



## Operation Iron Swords Updated to 3 p.m., January 15, 2024

Northern Arena	Israeli Casualties	Rocket Fire
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 651 attacks</li><li>• 161 Hezbollah operatives killed</li><li>• 22 operatives of other terrorist-organization killed</li><li>• One non-affiliated operative</li><li>• One Lebanese army soldier killed</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approximately 1,300 military and civilian dead (unofficial estimate)</li><li>• 132 hostages remain in the Gaza Strip</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approximately 11,000 rockets and mortar shells</li><li>• Approximately 9,000 rockets and mortar shells launched from the Gaza Strip</li><li>• Approximately 2,000 rockets launched from Lebanon and 30 from Syria</li></ul>

### Overview<sup>1</sup>

► **The southern arena:** The activity of the IDF forces continued, focusing on the Khan Yunis area. The Palestinian media reported that the main fighting centers were in Gaza City, the al-Nuseirat refugee camp (central Gaza Strip) and west of Khan Yunis. Hamas' military wing claimed responsibility for launching rockets at Ashdod. The spokesman for the Hamas military wing and other figures in the movement reiterated that they would be able to continue fighting, and claimed their firm stance had shattered Israel's hopes of attaining its objectives.

► **Israel:** According to reports, a combined stabbing attack was carried out in the center of Ra'anana. A woman was killed and 18 people were injured. The stabber was apprehended.

► **According to an unofficial estimate, since October 7, 2023, approximately 1,300 Israeli civilians and security personnel have been killed, 522 of them soldiers and officers; 132 civilian and military hostages are still being held by the terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip; 121 hostages have been returned to Israel.** According to senior Hamas figures,

<sup>1</sup> Click <https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en> to subscribe and receive the ITIC's daily updates as well as its other publications.

no contacts are currently being held regarding a prisoner exchange deal, and they reiterate that their precondition for any agreement is a ceasefire.

► **The Gaza Strip:** Medical officials continue to report a grave medical situation in the Gaza Strip. Egypt is trying to increase the amount of aid delivered to the Gaza Strip by appealing to several Arab countries, especially the UAE and Saudi Arabia, to send more.

► **The northern arena:** Hezbollah claimed responsibility for two attacks targeting Israel. IDF forces continued massive attacks on Hezbollah targets in south Lebanon. Hezbollah secretary general Hassan Nasrallah gave a speech which related to the "campaign" against Israel.

► **Judea and Samaria:** IDF forces operated at al-Najah University in Nablus and detained Hamas operatives; the Palestinian media reported 25 detentions. The university administration held a press conference during which it condemned Israel's activities, claiming they "infringed on academic freedom."

► **The pro-Iranian militias:** The tension between the Houthis in Yemen and the United States continues. Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi praised Yemen's "heroism in protecting the residents of the Gaza Strip." The Iranian foreign minister reiterated the claim that the "resistance forces" in the region operate independently according to their interests and do not receive instructions from Iran.

## Statistics

► The IDF spokesperson published data about the 100 days of activity of IDF forces in the Gaza Strip, the northern arena and Judea and Samaria correct to January 9, 2024 (IDF spokesperson, January 14, 2024).

- ◆ In the **Gaza Strip**, IDF forces have killed approximately **9,000 terrorists**, including two brigade commanders, 19 battalion commanders, and more than fifty company commanders of Hamas' military wing. In the **northern arena**, IDF forces have killed approximately **170 Hezbollah terrorists as well as terrorists belonging to other organizations**.

- ◆ In the **Gaza Strip**, about **30,000** terrorist targets have been attacked, including about 3,400 targets that were located during the fighting. In the northern arena, about **750 targets** have been attacked so far.

- ◆ In the Gaza Strip, about **2,300 detainees** were questioned, many of them exposed as terrorists, some of whom participated in the attack and massacre on October 7, 2023.

◆ About **9,000 rockets** launched from the Gaza Strip fell in Israel. About **2,000** missiles launched from Lebanon fell in Israeli territory and about **30** were launched from Syria.

▶About **3,200 IDF operations** were carried out in Judea and Samaria. **More than 2,650 Palestinians were detained, about 1,300 of them Hamas operatives.**

## The Southern Arena

▶The Palestinian media reported the main centers of fighting were Gaza City, the al-Nuseirat refugee camp (the center of the Strip) and the Muasi-Khan Yunis area (west of Khan Yunis). They also reported 125 dead and 265 wounded in the past day in IDF attacks in the Gaza Strip (Ma'an, January 15, 2024).

▶**The northern Gaza Strip: Elias Karam, a correspondent for al-Jazeera TV**, reporting from the region near the border, said that on the morning of January 15, 2024, exchanges of fire between the IDF forces and the "resistance members" [terrorist operatives] resumed in the al-Bureij refugee camp. He said the IDF forces were attacking heavily, the concussions blasts from the explosions could be heard throughout the area, and the exchange of fire was heavier than had been experienced so far (al-Jazeera YouTube channel, January 15, 2024).



**IDF attacks in the al-Bureij refugee camp (Aljazeera YouTube channel, January 15, 2024)**



**IDF attack on Beit Lahia (QUDSN X account, January 14, 2024)**

► **The southern Gaza Strip:** The IDF forces expanded their activities in the Khan Yunis area and carried out raids throughout the city, locating a large quantity of weapons, a stockpile of mortar shells and nukhba uniforms. In the raid on Hamas' operational headquarters they found diving equipment that belonged to the Hamas naval force. The forces also destroyed two munitions warehouses and attacked military buildings (IDF spokesperson, January 14, 15, 2024).



**IDF activity in the Khan Yunis area (IDF spokesperson, January 14, 2024)**



**Right: Weapons found in the Khan Yunis area. Left: Weapons found in a children's closet (IDF spokesperson, January 15, 2024)**



**Attacks on Khan Yunis. Right: Attack on a truck carrying weapons. Left: Attack on a terrorist squad (IDF spokesperson, January 15, 2024)**

► **Ibrahim Qanan, a correspondent for the al-Ghad TV channel in Khan Yunis**, reported on the continuation of fighting and massive IDF attacks in the southern neighborhoods of Khan Yunis, the areas of Qizan Abu al-Rashwan, Ma'an and Qizan al-Najjar. Meanwhile, IDF forces continued to attack in the east of Khan Yunis, causing extensive damage to buildings (al-Ghad TV, January 15, 2024).



Right: IDF strikes in Khan Yunis (QudsN X account, January 14, 2024). Left: Smoke rising from the combat area in the Qizan al-Najjar and Batn al-Sameen neighborhoods (Shehab X account, January 14, 2024)

### Rocket fire from the Gaza Strip

- On the afternoon of January 14, 2024, rockets were launched at Ashdod. No casualties or damage were reported.
- **The Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades, Hamas military wing**, announced that its operatives had launched a barrage of M75 Muqadma rockets at Ashdod in "response to the [alleged] massacres of civilians." They published a video they claimed documented the launch (Telegram channel of Hamas in Judea and Samaria, January 14, 2024).



Right: The beginning of a video recording the launch of the rockets targeting Ashdod. The sticker on the rocket reads, "Operation al-Aqsa Flood, 100 hundred days of campaign; Ashdod under fire; and we have more!! (Quds Press X account, January 14, 2024)

### Israeli casualties

- According to an unofficial estimate, since October 7, 2023, approximately 1,300 Israeli people have been killed. According to the IDF spokesperson, 522 of them are soldiers and

**officers (188 since the start of the ground maneuver on 27 October, 2023); 132 civilian and military hostages are still being held by the terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip; 121 hostages have been returned.**

### **Palestinian reactions to the fighting**

► In a speech given by **Abu Obeida, spokesman for Hamas' military-terrorist wing**, for the 100th day of Operation al-Aqsa Flood, he claimed they were 100 days in which Israel [allegedly] committed "massacres that shocked humanity." He claimed that Israel's hopes to attain its goals had been shattered by the firm stand of the "resistance" [terrorist organizations]. He also claimed that the fate of many of the hostages was currently unknown, adding that in all likelihood many of them had been killed and the rest were in danger. He also claimed that the IDF and the Israeli government bore full responsibility for the "situation" ( Hamas Telegram channel, January 14, 2024).

► **Sami Abu Zuhri, head of Hamas' "external" political bureau**, claimed the Palestinian "resistance" had the upper hand in the campaign, and managed and directed it. He claimed the "real situation" on the ground confirmed that the "resistance" was prepared to continue for a long time and would not wave a white flag. He added that Israel was still confused, set goals which were impossible to achieve, and the "resistance" inflicted great losses on the IDF, and was killing soldiers and destroying military vehicles on a daily basis (Arab website 21, January 14, 2024).

### **A ceasefire and the issue of the hostages**

► In an interview given by **senior Hamas figure Osama Hamdan**, he claimed they had no information about an Israeli delegation which had gone to Cairo to discuss the possibility of resuming negotiations with Hamas for a hostage deal, and no one had contacted them about the matter. He claimed the negotiations were currently deadlocked in light of Israel's continued attacks and the [alleged] attacks on civilians (Arabic Post, January 14, 2024). In another interview, he emphasized the adherence of the "resistance" to a complete cessation of "aggression" as a condition for reaching a hostage deal with Israel. He said the mediators had presented an initiative which Hamas discussed with the organizations, whose answer was that no solution was possible unless it was based on the cessation of "aggression" and the beginning of aid and reconstruction, in addition to ending the "siege" on the Gaza Strip. After Israel met the conditions, it would be possible to talk about the hostages. He claimed that the ball was now in Israel's court (Arabi21, January 14, 2024).

►On the sidelines of the "Freedom for Palestine" conference held in Istanbul, **Muhammad al-Hindi, deputy Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) secretary general**, said that Hamas and the PIJ had presented their views to Egypt regarding the negotiations and the exchange of prisoners in a joint paper. The conditions were that the "aggression" against the Gaza Strip had to end, after which negotiations could begin for a hostage deal. He added that the hostages were their trump card, and the United States and Israel wanted to neutralize it, so their position was clear, there would be no hostage deal until after the cessation of "aggression" and the withdrawal of the IDF from the Gaza Strip. He reiterated that the price for their release would be emptying the Israeli prisons of prisoners (Arabi21, January 14, 2024).

### **Transferring medicines to the hostages**

►The Arab Post website revealed information it had received from its "sources" about an Israel-Hamas "medicine deal" which was reached through Qatari mediation. According to sources, they had agreed to introduce 150 types of medicine to the hostages held in the Gaza Strip, in exchange for wounded Palestinians receiving medicine. According to the agreement, in exchange for each carton of medicine that reaches the captives, 1,000 cartons of medicine will reach the wounded Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. The sources stated that the drugs had been purchased in France and would be transferred to the Gaza Strip by the Red Cross under full Qatari supervision. Hamas would be responsible for regulating the mechanisms and rules for receiving the drugs and distributing them to the hostages (Arabic Post, January 14, 2024).

### **Terrorist attack inside Israeli territory**

►According to an initial report, at noon on January 15, 2024, a combined stabbing-vehicle ramming attack was carried out at three different sites in the city of Ra'anana. A woman was killed and 18 people were injured, three of them seriously. The terrorist who carried out the attack, a resident of Hebron, was detained by the security forces. The details of the attack are still under investigation and the security forces are searching the area for a suspect who may have been involved in the attack (Israeli media, January 15, 2024).





One of the scenes of the attack in Ra'anana (United Hatzalah, January 15, 2024)

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## The Gaza Strip

### Palestinian casualties

► **The Hamas-controlled ministry of health in the Gaza Strip** reported that as of 10 a.m., January 15, 2024, the number of dead since the beginning of the war stood at 24,100 and the number of wounded at 60,834 (ministry of health in Gaza Facebook page, January 15, 2023).

### The situation in the Gaza Strip

► **Dr. Khalil al-Daqran, director of the emergency room and spokesman for Shuhadaa al-Aqsa Hospital in Deir al-Balah**, said the situation in the hospital was very difficult due to the large number of patients, the lack of medical equipment and medicines, and a shortage of electricity, because they had almost no fuel left. He claimed the hospital was operating with only one generator, and he appealed to international organizations to provide them with the medical equipment they needed. He claimed the continued shooting of IDF forces near the hospital also interfered with its activities (al-Jazeera YouTube channel, January 15, 2024).



Dr. Khalil al-Daqran interviewed this morning by al-Jazeera TV  
(al-Jazeera YouTube channel, January 15, 2024)



**Residents in Gaza loot an aid truck near the coastal road  
(Nesher Palestine Telegram channel, January 15, 2024)**

## The Rafah Crossing

►According to reports, Egypt is working to introduce additional humanitarian aid into the Gaza Strip through the Rafah Crossing, after appealing to several Arab countries, particularly the UAE and Saudi Arabia, to increase the amount of their aid (al-Akhbar, January 15, 2024).

**Senior Hamas figure Osama Hamdan** said they wanted the crossing to be completely Palestinian-Egyptian, and managed only according to the Egyptian-Palestinian understandings where Israel would have no role (Arab Post, January 14, 2024).

## The issue of "the day after"

►**Taher al-Nunu, advisor to Isma'il Haniyeh, head of Hamas' political bureau**, claimed that Hamas' relationship with Fatah had not been severed and that a dialogue was currently being held in which Egypt had an important role. He claimed it would be up to them to decide who would head the leadership and they urgently needed to hold a dialogue with all the "Palestinian organizations." He also stated that they had not yet discussed the names of individuals to be appointed to the future Palestinian government and that it was possible to reach an agreement with all the "organizations" without external intervention (al-Arabiya, January 14, 2024).

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## The Northern Arena

### Hezbollah attacks

►Hezbollah continued attacking IDF posts and concentrations of forces on the border of Israel, claiming responsibility for two anti-tank missile and rocket attacks (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, January 14 and 15, 2024). Israeli Air Force fighter jets carried

out a wave of attacks in Lebanese territory, including on Hezbollah terrorist facilities and operational headquarters (IDF spokesperson, January 14, 2024).



#### Attacking Hezbollah targets (IDF spokesperson, January 14, 2024)

► **Ali Shoeib, a correspondent for the Hezbollah-affiliated al-Manar network**, documented the Air Force strikes in Aitaroun, Meiss al-Jabal and the al-Labouneh area, about one and a half kilometers north of Shlomi (Ali Shoeib's X account, January 14, 2024). A photo was published of a building which had been partially destroyed by the Israeli Air Force attack on Aitaroun (Fouad Khreiss' X account, January 14, 2024).



Right: Airstrike on Aitaroun or Meiss al-Jabal. Left: Airstrike on the al-Labouneh area (Ali Shoeib's X account, January 14, 2024)



A building in Aitaroun partially destroyed by an Israeli Air Force attack (Fouad Khreiss' X account, January 14, 2024)

## The Islamic al-Izz Brigades

►After the claim of responsibility issued by the Islamic al-Izz Brigades for infiltrating the Mount Dov area, "security officials in Lebanon" reported that the organization was still a mystery and that the bodies of the three dead operatives noted by the organization in its announcement had not yet arrived at any hospital in Lebanon and it was not known if they were still lying in the field or had been taken by Israel. "Local sources" in the Sheba Farms area said they were not familiar with the organization and knew nothing about its activities. Some people are of the opinion that it is affiliated with Hamas, but that was denied by sources close to the movement who said that Hamas was "proud of its martyrs" and did not hide them. The possibility it was affiliated with the PIJ was also denied by sources close to the organization (al-Sharq al-Awsat, January 15, 2024).

## Statements by senior Hamas figures

►**Senior Hamas figure Osama Hamdan** said in an interview that the killing of Saleh al-'Arouri was part of the "conflict with Hamas" and had not been aimed at "any other party." He also claimed they were not thinking of revenge, the real revenge would be for Israel to "disappear" and for the "occupation" to end, but naturally they had to strike Israel in a way which would make it "understand that such aggression" would have a response. He said he believed the "response" to the killing of al-'Arouri would come soon and in a way that would make Israel understand that attacking Hamas was not a simple matter. As to whether the response would come from Hamas or from the "resistance" in general, he said from the "resistance" in general,<sup>2</sup> and that Hezbollah had already begun to respond (Arabic Post, January 14, 2024). In another interview he stated that the response to the "crime of elimination" was their responsibility as the "resistance" in "Palestine." He claimed the killing had two aspects: the act itself, and the attack on Lebanon's sovereignty. Everyone, he claimed, was trying to do their duty and they were not asking anyone to respond to the killing, and if someone did, of course they would thank them for it, but the response was their responsibility (Arabi21, January 14, 2024).

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<sup>2</sup> Iran, Syria, Hezbollah, the Palestinian terrorist organizations, the Shi'ite Houthis in Yemen and the pro-Iranian militias in Iraq.

## Hassan Nasrallah's speech

► On January 14, 2024, Hassan Nasrallah, Hezbollah secretary general, gave a speech at a memorial ceremony for Wissam Tawil, a commander in the al-Adwan who was killed in a targeted attack on January 8, 2024. He said the following (al-Mayadeen, January 14, 2024):

◆ **The campaign in the Gaza Strip:** According to Nasrallah's allegations, Israel is still fighting to achieve a breakthrough before moving into the third phase of the war where it will redeploy its forces. Israel has not met the goals it announced, cannot eliminate the "resistance," not even the Hamas administration that still controls the evacuated areas in northern Gaza Strip. Israel hides its dead and the achievements of Hamas. He claimed that Israel's image was revealed to the world at the International Court of Justice in The Hague. Referring to the situation of the hostages, he claimed the families' hope for their release had ended.

◆ **The campaign in Lebanon:** Referring to the organization's attack on the Meron base, he said that they had launched 62 rockets and missiles, 40 Katyusha rockets and 22 Kornet anti-tank missiles at the base, and that 18 Kornet missiles had hit it. He claimed there were casualties at the base, but Israel was hiding that.

◆ **The involvement of the militias in Yemen and Iraq:** Regarding Yemen, he claimed that what is happening in the Red Sea was a severe blow to Israel's economy. He added that the "aggression" against Yemen represented "American and British stupidity," while the Americans called not to expand the war, they were expanding it themselves, and if they thought that Yemen would stop its "actions" [attacks] they were wrong. Regarding the Islamic Resistance in Iraq, he claimed that the announcement of its attacking Haifa with a cruise missile was "true," but Israel hid the attack. He claimed if the developments in all arenas continued as they were, the Israeli government would accept the terms of the "resistance."

◆ **United States involvement:** The United States warned them that if they didn't stop, Israel would start a war against them, but they were idle threats and it was useless to try to intimidate them. They have been ready for war for 99 days, and they will fight without limit. The Americans should fear for their vessels in the area and the safety of their bases.



Hassan Nasrallah (al-Manar, January 14, 2024)

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## Judea and Samaria

### Terrorist attacks

► On the evening of January 14, 2024, three Palestinians threw an IED and Molotov cocktails at the Judea and Samaria Division headquarters in Beit El. An IDF force opened fire at them. One was killed and the other two fled the scene (Judea and Samaria Rescue, January 14, 2024). The Palestinians reported the death of Suleiman Muhammad Kanaan, 17, from Birzeit (north of Ramallah), by IDF gunfire (al-Quds, January 15, 2024).

### Counterterrorism activities

► The Israeli security forces continued their counterterrorism activities throughout Judea and Samaria, detaining 17 wanted Palestinians (IDF spokesperson's Telegram channel, January 15, 2024). Since the beginning of the war in the Gaza Strip, more than 2,650 wanted Palestinians have been detained, about 1,300 of them Hamas operatives (IDF spokesperson's Telegram channel, January 14, 2024).

► Before dawn on January 15, 2024, Israeli security forces operated at al-Najah University in Nablus. They detained nine wanted Palestinians belonging to the Islamic Bloc (Hamas' student organization), and several other students were taken for questioning (IDF spokesperson's Telegram channel, January 15, 2024). The Palestinian media reported 25 detainees in an Israeli security force activity inside the university compound (al-Ghad TV, January 15, 2024). On January 15, 2024, the al-Najah University administration held a press conference, condemning what they described as Israel's blatant infringement of academic freedom (QudsN X account, January 15, 2024).



**Right: Israeli security forces entering Nablus (Shehab X account, January 15, 2024). Left: Press conference held by the al-Najah University administration (QudsN X account, January 15, 2024)**

► The Israeli security forces also operated in Qalqilya, destroying two houses belonging to Bassem Daoud and Saleh Daoud, Hamas operatives who carried out shooting attacks in 2015. They also seized hundreds of thousands of shekels intended to finance terrorist activity (IDF spokesperson's Telegram channel, January 15, 2024).

## Palestinian Authority (PA)

► **Ziad Hab al-Reeh, PA minister of the interior**, met in Amman with **Mazin al-Farrayeh, the Jordanian minister of the interior**, and discussed cooperation and coordination between the two ministries. Hab al-Reeh praised Jordan's support for the Palestinian people and its efforts to stop the "aggression" against them in the Gaza Strip, Judea and Samaria. Al-Farrayeh stressed Jordan's ongoing commitment to reach a ceasefire and reject the principle of displacement. **Hab al-Reeh** also met in Ramallah with **Gilles Michaud, UN under-secretary-general for safety and security**, and stressed the need to strengthen cooperation between the official bodies to ensure the entry of basic humanitarian aid and fuel into the Gaza Strip. Michaud expressed his concern about the situation in the Gaza Strip, Judea and Samaria, noting that the UN was working to achieve a ceasefire and provide humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip (Wafa, January 14, 2024).



**The Palestinian minister of the interior meets in Amman with his Jordanian counterpart (Wafa, January 14, 2024)**

► **Jibril al-Rajoub, chairman of the Palestinian Football Association**, said the participation of the Palestinian national team in the 2023 Asian Cup was a message to the world and a symbol of Palestinian national identity. He also said the time had come to put an end to the suffering of the Palestinians, noting that "Israeli aggression is a crime against the Palestinian people and the Palestinian cause" (al-Araby al-Jadeed, January 14, 2024).

► **Tawfiq al-Tirawi, a member of Fatah's Central Committee**, claimed that Fatah's absence from the media during the first days of the war had been a mistake. He said Fatah's Central Committee members were holding international contacts to stop the war in the Gaza Strip. He added that it continued to hold contacts on the international and Islamic levels, and praised Egypt for its ongoing cooperation (al-Najah, January 14, 2024).

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## Iran

► **Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi** spoke with **Mahdi al-Mashat, head of the Houthi Supreme Political Council in Yemen**, and praised Yemen's "heroism in defending the residents of the Gaza Strip." The two also stressed ensuring the security of international shipping. Al-Mashat stressed that Yemen's measures were directed against the "oppressive Zionist regime" (ISNA, January 14, 2024).

► **Hossein Amir Abdollahian, Iranian foreign minister**, reiterated that the "resistance forces" in the region, including Yemen, were acting independently to further their own interests and did not receive instructions from Iran. Meeting with representatives of the supreme leader and clerics, Abdollahian said that Hamas had succeeded in causing the political and security structure of the "Zionist regime" to collapse on October 7, 2023, , adding that Hamas' attack



had [allegedly] been an "action" by a "liberation movement against an illegitimate occupation regime." He added that Israel had not achieved any of its declared goals. The Iranian foreign minister also said that the United States had made a mistake in supporting Israel (Mehr, January 15, 2024).

► Referring to the 100<sup>th</sup> day of the war, **Nasser Kanani, spokesman for the Iranian foreign ministry**, wrote on his X account (January 15, 2024) that 100,000 dead and wounded Palestinian victims would forever be recorded in the pages of history and be judged by the "tribunal of human conscience" as the shame of "the fake regime of Israel and the United States government." He said Israel had not achieved any strategic achievements in the war and that its "crimes" would not save the "apartheid regime" from collapse.

## Pro-Iranian militias

### Iraq

► The Islamic Resistance in Iraq claimed responsibility for missile and drone attacks on three American bases, one in Iraq and two in Syria (Islamic Resistance Telegram channel, January 14, 2024).

### Yemen

► The Houthi al-Masirah network reported that the United States and Britain had attacked Jabal Jada in the al-Hudaydah area (al-Masirah Network, January 14, 2024). Joseph Habush, al-Arabiya correspondent in Washington, quoted a senior Department of Defense official as saying that there had been no American or coalition airstrikes in Yemen on that day (Joseph Habush's X account, January 14, 2024).

► The US Army Central Command (CENTCOM) reported that on January 14, 2024, at 3:45 p.m., the Houthis fired a cruise missile at the American destroyer USS Laboon, which was sailing in the southern Red Sea. The missile was intercepted near the coast of al-Hudaydah in Yemen by an American fighter plane, and no casualties or damage had been reported (CENTCOM X account, January 15, 2024).

► **Grant Shapps, Britain's defense secretary**, said Britain was waiting for developments in the Red Sea before deciding whether to launch new strikes against the Houthis. He noted that they did not want to be involved in military operations in the Red Sea, but ultimately freedom of navigation was an international right (Sky News, January 15, 2024).

► **Ali al-Qahum, a member of the Houthi political bureau**, said in an interview that the United States and Britain had declared open war on Yemen and had to endure the Yemeni attacks. He noted that the “aggression” against Yemen was not and would not be effective, that the battle was still open, and the United States and Britain would regret their “aggression” (al-Mayadeen, January 14, 2024).

► **Houthi spokesman Muhammad Abdeslam** said those measures would not prevent them from continuing to support the Palestinian people and their "resistance," and they would continue supporting the Palestinians by attacking ships belonging to Israel and ships bound for Israeli ports (Abdeslam’s X account, January 14, 2024).

## The Arab Arena

### Egypt

► "Exclusive Egyptian sources" reported that Egypt was setting up a crisis management cell to discuss the steps it might take following Israel's claim at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) that it had not prevented aid from entering the Gaza Strip and that Egypt was responsible for the Rafah Crossing. The cell reportedly includes diplomatic, legal and security officials. The “sources” further stated that "Egypt sent a legal memorandum to the ICJ in response to the Israeli claim and intends to consider additional legal measures, including those related to the Rafah Crossing (al-Araby al-Jadeed, January 14, 2024).

► **Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi** met in Egypt with **Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi** to discuss developments in the situation in the Gaza Strip. They stressed that they rejected the forced displacement of Palestinians from their land and pointed out the need for the international community to take responsibility for providing aid to the Strip (Egyptian presidential spokesman’s Facebook page, January 14, 2024). The Chinese foreign minister also met with **Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry**. They issued a statement saying that an immediate ceasefire had to be reached in the Gaza Strip and the hostages and prisoners on both sides had to be released. They also said they were monitoring developments in the Red Sea and claimed that the developments should be interpreted as being related to the situation in the Gaza Strip. They stressed the importance of uniting regional and international efforts to stop the attacks in the Gaza Strip and to ensure freedom of navigation in the Red Sea (Egyptian foreign ministry Facebook page, January 14, 2024).

## Tunisia

► On January 13, 2024, the Tunisian Forum in Support of the Resistance was held in Tunis, under the slogan "An opposing nation... A winning nation." The event was held on the invitation of the Tunisian People's Movement and attended by the speaker of the Tunisian Parliament; the PA ambassador to Tunisia; Bassem Na'im, Sami Abu Zuhri and Yusuf Hamdan on behalf of Hamas; Ihsan Ataya on behalf of the PIJ; Layla Khaled on behalf of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine; and Hezbollah's Central Council member Hussein Gharibis.

► In a speech given at the forum, **Ihsan Ataya, a member of the PIJ's political bureau**, said there were many ways to support the Palestinian people and the "resistance:" with words, positions, the media, and material and moral support, especially by boycotting Israeli and American products. He expressed hope that the Forum would be a permanent institution and that it would work to present constructive and creative ideas and to develop means of supporting the resistance from a public and humanitarian perspective. He praised South Africa's position in supporting the Palestinian cause, saying it had set an important example of legal support against Israel. On the sidelines of the forum, **senior Hamas figure Bassem Na'im** said that the Western powers were advocating for the "day after" the war in the Gaza Strip and the arrangements after the campaign, formulating plans and scenarios, but that the situation in the Gaza Strip and "Palestine", in general, was an internal Palestinian matter, and no one had the right to intervene. He claimed that all plans with which the Palestinians did not agree would not succeed because the Palestinians would oppose them (al-Araby al-Jadeed, January 13, 2024; Anadolu News, January 13, 2024; Tunisian radio station Jawhara FM website, January 13, 2024).



**Right: Layla Khaled, Bassem Na'im, Ihsan Ataya, and Yousef Hamdan, Hamas' representative in Algeria, in the Forum (al-Araby al-Jadeed, January 13, 2024). Left: Ihsan Ataya speaking (Anadolu News, January 13, 2024)**

► On the sidelines of the conference **Sami Abu Zuhri, head of Hamas' political department** “**abroad,**” said that the official and popular Arab and Islamic positions were still below the required level because it was not an ordinary campaign, but [an alleged] “war of annihilation.” He noted that the “resistance” was not only waging war against Israel, but also against a Western “coalition” led by the United States, and therefore there had to be a popular and official Arabic counter-coalition, which would constitute real support for the “resistance” and the Palestinians in Gaza (Arabi21 website, January 14, 2024).

## The International Arena

### United States

► **American President Joe Biden**, in a statement issued on the 100<sup>th</sup> day of the war in the Gaza Strip, emphasized the suffering experienced by the families of the hostages and noted that he was looking forward to maintaining close contact with his colleagues in Qatar, Egypt and Israel to bring everyone back. Biden pledged never to stop working to bring the American hostages home. He said that since October 7, 2023, the American administration had been employing aggressive diplomacy to return the hostages, and in cooperation with Qatar, Egypt and Israel, they had succeeded in bringing about a seven-day ceasefire in November and returning 105 hostages (White House website, January 14, 2024).

► **White House spokesman John Kirby** said the United States believed it was the right time to move to a less intense phase of fighting in the Strip and was trying to persuade Israel to do so. He said they were not saying that Israel had to completely take its “foot off the gas” because Hamas’ threat still existed, and therefore Israel had the right to continue fighting (CBS, January 14, 2024).

### China

► **Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi** called for a “broad, credible and effective” international peace conference and a concrete timetable for implementing the two-state solution. He said the infrastructure in the Gaza Strip had been “destroyed” and that millions were struggling to survive, adding that China would send another shipment of humanitarian aid to the Strip. Referring to tensions in the Red Sea, he called for an end to attacks on civilian vessels and the harassment of international trade. At the same time, he noted that the Security Council had never authorized any country to use force against Yemen and had to refrain from “adding fuel

to the fire" in the tension in the Red Sea, and that all parties had to respect the sovereignty of the countries along the Red Sea (the Chinese mission to the United Nations X account, January 15, 2024).