

## Press Review n°174. By Gilberte Jacaret

Peres to Israeli rescue teams in Haiti: You are pinnacle of IDF... President Shimon Peres held a conference call with members of the Israeli delegation to Haiti, and thanked them for their contribution and aid to the victims of the Haiti disaster....

The call was broadcast to all the medical teams on the public announcement system at the Israeli hospital.

"The entire nation is watching you every day with a crying heart and deep concern. You are the pinnacle of the capability of the IDF, which is not just Israel's defense forces, but is also the defense forces of people. It is not important where a disaster strikes, you are the first ones properly organized to help," said Peres.

HAITI

Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Israel beyond politics. Israeli aid arrives in Haiti, field hospital set up... Haaretz, Jan.15

PORT-AU-PRINCE - The Israeli field hospital in the earthquake-stricken Haitian capital reflects the streets of the city, fluctuating between despair and hope amid the looting, violence and stories of miracles. Each account takes on great importance against the background of the earthquake that devastated the Western hemisphere's poorest country.

ZAKA mission to Haiti 'proudly desecrating Shabbat... 'Ynet, Jan 16

ZAKA, a rescue team made up of religious volunteers, has been working overtime in the quake-stricken Haitian capital of Port au-Prince. Late Friday night they found a few minutes to conduct Kabbalat Shabbat.

"With all the hell going on outside, even when things get bad Judaism says we must take a deep breath and go on to save more people."

Haiti official: Quake death toll may reach 200,000... Haaretz, Jan 16

"We have already collected around 50,000 dead bodies. We anticipate there will be between 100,000 and 200,000 dead in total, although we will never know the exact number," Interior Minister Paul Antoine Bien-Aime told Reuters.

Some 40,000 bodies had been buried in mass graves, Secretary of State for Public Safety Aramick Louis said.

If the casualty figures turn out to be accurate, the 7.0 magnitude quake that hit impoverished Haiti on Tuesday would be

one of the 10 deadliest earthquakes ever recorded.

Three days after it struck, gangs of robbers had begun preying on survivors living in makeshift camps on sidewalks and streets strewn with rubble and decomposing bodies, as quake aftershocks rippled through the hilly neighborhoods&hellip;

Planes and ships arrived with rescue teams, search dogs, heavy equipment, tents, water purification units, food, doctors and telecoms teams. But with a clogged airport, wrecked seaport and roads littered with rubble, as well as the sheer scale of the destruction, aid was not yet reaching hundreds of thousands of victims.

The U.S. State Department said Haiti's government granted temporary control of the nation's main airport to the United States to speed earthquake relief work.

IDF aid mission arrives in Haiti

The Israel Defense Forces' aid mission to Haiti landed in Port-au-Prince earlier Friday with equipment for setting up an emergency field hospital. Around 220 soldiers and officers make up the delegation, including 120 medical staff who will operate the hospital in the Haitian capital.

The original plan was for the IDF to first send a Home Front Command rescue team, followed by medical teams.

But after contact was made with Haitian authorities, the army and Foreign Ministry decided that the Caribbean country's most pressing need was extra medical staff. Nearly every hospital in Haiti was destroyed in Tuesday's earthquake.

The mission includes 40 doctors, 20 paramedics and 24 nurses, as well as medics and medical technicians. Around a third of the delegation is made up of reservists who were called up especially for the mission.

The IDF's chief medical officer, Brig. Gen. Nachman Esh, said that while the field hospital will largely treat trauma patients, similar to those encountered in a war, specialists in various other fields have also been sent.

"We expect to have to deal mainly with trauma cases, but when we arrive there, we also expect to encounter the secondary wave of infections and diseases, as well as the routine cases that the local hospitals would usually deal with," Esh told Haaretz.

Over the past 12 months, the IDF's medical corps has been working to reestablish the field hospital unit that was disbanded nine years ago as part of cost-cutting measures.

Planes full of supplies headed to the Port-au-Prince airport on Thursday, but they arrived faster than ground crews could unload them. Aviation authorities had to restrict non-military flights from U.S. airspace because they feared the planes would run out of fuel while waiting to land.

Israel, Germany team cooperate on aid... Herb Keinon, Jerusalem Post, Jan 18

Israel and Germany signed an agreement Monday, within the framework of a joint cabinet session in Berlin, to cooperate in providing aid to developing countries - an agreement expected to give Israeli humanitarian efforts reach into some countries with which Israel does not have relations.

Anarchy looms on streets of Port-au-Prince...Times , Jan 16

The lack of a quick response to the dire situation in Haiti has left peacekeepers in danger as crisis enters fourth day.

Presidents unite for Haiti appeal

Barack Obama, flanked by George W Bush and Bill Clinton, has launched a national drive to raise funds for Haiti.

Earthquake... Euronews, Jan 16

United States planes are covering the tarmac at the Port-au-Prince airport. The Americans have been handed control, now the aim is to eradicate the mounting problems with distribution.

There is at least progress at the airport with supplies now landing. The focus in this devastating tragedy is now sharpest on the challenge of getting that aid to survivors and saving lives.

&hellip;Helicopters have been ferrying water to drop zones around the capital as aid workers have been hampered by debris and inadequate roads.

The numbers in need remain overwhelming. The task of bringing order, and quick, effective help remains daunting. The US-controlled airport, with only one runway, has become a vital hub and its role in this human tragedy cannot be underestimated.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

President Obama's five desperate options on healthcare reform... Times (Online), Jan 20

The dramatic Republican victory in Massachusetts leaves the Democrats looking for last-ditch options to save the healthcare bill.

Republican Scott Brown has won the US Senate seat in Massachusetts, breaking the grip held on Congress by the Democrats and President Obama... Euronews, Jan20

It gives the Republican party a crucial 41st seat in the 100-seat Senate, meaning it can hinder the passage of reforms, starting with the controversial bill on healthcare that is still going through Congress.

After beating his Democrat rival Martha Coakley, Brown told his delighted supporters:

"One thing is very, very clear as I travelled throughout the state: people do not want the trillion dollar healthcare plan that is being forced to the American people. And this bill is not being debated openly and fairly; it will raise taxes&hellip;it will raise taxes, it will hurt medicare, it will destroy jobs and run our nation deeper into debt."

Ironically, Brown is taking up the seat left vacant by the late Democrat senator Ted Kennedy, a staunch supporter of healthcare reform.

The healthcare bill could still pass if it arrives on Obama's desk before Brown takes office but it gives Democrats much less room for manoeuvre. The Democrats do still have a majority in the Senate but Brown's win deprives them of enough of a majority to ignore Republican objections.

Today is the first anniversary of Obama's inauguration. Losing one of his Democrat senators is an anniversary gift he will certainly not have wanted.

## ANTI-SEMITISM

Head of Rome's Jews asks Pope Benedict opening of archives on Pius XII... European Jewish Press, Jan 17

Subtitle: Benedict sparked an outcry among Jews last month by moving the wartime pope further along the road to sainthood.

ROME (AFP)-The head of Rome's Jewish community on Sunday said historians should have access to Vatican archives on World War II-era Pope Pius XII, accused of inaction during the Holocaust.

Greece Jews reeling after 'anti-Semitic' synagogue torching... Haaretz, Jan 20

The head of the Jewish community in Greece said Monday he feared for the security of Jews in the country after a synagogue on the island of Crete was set on fire.

Unknown assailants broke into the synagogue in the city of Chania on Saturday and set fire to it, causing extensive damage to the roof, thousands of books and computers. It appeared to be the second time the synagogue had been attacked this month.

"It is an anti-Semitic act," Moses Constantinis, head of the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece, told Reuters. "We are worried about the security of the Jewish community and the violation of freedom of religion."

Earlier this month a fire in the same building caused minor damage to a staircase. "We are worried, as they tried to burn down the synagogue twice. There is great concern that this might continue in other cities and synagogues," Constantinis said.

A fire brigade official in Chania said: "We suspect the attackers are members of a far-right organization, but we have no evidence that proves it."

Police officials said they were still investigating.

## OTHERS

Austrian university recalls diploma for Holocaust denier... European Jewish Press, Jan 12

VIENNA (AFP)---A leading Austrian university announced Monday it had withdrawn a honorary diploma awarded to an engineer who had questioned the gassing of Jews in Nazi death camps.

London's Jewish Chronicle website attacked by Turkish pro-Palestinian hackers