

World Zionist Organization Activity Report During Iron Swords War **Update for 21-28 November 2023**

- ❖ **Assistance for Israeli Agriculture** – Israeli agriculture is currently contending with immense challenges, with the primary difficulty being a severe shortage of agricultural labor. In order to help sustain the operational stability and continuity of the agricultural process and ensure the unbroken supply of fresh “blue and white” produce to the Israeli market, we worked hands-on alongside hundreds of other Israeli volunteers this week on Moshav Beit Ezra. A video clip is available on

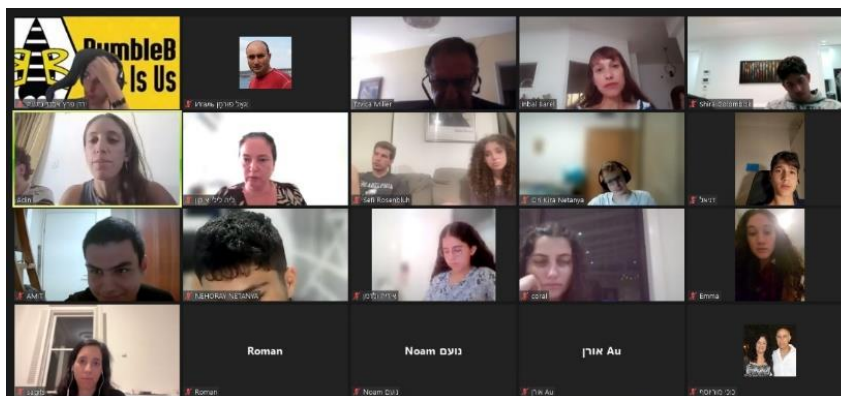


<https://www.facebook.com/WZOhebrew/videos/398818799136436>

- ❖ **Worldwide Zionist Federation Heads' Solidarity Mission** – The World Zionist Organization organized a program for a solidarity mission that brought to Israel representatives from Zionist Federations in the US, UK, Canada, South Africa, France, Bulgaria, Denmark, Mexico and Colombia. Heads of Zionist Federations met with the Chairman of the World Zionist Organization Executive and the Head of the Department for Irgun and Israelis Abroad. These meetings preceded addresses by speakers from the press and the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs about the current situation in Israel and its impact on the Diaspora. The delegation attended a memorial ceremony for the fallen in the “Operation Iron Swords” war at the National Memorial Hall on Mount Herzl and also participated in a deeply moving encounter with evacuees from Kibbutz Or Haner, who have been living in relocation at a Jerusalem hotel for over one month. The group is scheduled to travel on a solidarity tour, with a site visit to the Gaza border region communities of Mefalsim and Kfar Aza, and a tour of the southern region. Returning to Tel Aviv, they will visit the campaign headquarters established by the families of the hostages and “Hostages Square,” formerly known as the Tel Aviv Museum Plaza.



- ❖ **Connection with Hebrew Language Teachers and Educators Worldwide** – The World Zionist Organization is in constant contact with Hebrew language teachers and educators around the world, supplying educational resources, conducting professional in-service training and promoting the discipline and status of Hebrew language instruction in the Diaspora. One recent initiative is an ongoing series of online encounters between Israeli and Diaspora teenagers and college students, creating a shared space for dialogue about events in Israel. It offers young Jews in the Diaspora exposure to a live Israeli environment where they have an opportunity to hear what their peers in Israel are feeling and can engage in an authentic, open exchange that also opens a window on how the war is affecting everyone's life in Israel. Approximately 600 Jewish students from the US, Canada and Europe attended the first encounter, including middle and senior high school students at Jewish schools and Hebrew language students at universities and colleges. The first meeting proved meaningful for all the participants and has been followed by a series of weekly meetings (or thrice weekly, on occasion), attended by students, teachers and faculty from North America, Europe, Australia, Paraguay, Costa Rica and other countries. The scope of participation on the Israeli side has also broadened, with increasing numbers of high school students from Haifa, Netanya, Ashdod, Petah Tikvah, with additional groups joining from *kibbutzim* and *moshavim* in the Emek Hefer and Lachish regions. The program has also been extended to include high school students who fled the war in Russia and Ukraine, who are now contending with the war experience in Israel. Another part of this program has been a series of special meetings in Spanish, organized in conjunction with the Education Board of Amia, for dozens of Jewish schools in Argentina, and a separate encounter for non-Jewish schools. These encounters have made a significant contribution to *Hasbara* (public diplomacy) at an international level and the demand for them continues to grow. The plan is to expand to cover other target populations, such as *olim chadashim* (new immigrants to Israel), educators, and others.



- ❖ **Release the Hostages Exhibit** – Representatives of the World Zionist Organization toured the World Zionist Organization display in Hostages Square, which was created as part of the collective effort toward the campaign for the return of the hostages from Gaza. Following the tour, they visited the campaign headquarters.

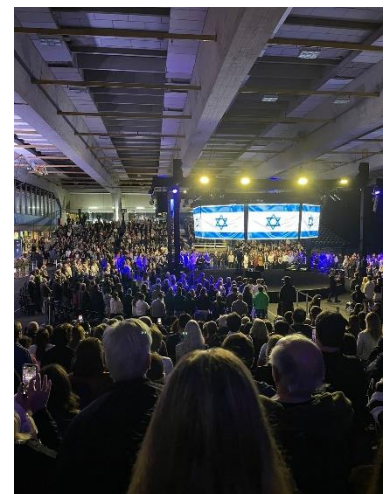


- ❖ **Educational Programming for Children from the Gaza Border Region** – The World Zionist Organization continues to organize visits to evacuees at their hotels and help evacuee children via a program of experiential school activities, aligned with their curriculum.



❖ **Activity Programs in Latin America**

- An online solidarity encounter with Israel took place at which participants met with one of the survivors of the massacre in Kibbutz Beeri.
- A major speaker event took place in Sao Paulo, Brazil, featuring Mosab Hassan Yousef, the son of a senior Hamas figure, who is a pro-Israel, anti-terror activist and co-wrote his own autobiography, entitled "*Son of Hamas*".



- ❖ **Chairs of Hope** – More than 240 Mexicans joined the “Chairs of Hope” project, which keeps attention focused on the plight of the Israeli hostages in Gaza. Each chair is symbolic of the hope for their speedy release, while the collective grouping of all the chairs expresses everyone’s feelings of solidarity, unity, and yearning for the return of all the hostages.



❖ **Activity Programs in Europe**

- “Being a doctor in Israel” - In conjunction with the “Gevahim” non-profit association, a professional webinar for doctors was organized in France; the event was attended by approximately 80 doctors from around the country. Guest speakers were Dr. Rina-Irene Fremont, recipient of the Ministry of Immigration and Absorption prize for her special contribution to Israeli society in the field of medicine; Dr. Gilles Morali and Dr. Dan Taieb, an alumnus of the Department for Aliyah Promotion’s medical *Ulpan* who made Aliyah four years ago. The speakers gave accounts of their personal Aliyah experiences and their work as medical doctors in Israel.
- Parents of French *olim* attended a lecture by Anat Alhayani, a parent counselor, who addressed techniques to re-establish the feeling of personal security in the wake of the October 7 events.
- World Zionist Organization Hebrew Ulpan teachers in France joined demonstrations on the International Day for Prevention of Violence against Women, which falls on 25 November.



- ❖ **International Day of the Child** – To mark the International Day of the Child on 20 November, hundreds of people assembled in front of the UNICEF building in Madrid, demanding the release of the child hostages held captive in Gaza. In Copenhagen, 800 teddy bears were displayed on city streets as part of an exhibit demanding the release of the child hostages.



- ❖ **'We Are Here for You'** – Since the horrific massacres on 7 October, there has been a 500% escalation in antisemitic incidents across Europe and the states of the US. This has led to a parallel demand for guidance, together with accessible and useful tools to contend with Antisemitism around the world. For this purpose, the World Zionist Organization has opened a dedicated response center for Jews in the Diaspora who have experienced Antisemitism or need specialized assistance and guidance. The email address for anyone requiring help is care4u@wzo.org.il



- ❖ **"Commemoration and Connection" Project** – Under this aegis, an extensive tour of Kfar Aza was conducted for the "Influencers Conference" – a group of 40 senior journalists from the Hareidi sector and from the Israeli mass media (print, radio, TV and various social media platforms.) The guided tour was led by Lt. Col. (Res.) Yaron Buskila, IDF Operations Commander for the Gaza Division. During the visit, an overview of the identification and collection process was presented by ZAKA-HQ's volunteer Search and Rescue cataloguing officer, Mr. Simcha Greinman, who has remained on site ever since the massacres. The group of influencers also met with residents, heard firsthand about atrocities committed on the black Shabbat and were able to view in person disturbing evidence from the horrific massacres perpetrated there. The next stop was the *Ichud Hatzalah* Medical Emergency Ops Room at Kibbutz Sde Yoav, where they heard accounts from staff and listened to original recordings from the volunteer rescue teams on the ground on 7 October. In the days following the visit, there was an unfolding of online reports appearing on websites and across social media, bringing a unique perspective on events of 7 October. This new *reportage* has supplied a much-needed broadening of media coverage in these times, helping the accounts gain worldwide exposure.



- ❖ **Embracing IDF Soldiers with Love** – The mobile shower units are still traveling to northern and southern-central Israel to supply facilities for IDF soldiers. During the humanitarian pause, the southern unit was able to enter the Gaza Strip and offer hot showers to soldiers.

- ❖ **The World Zionist Organization Donations Center** –

It has been another week of intense activity at the Donations Center, in response to a wide range of incoming requests from the field. The main projects moving ahead this week include the purchase of storm wear for the Israel Navy and the combat unit on the ground inside the Gaza Strip; softshell jackets for soldiers; coffeemakers and clothes storage closets for evacuees from South-central Israel; and emergency medical kits for local volunteer watch units in the Hof Ashkelon (Ashkelon Coast) Regional Council.

The Donations Center has received a great deal of positive feedback and grateful messages of appreciation – we bring two of them below:

I wish to thank the World Zionist Organization for the donation that has truly made a difference. Thanks to your generous donation, our hotel room is already beginning to feel like home. The children have their own closet, just as they do at home, and it creates a warm vibe that is literally tangible. Thank you for thinking about us, you have warmed our hearts. 🙏

*Wow! You have made us so happy with this coffeemaker. 💖
A huge thank you to the World Zionist Agency [sic] for your generous gift to us, as residents of Israel's Gaza border region. It warms our hearts in these difficult times.
A blessing on you all. 🙏*



- ❖ **Branding for Bulletproof Vests and Helmets** – The World Zionist Organization logo and legend have now been successfully imprinted on helmets and bulletproof vests intended for all organizational units in service or on tour in the field.



- ❖ **“Embracing Israel’s South-western Border”** – The Zionist Council in Israel continues to lead recreational break activities for evacuee families displaced from their homes in northern and southern Israel. One of the memorable programs this week was an event for child evacuees in Kibbutz Ein Harod Ichud and Kibbutz Nir David, in conjunction with the Israel Police, with guest star Tal Moseri, a popular children’s TV figure. The event included food stalls and extreme sports for children in skills relating to the work of the Israel Police and Firefighting Service. The children also received World Zionist Organization commemoration wristbands (In Memoriam, Bring Them Home, For Victory).

Other recreational breaks were organized for evacuee kids in Maalot, with a show and an amazing juggling workshop; at the Dan Hotel in Tel Aviv, volunteers helped evacuees create an incredible “drumming circle” performance.



- ❖ **Students for Agriculture** – In conjunction with the Zionist Council in Israel, the student community of “Totseret Ha’aretz” (“Made in Israel”) in Nof Hagalil embarked on a week of volunteer harvest work in the Emek Hefer region, in order to help support Israeli agriculture and the promotion of fresh Israeli produce.



- ❖ **Reinforcing the Living Covenant with Druze Society** – The Zionist Council in Israel has created a support project for families of Druze *miluimniks* (IDF reservists), which has so far delivered over 300 support and care packages to families of Druze reservists who received emergency call-up notices. The gift packs include board games for children, game activities for families, snack foods and a greeting card carrying wishes for unity and peace. The project received chat coverage by reporters from Israel National Channel 12 News as well as appearing on the Walla news website.



- ❖ **Ilai's Bar Mitzvah** – Prior to the outbreak of war and the family's evacuation from Kiryat Shemonah, Ilai Azoulay had been preparing for his Bar Mitzvah. Israel Zionist Council activists, together with others, came to the Club Hotel to roll out a memorable Bar Mitzvah celebration for Ilai.



- ❖ **My Home is Your Home** – This project continues to offer a bridge to connect displaced families who have lost their homes and help them find safe haven in challenging times. For further details and registration, please open this link: <https://www.wzo.org.il/departments/myhome/my-home-your-home/en>



- ❖ **Cooperation with the Families of the Hostages' Campaign HQ** – The President of the World Zionist Organization attended the recent Z3 Conference in Palo Alto, California, in cooperation with the Hostage Families' Campaign HQ. The aim was to leverage US and worldwide Zionist Federations' existing connections and access a new platform for the families' stories, where they hoped to reach an audience of influencers with millions of followers on social media, as well as familiar groups of the Jewish public. The conference offered unparalleled opportunities for them to tell their personal stories in face-to-face encounters, which left no-one indifferent to the hostages' plight.

