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# ISRANET DAILY BRIEFING

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## WEDNESDAY'S "NEWS IN REVIEW" ROUND-UP

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## WEEKLY QUOTES

**"[D]ear neighbors, we – citizens of Israel – want very much to live in Peace, in a region of peace where you and we enjoy it together. But we do not think that there is any point in signing an agreement with someone who today is here and tomorrow is in a grave, and his successors won't honor his signature. When the Middle East becomes a region of peace, give us a call, perhaps we will join the peace that you will begin in the Middle East. until then please leave us alone."** — Mordechai Kedar, lecturer in Arabic at Bar Ilan University and former IDF Military Intelligence officer, in an open letter to the Arab League following its announcement that it had endorsed a two-state solution based on the 1949 armistice lines. ([Jewish Press](#), May 23, 2013)

**"Many in the international community doubt UNRWA's impartiality and motives. Israel supports UNRWA's important humanitarian work; however, actions that encourage incitement, conflict and, ultimately, violence undermine this work....It's quite something for UNRWA to insist that the map predates the creation of Israel, given that the PLO only adopted this flag in 1964. UNRWA's grasp of history and geography is nothing short of appalling."** — Ron Prozor, Israel's ambassador to the UN, in a letter to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon protesting the fact that Ann Dismorr, director of the UN Relief and Works Agency in Lebanon, stood in front of cameras holding a map of Israel labelled "Arab Palestine" with Israel non-existent. ([Jerusalem Post](#), May 23, 2013)

**"To see the Assad regime point the finger at Israel out of professed concern for the health of Syrians is, frankly, a sick joke. They've slaughtered 80,000 of their own people, and are now busy destroying the lives of millions more. The real question is this: Why is the UN allowing mass murderers to deflect attention from their crimes by scape-goating democracies? A world health assembly should be about Hippocrates, not hypocrisy."** — Hillel Neuer, executive director of the Geneva-based UN Watch, a non-governmental monitoring group accredited to the UN, condemning the annual assembly of the UN's World Health Organization's for adopting its only country-specific [resolution](#) condemning Israel, ([UN Watch](#), May 22, 2013)

**“I think there is an opportunity [for peace], but for many reasons it’s not on the tips of everyone’s tongue. People in Israel aren’t waking up every day and wondering if tomorrow there will be peace because there is a sense of security and a sense of accomplishment and of prosperity.”** — John Kerry, U.S. Secretary of State, to reporters before entering a meeting with President Shimon Peres, during a recent trip to Israel in an attempt to re-start peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians. ([Times of Israel](#), May 23, 2013)

**“I value our president [Shimon Peres], but the concept of withdrawals failed and brought thousands of victims. Every time we give up land, people are killed.”** — Naftali Bennet, leader of the Bayit Yehudi party, responding to President Peres’ speech in Jordan at the World Economic Forum where he promoted a two-state solution. Bennett called for the government to declare that **“this is our land, and it is not for sale.”** ([Jerusalem Post](#), May 27, 2013)

**"A legitimate question is with whom we are going to sign an agreement. The Gaza Strip is being controlled by Hamas. They are not part of the peace. They are not willing...to accept Israel's right to exist, to renounce terrorism and to accept all the agreements between Israel and the Palestinians. And on the other side, we have Abu Mazen [Abbas], for many years without elections on the Palestinian side, without any possibility to change anything in Gaza, even if he wants to. So what's the use of signing an agreement?"** — Tzipi Livni, Israel’s Minister of Justice and specially designated peace negotiator said in an address to foreign diplomats in Jerusalem. ([The Telegraph](#), May 29, 2013)

**“Representatives of the Arab League are amending the ‘Saudi initiative’ and turning it into a ‘peace’ treaty with Israel. Really? Who does the Arab League represent? Only the regimes of the Sunni countries, or what's left of them. The Shiite countries - Iraq, Syria, Yemen and Lebanon - no longer cooperate with this league. So Israel makes peace with the Sunnis; but what about the others? We must keep in mind that the territory the IDF will withdraw from will be seized immediately by armed Salafis from all across the Arab world - as was the case in Sinai and Syria. Who will come to Israel's aid when it is attacked?"** — Guy Bechor, head of the Middle East Division at the Lauder School of Government at the Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya. ([Ynet News](#), May 28, 2013)

**“She’s an accomplished scholar, but her views on Israel would be quite disturbing to many students. She doesn’t believe in a Jewish state and we want other schools to think twice before giving her awards because it offends students.”** — Ilana Donohue, McGill Students for Israel co-president in a statement to the *Montreal Gazette* concerning McGill University’s intention of awarding an honorary doctorate to Judith Butler, an American academic and promoter of the boycott of Israel. Jeff Bicher, executive director of Hillel Montreal, on the other hand, said that, while he supports the students’ position, **“we do not believe that the honorary degree for her academic work condones in any way her anti-Israel activism.”** ([The Algemeiner](#), May 24, 2013)

**“Do you want us to abduct other Shalits? This is not part of our culture. We cannot do this.”** — Mahmoud Abbas, Palestinian Authority President, lamenting Israel’s failure to release pre-Oslo Palestinian security prisoners. Israel had only agreed to a mass prisoner release to free kidnapped soldier Gilad Shalit from Gaza, he recalled. ([Times of Israel](#), May 28, 2013)

**“Those who refuse to abduct Zionist soldiers renounce the pain and suffering of thousands of prisoners yearning for freedom. Operations to capture enemy soldiers and trade them for our heroic prisoners are at the heart of our people’s culture, and are a source of pride for them and their resistance.”** — Abu-Ubaida, spokesman for the Izz ad-Din Al-Qassam Brigades, on his Facebook page. ([Times of Israel](#), May 28, 2013)

**"[It's] like putting Jack the Ripper in charge of a women's shelter."** — Hillel Neuer, head of *UN Watch*, a Geneva-based advocacy group that monitors the work of the United Nations, commenting on the selection of Iran as chair of the UN Disarmament Conference. ([UN Watch](#), May 13, 2013)

**“Clearly this move is a threat to us. At this stage I can’t say there is an escalation. The shipments have not been sent on their way yet. And I hope that they will not be sent.”** But **“if God forbid they do reach Syria, we will know what to do.”** — Moshe Ya’alon, Israel’s Defence Minister, responding to Russia’s declared intention to ship sophisticated anti-aircraft missiles to Syria despite Israel’s protest that it would be an escalating factor in the war in Syria. ([Globe and Mail](#), May 28, 2013)

**'If the attacks of Hezbollah against Syrian territory do not stop within 24 hours, we will take all measures to hunt Hezbollah, even in hell.'** — General Salim Idriss, chief of staff of the Syrian rebels' Supreme Military Council, said in an interview with Dubai-based *al-Arabiya* television. ([Sky News](#), May 29, 2013)

**“We are very disappointed. We don’t have any patience [any] more”** — General Salim Idriss, military chief of the Free Syrian Army, responding to the apparent decision of the European Union not to send arms to Syrian rebels until after a planned peace conference in Geneva. At the same time, British Foreign Secretary said peace talks were a priority and that **“as we work for a Geneva conference, we are not taking any decision to send arms to anyone.”** Meanwhile, the U.S. State Department’s Patrick Ventrell, said that Washington had not made a decision to arm the rebels and condemned **“all support of arms to the regime,”** referring to Russia’s declared intention of selling highly sophisticated S-300 anti-aircraft missiles to the Assad regime in Syria. ([National Post](#), May 29, 2013)

**“Over the past few days, there have been additional mind-boggling exposures of further scandals, lack of transparency, cover-ups and ethical failures at the highest possible levels of the Claims Conference leadership and management. Unless these latest reports appearing in the Jerusalem Post and JTA are refuted, we must demand the immediate resignations of all those engaged in the subterfuges. It was in April 2007 that I wrote the first of 21 articles calling for a reform of the Claims Conference and appealing to the Board to ensure that wherever possible, all funds being directed to general projects be frozen and instead steered towards ameliorating the plight of the desperate elderly and ailing survivors unable to afford food, medicine and basic necessities of life. I repeatedly stated that it was our obligation as Jews, and in particular the duty of the Claims Conference, to ensure that these survivors would live out their remaining years with a modicum of dignity.”** — Isi Liebler, in an op-ed article in the *Jerusalem Post*. ([Jerusalem Post](#), May 22, 2013,)

**“To me, when I look at Israel, I see not only a Jewish state rebuilt on the ancient Jewish homeland, I see an outpost of the civilization in which I believe. Because I do not believe that all civilizations are equivalent. I don't believe in a civilization that torments women and children, that's woefully corrupt, that in the 21st century, not only cannot build a competitive automobile, but cannot even build a competitive bicycle! And while I wish the Arabs well—I wish no man harm, with the exception of a few terrorists here or there—nonetheless, to me, Israel is a beacon of justice, for rule of law, humanity, decency, culture... in short, Israel belongs to the Jews; it belongs to my civilization.”** — Ralph Peters, Lt. Col. U.S. Army (ret.), in an interview with *Arutz 7* prior to delivering a speech at the American Friends of Ateret Cohanim's 34<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala. ([Arutz 7](#), May 23, 2013)

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## SHORT TAKES

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**LIVNI: ABBAS NOT IDEAL PEACE PARTNER** — (*Jerusalem*) Tzipi Livni, Israel's chief peace negotiator, has expressed doubts over the ability of Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian leader, to deliver an agreement. Addressing foreign diplomats and journalists, Livni - who also serves as justice minister in Benjamin Netanyahu's cabinet - likened any agreement with Abbas to a signed check on an empty bank account because he does not control Gaza, which is run by the Islamist Hamas movement. She also acknowledged doubts over Abbas' legitimacy in the West Bank - which his Fatah movement controls - because he has not held elections for several years. ([The Telegraph](#), May 29, 2013)

**TERROR OVERWHELMING WESTERN INTELLIGENCE** — (*Herzliya*) The gruesome murder of a British soldier in London by two British Muslims, the first Islamist killing in Britain since suicide bombers killed 52 people in London in 2005, has revived the fear of the "lone wolf" *jihadi* threat in the Western world. The Boston Marathon bombing a month ago also comes to mind. Western democratic governments have not yet realized that the complete freedom of speech, propaganda and organization offered to radical Islamist religious and political leaders who actively support violence is the single greatest danger to their security. The security and law enforcement agencies seem to be overwhelmed by the large numbers of potential suspect terrorists they have to monitor and too cautious in their preventive operations. There is a salient pattern of plots or attacks against Jewish targets acting as the precursor for major terrorist plots against Western, Christian, and moderate Muslim targets. ([Ha'aretz](#), May 29, 2013)

**ROCKET ON HEZBOLLAH A TURNING POINT** — (*Beirut*) A rocket attack on the Hezbollah stronghold in south Beirut marks a turning point in the Syrian war and the clearest signal yet that the conflict is likely to escalate and spread to Lebanon, already on a knife's edge due to sectarian divisions. Shi'ite-Sunni strife in Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and elsewhere is manifesting itself in the Syrian civil war, dragging neighboring countries into the conflict. The rocket attack seems to be the opening salvo in Lebanon by Sunnis against the Iran/Hezbollah/Syria axis. Further examples of this came on Sunday as Egyptian jihadist movements called on Mujahedeen from around the world to go to Lebanon and fight Hezbollah, according to a report on Now Lebanon's website. And Bahrain's foreign minister called Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah a "terrorist" a day after his speech on Saturday, which called for strongly supporting Syrian President Bashar Assad, according to a report on *Al-Arabiya*. ([Jerusalem Post](#), May 27, 2013)

**FORMER ITALIAN LEGISLATOR MAKES ALIYAH** — (*Rome*) The Rome Jewish community leadership gave a rousing send-off to journalist and former Italian parliament member Fiamma Nirenstein ahead of her departure for Israel on aliyah Sunday. Born in Florence, Nirenstein was elected to Parliament in April 2008 as a member of the center-right People of Freedom ticket headed by former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi. During her tenure in Parliament, she was outspoken in support of Israel and in combating anti-Semitism. The Rome Jewish Community board, along with representatives of other Jewish organizations and the Israeli ambassador to Italy, toasted her at a ceremony ahead of Shabbat on Friday. "Her contribution in the last legislature was decisive, and not to be able to see her sitting in Parliament anymore is, for us, an insurmountable loss," Rome Jewish community president Riccardo Pacifici said. ([Jewish Press/JTA](#), May 26th, 2013)

**RUSSIA TO ARM SYRIA REGIME WITH ANTI-AIRCRAFT MISSILES TO PREVENT FOREIGN INTERVENTION** — (*Moscow*) A top Russian diplomat confirmed that Moscow will provide Syria with state-of-the-art air defense missiles to prevent foreign intervention in the country. Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov wouldn't say whether Russia has shipped any of the long-range S-300 air defense missile systems, but added that Moscow isn't going to abandon the deal despite

strong Western and Israeli criticism. Ryabkov said the deal helps restrain some "hot heads" considering a military intervention in Syria. Russia has been the key ally of Syrian President Bashar Assad's regime, protecting it from the United Nations sanctions and providing it with weapons despite the civil war there that has claimed over 70,000 lives. Ryabkov's statement comes a day after European Union's decision to lift an arms embargo to Syrian opposition. ([Ha'aretz](#), May 28, 2013)

**SYRIAN REBELS NEAR ISRAEL BORDER STOLE UN'S ARMORED TRUCKS** — (*Golan Heights*) A Syrian rebel group that twice abducted United Nations peacekeepers near the Israeli border in the past three months stole several UN vehicles, a UN Peacekeeping spokesperson acknowledged to *The Times of Israel* — including at least two sophisticated armored personnel carriers. An Israeli expert warned that the sophisticated UN-marked vehicles could be used in surprise border attacks on IDF targets. UNDOF reported in its quarterly report to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon that on March 6, a supply convoy carrying 21 UN personnel was waylaid by Syrian rebels near the village of Jamlah, near the Israeli border. After several days in captivity the Filipino peacekeepers were released unharmed, but, as of the writing of the March report, their four vehicles were "yet to be recovered." Yarmouk Martyrs Brigade now has two 'virtually indestructible' vehicles, which Israeli expert warns could be used in surprise attacks. ([Times of Israel](#), May 28, 2013)

**HUNGARIAN MP: AUSCHWITZ 'MAY NOT REFLECT REAL FACTS'** — (*Budapest*) An MP for the ultra-far right Jobbik party in Hungary has said that the Auschwitz concentration camp museum "may not reflect real facts," the *International Business Times* reports. During a discussion in parliament of a bill funding visits of Hungarian teenagers in the Nazi death camp in Poland, Tamas Gaudi-Nagy said the country's schools should not be "forced to take up such an expensive venture" to visit site whose historical accuracy is, he believes, doubtful. Gaudi-Nagy's statements were attacked by the country's ruling Fidesz party. Its leader, Antal Rogan, said: "Nobody has the right to question the Holocaust, the suffering and death of millions of people." ([Jewish Press](#), May 28th, 2013)

**70-80% OF PALESTINIANS DISPLACED IN SYRIA** — (*Homs Province, Syria*) Conflict in Syria has displaced more than two-thirds of the Palestinian refugees in the country, AFP quoted the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine refugees (UNWRA) said on Wednesday. "We have registered approximately 530,000 Palestinian refugees. We believe that almost all of them, certainly maybe 70-80 percent, are displaced from their normal homes," UNRWA Commissioner General Filippo Grandi told AFP during a visit to Syria. Speaking after meeting Palestinian refugees at a camp in central Homs province, Grandi told AFP that "12-15 percent of the refugee population in Syria is now [made] refugee again in another country." ([Jerusalem Post](#), May 23, 2013)

**PERI COMMITTEE APPROVES SANCTIONS ON DRAFT DODGERS** — (*Jerusalem*) The ministerial committee for equalizing the burden [of military service] approved Wednesday imposing criminal sanctions on draft dodgers, including haredim. The clause in the proposed bill, that would mandate how to draft yeshiva students and punish those who evade service, also makes room for the exemption of 1,800 yeshiva students from serving in the IDF. Finance Minister Yair Lapid lauded the decision in a press conference following the vote, describing the measure as the first significant step toward equality in the burden. This government proved it can make a change, even in the most explosive topics," he said. "This issue ended coalitions," he added. "In three years, 70% of haredim will be drafted. This is a badge of pride for this government and our party. We promised our voters we would not give in and we are keeping our promise." ([Jerusalem Post](#), May 29, 2013)

**ITALY PROF. SAYS HAS FOUND WORLD'S OLDEST TORAH** — (*Rome*) An Italian professor said on Wednesday he has identified what he believes is the world's oldest complete scroll of the Torah, containing the full text of the first five books of Hebrew scripture. Mauro Perani, professor of Hebrew at the University of Bologna, said experts and carbon dating tests done in Italy and the United

States dated the scroll as having been made between 1155 and 1225. The scroll, which has been in possession of the Bologna University Library for more than 100 years, had been previously thought to be from the 17th century. The scroll is made up of 58 sections of soft sheep leather each sewn together, most of them with three columns of script. ([Jerusalem Post](#), May 29, 2013)

**CIJR NOTES PASSING OF LONG-TIME SUPPORTERS**— (*Montreal*) Noted Montreal entrepreneur and philanthropist *Morton Brownstein z"l*, at 85. Heir to the Brown's Shoes business, founded in 1940, he built it into today's 40 cross-Canada outlets. Known for leading the Supreme Court challenge to Quebec's language laws, a supporter of many community causes, including the Jewish General Hospital, he was a strong and eloquent supporter of the State of Israel and of Jewish institutions in Montreal and Canada.

*Colonel Bernard J. Finestone, z"l*, at age 93. Joining the fight against the Nazis at age 17, he was a tank officer with the B.C. Dragoons, seriously wounded in the Italian campaign. A member of the Royal Canadian Legion, Col. Feinstone was a strong Zionist who supported the Jewish state, Israel, from the War of Independence onwards. He loved speaking to students, and was an avid reader of *CIJR's Daily Isranet Briefing*.

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#### ON TOPIC

**Mahmoud Abbas not Ideal Peace Partner, Tzipi Livni Admits:** [Robert Tait, \*The Telegraph\*, May 28, 2013](#)—Tzipi Livni, Israel's chief peace negotiator, has expressed doubts over the ability of Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian leader, to deliver an agreement even while insisting on the need for a historic deal to end the Middle East conflict.

**Two rockets hit Hezbollah-controlled district in Lebanon:** [Ha'aretz](#), May 29, 2013—Two rockets hit a Shi'ite Muslim district of southern Beirut on Sunday, residents said, wounding several people, a day after the leader of Lebanese Shi'ite militant movement [Hezbollah](#) said his group would continue fighting in Syria until victory.

**Explaining Obama's Fixation with Israel:** [Daniel Pipes, \*The National Review\*, March 19, 2013](#)—It's not just that he's spending days in Israel this week, but that he has spent a disproportionate amount of time over the last four years searching for a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Left thinks the Arab-Israeli conflict is key to world problems.

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