

World Zionist Organization Activity Report – Iron Swords war Update 18-24 October 2023

❖ **Regards from Home** – the World Zionist Organization launched an initiative inviting parents and families of men and women soldiers whose parents are not living in Israel to send packages and letters to their children. The WZO will then ensure the delivery of everything to the soldiers’ locations.

All relatives need to do is to package the parcel, write the soldier’s name and telephone number on it, together with any other relevant contact information. The package then requires an outer wrapping, where they should mark: ***c/o the World Zionist Organization Emergency Center, Rehov Hamelech George 48, P.O. Box 92, Jerusalem 910002 Israel.***



❖ **Being There for Bereaved Families** – The number of families finding themselves among the bereaved continues to rise as more loved ones are identified as being among the fallen. Among the many families sitting *shiva* there are mourners without visitors to comfort them. The World Zionist Organization created a WhatsApp group to help these empty *shiva* homes and issued an appeal to the general public to find whatever time they can to visit these families and offer them comfort and support in their time of need.

To join the support group to help these families, please click on this link: [WhatsApp Group Invite](#)



❖ **Experiential Activity Program at the Herzl Center** – As part of the World Zionist Organization’s endeavors to raise the morale of residents evacuated from their homes in southern and northern Israel, an experiential program has swung into action at the Herzl Center incorporating enjoyable and enriching activities with Zionist content. The program is open free to evacuees, including transportation and meals.





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World Zionist Organization

❖ **Unity Shabbat** – As a result of the difficult events that are touching all of us, The World Zionist Organization initiated, together with the Ministry for Diaspora Affairs and the Jewish Agency for Israel, a “World Unity Shabbat” involving 180 Jewish and Israeli organizations from over 40 countries. Together they conducted special Kabbalat Shabbat activities in solidarity with and support of Israel. The program was also publicized in Israel on *Ynet* (*Yediot Aharonot news portal*), *Galei Zahal* (IDF radio), *Reshet Bet* (Israel National Radio news channel) and Israel *Channel 13* TV, which gave exposure to hundreds of thousands of Israelis.

This week, on 27 October, there will be a joint Kabbalat Shabbat Zoom activity with guest moderators, songs, readings and other features.

A special booklet (in Hebrew, English and Spanish) has been produced for this activity, incorporating songs and readings from traditional Jewish and modern Israeli sources, to facilitate participation in this Kabbalat Shabbat worldwide. The Jewish people today is more united than ever before – because our strength lies in our unity.

The brochure can be downloaded from this link: [Unity Shabbat](#)



❖ **Kabbalat Shabbat for Evacuee Families** – The World Zionist Organization is organizing throughout Israel, as well as online, “Pre-Shabbat Encounters” for evacuees. Each encounter incorporates songs and stories and, above all, provides a window of respite and an opportunity to come together.



❖ Aid to the Inhabitants and Communities Living near the Gaza Border

- 'Tekuma' (Redevelopment) Administration – The Israel Civilian Cabinet recently resolved to establish a 'Tekuma' Administration, which has been charged with responsibility for rebuilding the Gaza border region. The World Zionist Organization, via the Settlement Division, constitutes an active partner in this body. The Settlement Division will be engaged in dimensions of the program relating to community, housing and construction. Support for community resilience within these communities is being done in partnership with *Mahut Israel*, a non-profit organization specializing in community rehabilitation, which will provide professional response and guidance to the Division and work alongside local councils and communities to support them in this process. The overall cost of this program is 5,000,000 NIS.
- Damage Survey – The World Zionist Organization, via the Settlement Division, has already commissioned a team of engineers to commence a mapping survey in order to prepare a comprehensive database of all the damage, as well as to tender solutions and estimate the needs and expected costs.
- Rental freeze – The Settlement Division manages buildings throughout Israel, including in the Gaza border region, where most of the inhabitants in localities that were designated 'closed military areas' have had to leave their homes. A decision was therefore made to freeze payment of rental fees for use of 'pre-fab' home structures managed by the Settlement Division, from October this year and until such time as the situation becomes clearer.
- Payments Protocol – Since the outbreak of hostilities, the Settlement Division has acted to streamline the time frame on account payments to local councils and suppliers. This includes some relaxation of stringency on requirements in relation to some of the permits and documents normally required in order to help the respective councils and suppliers preserve critical liquidity in their budgets and businesses at this time.
- Dialogue with Community Leadership Figures – Teams from the Settlement Division have been traveling around the respective communities in Israel with a view to embracing, learning and supporting the needs on the ground.





הסתדרות הציונית העולמית
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- ❖ **Ulpan Activity in the Diaspora** – The World Zionist Organization’s Hebrew Ulpanim in the Diaspora began their new academic year in October. Since the outbreak of war in Israel, ongoing updates have been provided to Ulpan personnel and an advocacy strategy has been put in place, with a view to mediating the situation in Israel to students and assisting Israel’s own endeavors in this respect.
- ❖ **Fly the Nest** – A support project for parents in Argentina whose children made Aliyah and are without family in Israel. The World Zionist Organization is currently providing assistance to parents, by mediating Israeli reality as well as offering them emotional support and encouragement.
- ❖ **Activity Programs in Latin America** – The World Zionist Organization is working to develop Israel advocacy content in Spanish and easy Hebrew for the general public, Jewish communities and Ulpan students, with an emphasis on expanding the range of talks and advocacy activity. Examples include the placement of billboard posters, calling for the return of the hostages, in prominent locations on the Buenos Aires underground and at bus stops in over 30 other cities; involvement in the planning and holding of pro-Israel rallies in Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, Porto Allegra and Curitiba; Zoom encounters with community members; translation of articles and features from Israeli journals.





הסתדרות הציונית העולמית
World Zionist Organization

❖ **Activity Programs in North America** – The World Zionist Organization has partnered with Jewish communities and Zionist Federations in North America, conducting wide-ranging Israel advocacy activities. These include encounters, webinars, as well as Zoom sessions with local politicians and well-known personalities, which have engaged thousands of people. Additionally, a dedicated daily slot is running on *Freedom FM* radio station with an Israel advocacy program addressing how to support Israel and offering updates on the current situation. There is also ongoing cooperation with *Radio Vera*, a Russian-language station in Canada, with jointly developed advocacy materials, edited and produced for their on-air slots.



❖ **Donations Center** – The World Zionist Organization’s Center has continued at full capacity over the past week. Large donations of equipment for the security forces have been collected, including, *inter alia*: mattresses, advanced medical emergency equipment, head-torches, battery chargers, winter detail, etc. This week, the World Zionist Organization volunteer personnel have been joined by staff with special needs, as part of the WZO’s year-round endeavors to involve people with special needs within the organization.

To receive any kind of assistance, please register at the following link:

<https://bit.ly/3PT1FGt>

For companies and donors interested in contributing equipment, kindly contact us via one of these channels: +972-2-6204333 / WhatsApp <https://bit.ly/46wSYsv>





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- ❖ **Cultural & Respite Activity Programs for Evacuees** – The World Zionist Organization, via its subsidiary Culture for Israel (*Tarbut LeYisrael*), is continuing with cultural activities and events. To date, it has held 2,560 activity events across Israel for the evacuees, featuring leading Israeli artists and theatre performances.



- ❖ **Israel Advocacy in Jewish Schools** – The World Zionist Organization is in ongoing contact with many Jewish schools around the world and has been providing talks and updates for school principals and teachers on the situation in Israel and how to address it. It also engaged in the preparation of advocacy resources and educational materials that have been disseminated to school principals.
- ❖ **My Home is Your Home** – Further to the appeal to Jews in the Diaspora and in Israel who own vacant apartments, asking them if they would be prepared to house evacuee families who lost their homes, 250 apartments have been offered to date.

