

# The Sabra Report

Raising Awareness and Encouraging Discussion About Israel

## Israel Taking Part in US-Led Ukraine Defense Summit

Anna Ahronheim, Jerusalem Post, April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022

### Recap:

Israel will attend a summit alongside 42 countries to discuss arming Ukraine in its fight against Russia.

### The Context:

- ✧ After months of buildup, Russia launched an attack against Ukraine on February 24<sup>th</sup>. With its urban offensive stalled, Russia now seeks to overtake the Donbas region where its heavy equipment and long-range bombers will be far more effective.
- ✧ The summit comes shortly after US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken visited Kiev for talks with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky, following his call for more powerful weaponry to repel Russian forces. Since the invasion began, over \$5 billion in equipment has been committed to Ukraine.
- ✧ Israel seeks to strike a balance between Russia and Ukraine considering the large Jewish diaspora in both countries and Russia's involvement in Syria, where the IDF carries out airstrikes against Iranian and Hezbollah targets. Israel has only offered humanitarian assistance thus far [1] though it recently announced a shipment of protective vests and helmets to Ukrainian emergency services [2].
- ✧ Zelensky criticized Israel for failing to provide defensive equipment saying, "we can ask why we can't receive weapons from you, why Israel has not imposed powerful sanctions on Russia or is not putting pressure on Russian business [3]?"

### Conversation Points:

- ✧ Is Israel's participation in the summit a sign of shifting allegiances?
- ✧ Should Israel maintain a strictly humanitarian policy towards Ukraine to keep its ties with Moscow intact?
- ✧ What balance should the Jewish State strike between its moral obligation to fellow democratic nations and its own strategic interests?

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## Israeli Politicians Hail Macron Win: 'A Good Night for France, Europe and The World'

Times of Israel, April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022

**Recap:**

Israeli politicians hailed French President Emmanuel Macron's victory over his far-right rival Marine Le Pen in the country's presidential elections.

**The Context:**

- ✧ France was an early supporter of Israel, providing military supplies and expertise to ultimately build Israel's (unconfirmed, but confirmed) nuclear arsenal. Coordination between the two countries in science, tech, education, medicine, and culture have increased since Macron became president in 2017 [4]. France is an especially important partner for Israel considering its influence in Lebanon and Syria, where Macron has tried to help rebuild the failed states [5].
- ✧ The election results caused immense relief in Europe after fears that a Le Pen presidency would leave the continent directionless following Brexit and the departure of German chancellor Angela Merkel. However, in an ominous sign, Le Pen's campaign yielded the largest vote share that a far-right candidate has ever received in France.
- ✧ Le Pen concerns the Jewish community at large due to her family's ultra-nationalist and antisemitic past. Macron won 86.66% of French election ballots in Israel, while Le Pen won just 13.34% [6].

**Conversation Points:**

- ✧ With extremes growing on both sides of the political spectrum, how can centrists like Macron achieve unity and govern effectively?
- ✧ Why is it important for Israel to maintain strong relations with the European Union?

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## Israeli Forces Fire Artillery Shells into Southern Lebanon

Al Jazeera, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022

**Recap:**

Israeli forces fired dozens of artillery shells into southern Lebanon, following a rocket attack earlier this week. The United Nations peacekeeping force along the border, UNIFIL, urged restraint on both sides.

**The Context:**

- ✧ There were several instances of rocket fire from Lebanon into Israel in recent years, with most blamed on Palestinian factions in the country. It is unlikely anyone in southern Lebanon acts without the approval of Hezbollah, the terrorist organization that maintains tight control over the area.

- ✧ The incident comes amid rising tension at the Al-Aqsa Mosque on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, a complex revered by Jews as the site of its two ancient temples and the home to Islam's third holiest site. Police actions to subdue riots there last May triggered an 11-day war in Gaza [7].
- ✧ Lebanon is currently suffering from one of the world's worst financial crises, with violence and protests occurring throughout the country as basic services collapse. The Israeli-Lebanese border has been largely quiet since a 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah [8].

**Conversation Points:**

- ✧ What is the purpose of a United Nations peace keeping force that can't keep the peace?
  - ✧ What are the potential ramifications of another failed state along Israel's border?
  - ✧ What is Israel's responsibility in preventing Lebanon from becoming a failed state?
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**Notes:**

1. [Israel Attends U.S.-led Talks on Boosting Ukraine Defense Aid](#), Haaretz, April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022
  2. [Israel attends US-led summit on sending more arms to Ukraine](#), Times of Israel, April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022
  3. [Israel Attends U.S.-led Talks on Boosting Ukraine Defense Aid](#), Haaretz, April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022
  4. [Macron II, the Jews, and Israel](#), Amb. Freddy Eytan, JCPA.org, April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022
  5. [Bennett, Lapid congratulate 'friend of Israel' Macron on election win](#), LAHAV HARKOV, Jerusalem Post, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022
  6. [Bennett, Lapid congratulate 'friend of Israel' Macron on election win](#), LAHAV HARKOV, Jerusalem Post, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022
  7. [IDF fires dozens of shells at targets in Lebanon after rocket attack on Israel](#), Times of Israel, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022
  8. [Rare flareup on Israel-Lebanon border after Jerusalem holy site clashes](#), Jeffrey Heller, Reuters, April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022
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**The Sabra Report** is a newsletter intended to stimulate conversation about Israel by recapping major events & providing context. Our conversation points are meant to encourage discussion amongst friends and family.

**The Sabra Report** is written by Irving Safdieh.

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