

US was not informed, Gaza hospital targeted in strike: Behind the assassination attempt on Mohammed Sinwar

Israel's decision to target Hamas leader Mohammed Sinwar in Khan Younis came from a sudden opportunity, leaving no time to notify the Trump administration; The strike was aimed at a command center under a hospital, prompting questions about Sinwar's fate

Itamar Eichner, Elisha Ben Kimon | 14:34

Israel did not notify the United States ahead of the assassination attempt on Mohammed Sinwar in Khan Younis, a source familiar with the matter revealed to Ynet on Tuesday evening. According to the source, the operation was the result of a "sudden opportunity," leaving no time to inform the Americans or consider the fact that the strike coincided with President Donald Trump's speech in Saudi Arabia.



Scene of the Khan Younis attack

The source clarified that Sinwar's death has not yet been confirmed, but noted that **"at the moment, it looks promising"**—and if he was there, it is hard to believe he survived because it was a very aggressive strike.

The decision to target Sinwar was made shortly before the operation, with the aircraft deployed in a rapid and compact timeframe. Officials in Israel estimate that it may take some time to determine the results of the strike with certainty, potentially a few days.

Mohammed Sinwar (Photo: IDF Spokesperson's Unit)



Mohammed Sinwar, brother of slain Hamas mastermind Yahya Sinwar, had been leading Hamas' military wing, the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, in Gaza since the assassination of Mohammed Deif. Following [the elimination of his brother Yahya Sinwar in Rafah](#), he also became involved in

managing broader operations in Gaza. Known for his extremist stance and as a significant figure in Hamas leadership, Mohammed Sinwar often posed a barrier to negotiations between Israel and Hamas. If he was indeed killed, this could impact ongoing talks, potentially strengthening the position of Hamas's external leadership, which is seen as more inclined toward reaching agreements.

The attempt to assassinate Sinwar involved Shin Bet's Operations Division and Military Intelligence, similar to other targeted killings carried out in recent months. Attention is now turning to who might succeed Mohammed Sinwar if his death is confirmed, with Gaza Brigade Commander Izz al-Din Haddad emerging as the most likely candidate.



In a joint statement issued by IDF and Shin Bet about the strike, it was reported that Hamas operatives were targeted in a command and control facility located underground beneath the European Hospital in Khan Yunis, in southern Gaza. A security source emphasized that the forces confirmed there were no hostages in the facility prior to the strike. Based on Israeli intelligence, several senior Hamas figures were present at the site that was bombed. According to Palestinian reports, the attack resulted in seven fatalities and 30 injuries.

The joint IDF and Shin Bet statement further asserted: "The terrorist organization Hamas continues to use hospitals in the Gaza Strip for terrorist purposes, cynically and cruelly exploiting the civilian population inside and around the hospital. Prior to and during the strike, measures were taken to minimize the risk to civilians, including the use of precise munitions, aerial surveillance, and additional intelligence information. IDF and Shin Bet will continue to act forcefully against the Hamas terrorist organization and eliminate any threats to the citizens of the State of Israel." <https://www.ynetnews.com/article/hkqhawbwex#autoplay>

Hamas Rafah brigade commander probably killed in IDF strike on Sinwar

Rafah brigade commander Mohammad Shabanah was potentially next in line to lead Hamas.

By [YONAH JEREMY BOB](#) MAY 14, 2025 19:00 Updated: MAY 14, 2025 19:25



Hamas flag painted on a cracked wall. (photo credit: zmotions/Shutterstock)

The IDF's strike on Tuesday night to try to kill Hamas chief Mohammad Sinwar may have killed Hamas Rafah Brigade commander Muhammad Shabana, sources estimate.

So far, there is cautious optimism that both Hamas officials were killed in the attack, though it may take time to confirm.

If so, then Hamas's current leader and one of the few top until now living Hamas commanders who might have replaced him, would have been removed with one swift military stroke.

IDF's previous strikes

Already during the war, the IDF has killed October 7 architect Yahya Sinwar, former military chief Mohammad Deif, Deif's deputy Marwan Issa, Northern Gaza Brigade commander Ahmad Ran Dur, Central Gaza Brigade Commander Ayman Nofel, and Khan Yunis Brigade Commander Rafah Salame.

Illustrative image of IDF soldiers and Hamas terrorists (credit: Canva, IDF SPOKESPERSON'S UNIT, REUTERS/IBRAHEEM ABU MUSTAFA)

This would leave only Gaza City Brigade commander Az-adin-al-Hadad alive from the pre-war original five

Hamas brigade commanders. <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/defense-news/article-853971>

Islamic Jihad fires three rockets at southern Israel, intercepted by IDF

The IDF struck Khan Yunis hospitals twice on Tuesday prior to the sirens.



By [JERUSALEM POST STAFF](#) MAY 13, 2025 22:02 Updated: MAY 13, 2025 23:39

Palestinian Islamic Jihad terrorists in Khan Yunis on October 10, 2020. (photo credit: ABED RAHIM KHATIB/FLASH90)

The Israeli Air Force intercepted two rockets fired from the Gaza Strip that caused sirens to sound in Sderot and the surrounding Gaza border area, as well as in Ashkelon, on Tuesday evening, the IDF said.

Palestinian Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for the rockets launched at southern Israel, *Walla* reported.

A third rocket fell in an open area, the military added. The [Sderot Municipality](#) stated that no injuries or property damage were reported.

Israel Police were prepared to conduct scans to locate areas where shrapnel had fallen.

While sirens continue to sound periodically in the Gaza border area 19 months since October 7 and the launch of Israel's war in Gaza, rockets fired from the Strip have not been able to pass the Gaza envelope since early April.

In April, Hamas fired approximately 10 rocket into Israeli territory, triggering sirens in the areas of Ashdod and Ashkelon. A man in his 30s sustained light wounds from rocket shrapnel following that barrage.

Scenes of an impact from a Hamas rocket in Ashkelon, April 6, 2025. (credit: MDA SPOKESPERSON)

IDF strikes on Gaza

On Tuesday, the IDF attempted to assassinate [Hamas leader Mohammed Sinwar](#) prior to the sirens, in a strike on the European Hospital in Khan Yunis in Gaza.

Earlier in the day, the IDF struck Nasser Hospital, also in [Khan Yunis](#), where they said Hamas terrorists were operating from.

This is a developing story.

<https://www.jpost.com/breaking-news/article-853838>

Possible killing of Mohammed Sinwar may boost hostage deal efforts, source tells 'Post'

The assassination attempt occurred as the Israeli delegation for hostage and ceasefire talks arrived in Qatar on Tuesday evening.

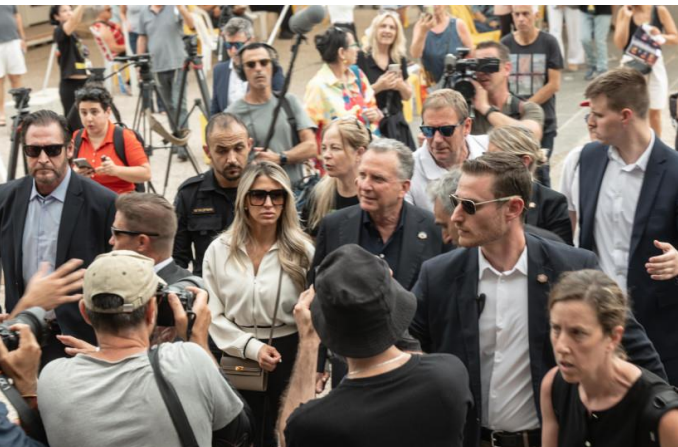
By [AMICHAEL STEIN](#) MAY 13, 2025 20:47 **Updated:** MAY 13, 2025 23:43



A video released by the Israeli army says to show Mohammed Sinwar, brother of Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar, travelling in a car through a tunnel near the Erez crossing, close to the Israel-Gaza border, amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Palestinian Islamist group Hamas, as seen in this s (photo credit: Israel Defense Forces/Handout via REUTERS)

If Hamas leader Mohammed Sinwar has indeed been assassinated, it would make it easier to reach a hostage and ceasefire deal, an Israeli official told *The Jerusalem Post* on Tuesday evening.

"[Mohammed] Sinwar was the most extreme figure in terms of negotiation positions for reaching a deal," the official said. "If he is out of the picture, it should ease the efforts to reach an agreement."



The assassination attempt occurred as the Israeli delegation, led by "M" from the Shin Bet (Israel Security Agency) and the Coordinator for Hostages and Missing Persons, Gal Hirsch, arrived in Qatar on Tuesday evening.

Witkoff, Bohler arrive in Doha for hostage-ceasefire talks

Trump's Middle East envoy, Steve Witkoff, and the administration's envoy for hostage affairs, Adam Bohler, also arrived in Qatar.

Ahead of the negotiations that began on Tuesday, senior [Qatari officials](#) met in recent days with Hamas representatives based in Doha.

US Middle East Envoy Steve Witkoff meets with hostage families, Israelis, at Hostages Square in Tel Aviv, May 13, 2025. (credit: Chen G. Schimmel/The Jerusalem Post)

"The message received by the American administration was that, despite Israel's insistence on a deal that does not include ending the war, Hamas is willing to negotiate even though it has not changed its position," a source familiar with the details told *the Post*. <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/defense-news/article-853826>

Israeli defense officials warn of 'widespread starvation' risk in Gaza - NYT

IDF officers reportedly said that "immediate steps were needed to ensure that the system to supply aid could be reinstated fast enough to prevent starvation."

By [JERUSALEM POST STAFF](#) MAY 14, 2025 02:03 **Updated:** MAY 14, 2025 02:11



A UN staff member stands in front of humanitarian supplies for Gaza stored at Egyptian Red Crescent warehouses storing aid for Gaza, in the Egyptian border town of El-Arish, Egypt, April 8, 2025. (photo credit: REUTERS/BENOIT TESSIER)

Some IDF officials have "privately concluded that Palestinians in Gaza face widespread starvation unless aid deliveries are restored within weeks," the New York Times reported on Tuesday.

The US news outlet's report was based on communicating with three Israeli defense officials "familiar with conditions in the enclave," who spoke on condition of anonymity. Does anyone trust the NY times???? rdb

IDF officers monitoring humanitarian conditions in Gaza warned their commanders that many areas in the enclave will run out of enough food to "meet minimum daily nutritional needs," the NYT claimed.

The officers reportedly said that "immediate steps were needed to ensure that the system to supply aid could be reinstated fast enough to prevent starvation" as it "takes time to scale up humanitarian deliveries."

"The military leadership has acknowledged the severity of the situation and is exploring ways to restart aid deliveries while circumventing Hamas," the NYT reported, according to the three defense officials.



Palestinian trucks loaded with humanitarian aid cross into Gaza through the Kerem Shalom crossing, February 17, 2025 (credit: ABED RAHIM KHATIB/FLASH90)

'Urgency of the humanitarian situation in Gaza'

This report exposes a "gulf between Israel's public stance on the aid blockade and its private deliberations," the NYT claims, adding that "It reveals that parts of the Israeli security establishment have reached the same conclusions as leading aid groups. They have warned for months of the dangers posed by the blockade."

It also "highlights the urgency of the humanitarian situation in Gaza," the report continued.

"Most bakeries have shut, charity kitchens are closing, and the United Nations's [World Food Program](#), which distributes aid and coordinates shipments, says it has run out of food stocks," it alleged.

The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, a UN-backed initiative that monitors malnutrition, warned of an imminent famine in Gaza, the NYT cited.

The IDF and Defense Ministry declined to respond to the comments, the NYT said.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson [Oren Marmorstein](#) told *the NYT* that he was "unable to share details from internal discussions, but that the ministry was in contact with "all the relevant agencies on an ongoing daily basis" and closely monitors the situation in Gaza." <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/defense-news/article-853858>

'Aid will no longer reach Hamas': Danny Danon to UN

"Israel will not cooperate with a mechanism that strengthens those who kidnapped, murdered, raped and tortured our citizens," Danon said.

By [JERUSALEM POST STAFF](#) MAY 14, 2025 00:25



ISRAEL'S AMBASSADOR to the UN Danny Danon speaks during a meeting of the Security Council on the situation in the Middle East and the Palestinian question, in November. (photo credit: REUTERS/Kent Edwards)

Israel's Ambassador to the UN [Danny Danon](#) said the current United Nations humanitarian aid system enables Hamas to benefit from international assistance and must be stopped.

"Aid will no longer reach Hamas," Danon said during a [UN Security Council \(UNSC\)](#) debate on the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, Ynet reported on Wednesday.

Before the debate took place, Danon posted on X/Twitter that the UNSC would convene for a special session to discuss the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

"In my speech, I will emphasize that the UN, led by the secretary-general, insists on preserving old distribution mechanisms that help channel aid to Hamas. Israel will not allow this. Hamas will not benefit from humanitarian aid," he posted.

Speaking at the debate, Danon directly criticized UN Secretary-General António Guterres.

Palestinian gunmen secure an aid truck following a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas, in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip, January 19, 2025. (credit: Hatem Khaled/Reuters)

"Instead of admitting that the system has failed, the UN insists on preserving Hamas's supply pipeline. This is not neutrality – but support for

terrorism," he said, as quoted by Ynet.

Danon added: "Israel will not cooperate with a mechanism that strengthens those who kidnapped, murdered, raped and tortured our citizens."

Gaza aid stolen by Hamas

In March, former hostage [Eli Sharabi](#) shared his testimony at a UNSC session focused on the hostages still held in Hamas captivity.

With regard to the humanitarian aid delivered to the Gaza Strip, Sharabi said that as an "eye witness," he saw what happened to that aid, *The Jerusalem Post* previously reported.

The "dozens of boxes paid by your government," he said, were stolen by Hamas and fed the "terrorists who tortured me and murdered my family."

The "terrorists would eat many meals a day from the UN aid in front of us," while the hostages never got any of it. <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-853856>

Israel must enforce UNRWA ban laws more strictly, MKs demand



UNRWA's six schools in east Jerusalem were shut down on May 8, after the Jerusalem Municipality on April 8 issued orders to all six school principals telling them to cease operations within 30 days.

By [ELIAV BREUER](#) MAY 13, 2025 16:43 **Updated:** MAY 13, 2025 22:28

A damaged sign is pictured at the headquarters of UNRWA following an Israeli raid in Gaza City, on July 12, 2024. (photo credit: Dawoud Abu Alkas/Reuters)

Attorney-General Gali Baharav-Miara was asked by over a dozen MKs from the coalition on Sunday to instruct the government to abide in full to two laws that came into

effect in late January, banning UNRWA operations in east Jerusalem and prohibiting Israeli institutions from cooperating with the agency in the West Bank and Gaza.

The MKs, led by Dan Illouz (Likud), argued in the letter they sent to the A-G that the law was not being sufficiently enforced, and blamed Baharav-Miara for delaying the law's implementation.

They were referring to reports that she had cautioned ministers to interpret the law in a way that did not violate international law, which grants operational independence to UN agencies, including [UNRWA](#).

The MKs who supported the legislation argued that the organization in Gaza was infiltrated by Hamas, that its facilities in Gaza were used by Hamas's military wing, that some of its employees had participated in the October 7 massacre, and that UNRWA's school curricula included positive attitudes towards violent resistance against Israel.

The laws were passed in January with large majorities, including MKs from the opposition.

"We, the undersigned members of the Knesset, demand the immediate and full enforcement of the laws for closing UNRWA, both the law for severing ties with UNRWA and the law to cease its activities in Israel, according to your responsibility to ensure that state systems operate within the law," the MKs wrote.



Gali Baharav-Miara. (credit: YONATAN SINDEL/FLASH90)

"These two laws were passed in the Knesset by an overwhelming majority. Their wording is clear, and their purpose is unequivocal: To remove UNRWA from operating within the sovereign territory of the State of Israel and to cut off all institutional contact with it," they continued.

"This is not an ambiguous intention but a clear, binding, and precise piece of legislation that has received the sovereign's approval," the MKs wrote.

They listed a series of alleged violations of the law, including that the IDF's Coordination of Government

Activities in the Territories (COGAT) division has continued to collaborate with UNRWA; that UNRWA's bank accounts have not yet been closed; that UNRWA offices in Jerusalem are partially operational; and that services that were previously provided by UNRWA have not yet been transferred to the relevant Israeli authorities.

The MKs listed an independent oversight committee comprised of a number of right-wing NGOs as its source, as well as closed-door meetings in the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee.

According to the MKs, "Classified and troubling information has been revealed to us as members of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, illustrating the extent to which lack of enforcement harms sovereignty, security, and the rule of law."

They continued, "The failure to implement the law is not just an internal failure; it is also an international humiliation. The State of Israel has taken a firm stance against UNRWA, paid a diplomatic price for it, and presented its position on every possible stage."

"Yet now it turns out that while we speak loudly, we are unable to implement our sovereign decisions in practice," they wrote. Does this sound familiar? The legitimate government makes laws and regulations and the leftists often (unelected) decide they are going to block the implementation of the orders that the legitimate government made. - rdb

The "diplomatic price" in question includes an ongoing case in the International Court of Justice (ICJ) at The Hague regarding an advisory opinion on Israel's obligations to facilitate aid delivered by states and international groups, including UNRWA, to Palestinians.

As for the ICJ, it heard arguments in late April and has yet to issue its opinion.

Israel did not participate in the arguments at the court and chose instead to file a written opinion.

The US supported Israel at the hearing. It relayed Israel's concerns regarding UNRWA, arguing that "an occupational power retains a margin of appreciation concerning what relief schemes to permit," and that "even if an organization offering relief is an impartial humanitarian organization, and even if it is a major actor, occupation law does not compel an occupational power to allow and facilitate that specific actor's relief operations."

IN AN opinion issued a few days prior to the ICJ hearing in an unrelated civil suit, the US

Justice Department reversed an opinion it issued during the previous administration.

It wrote that while the UN enjoys immunity from legal action in the US, its subsidiary bodies, such as UNRWA, do not. The letter said that UNRWA is not classified as a “subsidiary organ” of the UN under the International Organizations Immunities Act.

UNRWA's six schools in east Jerusalem were shut down on May 8 after the Education Ministry issued orders on April 8 to all six school principals telling them to cease operations within 30 days.

Three of the schools were inside the Shuafat refugee camp, and three others were in other east Jerusalem neighborhoods.

However, a statement by the Education Ministry did not mention UNRWA laws as the basis for shutting down the schools.

“The six UNRWA schools that operated in east Jerusalem were functioning without a license and in violation of the Schools Supervision Law (1969), and therefore, a closure order was issued against them,” the ministry said.

“The Education Ministry, the Jerusalem Municipality, and the Jerusalem and Israel Tradition Ministry had prepared in advance, ensuring high-quality educational solutions, significantly superior to those previously provided in the closed institutions instead,” the ministry continued.

“In recent months, the students’ parents were directed to the registration division of Jerusalem’s education administration to receive an organized placement for their children,” it added.

According to the statement, “Professional officials at the Education Ministry and Jerusalem’s education administration are overseeing the process and will continue to ensure comprehensive educational support in response to any parental inquiries.”

“The ministry will guarantee the immediate and optimal integration of all students,” it said.

Contrary to the statement, however, very few students have registered so far in alternative frameworks offered by the municipality, the Post has learned.

PER A statement on May 8 on X/Twitter by Roland Friedrich, the director of UNRWA affairs for the West Bank and east Jerusalem, “Heavily armed Israeli forces, together with officials from the Israeli Education Ministry and the Jerusalem Municipality, forcefully entered” the three Shuafat schools with the intention of shutting them down.

Friedrich posted a video showing military police entering a school courtyard in combat gear and with their rifles drawn.

The **forces “detained a staff member, took the ID numbers of staff present, and ordered them to dismiss the students immediately.** This was at a time when more than 550 students between six and 15 years of age and their teachers were present in class,” Friedrich wrote.

The **other three schools shut down prior to the entry of forces.**

Friedrich said that the closures were “traumatizing [to the] 800 young children who are at immediate risk of losing their access to education.”

“They have no alternatives. Their current school year, which runs until 20 June 2025, has ended by force,” he said.

“UNRWA schools are operationally independent and inviolable under international law,” the organization said. “Israel is obliged to protect them, just as it is obliged to protect all other UN staff and facilities at all times.”

Friedrich wrote on X on Tuesday that security officials had visited the schools again to ensure they had remained closed. **[The UNRWA schools perpetuation the indoctrination of the children in anti-Semitism and Jew Hatred and always have. There is no legitimate reason to allow that to go on in Israel. The problem is that the UN is fundamentally a biased anti-Semitic organization. The UN has never lived up to its fundamental charter. - rdb**

Contrary to the schools, UNRWA-run clinics have remained open in east Jerusalem. The Kalandiya Training Center, which straddles the border between east Jerusalem and the West Bank, has remained open as well, despite an attempt to shut it down in February.

The training center serves approximately 350 students per year who mostly come from across the West Bank to learn a trade in dormitory conditions.

Its demographic is males between the ages of 15 and 19, mostly from non-academic backgrounds and relatively low on the socioeconomic ladder.

COGAT issued the following response: “The Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories [division] is fully implementing the 2024 law for the cessation of UNRWA’s activities, which

prohibits contact between the organization and Israeli authorities and public officials. Accordingly, there is no communication or interaction with the organization's employees, whether in Gaza or in Judea and Samaria."

<https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-853795>

Houthi missile downed amid sirens in Jerusalem; IDF warns Yemen of impending strike

No injuries or damage reported in morning attack from Yemen, which follows two missile launches aimed at Israel the previous day

By [Emanuel Fabian](#) Today, 9:27 am Updated at 10:25 am



People take cover as a siren warns of an incoming missile fired from Yemen, on a train in Jerusalem, May 13, 2025. (Dor Pazuelo/Flash90)

A ballistic missile launched at Israel by the Iran-backed Houthis in Yemen was successfully intercepted by air defenses on Wednesday morning, the military said.

There were no immediate reports of injuries or damage in the attack.

Sirens sounded in Jerusalem and numerous surrounding towns, including some West Bank settlements. Preceding the sirens by some four minutes, an early warning was issued to residents,

alerting them of the long-range missile attack via a push notification on their phones.

Shortly afterward, the Israel Defense Forces repeated an "urgent" evacuation warning for three Houthi-controlled ports in Yemen, ahead of possible airstrikes.

Wednesday morning's missile attack followed two missile attacks the previous day.

On **Tuesday evening, a missile triggered sirens in central Israel and Jerusalem and** was intercepted by air defenses. No one was directly wounded, but two people were injured while rushing to shelters.

Several hours later on Tuesday, another ballistic missile launched from Yemen, apparently



aimed at Israel, fell short far from the country, according to an Israeli defense source. The military identified the launch, but no sirens sounded in Israel because the missile did not pose a threat.

A missile fired from Yemen also fell short of the country on Monday, a defense source said.

Supporters of the Iran-backed Houthi group in Yemen attend a weekly anti-US and anti-Israel rally in the rebel-held capital Sanaa, on May 9, 2025. (AP Photo/Osamah Abdulrahman)

The attacks came a week after Israel carried out two days of heavy sorties targeting infrastructure controlled by the Houthis in response to a missile that struck inside the grounds of Ben

Gurion Airport. After the airport was hit, most foreign airlines suspended flights to Israel.

On Sunday, the IDF issued an "urgent" evacuation warning to the three Houthi-controlled ports in western Yemen, though no strikes were reported to follow.

Shortly after Wednesday's missile attack, Adraee repeated the warning, saying, "Due to the Houthi terror regime's use of ports for its terror activities, we urge all those present at these ports to evacuate and stay away from them for your own safety until further notice."

The **Houthis — whose slogan calls for "Death to America, Death to Israel, [and] a Curse on the Jews"** — began attacking Israel and maritime traffic in November 2023, a month after the October 7 Hamas massacre.

The Houthis held their fire when a ceasefire was reached between Israel and Hamas in January 2025. By

that point, they had fired over 40 ballistic missiles and dozens of attack drones and cruise missiles at Israel, including one that killed a civilian and wounded several others in Tel Aviv in July, prompting Israel's first strike in Yemen.

Since March 18, when the IDF resumed its offensive against Hamas in the Gaza Strip, the Houthis in Yemen have launched 33 ballistic missiles and at least 10 drones at Israel. Several of the missiles have fallen short.



Security forces at the site where a missile fired from Yemen hit an area of Ben Gurion Airport near Tel Aviv, on May 4, 2025. (Chaim Goldberg/Flash90)

The sirens warning of missile attacks have sent hundreds of thousands of Israelis rushing to shelters at all hours of the day and night.

Both Israel and the US have struck Houthi targets in Yemen in response to the attacks.

Earlier this month, however, US President Donald Trump announced that the US would [stop bombing Houthi targets](#) in exchange for the group ceasing its attacks on important shipping lanes. The truce did not involve Israel, which the Houthis have continued attacking. [https://www.timesofisrael.com/houthi-](https://www.timesofisrael.com/houthi-missile-intercepted-as-sirens-blare-in-jerusalem-in-third-attack-in-24-hours/)

[missile-intercepted-as-sirens-blare-in-jerusalem-in-third-attack-in-24-hours/](#)

IDF must issue draft orders to all eligible men by July, A-G says

“If Torah learners are arrested, we won't be able to continue in this coalition,” haredi leaders told Maariv.

By [SARAH BEN-NUN](#) MAY 13, 2025 20:30 **Updated:** MAY 13, 2025 23:47



An ultra-Orthodox Jewish man is seen exiting an IDF recruiting office in Jerusalem, June 25, 2024 (photo credit: MARC ISRAEL SELLEM/THE JERUSALEM POST)

The IDF must issue [draft notices](#) to all eligible men - including those in the ultra-Orthodox (haredi) community - at the start of the nearest draft season, which will be this July, Attorney-General [Gali Baharav-Miara](#) said.

The comments were made at a meeting between several senior officials on the matter last week, and its contents were published on Tuesday.

There are around 80,000 eligible draft-age haredim, 24,000 of whom received notices since last

summer. Less than 3,000 answered the call.

The Israel-Hamas War has been ongoing since October 2023. Troops, especially reservists, are worn and exhausted by a year-and-a-half of war, and have put their lives on hold and at risk for it. As it stands, the war is not set to conclude anytime soon.

Baharav-Miara emphasized the urgency of increasing the military's manpower, as set forth by defense officials, and pointed to the High Court of Justice conditional order, which demands that the government explain why these specific draft notices have not gone out, as a “red flag.”

Haredi men dressed in traditional ultra-Orthodox garb stand behind a group of religious IDF soldiers (credit: MARC ISRAEL SELLEM/THE JERUSALEM POST)

The conditional order issued last month listed several demands, among them for the government to explain why draft-dodgers aren't being



effectively penalized. What this means is that the government must, in its response, offer a broader explanation as to why the court decision from last June – almost a year ago – which ruled that the state can no longer exempt haredim from the IDF, was not followed. The state has until June 24 to respond.

The attorney-general further noted in the meeting last week that she had approached Defense Minister Israel Katz two months ago to advance draft enforcement strategies, as well as to minimize the financial benefits “given to draft dodgers,” but that he has yet to address this issue.

In the June 2024 court ruling, the judges levied heavy criticism against the government, saying that its failure to adhere to its ruling after the existing draft law expired was illegal.

This comes as the IDF said on Tuesday that it began a serious arrest operation against draft dodgers in general, including haredim. The last time this happened was in November and March.

The urgency heightened up a notch during this time, Barahav-Miara said, “due to the extremely low turnout numbers of haredi draftees, along with the deepening inequality that places so much more strain on those who do serve, both in their mandatory service and in reserves.”

In the upcoming draft season, which will begin in July, between 2,500 and 7,000 haredim are set to be called up. So far, said the A-G, 18,900 draft notices have been issued to those eligible, about half (8,900) from the period of March through June. She said, however, that these were issued without the knowledge of whether the recipients are learning in yeshivot (Torah seminaries) or working. The IDF has said that by July, about 5,100 more notices are set to go out.

From the perspective of the haredi community and political leadership, this is a massive jump from what they were hoping would be a much smaller amount of drafts. Such a number – around 60,000 by the termination of the upcoming draft year – cannot differentiate between those who study and those who work.

Hareidi leaders attempt to keep Torah learners from draft

This very distinction is what haredi leaders have been trying to iron out in discussions on a draft bill in the government, since the law expired last June.

The Tuesday arrests of draft-dodgers have brought the coalition to the brink of collapse. According to reports, senior haredi political figures have warned of an imminent break in the coalition.

“If Torah learners are arrested, we won’t be able to continue in this coalition,” they told *Maariv*.

<https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-853824>

Ex-chief rabbi: If Haredi draft dodgers arrested, ultra-Orthodox will leave Israel *‘If they come to yeshivas and arrest students... we will all go abroad,’ says Yitzhak Yosef, threatening a mass exodus for the second time*

By [Sam Sokol](#) Today, 4:33 pm



Then-Sephardi Chief Rabbi Yitzhak Yosef sells the hametz (leavened food) of the State of Israel ahead of the upcoming Passover holiday, in Jerusalem, April 21, 2024. (Chaim Goldberg/Flash90)

If the government arrests yeshiva students for dodging the draft, then the ultra-Orthodox community will be forced to leave Israel, former chief Sephardic rabbi Yitzhak Yosef threatened on Wednesday, following the launch of an IDF enforcement operation to detain people who ignored enlistment orders.

“If they force us to go to the army, the yeshiva students, if they come to yeshivas and arrest students [then] we have no right to exist here [and] we will all go abroad, we will not stay here,” Yosef said in a speech published by the ultra-Orthodox Kikar Hashabbat news site.

Declaring that “our Torah protects the soldiers,” Yosef argued that Israel’s anti-missile defenses only succeeded in blocking attacks in the merit of yeshiva students’ studies.

If secular politicians understood this, he continued, they would massively increase the number of Israelis learning full-time in yeshiva.

In a separate clip, broadcast by Channel 13 on Wednesday, Yosef could be heard stating that worried

Haredi parents frequently contact him and he has to calm them down and assure them that their children will not be arrested.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has reportedly assured his ultra-Orthodox allies, who have threatened to topple the government if even one yeshiva student is arrested, that [no such arrests are expected](#).



Ultra-Orthodox Jews protest the IDF draft outside the Jerusalem enlistment center, April 28, 2025. (Sam Sokol/Times of Israel)

Yosef is the son of the late Shas party spiritual leader Ovadia Yosef and wields major influence with the faction, which is part of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's coalition.

This is the second time that Yosef has threatened a large-scale Haredi exodus from Israel over the enlistment issue. Last March, while serving as chief rabbi, he [warned](#) that ultra-Orthodox Jews would leave Israel en masse if the government ended exemptions of mandatory military enlistment enjoyed by the community.

"If **they force us to go to the army, we'll all move abroad**," Yosef said during a weekly lecture. "We'll buy a ticket... We'll go there."

He **subsequently claimed** that his comments had been "distorted" and stated that "it is necessary to pray daily for the soldiers, who give their lives for the residents of this country."

In June of last year, the High Court of Justice ruled that yeshiva students' long-standing exemptions from military service had no legal basis. Since then, the army has sent out nearly 19,000 initial draft orders to Haredim, although only around 319 have actually enlisted.

Currently, approximately 80,000 Haredi men between the ages of 18 and 24 are eligible for military service and have not enlisted.

Yosef was later recorded telling yeshiva students that "if you receive a military enlistment order, tear it up, throw it in the toilet, and flush. Don't consider it, don't be afraid."



Shas chairman Aryeh Deri meets with Moshe Maya, a senior member of the Shas Council of Torah Sages, June 26, 2024. (Courtesy)

Yosef is not the only Shas-affiliated rabbi to call for draft refusal. Last summer, Rabbi Moshe Maya, a senior member of the party's Council of Torah Sages, told Kol Baramah Radio that it was "forbidden for those who don't study to go to the army" because they would "end up violating the Shabbat."

Under the law, someone inciting others to evade service during wartime is liable for a prison term of 15 years.

In April, Yisrael Beytenu chairman Avigdor Liberman [called on police](#) to enforce this law against Haredi leaders, specifically calling out Yosef and Rabbi Dov Lando, the chairman of the Degel HaTorah party's ruling Council of Torah Sages, among others.

In an [open letter](#) published this March, the 94-year-old Lando instructed yeshiva students to "not report to the recruiting office at all" after receiving summonses.

Lando is also a member of the board of the [Vaad HaYeshivot](#) (Yeshiva Committee) and is linked to the "[Lema'anacha](#)" (for your sake) organization, both of which run hotlines advising worried yeshiva students to ignore draft orders. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/ex-chief-rabbi-if-haredi-draft-dodgers-arrested-ultra-orthodox-will-leave-israel/>

BBC's Gary Lineker shares Nazi propaganda rat emoji when discussing Zionists - Telegraph

Lineker pleaded ignorance over the Instagram post, prompting "furious new calls for the BBC to sack him," due to the antisemitic connotations, *The Telegraph* reported.

By [JERUSALEM POST STAFF](#) MAY 14, 2025 02:51 **Updated:** MAY 14, 2025 10:03



Gary Lineker's now-deleted Instagram post comparing Zionists to rats, May 2025. (photo credit: [SCREENSHOT/INSTAGRAM/VIA THE TELEGRAPH](#))

BBC presenter Gary Lineker pleaded ignorance over an Instagram post using a rat emoji when discussing Zionists, prompting "furious new calls for the BBC to sack him" due to the alleged antisemitic connotations, *The Telegraph* reported on Tuesday.

Nazi Germany used rats as a slur against Jews, which has remained in antisemitic messaging since.

Lineker claimed not to notice the image in a video by the Palestine Lobby campaign group, which he shared on his personal Instagram account. A spokesperson clarified to *Telegraph Sport* that Lineker "immediately deleted the video after learning of the symbolic meaning."

JPost Videos

"Whilst viewing and reposting a video, Gary did not notice a rodent emoticon added by the author of the post," he added. "Although if he had, he would not have made any connection. The repost has been removed."

Regardless, the event has sparked outrage among [Jewish groups in the UK](#), *The Telegraph* noted.

Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer (R) and Gary Lineker (L) react during a reception ahead of St George's Day at 10 Downing Street, London, Britain, April 22, 2025. (credit: STEFAN ROUSSEAU/POOL VIA REUTERS)

The image of a rat accompanied a video in which Canadian-Palestinian lawyer Diana Buttu attacked the IDF's actions in the Israel-Hamas War.

Campaign Against Antisemitism denounced the post on X/Twitter, stating, "He must go."

An earlier CAA post on X read, "Nothing to see here. Just Gary Lineker's Instagram account sharing an anti-Israel video

misrepresenting Zionism, complete with a rat emoji."

"The BBC has allowed the situation with Gary Lineker to continue for far too long. He has caused great offence with this video – particularly with [its] egregious use of a rat emoji to illustrate Zionists. BBC should ask him to leave now rather than allowing him to dictate his own terms," a spokesperson for the [Board of Deputies of British Jews](#) was quoted by *The Telegraph* as saying.

"Gary Lineker appears to have shared content about the Jewish state which echoes Nazi propaganda. This is utterly grim. The BBC's director general, Tim Davie, has a simple question to answer: does he tolerate the BBC's flagship presenters sharing content that has historically been used as an antisemitic slur?" the former director of BBC television, Danny Cohen, told *Telegraph Sport*.

"For too long, Gary Lineker has been flagrantly abusing his position as the best-paid presenter at the BBC to promote his deeply biased views. Now he has gone too far, sharing material that, whether he knows it or not, is redolent of the vilest anti-Jewish racism. He cannot be allowed to stay in position, let alone be the face of World Cup coverage. The BBC must act now," former Labour MP Lord Ian Austin told *Telegraph Sport*.

"Gary Lineker has been **sharing increasingly extreme content as his fixation has grown**, and it was apparent that it was only a matter of time before he crossed the line," Alex Hearn, co-director of Labour Against Anti-Semitism, was quoted by *The Telegraph* as saying.

"Sharing content that uses a rat to demonise the very idea of a Jewish nation-state draws directly from Nazi propaganda. It is unfathomable that this is apparently 'hateful conduct' on X but acceptable conduct for the BBC."

“Lineker made ill-judged comparisons with Germany in the 1930s to further his political point of view, but now he is sharing ideas about Jews popularised in 1930s Germany. When will enough disrepute be enough for the BBC? It’s time for Lineker to go,” he added.

Simon Myerson KC, chair of the Leeds Jewish Representative Council, questioned whether Lineker would "have the guts to explain this to [freed Gaza hostage] [Emily Damari](#)."

Who is Gary Lineker and what controversial statements has he made in the past?

Lineker has fronted the coverage for back-to-back World Cups, European Championships, and BBC Sports Personality of the Year shows. He has been the BBC’s highest-paid on-air talent for seven consecutive years. Lineker is set to leave the BBC’s flagship soccer program, *Match of the Day*, when the British soccer season concludes in the next few weeks. He earned £1.35 million in BBC pay last year.

The post comes shortly after Lineker, who is also the former England soccer captain, defended his right to express his opinions on issues such as Gaza in an interview with the BBC’s Amol Rajan.

During the interview, Lineker said: "I know where I stand on this. I’m sorry. It’s more important than the BBC. What’s going on there is the mass murder of thousands of children [and] is probably something that we should have a little opinion on."

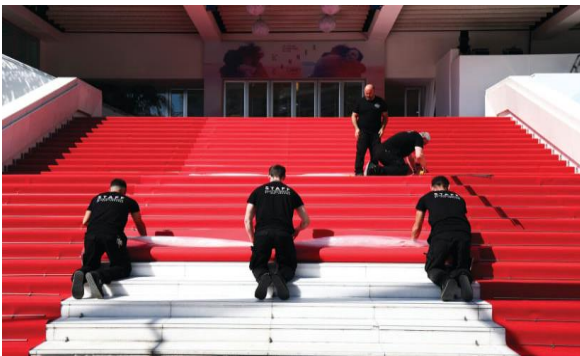
Lineker has also previously removed social media content that caused outrage among the British Jewish community.

In January 2024, he removed a post on X calling for Israel to be banned from international football. He had retweeted a pro-Palestinian call for Israel to be banned due to "grave violations of international law," but reportedly misunderstood the message and removed the post following a backlash from MPs who were angered by his “ill-informed” and “inappropriate” use of social media.

He also compared the then-Conservative government to acting in a way that was "not dissimilar to that used by Germany in the '30s." His suspension following this event caused a mass walkout from BBC Sport in protest, demanding he be reinstated. <https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/antisemitism/article-853862>

Richard Gere, Susan Sarandon among celebrities targeting Israel ahead of Cannes in letter
The letter makes no mention of October 7, 2023, that began the war, nor the Palestinian activists who were killed while standing up to Hamas.

By [HANNAH BROWN](#) MAY 14, 2025 03:37



WORKERS INSTALL the red carpet before the opening ceremony of the 78th Cannes Film Festival yesterday. (photo credit: Sarah Meyssonier/Reuters)

A letter signed by about 380 entertainment figures, including Richard Gere, Susan Sarandon, and Javier Bardem, criticizing the Cannes Film Festival for not releasing a statement condemning Israel for its war in Gaza against Hamas, was published on Monday, the day before the opening of the festival.

The letter, which appeared on the website of France’s Libération newspaper on Monday evening, said that “the horror of Gaza must not be silenced.”

The letter was dedicated to the memory of Gaza photojournalist/artist Fatima Hassouna, who was killed in an Israeli airstrike in Gaza in April, along with 10 of her relatives, including her pregnant sister. Her death came just after it was announced that a film about her life by Sepideh Farsi called *Put Your Soul On Your Hand And Walk* had been selected for the ACID section of the film festival.



The letter went on to say, “Since the terrible massacres of 7 October 2023, no foreign journalist has been authorized to enter the Gaza Strip. The Israeli army is targeting civilians. More than 200 journalists have been deliberately killed. Writers, filmmakers and artists are being brutally murdered.”

Israeli director Yuval Abraham (l) and Palestinian director Basel Adra speak on stage after having received the documentary award for "No Other Land" during the 74th Berlinale International Film Festival, Feb. 24, 2024 in Berlin. (credit: JOHN MACDOUGALL/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES/JTA)

The letter also criticized the American Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences for not being supportive enough of Hamdan Ballal, one of the directors of the Oscar-winning documentary about [West Bank villages](#), No Other Land, who was attacked by settlers and arrested by the IDF. He has since been released.

The **letter went on to say: “As artists and cultural players, we cannot remain silent while genocide is taking place in Gaza and this unspeakable news is hitting our communities hard**. What is the point of our professions if not to draw lessons from history, to make films that are committed, if we are not present to protect oppressed voices? Why this silence?”

Other signatories included Nadav Lapid, an Israeli director whose latest film, Yes!, is included in the Directors’ Fortnight section of Cannes this year, as well as Mark Ruffalo, Ruben Ostlund (who was the guest of honor at the Jerusalem Film Festival in 2022), Pedro Almodovar, Costa-Gavras, and Julie Delpy.

What the letter does not mention

The letter makes no mention of Hamas’s massacre in Israel on [October 7, 2023](#), that began the war, in which 1,200 people were killed and about 250 were kidnapped, 58 of whom are still being held in Gaza.

It also does not mention the brave Palestinian activists who have lost their lives standing up against Hamas for endangering Palestinian civilians by hiding among them and refusing to let civilians take cover in Gaza’s tunnel network, which is 500 km. long and could provide safety for hundreds of thousands. It also does not call for the release of the hostages still held by Hamas in Gaza.

Several of the signatories have made significant visits to Israel in the past and might have been expected to understand Hamas’s role in the conflict. Gere, who has visited Israel many times, and acted in films directed by three Israeli directors, was a guest of the Sderot Film Festival in 2004, a day after the city was hit by a missile barrage from Gaza. He accepted a gift from Sderot’s mayor of a piece of shrapnel from a missile at his master class there.

Sepideh Farsi, who is [Iranian](#) and has been to Israel a number of times, presented her movie about the suppression of pro-democracy protests in Iran, Red Rose, at the Haifa International Film Festival in 2014, just months after a previous war between Israel and Hamas.

In an interview with *The Jerusalem Post*, she said that she had hesitated to come to Israel then, but that the festival’s then-director, Phina Blayer, had convinced her to come.

At the festival, Farsi said, “I am standing before you as an Iranian, and also as a world citizen, to say that this absurd and unfair war could have been avoided... The path toward a mutual understanding, between Iran and Israel... between Israel and Palestine, are long but inevitable ones. It needs patience, and it needs courageous people who don’t give up on their ideals.” <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/culture/article-853823>

Belgium’s Jewish community on edge after police raids on illegal circumcisions

Police in Antwerp looking for rabbis conducting the religious rite without medical license; Jewish group says raids part of larger campaign of intimidation against Jews in Belgium

By [Zev Stub](#) Today, 6:52 pm



Illustrative photo of a ritual circumcision. (Yonatan Sindel/Flash90)

Belgium police conducted a series of raids on Wednesday in Jewish homes in Antwerp looking for people illegally conducting ritual Jewish circumcisions, local officials said.

Police conducted raids on three locations in Antwerp’s Jewish Quarter and nearby Green Quarter seeking knives and other equipment used in circumcisions, according to local reports. No one was arrested.

Police are concerned that the brit milah ritual is being performed on Jewish baby boys by

unlicensed mohels (people who perform circumcision) instead of professional doctors. The ritual is **commonly done in a synagogue**, not a medical institution, by people who may not have undergone receive comprehensive medical training.

“The **problem is that there is no clear law regarding circumcision at the moment,**” Belgian MP **Michael Freilich, the country’s only Orthodox Jewish lawmaker, told** The Times of Israel.

While there are no laws specifically regulating Jewish ritual circumcision, Belgium has laws mandating that all medical procedures must be performed by a licensed doctor.

Freilich, who works with the European Union on Jewish matters in his position as the European Jewish Association's diplomatic envoy for issues of antisemitism and Holocaust remembrance, is working on developing EU certification for mohels, but that is likely years away, he noted.

Until then, the situation is precarious for Jews looking to perform the biblically prescribed religious ritual with a traditional mohel.

"This is a very sad day. On one hand, Jews must obviously respect the laws of their countries," Freilich said. "On the other hand, there has been a policy until now of the government turning a blind eye to this issue. The problem is not that brit milah is not allowed; it's that there needs to be a clearer law about who can perform the procedure. We need to work together to find a solution."

European **Jewish Association chairman Rabbi Menachem Margolin condemned the raids**, calling them part of a larger campaign of intimidation against Jewish religious figures in Belgium.

"Following the ban on ritual slaughter [in a 2019 law that requires that animals be stunned before they can be slaughtered for food], the harassment of mohels represents a further red line and a clear warning sign to Belgian Jews and the Belgian government," Margolin said. "Any restriction on circumcision in Belgium would send a clear message to Belgian Jews that they are not welcome in the country."



Belgian MP Michael Freilich speaking to an audience in a synagogue in Belgium. (Courtesy)

Cutting under sharp scrutiny

Prosecutors in Antwerp, where most of Belgium's approximately 30,000 Jews live, have been investigating illegal circumcisions since a renegade member of the Jewish community filed a series of complaints.

In November 2023, Rabbi Moshe Aryeh Friedman, an anti-Zionist activist from New York living in Antwerp, complained to police that six mohels were endangering children by using a controversial custom known as [metzitzah](#)

[b'peh](#) in the circumcision process.

The practice involves mohels using their lips to suck blood from the penises of babies on whom they'd performed the Jewish ritual.

The controversial custom is thought to have caused the death of at least one child in New York in 2012 from herpes. Another outbreak among infants of Haredi families in New York occurred in 2017 and was attributed to *metzitzah b'peh*.

Then, in September 2024, Friedman informed police that circumcisions were being performed without legal approvals, and a local television station reported on the issue, stoking local concern.

"The only reason this is happening now is because of Friedman," Freilich said. "That doesn't mean it would never have happened, but he made it go much faster."

Uncensored circumcisions are under increased scrutiny in Europe. Last summer, authorities in Ireland [arrested](#) a rabbi from London for allegedly performing circumcision without required medical credentials in what may be the first case in modern Europe of a rabbi arrested in connection with a brit milah.

Circumcision is relatively uncommon among the general population of Europe, with only 10-20% of males having gone under the knife, compared to [over 70%](#) in the United States.

Muslims generally undergo circumcision at a hospital, not in a religious ceremony, so the legislation is primarily a Jewish issue.

Most countries do not have any specific legislation regarding circumcision, allowing the Jewish ritual to continue as a religious freedom without intervening, Freilich explained. Only Germany has a law specifically allowing non-medical practitioners to conduct the brit milah under appropriate medical and hygienic conditions.

Freilich hopes to work with other European governments to adopt similar legislation allowing circumcision. He is also trying to encourage the EU to recognize certified mohels, he said.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/belgiums-jewish-community-on-edge-after-police-raids-on-illegal-circumcisions/>

Moscow names topics for Istanbul talks with Kiev

Ukraine's inability to negotiate, however, makes it hard to predict if the meeting will yield results, Russia's deputy FM has said



13 May, 2025 21:15

FILE PHOTO. Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov. © Sputnik / Kristina Kormilitsyna

Moscow wants to discuss a “sustainable settlement” with Kiev during possible upcoming talks in Istanbul, including the recognition of formerly Ukrainian territories as an integral part of Russia, Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov has said.

The senior diplomat spoke with reporters about the proposed meeting on Tuesday, explaining that the issues Moscow would bring up are effectively “the same” it has in the past and largely concern the goals of Russia’s special military operation against Ukraine.

“They have been on the agenda all the time – how to ensure a reliable, sustainable settlement of the situation, first of all, by addressing the very roots of this conflict, resolving issues related to the denazification of the Kiev regime, ensuring recognition of the realities that have developed recently, including the entry of new territories into Russia,” Ryabkov stated.

The deputy minister was apparently referring to Kherson and Zaporozhye regions, as well as Donetsk and Lugansk People’s Republics, which were incorporated into Russia in late 2022 following a string of referendums. In the aftermath of the 2014 Maidan coup in Kiev, Crimea also opted to break away from Ukraine, joining Russia via a referendum shortly after.

The senior diplomat refrained from making any prognosis on the potential outcome of the proposed talks, but stressed that Moscow is committed to negotiating “seriously and responsibly.”

“It is premature to make any predictions. The question should be addressed to the sponsors of the Kiev regime and Kiev itself. Are they ready to negotiate? We have a strong impression that with the current approach, these figures can be characterized by their inability to negotiate,” Ryabkov said.

Russian President Vladimir Putin offered to resume direct negotiations on Sunday. He insisted that the settlement process must start with talks, and that negotiations could ultimately lead to “some kind of new truce and a new ceasefire.”

The offer has received a mixed reaction from Kiev and its backers, who continued to say that negotiations must be preceded by at least a 30-day truce. The proposal, however, was backed by US President Donald Trump, who urged Kiev to “immediately” accept it. Following Trump’s statements, Ukraine shifted its position, and leader Vladimir Zelensky announced his readiness to meet with the Russian president “personally.”

On Tuesday, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov refused to comment on the prospect of Putin’s personal participation, confirming only that a Russian delegation will be “waiting” for the Ukrainian side in Istanbul on Thursday. Peskov did not disclose who exactly would represent Russia at the meeting, since he said he had not been authorized to say. <https://www.rt.com/russia/617484-istanbul-talks-topics-revealed/>

Ukrainians know they won’t get territory back – Macron

Kiev has no capacity to reclaim the regions that became part of Russia since 2014, the French president said

14 May, 2025 01:22



French President Emmanuel Macron gestures to the media as he waits to welcome new German Chancellor Friedrich Merz at the Elysee Palace on May 7, 2025 in Paris. © Tom Nicholson / Getty Images

The Ukrainians are well aware that they do not have the means to retake all the territory held by Russia, French President Emmanuel Macron has said.

“The war must end, and Ukraine must be in the best possible position to enter into negotiations ... that will make it possible to address territorial issues,” Macron told TF1 on Tuesday. “Even

Ukrainians themselves have the lucidity to acknowledge ... **that they will not have the capacity to reclaim everything that has been taken [by Russia] since 2014.**"

"We can't leave Ukraine on its own," the French president added. "Since it will not be joining NATO, we are proposing reassurance forces. In other words, the allies who are willing ... will deploy forces far from the front line, in key locations, to conduct joint operations and demonstrate our solidarity."

France and the UK have proposed sending peacekeepers to Ukraine following a ceasefire but have provided few details. Russia has warned that any foreign troops stationed in Ukraine without its permission – especially those from NATO countries – would be treated as enemy targets.

Crimea, populated predominantly by ethnic Russians, voted to secede from Ukraine and join Russia shortly after the 2014 Western-backed coup in Kiev. The largely Russian-speaking Donbass republics of Donetsk and Lugansk, along with the regions of Kherson and Zaporozhye, did the same after holding referendums in September 2022.

Ukraine has rejected Russia's demand to renounce its claims to the lost territories. Ukrainian leader Vladimir Zelensky said in April, however, that Kiev *"did not have enough weapons"* to retake Crimea by force.

US President Donald Trump told Time magazine last month that *"Crimea will stay with Russia,"* claiming that Zelensky understood this as well. Trump's peace plan reportedly envisions freezing the conflict along the current front line and recognizing Russian sovereignty over the peninsula. The president has repeatedly stressed that he wants to end the bloodshed as soon as possible.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov said that Moscow seeks to discuss a *"sustainable settlement"* with Kiev during potential talks in Istanbul on May 15. <https://www.rt.com/news/617488-macron-ukraine-lost-territories/>

Kiev wants to trade civilians for neo-Nazis – Russian spy agency

Dozens of Kursk Region residents were captured by Ukrainian forces during a cross-border incursion last year

13 May, 2025 19:18



Russia's Kursk Region, March 2025 © Sputnik / Stanislav Krasilnikov

Ukraine is stalling the return of civilians captured in Russia's Kursk Region to use them as bargaining chips in a potential swap for fighters from the notorious neo-Nazi Azov unit, the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) has said.

Dozens of captured civilians remain in Kiev's custody following its incursion into Russian territory last August.

Ukrainian forces captured several towns and villages before being pushed back. On April 26, Russian President Vladimir Putin announced the full liberation of Kursk Region, saying Ukraine had suffered heavy losses.

In a statement issued on Tuesday, the SVR cited intelligence suggesting that Kiev plans to delay the civilians' return "for as long as possible." People close to Ukraine's Vladimir Zelensky, it added, see them as a "valuable asset" that could be exchanged for "something more substantial from Moscow than wounded and unfit-for-combat prisoners of war."

According to the agency, **Kiev hopes to leverage the detainees in talks to secure the release of fighters from the Azov brigade – a nationalist unit designated a terrorist organization in Russia – who have been convicted of serious crimes.**

Originally formed as a volunteer unit of radical nationalists, Azov rose to prominence following the 2014 Western-backed coup in Kiev, reportedly becoming a central part of an international white supremacist network. The Ukrainian government incorporated it into the National Guard the same year.

As of March, more than 140 Azov members had been convicted by Russian courts, according to Investigative Committee head Aleksandr Bastrykin.

The SVR said Kiev is *"cynically"* exploiting the fact that Russia has no similar *"trump card"* in the form of captured Ukrainian civilians and claims this increases its chances of *"forcing the Kremlin to play by their rules and agree to exchange the Kursk civilians for Azov fighters."*

In March, Ukraine released more than 30 civilians, mostly elderly, along with four children. Russia's human rights commissioner, Tatyana Moskalkova, said at the time that Moscow would continue pressing for the return of all the remaining detainees.

Last October, she reported receiving over a thousand inquiries from families searching for missing civilians.

The Russian Investigative Committee has reported incidents of looting, arson, and shootings of civilians by Ukrainian troops during the incursion. <https://www.rt.com/russia/617479-ukraine-captured-russian-civilians/>

OP ED

U.S. Sent Billions in Famine Relief to Yemen. The Population Rose 30%

Tue, 13 May 2025 9:19 AM PST by Daniel Greenfield



In May 2024, the Biden administration announced that it was providing \$220 million in aid to Yemen which the United States had been at war with since the start of that year.

Even while the US Navy was engaged in what the Associated Press would describe next month as the “most intense combat since World War II” with Yemen's Houthi Jihadists, the U.S. Mission to Yemen boasted of having provided “nearly \$5.9 billion” in aid beginning with the Obama administration, of being “the largest donor of humanitarian assistance” and urged that “other donors must join us in stepping up” to fund an Iranian-backed terror group at war with us.

A terror group whose motto, like its Iranian patrons, is “Death to America.”

One arm of the United States government, the Pentagon, was fighting the Houthis, while another arm, the State Department and USAID, were funding them. While Navy personnel on board US Navy vessels had seconds to prepare and counter Houthi strikes, State Department and USAID personnel worked to keep the Houthi's Hodeidah port open so more “aid” could pass through it. The US Navy was not allowed to strike Hodeidah even though it was the Houthi lifeline for the weapons that the Houthis were using to attack American and other vessels.

The Biden administration had ended President Trump's support for Saudi action against the Houthis and lavished a fortune on the terrorist areas because terrorist supporters and international groups had falsely claimed that Yemen was suffering from a deadly famine.

Before Islamic terrorist supporters, their leftist allies and international aid groups faked a famine in Gaza to save Hamas, #YemenFamine was trending on social media along with photos of wounded and starving children. Much as in Gaza, there was no famine. Rather the Houthis were seizing international aid which they then resold to create food shortages. The more aid came in, the more the Houthis seized. The fake famine was used to mount an international pressure campaign to end the attacks on the Houthis and send billions of dollars in relief to Yemen.

Massive shipments of urea, a fertilizer also used in explosives, were allowed into Yemen to help grow crops and stop the mythical famine. Even though urea was proscribed, the shipments were not interfered with in the name of ending the famine that wasn't happening. Along with the urea came ammonium perchlorate which is used in rocket fuel. The rockets being fired at US Navy vessels were fueled by the famine lie. False claims of a famine were a tool of war.

By 2018, over \$4 billion in humanitarian aid had poured into Yemen. The UN's World Food Program, which would later invent and become the loudest voice promoting the Gaza famine hoax, operated 5,000 distribution sites to supposedly aid 10 million people whom it claimed were facing emergency conditions, but could only track 1 in 5 of its food basket allotments.

In 2017, two-thirds of those who were supposed to be receiving food had not gotten anything.

In one Houthi province, the UN sent twice as much food as the people needed, and came away claiming that the majority of the population was still in desperate need of food.

The WFP, and even the AP eventually admitted that the Houthis were taking much of the food. The Houthis created fake lists of starving people who needed food. International aid groups resorted to sending money so that Yemenis could buy the food aid that was being resold.

Even though all of this [was well known](#), the Biden administration kept on sending more aid five years later. The money didn't go to the people: it went to the Houthis at war with America.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken's [first order of business](#) was taking the Houthis off the list of foreign terrorist organizations, making it legal to fund them, despite “their reprehensible conduct, including attacks against civilians and the kidnapping of American citizens” because of “the humanitarian consequences” that

would take place in Yemen. Even as the Houthis went to war against America, “humanitarian aid” provisions protected the delivery of fuel, and the port and airport operations that allowed the Houthis to get more money and weapons.

Earlier this year, the UN demanded \$2.47 billion for its 2025 Yemen Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan. In February, the Houthis killed a WFP worker (an event that got far less publicity than the deaths of aid workers in Gaza), but in April, the WFP expressed outrage that the United States was finally, at least temporarily, pausing aid and would not be allocating over \$100 million in funds to the enemy region at war with the United States.

After 9 years of non-stop famine (and billions in spending), 17 million people are facing acute hunger in Yemen. That’s up from 15.9 million people in 2019.

Since the famine began, Yemen’s population shot up from 30 million to 39 million.

Having a population increase by 10 million or 30% during a famine is unprecedented. What accounts for this Yemeni miracle? Miraculously, Yemen’s population rose sharply as an unprecedented wave of foreign aid poured into this country. It’s unknown how many of these miracle births were real or fake names to collect yet more humanitarian aid for the hungry.

After the latest round of airstrikes, a Yemeni man interviewed on camera, chanted, “Death to America” and bragged that “our country is fortified with the skulls of American demons.”

More accurately, it’s fortified with \$5.9 billion in American taxpayer money.

Since Yemen’s population seem to have figured out how to increase by a third during a famine affecting half their population, they clearly don’t need any more help from us, which should be used to help actual starvation victims in African countries that can’t just pump oil from the ground. Not only should we stop sending aid to Yemen, we should block all further aid.

If we don’t want to be in a perpetual war over passage through the Red Sea or depend on the goodwill of a terrorist group for access to it, we should cut off the money to the terrorists.

And while Iran has supplied the Houthis with weapons and money, in Yemen, much as in Afghanistan, Iraq and Gaza, much of the money going to the terrorists comes from us.

Daniel Greenfield is a Shillman Journalism Fellow at the David Horowitz Freedom Center. This article previously appeared at the Center's Front Page Magazine.

<https://bkdvk-zgpvh.campaign-view.com/ua/viewinbrowser>