Elevate Fact Sheet – State of War in Israel
Updated 2023-12-1, 8 am IDT (Jerusalem)

Background:
Over a month ago, on Saturday morning 7th of October, Israel was subjected to an intense, unprovoked, and indiscriminate terror attack from the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip. The October 7 pogrom represents a dramatic escalation of Hamas’ ongoing war targeting Israel’s civilian population. It marks the deadliest day in the nation’s history, resulting in over a thousand and a half dead, thousands injured, and hundreds of civilians taken hostage with many still missing. Archeologists of the Israeli Antiquities Authority in the past two weeks have joined forces with the IDF in identifying the remains of 10 individuals so far.

No country in the world would dismiss the deliberate murder of hundreds of innocent civilians. Israel’s priority is to safely bring back the hostages. Last Friday, the hostage and temporary truce deal took effect. As of Friday morning, the 1st of December, 105 hostages – 81 Israelis and 25 foreign nationals, mostly Thai agricultural workers, were released and freed from Gaza. The initial 4-day deal was extended after crunch negotiations, with Qatar and Egypt being the key mediators. Israel stated that it would extend the ceasefire by one day for every 10 additional hostages released. As part of the deal, Israel released 30 additional Palestinian security prisoners this week, bringing the total released so far to 210. Many of the hostages released are currently receiving continued medical and psychosocial support from specially trained staff at major Israeli hospitals. Regarding the release of the remaining hostages, President Isaac Herzog met with Emirati leader Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and asked him to use his “full diplomatic weight” to help bring the hostages back.

On Thursday morning, three people were killed and six were wounded, two of them seriously, in a terror attack at a Jerusalem bus stop. Later on, Hamas claimed responsibility for this attack, calling for the “escalation of resistance”. The bus stop was the scene of a deadly bomb attack almost a year ago. The two terrorists were neutralized on the spot. In response, the IDF arrested 23 terror suspects, including 10 Hamas operatives, overnight in the West Bank. Additionally, Israeli police reported foiling the smuggling of 137 guns into Israel from Jordan, which they say is the largest-ever weapons bust on the Jordanian border. This further demonstrates the escalating tension in the West Bank, where during the week the IDF also killed two senior terror operatives in Jenin during a raid.

The terror attack in Jerusalem, claimed by Hamas, highlights ongoing violations of the recent ceasefire. Reports indicate that Hamas breached the ceasefire multiple times, beginning just 15 minutes after it was established, by firing rockets into Israel. Additionally, Hamas is accused of denying the Red Cross access to visit and provide medical care to the remaining hostages, who have yet to be released. This situation is further compounded by allegations of children being separated from their mothers among those who are released. On Friday morning, rocket sirens were again heard in Sderot and Holit. The IDF confirmed that these projectiles were intercepted by air defense units. In response to these ceasefire violations and Hamas’s failure to provide a list of hostages scheduled for release by 7 AM today, the IDF has renewed attacks on the terror group.

Global incidents of antisemitism continue to rise, with countries such as Germany seeing an increase in antisemitism by 320% after October 7th, according to a new report. College campuses continue to be one of the largest zones for this increase in antisemitism. In the US alone, 73% of Jewish college students have experienced or witnessed antisemitism since the beginning of the war. In London, this week saw the largest march for decades against Jew-hatred in the UK, where approximately 60,000 people took to the streets to advocate for the immediate release of hostages and declare zero tolerance for antisemitism. In France, two people were charged for justifying crimes against humanity after spraying Nazi symbols, including swastikas, all over Paris.
Key points:

• **As World Jewish Congress President Ronald S. Lauder stated:** “Let it be known, unequivocally, that the entire Jewish diaspora stands in unwavering support of Israel and its valiant security forces during these challenging times.”

• The WJC Elevate stands with Israel. Take a look at WJC Elevate’s Resources and Action items in Response to Israel-Hamas War [here](#).

• Read more about this week’s WJC Elevate Changemakers Delegation to Israel [here](#).

• We urge all governments and international organizations to unequivocally denounce Hamas, recognizing them as a terrorist organization and express their unwavering support for Israel – not only in words but also in deeds – reaffirming its inherent right to self-defense and thank those who have already done so.

• We call on all governments to recognize and condemn the spillover effects of the war in Israel that have resulted in a disturbing increase in antisemitic incidents in the diaspora. Governments around the world must ensure the proactive deployment of resources to safeguard the well-being of Jewish communities and institutions.

• Social media companies must be held accountable for curbing the dissemination of misinformation and content that glorifies terror. They need to proactively monitor and remove any content that appears to downplay or show sympathy towards Hamas. You can read more about busting the myths about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict [here](#).

• **Universities and colleges must ensure a safe environment for Jewish students and faculty.** The increase in antisemitism at educational institutions following Hamas' actions and Israel's response needs immediate attention, with a strict zero-tolerance policy in place. You can read more about the experiences of young Elevate members and their actions to counter antisemitism and support Israel [here](#). Find several letters to send to University administrations prepared by WJC Elevate [here](#).

• Hamas, the terrorist organization that controls Gaza and is responsible for this extensive attack, launched a widespread assault on Israeli citizens. Hamas has committed ISIS-style crimes against humanity and war crimes such as abducting innocent civilians.

• Hamas continues to hold innocent civilians captive including children, women and elderly. Read more about the campaign – Bring Our Families Back - powered by the World Jewish Congress and its partners [here](#).

• This war was initiated by Hamas with the support of other terrorist organizations, devoid of any pretext or prior provocation from Israel. It comes after an extended period during which Israel has made tangible efforts to improve the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, demonstrating its commitment to peace. It also comes against the backdrop of the evolution of relations between Riyadh and Jerusalem which could have a game-changing significance in resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict.

• Hamas and the terrorist organizations that knowingly and deliberately operate from within densely populated areas and close to humanitarian facilities are responsible. They cynically use the hapless civilians over whom they rule as human shields. While Israel does everything possible to minimize harm
to non-combatants, these terrorist organizations commit double war crimes by indiscriminately targeting civilians while hiding among the civilian population of the Gaza Strip.