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READER EDITION

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ISRAEL BRIEF

Wednesday, June 3

Iran puts ballistic missiles on Kuwait and Bahrain, and Hezbollah fires through a fourth round of talks.

◇ URIEL ZEHAVI

THE BOTTOM LINE The doctors who would let an Israeli die on the table and the man with the lighter in the stairwell are downstream of the same permission slip — once “Zionist” reads as a clearance an institution will honor, a Jewish patient and a Jewish home both become legitimate targets, and enforcement arrives after someone has already paid for it. Britain ran 4,000 officers across a single London Saturday last month, which settles the capacity question and leaves the political one: whose fear gets managed, and whose gets indulged. The 75-organization letter is the one genuinely new thing in the picture, and it cuts the right way: the sectors that went silent on the October 7 rapes putting their names to Jewish women’s safety, the cost of two years of communal pressure finally landing, even if it took the fires to produce it.

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Reader Edition

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IRAN has gone from running the blockade to firing ballistic missiles at two Gulf monarchies, Hezbollah is shooting through the fourth Washington round it never agreed to, and Katz has answered with the only equation that has ever quieted the north — Dahiyeh treated as Kiryat Shmona is treated.

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Flash Brief

- **Gulf escalation:** Iran fires ballistic missiles at Kuwait and Bahrain; CENTCOM downs drones and holds the Hormuz blockade. *See The War Today.*
- **Lebanon talks:** A fourth Washington round opens as Hezbollah keeps firing and rejects the Dahiyeh-for-north trade outright. *See The War Today.*
- **Katz's line:** Beirut's suburb will be struck and evacuated as the northern towns are if the barrages continue. *See The War Today.*
- **Death-shelter strike:** The IDF kills the Nukhba commander who seized Hersch Goldberg-Polin z"l and three others on October 7. *See The War Today.*
- **Draft collapse:** Police cancel the haredi-evader operation as a mob tries to flip the car of a bereaved chief medical officer. *See Inside Israel.*
- **October 7 trials:** Israel commits \$350 million to the broadcast military tribunal that can reach genocide charges and the death penalty. *See Inside Israel.*
- **Aid for trade:** Huckabee confirms the post-2028 MOU ends US grants and rebuilds the relationship on trade. *See Israel and the World.*
- **India front:** A Hezbollah-linked foundation petitions Indian police to arrest a vacationing Israeli reservist. *See Israel and the World.*
- **Britain:** A Golders Green arson lands as NHS staff admit they would refuse to treat Israeli patients. *See Israel and the World.*
- **DTW:** Beaufort opens the road to Nabatieh; the EU advances sanctions on Smotrich and Ben-Gvir. *See Developments to Watch.*

THE through-line is who is willing to act and who is still negotiating the willingness. The same split runs through the domestic week — the coalition exercising its mandate hard against a Comptroller report auditing its own benches, the army 12,000 short while the mob protects the deferment that built the gap.

The War Today

HEZBOLLAH FIRES THROUGH THE WASHINGTON ROUND AS KATZ NAMES THE DAHIYEH LINE

Israeli and Lebanese representatives opened a fourth round of talks at the State Department, scheduled to run two days, while Hezbollah kept shooting through the halt Trump announced it had agreed to. The Israeli delegation told its counterparts Hezbollah never stopped, and Mahmud Qomati declared the group will not accept a “partial ceasefire” with no Dahiyeh quiet for northern quiet, threatening to answer any strike on the suburbs by reaching deeper than the northern communities. Katz set the new equation against that refusal: Dahiyeh will be treated as Israel's northern communities are treated, struck and evacuated if the towns keep coming under fire. Some 600,000 of the suburb's 950,000 residents have already left. The IDF continued

striking south of the Litani — six dead reported around al-Hosh near Tyre, multiple vehicle strikes south of the capital, a public warning that Hezbollah is operating from the Christian quarter of Tyre itself — while the Home Front Command lifted restrictions and reopened schools in the confrontation-line communities, then sirens returned to Kiryat Shmona and Manara after a day of quiet. Defense officials assess Hezbollah may now field fiber-optic FPV drones with a 60-kilometer reach, capable of striking Haifa, and Netanyahu told a northern council head a countermeasure is days from deployment.

ASSESSMENT

The only thing that has ever quieted the north is the IDF holding the line and answering each barrage with a strike back toward Beirut, not a memorandum a Lebanese state will never enforce on a militia it does not command. Reopening the schools and lifting the restrictions is the government betting the deterrence holds for a news cycle [the sirens over Kiryat Shmona had other plans before the ink dried]. The fiber-optic FPV is immune to the jamming the whole northern air picture was built around, and “a solution in days” is the same promise the doctor at Beaufort was owed.

IRAN FIRES BALLISTIC MISSILES AT KUWAIT AND BAHRAIN AS CENTCOM STRIKES HORMUZ

Iran launched ballistic missiles at two Gulf monarchies overnight, a rung above the maritime exchange Washington has been managing since the April 8 ceasefire. Two missiles aimed at Kuwait failed in flight and three at Bahrain were intercepted by Bahraini and US air defenses, while a drone strike on a passenger terminal at Kuwait’s international airport wounded several people and suspended air traffic. Bahrain’s military blamed Tehran for “systematic aggression” and Kuwait condemned “criminal Iranian aggression,” while Iran’s foreign ministry inverted it, claiming Kuwait and Bahrain bear responsibility for hosting the US forces that struck an Iranian tanker in the Strait and a telecommunications tower on Qeshm Island. CENTCOM said it downed multiple drones aimed at US personnel in Kuwait with no American casualties, fired on a vessel running the blockade toward Kharg Island, and continued enforcing the maritime restrictions that have kept Hormuz largely closed. Quds Force chief Esmail Qaani warned that new fronts could open and that the Bab el-Mandeb could come to mirror Hormuz. In Senate testimony, Rubio said the US has offered no sanctions relief to reopen Hormuz — relief is conditioned only on the nuclear program — and that Iran has indicated it will negotiate elements of that program it previously refused, with an agreement possible “today, tomorrow, or next week.”

ASSESSMENT

Tehran moving from blockade-running drones to ballistic fire on US bases tests the regime’s own ceiling before a single line of any memorandum is signed. Rubio’s nuclear-not-Hormuz line is the red line the whole “Hormuz-only” draft existed to refuse, said plainly in front of a Senate committee — relief buys centrifuges, not sea lanes. The talks stay alive because the exchange of texts is the asset Tehran is protecting [Iran “suspended” them yesterday and is back at the table by the afternoon].

IDF ELIMINATES THE OCT. 7 “DEATH SHELTER” KIDNAPPER, FOILS A SAMARIA CELL

The IDF killed Yusuf Ayish Awad Ramadan in central Gaza, deputy commander of a Nukhba cell that breached Israel on October 7 and seized Hersch Goldberg-Polin z”l, Eliya Cohen, Alon Ohel, and Or Levy from the roadside shelter at the Re’im junction — the “death shelter” where Hamas threw the grenade that took Hersch’s hand. Southern Command named Ramadan as advancing fresh terror plots against troops in Gaza, the basis for the strike. Ohel, held 738 days before his release, answered from Instagram: “I want to thank the IDF doing insane work in Gaza and Lebanon. To the last terrorist.” The same operations cleared five Hamas and Islamic Jihad operatives advancing imminent attacks on troops. In the Menashe sector near Meithalun, troops acting on Shin Bet intelligence arrested three terrorists preparing an attack and dug up a buried improvised “Carlo” firearm, while forces operated in Hebron at the home of the Gush Etzion ramming attacker. And Ibrahim Hilo, who held the body of Staff Sgt. Oron Shaul z”l in Gaza for a decade, broke under interrogation and will be indicted on security offenses.

ASSESSMENT

The men who planned and executed the shelter abductions are still being reached one at a time, the better part of three years on, because the bench keeps refilling and the warnings inside the building that Hamas is growing stronger remain the standing position. Ohel’s “to the last terrorist” from the man who spent 738 days in the tunnels carries more weight than J Street’s efforts to close off Israeli defense. The buried Carlo near Meithalun and the Gush Etzion ramming are the trajectory we have tracked toward a second Gaza in the heartland, fortunately this time it surfaced and rolled up before the cell could move.

Inside Israel

THE COALITION MOVES TO SEAT NETANYAHU’S LAWYER AS STATE COMPTROLLER WHILE THE COMPTROLLER AUDITS ITS BOOKS

The Knesset is voting this morning by secret ballot for Israel’s tenth State Comptroller, with the coalition behind Michael Rabilio — Netanyahu’s personal lawyer, who handled the political agreements that brought Gantz and later Sa’ar into the government — against retired Supreme Court justice Yosef Elron, who has the opposition and the Arab parties. The coalition has not locked a majority and fears defectors under the curtain. The vote lands the same week the sitting Comptroller published his 2024 party-financing report: ten factions carrying an 81.2-million-shekel deficit, Likud fined 150,000 shekels over suspected membership-dues offenses, Labor flagged for an illegal loan, and Ben-Gvir and Liberman both billing libel suits to the public purse. Behind it sits the package taking shape across the coalition — the AG-split bill and an override clause for the coalition’s right flank, the Daycare Law and Basic Law: Torah Study for the haredi parties, and an end-of-October election for Netanyahu — with Shas threatening to withhold votes on every coalition

bill, the Karhi communications-law split squeaking through 52 to 45, and the Machash bill pulled when UTJ lined up behind Shas's ultimatum.

ASSESSMENT

Seating the prime minister's own defense lawyer in the office built to audit the prime minister is the one appointment in this package where the independence problem is real, because Rabilio argued the cases the Comptroller's mandate reaches. We frame the guild-versus-coalition contest pro-coalition as a default; this is where the default earns a hard look on the merits. The legal guild's standard pick for the seat is a retired justice, which is what Elron is, and the convention itself is a guild artifact we do not treat as sacred [the opposition discovering the virtue of an independent watchdog the same week one fines its own benches]. There is a difference between breaking the retired-justice convention and handing the audit chair to the man who held your brief.

THE ARREST OPERATION COLLAPSES AND THE MOB TURNS ON A BEREAVED MOTHER

Police confirmed they cancelled the joint operation with the Military Police to detain haredi draft-evaders, citing operational load, and added that 60 percent of the targets on the list were secular. Hours earlier an anti-draft mob in Jerusalem surrounded the car of Chief Superintendent Dr. Valerie Shoshan, the police force's chief medical officer whose son fell fighting in Gaza, and tried to flip the vehicle. The evader count now tops 39,621, three in four of them haredi, against a first-half haredi enlistment of 1,866 and an army running roughly 12,000 soldiers short — and the same haredi parties answering enforcement with street paralysis are conditioning their Knesset votes on a Basic Law that would entrench in statute the exemption the High Court already struck down. Treasury has warned in parallel that the Daycare Law in the coalition package undercuts whatever draft incentive remains.

ASSESSMENT

A police force that cancels the operation and then notes most of its targets were secular has told the mob it heard the message. [How could that possibly go wrong?] The community is conditioning its votes on writing the exemption into a Basic Law precisely because it can read the same arithmetic everyone else can: the manpower gap is the inheritance generations of deferment built, and they are well aware of public opinion and need to lock in the "protections" which allow them to shirk their duty.

ISRAEL PUTS 350 MILLION DOLLARS BEHIND THE OCTOBER 7 TRIALS

The government allocated more than one billion shekels — about 350 million dollars across 2026 to 2029 — to build the special military tribunal that will try the terrorists who carried out the October 7 massacre, after last month's legislation established a system for public, broadcast proceedings that can reach genocide charges and the death penalty. The funds cover the courtroom, the prosecution, an IDF command center, broadcasting, and personnel. Katz and Smotrich framed it as the state bringing to justice the perpetrators of the worst slaughter of Jews since the Holocaust.

ASSESSMENT

The allocation lands at half the ministry's own estimate, which makes it a down payment on a multi-year process the next government inherits whatever the election produces. Israel will try October 7 in its own court, on camera, while Brussels lists Amana farmers and the Hague keeps its standing accusation open without a verdict.

Israel and the World

HUCKABEE CONFIRMS THE NEXT SECURITY MOU ENDS DIRECT US AID FOR TRADE

Huckabee acknowledged the security memorandum succeeding the current package after 2028 will close out direct financial assistance and rebuild the relationship around trade and economic ties. It is the most senior US confirmation yet of a shift Netanyahu has pushed for years. The ambassador made the call answering Joe Kent, the former National Counterterrorism Center director, who argued American military aid to Israel no longer returns anything to the United States. Huckabee's answer was a ledger: Israel takes \$3.8 billion and spends well past it buying American military goods. It lands the same week the Defense Ministry reported a record \$19.2 billion in 2025 defense exports, up nearly 30 percent and a fifth straight record year, with Abraham Accords states lifting their share to 15 percent and air defense the single largest category at 29 percent.

ASSESSMENT

The aid line was always the lever Israel's loudest American critics reach for first — whether J Street, AOC or Khanna interceptor-funding reversals, the Massie foreign-agent framework all run on the assumption that the \$3.8 billion is charity Washington can revoke to discipline Jerusalem. Huckabee is taking the lever out of their hands. The variable is whether the 2028 text actually retires the grant before a 2029 Democratic White House inherits it, because the same flank now treating “is Israel committing genocide” as a primary-ballot verb wants the aid alive for exactly one reason.

THE HIND RAJAB FOUNDATION OPENS AN INDIA FRONT AGAINST THE BACK-PACKER TRAIL

The Belgium-based Hind Rajab Foundation petitioned Indian police, the interior ministry, and immigration authorities over the weekend to arrest an Israeli reservist traveling in the country, alleging he demolished buildings in Rafah and Khan Younis with the 721st Combat Engineering Battalion and posted video celebrating it. The foundation says it handed Indian authorities a case file of clips and social-media posts and demanded prosecution under universal jurisdiction. Director Dyab Abu Jahjah, whose organization carries documented links to Hezbollah, framed the move as denying Israeli soldiers a “safe haven”. By the foundation's own count it has now filed more than 90 such complaints across roughly 30 countries — and produced no convictions and no indictments of consequence, with most dismissed, closed, or stalled at an early procedural stage.

ASSESSMENT

A foundation with a 90-for-0 litigation record files to make the next Israeli reservist think twice before booking the flight, which is the deliverable that does not depend on an Indian judge ever reading the file [the legal chief said as much, warning against the backpacker trail itself]. Abu Jahjah's outfit is the soft-rear-base version of the lawfare campaign Albanese runs at the UN and Khan runs at the Hague, working the jurisdictions where a friendly prosecutor or an immigration officer can be persuaded to act before the file collapses on the merits. India, a security partner Jerusalem has spent a decade building, is the new address — and the test is whether Delhi treats a Hezbollah-linked dossier as a basis for action or as exactly the foreign-pressure instrument it is.

GOLDERS GREEN ARSON LANDS AS BRITAIN'S DOCTORS ADMIT THEY WOULD LET ISRAELIS DIE

A man set a fire in a block of flats on Bridge Lane in Golders Green before dawn, fleeing when residents challenged him. A neighbor put the fire out before it reached the young families upstairs. The building is mostly Jewish, and the arson follows the Heaton Park synagogue attack and a run of fires at Jewish sites that Britain's Jews have spent the spring cataloging. The same week, a Jewish NHS medic disclosed that colleagues told her they would refuse to treat dying patients identified as Israeli — the Department of Health conceding in response that the system is “failing to protect” the community. More than 75 organizations working to end violence against women and girls, including Women's Aid, Refuge, and Rape Crisis England and Wales, signed a letter spearheaded by Jewish Women's Aid condemning the wave and naming Golders Green and Heaton Park by name — the same VAWG sector Jewish groups spent two years criticizing for declining to address the rape and sexual torture Hamas used on October 7. Amichai Chikli told pro-Israel legislators in Lisbon that Western European governments are running “outrageous policies and dangerously weak leadership in the face of growing antisemitism.”

ASSESSMENT

The doctors who would let an Israeli die on the table and the man with the lighter in the stairwell are downstream of the same permission slip — once “Zionist” reads as a clearance an institution will honor, a Jewish patient and a Jewish home both become legitimate targets, and enforcement arrives after someone has already paid for it. Britain ran 4,000 officers across a single London Saturday last month, which settles the capacity question and leaves the political one: whose fear gets managed, and whose gets indulged. The 75-organization letter is the one genuinely new thing in the picture, and it cuts the right way: the sectors that went silent on the October 7 rapes putting their names to Jewish women's safety, the cost of two years of communal pressure finally landing, even if it took the fires to produce it.

Briefly Noted

Frontline & Security

- *Times of Israel*: Lebanon's aviation regulator opened a safety audit of flag carrier Middle East Airlines after pilot unions flagged that crews were ordered to fly passengers near Israeli airstrikes and punished for reporting it.

Diplomacy & Geopolitics

- *JNS*: Smotrich signed a non-binding letter of intent with the Inter-American Development Bank in Washington to stand up two Isaac Accords investment funds — one seeded by the Israeli government, one drawing on the institutional savings the war has not dented — aimed at agriculture, water, energy, and tech across Latin America. Buenos Aires and Jerusalem are building the conviction-based normalization track on a AAA balance sheet while Brussels debates which farmers to sanction.
- *Times of Israel*: The US Treasury blacklisted Nobitex — the exchange handling roughly 70 percent of Iran's crypto traffic and run by a family with ties to the regime's top — for moving IRGC and central-bank money around the sanctions wall.
- *Times of Israel*: Rubio told lawmakers the US will admit Iran's World Cup team but not the IRGC handlers Tehran wants to embed in the delegation — Canada already barred the Iranian federation chief over the same ties.
- *Jerusalem Post*: Sa'ar inaugurated Israel's embassy in Suva, three decades after the last one closed and nine months after Fiji opened its own in Jerusalem, signing security-cooperation and diplomatic-training agreements with one mission now covering ten Pacific states.

Public Diplomacy & Media

- *Jerusalem Post*: CBS fired veteran "60 Minutes" correspondent Scott Pelley for cause after he accused new editor-in-chief Bari Weiss of "murdering" the program in a staff meeting, the eighth departure since the Skydance takeover installed her over a newsroom that had bristled at her line on Zionism and the Gaza coverage. The fight inside the most-watched news-magazine in American history is over whether a Jewish editor gets to run it.
- *Ynet*: A French court jailed and ordered the five-year expulsion of an Orleans law doctoral candidate who dedicated his thesis defense to Ali Khamenei a month after Israel killed him, refused to call Hezbollah or the IRGC terror organizations, and threatened the faculty with "Allah's punishment" — convicted of justifying terrorism, a register French universities rarely reach for.
- *JNS*: A federal judge in Atlanta is weighing whether Emory surgical oncologist Dr. Joshua Winer can take to a jury his defamation suit against a medical student, the Council on American-Islamic Relations, and a group calling itself Doctors Against Genocide, who branded him a war criminal for treating wounded soldiers during IDF reserve duty after October 7.
- *Algemeiner*: Official Palestinian Authority television told viewers that Jews who ascended the Temple Mount on Shavuot carried "bloodstained bread

used for religious rituals” — the medieval blood libel restocked for the holiday and broadcast by the Authority Washington still funds as the reasonable alternative to Hamas.

Domestic & Law

- *Times of Israel*: Prosecutors will charge Ibrahim Hilu this week for holding the remains of St.-Sgt. Oron Shaul ז”ל in a Gaza City fridge for nearly a decade until the IDF recovered them last January.
- *Israel Hayom*: The Labor and Welfare Committee passed a bill capping the legal fees lawyers can take from wounded IDF veterans and terror-attack survivors, a seven-year fight the bar association resisted to the end.
- *Jerusalem Post*: Druze MK Akram Hasson launched a Knesset caucus to open a direct normalization lane with Lebanese communities that want out from under Hezbollah — the Isaac Accords logic of conviction-based outreach, pointed north this time.

Economy, Tech & Infrastructure

- *JNS*: The Innovation Authority’s annual report credits high-tech with roughly half of Israel’s 2025 growth, but the \$84 billion exit figure rests on three deals — Wiz, CyberArk, Armis — while the Israel-based share of tech employees has slid to 62% from 69% in 2019 and R&D headcount fell for the first time in over a decade. The number to watch is where the next generation of these companies books its engineers and its taxes.
- *Globes*: Sderot-based ZutaCore closed a \$100 million round led by Mitsubishi Electric, Samsung, and Carrier for its waterless chip-cooling systems.

Culture, Religion & Society

- *Ynet*: Rachel Goldberg-Polin’s “When We Will See You Again,” her account of the year Hershe ז”ל was held in Gaza, opened at the top of the New York Times bestseller list — written, the reviewer notes, as a book about loss and a Jewish mother’s love rather than the war memoir the market expected.
- *JNS*: Lisa Gran Kovitch’s “Medieval Jewish Militants” assembles the documentary record of armed Jewish self-defense and communal arms across medieval Europe, against the standing assumption that diaspora Jewry met persecution passively.
- *Walla News*: Forty percent of the Gaza-envelope’s older residents are still working and 45 percent still volunteering more than two and a half years after October 7, with one in four over age 75 refusing to step back.

Developments to Watch

Judea & Samaria

Washington presses Leiter on settlement-leader sanctions — Ambassador Leiter was told the administration is frustrated with the lack of movement on

what it calls Judea and Samaria violence, with Vance and Rubio both pressing for action. The American instrument is the one with teeth Brussels lacks, and it follows public opinion rather than fact.

Northern Front (Lebanon / Syria)

Beaufort opens the road to Nabatieh — From the ridgeline positions the 36th Division seized, commanders describe the route into Nabatieh as a matter of operational decision. The fortress was the symbol; the threat it now puts over the sector Hezbollah runs the front from is the asset, and the evacuation warnings already issued over Nabatieh and the southern villages are what the army posts before it moves. **LIKELY TO ESCALATE**

Russia resupplies its Syrian foothold — The cargo vessel Sparta ran the first known post-Assad resupply from St. Petersburg to Tartus under naval escort, carrying equipment to hold Moscow's bases under the new authorities. Russia keeping its Mediterranean port and airbase through the transition is the variable that decides whether the Syrian flank stays a vacuum Israel watches or a patron-backed one it has to.

Gaza & Southern Theater

Egypt moves to fold Gaza into the Iran track — Cairo reportedly invited a Hamas delegation for talks, working to attach Gaza to the regional settlement taking shape with Iran, with Egyptian officials anxious the war in the Strip reignites. Folding Gaza into the Tehran negotiation is how Hamas converts the 70-percent ground operation into a bargaining line — the move to watch is whether Washington lets the two tables merge or keeps the disarmament clause out of the Doha exchange.

Regional Axis (Iran, Houthis, Militias)

A shipping mogul offers to pay Iran's Hormuz toll — Evangelos Marinakis, who runs over 150 vessels, said he would pay the transit fee Tehran wants to charge for the Strait, framing it as covering damages. Giving into extortion. Well, that's a choice.

The militia war reaches an Iraqi port — The IRGC claimed the projectiles that struck the MSC Sariska V at Umm Qasr, putting the maritime exchange inside Iraqi territorial waters for the first time. Hitting shipping at an Iraqi port hands Prime Minister al-Zaidi the confrontation Washington is already pressing him toward, and Kataib Hezbollah firing from inside forces the choice.

Tehran stages a three-city funeral procession — Iran is preparing a funeral march for Ali Khamenei across three cities, with 20 million projected in Tehran alone. A regime that has kept its wounded successor out of public view is choosing maximum mobilization at the moment its protest-trigger calendar is live — the crowd it summons to mourn is the same crowd that has not been allowed to gather since the war.

Diplomatic & Legal

The EU advances sanctions on Smotrich and Ben-Gvir — Italy is leading a push to sanction the two ministers, Hungary has dropped its automatic veto, and the pressure now sits on Prague as the last procedural obstacle. The package that listed Amana farmers last week reaches sitting cabinet members next, and a diplomat warns the precedent does not stop at these two — drafted and waiting on the votes to clear, it surfaces the moment Prague folds.

Tehran will keep the Doha texts alive because the exchange is the asset, the regime reopens buried launch sites that no memorandum can reverse, and Israel tries the men who built the death shelter in its own court on camera while the Hague keeps its accusation open without a verdict. The willingness to act is not in short supply on the field. It is in short supply at every table that still thinks it can negotiate against a side that has stopped asking permission.

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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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