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בנימין זאב הרצל - בהקשר לציונו - 80790						

# Israel is ready

**A**t the state memorial ceremony for Revisionist Zionist leader Ze'ev Jabotinsky at Mount Herzl on Sunday, President Isaac Herzog conveyed a clear message to both Israel's allies and enemies. "We did not seek this war. But when left with no choice, when faced with actions aimed at our destruction, we will defend ourselves without compromise – anytime, anywhere, and by any means necessary," he said.

At a time when the eyes of the world are on Israel, anticipating an attack by Iran and its proxies to avenge recent assassinations of top officials in Hamas and Hezbollah, Herzog's strengthening and soothing message hit the nail on the head.

Noting that Israelis are all enduring agitated and complex times, Herzog said: "Our enemies, part of an axis of evil, have declared their intent to attack us soon with great force. I do not underestimate the severity of this threat. I see and hear the deep anxieties, and I am well aware of the concerns and doubts following October 7. Despite everything, as someone privy to intelligence and other materials, I unequivocally declare: The State of Israel is prepared to confront this threat."

The president stressed that Israel maintains strong political and security alliances and partnerships to thwart hostile actions. "Chief among these is our alliance with the world's strongest power, the United States, which is committed to our security. Together, we have already led a broad security coalition against the Iranian axis of evil. Our relationship with the United States is strong, secure, and stable. This alliance has repeatedly proven itself since the onset of the conflict. We have no greater ally, and it is crucial to remember and uphold this relationship.

"Another important point: We must take responsibility for Israeli unity and solidarity during such challenging times. Our national resilience is being tested, and we all feel that internal tensions and polarization are growing precisely when we can afford it least. I call on public leaders to calm the situation, exercise restraint, avoid crossing red lines, and protect our social fabric and solidarity. We must not harm the IDF. Based on intelligence reports, I know our enemies celebrate when they see division among us. This is a strategic gain for them."

Herzog's speech channeled the spirit of Winston Churchill's World War II addresses, buoying public spirits and conveying a strong message to the British people and their enemies. In his most famous one – in the House of Commons on June 18, 1940 – he boomed out the immortal lines: "We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender – and even if, which I do not for a moment believe, this island or a large part of it were subjugated and starving, then our Empire beyond the seas, armed and guarded by the British fleet, would carry on the struggle, until, in God's good time, the new world, with all its power and might, steps forth to the rescue and the liberation of the old."

In the same vein, Israel is ready to fight its enemies anywhere and anytime, backed by the empire of good. Precisely 10 months after the heinous Hamas attack, the Jewish nation has undoubtedly learned the lesson of October 7. It is the same lesson of the Holocaust, but this time the Jewish people have a solid and independent state of their own that knows how to protect itself when necessary. The lesson is: Never again! ■