



**Commander, United States Naval Forces Central Command
Commander, United States FIFTH Fleet
Commander, Combined Maritime Forces**

March 16, 2021

H.E. Benny Gantz
Minister of Defense
State of Israel

Your Excellency,

On behalf of the Sailors, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen of the U.S. Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT), U.S. FIFTH Fleet, and Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), please accept my warmest personal greetings.

I write to invite Crisis Response Planners (Logistics, Maritime, Air, Civil-Military) from the Israeli Defense Force and the National Emergency Authority to attend a Humanitarian Operations Workshop (HOW) from 17-20 May 2021. The HOW series was created to improve partner country coordination when responding to Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HA/DR) operations in affected countries. The workshop's primary focus is on the appropriate use of military assets and capabilities in support of civilian-led HA/DR operations and conflict prevention.

NAVCENT intends to host the workshop either at Naval Support Activity Bahrain or at an alternate location in Bahrain. The workshop will be facilitated by representatives of the U.S. Agency for International Development and the U.S. Department of State. It will employ interactive presentations, discussion groups, and case-study methodology that will draw upon lessons learned and best practices from a wide range of past HA/DR events, including the 2019 Beirut Port Explosion. I have also invited counterpart personnel from the Israeli Ministry of Interior, as well as planners from the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, and representatives from the CMF located in Bahrain.

I ask that you provide confirmation of attendance by 25 March 2021, and a list of participants by 1 April 2021. In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19, I also ask that you nominate only participants who have been immunized against the virus. My staff point of contact, Lieutenant Phoenix Geimer, is available via email at phoenix.geimer@me.navy.mil, or via phone at +973-1785-6724.

Please be assured of my highest respect and warmest personal regards.

Very respectfully and
Sincerely yours,

S. J. PAPARO
Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy
Commander
U.S. Naval Forces Central Command
U.S. FIFTH Fleet
Combined Maritime Forces