



Dear Friends,

In a horrific terror attack yesterday evening, a rocket fired by Hezbollah from Lebanon landed on a soccer field next to a playground in the town of Majdal Shams in the Golan Heights killing 12 Druze children and youth and injuring dozens more, several seriously. An 11-year-old boy remains missing, and efforts are underway to locate him. The IDF has described Saturday's rocket strike as "the deadliest attack on Israeli civilians" since Hamas's brutal attack on October 7th which triggered war in Gaza.

Thousands attended today's funerals for the victims at which several people fainted when they were overcome by emotion and the crowds.

Jewish Federations are already assisting victims' families through our support for The Jewish Agency for Israel's Fund for the Victims of Terror which activated immediately when news of the attack broke. Emergency grants of 4,000 NIS (approximately \$1,100) will be provided to each bereaved family and the families of all of the wounded who have been hospitalized. In a later phase, additional support from the Fund will be made available for rehabilitation needs. Since October 7th, the Jewish Federations have allocated \$34.1 million to replenish and expand the Victims of Terror Fund to meet this crisis, including both funds from the Jewish Federations of North America Israel Emergency Fund and individual Federation allocations.

In addition, in the last 12 hours, Israel Emergency Response Committee co-chairs Steve Hoffman and Jeff Schoenfeld approved an allocation to match funding for an initiative of the global Jewish community under the auspices of The Jewish Agency. This initiative, in partnership with communities around the world through Keren Hayesod, aims to provide urgent trauma and humanitarian support to victims and their families as well as the broader community of Majdal Shams.

Prior to this tragic incident, funds from Jewish Federations of North America's Israel Emergency Fund were allocated to a range of urgent needs within the Druze community

alongside significant support from the Jewish United Fund of Metropolitan Chicago, UJA Federation of New York, the Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest New Jersey, and Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston.

In the aftermath of yesterday evening's devastating attack, Natal – the Israel Trauma and Resiliency Center is operating a special hotline around the clock in Arabic dedicated to residents of Majdal Shams and the entire Druze community. Additionally, a Druze therapist has been deployed to the town to provide immediate emotional support for all who need it. The partnership with Natal is a special initiative of the Chicago Federation begun last November.

Prime Minister Netanyahu has already landed back in Israel following last week's trip to the United States and will be meeting with senior security officials and the Security Cabinet later today to determine Israel's response to this egregious attack.

This attack obviously represents a significant escalation in the North. We will convene an emergency webinar this week (details forthcoming) on the situation.

Jewish Federations mourn with the people of Israel and the Druze community for those whose lives have been lost and pray for the full and speedy recovery of the wounded.

Julie Platt  
Chair, Board of Trustees

Eric Fingerhut  
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