

# Israel Says It Foiled al-Qaida Plot On U.S. Embassy

**BY IAN DEITCH**  
The Associated Press

JERUSALEM — Israel on Wednesday said it had foiled an "advanced" al-Qaida plan to carry out a suicide bombing on the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv and bomb other targets, in what analysts said was the first time the global terror network's leadership has been directly involved in plotting an attack inside Israel.

The Shin Bet intelligence agency said it had arrested three Palestinians who allegedly plotted bombings, shootings, kidnappings and other attacks. It said the Palestinian men, two from Jerusalem and one from the West Bank, were recruited by an operative based in the Gaza Strip who worked for al-Qaida leader Ayman al-Zawahri.

The State Department said the U.S. was not yet able to corroborate the Israeli claims.

While a number of groups inspired by al-Qaida have carried out attacks against Israel before, this appeared to mark the first time an attack was directly planned by al-Qaida leaders.

The Shin Bet said the Palestinians planned on attacking a Jerusalem conference center with firearms and then kill rescue workers with a truck bomb. Al-Qaida also planned to send foreign militants to attack the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv on the same day using explosives supplied by the Palestinians, it said.

It said five men whose identity and nationality were not disclosed were to fly into Israel with fake Russian passports to attack the American embassy. It was not

clear where the men are located.

The Palestinian operatives had planned on several other attacks, it said. One included shooting out the tires of a bus and then gunning down passengers and ambulance workers.

The agency said it the plot was in "advanced planning stages" but gave no further information on how close the men got to carrying it out. It said the Palestinians from Jerusalem had used their Israeli resident cards to scope out and gather intelligence on targets. They were arrested in the past few weeks, it said.

A number of al-Qaida-inspired groups have carried out rocket attacks from Gaza and Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, as well as shootings in the West Bank. Israeli intelligence calls these groups part of a "global jihad" movement.

Aviv Oreg, a former head of the Israeli military intelligence unit that tracks al-Qaida, said the plot marked the first time it has been directly linked to an attempted attack in Israel.

The Shin Bet said the three suspects made contact with al-Qaida over the Internet. It said they planned on traveling to Syria — where various jihadist groups are battling the forces of President Bashar Assad — for training.

Oreg said that many foreign fighters fighting the Assad regime are from Chechnya and predominantly Muslim parts of Russia and speculated that the militants with the phony documents would be from there.

Al-Zawahri's location is unknown, but he was last believed to be in Pakistan. He is the subject of an intense manhunt and

is not believed to personally go online or pick up the phone to discuss terror plots, experts say.

Last year, a threat that began with a message from the Yemen-based al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula to al-Zawahiri led to the closures of embassies across the Middle East and Africa, a U.S. official said at the time. The message essentially sought out al-Zawahiri's blessing to launch attacks.

Al-Qaida-inspired groups are on the rise in the Gaza Strip, which is run by the Islamic militant Hamas.

These groups accuse Hamas of being too lenient because it has observed cease-fires with Israel and has stopped short of imposing Islamic religious law, or Shariah, in Gaza.

In the West Bank, Israel and the Palestinian Authority of Western-backed Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas have cracked down on Islamic militants. Three Salafis, members of a movement that advocates a hard-line interpretation of Islamic law, were killed in a shootout with Israeli soldiers in the West Bank last November.

In Washington, State Department spokeswoman Marie Harf said U.S. investigators and intelligence officials were not yet able to corroborate the Israeli information and declined comment on specifics of the case.

"Obviously we're looking into it as well," Harf told reporters Wednesday. "I don't have reason to believe it's not true. I just don't have independent verification."

## Assad's Future Is Focus Of Peace Talks

MONTREUX, Switzerland (AP) — Furiously divided from the start, representatives of Syrian President Bashar Assad and the rebellion against him threatened Wednesday to collapse a peace conference intended to lead them out of civil war.

Assad's future in the country devastated by three years of bloodshed was at the heart of the sparring, which took place against a pristine Alpine backdrop as Syrian forces and rebel fighters clashed across a wide area from Aleppo and Idlib in the north to Daraa in the south.

U.S. and U.N. officials said merely getting the two sides in the same room was something of a victory, but U.N. chief Ban Ki-moon's claim that the discussions were "harmonious and constructive" was at odds with the testy exchange when he tried to get the podium from Syrian Foreign Minister Walid Moallem.

With little common ground, the two sides were to meet separately Thursday with a U.N. negotiator.

## Mayor Faces Snow Removal Complaints

NEW YORK (AP) — Northeasterners scraped and shoveled Wednesday after a snowstorm grounded flights, shuttered schools and buried roads with a surprising amount of snow, leaving biting cold in its wake. The atmosphere was particularly frosty in New York, where the new mayor acknowledged flaws in the cleanup and some residents complained that schools remained open while children elsewhere in the region stayed home.

The storm stretched from Kentucky to New England but hit hardest along the heavily populated Interstate 95 corridor between Philadelphia and Boston. As much as 14 inches of snow fell in Philadelphia, with New York City seeing almost as much, and parts of Massachusetts were soaked with as many as 18 inches. Temperatures were in the single digits or the teens in many places Wednesday.

In New York, Mayor Bill de Blasio, facing one of the first flashpoints of his weeks-old tenure, initially defended what he called a "coordinated, intense, citywide response" to a storm he said caused a worse-than-expected headache when it ramped up at rush hour.

# Oil Starts Flowing Through Keystone Pipeline

**BY SEAN COCKERHAM**  
McClatchy Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — Oil began flowing Wednesday through the southern leg of the Keystone XL pipeline, as a massive environmental battle continues over whether President Barack Obama should approve the northern portion to tap Canadian oil sands.

The southern part of the pipeline runs 487 miles from Cushing, Okla., to refineries in Texas. Keystone developer TransCanada hopes to soon get permission to start building the northern leg and bring controversial Canadian crude to the Gulf Coast.

The planned 1,179-mile northern leg gets most of the attention because the Canadian oil sands result in more planet-warming gases than conventional oil. But Keystone opponents in Texas have been fighting the southern section for years.

TransCanada said the southern leg can ship up to 830,000 barrels a day and help relieve the bottleneck of crude in Cushing, the Oklahoma town that is the world's largest oil storage hub. The pipeline runs from there to Nederland, Texas, with a planned spur to refineries around Houston.

"This is a very important milestone for TransCanada, our shippers and Gulf Coast refiners who have been waiting for a pipeline to supply oil directly from Cushing," TransCanada's chief executive, Russ Girling, told reporters Wednesday in a conference call.

Pipeline opponents in Texas pledged Wednesday to document all spills, leaks and disturbances along the route. They said the pipeline's ultimately planned cargo of Canadian oil sands crude would be difficult to clean up if it's spilled into Texas rivers and streams, as bitumen in such oil sinks in water rather than floating like conventional crude.

TransCanada's need to repair the pipeline before it started pumping oil fueled the opposition. So did letters the U.S. Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration sent TransCanada in September warning of dents in the pipeline and complaining the company did not use qualified welders.

The federal agency gave the pipeline its approval, though, and TransCanada's executives said Wednesday that the spill protections are state of the art.

"This is the safest oil pipeline that has been built in America to date," Girling said.

TransCanada continues to anxiously await the fate of the proposed northern leg of Keystone. That section of the pipeline requires approval from the State Department because it crosses the U.S. international border with Canada.

A preliminary State Department report downplayed the environmental impact of the pipeline, boosting the hopes of TransCanada, which said Wednesday that it expects a final analysis from the agency within weeks. Obama suggested in June, though, that he will block the pipeline if he concludes it would worsen global warming.

# HyVee

**EMPLOYEE OWNED**

2100 Broadway, Yankton • 665-3412

hour sale
12
HUGE

ALL ITEMS  
ALL WHILE  
SUPPLIES  
LAST

**Starbucks**  
*FREE upgrade*  
on any drink

6am - 6pm • Friday January 24<sup>th</sup>

<p>Amana New York <b>Strip Steak</b></p> <div style="float: right; font-size: 40px; color: red;"><b>\$3<sup>77</sup></b></div> <p style="text-align: right;">Each 8 oz.</p>	<p><b>7 Up</b> 6pk 1/2 Liters</p> <div style="float: right; font-size: 40px; color: red;"><b>99¢</b></div> <p style="text-align: right;">Limit 4</p>	<p>Deli Sliced <b>Ham</b></p> <div style="float: right; font-size: 40px; color: red;"><b>\$1<sup>99</sup></b></div> <p style="text-align: right;">Lb. Limit 4 lb.</p>
<p>Best Value <b>Russet Potatoes</b></p> <div style="float: right; font-size: 40px; color: red;"><b>49¢</b></div> <p style="text-align: right;">4 lb. bag Limit 3</p>	<p>Di Lusso <b>Classic Chef Salad</b></p> <div style="float: right; font-size: 40px; color: red;"><b>2/\$5</b></div> <p style="text-align: right;">Reg. Size</p>	<p>Frozen <b>Roma Pizza</b> Assorted Varieties</p> <div style="float: right; font-size: 40px; color: red;"><b>7/\$10</b></div>
<p>Italian Express <b>Large 16" Pizza</b> Pepperoni or Cheese</p> <div style="float: right; font-size: 40px; color: red;"><b>\$7<sup>00</sup></b></div>	<p>Hy-Vee Bakery <b>Apple Cupcakes</b> with Caramel Frosting</p> <div style="float: right; font-size: 40px; color: red;"><b>\$1<sup>99</sup></b></div> <p style="text-align: right;">6 ct.</p>	<p>Hy-Vee <b>Milk</b> Skim, 1% or 2%</p> <div style="float: right; font-size: 40px; color: red;"><b>3/\$5</b></div> <p style="text-align: right;">1/2 gal. Limit 3</p>
<p>Hy-Vee Fuel Station <b>5 Hour Energy</b> Berry Flavored</p> <div style="float: right; font-size: 40px; color: red;"><b>\$2<sup>49</sup></b></div> <p style="text-align: right;">2 pk.</p>	<p>Whole Rotisserie <b>Chicken</b></p> <div style="float: right; font-size: 40px; color: red;"><b>\$4<sup>77</sup></b></div> <p style="text-align: right;">Ea.</p>	<p><b>Red Apple Ale</b></p> <div style="float: right; font-size: 40px; color: red;"><b>\$6<sup>48</sup></b></div> <p style="text-align: right;">6 pk. Bottles</p>
<p>Ludens <b>Wild Cherry Cough Drops</b></p> <div style="float: right; font-size: 40px; color: red;"><b>\$1<sup>00</sup></b></div> <p style="text-align: right;">30 ct.</p>	<p>Nestle <b>Butterfinger or Butterfinger Peanut Butter Cups</b></p> <div style="float: right; font-size: 40px; color: red;"><b>2/\$1</b></div>	<p>Crest <b>Toothpaste</b> 4.6 oz. tube</p> <div style="float: right; font-size: 40px; color: red;"><b>99¢</b></div>
		<p><b>M&amp;M's</b> 11.4 - 12.6 oz. bag</p> <div style="float: right; font-size: 40px; color: red;"><b>2/\$5</b></div>