Bodies of kidnapped teenagers found in West Bank

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Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs

<https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/PressRoom/2014/Pages/Bodies-of-kidnapped-teenagers-found-30-Jun-2014.aspx>

PM Netanyahu: "'Vengeance for the blood of a small child, Satan has not yet created.' Neither has vengeance for the blood of three pure youths, who were on their way home to meet their parents, who will not see them anymore. Hamas is responsible - and Hamas will pay. May the memories of the three boys be blessed."

Following extensive searches in order to locate the three abducted teens - Eyal Yifrah, Gilad Sha'er and Naftali Frenkel - an effort led by the IDF, the Israel Security Agency (ISA) and the Israel Police, three bodies were discovered in the area northwest of Hebron, north of the Israeli community of Telem.

The bodies are currently going through forensic identification.

The families of the abducted teens have been notified.

Israeli authorities have named two Hamas members as prime suspects in the kidnapping - Marwan Kawasmeh and Amar Abu-Isa - who have been missing from their homes in Hebron since the kidnapping.

On August 20, 2014, speaking before the International Union of Muslim Scholars in Turkey, Hamas leader Saleh Aruri publicly admitted that Hamas kidnapped the three Israeli teenagers. The statement was aired on YouTube.

Official reactions

The Security Cabinet convened on Monday evening, June 30.

At the start of the Security Cabinet meeting, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said:

"With heavy grief, this evening we found three bodies. All signs indicate that they are the bodies of our three abducted youths - Eyal Yifrah, Gilad Sha'er and Naftali Frankel.

They were abducted and murdered in cold blood by human animals. On behalf of the entire Jewish people, I would like to tell the dear families - the mothers, fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers, and brothers and sisters - we are deeply saddened, the entire nation weeps with you. We will give the boys a proper burial.

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Upon the announcement that the bodies of the three boys were found President Shimon Peres released the following statement:

"All of Israel bows it's head today. For 18 days we hoped and prayed with one voice that we would find the boys safe and well. With this bitter news all of Israel mourns their deaths. Along with our deep sense of loss we remain committed to bringing the terrorists to justice. Our resolve in the fight against terror will only strengthen and we will ensure that murderous terrorism of this sort will not dare to rear its head again.

At this difficult time my thoughts and prayers are with the family. They educated their children with dedication and embedded within them a love of their country."

President-elect Reuven Rivlin: "What we feared has come to pass. Our fear was deep but we carried in our hearts the hope that even murderous terrorists would spare the teens. Our hearts at this difficult time are with the brave families who will forever be a symbol of heroism and hope in the most difficult times."

Foreign Minister Liberman has canceled his visit to Prague and is returning to Israel.