gaza Strip. Hamdan also thanked Iran for its continued support in the struggle against Israel (al-Mayadeen, February 9, 2024).

► "Sources" reported that the purpose of the Iranian foreign minister's visit was to calm Iran's allies, especially Hezbollah, to keep them from expanding the military confrontation with Israel and for them to respect the ceasefire when it went into effect (al-Anbaa, February 10, 2024).

⁴ Iran, Syria, Hezbollah, the Palestinian terrorist organizations and the Houthis in Yemen.

►Abdollahian continued to Syria, where he is expected to meet with Syrian President Bashar Assad (ISNA, February 11, 2024).

Statements by senior Lebanese government officials

►**Nabih Berri, speaker of the Lebanese parliament and head of the Amal movement**, said the repeated threats by senior Israeli officials did not frighten them. He warned that if the IDF tried to advance even one meter into Lebanese territory, the Amal Movement was prepared to defend the country. Berri said that the current style of fighting was not their field and did not match their capabilities, so they were mostly on defense right now. He added that during his meetings with international representatives, he insisted on giving the issue of the Lebanese displaced persons in south Lebanon its proper place and stressing that the issue of the return of the residents to their homes was a top priority and that it was they who needed guarantees, not Israel (al-Joumhouria, February 9, 2024). Recently, a number of Amal operatives were involved in shooting at Israel, and several operatives were even killed.

►Following his visit to Washington, **Elias Bou Saab, deputy speaker of the Lebanese parliament**, met in London with **Sarah MacIntosh, the British prime minister's advisor on international affairs**, and in another meeting with **James Heappey, the British minister of state for the armed forces, and Tariq Mahmood Ahmad, the minister of state for Middle East and North African affairs**. They discussed developments in the war in the Gaza Strip and its implications for Lebanon, and the need to stop the “aggression” against the Gaza Strip as a starting point for comprehensive quiet in the region. They also agreed on the need to deliver military aid to the Lebanese army because of its important role in maintaining security and stability (al-Nashra, February 8, 2024).

►**Hector Hajar, Lebanese minister of social affairs**, said the decision to stop funding UNRWA would lead to the end of aid to some 250,000 Palestinian refugees. He said that if the funding stopped, about 40,000 children would not be able to receive education, support for Palestinian clinics that provided assistance to 20,000 refugees would end and the treatment of 600 cancer patients would end. He noted that 80% of refugee families were living below the poverty line, and Lebanon could not tolerate such a situation because the country lacked economic resources, schools, hospitals and medications for cancer, and even the Lebanese themselves had no access to any of these. Lebanon's bearing the burden of Syrian and Palestinian refugees would put enormous pressure on Lebanon's already weak economy,

undermine the country's social environment and force Lebanon to grant citizenship to Syrian and Palestinian refugees (Sputnik in Arabic, February 9, 2024).

Syria

- ▶ According to a "Syrian military source," on February 9, 2024, at around 1:10 p.m., two UAVs penetrated Syrian territory from the Golan Heights area. Syrian aerial defense forces shot them down west of Damascus. At the same time, explosions were reported over Damascus (al-Watan, February 9, 2024). There was also another report on an attack in the al-Dimas area on the outskirts of Damascus (al-Watan Telegram channel, February 10, 2024).
- ▶ The target of the attack was reportedly a building in Qura al-Assad, about five kilometers northwest of Damascus, near the al-Dimas area. It was noted that at least three people, whose identities were unknown, were killed and several others were wounded. Senior military personnel and high-ranking politicians reportedly live in the area (Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, February 10, 2024).

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Judea and Samaria

Counterterrorism activities

- ▶ The Israeli security forces continued their counterterrorism activities in Judea and Samaria, detaining six wanted Palestinians. Since the beginning of the war, more than 3,060 wanted Palestinians have been detained, more than 1,350 of them Hamas operatives (IDF spokesperson's Telegram channel, February 11, 2024).
- ▶ Israeli security forces operated in Beit Ummar (north of Hebron), detaining several wanted Palestinians and locating a laboratory for manufacturing explosive devices. In addition, the forces seized dozens of illegal vehicles, military equipment, incitement materials, ready-to-use Molotov cocktails and other weapons (IDF spokesperson's Telegram channel, February 11, 2024). The Palestinian media reported that 14 Palestinians had been detained during the security force activity (Palestinian TV Facebook page, February 10, 2024). The Beit Ummar municipality announced the cancellation of the municipality's work day due to the activity of the Israeli security forces there (Beit Ummar municipality Facebook page, February 10, 2024).



**Israeli security forces' activity in Beit Ummar
(Ramallah News Facebook page, February 10, 2024)**

► On the night of February 8, 2024, the Israeli security forces operated in several locations in Judea and Samaria. In the Tulkarm refugee camp, they detained four wanted Palestinians, and in the villages of al-Mughayir and Sinjil (northeast of Ramallah), they detained several wanted Palestinians and seized funds intended to finance terrorist activity (IDF spokesperson's Telegram channel, February 9, 2024).

Activity of the PA's security services

► The Jenin Battalion of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad's Jerusalem Brigades issued a statement claiming that members of the PA's security services had detained several of its operatives and seized their weapons. The statement noted that the weapons of the Jenin Battalion were directed at Israel (the "occupation") and the settlers. It called on members of the Palestinian security services to release the operatives and their weapons (Filastin al-Yawm TV website, February 9, 2024). The day before, social media reported that the Palestinian security services had detained three Jenin Battalion operatives in Nablus (Basel Abu Hassan's X account, February 8, 2024; @jenencamb Telegram channel, February 8, 2024).

Friday's events

► The Palestinian waqf (department of Muslim endowments) in Jerusalem said that the Friday prayer on the Temple Mount on February 9, 2024, had been attended by about 25,000 people, the largest number of worshippers since the beginning of the war. **Sheikh Muhammad Hussein, the preacher of al-Aqsa Mosque and the mufti of Jerusalem and the Palestinian territories**, said in his sermon that al-Aqsa Mosque was part of their faith and that they would not give up an inch of its land, and under no circumstances would there be bargaining for it. He also stressed that al-Aqsa Mosque belonged only to Muslims and that no one could share it with them (aljazeera.net, February 9, 2024)



The prayer at al-Aqsa (aljazeera.net, February 9, 2024)

► In response to Hamas' call, after the Friday prayer a march was held in Ramallah-al-Bireh in support of the Gaza Strip and the “resistance.” The marchers chanted slogans of support for the “resistance” and praise for Lebanon, Yemen and Iraq. They waved Palestinian and Hamas flags as well as Yemen, Iraq, South Africa and Hezbollah flags (al-Araby al-Jadeed, February 9, 2024).



The march in Ramallah (al-Araby al-Jadeed, February 9, 2024)

Announcement of the death of a Palestinian prisoner

► The Palestinian prisoners' affairs commission and the Palestinian prisoners' club reported the death of administrative detainee Muhammad Ahmad Rateb al-Sabar, 21 years old, from the town of al-Zahariya, who had been detained since May 2022 and whose administrative detention had been extended by four months in November 2023. He allegedly died as a result of medical negligence at Hadassah Hospital after he was transferred there from Ofer Prison. According to the claim, he was suffering from complications of an illness and they refused to provide him with the medication he needed. He was the eighth Palestinian prisoner to die in Israeli jails since the beginning of the war (Wafa, February 8, 2024).

Palestinian Authority (PA)

► **PA Prime Minister Muhammad Shtayyeh** met with **Sigrid Kaag, the UN coordinator for the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip**, to discuss ways to increase aid to the Gaza Strip and provide its residents with medical equipment through all the crossings. Shtayyeh stressed the importance of opening an office for humanitarian affairs in the Gaza Strip to closely monitor and document the "crimes of the occupation" (Wafa, February 8, 2024).

► "Sources" told the Saudi Arabian news website al-Sharq that **Mahmoud Abbas, PA chairman**, was planning to form a new technocratic government for the day after the war in the Gaza Strip, and that the reconstruction and security of the Gaza Strip would be its top priorities. The sources also noted that Mahmoud Abbas had put **Muhammad Mustafa, head of the Palestinian investment fund**, in charge of that mission. The sources added that at Mahmoud Abbas' request, a team of experts had prepared a plan for the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip, including the establishment of a reconstruction authority under the supervision of the International Bank, and that Mahmoud Abbas would present the idea to the emir of Qatar during their meeting in Doha on February 12, 2024. Hamas "sources" said they welcomed cooperation with the PA in all matters related to the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip, but demanded to examine and understand what each step entailed, who the members of the government would be, and what the nature of the body overseeing the reconstruction would be. Hamas also demanded that there be a body to oversee the government and the reconstruction authority, and that it include various Palestinian political officials and independent national figures. According to the sources, Hamas praised Qatar's efforts to reach internal Palestinian understandings and pledged not to disrupt the efforts (al-Sharq, February 10, 2024).

► In an interview, **Muhammad Dahlan, a senior Fatah figure in exile**, made it clear that he was not interested in the role of future leader of the renewed PA. As for the possibility that Hamas would play a political role in the Palestinian arena after October 7, 2023, Dahlan said no force could wipe Hamas out completely because Hamas was an "idea." He said he did not necessarily expect Hamas or representatives of other organizations to participate in the government, but a government of technocrats. He also noted that during the temporary transition phase, the support and participation of all parties would be needed to stabilize the internal situation and hold general elections. Referring to Mahmoud Abbas, Dahlan claimed that according to public opinion polls, a large percentage of the Palestinians demanded his

resignation, and therefore it would be better for him to leave after a historic speech in which he would acknowledge his mistakes, and he and his team had to restore sovereignty to the people and not allow other parties to decide the future through secret negotiations. Dahlan stressed that he was completely opposed to taking civilian hostages, but made it clear that he did not condemn the kidnapping of soldiers (Politico, February 9, 2024).

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Iran

Pro-Iranian militias

Iraq

► It was reported that the Green Village base in the al-Omar oil field in the Deir ez-Zor area had been attacked and no one claimed responsibility (SAMA; al-Mayadeen, February 8, 2024). It was also reported that the Koniko base on the Iraqi-Syrian border had been attacked (al-Arabi, February 9, 2024) and that three missiles had hit the base (Sputnik, February 9, 2024). According to a "security source," the aerial defense systems of the United States forces in the Koniko oil field in eastern Syria responded to six UAV strikes in their area (Reuters, February 10, 2024). It is believed that the pro-Iranian militias were behind the attacks. No casualties were reported.

► The Islamic Resistance in Iraq condemned the killing of Wissam Muhammad Saber, a senior Kataib Hezbollah (Hezbollah Brigades) operative, by the American forces in their attack on February 7, 2024. It said the United States "remained despicable, understood nothing but attacks, and violated the rules of warfare." According to the statement, these "crimes" left the organizations with no choice but to adhere to their responsibility towards their own people under any circumstances. They called on their "brothers in jihad" to join the ranks of the "resistance" in expelling the occupation in Iraq and the region (Islamic Resistance Telegram channel, February 9, 2024).

► The statement was issued after reports that **Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammad Shia' al-Sudani** had reached an agreement with some of the militias in Iraq to stop the attacks in the country and after a senior American military official had said that they had made it clear to the Iraqi government that they would not attack if the attacks on United States forces stopped (al-Jazeera, February 9, 2024).

► **Iraqi Foreign Minister Fouad Hussein** said that the tension between Iran and the United States was high and that they could not solve their problems on Iraqi soil, which had already paid a high price. He expressed hope that both sides would stop the attacks. He noted that there were unwanted pro-Iranian militias operating in Iraq that attacked American soldiers. He said they had conveyed a message to them that if they continued their actions, they would push the country into a war that had nothing to do with them (BBC, February 11, 2024).

Yemen

► During the weekend, the Houthis reported several American-British airstrikes against targets in Yemen, including three airstrikes in the al-Hudaydah governorate, two in the al-Qatimat area in the Baqim district, and also airstrikes in al-Jabana and al-Durayhimi in al-Hudaydah (al-Masirah, February 9 and 10, 2024).

► At the same time, the United States Central Command (CENTCOM) announced several airstrikes carried out by the forces against unmanned vessels and cruise missiles that were ready to be launched in Houthi-controlled areas as part of preventing damage to vessels in the Red Sea (CENTCOM X account, February 8-10, 2024).

► **Abd al-Malik al-Houthi, leader of the Houthis**, gave a speech in which he related to the killing of a senior Kataib Hezbollah operative in Iraq. He noted that so far, the United States and Britain had carried out 86 airstrikes on Yemeni soil as part of their efforts to protect Israeli ships in the Red Sea. He stressed that the airstrikes had not affected their military capability at all, and that their operations continued and would not stop until the “aggression” and the “siege” on the Gaza Strip stopped. He praised the Iraqi front for their contribution to the “resistance” that led to an escalation by the United States. He noted that the Houthis continued to assist “Palestine” with naval operations and would continue to do so until the “aggression” stopped, noting that these actions certainly harmed the Israeli economy. He said the Houthis had carried out five major operations this week, one of which, according to the United States, lasted 14 hours. He also claimed that the Houthis had also attacked Eilat and that the “Zionists in Eilat” were in constant panic and the economic situation there had definitely been harmed (al-Masirah, February 8, 2024).

► **Muhammad Abdeslam, Houthi spokesman and head of the Houthi negotiating team**, stressed that the operations in the Red Sea were separate from the peace talks with Saudi Arabia and that their objective was clear, they were directed against Israeli ships and those bound for Israel, and these operations continued and would continue until the “aggression”

against the Gaza Strip ended and the siege ended with the entry of aid into the Gaza Strip (al-Sharq al-Awsat, February 9, 2024).

► Germany sent a frigate ahead of the launch of the EU's naval force in the Red Sea, which will begin operating in mid-February 2024. The ship is designed for air defense and is equipped with radars that can identify targets at a distance of up to 400 kilometers and with missiles against ballistic missiles and UAVs with a range of more than 160 kilometers. The German navy commander said free maritime trade routes and their ability to defend themselves were the basis of their industry (Reuters, February 8, 2024).

The Arab Arena

Egypt

► **Sameh Shoukry, Egyptian foreign minister**, warned of the spreading conflict in the region, noting that the expansion of military operations had serious consequences. He stressed the demand for an immediate ceasefire in the Gaza Strip and noted their efforts on the issue. He also noted that the establishment of a Palestinian state was the only way to stability in the region (al-Qahera, February 10, 2024).

Jordan

► **Yahya Abu Aboud, chairman of the Jordanian Bar Association**, said that on February 2, 2024, the Association, along with other Arab bar associations and legal organizations, had filed a complaint with the chief prosecutor at the International Criminal Court (ICC) headquarters in The Hague, against Israeli officials and individuals for "acts that constitute a crime of genocide committed in the State of Palestine [sic]." He said it was the first of several complaints to be submitted to the Court, and noted that it was based on a collection of documents and evidence regarding the "crimes" and on the recent decision of the International Court of Justice in response to a complaint filed by South Africa against Israel. He said the complaint was an implementation, among other things, of the decision stemming from the Algerian Declaration (the International Coalition to Support the Legal Case of the Palestinian People).⁵ It was noted that the international team included the Jordanian Bar

⁵ It refers to the international legal conference held on November 29-30 in Algiers, entitled "Justice for the Palestinian People," with the participation of French lawyer Gilles Devers and senior Hamas figure Sami Abu Zuhri.

Association, the Palestinian Bar Association, the National Association of Algerian Bar Associations, the National Association of Algerian Judges, the Tunisian Bar Association and the Mauritanian Bar Association (Jordanian News Agency, February 5, 2024). Abu Aboud said the complaint would be examined by the chief prosecutor's office and a meeting would be held with the chief prosecutor and the ICC over the next two to three weeks to monitor the complaint, which included the names of Israeli President Herzog, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Defense Minister Yoav Gallant and other senior Israeli officials (Aljazeera.net website, February 6, 2024).

Saudi Arabia

► On February 8, 2024, Saudi Arabia hosted a meeting of Arab foreign ministers to discuss developments in the Gaza Strip. The meeting was attended by **Qatari Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, UAE Foreign Minister Abdullah bin Zayed, Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman al-Safadi, Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry and PLO Executive Committee Secretary Hussein al-Sheikh**. They stressed the need to end the war in the Gaza Strip, reach an immediate and complete ceasefire, ensure the protection of civilians in accordance with international humanitarian law, and lift all restrictions preventing the entry of humanitarian aid into the Gaza Strip. They expressed their support for UNRWA and called on all its supporters to play their role in supporting humanitarian missions for Palestinian refugees. They also stressed the importance of taking irreversible steps to implement the two-state solution and recognize the "State of Palestine" along the lines of June 4, 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital, in accordance with international resolutions, stressing that the Gaza Strip was an integral part of the occupied Palestinian territory and rejecting all forced displacement operations (al-Araby al-Jadeed, February 9, 2024; al-Ekhbariya, February 8, 2024).

◀ **Faisal bin Farhan, Saudi foreign minister**, met in Saudi Arabia with **UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini** and called on donor countries to continue their support for the agency (Saudi foreign ministry X account, February 8, 2024).

The International Arena

United States

► **American President Joe Biden** met in Washington with **German Chancellor Olaf Scholz**. Among other things, the two discussed efforts to prevent regional escalation in the Middle East. They also reaffirmed their commitment to Israel's right to self-defense in accordance with international law and stressed the need to increase humanitarian assistance to the Gaza Strip (Agence France-Presse, February 10, 2024).

United Nations

► In response to the IDF's activity, **UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk** said Israel's systematic destruction of structures in Gaza to establish a buffer zone was illegal and a war crime. He also claimed that Israel had not provided persuasive reasons for such extensive destruction of civilian infrastructure and that forcible displacement of civilians could also be a war crime (Agence France-Presse, February 8, 2024).

Global Jihad

ISIS's threat against the Jews

► On February 9, 2024, the ISIS-affiliated al-Adiyat media foundation published a poster reading, "We are coming, Jews. The spreading of the Caliphate will not be stopped by borders and will not be prevented by the dogs of the Jews [i.e., Arab regimes collaborating with Israel]" (Telegram, February 9, 2024).



Poster of the ISIS-affiliated al-Adiyat media foundation (Telegram, February 9, 2024)