

Ynet-News, January 27, 2023 – Friday

1.27.23 – Fr- - - News Placed in January 27 spot – Friday  
At least 7 Israelis killed, 10 wounded in Jerusalem synagogue drive-by shooting

1.26.23 – Th- - - News Placed in January 26 spot – Thursday  
IDF responding to Gaza rockets, attack Hamas underground production facility

1.25.23 – We- - - News Placed in January 25 spot – Wednesday  
Despite Netanyahu promises, state-funded Shabbat events might be scrapped

1.23.23 – Mo- - - News Placed in January 24 spot – Tuesday  
US-Israel ties souring as American youth consider Israel an illegitimate state

1.23.23 – Mo- - - News Placed in January 23 spot – Monday  
US & Israel military drills surge large battle-ready forces into the Middle East

1.22.23 – Su- - - News – Sunday  
Anti-government companies announcing strike on Tuesday several hours

1.22.23 – Su- - - News Placed in January 22 spot – Sunday  
Deri dismissed from Cabinet following Court ruling; will remain an influence

1.22.23 – Su- - - News – Sunday  
Knesset Lawyers refuse to overhaul Court appointments & ability to change laws

1.21.23 – Sa- - - News Placed in January 21 spot – Saturday  
Lapid & Gantz stir rallies against reform to appoint judges & overriding Court

1.19.23 – Th- - - News Placed in January 19 spot – Thursday  
620 lawyers issued a letter to Herzog to warn against judicial reforms

1.19.23 – Th- - - News – Thursday  
Israel and Palestinians clash at UN meeting as extremists fuel the fire

1.27.23  
At least 7 Israelis killed, 10 wounded in Jerusalem synagogue drive-by shooting

1.27.23  
At least 7 Israelis killed, 10 wounded in synagogue attack in Jerusalem

Suspected terrorist, 21-year-old resident of east Jerusalem, shot dead; Palestinians in West Bank and Gaza celebrate attack with fireworks; terror attack is Israel's deadliest since 2011

Ynet|Updated:13:17

At least seven Israelis were killed and 10 others were wounded in a shooting attack near a synagogue in Jerusalem, the Magen David Adom medical emergency services reported Friday. The terror attack is Israel's deadliest since 2011.

The assailant was shot dead, and the wounded were taken to Hadassah Mount Scopus Hospital. Among the dead is a father and his teenage son.

Israel's police said the attack happened at the Neve Ya'akov neighborhood in east Jerusalem.

The police said the shooter was driving a car and opened fire on worshippers outside a local synagogue that lasted "for several minutes." The police said the attacker was a 21-year-old resident of the east Jerusalem neighborhood of At-Tur.

Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza celebrated the deadly attack, reportedly firing celebratory weapon rounds in the air, lighting fireworks and handing out sweets.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said he was set to hold an emergency meeting in the wake of the attack. Defense Minister Yoav Galant said he was returning to Israel from an official visit following the deadly shooting.

Galant said he "instructed the security system to be ready for more possible developments, and to bolster the forces in the Jerusalem area and around the West Bank settlements." Netanyahu, meanwhile, toured the scene of the attack, as did National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, who left just before the prime minister's arrival.

MDA paramedic Fadi Dekidek, who was among the first to arrive at the scene of the attack, said: "We saw a woman and four men lying on the side of road. They were suffering from gunshot wounds and had no signs of life. We had to pronounce their deaths on the spot. Three more wounded, including a boy and a 70-year-old woman, were evacuated in critical condition."

The United States condemned the terrorist attack, U.S. State Department deputy spokesperson Vedant Patel said. Patel told reporters at a news briefing that U.S. officials were in touch with their Israeli counterparts and that he did not expect changes to Secretary of State Antony Blinken's visit to Israel next week.

Britain's foreign secretary, James Cleverly, also condemned the attack. "To attack worshippers at a synagogue on Holocaust Memorial Day, and during Shabbat, is horrific. We stand with our Israeli friends," he said in a statement on Twitter.

The killings took place a day after Israeli troops killed nine Palestinians in Jenin, in the deadliest West Bank raid in years.

The spokesman for the Hamas terror group called the Jerusalem attack a "heroic act of revenge for the massacre in Jenin."

A senior Islamic Jihad official in the Gaza Strip praised the attack: "The shooting is a sign that the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are united against the Israeli enemy."

First published: 20:46, 01.27.23

1.26.23

IDF responding to Gaza rockets, attack Hamas underground production facility

1.26.23

Israel strikes Gazan targets in response to rockets

IDF Spokesperson's Unit says aircrafts attacked an underground facility for the production of rockets, belonging to the Hamas terror group

i24NEWS|Yesterday | 23:15

The Israel Defense Forces launched an attack on the Gaza Strip early Friday, responding to two rockets fired from the Palestinian enclave a few hours earlier.

The military's spokesperson's unit said in a tweet that warplanes had attacked an underground facility for the production of rockets, belonging to the Hamas terrorist organization. Israel considers Hamas responsible for rockets fired from Gaza.

Shortly after the airstrike, more sirens blared in southern Israeli communities. Israel's military said that three rockets were launched. One was intercepted by Israel's Iron Dome missile defense system, another fell in an open field, and the last fell short of crossing over Israeli territory.

Tensions in the northern West Bank boiled over earlier on Thursday, as Israeli forces operating in Jenin came under fire and 10 Palestinians were killed in the ensuing gunfight. This was during operations to thwart a terrorist attack, part of ongoing actions by Israel in the area against Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

Israel said it was investigating reports of civilians hit. The Palestinian Authority said it is suspending security coordination with Israel after what it called a "massacre."

The Biden administration called to "end the cycle of violence that has claimed the lives of too many innocent people," State Department spokesman Ned Price said.

1.25.23

Despite Netanyahu promises, state-funded Shabbat events might be scrapped

1.25.23

Despite Netanyahu promises, state-funded cultural Shabbat events might be scrapped

After PM stepped in to subdue public outcry about suspending public funds for 'Israeli Shabbat' initiative, body overseeing heritage sites says project in limbo as ministries reshuffle authority

Kobi Nachshoni | Yesterday | 10:52

Despite Prime Minister Netanyahu's commitment to keeping the "Israeli Shabbat" cultural initiative running on state funding, the Council for Conservation of Heritage Sites in Israel said on Wednesday that it will have to suspend the project due to lack of funds.

Last week, Culture Minister Miki Zohar of Netanyahu's conservative Likud party announced his intention to suspend funding for the project — which was launched last year by the previous government — supposedly to avoid offending the Shabbat-observing population, setting off a firestorm that prompted Netanyahu to step in and

Following a private conversation with Zohar, Netanyahu issued a statement reiterating that the activities, encouraging Israelis to explore heritage sites on weekends, will not see their funding cut.

However, the Council for Conservation of Heritage Sites in Israel is struggling to cough up the funding necessary to keep historical sites open on the weekends without charge, meaning visitors will have to pay admission to dozens of sites for the next two years. The council said that state funding will run up until the end of January, a mere week away. While the announcement suggested suspension came due to "reorganization", Ynet has learned that the reason lies with the council's difficulties in retaining funding for 2023, presumably to avoid offending the Shabbat-observing segment of the population.

In an interview in Ynet studio on Tuesday, Culture Minister Zohar said: "I'm not interested in initiating the activity, but I have no issue with it being funded by the ministry. The activity will not be suspended. Those who enjoy the initiative will continue to do so. I just don't want to be the one initiating it."

On February 1, the initiative and its funding will be transferred from the Culture Ministry to the Ministry of Jerusalem and Heritage. The presiding minister Amihai Eliyahu of the ultranationalist Otzma Yehudit party has yet to make clear his position on the issue, suspending the project in limbo until its budget is restored.

For the foreseeable future, sites like the Tower of David Museum in Jerusalem, the Slick in Nahalal tourist attraction and many others will all stipulate entrance with upfront payment.

The Ministry of Culture and Sports said in a statement: "In accordance with coalition agreements between Likud and Otzma Yehudit, preservation of all heritage sites will be under the authority of the Ministry of Jerusalem and Heritage. Thus, it will no longer be our responsibility."

The office of Minister Amihai Eliyahu said that responsibility for the heritage sites has not been transferred yet, therefore they have no comment on the issue at this time.

1.23.23

## US-Israel ties souring as American youth consider Israel an illegitimate state

1.23.23

U.S.-Israel ties souring worse threat than Iran, report says  
INSS report presented to President Herzog says growing political polarization and antisemitism in the U.S. could put a strain on Jerusalem's relations with Biden administration  
Itamar Eichner|14:39

A report published on Monday by the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) on major threats to Israel in 2023 said that maintaining strong relations with the U.S. is the most important challenge for Israel in the coming year.

The report also detailed two other major threats to Israel — the Iranian nuclear program, and a possible collapse of the Palestinian Authority leading to a conflagration of tensions throughout the Palestinian territories.

INSS chief Prof. Manuel Trajtenberg and Director-General Tamir Hyman presented the report to President Isaac Herzog at an official event in Jerusalem. The INSS emphasized in the report that the ever-growing polarization in U.S. politics could gnaw at the relations between Washington and Jerusalem, and the research institute considers maintaining those relations a paramount priority in 2023.

According to the report, the progressive political camp in the U.S. is continuing to tighten its grip on American youth, who increasingly consider Israel an illegitimate state and an expression of white supremacy and colonialism. This, alongside increasing antisemitism and racism across the U.S., challenges the amicable relations between the countries. INSS researchers believe that should Israel pursue policies deemed by Washington undemocratic or harmful to the Palestinians, this could put a strain on bilateral ties.

Cooperation with Washington's prime adversaries China and Russia could also shake up the decades-long bonhomie between the two nations, as well as negatively affect U.S. public opinion of the Jewish state.

The INSS report further details that the gravest external threat Israel faces is Iran's nuclear program as Tehran continues galloping toward nuclear capabilities. Researchers believe that sans a multilateral agreement to curb the Islamic Republic's ambitions or military intervention, it may soon turn into a nuclear state while continuing to stretch its tendrils across the region through its proxy militias. The report also added that seeing as the chance of signing a new nuclear deal between Iran and Western powers is low, and with Tehran strengthening military ties with Russia, Israel could benefit from expanding cooperation with the U.S. and European nations alongside friendly Arab countries in the region.

Moreover, Iran's reluctance to sign the deal makes it easier for the West to impose further sanctions against it, led by the U.S. and other partners.

Additionally, researchers believe that Jerusalem should push to declare the nuclear talks with Iran a bust, and for European nations to place further sanctions on Iran seeing as it violated the previously signed agreement.

"In the current era, it becomes clear that the Middle East's future has much to do with future partnerships," Herzog said at the ceremony. "It is also vital to cooperate with our allies against the Iranian threat and its dangerous metastases in the region."

"This must be done not only for Israel but for the entire Middle East," Herzog added. "It should be a high-priority interest in the region."

### 1.23.23

#### US & Israel military drills surge large battle-ready forces into the Middle East

### 1.23.23

U.S., Israel launch week of major military exercises

Washington officials say drills not oriented around any particular adversary, reiterate commitment to Israel remains 'ironclad'

Reuters|10:35

The United States and Israel on Monday launched what one U.S. official described as the allies' most significant joint military exercise to date, involving thousands of forces, a dozen ships and 142 aircraft, including nuclear-capable bombers.

The "Juniper Oak" drills, which will run through Friday, are meant to demonstrate and deepen integration between the U.S. and Israeli militaries, the senior U.S. defense official said, and come at a time of growing tension over Iran's nuclear program.

Although the drills will likely draw interest from Tehran, the U.S. official said there would be no mockups of Iranian targets and that the exercises weren't oriented around any particular adversary.

"I do think that the scale of the exercise is relevant to a whole range of scenarios, and Iran may draw certain inferences from that," the official acknowledged.

"It's really meant mostly to kick the tires on our ability to do things at this scale with the Israelis against a whole range of different threats."

The exercises will include live-fire exercises and involve 6,400 U.S. forces, many of which will be aboard the U.S. aircraft carrier George H.W. Bush strike group. Some 450 troops on the ground in Israel, the official said.

Beyond B-52 bombers, the U.S. aircraft will include F-35s, F-15s, F-16s and F-18s.

Drills will take place over large distances, involving land, sea, air and space, the official said.

The planning for the exercises began only a couple of months ago, before conservative Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu regained top office on Dec. 29.

Israel has opposed U.S. President Joe Biden's attempts to revive the Iran nuclear deal, concerned that it would not stop Tehran's development of a nuclear weapon.

But those negotiating efforts have been set aside for now while Washington pressures Iran to stop providing drones to Russia for use in its war against Ukraine and seeks to stop a crackdown on Iranian demonstrators.

The senior U.S. official said America's commitment to Israel's security was "ironclad." "We have Israeli governments of one flavor or the other. They come and go. But what doesn't change is our ironclad commitment to Israel's security," the official said.

"So this is a sign that we continue to have Israel's back at a time where there's a lot of turbulence and instability across the region."

The Iranian nuclear program remains a concern.

"I think it's fair to say Iran's nuclear program is more advanced now than it's ever been. Their breakout timelines are more compressed. Their knowledge and know-how has gone up," the official said. "So the challenge has gone up."

The official said the drills would show how the United States could effectively surge large numbers of battle-ready forces into the Middle East, even as Washington focuses on Russia's invasion of Ukraine and intensifying competition with China.

"As our adversaries and competitors are sizing up the U.S. military, I suspect they will take note of our ability to do this because, frankly, no other military on Earth could do this," the official said. "Not while they're doing everything else that we're doing around the globe."

1.22.23

Anti-government companies announcing strike on Tuesday several hours

1.22.23

Anti-government protest increases with 130 Israeli companies announcing strike

The joint committee of groups opposed to the reforms put forth by the far-right and religious government says drastic measures must be taken to make clear that assault on the judicial system will not be accepted

Adam Kotev|13:43

Over 130 hi-tech companies and businesses will go on strike on Tuesday to protest the proposed legislation to change the Israeli justice system, the joint committee of organizations opposing the government said on Sunday.

"More than 130 businesses and companies will go on strike that will last for several hours, as a warning to the Israeli government," the joint committee said in a statement.

It also said that additional forms of demonstrations were expected to take place on Thursday, and that further detail will be revealed soon.

A mass demonstration against the government is set for Saturday evening in Tel Aviv after similar protests were held in the past three weeks.

The joint committee published a list of 16 of the most prominent high-tech companies including Wiz, INX, Cheq, Luminescent, and more.

"The dictatorship coup will severely harm civil rights, the Israeli economy, and all aspects of life," the joint committee said. "Therefore, we must take drastic measures. Despite the economic cost, we are taking this first step, in order to make it clear to the Israeli government that the regime change will not fly. The State of Israel will not be a dictatorship because it will not function, not even for a single day, without the central backbone of the Israeli economy and Israeli society."

The legal reforms advanced by Levin and Netanyahu would empower the country's 120-seat Knesset to override Supreme Court rulings with a simple majority of 61 votes. Levin also proposed that politicians play a greater role in the appointment of Supreme Court justices and that ministers appoint their own legal advisers, instead of using independent professionals whose positions on the legality of decisions are binding.

On Saturday, an estimated 110,000 Israelis turned out to two rallies in Tel Aviv, to protest the government's plan. Other demonstrations with the participation of thousands, were held in Haifa, Beer Sheva, Jerusalem, and other locations around the country.

### 1.22.23

Deri dismissed from Cabinet following Court ruling; will remain an influence

### 1.22.23

Netanyahu dismisses Deri from Cabinet following High Court ruling

Deri reportedly will keep his position as Shas party leader and remain éminence grise in Cabinet while relinquishing ministerial roles to other members of his party

Reuters, Ynet|05:01

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu dismissed coalition ally Arye Deri from the Cabinet on Sunday following a High Court of Justice order for his removal over his criminal record.

"It is with heavy heart, great sorrow, and deepest pain, that I must relieve you of your duties as a minister in the government," Netanyahu told Deri at the weekly Cabinet meeting.

However, Deri - who was appointed interior and health minister on December 29 - will keep his ultra-Orthodox Jewish party Shas in Israel's coalition government, confidant Barak Seri, a former spokesman for the minister, told Army Radio.

The High Court ruling last week against Deri's appointment, given his 2022 plea-bargain conviction for tax fraud, stoked a stormy debate in Israel - accompanied by nationwide protests - over government-proposed judicial curbs.

At the Cabinet meeting, Netanyahu said that dismissal only came in compliance with the court's ruling, which he called "an unfortunate decision that ignores the will of the people, as reflected in the great trust that the public gave to the people's representatives and their elected officials in my government, when it was clear to everyone that you would serve in the government as a senior minister."

The premier added that he would also seek "any legal way in which you can continue to contribute to the State of Israel from your vast experience and skills, in accordance with the will of the people."

The less-than-month-old religious-nationalist alliance creaked elsewhere as a far-right partner planned to boycott the weekly cabinet session in a dispute over Jewish settlement policies in the West Bank.

Seri said Deri would make a final showing as interior and health minister at the Cabinet session, at the conclusion of which he would be formally dismissed by Netanyahu.

"He will remain in a position of influence and continue to have undisputed control over Shas," said Seri, telling Army Radio he had discussed the matter with Deri on Saturday night.

Netanyahu and Deri have not publicly detailed their plans following Wednesday's ruling, which members of the premier's conservative Likud party had lamented and promised to redress. Netanyahu spokespeople did not comment on the matter on Sunday.

Separately, ministers from the ultranationalist Religious Zionist party said they would not attend the Cabinet session in protest at Israel's demolition on Friday of a small settler outpost that had been erected without government permission.

Religious Zionist party leader Bezael Smotrich, who wields some Cabinet responsibilities for West Bank settlements, had sought a postponement of the demolitions to enable further discussions - but was overruled by Defense Minister Yoav Galant of Likud.

"This (settlements) is a capstone issue for our participation in the government," National Missions Minister Ori Strock of the Religious Zionist party told Kan radio. She declined to elaborate on what steps the party might take next.

In solidarity with the Religious Zionist party, fellow far-right coalition party Otzma Yehudit said it would demand that Israel implement a long-delayed evacuation of Khan al-Ahmar, a Bedouin Palestinian encampment in a key West Bank area near Jerusalem. World powers have urged Israel not to demolish Khan al-Ahmar, worrying about another potential blow to efforts to negotiate the creation of a Palestinian state alongside Israel. Most countries deem Israel's West Bank settlements illegal.

1.22.23

Knesset Lawyers refuse to overhaul Court appointments & ability to change laws

1.22.23

Opposition lawmakers boycott key Knesset discussion on contentious judicial reform

Dissenters cite protest of improper procedure as reason for absence; Constitution Committee chair Rothman accuses them of abdicating their duties as panel members Sivan Hilaie, Tova Zimuky|04:38

Opposition lawmakers announced on Sunday they will boycott a key discussion in the Knesset on a raft of controversial judicial reforms pushed by the government in protest of what they deemed improper legislative procedure.

The Israeli legislature's Constitution, Law and Justice Committee met Sunday morning to hammer out details pertaining to the proposed changes, among them an overhaul of the panel that appoints judges to Israeli courts and a curtailment of the Supreme Court's ability to strike down laws approved by a Knesset majority.

These changes were compiled by committee chairman Simcha Rothman under a single bill, the text of which was approved by the panel last week, that was tabled for discussion without an opinion from the Knesset's legal advisors, which has not been completed yet. At the opening of the discussion, Rothman took a swipe at the absent legislators, some of whom had taken part in protests against the reforms the night before, and implicitly accused them of abdicating their duties as panel members.

"It's hard working from the opposition, I should know, I've done so for a year and a half," he said.

"There are long days and it can get tough, they needed some time off. So I understand how they feel. They must be spent after shouting in the streets, so they didn't have the strength to show up and speak where the decisions are really made, here in the Knesset."

Two visitors interrupted the meeting, shouting chants in protest of the reform before being ejected from the conference room by ushers.

In response to a Ynet request for comment, Yesh Atid MK Yoav Segalovitz, one of several opposition lawmakers who boycotted the meeting, said that he refuses to participate in "this kabuki theater that is aimed at dismantling and sullyng the system of government in Israel."

Yisrael Beiteinu MK Yulia Malinovski said that "the discussions are taking place without proper professional background material and without a legal opinion, completely contrary to Knesset protocol and procedure".

1.21.23

Lapid & Gantz stir rallies against reform to appoint judges & overriding Court

1.21.23

110,000 turn out to Tel Aviv rallies against judicial reform

Former PM Lapid says what you see here today is a demonstration in favor of the country. People who love this country came here to defend it, its democracy and its courts

i24NEWS|15:34

An estimated 110,000 Israelis turned out to two rallies in Tel Aviv on Saturday to protest a proposed reform to the justice system. This is the third such event in the coastal city in as many weeks. Thousands more rallied in Haifa, Jerusalem, and Be'er Sheva.

Politicians addressing protesters in Tel Aviv included opposition leader and former prime minister Yair Lapid and Benny Gantz, a former defense minister and alternate prime minister.

"What you see here today is a demonstration in favor of the country. People who love this country came here to defend it, its democracy and its courts," Lapid said at the larger of the two demonstrations outside the Azrieli center.

Gantz said that "we encourage the protest and see it as backing for our political activity at the various levels. We can argue about many things, just not about Israeli democracy. We are ready to reach agreements on the reform, but that does not mean that we will compromise on democracy. There will be no compromise on democracy, the rule of law and a strong and independent judiciary."

Another speaker was the celebrated Israeli novelist David Grossman, who said that "the house is on fire. Now is the time that we assert who we truly are and what kind of future we bequeath to our children."

Earlier this month Yariv Levin, a justice minister in Benjamin Netanyahu's right-wing government, announced a plan to hand more powers to lawmakers in appointing judges and overriding Supreme Court decisions.

Critics say Levin's reforms would cripple judicial independence, set back minority rights and compromise the credibility of the courts system. Among those opposed are the Supreme Court chief justice and the country's attorney-general, while critics of the Supreme Court say it is overreaching and unrepresentative of the electorate.

1.19.23

620 lawyers issued a letter to Herzog to warn against judicial reforms

1.19.23

Major Israeli law firms warn against judicial reforms in joint letter

Letter expresses worry that the reforms could lead to loss of Israel's position on the international stage and cause serious damages to the country's economy

Gilad Morag|11:31

Some 17 major Israeli law firms employing 3,500 lawyers, published a joint letter on Thursday warning against the possible harm to the country should the proposed judicial reforms be instated.

"We wish to alert to the assault on the independence of the judicial system and to the disruption of the system of checks and balances that are the basis of the democracy we

are so proud of, along side our nation being the home of the Jewish people," the letter said.

The authors said they did not represent either side of the political divide and respect the decision of voters but add that as attorneys who appear in court on a daily basis, are familiar with the court system including its challenges and problem.

"The judicial system is not above criticism and changes to its methods – but the reforms are the wrong way to go about them. This planned legislation does not repair or construct an independent and robust legal system. On the contrary, it harms its independence and its ability to protect human rights from the actions of government," the letter said.

"We want to make clear we are worried that should the reforms pass, we fear that Israel's position as an international center of trade could be harmed. "Foreign investments in Israel could decrease, Israel's credit score could plummet, and our position in the OECD could be at risk."

The letter also urged Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Justice Minister Yariv Levin to hold a public dialogue with the advice of legal experts to oversee the proposed reforms.

Earlier, 620 lawyers issued a letter to President Isaac Herzog on Wednesday, where they also expressed worry over the judicial reforms. "The reform is a revolution that will lead to a coup. None of us – especially those elected to lead – must underestimate the importance of such legislation," they said.

1.19.23

Israel and Palestinians clash at UN meeting as extremists fuel the fire

1.19.23

Israel and Palestinians clash at UN meeting as tensions rise

UN envoy Erdan slams Palestinians for referral to World Court and drafting 'poisonous and destructive resolution... with sole purpose of destroying Israel as Jewish state'

Associated Press|03:01

Israel's UN ambassador accused the Palestinians on Wednesday of stabbing a knife into any chance for reconciliation by seeking an advisory opinion from the UN's highest court on Israel's decades-old "occupation" — and the Palestinian UN envoy accused Israel's new government of seeking to crush its people.

The always contentious monthly UN Security Council meeting on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was even more vitriolic and threatening this week, and UN Mideast envoy Tor Wennesland warned that "a dangerous cycle of violence persists on the ground, amidst increased political tension and a stalled peace process."

"Israelis and Palestinians remain on a collision course amid escalating political and inflammatory rhetoric as well as heightened violence in the West Bank — both with potentially grave consequences," he said. "Absent a concerted and collective effort by all, with strong support from the international community, spoilers and extremists will continue to pour more fuel on the fire and we will move still further from a peaceful resolution of the conflict."

Underlying the ongoing violence is the Palestinians' decades-long quest for an independent state in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem, territories seized from Jordan and Egypt by Israel in the 1967 Six-Day War. Israel considers the West Bank to be disputed territory and has built dozens of settlements that are now home to roughly 700,000 Jewish settlers.

In the latest confrontation, the Palestinians and their supporters won UN General Assembly approval on Dec. 30 of a resolution asking the International Court of Justice or ICJ to intervene in one of the world's longest-running and thorniest disputes and render an advisory opinion on the legality of Israeli policies in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

While the court's rulings are not binding, they do influence international opinion.

Israel's new hardline government responded on Jan. 6 by approving steps to penalize the Palestinians in retaliation. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said they were aimed at what he called "an extreme anti-Israel" step at the United Nations.

The measures include withholding \$39 million from the cash-strapped Palestinian Authority and transferring the funds instead to a compensation program for the families of Israeli victims of Palestinian terrorist attacks, deducting an amount equal to the sum the authority paid last year to families of Palestinian prisoners and those killed in the conflict including terrorists implicated in attacks against Israelis, and ending VIP travel privileges for leading Palestinians.

The Palestinians responded by getting more than 90 countries to sign a statement expressing "deep concern" at penalizing the Palestinians for going to the court, and urging Israel to reverse the punitive measures. Foreign Minister Eli Cohen rejected the statement.

At Wednesday's Security Council meeting, Israel's UN Ambassador Gilad Erdan accused the Palestinians of drafting "a poisonous and destructive resolution" referring Israel to the ICJ "with the sole purpose of destroying Israel as the Jewish state."

He claimed this has been a Palestinian goal since before Israel's founding in 1948, and said one weapon they use "is the manipulation and abuse of international bodies" to force Israel to agree to their demands, which he called "multilateral terror."

Erdan pointed to anti-Israel activities spurred by the Palestinians at the Geneva-based UN Human Rights Council and the International Criminal Court, and said that with the adoption of the General Assembly resolution on the ICJ, "the Palestinians stabbed a knife in the heart of any chances for dialogue or reconciliation."

He also accused the Palestinians and the UN of exaggerating Palestinian casualties and under-reporting and discriminating against Israeli victims. While 2022 "may have been the deadliest year for Palestinian terrorists," he said, "it was also the year with the most terror attacks committed against Israelis in a decade."

Riyad Mansour, the Palestinian UN ambassador, told the council the new Netanyahu-led government has said openly its program is to increase settlements, "annexation, systemic discrimination and oppression."

"It does not recognize our rights anywhere, and proclaims a right for its settlers everywhere," Mansour said.

The international community overwhelmingly considers settlements to be illegal. Israel's annexation of East Jerusalem, home to the city's most sensitive holy sites, also is not internationally recognized.

Mansour said "peace is still possible," but only if the Security Council and the international community "stand up to the supremacists" and take action to "end Israel's occupation", ensure accountability for its annexation of Jerusalem, recognize the state of Palestine, and reject Israeli settlers in disputed territory.

"We face the absurd situation where impunity is enjoyed by those who violate the law and collective punishment is endured by those entitled to its protection," Mansour told the council.

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Ynet-News, January 18, 2023 – Wednesday

1.18.23 – We- - - News   Placed in January 18 spot – Wednesday  
High Court denies Deri serving as minister citing "extreme unreasonableness"

1.18.23 – We- - - News   Placed in January 16 spot – Monday  
US sent Ukraine 300,000 artillery shells from 1973 stockpile in Israel

1.17.23 – Tu- - - News   Placed in January 17 spot – Tuesday  
Jordanian ambassador would not wait to enter al-Aqsa, sparking diplomatic row

1.14.23 – Sa- - - News   Placed in January 15 spot – Sunday  
Netanyahu brushes off mass protests; calls justice reform 'will of the people'

1.14.23 – Sa- - - News   Placed in January 14 spot – Saturday  
Police close roads, as safe crowds rally across Israel in anti-government protests

1.12.23 – Th- - - News   – Thursday  
Three dead today, in PA clashes with IDF; total 19 in 2<sup>nd</sup> week of 2023