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October 22, 2025

ISRAEL BRIEF

Wednesday, October 22

Ceasefire with teeth. Lawfare on cue. Israel holds the line while enemies test the fence.

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CLASSIFICATION

Reader Edition

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ON the ground, Israel is tightening control: the new “Yellow Line” inside Gaza is real, the rules are blunt, and the U.S.-led coordination hub in Kiryat Gat is now live to watch compliance in real time. Hamas returned two more hostage bodies through the Red Cross while still fielding 10,000–20,000 fighters and trying to project “normal life” with public executions the mediators now say will stop. Translation: the truce exists, but only because it’s being policed.

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To the north, Western intelligence says Hezbollah is rebuilding faster than the Lebanese Army is dismantling—exactly the inverse of the ceasefire’s intent. Trump’s envoy warned that if Beirut stalls, Israel will act. Pair that with reports of precision strikes in south Lebanon and you get why the “quiet” border still hums.

Abroad, the World Court is about to weigh in (again) with an advisory opinion on aid obligations that predates the current deal but will be wielded against Israel anyway. Brussels, meanwhile, finally has MEPs from 16 countries pushing to cut UNRWA funding over terror ties.

Inside Israel, the Knesset passed a serious funding boost for disabled veterans and bereaved families—needed years ago and urgent now. The draft fight sharpened: a December push to pass the ultra-Orthodox conscription law, plus two arrests of dodgers.

From yesterday’s watchlist into today’s brief: we flagged the ceasefire HQ, the Hezbollah rebuild, and the ICJ opinion. They all matured—fast. Keep eyes on the Yellow Line enforcement, on targeted hits in Gaza and south Lebanon, and on Europe’s UNRWA debate. Those are the levers that decide whether this ceasefire behaves like peace or like a countdown clock.

Subscribe — cross the Yellow Line into facts.

The War Today

Hamas hands over bodies of two more Israeli hostages

Hamas returned through the Red Cross the remains of Nir Oz residents Aryeh Zalmanovich, ז"ל, 86, and IDF reservist Tamir Adar, ז"ל, 38—both murdered after being abducted on October 7. Their recovery brings the count of returned bodies to 14 of 28 promised under the ceasefire deal. Jerusalem urged Hamas to fulfill its commitments and vowed to bring home every hostage, living or dead. [Read more at JNS]

US military says ceasefire HQ will be able ‘to assess real-time developments in Gaza’

The new U.S.-led Civil-Military Coordination Center in southern Israel will monitor Gaza’s fragile ceasefire through a joint operations floor linking CENTCOM, allied militaries, and NGOs. Vice President JD Vance and Jared Kushner toured the site, pledging that “no reconstruction funds” will reach areas Hamas still controls. The center will coordinate aid, verify compliance, and plan stabilization forces while keeping U.S. troops outside Gaza’s borders. The next phase of the Trump plan is operational—even if the peace it supercedes isn’t. [Read more at The Times of Israel]

Hamas still has up to 20,000 fighters, lost 90% of rockets and production sites

An Israeli military official told NBC that Hamas retains 10,000–20,000 trained fighters but lost most of its rockets and key manufacturing hubs. Tunnel networks largely survive and Hamas operatives have reappeared on Gaza's streets, staging "normalcy" and publicly executing suspected collaborators. Defense Minister Israel Katz says the IDF is focusing on the tunnels as part of disarming Hamas after the pullback to the Yellow Line. The numbers show Hamas weakened, not gone. [Read more at Ynet]

'Hezbollah rebuilding faster than Lebanese Army dismantling,' Western intel. officials tell 'Post'

Western intelligence officials say Hezbollah is rearming, recruiting, and rebuilding sites north of the Litani faster than Lebanon's army can dismantle them. Beirut has a disarmament plan on paper, but progress is slow while Hezbollah restores capacity that Israel vowed to strip. Trump's envoy Tom Barrack warned that if Lebanon stalls, Israel may act alone, and the price for Hezbollah would be severe. The northern front is heating up again while the world stares at Gaza. [Read more at The Jerusalem Post]

Two years after Oct. 7, groups renew call to document sexual violence by Hamas

Israeli advocacy and research groups are redoubling efforts to record testimonies of sexual violence committed by Hamas during the October 7 massacre. The Association of Rape Crisis Centers in Israel and the 710 Testimony Project say the crimes were systematic and vastly underreported, with survivors still too traumatized to speak. Their work aims to build a verified archive for memory, justice, and the fight against denial. The horror must be recorded, because forgetting would finish the work the perpetrators began. [Read more at Ynet]

Inside Israel

Knesset passes law doubling funds for organizations working with disabled soldiers

The Knesset unanimously approved a law requiring at least NIS 150 million yearly for groups serving disabled IDF veterans, and NIS 10 million for victims of hostilities and bereaved families. The move follows a two-year surge in PTSD and injuries since October 7, with the rehab system strained by staffing gaps and rising suicides. The law funds sports, rehab, cultural programs, and Warriors Homes, and comes alongside a ministry task force to expand care. This is overdue support for those who paid the price of our security. [Read more at The Times of Israel]

Bismuth says law regulating ultra-Orthodox conscription will be passed in December

Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee chair Boaz Bismuth announced that the government's long-delayed draft law for the ultra-Orthodox will reach final readings in December. The plan would enlist 10,000 Haredim within two years while preserving Torah study exemptions and adding sanctions for those who refuse service. The IDF says it urgently needs manpower after two years of war, yet the law's real test will be implementation that respects Haredi norms without excusing civic duty. Kashrut and prayer are already solved issues in the army; the harder work is building trust so service becomes possible and expected. [Read more at The Times of Israel]

Military Police arrest two Haredi draft dodgers amid renewed debate over conscription bill

Military Police detained two ultra-Orthodox yeshiva students who ignored call-up orders, reigniting anger and fear across Haredi communities as lawmakers argue over the next draft law. The arrests highlight the widening gap between religious obligation and national responsibility: the IDF insists on equal service, while rabbinic leaders reject even symbolic quotas. Everyone who can serve should serve—in combat, civil defense, or medical units—but policy must also account for modesty and community norms if it's to work. Enforcement without respect breeds defiance; enforcement with accommodation builds a shared burden. [Read more at Ynet]

Smotrich to present 2026 budget plan; includes lower taxes following 2 years' of war

Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich will brief the prime minister on a 2026 budget aimed at shifting from emergency to growth. Defense will get a broader framework with efficiency demands, while the public should see tax relief, likely via income-tax changes or a VAT rollback. Timelines are tight, so a short continuing budget into early 2026 is possible. It's a complicated path to simplicity: fund deterrence, cut waste, and let working Israelis breathe. [Read more at Israel National News]

Critical failures in reforms, food security, real estate data systems, state comptroller warns

State Comptroller Matanyahu Englman says key reforms were launched without teeth and vital data systems are broken. Import streamlining sputtered, food reserves are fragmented and sometimes contaminated, and real-estate databases are so faulty that benefits were wrongly denied and price indices skewed. He urges a unified national property registry and a regulated, centralized emergency food framework—calling for competent logistics and governance. [Read more at The Jerusalem Post]

Israel and the World

World Court to give opinion on Israel's aid obligations for Gaza, West Bank

The International Court of Justice is set to issue an advisory opinion on Israel's legal obligations to ensure humanitarian aid reaches Gaza and the West Bank, stemming from Israel's ban on UNRWA before the current ceasefire. While nonbinding, the opinion could fuel new political campaigns against Israel at the UN. Israel argues the proceedings are biased, noting it already allows hundreds of aid trucks into Gaza under the U.S.-brokered truce and that Hamas routinely diverts supplies. [Read more at The Times of Israel]

EU lawmakers urge halt to UNRWA funding over terror links

MEPs from 16 EU countries urged Brussels to stop financing UNRWA, citing staff ties to Hamas and PIJ, UN findings on employee participation in October 7, and UNRWA facilities intertwined with Hamas infrastructure. The bloc sends €80–90 million yearly; Sweden and the US have already paused cooperation. If the EU wants a real “day after,” money must go to accountable providers that reject terror and antisemitism. [Read more at The Jerusalem Post]

Senate Hezbollah hearing spotlights Venezuela's strategic partnership with Iran and terror ties

A bipartisan U.S. Senate hearing exposed how Venezuela under Nicolás Maduro has become Hezbollah's new narcoterrorism hub in Latin America. Experts told lawmakers that Hezbollah—short of Iranian cash—is turning deeper to cocaine trafficking and laundering networks across the region. Witnesses urged declaring Venezuela a state sponsor of terror and pressing regional allies to blacklist Hezbollah in full, not just its “military wing.” Iran's proxy is exporting jihad and crime to America's backyard. [Read more at Jewish Insider]

Israel participates in Korea's weapons exhibition, despite protests

After bans from arms expos in Europe and Dubai, Israel's defense industry displayed at Seoul's ADEX 2025, showcasing Rafael, IAI, and Elbit systems. Activists demanded Israel's removal, calling it a “genocidal war criminal state,” but South Korea held firm. SIBAT, the Defense Ministry's export arm, said the exhibit “strengthens Israel's global defense partnerships” and expands the Asia-Pacific market. For Israel's defense exporters, Asia is open for business even when Europe slams the door. [Read more at The Jerusalem Post]

Judge Denies CAIR's Challenge to Campus Antisemitism Prevention Training

A U.S. federal judge denied a motion by the Islamist group Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) to block Northwestern University's mandatory antisemitism-prevention course, ruling the group failed to show any harm. The course uses the IHRA definition of antisemitism and asks students to pledge not to harass Jews—a standard adopted by most democratic governments. CAIR, with ties

to Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood, argued the training discriminates against “Palestinian identity” and restricts anti-Israel activism. The court’s rejection is a win for Jewish students and a setback for an organization that increasingly frames opposition to antisemitism as a civil-rights violation. [Read more at The Algemeiner]

Briefly Noted

- **Hamas executions and Trump’s warning** (Ynet): Hamas told mediators it would halt executions of alleged collaborators after U.S. President Trump warned of a “swift and brutal” response to internal killings that risked collapsing the ceasefire. Officials remain skeptical that the terror group can—or will—maintain discipline.
- **UN famine claims challenged** (Israel National News): Experts challenge UN-linked famine claims in Gaza, noting mortality data and food prices don’t meet international thresholds. The famine narrative is political, not nutritional.
- **Syria and Lebanon normalization signals** (Ynet): Syria and Lebanon are quietly weighing normalization with Israel—Damascus through Druze and ministerial channels, Beirut through potential economic ties if it can sidestep Hezbollah.
- **Pakistan-Afghanistan ceasefire fragility** (Jerusalem Post): Pakistan’s defense minister says the new Pakistan-Afghanistan ceasefire lives or dies on Kabul stopping cross-border TTP attacks; Islamabad warns it will strike militants “wherever they are,” including Kabul. Fragile is doing a lot of work here.
- **Sudan’s humanitarian catastrophe** (Jerusalem Post): In Sudan’s Darfur region, the city of al-Fashir—the army’s last holdout—is under siege by the Rapid Support Forces, a paramilitary group conducting a genocide. Drones and shelling have driven civilians underground as famine spreads and aid collapses. Over a million people have fled; a quarter-million remain trapped. The world’s “humanitarian community” stays quiet when it can’t be blamed on Jews.
- **Netanyahu pardon petition** (JNS): Likud ministers asked President Herzog to pardon Netanyahu, calling his ongoing trial a “bleeding wound” and echoing Trump’s Knesset appeal to “cancel the witch hunt.”
- **Tlaib’s selective outrage** (The Algemeiner): Rep. Rashida Tlaib accused Israel of “genocide” after retaliating against Hamas for killing two IDF soldiers—having stayed silent during the ceasefire itself. Her outrage seems to activate only when Jews fight back.

- **City University London mob attack** (Jewish Chronicle): Masked “City Action for Palestine” activists stormed City, University of London demanding Israeli economist Prof. Michael Ben-Gad be fired as a “terrorist.” The university president called the mob “unlawful and repugnant.”
- **U.S. terror victims’ lawsuit** (Jerusalem Post): U.S. victims of Palestinian terror—including the Force family—sued the PA/PLO in Manhattan over “pay-for-slay” funding. Civil lawfare may achieve what diplomacy refuses to touch.
- **Wikipedia’s antisemitism problem** (JNS): Six weeks past deadline, the House says Wikimedia hasn’t produced documents on antisemitism and bias on Wikipedia despite reports of coordinated anti-Israel editing; the Senate is probing too.
- **Israeli medical breakthrough** (Times of Israel): A University of Haifa team developed a blood test using AI to predict suicide risk in bipolar patients with 95% accuracy—a leap in preventive psychiatry and another Israeli gift to world medicine.
- **Argentina flight subsidies** (Globes): Israel may subsidize direct Tel Aviv–Buenos Aires flights to solidify ties with pro-Israel President Milei and revive South American tourism.
- **Fauda heads to film** (Jerusalem Post): Hit series Fauda is reportedly headed for the big screen as Season 5 films in Budapest after security threats. Lior Raz won’t confirm—which usually means it’s happening.

Developments to Watch

- **Iran signals constrained posture** – Tehran’s army chief said Iran “won’t act against Israel now,” while warning any perceived aggression will draw a different response—classic message discipline from a regime buying time.
- **IED hits IDF tank** – An explosive device wounded two soldiers during an area-clearing mission in Khan Younis; IDF returned fire as additional devices detonated nearby. **LIKELY TO ESCALATE**
- **Civilian carry expanded** – Dimona joined the list of cities eligible for personal firearm licenses; since Oct. 7, more than 215,000 Israelis have armed under the reform aimed at bolstering civilian response.
- **U.S. jails IRGC supplier** – A Virginia court sentenced a Pakistani national to 40 years for smuggling Iranian ballistic-missile parts to Yemen’s Houthis, underscoring U.S. enforcement against Tehran’s proxy pipeline.
- **Germany buys Spike missiles** – Berlin approved a €2 billion purchase of Israel’s Spike anti-tank missiles, locking in long-horizon stockpiles as Europe retools for high-intensity war realities.
- **UAE plants deeper roots** – Abu Dhabi bought a multimillion-shekel plot in Herzliya for its permanent embassy, a tangible marker that normalization isn’t a press release—it’s policy.

- **Overnight Tuqu’ dragnet** – IDF forces operated in the Bethlehem-area town of Tuqu’ amid a rise in roadside attacks and arson along key arteries in Judea and Samaria. **LIKELY TO ESCALATE**
- **Ain Qana drone strike** – Reports in south Lebanon say a motorcyclist was killed by a precision drone strike near Ain Qana, consistent with Israel’s ongoing shadow war against Hezbollah handlers. **LIKELY TO ESCALATE**
- **Ben Gurion–Eilat resumes** – El Al restarted daily domestic flights to Eilat, rebuilding internal connectivity that helps the south recover economically while tourism slowly reopens.
- **Embassy-grade map shift** – Israel formally marked the internal Gaza “Yellow Line,” a control seam the IDF will enforce with zero-warning rules against armed operatives who cross it. **LIKELY TO ESCALATE**

Closing Commentary

THIS phase is clarity by enforcement. The U.S.-run center helps verify the deal. The Yellow Line gives the IDF a clean rule of engagement. Hezbollah’s rebuild increases risk. The ICJ will issue words; Israel will keep moving trucks, and keep intercepting the theft Hamas calls “aid distribution.”

If you’re in Israel, back the disabled-vets buildout, tell your MK to pass a conscription law that sets quotas, timelines, and sanctions—and builds the tracks Haredi soldiers can actually serve on. (And if you happen to *be* one of those MKs, stop tweeting about unity and do it.)

Abroad, press your representatives for the same clarity: no money to UNRWA, no reconstruction funds where Hamas still rules, and full terror designation for Hezbollah—military, “political,” all of it. (And if you’re the one writing the policy memo, consider this your reminder.)

Thanks for reading!

Until tomorrow,

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Uriel Zehavi is the executive director of Mitzpe Institute, where he writes the daily Israel Brief and co-directs its Institutional Intelligence practice with Modi Zehavi. He is the author of four books from Mitzpe Press and advises Israeli and allied clients on strategic communications for Western audiences.



ABOUT MITZPE INSTITUTE

Mitzpe Institute is an intelligence and strategy organization focused on Israeli security, diaspora threat assessment, and the strategic challenges confronting the Jewish people and the West. We produce daily intelligence, forensic analyses, strategic assessments, and tactical briefings read by policymakers, military leaders, and institutional decision-makers across more than 90 countries and all 50 US states — from the Knesset and the US Congress to allied governments, major policy institutions, and Jewish organizational leadership worldwide.

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