



ISRAEL NEWS

*A collection of the week's news from Israel
From the Bet El Twinning / Israel Action Committee of
Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation*

central Israel . A porous Seam Line during Ramadan would allow for the infiltration of terrorists who view the holiday not as a time for prayer, but as a window of opportunity for mass-casualty attacks.

Events...

Monday, February 2, 7pm

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Commentary...

Israel Cannot Afford a Hamas 'Victory Picture' During Ramadan

By Amine Ayoub

As the Islamic holy month of Ramadan approaches in mid-February, the State of Israel finds itself at a civilizational crossroads. Following a pivotal briefing to the Knesset National Security Committee on Monday, the Israel Police and security forces have issued a clear, uncompromising vow: there will be no "victory display" for Hamas on Jerusalem's Temple Mount.

The primary objective for the coming month is the prevention of a "victory picture"-the staged, triumphalist imagery of Hamas flags fluttering over Judaism's holiest site.

These displays are often dismissed as mere symbolic expressions of religious fervor. However, symbols are the lifeblood of rejectionism. In the reality of the Middle East, conflicts do not end through polite negotiation or economic incentives; they end only when the aggressor internalizes its own defeat. To allow a weakened, cornered Hamas to project an image of dominance in the heart of Jerusalem would be to grant them a strategic lifeline precisely when they must face the reality that their war aims have failed.

For decades, an analytical failure governed the Temple Mount. Security officials frequently sought "quiet" at any cost, often framing blatant religious incitement as "freedom of worship". This was the era of "managing the conflict"-a strategy that treated terror as a seasonal nuisance rather than an existential threat.

By allowing radical groups and Iranian-backed proxies to weaponize the Al-Aqsa Mosque as a staging ground for jihadi optics, Israel inadvertently signaled that its sovereignty was negotiable. Chief Supt. Ido Katzir's recent statement that Ramadan now takes place against the "backdrop of war" is a refreshing, if overdue, admission that the Temple Mount is a battlefield of narratives where celebrations of terror have "no place".

The tactical measures proposed for Ramadan 2026-limiting entry to men over 55, women over 50, and children under 12-are not "escalations," as Hamas claims, but essential pillars of security. These restrictions are designed to decouple genuine religious observance from the demographic most susceptible to the "lone-wolf" recruitment favored by Tehran. By limiting the presence of younger groups, the police are physically removing the shock troops used by Hamas to manufacture "clashes" for international consumption.

National Security Committee chairman Tzvi Foghel correctly identified that managing the fallout of the current conflict requires a formula for success based on inter-organizational cooperation, specifically targeting the potential for incitement by Iranian-backed entities that use religious events to ignite the masses.

Crucially, this security architecture must extend beyond the Old City walls.

The IDF's reinforcement of the "Seam Line"-the security barrier along the pre-1967 boundaries with Judea and Samaria-is a vital defensive component. As security officials have noted, these communities serve as the "protective wall" for the major cities of

The current conflict cannot be allowed to relapse into a wave of lone-wolf stabbings or car-rammings because the state was too timid to enforce its borders.

Hamas has already characterized these security measures as a "dangerous escalation" and an attack on religious freedom. This is a predictable script from an organization that has systematically converted religious and civilian spaces into military hubs.

The strategic imperative is clear: true peace follows the recognition of reality, and that reality requires the enemy to concede that their violent goals are impossible. If Hamas believes they can still achieve a "victory display" in Jerusalem, they will continue to resist disarmament and reconstruction efforts in Gaza. The road to a stable, post-Hamas reality begins with the total eclipse of their influence in Jerusalem.

The Israel Police and the IDF must remain steadfast. A ceasefire is not a surrender, and a pause is not a peace. The current era of regional conflict will only reach its conclusion when the citizens of Israel see that the flags of jihad have been permanently lowered. By preventing a Hamas victory picture this Ramadan, Israel is doing more than just securing a holy month; it is asserting the permanence of the state and the finality of its security goals. First recognition of defeat, then a path to stability. (IsraelNationalNews.com Jan 14)

Trump Appoints Hamas Patrons to Gaza Board, Raising Alarm in Israel

By David Isaac

Israel responded sharply to the Jan. 16 White House announcement that Turkey, Qatar and Pakistan would take part in the running of the Gaza Strip, leading to a rare breakdown in usually strong communication between America and Israel.

The Israeli Prime Minister's Office seemed caught off guard by the move, which came as part of a broader announcement about the formation of various bodies to implement Phase Two of President Donald Trump's 20-point plan to end the Gaza conflict.

On Jan. 17, the PMO said that "the composition of the Gaza Executive Board ... was not coordinated with Israel and is contrary to its policy."

Observers told JNS that Turkey, Qatar and Pakistan being members of a committee was one thing, but having them put troops on the ground was quite another.

Netanyahu stressed this in a Knesset speech on Monday, saying Israel would not accept Turkish and Qatari soldiers as part of the Gaza International Stabilization Force (ISF), the multinational peacekeeping group outlined in the Trump plan.

"Turkish soldiers and Qatari soldiers will not be in the Strip," the prime minister said. Israel has ruled out Pakistani troop participation as well.

Yoni Ben-Menachem, Middle East intelligence analyst for the Jerusalem Center for Security and Foreign Affairs (JCSA), told JNS: "The red line is boots on the ground. If there aren't Turkish and Qatari troops, the committee can decide what it wants. But on the ground, Israel will control the situation."

"The main question is whether they're going to have a presence in Gaza itself. That I hope is not going to happen," said IDF Brig.-Gen. (res.) Yossi Kuperwasser, head of the Jerusalem Institute for Strategy and Security (JISS), and former head of the Research Division at the Israel Defense Forces' Intelligence Corps.

Israel would have an uphill battle blocking Turkey and Qatar from the post-war process entirely due to their crucial role in

convincing Hamas to accept the Oct. 2025 ceasefire, which led to the return of the remaining living Israeli hostages, said Kuperwasser. “You have to pay something. So long as these countries are not involved on the ground, it’s inconvenient. It’s a problem, but it’s not the end of the world,” he added.

Jonathan Schanzer, executive director at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, agreed that the White House views Doha and Ankara as having earned their spots for advancing key parts of the first phase of Trump’s plan. The administration may also see broader regional participation as leading to normalization between Saudi Arabia and Israel, he said.

“The problem is that Turkey and Qatar are patrons of Hamas: financial, ideological, military patrons of a terrorist organization. They are, in other words, state sponsors of terrorism,” Schanzer told JNS.

“They are responsible for the war that erupted. They are responsible for not bringing that war to an end sooner. They are responsible for not reining in their terrorist proxy. And as a result, if you ask me, they should never have had a role to play.”

Qatar and Turkey should have been sanctioned and excluded from America’s alliance structures, Schanzer argued. Trump, he said, was following in the footsteps of a failed Biden policy, allowing Turkey and Qatar to take part in a process to end a war they helped start.

“It’s the antithesis of peace. To create a Board of Peace with these two countries makes zero sense,” said Schanzer.

Several other bodies were mentioned in the Jan. 16 White House statement, including the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza (NCAG), the technocratic body that will run daily life in the Strip, and a founding Executive Board (not to be confused with the Gaza Executive Board).

The Board of Peace (BoP), a much larger body which numerous countries have been invited to join, will hold a charter signing ceremony on Thursday at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

The Gaza Executive Board includes 11 members. Among them are Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan and Qatari diplomat Ali al-Thawadi, whose official title is minister at the prime minister’s office for strategic affairs.

Fidan is a problematic character, according to Schanzer. A former head of Turkish intelligence, Fidan played a key role in establishing Hamas’s presence in Turkey. He spearheaded a money laundering scheme that delivered \$20 billion in cash and gold to Iran, and he is responsible for enabling the flow of fighters and funds to Islamic State in Syria.

“Hakan Fidan is responsible for a huge amount of the chaos that we have seen unfold in and around Turkey, and he is probably the figure that I am most worried about when we talk about this board and the impact that it might have on the Middle East,” said Schanzer.

Turkey and Qatar will exploit their membership on the Gaza Executive Board to undermine efforts to truly disarm Hamas, said Ben-Menachem.

“Turkey and Qatar could be helpful, but they are not going to help,” Kuperwasser agreed, though he noted that it was they who gave Trump the idea that Hamas will disarm. “But by and large, it’s against their interest because Hamas is part of their axis and they want it to stay in power,” he said.

Despite the participation of bad actors, Kuperwasser said Israel should try to make the Trump plan work, as the alternative is for Israel to run Gaza itself. It will cost a fortune, require large numbers of troops and put Israel in charge of everything from Gazan sewage to health care. “We don’t want to be in daily friction with the Palestinians,” he said.

According to Schanzer, Israel’s options are somewhat limited. The question, he said, is how willing Jerusalem is to antagonize Trump given its other challenges in the region, in particular Iran.

The appointment of Turkey, Qatar and Pakistan is definitely a case of miscommunication, said Schanzer, but the friendship between Trump and Netanyahu is strong and he wouldn’t characterize the

situation as a crisis, but rather a disagreement.

For Ben-Menachem, ultimately all that matters is that Hamas disarms. And in his view, only Israel can accomplish this. “Nobody has the motivation and nobody has the military capabilities, only Israel,” he said. (JNS Jan 21)

From Free Speech to Fear: Synagogues Targeted by Terror Tactics

By Paul Goldenberg

America’s commitment to free speech is one of its greatest strengths. But free speech was never meant to be a license to intimidate, terrorize or target vulnerable communities. When protests are deliberately staged at Jewish institutions and synagogues—places of worship, community life and identity, not political power, the line between expression and coercion has already been crossed.

Recent pro-Palestinian demonstrations outside Jewish institutions and synagogues in New York have exposed a dangerous misconception: that as long as no physical violence occurs, intimidation is acceptable. It is not. And calling it “protest” does not make it so.

In response, New York Gov. Kathy Hochul has proposed legislation creating a 25-foot buffer zone around houses of worship and health-care facilities. While well-intentioned, this proposal is inadequate, and from the perspective of anyone who has actually commanded public-order policing, it borders on the ridiculous.

I say this as a former senior law-enforcement official responsible for managing large-scale demonstrations, civil unrest and public-safety threats. Distance does not neutralize intimidation. If fear is the objective, then 25 feet—or even 50—changes nothing. The message remains unmistakable: You are being watched, targeted and made unsafe because of who you are.

These demonstrations are not about persuading the public or influencing policy. If they were, then they would be directed at lawmakers, embassies or government institutions. Instead, they are aimed at Jewish institutions and synagogues, places where families pray, children learn and communities gather. That choice is not incidental. It is strategic.

This is why the debate is being framed incorrectly. This is not a First Amendment issue. The First Amendment protects speech, not harassment. It does not shield conduct intended to coerce civilians, disrupt religious life or instill fear in a targeted population. When demonstrations are designed to make people afraid to enter their own synagogues or community institutions, they cease to be expressive acts and become acts of intimidation.

Some are uncomfortable using the word terrorism. They shouldn’t be. Terrorism is defined by intent, not scale—the deliberate use of fear and intimidation against civilians to advance an ideological cause. When demonstrators target Jewish institutions rather than political actors, chant slogans linked to violent movements and exploit historical trauma to magnify fear, the intent is clear.

Context matters. Jewish communities are not reacting in a vacuum. They are responding in the aftermath of the Hamas-led terrorist attacks on Oct. 7, 2023, when 1,200 people were slaughtered and another 251 kidnapped; amid rising global antisemitism and synagogue attacks; and open calls for violence against Jews worldwide. Ignoring that context does not make us neutral; it makes us negligent.

It must also be said plainly that law enforcement is not the problem. Police officers on the ground have acted professionally and responsibly, often under intense pressure, to prevent escalation and maintain order. They are doing their jobs within the limits of the law. What they lack is not commitment but legal authority. When statutes are vague and consequences are minimal, officers are forced to manage intimidation rather than stop it.

What is most troubling—and least discussed—is that many of these demonstrations bear none of the hallmarks of spontaneous

grassroots activism. They are well organized, well-funded, coordinated across jurisdictions and professionally orchestrated. Messaging is uniform. Tactics are repeated. Targets are consistent. That alone warrants serious scrutiny.

Law-enforcement and national-security agencies must investigate these demonstrations for what they may represent. Some organizing entities may be receiving foreign funding or direction from adversarial actors who benefit from social division, religious intimidation and internal destabilization in the United States. This would not be unprecedented, and it would not be accidental.

The U.S. Department of Justice, as well as its federal and state partners, should assess whether the organizations coordinating and financing these actions meet the threshold for criminal conspiracy, material-support violations or racketeering activity. Where evidence supports it, accountability must follow. Political rhetoric does not confer immunity.

There is also a tangible and often overlooked consequence: financial harm. Jewish institutions targeted by these demonstrations are being forced to divert limited resources to private security, barriers and facility hardening costs incurred solely because they are being deliberately targeted. Organizations that orchestrate and fund such actions should be held civilly accountable for the foreseeable security costs that they impose. Forcing religious communities to absorb the financial burden of intimidation is not protected expression; it is economic coercion. Protest groups cannot externalize the cost of fear onto their targets and then claim moral exemption.

Supporters of buffer-zone legislation argue that it strikes a balance between free speech and religious freedom. It does not. Balance is not achieved by tolerating intimidation at a slightly greater distance. Law-enforcement professionals are trained to recognize pre-incident indicators—behaviors that signal escalation before violence occurs. Targeted harassment of Jewish institutions and synagogues is one of them. Waiting for violence before acting is not restraint; it is failure.

This debate is not unique to New York. Similar challenges are unfolding across the United States and in Canada, where Jewish institutions have increasingly become protest targets. The question everywhere is the same: Do Americans still have the right to worship and gather without fear?

Today, it is Jewish institutions and synagogues. Tomorrow, it may be churches, mosques or other vulnerable American religious institutions. Once intimidation is normalized, so long as it occurs just beyond an arbitrary perimeter, we erode not only religious freedom but the democratic values that depend on it.

Free speech is a cornerstone of democracy. But fear is its enemy. And when intimidation is disguised as protest, failing to name it is not neutrality; it is surrender.

America must draw a clear line: Protest policy all you want, but do not terrorize communities. Not at their doors. Not ever. (JNS Jan 16)

How Iran Protests Put Hezbollah's Survival in Jeopardy

By Yossi Mansharof

The protest movement in Iran reflects a deep crisis that will affect not only the conduct of the regime, fearful for its future and fighting for survival, but also the future of Hezbollah in Lebanon.

Within a single day, what began as an economic protest transformed into a comprehensive uprising against the regime itself, accompanied by demands for its removal. The unrest has gradually spread to all 31 provinces of the country.

Iran was already facing severe economic distress, compounded by acute water and energy crises. Yet since January 2025, the Khamenei-led regime has transferred a billion dollars to Hezbollah, as part of its effort to maintain and strengthen the organization. This extensive financial assistance underscores Hezbollah's immense importance to the regime, even in the post-Nasrallah era.

The question, however, is whether Iran can reap the dividends of this investment while mired in a severe internal crisis and facing a

tangible American military threat. The regime relies on Hezbollah to bolster its deterrence posture vis-à-vis the US and Israel, and also to help suppress protesters, whose numbers reportedly peaked at nearly two million, according to the opposition-affiliated Iran International, although the unrest had somewhat subsided at the time of writing.

Since the protests escalated, media outlets, including CNN, have reported that militants from various militias arrived in Iran to assist in suppressing the unrest. CNN reported that approximately 5,000 fighters from four Iraqi militias – Kataib Hezbollah, al-Nujaba, Kataib Sayyid al-Shuhada, and the Badr Organization – were deployed for this purpose.

These reports align with a January 12 statement by Kataib Hezbollah's secretary-general, Abu Hussein al-Hamidawi, who declared to the Iranian regime and to Khamenei that his organization was "unambiguously with you and will defend the Iranian people." Testimonies from Iranian citizens also indicate that foreign, Arabic-speaking elements participated in the repression.

Kataib Hezbollah further threatened on January 16 to attack US bases in Iraq and across the region should the Iranian regime be attacked.

Hezbollah itself, however, condemned the protests in a January 13 statement, adhering to the regime's narrative that the unrest reflects an American-Israeli conspiracy rather than an authentic expression of the Iranian people's will. Unlike its Iraqi counterpart, the Lebanese-based terrorist group refrained from expressing readiness to participate in suppressing the protests or threatening to assist the Iranian regime if attacked.

This restraint stems from Hezbollah's complex political predicament in Lebanon. The Lebanese state's ongoing efforts to disarm the organization underscore that, given its current weakness, Hezbollah cannot even signal an intention to assist the Iranian regime in crushing protests. Such a move would provoke fierce criticism from Lebanese political elites and society, who already accuse Hezbollah of being an Iranian actor rather than a Lebanese one.

Moreover, should US President Donald Trump follow through on his threats and attack the Iranian regime, Hezbollah would likely be unable to join any retaliatory campaign against American interests in the region or against Israel, unlike the Houthis. Doing so would expose it to a US military strike and give Israel a pretext for a broad assault, rather than limiting itself to targeted strikes against Hezbollah operatives and infrastructure.

It bears recalling that, in light of Hezbollah's weakening under Naim Qassem, one of the groups founders who replaced Hassan Nasrallah as its leader when he was assassinated in October 2024, the organization did not assist the Iranian regime during the Iran-Israel 12-day war. According to the Emirati media outlet The National, citing Lebanese sources, Hezbollah committed to the Lebanese state that it would not participate in that war or drag Lebanon into it, following pressure from senior Lebanese officials.

Beyond this, if the protests succeed and the Iranian regime is overthrown, Hezbollah would face grave danger due to multiple factors. The organization is deeply dependent on Iran, and a regime collapse could place it in an existential predicament. Its rivals in Lebanon's political arena and in society – already declaring that the fall of the Iranian regime would spell Hezbollah's end and enable the establishment of a sovereign Lebanese state – would likely seek to fully exploit such a development.

Top Iranian commanders emphasized after the fall of the Assad regime that Tehran spent the past decade equipping Hezbollah with local production capabilities. While the terrorist group uses these capabilities along with smuggling from Iran and Syria, this arsenal appears primarily designed for fighting Israel. A significant portion of it would be ill-suited to a struggle for the organization's very survival inside Lebanon.

As the Syrian case demonstrates, sectarian violence tends to surge following tectonic shifts in the region. Hezbollah could therefore face mass violence from some of its rivals. The scale of

change anticipated under a free Iran is already evident in a chant heard among Iranian protesters: “Not Gaza, not Lebanon, my life for Iran.”

Furthermore, in a manifesto published on January 15 outlining his anticipated policies, crown prince in exile Reza Pahlavi emphasized that he would establish peace with Israel, end support for terrorism, and cooperate with regional and global actors against extremist Islamism.

The overthrow of the Iranian regime would clearly serve Israel’s strategic interests. Consequently, Tehran’s demands for “fair play” and its complaints about foreign interference ring hollow, given its own history of dispatching tens of thousands of mercenaries to Syria to defend Bashar al-Assad, along with its blunt military interventions across the region and beyond. Israel would reap substantial benefits from such a tectonic shift, whose repercussions would resonate throughout the Middle East, particularly in Lebanon.

In its current fragile condition, Hezbollah appears incapable of assisting the Iranian regime if attacked or of suppressing renewed protests. Israel should act to promote such a scenario, while preparing for the possibility that Hamas may launch attacks from Lebanon in support of the Iranian regime. (Jerusalem Post Jan 20)

Trump Deserves ‘Trust’ on Gaza and Iran, not Blind Faith

By Jonathan S. Tobin

When Steve Witkoff, special envoy to the Middle East in the Trump administration, told an audience at the Israel-American Council’s conference this week in Hollywood, Fla., that they should “trust” President Donald Trump to do the right thing on both Iran and Gaza, many, if not most, of those in attendance were probably ready to do so. Trump’s historic support for Israel and willingness to repeatedly confront the Islamist regime in Tehran have earned him the benefit of the doubt when it comes to what will happen in 2026.

Right now, the administration seems primarily focused on the next steps. For the moment, Trump appears to have backed down from his threats to attack the regime to force it to stop the mass killings of dissidents. Whether this leads to negotiations with the mullahs, as some members in the administration appear to have been advising, remains to be seen.

It’s probably premature to say for certain that Washington has found an opportunity to push the theocrats and their Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps past the tipping point when their fall would be inevitable. But if reports are true that their bloody tactics have succeeded in largely quelling the protest movement, then hopes for freedom for Iranians and a respite from the regime’s terrorist campaign and nuclear threats for the Middle East have been disappointed.

When it comes to what the administration is doing to implement the ceasefire it brokered in the Gaza Strip, disillusionment is also merited. At the IAC event, Witkoff touted the announcement of the naming of a technocratic governance framework for Gaza called the Board of Peace. While he exuded optimism, what he appears to be asking for is not so much support for a coherent policy, but blind faith that is unjustified by actions on the ground.

Witkoff said that the board, of which Trump is the titular chairman, will “forever replace Hamas” and that this “actually happened today.” That body is a key element of the ceasefire that ended the fighting in the war that followed the Hamas-led Palestinian attack on southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023. The agreement was predicated on a pledge that Hamas would not only disarm but also give up power in Gaza.

Trump is, as he said in a post on Truth Social, vowing that the ceasefire’s terms will be implemented, including “full demilitarization,” and that “they” (meaning, Hamas) “can do this the easy way or the hard way.”

But a briefing this week by Trump aides seemed to indicate that the administration may be defining demilitarization as something other than the absolute terms used by the president. That involved, “a

general concept, which is the terror infrastructure that’s been built in Gaza will be destroyed and the heavy weaponry, like RPGs and rocket launchers and missiles, those need to be put into a place where they’re not being used to defend against Israel, or in offensive raids or attacks on Israel.”

Another important element of the ceasefire—the creation of an International Stabilization Force, staffed by non-Israeli foreign soldiers who would enforce its rules—also appears to be a matter of trusting Trump, and by extension, Witkoff. Like the Board of Peace, whose efforts would be led by Ali Shaath, a Palestinian civil engineer who previously held a post with the Palestinian Authority, the force is being organized in consultations between Witkoff and representatives of Qatar, Turkey, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Morocco.

That may sound good to Witkoff. But as with the facts about Iran, a wide gap exists between the promises and tough talk, and the reality of post-ceasefire Gaza.

Hamas remains in control of roughly 47% of the Strip after Israel withdrew a “yellow line” mandated by the October agreement. Inside that territory, there is every indication that operatives are doing their best to rearm and repair the tunnel network where they store arms, material and hide their terrorist cadres.

No one seriously believes that they can be trusted to store any of their equipment in a manner that will prevent them from using it to attack Israel as soon as they are ready to resume their war against the Jewish state. And as long as Hamas cadres are still armed with lethal weapons not covered by this farcical process, the notion that Palestinian Arab technocrats will implement policies or reconstruction that will prevent Hamas from retaining control is simply nonsense. Nor is there any reason to believe that a stabilization force that isn’t prepared to fight Hamas (and one composed of elements from the countries that Witkoff is talking with won’t do that) will budge the Islamists from power.

Like their sponsors in Tehran, Hamas forces in Gaza are not prepared to simply meekly accept that their time on the world stage has come and gone. These are people whose beliefs are rooted in fanatical religious faith that considers the use of violence not merely acceptable, but integral to their dogmatic system. Mere threats, even those from a president who has shown his willingness to order strikes on Iran and Venezuela, won’t suffice.

There is reason to believe that the Israeli government understands that Trump’s scheme for peace won’t lead to a Gaza free of Hamas. And since Hamas believes that it is engaged in a multi-generational war to destroy Israel, that means the conflict will, sooner or later, begin again. In the short term, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is likely not eager to lead a weary nation that is still recovering from two years of fighting back into combat.

There is no question that the Hamas regime in the truncated Gaza it controls is not nearly as dangerous as the one it ruled as an independent Palestinian state in all but name on Oct. 6, 2023. Add to that the beating Israel administered to Hezbollah to its north has reduced, if not eliminated, the threat it posed from Lebanon. The related fall of the Bashar Assad regime in Syria, another ally of Iran, also reduced the peril Israel and the region faced from Tehran. And the Israeli and U.S. airstrikes on Iran’s nuclear and missile programs altered the balance of power in the region.

Still, the expectations for the fall of the Islamist regime in Tehran that were raised in recent weeks by domestic protests may not be fulfilled. The same is true for the promises being made by Trump and Witkoff about real change in Gaza.

The administration deserves credit for not making the Middle East worse, as well as for backing Israel in ways that have made it safer and undermined the Islamist forces waging war on the West. Its policy goals and tough-minded approach may yield more such gains. But for now, optimism about Trump’s vision for peace in the Middle East must yield to grim determination to continue a long war against forces that have no intention of giving up. (JNS Jan 16)