




# The First 15 Days of the Hamas War on Israel

A CHRONICLE  
FROM THE DIARY OF  
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THE JOSHUA FUND®

A black and white landscape photograph showing a wide valley. In the foreground, there are dark, rolling hills. The middle ground features a valley floor with some structures and a winding path. In the distance, a large, rounded mountain or hill rises against a sky filled with dramatic, layered clouds. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

**“THERE IS  
NOTHING CERTAIN  
THAT ANCHORS  
OUR SOULS  
EXCEPT GOD  
AND HIS WORD.”**

*Lynn Rosenberg*

## INTRODUCTION

Since October 7, our hearts have been crushed, along with all those who live here in Israel, as the stories and images have revealed more and more of the shocking attacks on the communities near the Gazan borders. Our Humanitarian Director has been especially pained by the death of three friends from his old army unit.

As we talk among our family, our church, and the larger believing community, we all feel the same way... sick at heart, easily distracted, lacking regular or sufficient sleep, highly motivated yet not always sure of the best course of action...and we're all waiting in a state of suspense regarding what will be the next chapter of this conflict, what will happen next. We are unsure how the decisions of the leadership in Israel, Gaza, Jordan, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, and Iran will play out in the following weeks and months and how we will all be affected.

There is nothing certain that anchors our souls except God and His Word. It has been essential to know that we are being held up in prayer and for us to find the sweetness of fellowship wherever we can. What follows is a log I kept for the first weeks of this war... There have been constant messages and calls from people inside and outside the country, often with requests for prayer, comfort, interviews, or aid.

*Some tasks and meetings are omitted.*

## **FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2023**

It was a beautiful day in the Galilee and Golan with our family. Our oldest son and his wife and her brother have been visiting since October 1, the end of their visit.

After a visit to Nazareth Village, we rode a boat along the Galilee, and shared dinner at a family-favorite burger place. We arrived back in Jerusalem around midnight.

Once back, one of our sons and his wife left for their home in the north. We planned to visit a few last sites in Jerusalem the next day before taking the three Californians to the airport.

## **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2023**

**News of attacks unfolds starting in the early morning hours, around 7 a.m.**

Our Humanitarian Director, Women & Children's Project Coordinator, Logistics Manager, Food Distribution Manager, and Humanitarian Administrator sync up with all our distribution managers; thank God everyone is safe.

*We are especially concerned about the Distribution Centers close to the Gaza Border:* We are in close contact by phone calls with staff at one distribution center about their fearful situation and their desire to get out of the terrorized city to safety. However, the city is on lockdown because of the fear of terrorists still at large. They are not allowed to leave. Over the next few days, one distribution staffer wants to go, but various family members refuse to evacuate.

Our three family members attempting to depart Israel have their flights canceled.

A group of Harvard grad Believers, organized by dear old friends of the Rosenbergs, arrive in Israel – Joel and I were supposed to be hosting, teaching, and traveling with them over the coming week. However, we are told to stay off the roads for safety's sake and to allow the movement of 300,000 reservists to get into position, so we do our "Welcome to Israel" dinner via Zoom – but it is cut short by the sirens in Tel Aviv, so they must run to the hotel's bomb shelter.

### **SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2023**

**It becomes clear that this is an unprecedented attack. More and more horrific details are revealed.**

Our newest Israeli staff member was called into reserve duty, along with 300,000 others, including men and women from every congregation and ministry.

One of my students from a women's program I helped lead left a voicemail today, sobbing and grief-stricken, saying that her son-in-law had been killed while rescuing people from a kibbutz where one of several massacres took place. I talked with her multiple times over the next week, processing her grief and hearing her son-in-law's amazing and heroic story; she is the only follower of Jesus or believer in the family; the rest are Orthodox Jews.

The decision is made to temporarily halt all regularly scheduled food deliveries, except on a case-by-case basis. All field report visits are canceled.

A pastor in Nazareth reached out - he is already buying supplies for displaced families and others. The Joshua Fund initiates a grant for their church.

### **MONDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2023**

**Everyone in the country is told to prepare their bomb shelters with water and supplies for three days.**

Our Humanitarian Director emails all DC managers to see if they have specific war-related needs.

A congregation reaches out for much-needed assistance, and The Joshua Fund immediately approves a grant for supplies to distribute. At this moment, we are notified that some of our distribution center staff are evacuated to a village outside Jerusalem.

It becomes clear that a significant need will be to serve the families of those who have been called up. We focus on specific Believers' requests through our ministry partners.

Shortly after, a notification comes in that one of our dear partners is granted approval from Old City police to receive delivery of food – one of our distribution staff hurries in to make the food delivery.

I drive Joel to TBN studio and then the rest of us to the grocery store – alarms sound in Jerusalem, and we must take cover in a field.

**Eleven people were injured in Jerusalem, as three rockets were not intercepted, and strikes occurred in Abu Gosh.**

I host a Zoom call for updates and prayer with the young women's Bible study--three of these women's husbands have been called up to fight for Israel in the war.

Our pastor is stuck in Italy, where he was teaching, and our other pastor and elder, along with his wife, are stuck in the USA.

Everyone on our church staff was called into reserve duty except one man and one woman. This includes the pastor of our sister congregation and two close family friends.

Northern towns are told "Code 2000" over radios – in that scary moment, they prepare for an invasion from the north—locking doors, turning off lights, getting into bomb shelters, and being quiet.

Our Humanitarian Director and Women & Children's Project Coordinator decide to relocate to Jerusalem to be together with us in the face of this war.

## **TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2023**

**Rising in the morning, we have a family time of breakfast, devotions, and worship.** Our Women & Children's Project Coordinator leads us in worship with a guitar.

At noon, Joel and I drive three family members to the airport; this is their 3rd attempt at a flight out. This one is on Ethiopia Airlines: Tel Aviv to Addis Ababa to Dublin to Washington, DC to LA to northern California. Their flight is delayed for over three hours as they sit on the tarmac listening to bombs falling and being intercepted around the airport. Finally, their flight departs.

Our Humanitarian Director has a team meeting with the humanitarian staff – they are all committed to continuing regular deliveries despite severe personal risk.

**Our Humanitarian Director and Logistics Manager go to a makeshift logistics center set up by two Christian discipleship partners and a collection of Christian congregations.** Our Humanitarian Director and The Joshua Fund are invited to participate.

At the makeshift logistics center, refugees are received, supplies centrally gathered, meals cooked, requests received, and drivers make targeted deliveries to Believers and families in crisis.

The Joshua Fund offers food, water, and hygiene products at the makeshift logistics center.

Our Humanitarian Director speaks with the Director of Israel's Special Projects to discuss new grants to two Christian discipleship partners that we've had a trusted relationship with before this ongoing effort.

At The Joshua Fund's Humanitarian Executive Committee meeting our Humanitarian Director conveys the staff's desire to keep bringing food, which is approved.

Volunteer Forms signed by staff – they are all willing and eager to continue to be on the roads and make deliveries despite risks.

Joel and I and our Humanitarian Director and Women & Children's Project Coordinator joined a national Joshua Fund prayer call for Israel.



**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2023**

**We are in touch with an Arab-background pastor in the south of Israel to get perspectives from Christians who are Gazans and West Bank Palestinians, and we are also in contact with the Believers who run a Christian school in Gaza. Terror and death surround them, with only three hours of electricity a day.**

Our Humanitarian Director, Women & Children's Project Coordinator, and I pick up the Emergency Response tent stored with a ministry partner.

Our Humanitarian Director and Women & Children's Project Coordinator pick up a male volunteer to help, and they head to the makeshift logistics center; they drop off the tent and a clothes donation.

Our Humanitarian Director finds a wholesale supplier of essential items.

Our Logistics Manager finds vendors for towels, and those are purchased.

Our Food Distribution Manager and Humanitarian Administrator regularly deliver to Jerusalem, Beersheva, and Tel Aviv.

**A false alarm in the north (attributed to Cyber warfare) indeed strikes fear in all our hearts – our app shows bombs and massive infiltration of terrorists in the north**, surrounding the Galilee, and across the whole border area, including Haifa. It takes about an hour before we are told it was a false alarm. Our friends in the north have been locked in their bomb shelters for that whole time.

A family with two small children from a Christian congregation moves into a Joshua Fund-subsidized apartment. The mother's husband was called up to reserve duty, and she has no bomb shelter in her home.

### **THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2023**

**Our Humanitarian Director and our Food Distribution Manager make regular deliveries to Haifa.**

Our Logistics Manager brings towels to the makeshift logistics center, and water delivery arrives.

The whole team converges at the makeshift logistics center to unload shipments and load up cars for delivery.

10:30-2 p.m. - Our Women & Children's Project Coordinator and I host believing moms and kids (one whose husband is called up)

3-5 p.m. - I organize and host a Zoom call for English-speaking women in Israel to hear about "How to Handle Anxiety and Fear & How to Parent in Time of Fear."\* This is recorded and shared with others from several Christian ministries in the Epicenter.

*\*Zoom session led by a local believing partner who is a trained and licensed counselor.*

### **FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2023**

Our Humanitarian Director and Food Distribution Manager pick up hygiene products and deliver them to a partner distribution center.

**One of The Joshua Fund’s program partners reports back with excitement; they are thrilled that we have water for several people groups—they are without water, thermal gear, and headlamps.** Our Humanitarian Director meets with the program partner and leadership of a nearby congregation to review the week’s efforts – great clarity is reached.

The Women & Children’s Project Coordinator, me, and a volunteer gather donations for moms and children from Jerusalem Believers. There were two drop-off points – one was our apartment, and the other was the apartment of someone from another congregation. We pray with the family who agreed to house the donations; then, we drive to get more supplies for a needy family housed in Jerusalem. Drive to Beersheva to bring donations to a ministry partner for their network of 200 needy moms.

Total “God story” – Our Women & Children’s Project Coordinator and I stopped to get groceries for home. Our Women & Children’s Project Coordinator ran into a friend from a 24-hour prayer and worship house. He tells us a chef has been preparing food all day and giving it to people in need (displaced, grieving, moms alone with husbands called up). It is close to the beginning of Shabbat, and he wants to give us everything he has left to get home.

He gives us fresh vegetables, salads, a vegetable stew, and about 100 fresh eggs. We’re not sure what to do with it! We called Our Humanitarian Director, and it turns out he just got off the phone with a distribution center manager who has finally evacuated and has been offered a place for ten days along with three families from their congregation. They wonder if we have fresh vegetables and water because they’ve been shopping and finding the stores have none. So, our Women & Children’s Project Coordinator and I get back

in the car and head to the makeshift logistics center! We drop off the eggs to an overseer, who heads up the kitchen there. We ask a translator to accompany us if we encounter language barriers. We pick up a water supply and head to the apartment where these three families have just arrived.

We spend time hearing their stories and praying with them. There are tears and hugs, and we are all amazed at God's sweet orchestration.

### **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2023**

We host two single women from our congregation to watch church via Zoom and stay for a long lunch.

**We spend the late afternoon creating an “Emergency Volunteer Team” and clarifying roles and procedures.**

A Christian discipleship partner reports that 31 locations were personally visited, connecting with Believers.

### **SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2023**

Volunteer Team – 4 members start researching and calling vendors to check on stock and prices of our “Needs List” – then Our Humanitarian Director calls to close deals.

**Joel goes to the southern border with Gaza with a camera operator and a group of ambassadors to Israel to see firsthand the situation on the ground there.**

4 – 9 pm Our Women & Children's Project Coordinator and I host 30 women and children (and two husbands) for fellowship and lasagna dinner here. Three moms (with 11 children) have husbands called into service.

### **WEEK OF OCTOBER 16-23, 2023**

Our volunteer team calling suppliers successfully locates excellent prices for our Humanitarian Director to follow up.

**10/16** Our Women & Children's Project Coordinator's mother arrives to help (she brings 250 pounds of donated supplies in 7 duffel bags!)

Personal deliveries by The Joshua Fund staff to 4 locations in the south, all through the loving & witnessing relationships with Believers.

I do Kim Moeller's podcast "The Generous Girl."

**We serve in the kitchen of the makeshift logistics center. 1300+ individual meals are being made there each day! Deliveries to southern towns living under rocket fire & evacuees.** Amazing and surreal: the kitchen at our logistics center became certified as a kosher kitchen to serve everyone in need. An orthodox rabbi comes every morning to "light the fires" and to oversee the workers.

Meetings at a location where 150 Christian and non-Christian evacuees are hosted on Jerusalem's outskirts.

Received specific clothing requests, searched for those clothes from church clothing ministry & some new from the store. Delivered and helped sort clothes for evacuees (those from the southern border towns

did not come prepared for the chilly weather in the Jerusalem hills).  
Hosting various Believers for fellowship and prayer.

The team makes deliveries to a city affected by rockets and terror attacks.

Traveled to the northern border of Lebanon with a film crew to interview four leaders on the situation, threats, and need for prayer there.

We were provided a report by a Christian discipleship partner that almost 1,000 care packs have been distributed with our supplies.

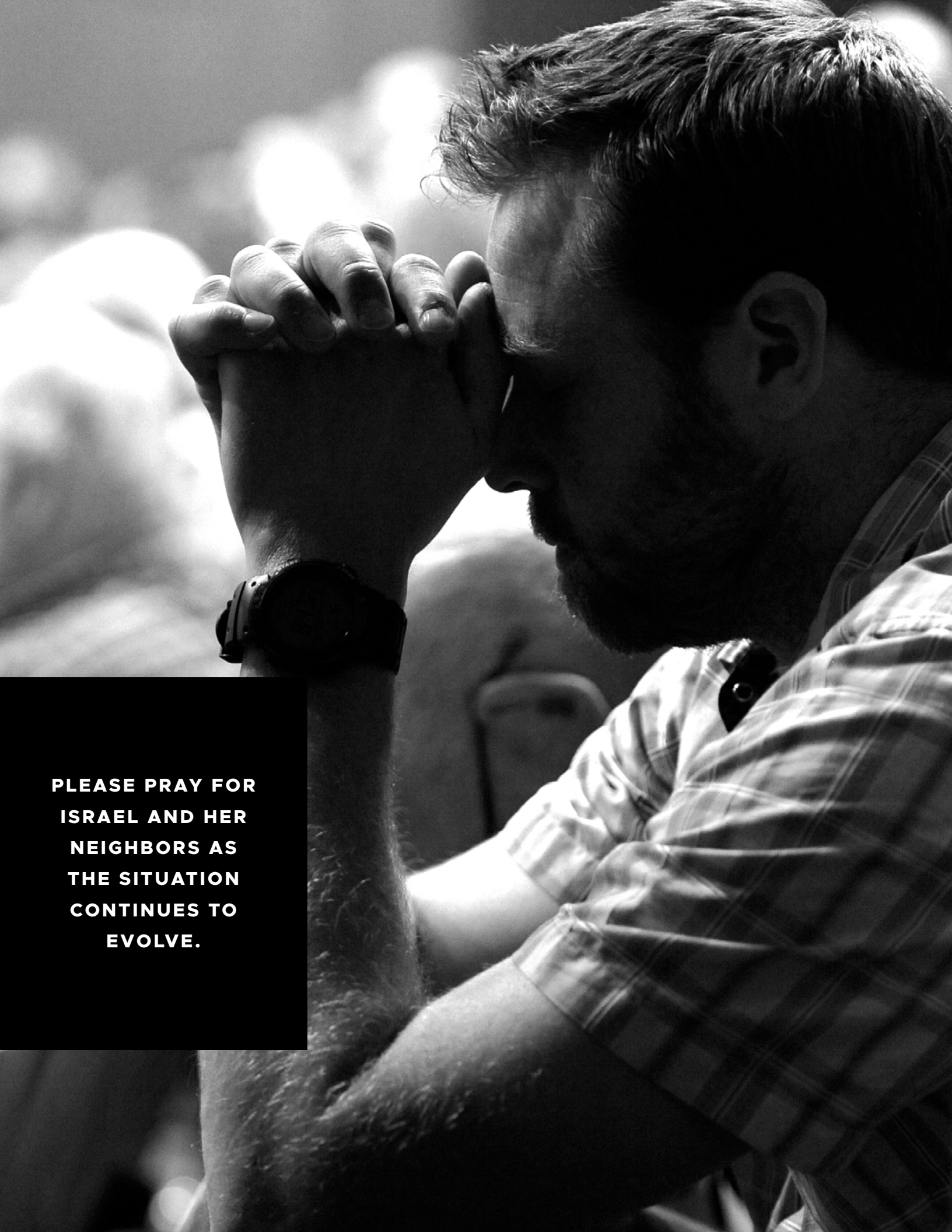
We outfit our bomb shelter with food, water, supplies, power, etc., in case of the need to be there longer term.

**On 10/21**, we host people to mark Our Humanitarian Director's birthday.

**10/22, we learn that 17 people hiding in the Gazan Greek Orthodox church have died because a building next door was hit with missiles. The dead include relatives and friends of the Christian school.**

**10/23** – Our middle son arrives in-country to help respond to the crisis.

**10/24** - The Whole family brings dinner and stays to share dinner and spend time with the wife and children of our deployed Joshua Fund staff member.



**PLEASE PRAY FOR  
ISRAEL AND HER  
NEIGHBORS AS  
THE SITUATION  
CONTINUES TO  
EVOLVE.**

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