

5 Av 5774
1 August 2014

Dear Chaverim,

These are clearly difficult times for Am Yisrael in Eretz Yisrael as our brothers and sisters endure the sirens and threat of rockets and terrorist activity on a daily basis while trying to maintain a semblance of normalcy amidst the trauma. On the front lines, our brave soldiers of Tzahal are working tirelessly and with deep-seated motivation to protect the nation, defeat the enemy and bring peace to our borders.

During this time, we have seen and experienced almost unprecedented displays of unity both within Israel and the broader Jewish world as we share our support for what we know to be true and just, and feel terrible anguish at the loss of every precious soul in defence of our Land.

We at Shaarei Tefillah, through the guidance of Rabbi Berlin, continue to play our part through our daily Tehillim, increased learning and Tefillah, and the encouragement for each of us to adopt an individual Chayal serving in Gaza and increase our Avodat Hashem in their merit.

In addition, many communities around the world, including here in Melbourne, have adopted causes to provide some tangible support in contributing to the efforts of Tzahal.

With the endorsement of Rabbi Berlin, an opportunity has presented for Shaarei Tefillah to join with the JLC in Sydney in raising urgent funds for a specific elite unit of the Givati Brigade operating in Gaza, to provide some enhanced equipment that the army is not able to provide. I refer you to the attached letters from Rabbi Davey Blackman of the JLC and Eitan Bergson of the Rimon unit to understand the purpose and context of the request. With the distribution of the funds, Shaarei Tefillah will be specifically recognized as a partner in this important Mitzvah.

The timing to raise the funds is short and distribution will begin this coming week for the purchase of equipment in order to get it into the unit's hands within days. Bank account details are included in Rabbi Blackman's letter. **Please ensure to include Shaarei Tefillah in the reference field accompanying your contribution.**

I encourage you all to please consider participating in this important Mitzvah, both as an individual and as members of Shaarei Tefillah, and through this and all our efforts mentioned above, may we merit the swift return of long lasting peace and security to our Home Land and the ultimate Redemption.

Shabbat Shalom
Adam Goldberger

From: "Office JLC" <office@jlc.org.au>

Date: 30 July 2014 1:06:36 pm AEST

To: <jewish-learning-centre@jlc.org.au>

Subject: [Jewish Learning Centre] JLC Approach to the Crisis in Gaza from RDB

Dear Chevra,

As we all know the current situation in Israel demands that we show support for our boys in action.

Our support, I believe needs to demonstrate two core principles:

1) our belief in Hashem as The Source of our success and protection on the one hand and 2) our responsibility to actively participate in whatever way we can, in the support and defence of our people and State.

To demonstrate our belief in The God of Israel who never 'sleeps nor slumbers' I direct your attention to Project Shmira. See link below.

In active support of our soldiers in action, we at JLC have found a specific unit of soldiers, Sayeret Rimón of Givati, to which we can contribute, in some small measure.

I must admit a personal connection; I was in Givati as part of the first infantry unit sent in to Gaza to deal with the first Intifada in Dec, 1987.

Please see the personal letter from one of the elite soldiers with whom I am in contact, attached above.

In Summary: we are appealing to give our boys the funds needed to upgrade their personal equipment.

This important equipment includes:

- A Proper Pair of Boots: Zomberman Vioz GTX boots- US\$215/ AU\$229 per pair. A much more comfortable and robust option than the standard Tzahal issue.
- Combat Vests: The Marom Dolphin Full Face Ergonomic Body Armor Vest- US\$300/ AU\$320 per vest- This vest is much lighter, sturdier and allows for greater range of motion than the standard issued combat vests and they would also fit Kevlar plates within the vest instead of adding a bulky bulletproof vest under a regular vest.
- A Tactical Face Mask- US\$35/ AU\$37 per mask- Camouflage is essential and there aren't enough masks for everyone. It would also help keep faces warm on a cold desert night.
- Headlamps: Petzl Tachtikka Plus LED Headlamp- US\$55/ AU\$59 per headlamp- These headlamps are ideal as it is difficult to see at night time and a handheld flashlight compromises the use of one hand.

Please note: Amounts above and in the included letter were given to us in US dollars. We have included an approximate Australian dollar equivalent.

Unfortunately we are not able to offer tax deductibility on this donation. To make a non-tax deductible donation please transfer funds into the account details below and let the office know:

Account name: Jewish Learning Centre

BSB: 332027

Account No: 552903056

We look forward to hearing from you and appreciate your commitment and support.

With heartfelt prayers to turn these days of mourning and war into days of victory over evil resulting in peace and redemption.

Kol Tuv
RDB

Shmira Project

The Hebrew word "shmira" (pronounced *shmeerah*) means "guarding" or "protecting". In modern Hebrew, *shmira* also means guard duty. The Shmira Project is an ongoing, grassroots program that pairs IDF combat soldiers with Jews around the world who do acts of kindness, prayer or Torah learning to increase the soldier's spiritual merit and protection. The Shmira Project is a person to person match that everyone can do. It follows the ancient practice of pairing physical effort with spiritual effort. The families of soldiers and the soldiers themselves enjoy the reassurance of spiritual support. Participants enjoy knowing that they bring about unity and connectedness. **There are absolutely no fees.**

Who supports this?

This project originated with Rav Simcha HaCohen Kook, Chief Rabbi Rechovot & The Hurva Synagogue with the Bostoner Rebbe, zt"l in 2009 during the Gaza Operation Cast Lead. It has the support of people across the world and across all denominations. It's being organized in its present format by the mother of a former IDF paratrooper.

Click on the link to give a soldiers name or to sign up and receive a soldiers name:

<http://www.shmiraproject.com/en-us/signup.aspx>.



My name is Eitan Bergson, and I am one of twenty-eight members currently serving in the March 2013 draft of the Rimon unit of the Givati brigade. My platoon, known as Tzevet Balus, includes a cross-section of the Israeli population; Ashkenazim, Sephardim, religious, secular, Ethiopians, Druze, and two lone soldiers. Together we have gone through hard times, together we have overcome obstacles, and together we have helped each other grow as people and as an even stronger platoon.

The Rimon unit was re-established in 2010 in response to the need for a specialty elite unit to deal with the rise of terrorist activity on the Sinai and Gaza borders. Our unit specializes in desert warfare in the Negev and the Sinai, and urban warfare in the Gaza Strip. In order to be accepted into this elite unit we had to first pass a selective three day tryout. Only after passing were we allowed to start our rigorous training. We are learning reconnaissance, counter-terrorism, and all the tools necessary to be expert desert commandos.

The Israeli Army provides us with many things. Unfortunately, the army cannot provide us with the best equipment needed to fulfill our ultimate mission of protecting the State of Israel, and keeping us from likely injuries which could put us in harm's way. Our uniform is not only what clothes us, but what provides us with the necessary equipment for our mission. In order to fulfill our missions, our equipment must be at its best.

Among the most important things that a soldier needs is a proper pair of boots. This pair of boots can guarantee that a soldier will be able to be mobile at crucial moments. Thankfully, the IDF has recently instituted a better standard-issue combat boot for the regular soldier. During wartime, regular units are expected to carry thirty percent of their body weight for twenty-four hours at a time. However, a desert commando can find himself with more than half of his body weight on his back for even seventy-two hours. Unfortunately, the standard issue boots don't stand up to these conditions. Because of this, a lot of strain is put upon our back, knees, and ankles. This ultimately leads to injuries and strains, and when we are out in the field on a mission we are put in a position of danger because we aren't able to function optimally when the time comes to act. Therefore, we are looking to buy Zomberman Vioz GTX boots (\$215 per pair) for all 28 members of my platoon. The design of these boots better matches our needs of carrying heavy loads for long periods of time and distance. They will help take the strain off of our joints and help us function when we are in critical situations.

Another very important piece of equipment any soldier will use throughout his service is his combat vest. We put all of our ammunition, water, combat bandages, and other equipment needed in our combat vest. The standard issued combat vest is large and bulky and restricts range of motion. A combat vest which is comfortable, lightweight, sturdy, and allows for greater range of motion would be better for our unit. The Marom Dolphin full face ergonomic body armor vest (\$300 per vest) has all of these qualities, and would also fit Kevlar plates within the vest instead of adding a bulky bulletproof vest under the regular one. When we go out for missions needing extra protection this vest would ensure that we would be faster, and therefore safer and more efficient during these missions. Having a good vest can make the difference between success and failure.

Within the first month of our service we learned how to conduct ourselves while in the field. One of the basic principles learned about field conduct is camouflage. As desert commandos in Rimón, we need to blend into the desert background and the army provides face coloring to do that. However, there usually isn't enough for everyone. Clearly, an easy solution to this would be to simply receive more, but army requisitions are not always filled. This being the case, a tactical face mask (\$35 per mask) is a piece of equipment that would help us avoid the problem entirely. Also, it would keep our faces warm on cold desert nights. A tactical mask is something that would ensure us never going out in the field without being properly camouflaged.

As a commando unit it is best for us to do missions at night. One of the obvious advantages of nighttime is that it is difficult to see. However, that can also be a disadvantage for us. This comes into play, for example, when trying to look at a map while on a mission. The army's solution to this is a handheld flashlight. However, for us, a handheld flashlight means that we'll be short a hand; and when you only have two, they both become critical during a mission. The solution which we have found is the Petzl Tactikka Plus LED Headlamp (\$55 per headlamp). This is a great piece of equipment that is ideal for someone who can't let himself be put in a situation where he isn't as efficient as possible. For us, efficiency means that we are able to execute missions successfully while at the same time being as safe as possible.

Therefore, we are asking you to help us fill this gap. Our platoon, as a tzevet, has started an effort to raise \$16,950 so that we can each have boots, armored vests, face masks and LED headlamps. But we can't do it alone; we need your help. All donations, big or small, will go a long way towards creating a more efficient, more productive, and safer environment for us to protect Israel. Unfortunately, we sometimes find ourselves in dangerous situations in order to protect Israel from her enemies. Your generosity can help us complete our missions, and in the safest way possible.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Eitan Bergson on behalf of Tzevet Balus

For more information:
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