

# NEWSBYTES

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"Let us be alert to the season in which we are living. It is the season of the Blessed Hope, calling for us to cut our ties with the world and build ourselves on this One who will soon appear. He is our hope—a Blessed Hope enabling us to rise above our times and fix our gaze upon Him." Tozer

## Israel hosting 'largest, most advanced aerial exercise ever'

The "Blue Flag" aerial exercise, which includes troops from Germany, Italy, Britain, France, India, Greece, and the United States, "is groundbreaking in terms of technology, quality of training, and the number of participating nations," Air Force chief says.

By [ILH Staff and i24NEWS](#)

Oct 20



The first "Blue Flag" exercise took place in November 2013 and has been held on a biennial basis since then | File photo: Yehuda Ben Itach

The Israeli Air Force is currently hosting a multinational military aviation exercise described as "Israel's largest and most advanced aerial exercise ever."

The "Blue Flag" aerial exercise took off on Sunday at Uvda Air Force Base in southern Israel and is

scheduled to last for two weeks until October 28.

Seven air forces from around the world are participating: Germany, Italy, Britain, France, India, Greece and the United States.

According to the Israeli military, the event marks the first deployment of a British fighter squadron in Israel since the establishment of the country, as well as the first deployments in Israel of an Indian "Mirage" fighter squadron and French "Rafale" fighter squadron.

"This exercise is groundbreaking in terms of technology, quality of training, and the number of participating nations," IAF Commander Maj. Gen. Amikam Norkin said in a statement. "It illustrates the partnership and strong bond between the nation's air forces and acts as a stepping-stone toward regional and international cooperation."

The first "Blue Flag" exercise took place in November 2013 and has been held on a biennial basis since then.

The goal of the exercise "is to strengthen strategic international cooperation through shared learning about the integration of fourth and fifth-generation aircraft in complex operational scenarios," the Israeli military statement said.

Various fourth and fifth-generation aircraft are taking part in the drill, including the F-35, F-15, Eurofighter, Dassault Rafale and Dassault Mirage 2000.

## **Inviting God's Judgement - US Looking To Deny Israel Sovereignty Over Jerusalem**

The Biden administration wants to reopen a consulate for Palestinian affairs in Jerusalem as part of its efforts to reverse former U.S. President Donald Trump's policies and achievements.

Trump subsumed the consulate into the U.S. embassy when he moved it from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem in 2018--a move that was hailed by every friend of Israel and that finally fulfilled the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995, which explicitly states, "Since 1950, the city of Jerusalem has been the capital of the State of Israel."

The Biden administration's plan, however, would divide the united capital of Jerusalem and push any chance for peace with the Palestinians farther away, as well as break diplomatic norms, violate U.S. law and damage America's special relationship with Israel.

Last week, Israel's Justice Minister Gideon Sa'ar said Israel "cannot and will not agree to divide Jerusalem by permitting a U.S.-Palestinian consulate to open." He clarified that it would "violate Israeli and U.S. law, and betray the commitment of both countries to Israel's eternal and undivided capital."

This is a sharp contrast to the stance U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken has taken, especially as he announced in May that America would reopen the Jerusalem consulate it had used in the past to engage with the Palestinians. The question is: Why would the Biden administration want to insult its closest ally in the Middle East to placate the Palestinians, who are offering nothing in return? What does it gain in the short or long term other than dividing the capital of the Jewish state?

Former Jerusalem Mayor and current Likud Knesset member Nir Barkat told JNS that the Biden administration's plan to unilaterally open the consulate in the heart of Jerusalem "will destabilize the Middle East, damage Israel's security and give a prize to radical Islam by dividing the Jewish capital."

Barkat suggested that if Biden's team wants to improve relations with the Palestinians, "they should send a diplomatic mission to Ramallah and demand that they stop supporting terrorists, change their education system, and instead of violence, focus on peace for future generations." Barkat has been busy over the last few months lobbying against the consulate and has also been pushing to outlaw it.

In September, he met with U.S. senators and congressmen during a trip to Washington and asked them to oppose the opening of the consulate. His main message to them, reiterated on his Twitter feed, was "we cannot allow the opening of a Palestinian consulate which would divide Jerusalem--the eternal, united and undivided capital of the Jewish people."

'A terrible idea'

Others have expressed their opposition as well. Former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said last week that opening a U.S. consulate for Palestinians in Jerusalem was "a terrible idea for the United States, Israel and the Palestinian people."

Matan Peleg, chairman of Im Tirzu and a signatory to a letter sent by 150 bereaved families to Blinken this week, wrote: "If the secretary of state wants to promote 'peace,' the last thing he should do is set up a special American consulate for Palestinians in the capital of Israel."

"Apart from the fact that this tramples Israeli sovereignty and lacks any minimal respect for a friendly nation, it also signals to the Palestinians that the path of recalcitrance and resistance is acceptable, and pays off. This step will encourage nothing but terrorism," he said.

According to Itamar Marcus from Palestinian Media Watch, "American law is quite clear. The U.S. 'Jerusalem Embassy Act' repeatedly stresses the unity and indivisibility of Jerusalem as Israel's capital."

In an article recently published in Newsweek, attorneys Nathan Lewin and Alyza D. Lewin wrote that while many consider the consulate to be "a minor administrative change," it is actually "nothing less than a devious scheme to reverse U.S. recognition that Jerusalem is in Israel. ... This is not about dividing Jerusalem. It is about denying Israel's sovereignty over Jerusalem."

However, Thomas Nides, who was confirmed by a Senate committee this week to be incoming U.S. Ambassador to Israel, seemed to support opening the consulate when he said in September during his confirmation hearing, "That consulate has existed, in one form or another, for almost 130 years."

'They never have any conditions for anything'

The Biden administration's desire to reopen the consulate raises a lot of questions, as well as eyebrows, and appears to suggest that the United States is not neutral on the matter and is intentionally taking the Palestinian side.

Eytan Gilboa, an expert on U.S. policy in the Middle East at Bar-Ilan University in Ramat Gan, told JNS the Biden team's effort is "a very hostile move."

"It's not just hostile to Israel," he said. "These moves are irrational and are also bad for the Palestinian people. This is very strange and unusual." He noted that both the United States and the Palestinians would like to roll back Trump's policies and this is one of them. "The Biden administration has already gone back on issues such as funding for the Palestinian Authority, they restored funding for UNRWA, they are talking about reopening the PLO office in Washington, and they are talking about the two-state solution and starting a diplomatic process."

Gilboa noted the Biden administration's argument that this move will encourage the Palestinians to return to negotiations. He rejected this argument outright, noting that former President Barack Obama "was the most pro-Palestinian president, maybe in history, at least since Carter, and the Palestinians still refused to come to the table," he said.

Gilboa lambasted the Biden administration for its "typical error in American diplomacy."

"They do all kinds of things without any conditions," he said, noting, for example, the U.S. appeasement-oriented diplomatic approach at the United Nations, the U.N. Human Rights Council and with regard to Iran.

For instance, he said, America can restore funding to the P.A. while also demanding certain changes, "and they never do it," he said. "They never have any conditions for anything. At least require some concessions from the other side. It's poor diplomatic management and not just poor policy."

"Just connect the dots and see how many failures they have in intelligence," he said. "Afghanistan is a failure. China is a failure. So maybe the Palestinian issue is also a failure."

Gilboa suggested that the United States is trying to link the Palestinian issue, the Abraham Accords and Iran.

"They are saying to Israel, 'You need to cooperate on the Palestinian issue in order for us to be more favorable to your advice on Iran.' This is very dangerous," said Gilboa. "If this logic exists, it doesn't make much sense."

He also pointed to the timing, which he said is "always important." Israel's shaky government coalition looks poised to pass a budget in November--the country's first in over two years--and any political challenge before that could topple it.

According to Gilboa, opening a consulate for Palestinians in Jerusalem would mean "some reduction in the status of the existing Jerusalem embassy. There is no state in the world where there is an embassy and a consulate in the same place," he said.

He also noted the international understanding that countries do not open diplomatic representation without the complete endorsement of the host country. Israel opposes it, and yet, the Biden administration is allegedly fixated on forcing Israel to allow it.

"This is not how things work," said Gilboa. "This is going to be a violation of diplomatic protocols. The American proposed action without Israeli consent is a total violation of all kinds of rules."

## Russian, Chinese warships hold first joint patrols in the Pacific

Reuters

MOSCOW, Oct 23 (Reuters) - Russian and Chinese warships held their first joint patrols in the western Pacific Ocean over the past week, Russia's defense ministry said on Saturday, a move Japan said it was monitoring.

Moscow and Beijing, which staged naval cooperation drills in the Sea of Japan earlier in October, have cultivated closer military and diplomatic ties in recent years at a time when their relations with the West have soured.

The naval manoeuvres, which Russia said ran from Sunday through Saturday, have been closely watched by Japan, which said earlier in the week that a group of 10 vessels from China and Russia sailed through the Tsugaru Strait separating Japan's main island and its northern island of Hokkaido.

"The group of ships passed through the Tsugaru Strait for the first time as part of the patrol," Russia's defence ministry said in a statement. The strait is regarded as international waters.



"The tasks of the patrols were the demonstration of the Russian and Chinese state flags, maintaining of peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region and guardianship of the subjects of maritime economic China's defence ministry said on Sunday the joint exercise aimed to "further develop the China-Russia comprehensive strategic partnership in the new era, enhance the joint action capabilities of both parties and jointly maintain international and regional strategic stability".

A report on the ministry website said the operation was part of annual cooperation between the two nations and not targeted at third parties.

Japanese defence officials said on Sunday the Russian and Chinese vessels had also passed through the Osumi Strait off the southern Japanese prefecture Kagoshima, public broadcaster NHK reported.

Foreign ships are allowed to navigate through the Osumi and Tsugaru straits as they are international waterways, but Japan's defence ministry said it will monitor the two navies, characterising the recent moves as "unusual", NHK reported.

Japanese officials could not immediately be reached for comment.

## **IDF said to resume practicing potential strike on Iranian nuclear sites**

Military chief Aviv Kohavi reportedly orders air force to 'intensely' drill for possible attack on Iran, after 2-year pause in training

By **TOI STAFF** 21 October 2021, 9:32 pm



Illustrative: An Israeli Air Force Boeing KC-135 Stratotanker and F-16 fighter jets perform during an air show over Tel Aviv on May 9, 2019, as Israel marks its 71st Independence Day. (Jack Guez/AFP)

The Israeli Air Force has resumed training for a possible strike on Iranian nuclear facilities, Israeli television reported Thursday.

According to Channel 12 news, Israel Defense Forces Chief of Staff Aviv Kohavi ordered that budgetary funds be set aside for drilling such a scenario, after a two-year hiatus.

The network said Kohavi had also ordered that the air force train "intensely" in simulating a strike on Iran's nuclear program.

On Monday, Channel 12 reported that the government planned to allocate NIS 5 billion (\$1.5 billion) for an attack on Iran, with NIS 2 billion (\$620 million) coming from the 2022 defense budget and the rest coming from the current budget.

A day later, Defense Minister Benny Gantz defended the government's requested budget increase for the military, warning that the additional funds are necessary in order to prepare for a potential strike on Iranian nuclear sites.

Kohavi publicly declared in January that the IDF was preparing fresh "operational plans" for a potent military strike, and in August that Iran's nuclear progress has prompted the IDF "to speed up its operational plans," with a fresh budget to do so.

In his speech to the United Nations General Assembly last month, Prime Minister Naftali Bennett declared that "Iran's nuclear program has hit a watershed moment, and so has our tolerance. Words do not stop centrifuges from spinning... We will not allow Iran to acquire a nuclear weapon."

United States President Joe Biden's administration has said it is still seeking a joint US-Iranian return to compliance with the 2015 nuclear deal, while acknowledging that it will not wait indefinitely for Tehran to return to the negotiation table.

If it fails to do so, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken told his Israeli counterpart Yair Lapid this month that "every option" will be on the table — an apparent uptick in rhetoric after Biden told Bennett in August that Washington was willing to consider "other options" if the nuclear deal cannot be revived.

## I Will Look for You

By Dennis Huebshman      Oct 24

From 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; "But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep. For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from Heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then, we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. Therefore, encourage one another with these words" (any emphasis mine)

Then, 1 Corinthians 15:50-53; "I tell you this, brothers; flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead shall be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality."

Paul wrote these epistles to Christians of his day, giving them assurance that Jesus had not yet returned to call His believers Home, and that any who had fallen asleep – died – would not be left out. In 2 Thessalonians 2, he stated that the day would not come until just before the evil man of lawlessness would be revealed, and then the "rebellion," or tribulation, would take place (vv.1–4).

Paul explains in verses 6–7 that what was "restraining" the antichrist had to be removed before he could be revealed. This would be the Holy Spirit who indwells all true believers while we are alive; and if the Holy Spirit is taken out of the way, then all believers would have to be removed as well. Then, the Rapture, as described in 1 Thessalonians and 1 Corinthians, would take place. It would also keep God's promise to prevent believers from entering the wrath.

The assurance that all who perished and were in Christ would be raised first is evident in both epistles. Then, those who will be alive at the shout and trumpet sound would be taken up next. It seems like a very detailed, lengthy operation, but we're told it will be in the "twinkling of an eye."

When Jesus comes to call us up to meet Him in the clouds, He will "bring with Him those who have fallen asleep." When a believer perishes on earth, that person's soul goes to be with Jesus right then (Philippians 1:23). At the Rapture, the body and soul are reunited and converted to immortal, imperishable bodies. By the way, God knows where everybody that has ever perished is located, even if it's only a very small particle that's left. Those who are alive will be converted on the way up to meet

with Jesus. This will practically be instantaneous. “Twinkling of an eye” is considerably less than one second, and God is very capable of doing this.

To even be a part of all this, one must have received and accepted Jesus as their Savior, Redeemer, and King. That process is described in Romans 10:9-13 and bears repeating once more. “Because if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. For the scripture says, everyone who believes in Him will not be put to shame. For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing His riches on all who call on Him. For everyone who calls on the Lord will be saved.”

It should be noted that when the Father repeats something, we should take special note. Three times in the above scripture, we’re told that all who follow this will be saved. That should leave no doubt, for anyone that has Jesus in their hearts will have an eternal Home with Him.

Another super benefit: Christians never say a permanent goodbye to fellow believers. At some point, known only to God, we will forever be with all who are saved. A very touching poem by Christian poet Pearl Leona Sturgis is “I’ll Be Looking for You.”

“I’ll be looking for you when the Trumpet shall sound, and I rise from the ground.

As the Heavens depart like a scroll, when I sail through the air, I’ll remember this prayer, for I’m paying today for your soul.

I’ll be looking for you when life’s journey is through and all burdens have vanished away! Now I’m asking the Lord, and my whole heart is poured in this prayer I am praying today.

Will you meet me someday in that Home far away, with no heartache nor sorrow to bear? In those Mansions sublime, may yours be next to mine; if we never meet here, meet me There!”

What a wonderful feeling to know that we will be with loved ones forever. That is, those who have followed the ABCs of Salvation. Admit (confess) we’re sinners, as all of us are (Romans 3:23; Romans 6:23). Believe Jesus is our Lord and that He was raised from the dead by the Father to cover our sins (John 3:16; John 14:6). And finally, Call on the name of the Lord and be saved (Romans 10:13).

There may be some who refuse to believe, or those who will choose to follow the false prophets’ teachings that there are many ways to Heaven, or that all religions worship the same god, or as long as you’re a good person, you don’t need Jesus. Their fate is clearly stated in Revelation 20:11-15. There can be no repentance after a person takes their last breath here, and for those who have not received and accepted Jesus as their Savior. Heaven or Hell is established at that instant.

Time is definitely getting short, as all the end-time prophecies are here right now. It’s only a matter of which moment that God has decided it will be. Just witnessing how evil, corrupt, and sinful this world has become is only a preview of the tribulation. It will get even worse, and those who remain for it will have chosen to do so.

Call on Jesus today – right now – and secure your place in Heaven with Him forever. Hopefully, I’ll See You There!

Maranatha!