



ISRAEL MATTERS!

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Israel's First-Responders Form Kaleidoscope of Cultures

US Police Delegation in Israel to Learn Counter-Terrorism Techniques and Hold 9/11 Ceremony

Citing Israel's preeminence in counter-terrorism – and the fact that it is the only country outside the United State to have a 9/11 memorial honoring every victim – a US police delegation visited the country on the 15th anniversary of the attack. Fifty-two officers from seven states arrived in Israel during September to train with multiple units, visit the new state-of-the-art police academy in Beit Shemesh, and hold a ceremony at Jerusalem's 9/11 memorial.

Commander of Israeli Police National License and Permit Unit, Chief Superintendent, Yoni Zeitak, said the visit marks the first time that a police delegation from the US came to Israel to hold such a memorial.

Asked why the relationship is so strong between the US and Israeli police forces, a spokesman noted respect for Israel's efficiency and advanced tactics, coupled by its ability to enforce the law in a humane manner, despite dealing with countless depraved terrorists.

Craig W. Floyd, president and CEO of the National Law Enforcement Officer's Memorial Fund, said the significance of the US officers coming to Israel to hold a 9/11 ceremony during the present international terrorism wave cannot be overstated. "When you talk about 9/11," he continued, "that's really when our war on terror began, and Israel, obviously, has been dealing with terrorist attacks for many years before, so we can certainly learn from Israeli experience and expertise here." [JPost.com]

An unusual hug caused thunderous applause at a recent Knesset ceremony saluting Israel's emergency medical first-responders and search-and-rescue personnel. Parliamentarian Yehudah Glick, who survived an Arab shooting attack two years ago, spontaneously climbed onto the podium to embrace Kabahah Muawhiya, an Arab-Israeli volunteer EMT with the national volunteer emergency medical services organization, United Hatzalah of Israel. "United Hatzalah is not just about emergency first response and medical rescuing, but it is literally uniting people from different walks of life and different religions," Muawhiya told Israeli lawmakers. "It is a uniting of peoples and a unity of hearts."



Many people are surprised to learn that Arab citizens volunteer and work for the Israeli emergency response organizations Magen David Adom (MDA); ZAKA and United Hatzalah. [Photo left: Arab and Jewish ZAKA volunteers in the Negev prepare to rescue victims together]

For the first-responders, it's only natural that representatives of all Israel's population groups would cooperate to save lives. "I am there to treat people who are hurt, and it doesn't matter if they are Jewish or Arab," United Hatzalah volunteer medic Khaled Rishek said. "It gives me a feeling of satisfaction." Rishek and Muawhiya are among about 300 Muslim, Druze, and Christian United Hatzalah volunteer EMTs, paramedics, and doctors out of a total of some 3,000 who race to calls in their own neighborhoods.

After 10 years in United Hatzalah, Rishek is friends with many of the Jewish volunteers in Jerusalem. He lives on a street with Arabs on one side and Jews on the other, along the former border between Jordan and Israel. He's a longtime employee of the Jerusalem International YMCA, "a place that is also one of coexistence." "Khaled is one of our most active volunteers," says United Hatzalah founder Eli Beer, who shared a \$10,000 peace prize with his Arab coordinator, Murad Alyan, in 2013.

(Continued)

BDS: A Threat to the Entire Middle East

By: Abed Almaala, Jordanian Opposition Coalition

As a Jordanian politician, I feel obligated to speak out against the anti-Israel boycott, divestment and sanctions movement and its effect on the Middle East and the world. I represent the point of view and interests of the Jordanian people. By doing so, I have freedom that many others may not. My views on BDS are unbiased and balanced because I am not an Israeli and nobody could accuse me of being anti-Arab.

Let me be clear: BDS is a reckless act of hatred that

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“Our [Arab] volunteers are dealing with saving lives of their neighbors who have heart attacks and car accidents,” Beer said. “They feel comfortable with what they’re doing and they feel privileged to do it. When you’re wearing our jacket, you’re a hero and people look to you for help.”

In August 2015, MDA senior paramedic Ziad Dawiyat, an Arab-Israeli, went to assist a laboring mother in Jerusalem – the same woman whose fatally injured infant he had transported to the hospital the previous October following a terror attack.

ZAKA, which retrieves bodily remains following accidents and violent crimes, and mounts search-and-rescue missions in Israel and worldwide, trains Bedouin, Muslim, and Druze volunteers to serve their own communities. “It gives me faith and pride that they depend on me,” Sheikh Jaffal Abu Sabet, leader of ZAKA’s Muslim unit in the Negev, told a reporter. “In the end we are all people — Jews, Muslims, Christians — and we all must be taken care of the same way.”

Yossi Fraenkel, ZAKA’s deputy commander for greater Jerusalem and operations officer for the ZAKA International Rescue Unit – as well as a volunteer MDA paramedic, volunteer Israel Police officer and former New York City Police chaplain – says it is “an amazing honor to be part of an organization that’s so diverse. We don’t see color or race; we see human beings. We are there for everyone, no matter who and no matter where.”

Last April, ZAKA held a three-day disaster preparedness training course in the Dead Sea region for Israeli and Palestinian volunteers under the auspices of the Ministry for Regional Cooperation, in partnership with the Palestinian volunteer organization Green Land Society for Health Development (GLSHD).

“Natural disasters do not differentiate between peoples; they affect everyone,” said GLSHD Director Dr. Akram Amro. “Therefore, we too, as residents in this region, must unite in order to be able to help each other, regardless of religion or nationality.” [Israel21c.org]

threatens the security and stability of not only Israel, but also my country, Jordan, and the entire Middle East. BDS seeks to attack and isolate Israel. But what is Israel’s importance to Jordan, and to the world? Why should anyone care if Israel is hurt? [T]he president of the Jordanian opposition, Mudar Zahran, wrote last year: “If the day were to come when Israel falls, Jordan, Egypt and many others would fall, too, and Westerners would be begging Iran for oil.” “We can hate Israel as much as we like, but we must realize that without it, we too would be gone.”

Israel is at the front of the war against terror in our region, and if Israel is hurt, we all will suffer, and Jordan will suffer the most. Therefore, BDS is a threat to us all - a threat to America as much as it is a threat to Israel, Jordan and our Palestinian brothers.

BDS claims to target Israel because Israel oppresses the Palestinians. If so, why does BDS never target Jordan’s government, which oppresses and destroys the lives of the majority of Jordanians of Palestinian origins, and where many of my own people, the Bedouin Jordanians, go hungry? Why does BDS never boycott Lebanon, where Palestinians are banned from working as taxi drivers? Why does it not boycott Syria, where President Assad has killed thousands of Palestinians in Yarmouk camp?

BDS, admit it: You are racists and anti-Semites. But BDS is not alone. It could not survive without support, both financial and political, and we in the Jordanian opposition have information that BDS receives support of various kinds from Arab dictators. From day one, Arab rulers have been telling us that Israelis are the enemy, and that we should forget about our own hungry children and our ruthless governments and focus exclusively on hating and killing Jews. ...

BDS promotes the very same bankrupt concepts. I say, BDS: Shame on you. Shame on you for attacking the only country that offers jobs to my Palestinian brothers. Shame on you for attacking the country that provides free health care for Palestinian cancer patients. Shame on you for selling your souls to Arab regimes.

And as a Jordanian ..., it is time we stopped talking about peace and began living peace through economic prosperity; this is our promise and our mission. ... We Arabs have boycotted Israel for 70 years. Where has it gotten us? We are light-years behind Israel in technology and the economy.

... Someday soon, Jordan will be free and we will build a new system that will work closely with Israel, through partnership, not competition, and through true cooperation rather than just a cold peace. And we will turn Jordan into a model for Arab countries to follow through cooperation with our Israeli brothers and sisters and the blessings of our American friends.

Am Yisrael Chai. Am Yarden Chai. [Israel Hayom]