

Biden in his CNN interview announcing the unprecedented suspension of some military aid to Israel | Source: CNN

Overview

- **For the first time since the start of the war the Biden administration openly admitted that it was withholding and delaying weapon shipments to Israel as a sign of their disapproval of Israeli tactics.**
- **The Palestinian bid to obtain UN membership powers similar to those of a member state was passed in the General Assembly by a large majority.**
- **The EU Foreign Minister Josep Borrell said that on May 21, Spain, Ireland, Slovenia, and "other EU member states" are expected to recognize the "State of Palestine".**
- **The Pentagon announced that it would not deliver 3500 bombs including 1800 900 KG bombs that could be used in a large-scale operation.** In an interview, Secretary Blinken said they were looking into these deliveries, same as Secretary Austin confirmed in his testimony before the Senate Appropriations Committee's defense subpanel. A shipment of 6,500 precision guided JDAM missiles worth a total of \$230 million has already been delayed. These devices help the IDF **turn "dumb" bombs into smart bombs that are more precise and reduce collateral damage. This action alone would likely increase the civilian death toll in Gaza.**
- **Secretary of State Tony Blinken** reported to Congress that **it is not possible to verify** whether Israel has used U.S.-made weapons in Gaza in a manner that **violates international law.** In an interview, Blinken said it was "reasonable to assess" that, without committing to assert.



Hamas leaders including Ismail Haniyeh meeting with the Algerian delegation | Source: Hamas west bank on telegram, t.me/hamaswestbank1

International

- United Arab Emirates Foreign Minister Abdullah bin Zayed on Friday denounced a suggestion by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that **Abu Dhabi might assist local Palestinians in managing Gaza after the war**. Bin Zayed tweeted a denunciation of Netanyahu's proposal his country "participate in civil administration of the Gaza Strip, which is under Israeli occupation."
- **The Palestinian bid to obtain UN membership powers, that are similar to those of a member state was passed in the General Assembly by a large majority**. 143 countries voted in favor, 9 opposed, and 25 abstained. Israel's Ambassador to the UN, Gilad Erdan, strongly criticized the proposal, and while standing at the podium, read from the UN charter and shredded it to demonstrate that the vote has shredded the credibility of the UN.
- The Canadian House of Commons unanimously adopted a resolution calling on Justin Trudeau's government to designate the **Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)** of Iran as a terrorist organization and to expel about **700 Iranian agents operating in the country**.
- Another Caribbean country announces recognition of a Palestinian state: **The Bahamas have declared that they will recognize the Palestinian state, joining Jamaica, Barbados, and Trinidad and Tobago**.
- A group of Dutch lawyers filed a request with the International Criminal Court (ICC) to issue an **arrest warrant for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for "war crimes."**
- **Turkey rejected Israel's statement that it was easing its trade embargo with them**. The Turkish Trade Minister, Omer Bolat, stated that "Israel's claims" are "completely speculative and have no connection to reality." This was in response to Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz's comments that Erdogan had backed down and lifted many of the trade restrictions with Israel.
- **Slovenia announced that it will recognize the Palestinian state in mid-June**. The Prime Minister of Slovenia, Robert Golob, said that he wants his country's recognition to "act as a stimulus for this negotiation to progress more quickly" and to accelerate the UN dialogue on an immediate ceasefire, the release of hostages, and the security and existence of Israel through a two-state solution.
- The **EU Foreign Minister Josep Borrell** said that on May 21, **Spain, Ireland, Slovenia, and "other EU member states" are expected to recognize the Palestinian state**. This statement was made ahead of the scheduled vote this afternoon at the UN on the Palestinian request for membership powers. According to Borrell, "It is a symbolic act, which more than recognizing a state - recognizes the desire that this state should exist." He added that, **Belgium** and "other countries" would likely follow the decision as well.



Gaza Strip

Diplomatic

US role in the war

For the first time since the start of the war the Biden administration openly admitted that it was withholding and delaying weapon shipments to Israel as a sign of their disapproval of Israel's Rafah Operation.

In a **CNN interview**, Biden openly spoke about his warning to Prime Minister Netanyahu that a **large scale operation in Rafah in the main population centers** would force him to not support Israel's war efforts. Biden said in the interview that **his red line had not yet been crossed**.

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IDF Spokesman, Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari said that **Israel's stockpiles are full, and it could conduct the operation in Rafah without further US support**. Netanyahu said in a speech that Israel would fight alone if it would be forced to do so.

- **Secretary of State Tony Blinken** says in a report to Congress **it is not possible to verify** whether Israel has used U.S.-made weapons in Gaza in a manner that

violates international law. The report also said that given Israel's significant reliance on U.S.-made weapons, "it is reasonable to assess" that they have been used by Israeli security forces since Oct. 7 "in **instances inconsistent with its international law obligations or with established best practices for mitigating civilian harm.**" The report lists incidents that raise concerns about Israel's use of U.S.-made weapons in violation of international law. **It also details efforts Israel made to operate in alignment with international law and includes large amounts of information Israel obtained regarding these incidents,** Allowing the US to gain a comprehensive perspective into Israel's procedures and processes. **The report reprimanded Israel by suggesting that it could do more to reduce civilian harm.** With that said, the report does not reach a **conclusive assessment** as it says Israel did not provide all the information it needed and that they cannot make an overall judgement based off individual incidents.

- The Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor and USAID recommended Blinken conclude that Israel has violated the terms of the national security memorandum, but other parts of the department pressed Blinken to certify that it did not. **U.S. Ambassador** to Israel Jack Lew and outgoing **U.S. Gaza humanitarian envoy David Satterfield** sent a memo to Blinken in recent weeks saying Israel is not violating international law in its war in Gaza.

an American guarantee that the ceasefire would become permanent, Israel would withdraw from the Gaza strip, and it would be able to survive as a governing body, the release of hundreds of terrorists with blood on their hands. All of these conditions would result in an Israeli defeat and are therefore terms that Israel cannot acquiesce to.

Hamas has not agreed to continue negotiations without the American guarantee of sabotaging any chance of a deal which only demonstrates that Hamas never intended to reach an agreement but were only using the negotiations themselves as a means to foment international **pressure on Israel.**

As part of the revised deal, **Hamas had agreed to release 3 hostages every 3 days and subsequently, "dead or alive", and changed the demand for the release of hostages to occur on a weekly basis.** The refusal to commit to release living hostages, and the vague text that suggests theoretically that living hostages could be shot to death before their release, was one of the elements that pulled the brakes on the deal. Hamas political bureau chief called upon Iran and Turkey to pressure Israel to accept a ceasefire deal and prevent it from proceeding with its operation in Rafah.



IDF leaflets scattered over Rafah advising civilians to evacuate to safe zones | Source: IDF Spokesperson

Reactions to the Rafah Operation

- **Egypt condemned the Israeli action in Rafah**, stating that it sees it as a "dangerous escalation" that threatens the lives of more than a million Palestinians. Egypt also warned that the IDF's ground operation endangers what it described as efforts to reach a **"permanent ceasefire."** In a statement published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Cairo, the Egyptians called on Israel **"to exercise restraint"** and called on "all international actors to intervene and exert pressure to neutralize the current crisis and allow diplomatic efforts to achieve the desired outcomes."
- European Union's Foreign Minister, **Josep Borrell**, expressed anger over the initiation of the IDF's ground operation in East Rafah, during which the Gaza side of the Rafah crossing was captured. **"The ground attack on Rafah has restarted, despite all requests from the international community, the USA, and European Union countries - everyone asked Netanyahu not to attack Rafah,"** Borrell told reporters in Brussels.
- Due to the closure of the Rafah crossing: **The Americans airdropped humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip, in collaboration with the Jordanian Air Force.**
- The Israeli war cabinet unanimously decided to **intensify the operation in Rafah**, despite the halt in arms shipments by U.S. President Joe Biden, who emphasized that he would stop **supplying weapons to Israel if it operates in Rafah.**
- Lebanese newspaper "Al-Akhbar," associated with Hezbollah, reported from Egyptian sources that **Israel**

The Hamas Hostage Deal and Rafah Operation

After negotiations with Hamas broke down, Israel initiated its Rafah operation. The operation started with the distribution of **leaflets and phone calls to residents of eastern Rafah to evacuate.** Hamas tried right before the operation started to claim that it had accepted the hostage deal which was a **lie as it had 'agreed' to terms that were not even discussed.**

Hamas was adamant in its demands to receive

informed Cairo that the military operations in the border strip at Rafah would continue, and it intends to carry out "further actions" in the area.

According to an Egyptian source, there are Israeli plans to address each area in Rafah separately to avoid direct confrontation with the USA and the international community.



Israeli tank at the Rafah crossing | Source: various social media accounts

Operational

Before the start of the operation and during the time that the delegations were discussing a hostage deal, Hamas fired rocket barrages at the Kerem Shalom crossing, from which the most amount of humanitarian aid came during the war. **Over 14,000 trucks passed through this crossing while 11,000 trucks passed through the Rafah crossing.** 5 IDF troops were killed as a result of the attack which prompted Israel to close off the crossing. After a phone call from President Biden, Netanyahu ordered the crossing to reopen hours later.

- **The IDF captured the Rafah crossing to Egypt, a strategic position which allows the IDF to oversee the movements through the crossing and meticulously look for tunnels which are the lifeline of the Hamas war machine.**
- Hamas and other terrorist factions still manage to shoot rocket barrages to Israel including from Rafah itself.
- Hamas battalions are regrouping and the IDF has taken the **Zaitun neighborhood for the third time since the start of the war.** This indicates that Israel cannot leave any vacuum of control in Gaza as it is quickly filled by Hamas remnants that regroup. As a result, Israel will not be able to allow civilians to return to the northern part of the Gaza Strip. According to a statement by the Nahal Brigade Commander at the end of April, the eradication of terror in the area **could continue for a year and a half.**
- IDF called on residents of **11 areas in the north of the Strip, including the entire Jabalia camp and parts of Beit Lahia, to evacuate immediately to the west of Gaza City.** This is likely preparation for

another operation in the same area or an increase in the intensity of bombings to prevent further terrorist re-organization.

- In East Rafah, Brigade 162 soldiers eliminated dozens of terrorists, raided dozens of terror infrastructures, and cleared the area with a focus on advancing along the **Salah al-Din Road, in an attempt to control this major movement axis to reopen the Rafah crossing and transfer supplies to the Khan Yunis area to facilitate the transfer** of most of Rafah's population. So far, over 30 terrorists have been eliminated and 10 tunnel openings have been found (most likely used to smuggle weapons from Sinai).
- The IDF is using **bulldozers to clear the area along the Philadelphi Corridor as can be seen in satellite images.** Most of it is in the area northeast of the Shouka al-Soufi neighborhood, likely in preparation for an attack on Rafah city and continued advancement along the Philadelphi axis.
- **Over 150,000 Gazans have reportedly left Rafah** to the Dir El Balah area and other safe zones designated by the IDF.
- There is a **severe manpower shortage to maintain the many detainees** from Judea and Samaria and Gaza Strip. The IDF is requesting from Military Intelligence to transfer officers (including those in vital intelligence roles) **to maintain detainees in three temporary detention facilities, which not only impacts intelligence operations but also exposes the reason for the decrease in arrests,** potentially leading to an increase in terrorism in the Judea and Samaria again.



Josep Borrell, EU's Head of the External Action Service and VP of the Commission, announced the expected recognition of the "State of Palestine"

by several EU members | Photo: Alexandros Michailidis, Shutterstock.com

Domestic Arena

The **anti-Israeli propaganda channel Al Jazeera has been shut down in Israel until July 31** (at which point the order for its closure will need to be extended). Equipment from the propaganda channel has been confiscated, and broadcasts in Israel, primarily among Israeli Arabs and Arabs in the Judea and Samaria and Jerusalem, will be restricted to **prevent incitement to terrorism and violence.**

ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR:

Weekly War Summary

LEBANON



6,000+
TOTAL SINCE 10.7
TERROR TARGETS HIT BY IDF



3 / 17
THIS WEEK / TOTAL SINCE 10.7
IDF FALLEN SOLDIERS



0 / 6
THIS WEEK / TOTAL SINCE 10.7
KILLED ISRAELI CITIZENS



410+
TOTAL SINCE 10.7
KILLED HEZBOLLAH
OPERATIVES



3,800+
TOTAL SINCE 10.7
ROCKETS ENTERED
TO ISRAEL

Week 31

IDSF הביטחוניסטיים
ISRAEL'S DEFENSE & SECURITY FORUM

Visit www.warinisrael.org for daily updating figures

05-11 May 2024

ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR:

Weekly War Summary

JUDEA & SAMARIA



150 / 4,000+
THIS WEEK / TOTAL SINCE 10.7
ARRESTED TERRORISTS



450+
TOTAL SINCE 10.7
KILLED TERRORISTS - IDF CLAIMS



4,666
TOTAL SINCE 10.7
PALESTINIAN TERROR ATTACKS



1 / 22
THIS WEEK / TOTAL SINCE 10.7
ISRAELI TERROR VICTIMS
& FALLEN SECURITY PERSONNEL

Week 31

IDSF הביטחוניסטיים
ISRAEL'S DEFENSE & SECURITY FORUM

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05-11 May 2024

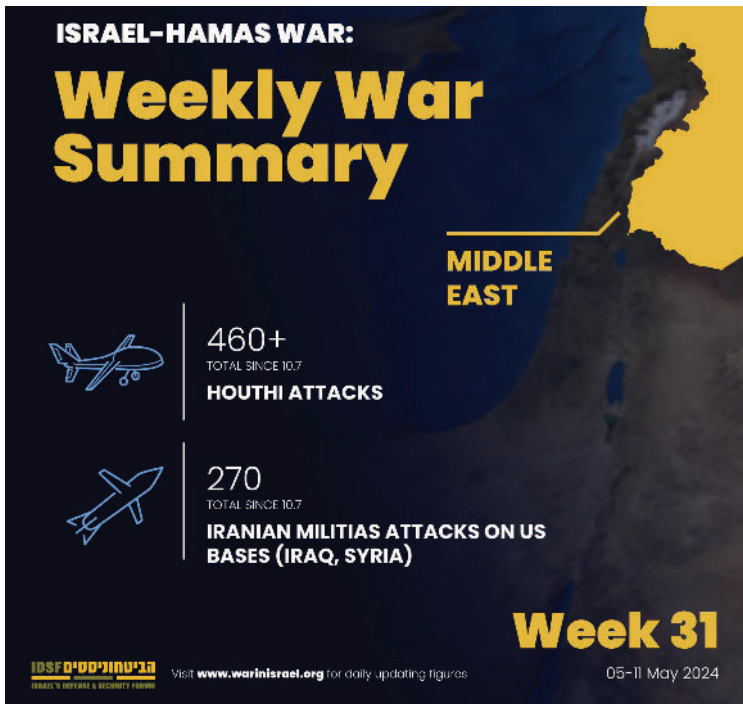
Lebanon

Operational

- Hezbollah attacked 11 times in one day, including two rocket barrages toward Kiryat Shmona (a total of 60 rockets were fired at the city, causing significant damage to buildings and property). The terror organization launched dozens of Katyushas toward the Golan Heights. The Israeli Air Force struck targets across Lebanon up to a depth of 80 km, attacking many terror infrastructures of the Radwan force. Hezbollah fired 744 rockets in April compared to 746 in March.
- A UAV that Hezbollah launched into Israeli territory was intercepted.
- Hezbollah attacked using a UAV on Metula, killing two reservists from Brigade 551, both aged 31. Rockets were launched from Syria toward the Golan Heights, and the Artillery Corps struck targets in southern Syria.
- Deputy Secretary-General of Hezbollah, Sheikh Naim Qassem, stated, "If Israel is preparing for war, we tell them that we have finished our preparations."
- Israeli aircraft fighters attacked about 15 military buildings and terror infrastructures located in a military camp associated with Hezbollah's Radwan force in the Arab al-Luweiza area of southern Lebanon.

Judea and Samaria

- Border Guard fighters apprehended 49 illegal residents in a single apartment in Jaffa; one suspect who was hiding under a bed was caught with a knife in his possession. In the only 24 hours, the forces detained approximately 170 illegal residents, 9 smugglers, 3 employers, 95 of them in the Jerusalem Border Police area and the rest in various places. Since the operation began at the start of the year, Border Guard fighters have detained over 5,500 illegal residents in all sectors and more than 900 suspects who facilitated, employed, and hosted illegal residents.
- Since the start of the war, approximately 4,000 wanted individuals have been arrested across the Judea and Samaria Division and the Jordan Valley and Valleys Brigade, about 1,700 of whom are affiliated with the Hamas terrorist organization.
- During an operational counterterrorism activity in the town of Deir A-Rusun near Tulkarm, Chief Inspector Yitav Halevi fell as part of a Yamam force operating in the area. Yamam is Israel's National Counterterrorism Unit and is a central tenet of the Israel Police. Halevi was the son of Yoram Halevi, the former commander of this elite unit. This activity comes against the backdrop of the increasing status of the Tulkarm area as a central terrorist hotbed, an area previously considered mitigated relatively to Jenin and Nablus. Multiple shooting incidents, intense operations and increased terrorist attacks and attempted attacks came out of Tulkarm in the past few months.



Global Jihad

ISIS is threatening to carry out attacks at various sporting events, including the Cricket World Cup in the USA and the West Indies, and the Euro 2024 games in Germany. ISIS has also encouraged "lone wolves" and has called on supporters to join "the battlefield in their countries." **Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados** will host the advanced stages of the tournament, which will attract large crowds and extensive viewership. Trinidad and Tobago will host the semi-final matches, while Barbados will host the final game. Given the concerns of these countries regarding potential ISIS attacks—especially considering that both recently declared their recognition of a Palestinian state and support for the Palestinians—it may indicate a certain concession in the face of fears from radical Islamic elements that might commit terrorist acts on their soil.

Egypt

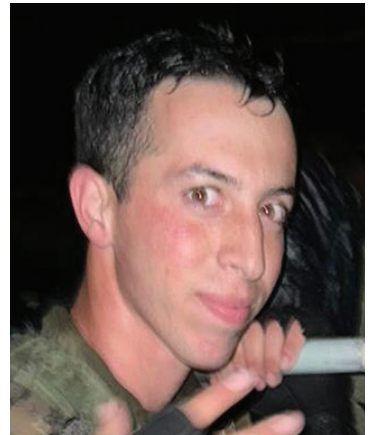
- Egypt is afraid that Hamas will blow up underground tunnels below their border which would allow Gazans to escape to Egypt. Egypt is trying to pressure Israel against its **Rafah operation by refusing to send aid trucks if the IDF does not withdraw from the Rafah crossing**. As a result, there is a **significant decrease in the amount of aid entering Gaza**. According to an Israeli official, there was coordination with the Egyptians before the takeover of the Rafah crossing, but the Egyptians withdrew from all understandings after the pictures of the tanks and the waving of the Israeli flag at the crossing began circling **Arab media**. **Egypt does not want to be seen as a collaborator and enabler of Israel**. Senior American officials claim that Israel did not properly coordinate with the Egyptians with the operation at the Rafah crossing.
- The Egyptians have briefed their own media by presenting themselves as tough on Israel- they said

that **Egypt warned Israel of the consequences of continuing its control over the Gazan side of the Rafah crossing and placed all responsibility for the deterioration of the humanitarian situation on Israel**.

- One of the channels of Hamas's military arm reports that the murder of **Canadian- Israeli businessman Ziv Keper** in Egypt was carried out by an Egyptian group calling itself "The Liberation Guards - **The Martyrs Group of Muhammad Salah**" (the Egyptian policeman who committed the murderous attack on the Egypt border in June 2023). They are publicizing this group's claim of responsibility for the murder.

Iran

- The British Telegraph revealed from sources within the Iranian opposition that Iran is training **Hezbollah fighters** to carry out attacks using unmanned aerial vehicles against northern Israel from a secret facility located about **five kilometers from the city of Qom**.
- Nechirvan Barzani, **the President of the Kurdish region in northern Iraq**, visited Tehran. During the visit, he **met with senior figures in the Iranian government**, including Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, President Ebrahim Raisi, Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council Ali-Akbar Ahmadian, Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian, Commander of the Revolutionary Guards Hossein Salami, and Speaker of the Majlis, Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf. They **discussed bilateral issues and developments in the region**. In his meeting with Barzani, President Raisi said that the government of Iraq and the Kurdish region must prevent any misuse by the **"Zionist regime" and "anti-revolutionary" groups in Iraqi territory to act against Iran**.
- The head of the Iranian Atomic Energy Organization, Mohammad Eslami, in a meeting with the Saudi ambassador to Tehran, Abdullah bin Saud Al-Anzi, stated: **"We are ready for nuclear cooperation with Saudi Arabia"**.
- During the Iranian Foreign Minister, Hossein-Amir Abdollahian's meeting with the head of the Turkish-Iranian Parliamentary Friendship Group, Kiyaa Turkmenoğlu, Abdollahian emphasized **Turkey's special place in Iran's policy towards its neighbors, pointing out the role of Iran and Turkey as two strongest countries in achieving sustained stability in the region of "West Asia."** After the Iranian Foreign Minister met with the Turkish Foreign Minister at the Summit of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in Gambia, he met with additional figures to **strengthen the axis between the neighboring countries**.



12 IDF soldiers fell in combat in the Gaza Strip this week and one Yamam combatant (Israel's National Counter-Terrorism Unit) in Tulkarm: Staff sergeant Ruben Marc Mordechai Assouline, Staff sergeant Ido Testa, Staff sergeant Tal Shavit, Sergeant Michael Ruzal, Master sergeant (res.) Nahman Natan Hertz, Master sergeant (res.) Dan Kamkagi, Staff sergeant Haim Sabach, Sergeant Itay Livny, Sergeant Yosef Dassa, Sergeant Ermiyas Mekuriyaw, Sergeant Daniel Levy, Staff sergeant Ariel Tsym, and Chief Inspector Yitav Halevi Of Blessed Memory