



## United Hatzalah of Israel

*Highlights of the week in Israel* 31 December 2008

*Dear Friends and Supporters,*

It is with a **heavy heart** that I share with you news from the south. The hostilities have reach as far as Netivot and **killed a civilian** in front of his home this afternoon. A **synagogue and numerous homes have been hit** throughout the southern region, including **Ashkelon, Sderot and more**. Dozens of civilian areas have been hit. Israeli warplanes have **hit back hitting hundreds of terror targets** in Gaza.

United Hatzalah medics have been responding to **missile strike after missile strike**. One medic reported that he **just finished his Shabbat meal** when the warning came over the communications net. He ensured the safety of his family and **raced out to join his fellow United Hatzalah volunteers in saving lives**.

Our **primary operational concerns** at this stage is the **increased range of the missile** that Hamas has imported during the cease-fire. Cities like **Ashdod, Kiryat Malachi and Kiryat Gat** are considered targets and are by and large **under-fortified**. United Hatzalah has promised all of its volunteers that all resources will be put at their disposal to **ensure their personal safety**. For this **we need your help**. Please **click on the link below to help out**. Additional sets of **personal armor and trauma kits are urgently required**.

**Over 100 volunteers have signed up** to serve alongside their friends in the south. Additional volunteers are on call to **relieve the southern medics if the hostilities continue** for any length of time. In many volunteers have **offered to host families** of medics who wish to get out of harm's way. Our medics in the south have told us that if their families are safe then they are better able to **concentrate on saving lives**.

I am **personally going down south now** with other senior staff of United Hatzalah to bring additional **medical equipment and sets of personal armor**. I will update you on the situation on the ground as things develop.

Sincerely,

**Eli Beer**

Chief coordinator

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## United Hatzalah Medic attacked by Terrorist

The **battle on the home front** has in fact struck close to home as **United Hatzalah medic Aryeh Deutsch** was **critically wounded** on a work site when he was **attacked from behind by a terrorist**. He has suffered **serious head wounds** and is undergoing surgery as I write this letter. He is in our thoughts and prayers.

Aryeh is an active member of United Hatzalah's **Modiin Illit emergency response team**. It was precisely these volunteers who responded to the call and found their **friend and comrade in need** of their help. Aryeh (seen in photo on left) **earned quite in a name** for himself as a medic who responds to any call day or night. Neighbors recall his assistance in treating them and their children with **patience, care and an occasional candy**. A child's smile was his only payment. He responded to some of **the most traumatic incidents** that area has seen. He like all United Hatzalah medics treat all **patients without regard for race or religion with dignity and respect**. We are outraged that such a **kind giving person was so brutally attacked**. We eagerly await good news and hope to **welcome him back** on the team as soon as possible.



After the **terrorist ran from the scene** he grabbed a knife and began to **indiscriminately stab passersby**. An elderly gentleman, a young mother with child in tow, and others. A **responding paramedic shot** the terrorist. All people including the terrorist were treated by United Hatzalah medics and MDA teams.

The war in the south is spreading. Over **60 missiles have struck Israel** today. Aside from the fact that **Hamas has fired Grad rockets** into Ashkelon **killing one and wounding 14**, unrest and rioting has erupted throughout Israel, **molotov cocktails and rocks have been hurled** at soldiers and civilians alike.

As for my visit to **Netivot, Sderot and other areas** we stopped in, I must say I went there to **strengthen the morale** of our volunteers but it is I who was strengthened. They live the phrase **“working under the gun”** and do not fear it. They **put their own lives at risk** to save the lives of others. **I am proud of them** and wish to do all I can for them. Given the **expanding nature of this conflict** the need for **personal armour for all of them** is paramount.

We **appreciate the help** of all who have responded generously so far. We are anticipating to be on **wartime footing in many areas** for a long period of time. Everything from **trauma bandages to oxygen kits** (tanks, regulators, masks etc.) are going to be in high demand. Please take a few moments to see how you can **help us in the battle to save lives**.

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## Expanding Conflict Stretches United Hatzalah Resources

In response to the many who have requested an **update** on Aryeh's condition. Our **thoughts and prayers are still with United Hatzalah medic Aryeh Deutsch** and others wounded in the broadening conflict. Aryeh's **medical situation has deteriorated** due to secondary bleeding in

the brain. The name Raphael has been added to his name for prayers. His name is now **Raphael Aryeh ben Varda**. Special thanks for **United Hatzalah paramedic Kobi Rosenstein** who aside from treating Aryeh and others wounded on the scene was the one who had the presence of mind to actually **shoot the attacking terrorist** thereby prevent a far worse tragedy.



The **war in the south is expanding**. The 30 km (18.6 miles) danger ring has been expanded to 40 km (24.8 miles). For our friends on the east coast of the US that is about the **distance from New York City to Stamford CT**. This is putting over **half a million people in range** of the missiles. Cities like **Beersheba, Kiryat Malachi and Gadera** never imagined they would have to deal with the missile terror from Gaza.

United Hatzalah medics in all of these cities have **increased their readiness** level to the maximum. Their personal cars or United Hatzalah ambulances gas tanks are always at least half full, **trauma medical kits fully stocked** and those that have been issued **personal armor**, keep it close at hand.



Shaul, a United Hatzalah medic from the south told me that while he has **no plans to curtail his lifesaving activities** he nonetheless has no answer when his wife asked **“Why should I become a widow and our 10 children orphans because you keep putting yourself in unreasonable danger”**. He told me that running out in the middle of missile salvos **without personal armor** is what bothers her.

I promised him that I would do all that I can to help bring more personal armor to him and the others serving in the ring of danger.

Special kudos to **Nachi Klein northern district coordinator** for coming down south with a detachment of **combat experienced medics**. They have established a **schedule of rotations** to allow for a regular flow of medics to provide some **relief and reassurance** for the medics on the ever expanding front line.

Individual United Hatzalah medics from across the country are also streaming to areas in the south taking **time off from work or studies** and taking leave of their families in solidarity and support of the local medics.

Medics and their families **outside of the current ring of danger** have **opened their homes** and found additional sleeping arrangements for families who wish to leave the immediate area of conflict for a respite. So far only a few people have taken advantage of the offers.

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**Thank you to all who have given us the opportunity to continue our work.**  
**We hope you will continue to support us in the future.**

**United Hatzalah** is the largest emergency rescue volunteer organization in Israel which, working hand in hand with MDA has the endorsement of the leading Rabbis in Israel.

**United Hatzalah** has branches in almost every city in Israel from the Golan Heights in the north to Eilat in the south.