

Situation Report

Israel-Hamas War Monitoring

Classification: TLP:CLEAR

Criticality: High

Intelligence Requirements: Key Personnel Residential Threats, Geopolitical, Military

**As of 1200 EDT
October 17, 2023**



Situation Report: Israel-Hamas War Monitoring as of 1200 EDT on October 17, 2023

Scope Note

ZeroFox Intelligence is derived from a variety of sources, including—but not limited to—curated open-source accesses, vetted social media, proprietary data sources, and direct access to threat actors and groups through covert communication channels. Information relied upon to complete any report cannot always be independently verified. As such, ZeroFox applies rigorous analytic standards and tradecraft in accordance with best practices and includes caveat language and source citations to clearly identify the veracity of our Intelligence reporting and substantiate our assessments and recommendations. All sources used in this particular Intelligence product were **identified prior to 11:00 AM (EDT) on October 17, 2023**; per cyber hygiene best practices, caution is advised when clicking on any third-party links.

› Key Findings

- Israel's military remains amassed on multiple fronts along the border with Gaza, likely in preparation for a ground offensive. Multiple non-profit organizations are warning of the escalating humanitarian crisis; the Rafah border crossing did not open on Monday as expected, preventing humanitarian supplies from being delivered into Gaza.
- A gunman allegedly shot and killed two Swedish nationals in a terrorist attack in Brussels, Belgium, on Monday; the gunman claimed "to be inspired by the Islamic State," with no indication that the attack is linked to the Israel-Hamas war.
- The mass proliferation of mis- and disinformation online about the war continues, with viral photos and videos circulated that have later been determined to be false or misleading. ZeroFox has identified a notable uptick in disinformation surrounding the war.

| Situation on the Ground

As missile strikes in Gaza continue, Israel's military remains amassed on multiple fronts along the border with Gaza, likely in preparation for a ground offensive. Israel continues to urge Gazans to move south towards the Egypt-controlled Rafah border; reports state that more than one million Gazans have now been displaced and left their homes.¹ Multiple non-profit organizations warn of the escalating humanitarian crisis, with civilians lacking access to food, water, fuel, and medicine. The Rafah border crossing did not open on Monday as had been expected, preventing humanitarian

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[hXXps://www.aljazeera\[.\]com/news/liveblog/2023/10/14/israel-hamas-war-live-us-moves-second-aircraft-carrier-to-mediterranean](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/liveblog/2023/10/14/israel-hamas-war-live-us-moves-second-aircraft-carrier-to-mediterranean)



supplies from being delivered into Gaza. There are unconfirmed reports that Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) have struck targets in southern areas of Gaza—including Rafah and Khan Younis, where Israel told Palestinians to evacuate for their safety.² Despite calls to accept refugees to ease civilian casualties, the King of Jordan, Abdullah II, stated that there will be no refugees accepted into Jordan or Egypt.³ This means it is likely that any Palestinians without dual nationality will be turned away from the Rafah border crossing should it open.

U.S. President Joe Biden will visit Israel on Wednesday, October 18, 2023, before meeting with Arab leaders in Jordan.⁴ The details of the trips remain vague, almost certainly due to security concerns. New York Governor Kathy Hochul has said she will travel to Israel on Tuesday for a “solidarity mission” to meet with diplomatic leaders and communities affected by the October 7, 2023, Hamas attack. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz is also set to visit Israel today.⁵⁶

Due to the complicated security measures necessary to facilitate Biden’s trip, it is likely that the Israeli military will not launch its anticipated offensive amid the President’s visit. It is also probable that other parties, such as Hezbollah, will refrain from large-scale attacks during this time to avoid potential U.S. military intervention in the conflict. In this context, the visit can also be viewed as an attempt at deterring a broader regional war.

Tensions remain high at the Israel-Lebanon border, with the Israeli military claiming to have killed four militants attempting to cross from Lebanon with an explosive device.⁷ An anti-tank missile fired from Lebanon landed in Metula in northern Israel, injuring three people.⁸ The World Health Organization said it has deployed two shipments of medical supplies to Beirut, Lebanon, in preparation for a potential escalation with Israel.⁹

| Global Protest Activity, Escalating Community Tensions

A gunman is alleged to have shot and killed two Swedish nationals in a terrorist attack in Brussels, Belgium, on Monday, October 16, 2023. In a video posted on social media, a man identifying himself as

² [hXXps://x.com/AJEnglish/status/1714164617696424378?s=20](https://x.com/AJEnglish/status/1714164617696424378?s=20)

³ [hXXps://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/king-abdullah-gaza-no-refugees-jordan-no-refugees-egypt-2023-10-17/](https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/king-abdullah-gaza-no-refugees-jordan-no-refugees-egypt-2023-10-17/)

⁴ [hXXps://apnews.com/live/israel-hamas-war-live-updates](https://apnews.com/live/israel-hamas-war-live-updates)

⁵ [hXXps://apnews.com/article/new-york-governor-hochul-visit-israel-1976e2093e87e748a8efb12a42ee0adc](https://apnews.com/article/new-york-governor-hochul-visit-israel-1976e2093e87e748a8efb12a42ee0adc)

⁶ [hXXps://www.reuters.com/world/germanys-scholz-visit-israel-egypt-this-week-sources-2023-10-16/](https://www.reuters.com/world/germanys-scholz-visit-israel-egypt-this-week-sources-2023-10-16/)

⁷

[hXXps://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israeli-military-says-killed-four-people-who-tried-infiltrate-lebanon-plant-2023-10-17/](https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israeli-military-says-killed-four-people-who-tried-infiltrate-lebanon-plant-2023-10-17/)

⁸ [hXXps://apnews.com/article/lebanon-israel-hezbollah-clashes-cadccde8c6ce5400ee36fd12d3bfea52](https://apnews.com/article/lebanon-israel-hezbollah-clashes-cadccde8c6ce5400ee36fd12d3bfea52)

⁹ [hXXps://www.nytimes.com/2023/10/16/world/middleeast/israel-lebanon-border-tensions.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/10/16/world/middleeast/israel-lebanon-border-tensions.html)



the gunman claimed “to be inspired by the Islamic State,” with no indication that the attack is linked to the Israel-Hamas war. At the time of writing, the suspected perpetrator has been shot dead by police, ending an overnight manhunt. The attack occurred as Belgium hosted Sweden in a Euro 2024 qualifier soccer match in Brussels, forcing the match to be abandoned at half-time.¹⁰ It is likely the attack on Swedish nationals is linked to a spate of Quran-burning protests in Sweden and Denmark that have sparked tensions with Muslim communities and ignited demonstrations in Muslim-majority countries.

The Israel-Hamas War continues to drive an increase in antisemitic and anti-Muslim hatred in the United States, Europe, and more broadly. While no links to the war have been established, high-profile events such as Monday’s terrorist attack in Brussels will likely exacerbate tensions, creating fear within vulnerable communities and fueling anti-Muslim hatred.

- On Monday, Tell MAMA—an organization that records anti-Muslim hate incidents—reported a five-fold increase in incidents in the United Kingdom (UK) between October 7 and 16, when compared with the same period in 2022.¹¹ Similar increases have been reported by UK-based organizations that record anti-Jewish hate incidents.
- In France, the Palace of Versailles was evacuated and then closed to visitors after receiving a bomb threat around noon on October 17. Versailles reopened its doors by 3:30 PM once a search was completed. Versailles closed and evacuated visitors on October 14 after a bomb threat as well.¹²
- Also in France, police are searching for a knife-wielding man who reportedly threatened two students and yelled “Allahu Akbar” in the southern town of Port-de-Bouc outside of Marseille.¹³
- Tensions are reportedly particularly high on university campuses in the United States and Europe, including at Stanford, Harvard, Yale, and Colombia. Pro-Palestine and Pro-Israel protests caused clashes between groups of students.¹⁴ Colleges, which are increasingly asserting positions of neutrality on the conflict, are facing increased pressure from both sides to adopt more partisan stances. Images and videos of students are being circulated on social media—most recently of three individuals allegedly at New York University tearing down posters

¹⁰ <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/10/16/europe/belgium-brussels-shooting-intl/index.html>

¹¹ <https://x.com/TellMamaUK/status/1713951672962097298?s=20>

¹² https://www.bfmtv.com/paris/nouvelle-evacuation-en-cours-du-chateau-de-versailles_AN-202310170491.html

¹³ <https://twitter.com/AlertesInfos/status/1714260088859312519>

¹⁴ <https://apnews.com/article/israel-hamas-war-college-free-speech-543aff623d5f54ad6529fe598ae48271>



of Israelis kidnapped during Hamas' attack—calling for them to be identified.¹⁵ The doxxing and identification of individuals have the potential to escalate to physical violence.

| Cyber Activity, Mis- and Disinformation

Concerns remain over the vulnerability of security cameras in Israel and Palestine to cyberattacks, necessitating measures like encryption and access controls for public safety.

- The Israeli Cyber Directorate continues to circulate guidance to the owners of private home security cameras to urgently secure them against potential compromise. The advice published on the official government website includes steps such as changing the camera's admin password, enabling two-step verification, configuring automatic updates, disconnecting cameras, or even covering them.¹⁶

Pro-Palestinian threat actors, some of whom have been traditionally aligned with Russia, have continued to target Israel-based organizations and their allies with disruption and website defacements. Threat collectives include the Telegram channel StarsX Team, which has stated it is targeting websites of entities in Israel, India, and the United States in support of Palestinians.¹⁷

- Telegram channel TEAM : ONE PIECE claimed to have hacked IBM Israel. The group claims to have all the company's data, including phone numbers, emails, addresses, credit cards, and ID cards;¹⁸ ZeroFox has neither independently confirmed nor disconfirmed the allegations made by the group.

¹⁵ [hXXps://x.com/StopAntisemites/status/1714073317315887385?s=20](https://x.com/StopAntisemites/status/1714073317315887385?s=20)

¹⁶ [hXXps://www.gov.il/he/departments/news/home_camera_owners_change_your_password](https://www.gov.il/he/departments/news/home_camera_owners_change_your_password)

¹⁷ ZeroFox Internal Collections

¹⁸ ZeroFox Internal Collections



| Appendix A: Traffic Light Protocol for Information Dissemination

	Red	Amber
WHEN SHOULD IT BE USED?	Sources may use TLP:RED when information cannot be effectively acted upon by additional parties and could lead to impacts on a party's privacy, reputation, or operations if misused.	Sources may use TLP:AMBER when information requires support to be effectively acted upon but carries risks to privacy, reputation, or operations if shared outside of the organizations involved.
HOW MAY IT BE SHARED?	Recipients may NOT share TLP:RED with any parties outside of the specific exchange, meeting, or conversation in which it is originally disclosed.	Recipients may ONLY share TLP:AMBER information with members of their own organization and its clients, but only on a need-to-know basis to protect their organization and its clients and prevent further harm. Note that TLP:AMBER+STRICT restricts sharing to the organization only.
	Green	Clear
WHEN SHOULD IT BE USED?	Sources may use TLP:GREEN when information is useful for the awareness of all participating organizations, as well as with peers within the broader community or sector.	Sources may use TLP:CLEAR when information carries minimal or no risk of misuse in accordance with applicable rules and procedures for public release.
HOW MAY IT BE SHARED?	Recipients may share TLP:GREEN information with peers and partner organizations within their sector or community but not via publicly accessible channels.	Recipients may share TLP:CLEAR information without restriction, subject to copyright controls.



Appendix B: ZeroFox Intelligence Probability Scale

All ZeroFox intelligence products leverage probabilistic assessment language in analytic judgments. Qualitative statements used in these judgments refer to associated probability ranges, which state the likelihood of occurrence of an event or development. Ranges are used to avoid a false impression of accuracy. This scale is a standard that aligns with how readers should interpret such terms.

Almost No Chance	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Roughly Even Chance	Likely	Very Likely	Almost Certain
1-5%	5-20%	20-45%	45-55%	55-80%	80-95%	95-99%