

IN THE NEWS

**Mofaz warns
 Hamas on terror**

Israel's defense minister threatened a new military offensive against Hamas if it resumes terrorist attacks.

Sunday's Yediot Achronot quoted Shaul Mofaz as saying that the Islamic terrorist group would not be immune from Israeli countermeasures despite its victory in Palestinian Authority elections last week.

"If Hamas carries out terrorist attacks against Israel, we will return to the preventive strike policy, including against leaders of the group," Mofaz said, using the official term for Israel's targeted killings of top terrorists. "No one will be immune, even those in the political echelon."

**German leader
visits Jewish state**

German Chancellor Angela Merkel launched her first official trip to Israel on Sunday.

During her trip, Merkel is expected to discuss Israeli-German economic relations, and express concerns about Iran's nuclear program and Hamas' victory in last week's Palestinian election.

Merkel is meeting with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and Israel's acting prime minister, Ehud Olmert.

She will not meet any Hamas leaders.

**U.N. marks
Holocaust Day**

The United Nations marked its first-ever Holocaust Remembrance Day last Friday.

"We sound an alarm, a call to arms and a wake-up call to the world, a world in which a member state of this organization denies the Holocaust while it prepares the next one," Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, Dan Gillerman, told a General Assembly hall packed with Holocaust survivors, Jewish and Israeli officials and other members of the Jewish community.

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WORLD REPORT

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Hamas win poses dilemma for Israeli, world policy-makers

By LESLIE SUSSER

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Hamas' sweeping election victory is forcing all key players to reassess their positions on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and has created a widespread sense of uncertainty about the future, with Israelis, Palestinians and outside observers raising a host of fundamental questions.

Following are some of the main concerns and an analysis of how they might play out.

The big question is whether Hamas in power will moderate its radical positions or put Palestinian society on a collision course with Israel and the Western world.

There will be enormous pressure on Hamas to adopt a more pragmatic line. The European Union, which provides up to 90 percent of international aid to the Palestinians, is threatening to suspend its economic support unless Hamas recognizes Israel's right to exist and renounces violence.

In the short term, cutting off these funds could leave a Hamas government unable to pay the salaries of 155,000 Palestinian civil servants, including the 30,000-strong Palestinian Authority security forces. In the longer term, ambitious plans to jump-start the stalled Palestinian economy may have to be shelved, perpetuating poverty and unemployment.

A militant Hamas also will face international isolation, giving Israel the moral and diplomatic high ground for tough responses to Palestinian terror.

Israel will be able to exert tremendous diplomatic, economic and military pressure. On the diplomatic front, it won't talk to

Hamas in its present form; as to the economy, the Palestinians are dependent on Israel for electricity, the transfer of tax revenue, goods, services, work places and border crossings; and, if terrorism escalates, Hamas leaders could become targets.

Therefore, while it won an outright majority of 74 of the 132 seats in the Palestinian Legislative Council, Hamas wants the defeated Fatah movement to stay on in government to give it a semblance of respectability vis-a-vis Israel and the international community.

Still, despite all the international, Israeli and domestic pressure, Hamas for now probably will refuse to moderate its ideology, which calls for Israel's destruction. Indeed, there are strong opposing pressures on Hamas to maintain its radical line.

Iran, for example, could make up for funds the European Union withholds — on condition that Hamas remain militant. Fidelity to its ideology, and goading by other militant groups, also could shunt Hamas away from moderation.

• Does the Hamas victory mean the end of the dynamic toward independent Israeli and Palestinian states living side by side?

Not necessarily. By its very participation in the election Hamas has been sucked into the two-state paradigm: The Palestinian Parliament holds sway in the West Bank and Gaza Strip but not over all the territory — including Israel — that Hamas claims as "Palestine."

More importantly, the Hamas victory likely will accelerate unilateral Israeli moves to establish a clear border between Israelis

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ANALYSIS

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and Israeli settlements on one side, and Palestinians on the other.

• **Is Hamas uniformly radical, or are there more moderate voices?**

The organization's formal position is that there can be no talks with Israel until it withdraws to its pre-1967 boundaries, divides Jerusalem and takes in vast numbers of Palestinian refugees, positions that are unacceptable to Israel. Until then, Hamas says, all contacts will be through third parties.

Behind the scenes, however, some Hamas leaders are intimating that there could be direct negotiations before then. On this score, and in general, Ismail Haniya, Hamas' primary candidate for prime minister, is thought to be more pragmatic than the Gaza-based party leader, Mahmoud al-Zahar.

• **How is the secular Fatah movement likely to respond to its loss of power?**

Fatah, the movement founded by Yasser Arafat, has dominated the Palestinian nationalist movement since its inception 40 years ago. Its loss of power to the Islamic fundamentalists came as a profound shock. Fatah leaders' initial reaction was to dismiss out-of-hand Hamas calls to participate in a national unity government on the grounds that Fatah plans to rebuild in opposition and return to power once Hamas' approach proves unrealistic.

Fatah says it intends to hand over power peacefully, but already there has been some fighting between the two groups and some talk of using force to reverse

the election result, the way the army did when Islamists were poised to win power in Algeria in 1992. A key development to watch will be whether P.A. security personnel loyal to Fatah agree to place themselves under Hamas command.

• **What are the likely regional consequences?**

For Israel, one of the most dangerous results would be a growth of Iranian influence in the Palestinian arena. Hawks like the Likud Party's Yuval Steinitz, chairman of the Knesset's

Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, see a tightening of an Iranian-controlled terrorist belt around Israel, with the Lebanese-based Hezbollah to the north and Hamas and other Palestinian militants in the center and south.

A lot will depend on the choice Hamas makes between Iran and the rest of the international community.

• **Will Hamas continue the cease-fire, or "tahdia," that most Palestinian terrorist groups declared in early 2005, or will there soon be a fresh outbreak of terrorism?**

The Israeli intelligence assessment is that Hamas will observe the cease-fire, at least in the short term. What happens next will depend on the long-term strategy that Hamas, with all the constraints of power, decides to adopt.

As for terrorist acts by other militants such as Islamic Jihad, Hamas, with its radical ideology, will be in no position to condemn them.

Some Israelis are saying this will make it easier for Israel to cope. There will be no more masks or double talk, analysts say, such as when the Palestinian Authority condemned terror to the outside world but did nothing to stop it. With Hamas in power, they add, Israelis are likely to be more united in fighting terrorism and to get more international support for counter-terrorist activities.

• **What are Israel's options?**

Government policy is shaping up as the following: No talks with Hamas, persistence with the "road map" peace plan's demands for a renunciation of terrorism

and disarming of militias, consideration of further unilateral withdrawals, rapid completion of the West Bank security fence, targeting of the Islamic Jihad militia and carrot-and-stick use of Israel's economic leverage.

On the left, Meretz Party leader Yossi Beilin suggests circumventing Hamas by negotiating peace with Fatah leader Mahmoud Abbas, who will remain as P.A. president, and putting any deal to a Palestinian referendum.

On the right, Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu urges moving the fence deeper into Palestinian territory to distance the militiamen from major Israeli roads and the international airport.

• **What impact is the rise of Hamas likely to have on Israeli elections?**

All the main parties are trying to make political capital of the Hamas victory in the run-up to Israel's own election in March. Likud argues that last summer's unilateral withdrawal from Gaza and the northern West Bank showed the Palestinians that terrorism pays, and the fact that Hamas could claim that its militiamen forced Israel to leave paved the way for its election success.

On the left, Labor and Meretz claim that the Sharon government weakened Abbas and Fatah by ignoring them as potential peace partners, which they say contributed to Hamas' rise.

The main argument now, though, is likely to be between the unilateralism advocated by Kadima and Labor and the Likud's tougher approach.

In past elections, Likud's use of scare tactics and projection of strength in the face of perceived threats has been very effective.

Despite the rise of Hamas, however, Likud may find it difficult this time to dent Kadima's lead in the polls. The governing party's unilateral message — that Israel has the power to shape a new reality that's best for it, regardless of who holds power on the Palestinian side — seems at least as valid as when Fatah was in charge.

Hamas' formal position is that it will not directly negotiate with Israel until it withdraws to pre-1967 borders, divides Jerusalem and takes in large numbers of Palestinian refugees.

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Sixty-one years later, U.N. marks Holocaust

By CHANAN TIGAY

UNITED NATIONS (JTA) — Sixty-one years to the day after the liberation of Auschwitz, the United Nations marked its first-ever Holocaust remembrance day, commemorating those lost in the genocide that was the impetus for the world body's birth.

The acknowledgment was long overdue, said those who attended last Friday's ceremony in a packed General Assembly Hall.

"For us survivors, this commemoration under U.N. auspices is a muted triumph," said Roman Kent, chairman of the American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors. "It is imperfect justice, for it took 60 years for the crimes committed during the Holocaust to be properly acknowledged by the United Nations."

Even as speakers harkened back to Nazi atrocities of the last century, the ceremony's relevance to the present day seemed to be a presence of its own in the large hall.

That's because it came the same week

THIS WEEK

MONDAY

■ U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice meets in London with other members of the "Quartet" and other European leaders. The leaders will discuss assistance to the Palestinians now that Hamas has won the Palestinian elections.

TUESDAY

■ President Bush delivers the State of the Union address. Bush is expected to emphasize health care reform, an issue of concern to the Jewish community.

THURSDAY

■ Sen. Norm Coleman (R-Minn.) headlines the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington. The focus of the breakfast is expected to be faith-based assistance to developing nations.

SUNDAY

■ An exhibit on the role on vacations in American Jewish life opens in Chicago. "The Other Land: Vacationing, Identity and the Jewish American Dream" is up at the Spertus Museum through June 4.

■ A conference on the synagogue gabbai — the congregant or lay officer who plays a major coordinating role in the running of services — opens in New York. The conference is sponsored by the Orthodox Union's Department of Community and Synagogue Services.

as Hamas, a Palestinian terrorist group committed to Israel's destruction, won a landslide victory in Palestinian legislative elections — and just weeks after Iran's president called for Israel's destruction and sought to deny the Holocaust.

Meanwhile, an Islamic journalists group reportedly is preparing to host a conference on the Holocaust that a spokesman said will include "those who have spent years of their lives in the study of documents related to the Holocaust and have come to the conclusion that the history books in schools and universities do not correspond to the truth."

"We sound an alarm, a call to arms, and a wake-up call to the world," Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, Dan Gillerman, told the audience of Holocaust survivors; Jewish, Israeli and other officials; and members of the general Jewish community. "A world in which a member state of this organization calls for wiping Israel off

the face of the map. A world in which an extreme and evil regime denies the Holocaust while preparing the next one."

In a Jan. 20 letter circulated to the General Assembly, a copy of which was obtained by JTA, Iran lays out its opposition to U.N. Holocaust commemoration, taking issue with the body's recognition of the suffering of "a particular ethnicity or religion" and calling for the exploration of "different aspects of historical events without any arbitrary restrictions" — a clear nod to Holocaust denial.

"Regrettably, the Zionist regime has routinely attempted to exploit the sufferings of the Jewish people in the past as a cover for its crimes being perpetrated today against Palestinians in the occupied territories," the letter states.

In a videotaped address to the memorial ceremony, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan did not refer to Iran by name, but took aim at comments like those of its president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

"Remembering is a necessary rebuke to those who say the Holocaust never

happened or has been exaggerated," Annan said. "Holocaust denial is the work of bigots. We must reject their false claims."

Last year, the General Assembly held a session for the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. The event marked the first time the body observed the new International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust, which was mandated in an assembly resolution adopted in November 2005.

While last Friday's event was emotional and successful, the vast majority of those attending were survivors and members of the Jewish community, not representa-

tives from U.N. member states, an Israeli official noted.

However, the official did note the presence of European representatives, including ambassadors.

The ceremony included a performance by Boston's Zamir Chorale of music by Holocaust victims, along with remarks from the president of the General Assembly, Jan Eliasson of Swe-

den; Gerda Weissmann Klein, whose story was told in the Academy Award-winning documentary "One Survivor Remembers" and who offered a moving recollection of her Holocaust experience; and Yehuda Bauer, an academic and adviser to Yad Vashem.

Several days of Holocaust-related events at the United Nations led up to last Friday's ceremony, including the display of several Holocaust memoirs and diaries. The books were published by the Holocaust Survivors' Memoirs Project, which so far has published seven of 900 manuscripts it has collected.

"The authentic memoirs of Holocaust survivors are the single most powerful antidote to" Holocaust denial, said Menachem Rosensaft, chairman of the memoir project's editorial board.

Gillerman concluded his remarks from the podium by removing a kippah from his pocket, placing it on his head, and quoting the Book of Psalms, in Hebrew: "May God Give His People Strength," he said. "May God Bless His People With Peace." ■

'Remembering is a necessary rebuke to those who say the Holocaust never happened or has been exaggerated.'

Kofi Annan
Secretary-General, United Nations

NEWS IN BRIEF

NORTH AMERICA

Bronfman laid to rest

Andrea Bronfman was laid to rest on Jerusalem's Mt. of Olives. Acting Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and former Prime Minister Shimon Peres joined mourners last Friday at the Gan Hashoshanim park in the Jerusalem neighborhood of Talbieh.

The wife of Canadian billionaire Charles Bronfman, she was killed Monday morning in New York City when she was hit by a taxi while walking her dog.

"Andy didn't just give from her pocket, she gave from her heart," Gidi Mark, director of birthright israel, the Israel travel program co-founded by Bronfman, her husband and Michael Steinhardt, told Ha'aretz.

Widely known as Andy, Bronfman was described by friends and colleagues as a model for "active philanthropy" who dedicated herself to Israel, Jewish education and the arts.

UCLA to have Israel studies chair

UCLA announced a \$1 million chair in Israel studies.

The money for the chair comes from the Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation. The chair will be part of the school's Israel studies program, which was created in 2003-2004. Potential candidates for the position are being informally discussed, although no names have been released.

MIDDLE EAST

Israeli mystic dies at 106

Rabbi Yitzhak Kadouri, a leading Israeli mystic, died at the age of 106.

Kadouri, the spiritual mentor of the powerful Sephardi religious party Shas, succumbed on Saturday to pneumonia after being hospitalized. He was considered a master of the Jewish mystical tradition known as Kabbalah.

"This is a huge loss for all of Israel," Shas leader Eli Yishai said. Kadouri's funeral was held Sunday in Jerusalem.

Israelis, Palestinians fight disabilities

A new organization supports Israelis and Palestinians working with children with developmental disabilities.

The group launched by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and the World Health Organization had its pilot meeting Jan. 16 in Jerusalem.

WORLD

Ukraine honors controversial publisher

Jewish groups in Ukraine criticized Ukraine's president for honoring a lawmaker who was the head of a newspaper that published anti-Semitic articles.

Last week, President Viktor Yuschenko awarded Ivan Spodarenko his country's highest award, the Hero of Ukraine medal. Spodarenko, a Socialist lawmaker, is the head of the editorial board and former longtime editor of Silski Visti.

In 2004, the newspaper published an article asserting that 400,000 Jews served in Nazi SS forces during the German invasion of Ukraine in World War II.

With its circulation of 500,000, Silski Visti is one of the most widely read Ukrainian newspapers, catering mainly to rural readers. In 2002 and 2004, the newspaper published a series of anti-Semitic articles that outraged the Jewish community. The paper was sued over anti-Semitic articles in 2004 but the case was closed in 2005

without a verdict. Last April, Spodarenko was among the signatories of an anti-Semitic letter calling "to stop the criminal activities" of the organized Jewish community in Ukraine.

Russian Jewish businessman wanted

Russian prosecutors issued an arrest warrant for a Jewish businessman who has been active in the country's leading Jewish group.

The warrant was issued this week for Igor Linshitz, president of Neftyanoi Bank, who is being incriminated in "illegal banking operations."

Prosecutors said the banker is suspected of receiving "illegal income" equivalent to more than \$2 billion. Linshitz has been a member of the Russian Jewish Congress board since the group's founding in 1996. The group has not commented on the development.

Hackers attack Russian Jewish sites

Computer hackers attacked three Russian Jewish Web sites.

The Russian neo-Nazi group, Slavic Union, claimed responsibility for the attacks on the Web sites of the World Congress of Russian-Speaking Jewry, the Jewish Agency for Israel's office in Rostov-on-Don and the Jewish community of Saratov.

The attacks took place last Friday, and according to a Slavic Union Web site, were carried out on international Holocaust Remembrance Day to mark what the group called a "virtual Holocaust" against Russian Jewish Web resources. Slavic Union has previously claimed responsibility for hackers' attacks against several anti-fascist and liberal Web sites.

A leader of the World Congress of Russian-Speaking Jewry told JTA that the organization's Moscow office was going to file a formal complaint with the authorities.

Hidden children exhibit in Berlin

An exhibit on Jewish children who hid in World War II-era Berlin opened at the city's Anne Frank Center.

Featured are the stories of several survivors, including Reha Sokolow, whose parents hid her as an infant. The family managed to survive the war, sometimes hidden by sympathetic non-Jews, sometimes sleeping in telephone booths. In all, up to 7,000 Jewish adults and children managed to hide out in Berlin through early 1945. Of the 3,500 whose names and ages are known, 220 were children, ranging in age from a few days to 16 years.

"Every story of survival was very complicated," historian Beate Kosmala of the Memorial to German Resistance, who prepared the exhibit, said at its opening. Last Friday's Holocaust Remembrance Day "recalls the children who were murdered, as well as the horrors experienced by those who survived the persecution and who are our witnesses today."

The exhibit is a co-production with the Center for Research on Anti-Semitism in Berlin and the Memorial to German Resistance.

Slovaks honored as righteous

The Israeli Embassy in Bratislava recognized seven Slovaks as Righteous among the Nations.

Only one of the seven honored is still alive, but she could not attend the ceremony for health reasons, so the honors were presented to their families in appreciation of the help they offered Jews during the Holocaust.

The decorated individuals include a Protestant priest, a former policeman and ordinary citizens who helped hide Jews from the Nazis. The Nazi-sponsored Slovak state deported some 70,000 Slovak Jews, most of whom died in concentration camps.

More than 400 people in Slovakia have been named Righteous Among the Nations.