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READER EDITION

April 30, 2026

ISRAEL BRIEF

Thursday, April 30

Trump holds the Lebanon track as London names the proxy network and the AG cuts the yeshiva donor line.

◇ URIEL ZEHAVI

THE BOTTOM LINE Bern has now rejected unilateral Palestinian recognition twice in seven months — both chambers, neither vote close. The Geneva Initiative anchor in the proposed text dated the whole exercise. That 2003 framework — drafted by Yossi Beilin and PLO operatives in a Swiss hotel, funded by the Swiss foreign ministry — proposed handing the Old City of Jerusalem to a Palestinian state minus the Jewish Quarter. Selling Har HaBayit to a sovereignty that does not exist, brokered by Israelis no Israeli elected, in the city whose institutions the framework's beneficiaries use to launder the campaign against Jerusalem itself. The two-state solution died on October 7. What persists is a European recognition campaign that has not absorbed that fact and a generation of European parliamentarians still voting on an absurd framework.

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Israel Brief: Thursday, April 30

Flash Brief

- **Lebanon:** Trump rejects Netanyahu's freedom-of-action request as a Hezbollah drone hits Shomera mid-school-run. *See The War Today.*
- **Iran:** CENTCOM briefs Trump on three strike options as the Ford carrier sails home from the Middle East. *See The War Today.*
- **Section 46:** Baharav-Miara cuts donor tax credits for yeshivot whose draft-age students refuse to enlist. *See Inside Israel.*
- **Hesder revolt:** Religious-Zionist rabbis announce students will not enlist in tank units while gender mixing is on the table. *See Inside Israel.*
- **London:** Two haredi men stabbed at Golders Green; UK fast-tracks legislation against Iranian state-proxy networks. *See Israel and the World.*
- **Switzerland:** Lower house rejects Palestinian recognition 116–66, the second Swiss rejection in seven months. *See Israel and the World.*
- **Flotilla:** Israeli Navy intercepts 21 Sumud Flotilla vessels overnight near Crete; 170 activists detained. *See Briefly Noted.*
- **Gaza maps:** New IDF maps move the Yellow Line forward and add an orange-line zone covering 64% of the Strip. *See Briefly Noted.*

London cannot run a counter-extremism framework while a pro-Iranian group claims the synagogue arsons. Baharav-Miara cannot run an equality jurisprudence while the army runs out of soldiers. None of which moves the only variable the next two weeks turn on. The variable is whether Trump's restraint survives the next CENTCOM briefing or the next salvo from Hezbollah.

The War Today

TRUMP HOLDS NETANYAHU IN THE LEBANON BOX AS HEZBOLLAH HITS A SCHOOL RUN

President Trump rejected Netanyahu's request for freedom of action in Lebanon and a two-week deadline on the Beirut talks, instructing the prime minister to "restrain" Israel and not jeopardize the truce that started April 17 and was extended on April 24 for three weeks. The conversation came after Netanyahu's small-group cabinet reviewed options to strike Hezbollah past the Yellow Line. Cross-border fire continued through the call. Hezbollah launched explosive-laden FPV drones at IDF troops in southern Lebanon yesterday in two separate incidents. This morning, sirens sounded in fifteen northern communities. A drone struck Shomera and set a vehicle ablaze as a school bus moved through the area. Four days earlier, a strike landed roughly 300 meters from a school in Ma'ale Yosef regional council. Council head Shimon Guetta: "There aren't even 50% of students in school. This is not a ceasefire — it's fire without a pause." IDF Chief of Staff Eyal Zamir told troops in Taybeh yesterday that the mission is unchanged: "On the combat front, there is no ceasefire." Reserve troops from the 226th Brigade, operating south of the Forward Defense Line, located a 900-kilogram booby-trapped Hezbollah

explosive pit and a separate weapons cache of mortar shells and rockets in the past 24 hours.

ASSESSMENT

Trump's "restrain" instruction holds Israel in a posture Hezbollah has already abandoned. The drones flew this morning while a bus carried children. The 900-kilogram pit is what the buffer zone is designed to root out. The president has committed his political capital to the diplomatic track and is pricing the cost in northern children's school attendance. Foreign Minister Sa'ar's framing — "Hezbollah continues to drag Lebanon into this war" — is correct on the merits and irrelevant to the operational picture. The Lebanese army Aoun is supposed to deploy cannot disarm Hezbollah, and Beirut, Tehran, Washington, and Jerusalem all know it. Israel's ask was a deadline. Trump gave Beirut more time. The IDF is being asked to absorb fire it would otherwise be removing. [But sure, tell me all about how Bibi is in charge of Trump.]

TRUMP BRIEFED ON CENTCOM STRIKE OPTIONS AS THE FORD SAILS HOME
CENTCOM Commander Adm. Brad Cooper is briefing Trump today on three Iran options: a short, intense strike campaign focused on infrastructure; control of part of the Strait of Hormuz, possibly including ground forces, to reopen commercial traffic. The briefing is supposed to also detail a special-forces operation to recover the roughly 450 kilograms of 60% enriched uranium Iran still holds. Cooper has also requested deployment of the Army's Dark Eagle hypersonic missile to the region. Cooper gave Trump a similar briefing on February 26, two days before the U.S. and Israel launched Operation Roaring Lion. Trump said yesterday the blockade is "somewhat more effective than the bombing" and that Iran is "choking like a stuffed pig." Tehran is not negotiating. Parliament deputy speaker Haji Babaei said yesterday Iran is "demanding our rights," not bargaining. Oil minister Mohsen Paknejad insisted the blockade has caused no disruption [the onshore-storage math says otherwise]. The IRGC-affiliated Defa Press yesterday published a menu of options to break the blockade. The list runs from state-sponsored piracy against U.S.- and Israeli-linked vessels to sanctioned Caspian trade with Russia. Iran's delegation told Pakistani mediators it must consult "Mojtaba" before responding to the latest U.S. position. Senior Iranian sources name IRGC commander Ahmad Vahidi as the only man with direct access. Mainstream regime figures have consolidated around Vahidi's line: no nuclear discussion until the blockade lifts. President Masoud Pezeshkian, who pressed economic prioritization, has been pushed from the centers of power. Tehran's Supreme National Security Council met this week on "preventative security measures" against the unrest the blockade will produce. The USS Gerald R. Ford carrier will leave the Middle East within days after a ten-month deployment. The Lincoln and Bush remain to enforce the blockade. Rubio approved a State-Pentagon Maritime Freedom Construct on April 28. Embassies are to deliver the demarche to allies by May 1, with Russia, China, Belarus, and Cuba excluded. Trump separately spoke with senior U.S. oil executives Wednesday night about a months-long blockade.

ASSESSMENT

Cooper's February briefing produced Roaring Lion. The April briefing arrives with CENTCOM's options on the table for when the blockade alone stops working. The Ford's departure reduces visible carrier presence at the moment Trump prefers economic strangulation to kinetic action. The Maritime Freedom Construct is the architecture for a coalition blockade that outlasts a single president. Excluding Russia, China, Belarus, and Cuba ratifies the Cold War framing the Iran war forced into the open. Vahidi has consolidated the regime around no nuclear talks while the blockade holds. Pakistani mediators are running messages between Washington and the IRGC. The moderate channel does not exist. The SNSC's preparation for domestic unrest tells the rest. Tehran is bracing for the protests the blockade will produce, and the regime's standard answer is well known. The wildcard is how Trump answers if the regime starts gunning down demonstrators during a War Powers debate.

Inside Israel

THE AG CUTS OFF YESHIVA DONOR TAX CREDITS AS HAREDI MOBS BLOCK JERUSALEM

Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara ruled yesterday that yeshivot enrolling draft-age students who fail to report for IDF service will no longer qualify under Section 46 of the Income Tax Ordinance, the provision that grants donors tax credits for contributions to recognized public institutions. The economic consequence is direct. Yeshivot dependent on tax-deductible donations lose their funding base unless their draft-age students enlist. Hours later, hundreds of haredi extremists blocked entrances to Jerusalem. Police moved against them. UTJ chairman Yitzhak Goldknopf called the ruling “collective punishment — disproportionate and immoral.” Degel HaTorah chairman Moshe Gafni called it “an open declaration of war against the Torah world and Judaism in the State of Israel” and demanded Netanyahu remove the AG. The decision arrives against the backdrop of Justice Sohlberg's operative deadlines — 21 days, 35 days, June 1 — for police enforcement against haredi draft evaders, with the police still declining to arrest evaders during routine encounters.

ASSESSMENT

Section 46 is the line item that made the yeshiva economy work. Without donor tax credits, the institutions that have refused to send their students must explain to their donors why the donation no longer counts. The political response from Gafni and Goldknopf — that the AG is “abusing her authority” — is the same response the coalition has been making for two years to every High Court ruling that touches the draft. This decision arrives with operative consequences donors will price within the next quarter. The community's response on the streets — entrance-blocking, the assault last week on Brig. Gen. Yamin's home — is the expression of a community discovering that the institutional accommodation is finally ending. Sohlberg's June 1 deadline is the convergence point. Whether the police actually execute determines whether June 1 produces compliance or a contempt sequel.

RELIGIOUS ZIONIST RABBIS REFUSE THE CO-ED ARMORED CORPS

The High Court instructed the IDF this month to launch a pilot program for female soldiers in the Armored Corps by November 2026, after repeated military delays. Religious Zionist rabbis from across the community — both the

liberal and hard-line wings of the hesder yeshiva network — met last week and announced their students will not enlist in tank units as long as gender mixing remains on the table. Rabbi Zalman Melamed of Bet El: “It is impossible for a person keeping Torah commandments to serve in a co-ed place. In the [religious] Zionist ‘high yeshivas,’ we have decided that we are not going to the Armored Corps as long as there is no clear decision against [having men and women serve together].” Rabbi Yaakov Medan of Har Etzion: “We will not serve in a place where there is such mixing.” Rabbi Meir Nehorai of Beit Hillel — the liberal Orthodox organization — joined the position. The Tzohar rabbinic group concurred. The IDF plans gender-segregated tanks within mixed companies, with mixed deployment at battalion and brigade levels. Hesder yeshivot supply a disproportionate share of Armored Corps officers and combat soldiers.

ASSESSMENT

*The High Court is right that women who want combat roles should serve in them. The IDF’s foot-dragging on the pilot was the institutional position that needed correction. The hesder network’s response is the constraint that comes with the correction. Bet El to Har Etzion, hard-line to liberal — when the rabbis converge unanimously, the position is not fringe and not waiting out. The Armored Corps is one of the IDF’s manpower pinch points, and the reservist machinery is already creaking under the haredi non-draft. Pulling the religious-Zionist intake from the formation that needs them most multiplies the squeeze. The settlement is the one **From Deferment to Duty** named for haredi service: separate-track design where it has to be separate, integrated where it can be. Male-only platoons inside an Armored Corps that also runs mixed and all-female formations is the framework the IDF should have built when the High Court first ordered the pilot. Build it now. Equality that costs the IDF its religious-Zionist combat officers is not equality the country can afford in year three of a multi-front war.*

Israel and the World

LONDON STABBING FORCES UK TO NAME THE IRANIAN PROXY NETWORK

Two men were stabbed yesterday outside the Golders Green synagogue in north London. The attacker was arrested at the scene. UK Security Minister Dan Jarvis told Times Radio this morning the government will fast-track legislation under the National Security Act to allow prosecution of individuals operating as proxies for state-sponsored groups — treating them as foreign intelligence services. Jarvis announced an additional £25 million for Jewish community protection, bringing this year’s total to £58 million. The legislation follows a string of recent attacks on London Jewish targets. Police investigating an earlier synagogue arson are examining possible Iranian links. A pro-Iranian government group claimed responsibility for the prior incident. Last October a vehicle-and-knife attack on a Manchester synagogue killed two worshippers and the attacker. Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation Jonathan Hall said the wave is “the biggest national security emergency” since 2017. In Berlin, Jewish Student Union president Ron Dekel was harassed twice in a week — followed by a vehicle blasting “Free Palestine” near the Bundestag, then surveilled at his synagogue by the same woman, who attempted to enter the building before a rabbi intervened. In Los Angeles, a Jewish man walking home from the Adas Torah synagogue Monday

night was attacked by an assailant shouting “Free Palestine” and antisemitic slurs. The attacker fled, leaving a glass-breaker behind that police took as evidence.

ASSESSMENT

The UK’s emergency legislative move is the first time a Western government has formally named the Iranian state-proxy architecture as the operational source of attacks on its Jews. The mechanism Tehran has been using across Europe — recruit a criminal, supply the target, claim deniability — is what the Jonathan Hall framing as “national security emergency” actually means. The £58 million for community protection is the cost the British state is now paying for two decades of treating Iranian intelligence operations on UK soil as a counter-extremism problem rather than a hostile-state problem. Berlin is what happens without the legislation. Los Angeles is the parallel American picture, without the state-proxy framework around it. Every European Jewish community already knows about its operating environment — and what the Dutch AIVD report and last week’s Jewish Agency aliyah-conversation data already documented. The question is whether Starmer’s government can move the National Security Act amendment through the parliamentary session before the next Iranian-orchestrated attack establishes the precedent it intends to prevent.

SWITZERLAND’S LOWER HOUSE SHUTS DOWN PALESTINIAN RECOGNITION

The lower house of the Swiss parliament voted 116 to 66 against recognizing Palestinian statehood, with eleven abstentions. The Council of States — the Swiss senate — already rejected an analogous initiative in September 2025 by 27 to 17. The Geneva Canton text proposed a recognition tied to the Geneva Initiative, the 2000s framework promoted by left-wing Israelis and PLO officials that contemplated PA control of the Old City of Jerusalem outside the Jewish Quarter. Swiss Federation of Jewish Communities General Secretary Jonathan Kreutner: “We have always said that we support the two-state solution, but that it should be achieved through negotiations and a peaceful resolution, not through unilateral declarations.” The Swiss vote breaks against the European unilateral-recognition wave that gathered through 2024 and 2025.

ASSESSMENT

Bern has now rejected unilateral Palestinian recognition twice in seven months — both chambers, neither vote close. The Geneva Initiative anchor in the proposed text dated the whole exercise. That 2003 framework — drafted by Yossi Beilin and PLO operatives in a Swiss hotel, funded by the Swiss foreign ministry — proposed handing the Old City of Jerusalem to a Palestinian state minus the Jewish Quarter. Selling Har HaBayit to a sovereignty that does not exist, brokered by Israelis no Israeli elected, in the city whose institutions the framework’s beneficiaries use to launder the campaign against Jerusalem itself. The two-state solution died on October 7. What persists is a European recognition campaign that has not absorbed that fact and a generation of European parliamentarians still voting on an absurd framework.

Briefly Noted

FRONTLINE & SECURITY

- *Ynet*: The Israeli Navy intercepted 21 of roughly 60 Sumud Flotilla vessels overnight west of Crete, detaining around 170 activists. Acting at this scale and distance keeps the spectacle far from Israeli shores.

- *JNS*: Defense Minister Israel Katz sanctioned the Hamas-organized crowd-funding campaign behind the Gaza flotilla yesterday. The financial counterpart to the navy interception — the same operation hit at both ends.
- *Times of Israel*: New IDF maps show the Yellow Line moved forward, with an orange line covering another 11% of Gaza. Israel now controls roughly 64% of the Strip — the buffer-zone doctrine in cartographic form.
- *Ynet*: IDF Yahalom troops recovered Hezbollah camera footage from Mays al-Jabal: children dressed as fighters, weapons in homes and religious sites. The human-shield doctrine UNIFIL spent two decades not seeing is now on tape.

DIPLOMACY & GEOPOLITICS

- *JTA*: Israel's 2026 budget allocates \$730 million for hasbara, over four times last year's figure. Pew shows 60% of Americans now view Israel unfavorably. The gap is a policy problem current messaging cannot close — the road map to fixing it was laid out in *The Two Middles* (and touches on both *The Fifty Year Front* and tomorrow's Dossier: *The Wrong Map*).
- *Israel National News*: Two former senior IDF officers found UN OCHA's "settler violence" tally includes Jewish hikes and Temple Mount visits. Foreign governments and the EU funneled roughly 94 million NIS to the Israeli orgs producing the modern blood libel.
- *Jerusalem Post*: Israel and Serbia launched their first strategic dialogue Tuesday, announcing free-trade negotiations and permanent Israeli economic representation in Belgrade. Sa'ar names the Western Balkans a Foreign Ministry priority; Belgrade welcomes Jerusalem as Brussels works to disinvite it.
- *Jerusalem Post*: Israel's Grain Importers Association turned away a Russian wheat vessel suspected of carrying cargo from occupied Ukrainian territory. Kyiv produced the result without firing the sanctions package Zelen-sky and Sybiha had been preparing.

DOMESTIC & LAW

- *Jerusalem Post*: An Agam poll finds two-thirds of Israelis call Netanyahu's wartime performance disappointing, with only 22% supporting the Hezbollah ceasefire. The political base for Bennett-Lapid's merger lives in those numbers.
- *Ynet*: AG Baharav-Miara will respond to Herzog's mediation push but insists any plea deal include a moral turpitude finding [not something Bibi is inclined to agree to]. The window opens post-election, when government formation and a Netanyahu legal compromise can move in one package.

CULTURE, RELIGION & SOCIETY

- *Jewish News*: Jewish students visiting London's Hendon School Tuesday for an antisemitism programme found around ten swastikas in the drama studio. The school's explanation that the studio was let externally describes the operating environment more than it excuses it.

Developments to Watch

NORTHERN FRONT (LEBANON / SYRIA)

- **Beirut next-round timing** — Aoun publicly awaits a White House-set date for the next direct negotiating session. Trump's no-escalation line holds days, not weeks; the next northern casualty resets the political math.

GAZA & SOUTHERN THEATER

- **Hamass early-May disarmament deadline** — The formal handover for rockets, drones, anti-tank missiles, and tunnel maps arrives within days. Al-Hayya sits in Cairo, Doha is closed to him, and Ankara remains unbuilt. The cabinet decision lands when the window closes.
- **Spring Flotilla follow-on** — Roughly 40 vessels remain inbound after the overnight interception, with another 40-boat Turkish flotilla expected to join. The next 72 hours determine whether the navy intercepts again at distance or closer to shore.

REGIONAL AXIS (IRAN, HOUTHIS, MILITIAS)

- **Iran's revised proposal to Pakistani mediators** — Tehran is expected to deliver a revised proposal through Islamabad within days. The test is whether Iran moves on enrichment or returns the same Hormuz-only frame Rubio rejected last week.
- **UAE OPEC withdrawal effective May 1** — Abu Dhabi's exit takes effect tomorrow, with MBZ adviser Amjad Taha teasing "another historical day is imminent." Saudi response timing within the week tests whether Riyadh accepts the divergence or attempts to constrain it.

DIPLOMATIC & LEGAL

- **EU Foreign Affairs Council Luxembourg tomorrow** — Tomorrow's FAC is the first since Hungary's April 12 government change ended Orban's veto on EU-Israel Association Agreement suspension. Whether Magyar's Tisza commits publicly determines whether qualified-majority arithmetic exists.
- **Gofman Mossad confirmation challenge** — Movement for Quality Government and Forum Homat Magen LeIsrael's petition against Maj.-Gen. Roman Gofman's installation names Baharav-Miara as respondent. Second lawfare front on the AG the same week she cut yeshiva tax credits — same NGO ecosystem, parallel timing.
- **War Powers Act authorization window** — Trump's window to extend the Iran campaign without congressional authorization is narrowing. House arithmetic constrains his response if the regime starts firing on protesters during the debate.

HOME FRONT & POLITICS

- **Netanyahu testimony continuation** — Wednesday's hearing broke for the flotilla security consultation; cross-examination on Case 4000 resumes within days. Prosecutor Tirosh aims to close the case by Monday before pivoting to Case 2000 on the Mozes affair.
- **Eisenkot's merger choice** — Bennett-Lapid's Beyachad consolidation puts the call to Eisenkot in plain form. Fold in early at the cost of Bennett's PM slot, or ride solo nine seats to the wire.

- **Lag B'Omer Meron framework** — The 4,500-participant scaled-down ceremony awaits Home Front Command sign-off for May 6. This morning's Shomera strike on a school-bus route is the metric that decides whether even the partial framework holds.

Three governments moved today on arguments Israel has been making for a decade. The fourth — the one whose timing actually decides — is still inside today's CENTCOM briefing. The institutions caught up; the variable did not.

Shabbat shalom!

— *Uri Zehavi* · Intelligence Editor With *Modi Zehavi* · Data + Research Analyst

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