

ISRAEL WEEKLY WAR SUMMARY

Week #120 January 18 - January 24, 2026

This is a product of the IDSF Habithonistim Research Department, distributed by the David Institute for Security Policy in coordination with IDSF USA



Account of the main events in the Israel-Hamas war and hostilities by the Iranian Axis



Photo Cover: President Trump ratifies Board of Peace

Source: The White House

Jared Kushner, at the Davos World Economic Summit, Presented a four-phase reconstruction plan for Gaza, and stated that a new governing authority would oversee Hamas' disarmament, emphasizing that disarmament is essential for reconstruction, with monitoring planned over the first 100 days. However, no threats or enforcement mechanisms were mentioned, creating the impression of de facto acceptance of Hamas' continued existence.



SECURITY BRIEFING WEEK 120



0

Total Israeli casualties This Week

0

Total Civilians killed this week

0

Total IDF Casualties this week



43,000

The estimated death toll of Iranian protesters during the current uprising, a significant increase compared to the 20,000 deaths initially reported.



27%

The year-over-year increase in "nationalistic crime" attacks by extremist Israeli Jews in Judea and Samaria for 2025 (rising to 867 total incidents).



17

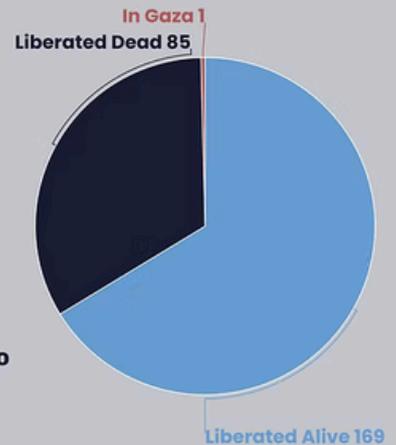
At Davos, 35 world leaders committed, and 17 signed onto to the "Board of Peace" for Gaza's reconstruction, aiming for demilitarization despite lacking enforcement mechanisms.



6%

The reported water level of reservoirs around Tehran (with emergency reserves at just 23%), signaling a severe domestic crisis for the Iranian regime.

HOSTAGES IN GAZA: 1





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- One assessment suggests that reconstruction on the Israeli side of the Yellow Line could allow Gazans, with Hamas' approval, to relocate into rebuilt zones. This could later enable the IDF to destroy remaining Hamas military capabilities without civilians being used as human shields.
- The United States is engaging Hamas indirectly via three mediators regarding phased disarmament. The proposal includes initial surrender of heavy weapons, delivery of complete tunnel maps, followed by gradual handover of light weapons. In return, militants could receive amnesty, safe exile, or integration into new security bodies, while Hamas would retain the option to function as a political and administrative actor within the new government.
- Egypt views preservation of the Palestinian issue as a strategic asset, allowing continued pressure on Israel internationally and within the Arab world. Consequently, Cairo opposes any solution framed as resolving the "Palestinian refugee problem." Additionally, President Sisi appears to be appealing to right-wing European sentiment, linking Islamization and illegal migration to Gaza in order to shift blame onto Israel should Gazans be allowed to leave.
- Under the current framework, Israel will operate a remote surveillance system at the Rafah crossing and will be responsible for granting advance approval for travelers entering and exiting the Gaza Strip. Israel will also retain the authority to scan computers and other electronic devices passing through the crossing. While the IDF will not maintain a physical presence at the crossing itself, Israeli forces will be deployed nearby and will operate an independent checkpoint designed to prevent weapons smuggling.

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- The crossing will be formally operated by officers from the European Union Border Assistance Mission, established in 2005 to monitor Rafah, alongside members of the Palestinian Authority's intelligence service, described as unarmed and not fully informed. This structure reflects an attempt to balance Israeli security control with international and Palestinian administrative involvement.
- According to a Reuters report, several European countries that had sent representatives to the base in Kiryat Gat do not plan to return them. These representatives returned to their home countries during the New Year's holiday, and additional countries are also planning to suspend their activities at the base. The stated reasons include uncertainty regarding the future of the mission, alleged Israeli violations of the ceasefire, and the lack of progress in Gaza's reconstruction. Another contributing factor is the growing fragmentation within NATO, particularly surrounding disputes over Greenland and Ukraine, which is affecting alliance cohesion and willingness to sustain overseas commitments.
- In Turkey, Hamas political bureau chairman Khalil al-Hayya met with Turkish intelligence chief Ibrahim Kalin to coordinate progress toward Phase II of negotiations and discuss Hamas' political and organizational survival. At the same time, reporting indicates that Israel continues to train local militias and provides them with air cover or intelligence assistance during operations conducted behind the Yellow Line.

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- Task Force 7 operating under Gaza Division control has been active in the southern Gaza Strip. Over the past week, its forces eliminated six militants who emerged from underground tunnel shafts. Subsequent searches uncovered explosive devices and additional weapons. In separate operations, the force located a five-barrel rocket launcher along with several other firearms. Together with Yahalom engineering units, they destroyed a 4-kilometer-long tunnel, the result of a mapping and intelligence effort that lasted more than a year. Importantly, Israeli assessments still estimate the existence of hundreds of kilometers of undiscovered tunnels, underscoring the scale of Hamas' remaining underground infrastructure.
- It was revealed for the first time that the IDF has begun deep excavation works—several meters underground—along two sections in northern and southern Gaza, each stretching 1.5 kilometers. These are designed as ground obstacles against vehicles and pedestrian infiltration, adding a physical barrier to the existing security architecture.
- IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir sent a sharp warning letter last week to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other senior officials, cautioning that the current shortage of soldiers could seriously harm military readiness in the very near future. The letter highlights growing concern within the senior military leadership that manpower constraints may directly impact operational capability and preparedness amid ongoing and potential future escalations.

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- According to data recorded by the Israel Defense Forces and the Shin Bet, the number of attacks by extremist Israeli Jews against Palestinians and Israeli security forces in Judea and Samaria increased by 27% in 2025 compared to the previous year. In total, 867 incidents of “nationalistic crime” were recorded, up from 682 incidents the year before, indicating a significant deterioration in internal security conditions. The number of severe incidents, classified by Israeli security bodies as terrorism, rose by more than 50%. Security assessments estimate that approximately 300 Jewish extremists are actively involved in violent attacks, with around 70 considered “hardcore” extremists responsible for the most serious incidents. These individuals are believed to reside in 42 illegal outposts across Judea and Samaria.
- The four-day ceasefire between the Syrian Army and the SDF expired, but under American and Turkish pressure it was extended by 15 additional days. The extension is intended to allow the transfer of 7,000 Islamic State prisoners to Iraqi prisons. Hundreds have already escaped or been released, alongside tens of thousands of family members from detention camps. In several locations, including Raqqa, ISIS flags were raised, and Islamic texts were distributed to those freed.
- According to reports in an Iranian opposition newspaper, Supreme Leader Khamenei has relocated to a fortified underground bunker, fearing American or Israeli assassination. Senior Iranian officials continue to threaten that any attack on Iran would trigger indiscriminate strikes against all American bases in the region.

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- CENTCOM commander Brad Cooper visited Israel as the guest of Chief of Staff Eyal Zamir to prepare for regional escalation. The force buildup continues, with additional American and British aircraft deploying to bases in Jordan and Qatar, alongside long-range refueling aircraft and ammunition shipments. It has been assessed as the largest regional military reinforcement since the eve of “Operation Rising Lion.
- New figures regarding the Iranian protests, indicated that the Iranian regime massacred thousands of Iranians during the night of January 8–9. The International Center for Human Rights (ICHR) claims that altogether, 43,000 Iranians have been killed and another 350,000 have been wounded. The regime admits to at least 3,000 deaths among its own security forces. The HARAN organization has verified 5,459 fatalities, is reviewing 17,031 additional names, and reports over 40,000 arrests. According to Time magazine, the regime itself acknowledges more than 30,000 deaths among the Iranian public. These figures point to the immense scale of the organized internal uprising and the existential threat perceived by the regime.
- It was also reported that water levels in reservoirs around Tehran have fallen to just 6%, while an emergency reservoir connected to the capital last summer has dropped to 23%. This situation could ignite further protests in the near term.