

04272026 NEWS SPECIAL Don't miss Lev U'Neshama NOTE at end!

Please Note:

I am now home from having triple bypass surgery. I will be sending news out but it will be very abbreviated with only titles and links You can also subscribe to one of the many Israel reviews that are mailed out daily.

Thank you for your patience. rdb

DF strikes Lebanon's Beqaa Valley for first time in 3 weeks as some towns in north cancel school

Raids deeper in country follow continued Hezbollah fire; Lebanese president pans terror group for waging war serving 'foreign interests'; Hezbollah reportedly threatens suicide bombings

By [Emanuel Fabian](#), [Nurit Yohanan](#), [Stav Levaton](#)

and [Agencies](#) Today, 5:41 pm

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/idf-strikes-lebanons-beqaa-valley-for-first-time-in-3-weeks-amid-shaky-ceasefire/>

Lebanese gov't yet to take any action against Hezbollah, Israeli officials tell 'Post'

Speaking to IDF generals on Monday, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stressed that Israel was given "full freedom of action to foil immediate and emerging threats."

By [AMICHAEL STEIN](#), [JAMES GENN](#) APRIL 27, 2026 19:35 Updated: APRIL 27, 2026 21:02

<https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/article-894343>

Slain soldier's girlfriend says at funeral that she saw his death in Lebanon in real time

Idan Fooks, 19, killed in Hezbollah drone attack on Sunday, laid to rest; girlfriend was on duty as a surveillance soldier; mother recalls his 'heart filled with good intentions'

By [Stav Levaton](#)

and [Tol Staff](#) Today, 7:54 pm

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/slain-soldiers-girlfriend-says-at-his-funeral-that-she-saw-his-death-in-lebanon-in-real-time/>

Rubio rejects new Iranian proposal to reopen Strait of Hormuz, with future of talks in limbo

Iran's plan is 'We'll blow you up and you pay us,' says top US diplomat; tanker traffic muted in strait, which Iran says it controls; Germany's Merz: Iran 'humiliating' US in talks

By [Agencies](#) and [Tol Staff](#) Today, 8:36 pm

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/rubio-rejects-new-iranian-proposal-to-reopen-strait-of-hormuz-which-tehran-says-it-still-controls/>

Iran said to offer US deal to reopen Hormuz, end war and put off nuclear talks

Trump to meet with national security, foreign policy teams to discuss proposal, report says, as oil prices rise after failed attempt to restart negotiations over the weekend

By [Tol Staff](#) and [Agencies](#) Today, 10:03 am

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/iran-said-to-offer-us-deal-to-reopen-hormuz-end-war-and-put-off-nuclear-talks/>

Iran's leadership is humiliating the United States, Germany's Merz says

Merz also said he did not see what exit strategy the US was pursuing in the Iran war - comments that underlined deep divisions between Washington and its European NATO allies.

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz makes a statement on the situation in the Middle East, at the chancellery in

By [REUTERS](#) APRIL 27, 2026 18:51 Updated: APRIL 27, 2026 21:00

<https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/iran-news/article-894338>

As Hamas prepares to choose 1st leader since Sinwar, postwar Gaza's fate hangs in the balance

Two leading contenders would pull terror group in different directions: prioritizing fighting to keep a grip on the Strip or conceding the battlefield in exchange for survival

By [Nurit Yohanan](#)

Today, 4:25 pm

PA leader Abbas's loyalists win local elections, including in Gaza's Deir al-Balah

First election of any kind in Strip in over 2 decades is cast by Ramallah as a success and 'another step on the path to full independence'

By [Agencies](#) and [Nurit Yohanan](#)

Today, 1:39 am

Eisenkot invites most opposition chiefs to meet, coordinate path to 'Zionist majority' victory

Strategizing on how to oust Netanyahu, Yashar leader reaches out to Bennett and Lapid, whose merged Together party he does not intend to join; does not invite Arab parties or his own low-polling ex-colleague Gantz

By [Ariela Karmel](#)

Today, 6:46 pm

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/eisenkot-invites-most-opposition-chiefs-to-meet-coordinate-path-to-zionist-majority-victory/>

Canadian antisemitism 'metastasized' in 2025 with record 6,800 incidents, mostly online

B'nai Brith Canada's annual report, tallying 10 violent incidents and hundreds of cases of vandalism, says Jew-hatred is 'national crisis' that's become 'normalized in our society'

By [Zev Stub](#)

Today, 6:53 pm

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/canadian-antisemitism-metastasized-in-2025-with-record-6800-incidents-mostly-online-report/>

'You're lucky you're not soap bars': Jews forced to leave rally marking WWII end in Italy

Members joining march under banners of British Army's Nazi-fighting Jewish Brigade and other Jewish organizations are insulted and prevented from continuing

By [Rossella Tercatin](#)

26 April 2026, 11:35 pm

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/youre-lucky-youre-not-soap-bars-jews-forced-to-leave-rally-marking-wwii-end-in-italy/>

Hamas organizing pro-Palestinian protests, raising funds in Netherlands, Dutch intelligence says

The AIVD warned about Iran's focus on offensive cyber programs, including influence operations, sabotage, and espionage, targeting Europe.

By [MICHAEL STARR](#) APRIL 27, 2026 11:47 Updated: APRIL 27, 2026 16:20

<https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/article-894273>

'I don't leave my house': youth gangs terrorize south Tel Aviv

Residents say the problem has persisted for years, with many afraid to complain; police say minors' involvement limits enforcement and broader government action is needed

Maya Cohen|Updated:12:43

<https://www.ynetnews.com/article/hydb7mttwg#autoplay>

As Israel becomes a dominant force in the Middle East, where does Turkey stand? - analysis

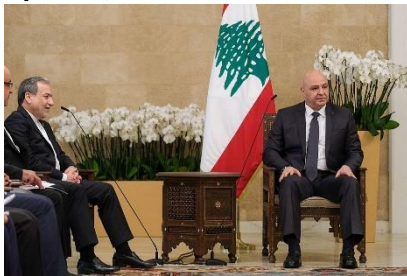
Ankara is realizing that in a Middle East dominated by Israeli technological and intelligence prowess, traditional power might no longer be enough.

By [AMICHAEL STEIN](#) APRIL 27, 2026 20:06

OP ED

Trump is Right: Laws Across the Middle East to Prevent Normalization with Israel are 'Crazy' - and Poisonous
by [Khaled Abu Toameh](#)

April 27, 2026 at 5:00 am



If Lebanese President Joseph Aoun were to accept US President Donald Trump's invitation to meet Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at the White House, he would effectively be violating Lebanon's own anti-normalization law, which prohibits all economic, professional, cultural, or social relations between Lebanese nationals and Israeli citizens and entities.

Pictured: Aoun (R) meets with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi in Baabda, Lebanon, on January 9, 2026. (Photo by Courtney Bonneau/Middle East Images/AFP via Getty Images)

US President Donald J. Trump recently said that he has never heard of a Lebanese law banning contact with Israel. "I never heard of that, but... I'm pretty sure that'll be ended very quickly," Trump [told](#) reporters. "I know Lebanon doesn't want that... That's crazy."

Trump is right. These laws are "crazy." They are also poisonous.

So long as Arabs and Muslims are taught by law, religion and social pressure that contact with Israelis is forbidden, the prospects for peace and coexistence will remain out of reach.

There can be no real stability in the Middle East while anti-normalization laws and campaigns persist. Such laws and campaigns only empower extremists and terrorists who seek Israel's and the region's destruction.

Trump is reportedly seeking to [invite](#) Lebanese President Joseph Aoun and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to a meeting in the White House as part of an effort to achieve peace and stability between Lebanon and Israel. If Aoun, however, were to accept Trump's invitation to meet Netanyahu at the White House, he would effectively be violating Lebanon's own anti-normalization law, which prohibits all economic, professional, cultural, or social relations between Lebanese nationals and Israeli citizens and entities.

Lebanon's anti-normalization law, rooted in the 1955 Boycott Law and reinforced by the penal code, [prohibits](#) virtually all contact with Israel, which is classified as an "enemy state."

The law goes even further. It bars any person or legal entity, directly or indirectly, from [engaging](#) in any transaction -- commercial, financial, or otherwise -- with individuals or organizations linked to Israel.

The penalties are severe. Violators can [face](#) prison terms ranging from three to ten years with hard labor, in addition to fines, professional bans, and the confiscation of goods.

What may sound "crazy" in Washington is, in fact, standard practice in several Arab and Islamic countries. Lebanon is not the exception; it is the rule.

Legislation to prevent countries from establishing normal relations with Israel has existed in the region for decades. Countries such as Syria and Iraq have long maintained sweeping [prohibitions](#) on contact with Israelis, with penalties that have included life imprisonment and even death.

On May 26, 2022, Iraq's parliament [passed](#) the "Criminalizing Normalization and Establishment of Relations with the Zionist Entity" law, which unanimously prohibits any diplomatic, political, economic, or cultural ties with Israel. Violations, including supporting "Zionist ideas" via social media, can incur life imprisonment or the death penalty.

Since then, Iraqi authorities have [filed](#) legal complaints against several political activists and bloggers, accusing them of supporting Israel. "One of the primary figures named in the complaints is Ghaith al-Tamimi, an

Iraqi political activist living abroad. Al-Tamimi is known for his strong criticism of Iran and its affiliated factions within Iraq," [according](#) to *The New Arab* media outlet.

"Al-Tamimi has been accused of using his social media platforms to make statements that were interpreted as supportive of Israeli actions in Gaza and Lebanon. This has sparked outrage within Iraq, where any perceived support for Israeli operations is considered a violation of the country's laws."

In another case, the Karkh Criminal Court in Baghdad [sentenced](#) a man to life imprisonment for promoting the "Zionist entity" (Israel) on social media. According to the Supreme Judicial Council, the defendant, whose identity has not been released, published photos and videos on Facebook supporting normalization with Israel. Authorities also found Hebrew-language books and newspapers in his home.

In Kuwait, similar [laws](#) – backed by parliamentary legislation and Islamic religious rulings – [criminalize](#) normalization with Israel and treat it as an act of treason. A few years ago, the Criminal Court in Kuwait [issued](#) a three-year prison sentence with hard labor against renowned media personality Fajr al-Saeed, who had publicly called for normalization with Israel.

Even Egypt, which signed a peace treaty with Israel more than four decades ago, has a [law](#) that authorizes the revocation of Egyptian citizenship if a national is "qualified as Zionist." The Egyptian government has used this law, passed in 1975, to revoke the citizenship of Egyptians who marry Israeli nationals.

These laws are frequently reinforced not only by governments, but also by influential religious institutions such as Cairo's Al-Azhar Al-Sharif, the premier institution of Sunni Islam, which has [issued](#) rulings banning all forms of non-governmental contact with Israelis and framing normalization as religiously forbidden.

Another prominent Islamic body, the International Union of Muslim Scholars (IUMS), has [issued](#) a *fatwa* (Islamic ruling) forbidding normalization with Israel. The ruling came in response to the normalization agreement signed between Israel and the United Arab Emirates more than five years ago. According to IUMS, normalization [agreements](#) are "not reconciliations or truces... rather, they are a concession of the holiest and most blessed of lands and a recognition of the legitimacy of the occupying enemy [Israel]."

The purpose of these laws and religious rulings is clear: to deter, punish, and stigmatize any form of coexistence with Israel. By criminalizing people-to-people engagement, Arab and Muslim leaders and institutions send a powerful message to their populations: peace with Israel is not merely undesirable, but a crime. This message is reinforced through media campaigns, professional blacklisting, and public accusations of "treason" against those who dare to engage with Israelis.

If Trump is serious about presenting himself as a peacemaker, his surprise at Lebanon's law should be only the beginning. The real challenge lies in confronting a deeply entrenched system of boycotts, legal restrictions, and incitement against Israel across the Arab and Islamic worlds.

Where peace is illegal, peace is impossible.

The US maintains close ties with several Arab and Islamic countries where laws and campaigns banning normalization with Israel remain in force. Washington has diplomatic, economic, and political leverage with many of the countries that enforce these laws. The question is whether it is willing to use it.

Khaled Abu Toameh is an award-winning journalist based in Jerusalem.

<https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/22479/laws-prevent-normalization-with-israel>



BS”D

STEP BY STEP

STEP BY STEP: Good news is that many friends and supporters of Lev U'Neshama (Heart and Soul) donated towards the Education Fund project to provide basic school supplies for actually 350 children within our Lev U'Neshama families.

We are grateful that the school supply part of our effort has been successful.

According to the Israel Population and Statistics office, Tzfat's population is about 40,000, and one third live at the poverty level. We do what we can so at least the children within our struggling LUN families can get the things they need.

Every week we are providing new sport shoes and eye exams/eyeglasses to the children on our request list. However, previous donations are rapidly dwindling. I am reaching out now before the fund has been emptied and we will have to say "no" to additional requests.

We work with two local shoe merchants who give Lev U'Neshama a discount but they advised us the cost of the shoes has increased. Also, we work with an accredited optician in town who also gives us a discount but his cost is stable.

Lev U'Neshama is an Israeli registered non-profit charity organization, volunteer run, no business expenses whatsoever and every \$ goes into our programs.

Shoes: \$45 per pair regular and \$60 for First Steps, baby shoes.

Eye Exam/Eyeglasses: \$60 per child.

Your support is urgently requested.

Or use the Zelle US to US bank transfer system (contact me at mortsmo@aol.com for bank information).

US Donors may also send checks made payable to

Simcha Smolensky, my son, who is also a volunteer. Send to:

Rabbi Simcha Smolensky, 6739 N Mozart St Chicago IL 60645

Your support will be appreciated.

Yaffa Smolensky