

“A Belief is not merely an idea the mind possesses; a Belief is an idea that possesses the mind.”

*Robert Oxtan Bolton*

# Israel and Palestine



Chris Schaefer

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## **Musalaha**

### **A Vision of Reconciliation**

Musalaha, which means "Reconciliation" in Arabic, was founded in 1990 to promote reconciliation and unity among Israelis and Palestinians. An Executive Board of Palestinian and Israeli community leaders in Israel and the West Bank guides the organization.

Each year they conduct several different programs for women, young adults and children, in which groups of Israelis and Palestinians meet to get to know one another. One of those annual programs is a 5-day desert encounter where a group of Israeli and Palestinian women meet at a resort to participate together in seminars and workshops. It is oftentimes the first experience any of the participants have had in meeting and engaging with their neighbor.

This year, the desert encounter has been called off.

You might find the dialogue between the two event Project Managers interesting, as it was published in Musalaha's May newsletter. They are:

- **Hiba** (Palestinian)
- **Tifferet** (Israeli)

**Hiba:** Despite pushing myself towards reconciliation, my fears attached to this ongoing genocide and violence taking place in the West Bank and Gaza have been taxing. The uncertainty of our circumstances here pulls us towards hate, making it near impossible to think of the other's humanity.

**Tifferet:** When I was 8 years old, on the eve of Passover in 2002, during the Second Intifada, I was near an attack. To this day, I can remember the sound of the explosion as I stood on the street. For years, I refused to get on buses, and a deep hatred and profound fear of Palestinians developed within me - even just hearing the Arabic language made me afraid.

**Hiba:** Our current situation of escalating violence, killings, and hatred only add to the complexity and sensitivity of meeting Israelis. The Palestinian women have been asking and fearing how the Israeli women will react – *will they misunderstand our experiences and stories? Will they feel for us?* When the Palestinian women gathered together, I listened as one participant mentioned her unwillingness to compromise her belonging in this occupied land. She, along with the other women, are strong and capable of holding the tension of fears while also speaking and reflecting their experiences of life under a brutal military occupation.

**Tifferet:** The Israeli women also carry fears within. Some of these fears are related to traveling to the desert in an Arab country, concerns about being attacked, regional

# **The War in Gaza Trump Peace Plan**

# Review

## 25<sup>th</sup> Knesset, elected November 1, 2022



Benjamin Netanyahu,  
Prime Minister

### Cabinet Ministers:



Yariv Levin,  
Likud, Deputy PM and  
Minister of Justice



Bezalel Smotrich,  
Religious Zionist Party  
Minister of Finance



Itamar Ben-Gvir,  
Otzma Yehudit  
Minister of National  
Security

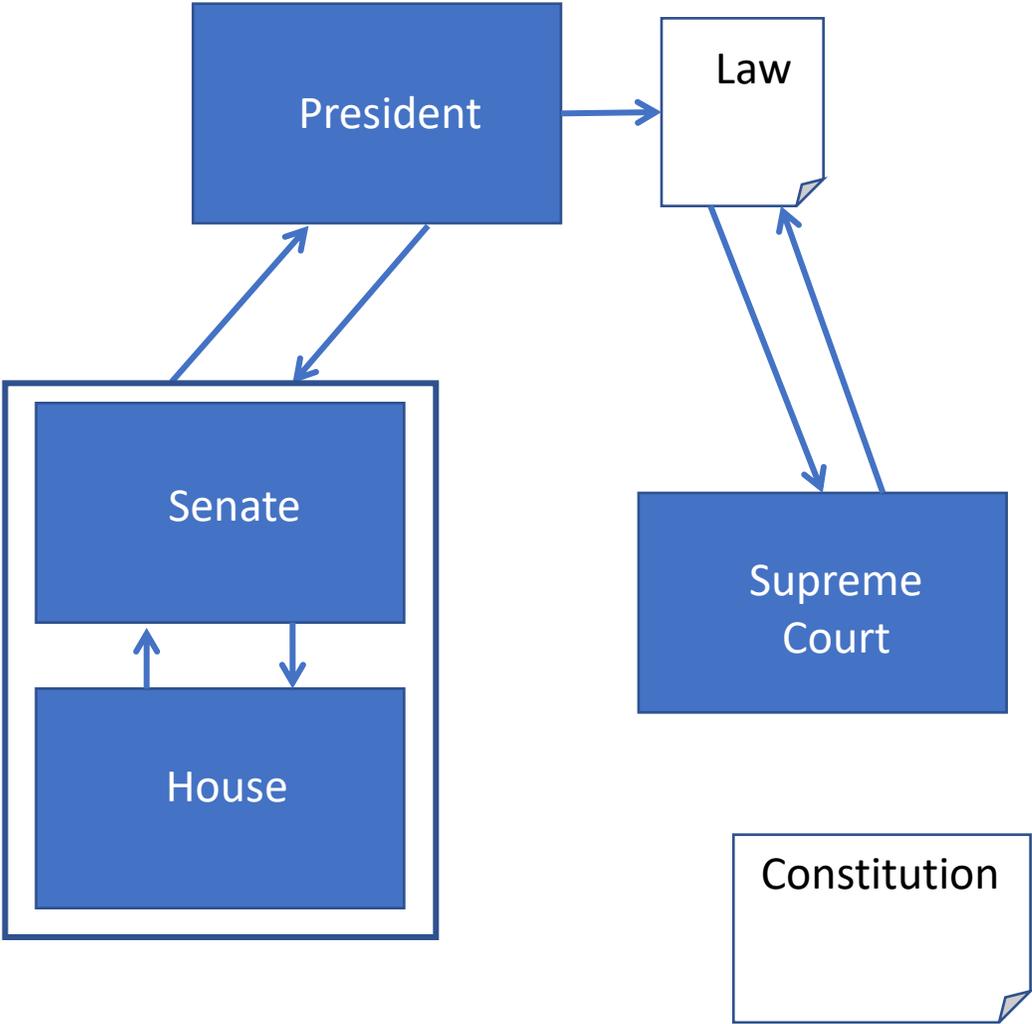


Yitzhak Goldknopf,  
Agudat Yisrael  
Minister of Housing  
and Construction

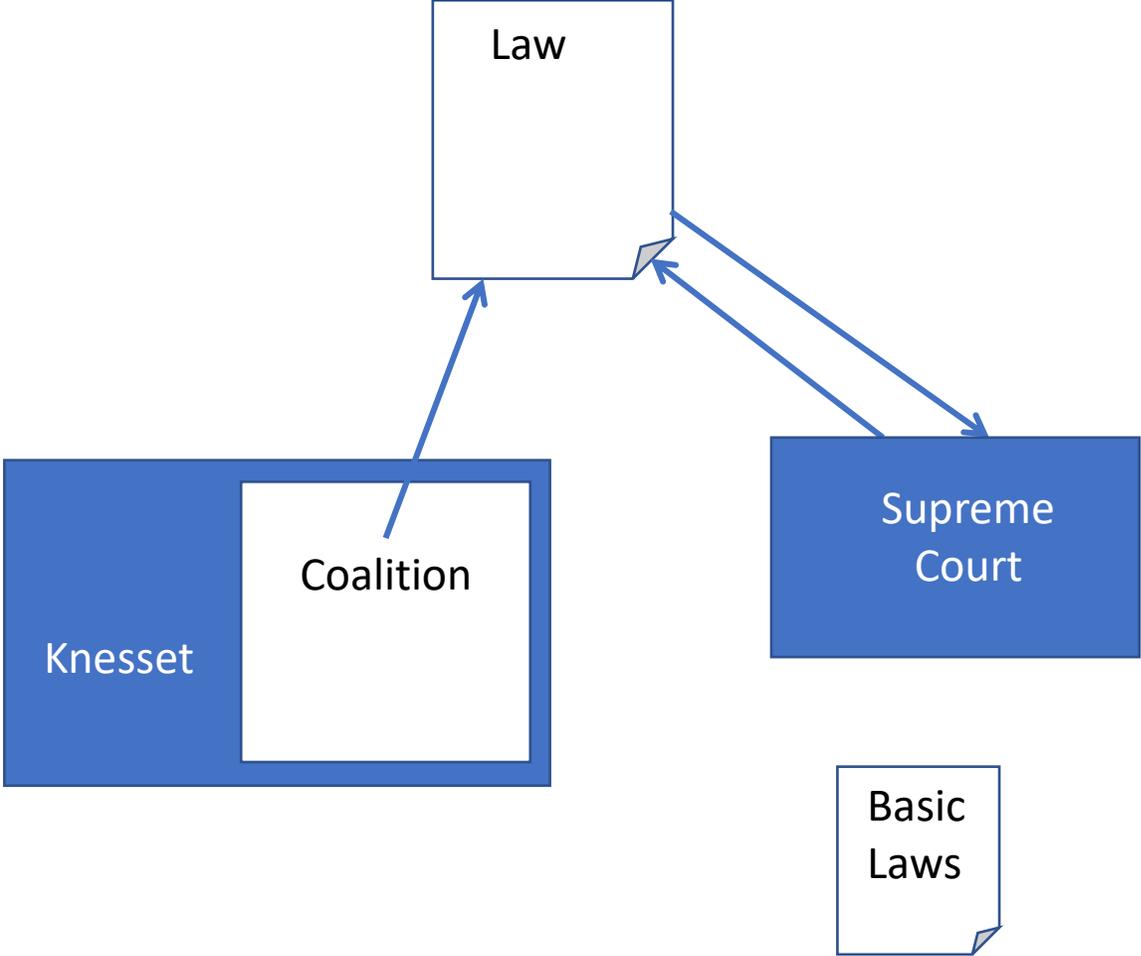


Avi Moaz,  
Noam  
Deputy Minister,  
Jewish Identity

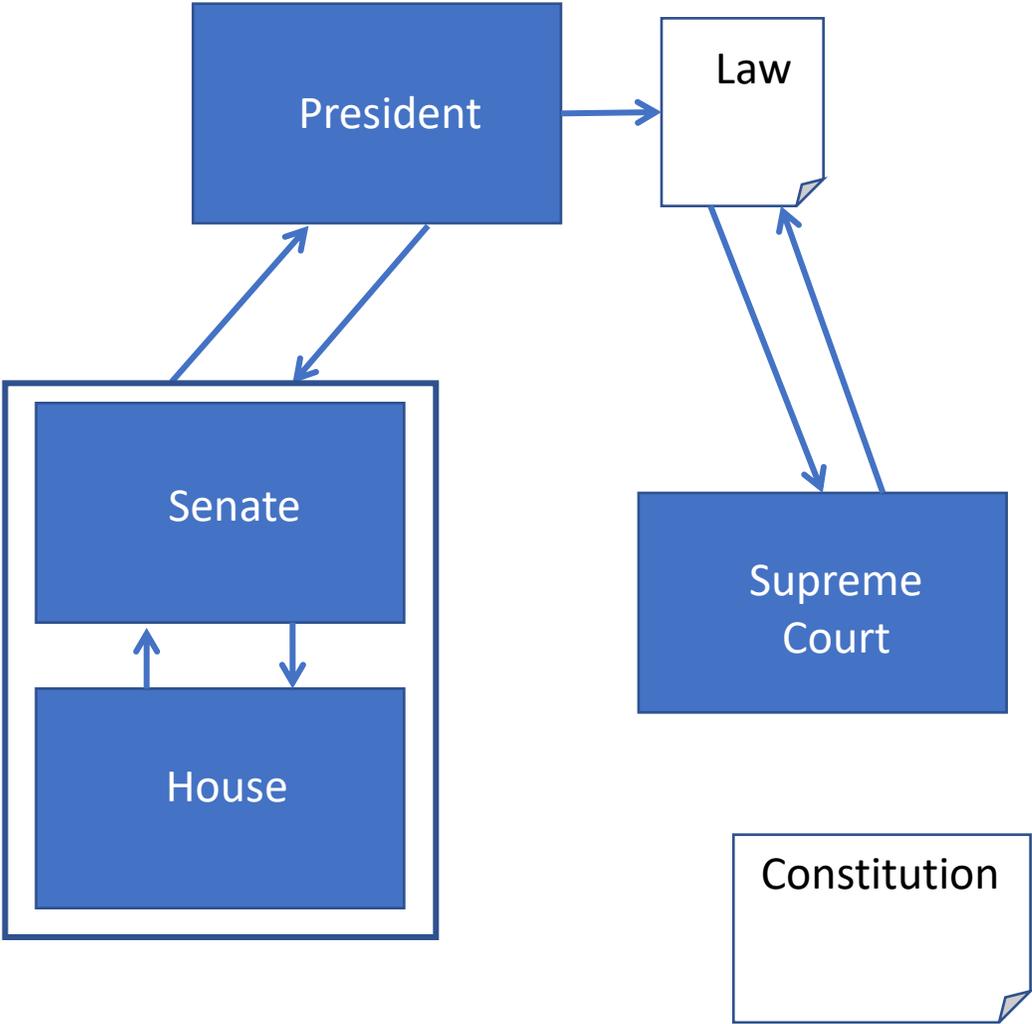
U.S. Democracy



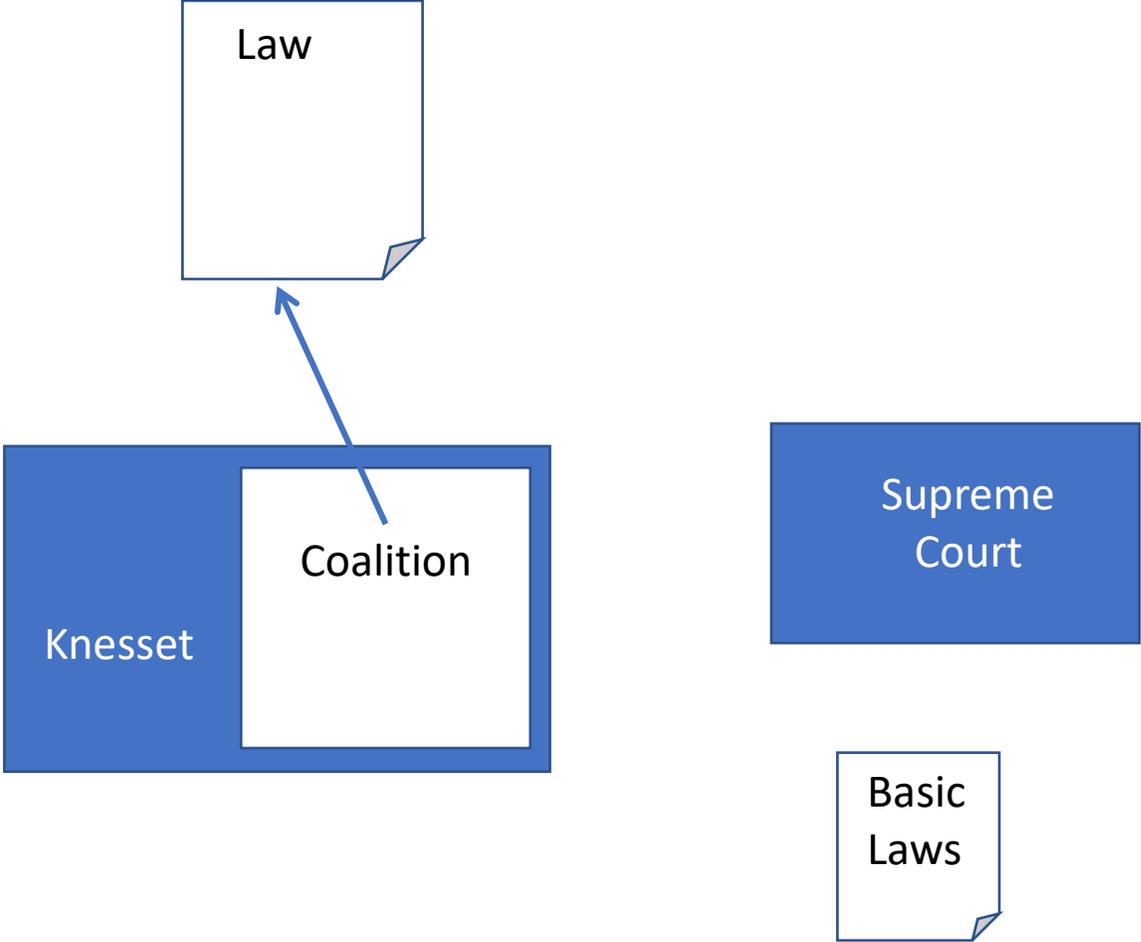
Israeli Democracy



U.S. Democracy



Proposed Israeli Judicial Reform



## **Ultra-Orthodox/Religious Zionist objectives:**

- 1. Make Israel a state of Jewish citizens only.**
- 2. Make Hebrew the only official language.**
- 3. Require Israeli citizens to abide by Jewish Law.**
- 4. Expand settlements so as to take over more of Judea and Samaria (the West Bank).**
- 5. Exempt the Ultra-orthodox from military or government service of any kind.**
- 6. Provide stipends to Ultra-orthodox males so they have no obligations except to enroll and study in Yeshivas.**
- 7. Change Israel's education requirements so that Ultra-orthodox grade schools and high schools no longer have to teach the core curriculum, including English and math, in order to receive government funding.**



Protesters on Begin Road in  
Tel Aviv, Jan 29, 2023



Protesters in front of the Israeli Knesset in  
Jerusalem, Feb 20, 2023

Burned car and home in Palestinian village of Huwara after a settler attack on February 26, 2023.



Itamar Ben-Gvir,  
Minister of Security



Bezalel Smotrich,  
Minister of Finance,  
Administrator of the  
West Bank

# **The War in Gaza: Hamas' Plan**

# Hamas



Hamas military commander  
 Mohammad Deif.

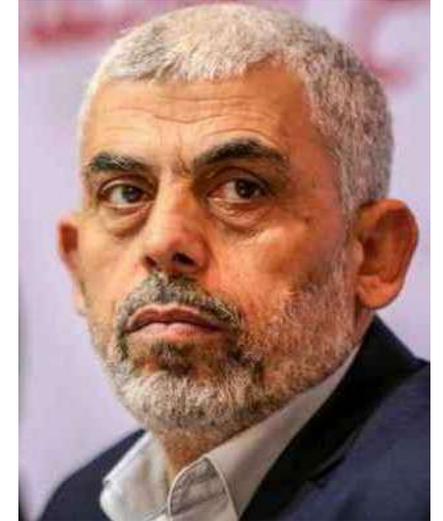
- On Israel’s “most wanted” list since 1995 for killing Israeli soldiers.
- Has survived 7 Israeli assassination attempts, one of which killed his wife and two children in 2014.
- 2002 became head of al-Qassam Brigades and developed those terrorist units into military units.
- Planned the Oct 7, 2023 operation.



Ismail Haniyeh,  
 Political Leader  
 Damascus/Qatar.



Kahled Meshal,  
 Foreign Affairs  
 Damascus/Qatar.



Yahya Sinwar,  
 Gaza Political Leader of Hamas

- Former Hamas “enforcer,” who executed (brutally murdered) Palestinians accused of collaborating with Israel.
- Reportedly favors Hamas ties with Iran.
- 2017 became head of Hamas’ Gaza political bureau.

## **The Plan:**

1. Breach the border fences.
2. Storm Israeli military positions.
3. Murder as many civilians as possible.
4. Capture hostages to bring back to Gaza.
5. Destroy Israeli towns by burning.



Yahya Sinwar  
head of Hamas in  
Gaza



Sinwar and Deif think the Gaza attack force might link up with Hamas fighters from the West Bank.

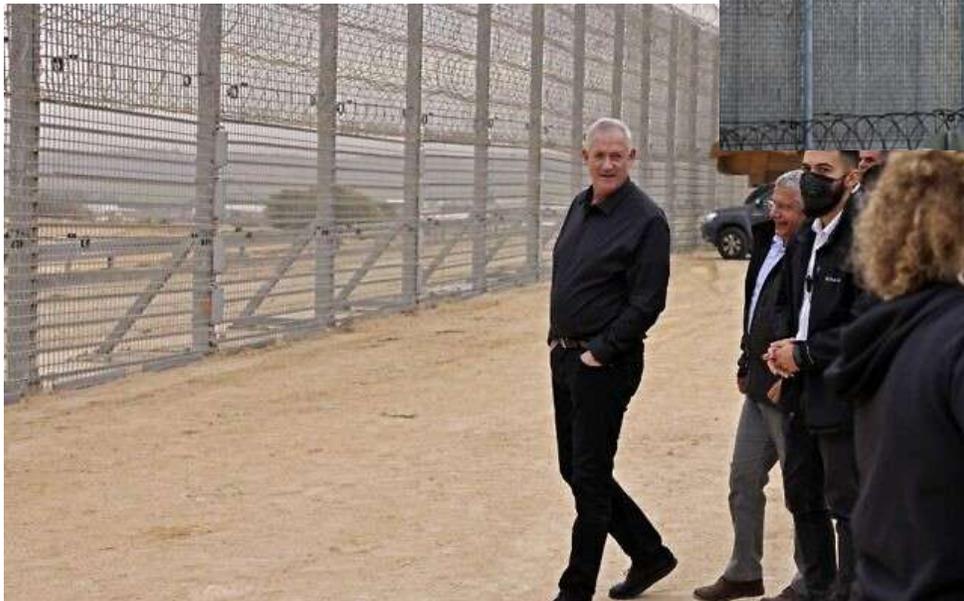
# Ben Gvir's failure:



Ben Gvir moves security from Gaza to the West Bank.



Automated guard tower, with camera and automatic weapon.



Impenetrable steel fence.



Itamar Ben-Gvir,  
Minister of Security

## Operation al-Aqsa Flood



Hamas breaks down the border fence near Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip on October 7, 2023. (Photo: Stringer/APA Images)





23 10 07 Palestinians take control of an Israeli tank at Gaza fence - Haaretz - Yousef Masoud - AP



Civilians killed by Hamas militants lie covered in Sderot, Israel, on Saturday, Oct. 7, 2023. (AP Photo/Ohad Zwigenberg)



Police officers evacuate a woman and child from a site hit by a rocket fired from the Gaza Strip in Ashkelon, southern Israel, Saturday, Oct. 7, 2023. (AP Photo/Tsafrir Abayov)



Israeli troops inspect the ravaged site of the attack on the Supernova desert music festival on October 10, 2023 [Jack Guez/ AFP]

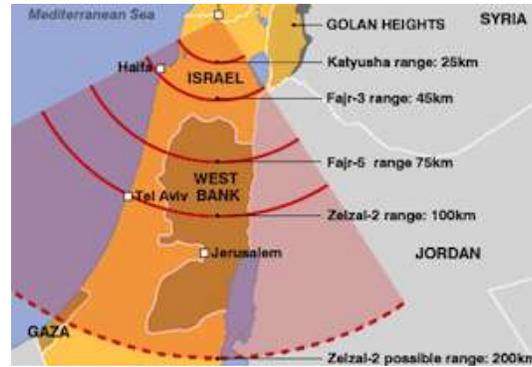


23 10 07 Sderot police station hit by Hamas. (Haaretz - Ronen Zvulun – Reuters)



October 10, 2023. An IDF soldier prepares to remove the bodies of Israelis killed during the October 7, 2023 attack by Hamas terrorists, in Kibbutz Kfar Aza, in southern Israel bordering the Gaza Strip. (Jack Guez/AFP)

# Hezbollah:



Hezbollah's Iranian missiles, supposedly, can hit most of Israel from southern Lebanon.



Smoke billows from fires ignited by Israeli shelling on the forested areas of the southern Lebanese village of Deir Mimas. Credit: Photo by Rabih DAHER / AFP



Two men stand by a truck as they watch smoke plumes rising from a fire in a field after rockets launched from southern Lebanon landed near Katzrin in the Golan Heights. Credit: AFP

# **Israel Strikes Back**



Northern Gaza after an Israeli airstrike, as seen from Sderot, Israel, on Oct. 29. Tamir Kalifa for The New York Times



Source: Ocha

BBC



Source: Ocha

BBC

Goals:

1. Destroy Hamas.
2. Get the hostages back
3. Prevent such an attack from ever happening again.



Israeli forces arrive at the Erez border crossing next to the northern Gaza Strip (Marcus Yam/Los Angeles Times).

**27 Oct:** Tanks and other armoured forces move into northern Gaza



Goals:

1. Destroy Hamas.
2. Get the hostages back
3. Prevent such an attack from ever happening again.



Northern Gaza after an Israeli airstrike, as seen from Sderot, Israel, on Oct. 29. Tamir Kalifa for The New York Times



Pvt. Ori Megidish at home with her parents.

↓ Israeli ground forces

**9 Nov:** Israeli forces cut the Strip in two, surrounding Gaza City



**27 Nov:** Israeli forces hold positions during seven-day ceasefire





Smoke rises in Gaza, seen from Sderot, Israel, as Israeli attacks continue across Gaza. [Mostafa Alkharouf/Anadolu Agency].



IDF soldiers Samer Al-Talalka, Alon Shamriz, and Yotam Haim escaped from Hamas, only to be shot and killed by the IDF, by mistake.



Source: Ocha

BBC

Dec 2023. Israeli ground forces move south toward Khan Unis..



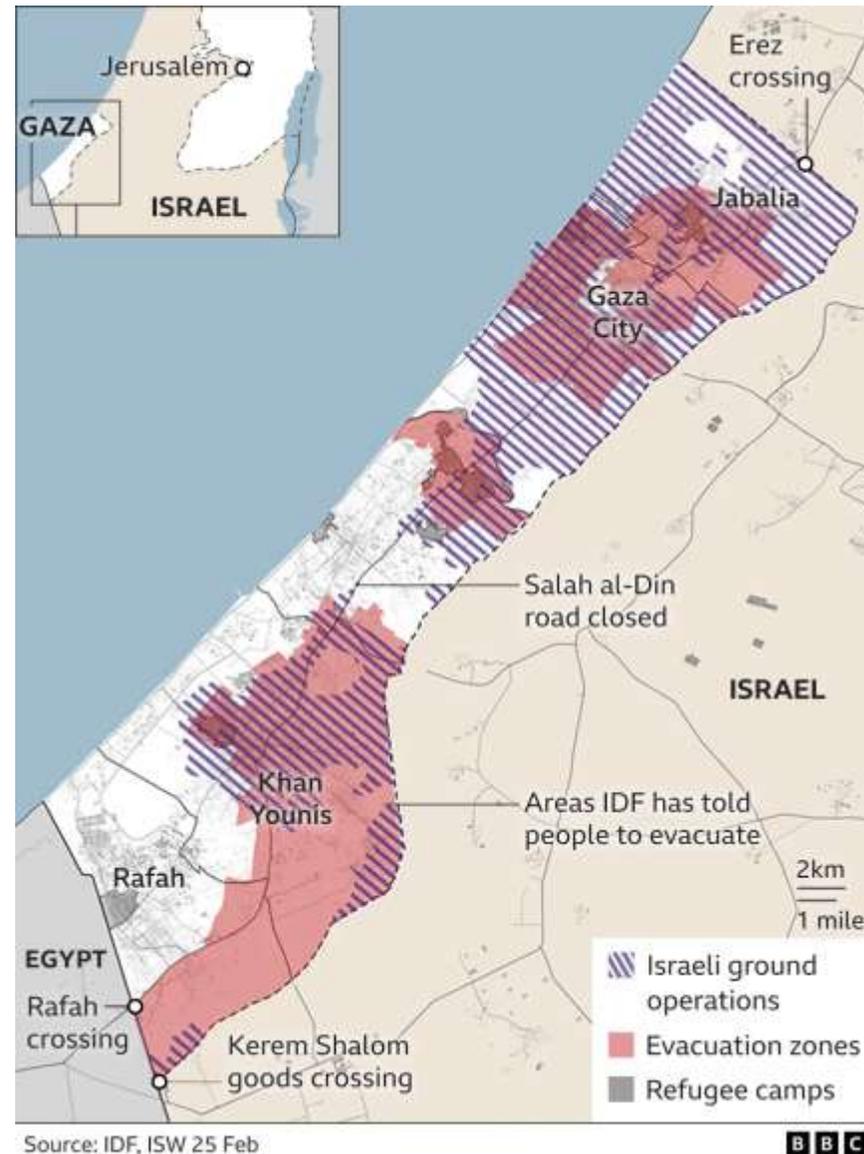
January 14, 2024, Gaza after 100 days



Fernando Simon Marman, aged 60, and Luis Herr, aged 70, were rescued by the IDF in Rafah on February 12, 2024.



Feb. 22, 2024. Destroyed houses in Jabalia refugee camp.  
REUTERS Mahmoud Issa.



Feb 25, Israeli forces reduce operations in northern Gaza.



**NEW DETAILS**

**CBS** EVENING NEWS  
WITH NORAH O'DONNELL

**GAZA AID CONVOYS AMBUSHED BY GANGS**

A truck carries humanitarian aid into the Gaza Strip, but is swarmed by residents trying to get food.



Route of the 3-car WCK aid convoy on 4/1/24, accompanied by two Israeli armored vehicles.



World Central Kitchen vehicle hit by an Israeli airstrike in Deir al Balah, Gaza Strip, Tuesday, April 2, 2024. Ismael Abu Dayyah/AP



Seven World Central Kitchen aid workers killed in Gaza.



Hostages rescued by the IDF June 8, 2024.



Source: Ocha

BBC

May-August 2023.  
Israeli ground forces  
move into and occupy  
Rafah..



Boys watch smoke billowing during Israeli strikes east of Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip AFP via Getty Images



Hamas fighters remain active. Bashar Taleb/Getty Images.

# Death Toll

**Religious Zionist/  
Ultranationalist View**



National security chief and leader of the religious Zionist Jewish Power Party, Itamar Ben-Gvir, calls for rebuilding Jewish settlements in Gaza and expanding those in the occupied West Bank.



Crowd celebrating at the Jerusalem Convention, Jan 28, 2024, organized by far-right activists to promote expansion onto more Palestinian land.



Feb, 2024. Israeli settlers and Religious Zionists go to the broken barriers around the Gaza Strip to celebrate. For them, this is not a military operation or an attempt to rescue hostages. It is a holy war. (Marcus Yam/Los Angeles Times)



Once inside, the settlers quickly erect an “outpost” (two small, plywood buildings in this case) to illustrate their claim to the Gaza Strip. (Marcus Yam/Los Angeles Times)



For the settlers, this is not a military operation in Gaza or even an attempt to rescue hostages. It is a holy war. (Marcus Yam/Los Angeles Times)



Young religious Zionist men study both the Torah and military strategy at Bnei David Academy in the West Bank. (Marcus Yam/Los Angeles Times)



Academy founder Rabbi Eli Sadan supports a “Scorched Earth” policy with regard to Palestinians and Gaza.

# **Humanitarian Aid**



Source: Ocha

BBC

With the majority of Gaza's population crowded into Rafah and al-Mawasi, there is no sufficient supply line for food, water or medical supplies.





Israeli protestors march to the Karem Shalom checkpoint, hoping to block aid shipments into Gaza. (Marcus Yam/Los Angeles Times)

Israeli police remove a protestor from a sit-in intended to block food and medical supplies from entering Gaza. (Marcus Yam/Los Angeles Times)





Feb., 2024 Israeli protestors begin blocking aid trucks at the crossing points. They say the food and medical supplies are being diverted to Hamas instead of being delivered to civilians in need – a claim relief agencies completely reject. Photograph: Alessio Mamo/The Guardian



A Royal Jordanian Air Force C-130 Hercules military transport aircraft drops humanitarian aid on Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip on June 4. EYAD BABA/AFP via Getty Images



In northern Gaza.  
Agence France-Presse — Getty Images



March 15, 2024. A small ship, the *Open Arms*, arrived from Cyprus towing a barge with 200 tons of food supplies from the World Central Kitchen.



June 19, 2024. U.S. Army pier being re-attached to Gaza shore. When fully operational it was supposed to handle the equivalent of 100-150 trucks per day.

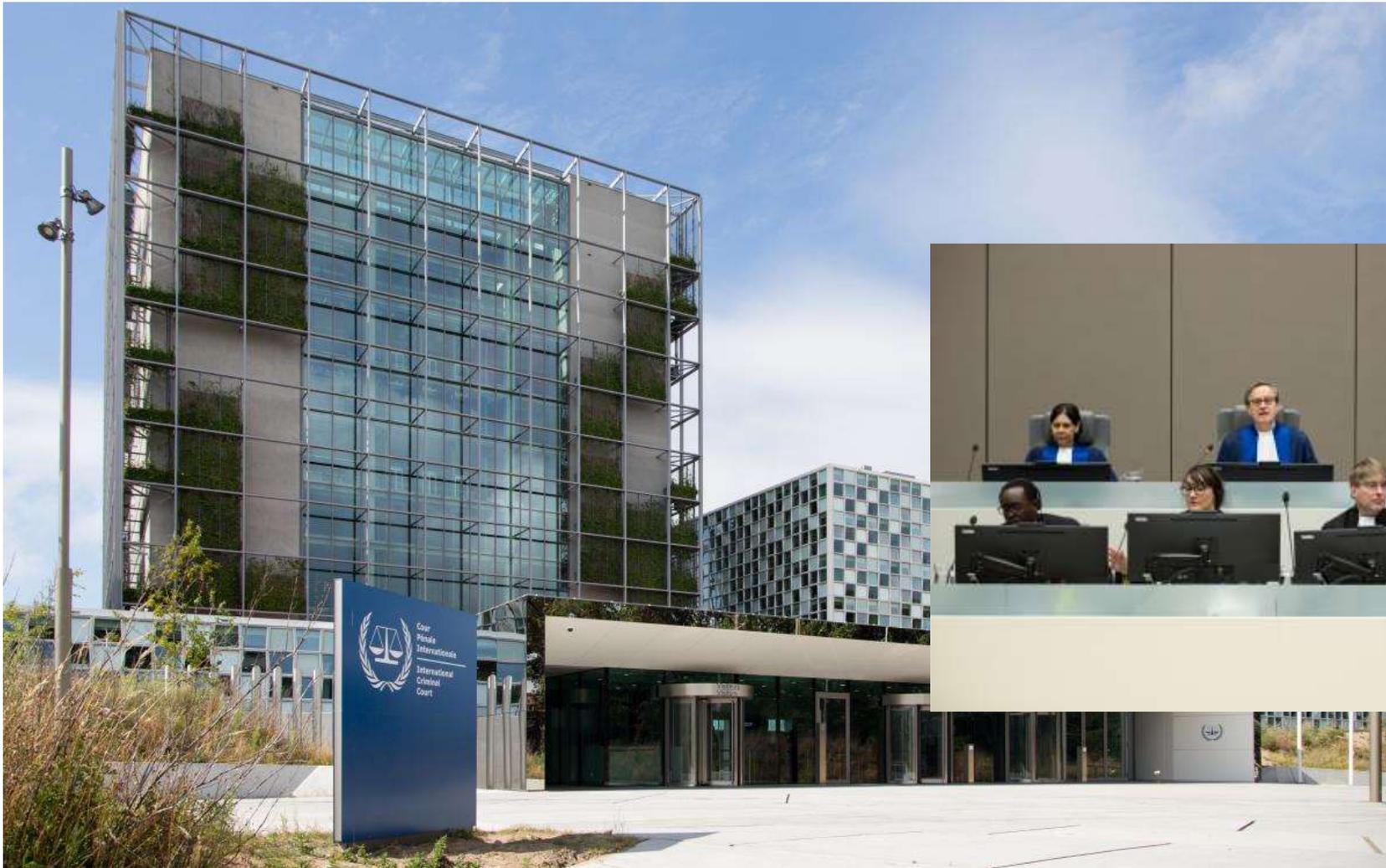


Israeli settlers destroy desperately needed humanitarian aid coming from Jordan to Gaza.— X/SuppressedNews



Itamar Ben-Gvir,  
Minister of Security

Israeli soldiers look on as settlers loot aid trucks bound for Gaza. YouTube/Guardian News.



International Criminal Court, The Hague, Netherlands

# **Iran and Hezbollah**



April 1, 2024 Israel bombs the Iranian embassy in Damascus, Syria. Hits the consular section killing sixteen persons, including two IRGC generals.

## ISRAEL'S WAR ON GAZA

# Iran launches drones, missiles at Israel

Israel says nearly all incoming drones and missiles - numbering more than 300 - from Iran, Iraq and Yemen have been intercepted. Iran says the attack is in response to an Israeli strike on its consulate in Syria on April 1 and that the matter can now "be deemed concluded".

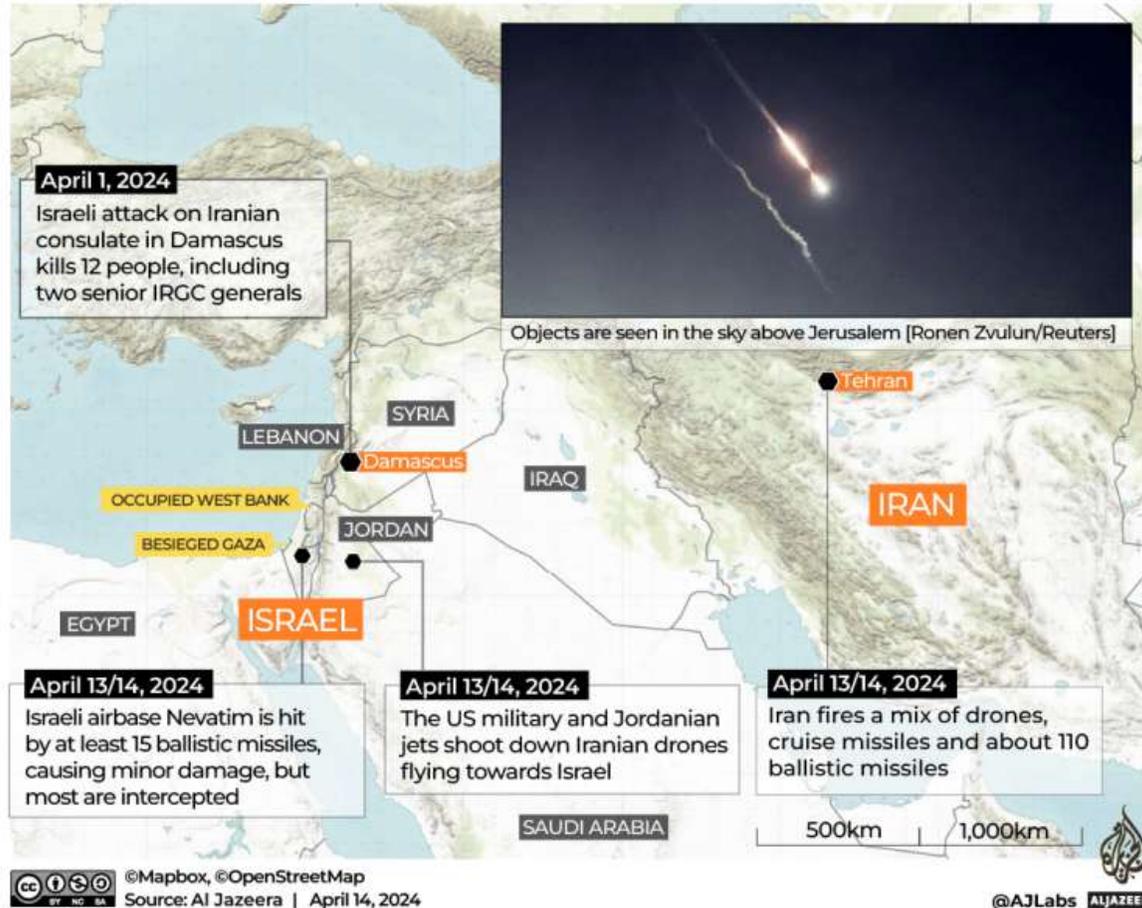
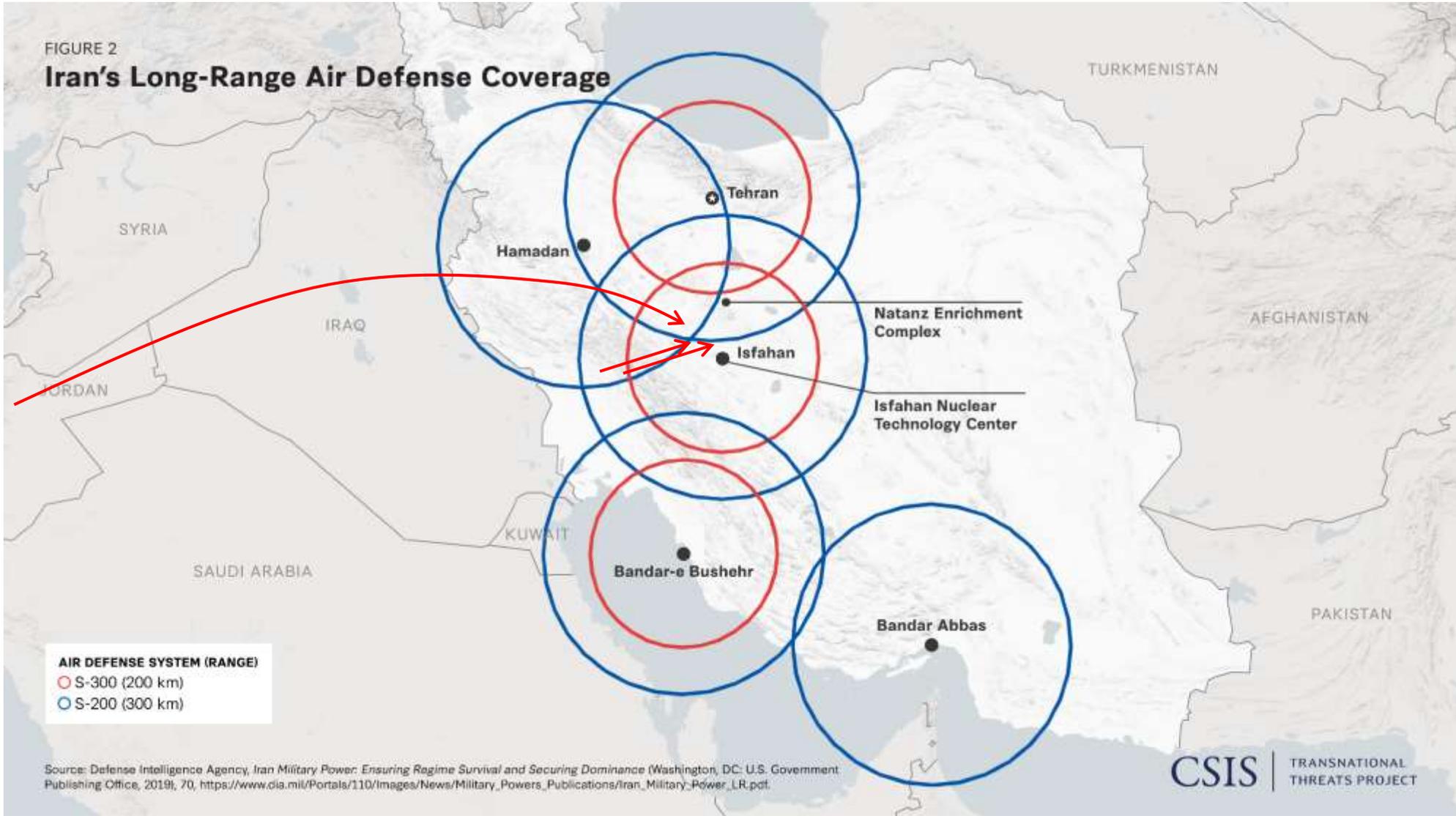
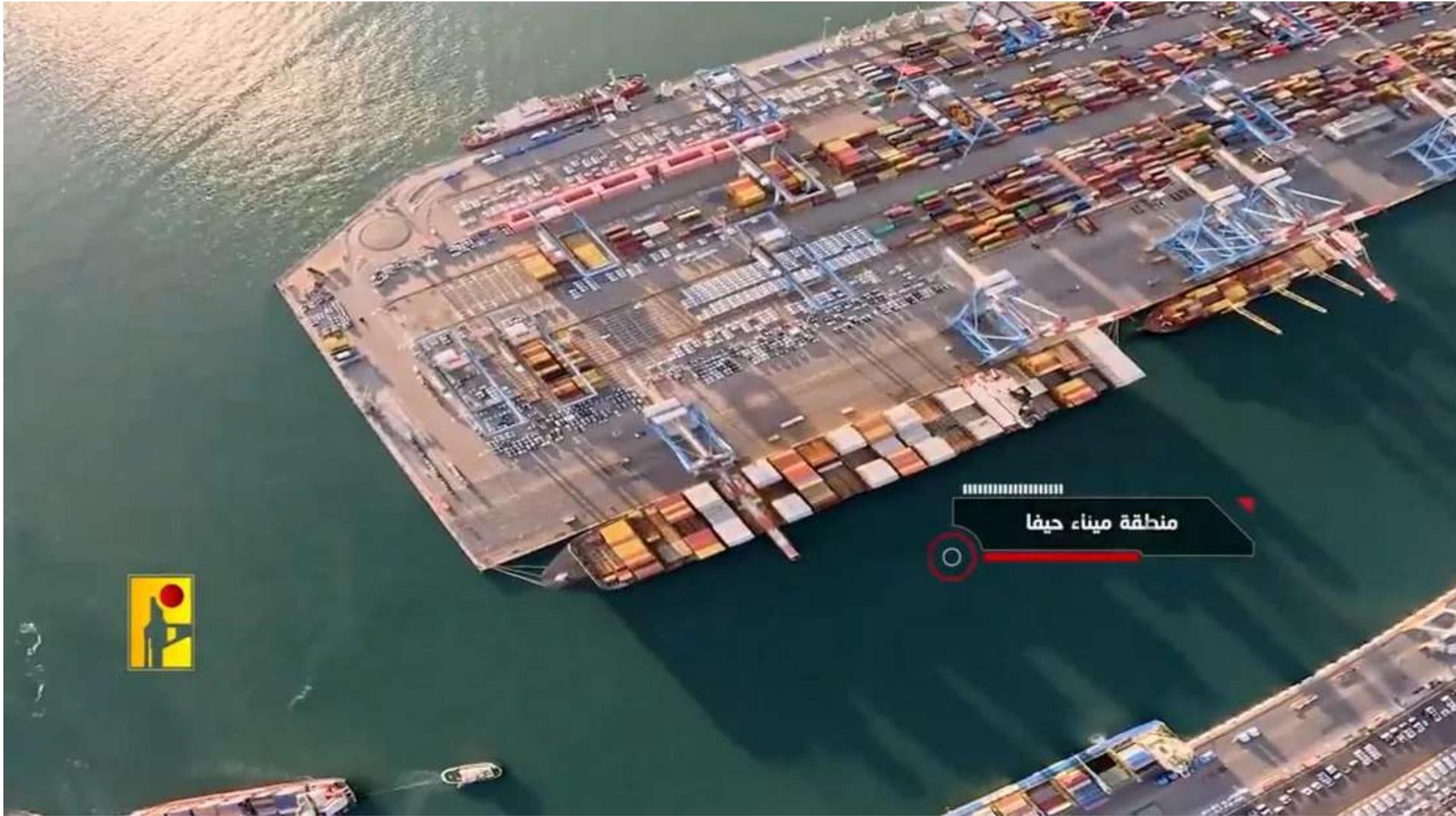


FIGURE 2

## Iran's Long-Range Air Defense Coverage





The Haifa Port area is seen in the video released by Hezbollah.  
AlMayadeenNews



Ismail Haniyeh,  
Political Leader  
Damascus/Qatar.



Haniyeh assassinated  
in Tehran, 7/31/24

Funeral in Tehran of Ismail Haniyeh, Hamas political leader and Chief Negotiator.



Remnants of a [Hezbollah](#) pager that exploded on 17 September 2024. By AFP/Getty Images



Message received at 15.30 local time on Tuesday appearing to be from leadership



 Pager buzzes with message alert

Seconds later thousands of devices detonate



Sayyid Hassan Nasrallah,  
Leader of Hezbollah



Hassan Nasrallah assassinated at Hezbollah Headquarters in Dahieh, by an IDF airstrike on September 27, 2024.



An [IAF F-15I](#) loaded with guided bombs as it is taking-off for the airstrike on 27 September 2024



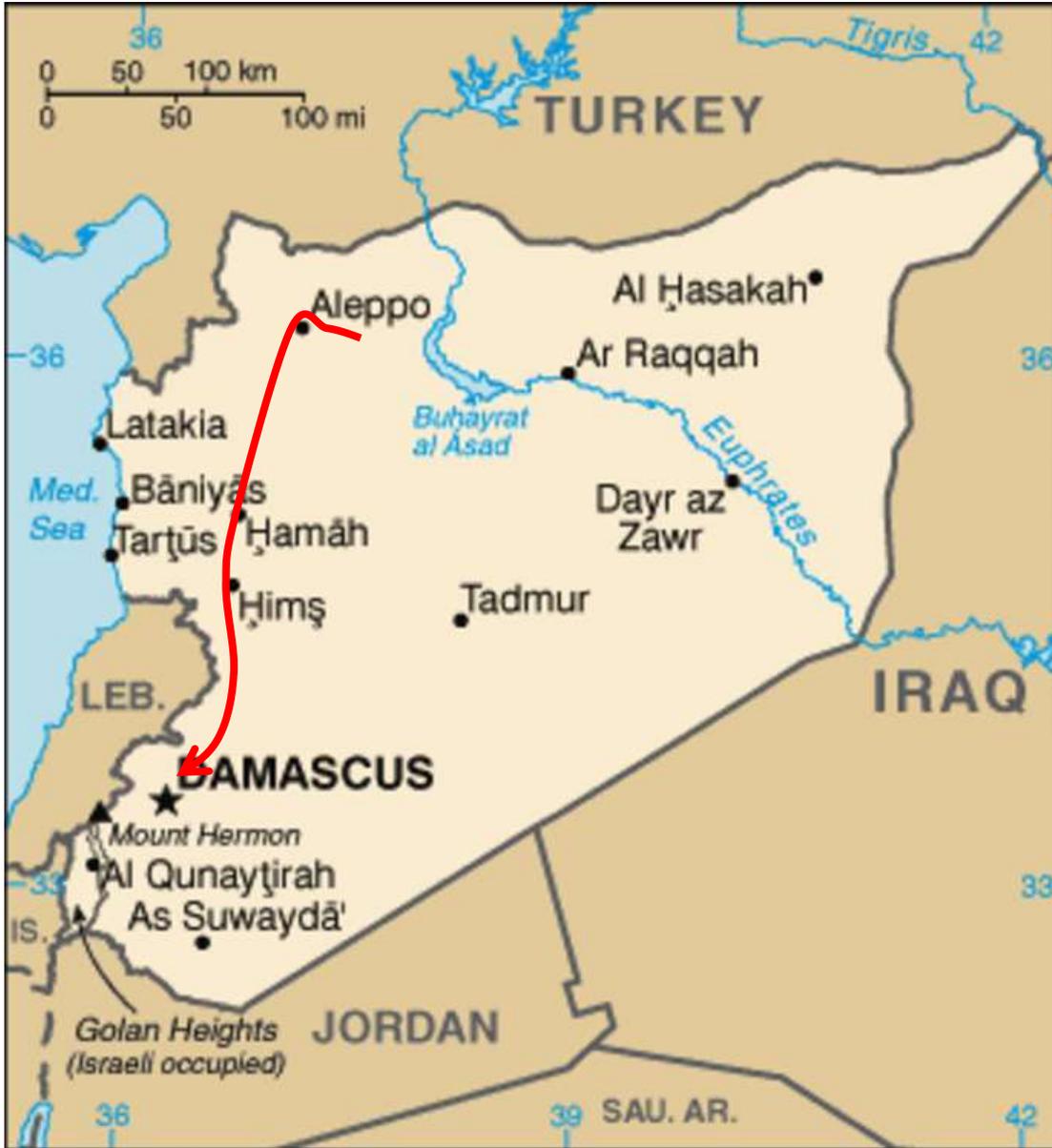
The Iranian air attack was an extensive air operation against Israel on the evening of 1 October 2024, and included 181 projectiles. The result was at least 8 Israelis killed. This photo was taken in the Lower Galilee from a settlement towards the east.



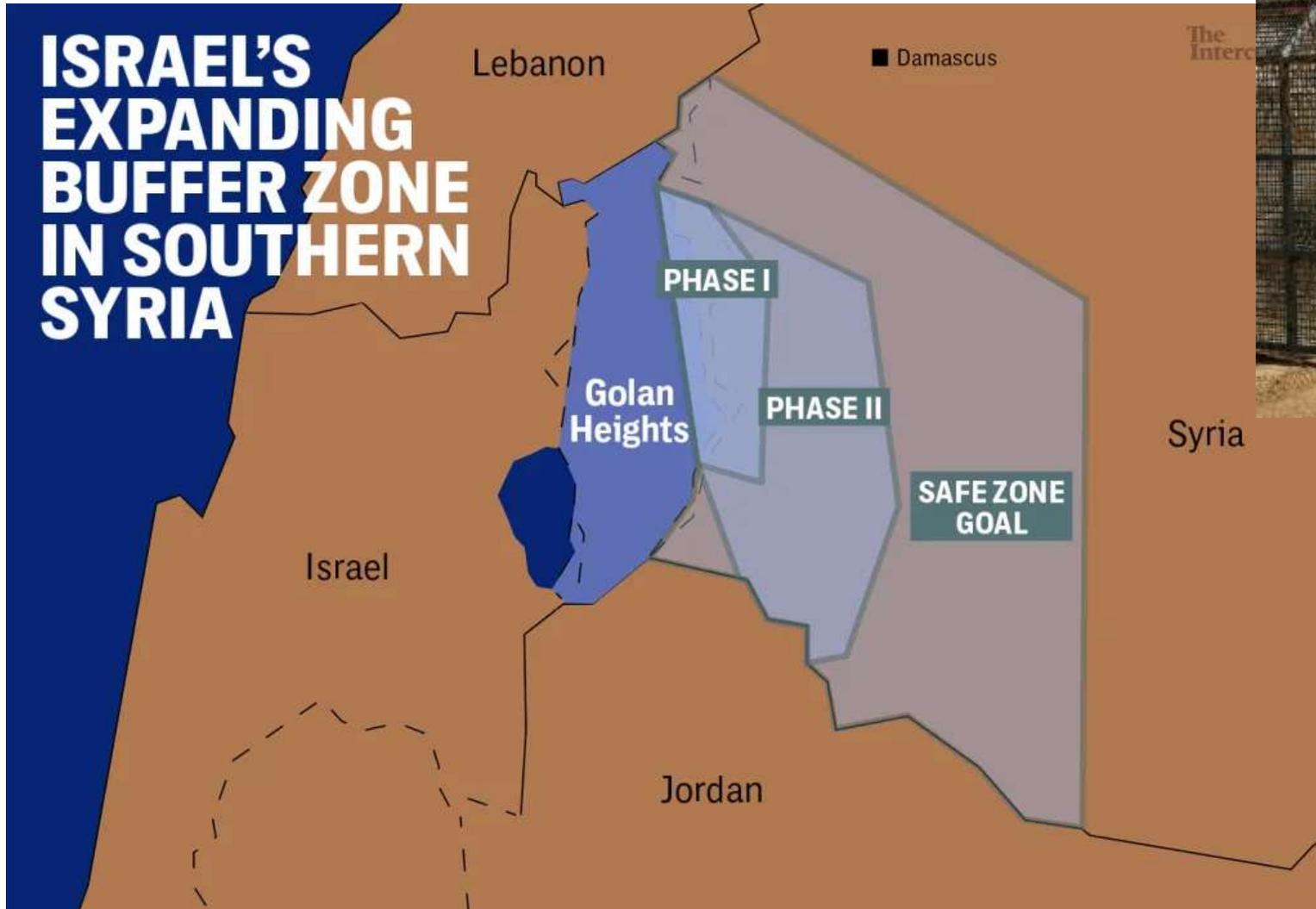
Yahya Sinwar,  
Hamas Political Leader  
Gaza



Parchin Military Complex. Credit: Satellite Image © Maxar Technologies.



Syrian rebels pose for a selfie in Hama Dec 6 2024. Credit: BAKR AL KASSEM AFP via Getty Images



Israeli troops return from the buffer zone, near the Druze village of Majdal Shams in the Israeli Golan Heights. Credit: Jala Marey/ AFP

Israeli is expanding its buffer zone out of concern for what may develop in the new Islamic Syria, with Turkish support. Map: The Intercept

Iran's weakened state:

- Most of Hezbollah's capabilities are destroyed
- Assad's Syria is replaced by a Sunni Islamist state
- Hamas is largely disabled
- Iran's ballistic missile production interrupted
- Iran's air defense system is badly damaged and ineffective
- Iran's regional influence at its lowest ebb in 30 years

Time to build a nuclear weapon?



IAEA Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi says no one has ever enriched to 60% without moving ahead to a nuclear weapon. Credit: Roland Schlager/APA/dpa/picture alliance



Khan Younis, southern Gaza strip.



Jabalia Refugee Camp, built in 1948  
to house displaced Palestinians.

# **Trump Ceasefire**



May 31, 2024. Joe Biden laid out a three-phase proposal that Israel submitted to wind down the crisis. He declared, "It's time for this war to end."



Jan, 2025. Donald Trump made it happen

## Israeli hostages released by Hamas:



The first three hostages being released within the ceasefire agreement. The [International Committee of the Red Cross](#) turns the former hostages over to the custody of the [IDF](#)

33 hostages were returned during Phase I of the Ceasefire.



Liri Albag meets her family after being released from Hamas captivity.



Netanyahu's Religious Zionist supporters are not interested in ending the war, they are interested in taking over Gaza.



Benjamin Netanyahu says the war in Gaza can't end until Hamas is destroyed. Leo Correa/POOL/AFP via Getty Images



Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announces resumption of the war in Gaza, March 18, 2025. (Israeli Government Press Office via AP)



Israel declares ceasefire 'over.' Israeli air strike hits Gaza's Nasser hospital.

## Itamar Ben Gvir returns in time for the Budget vote...



With Israel once again on the attack in Gaza, Religious Zionist leader Itamar Ben Gvir returns to his cabinet post as National Security Minister.



Anti-government demonstrations,  
March 19, 2025. (Nathan Klabin/The  
Media Line)



Fate of the hostages

# **The 12-Day War**



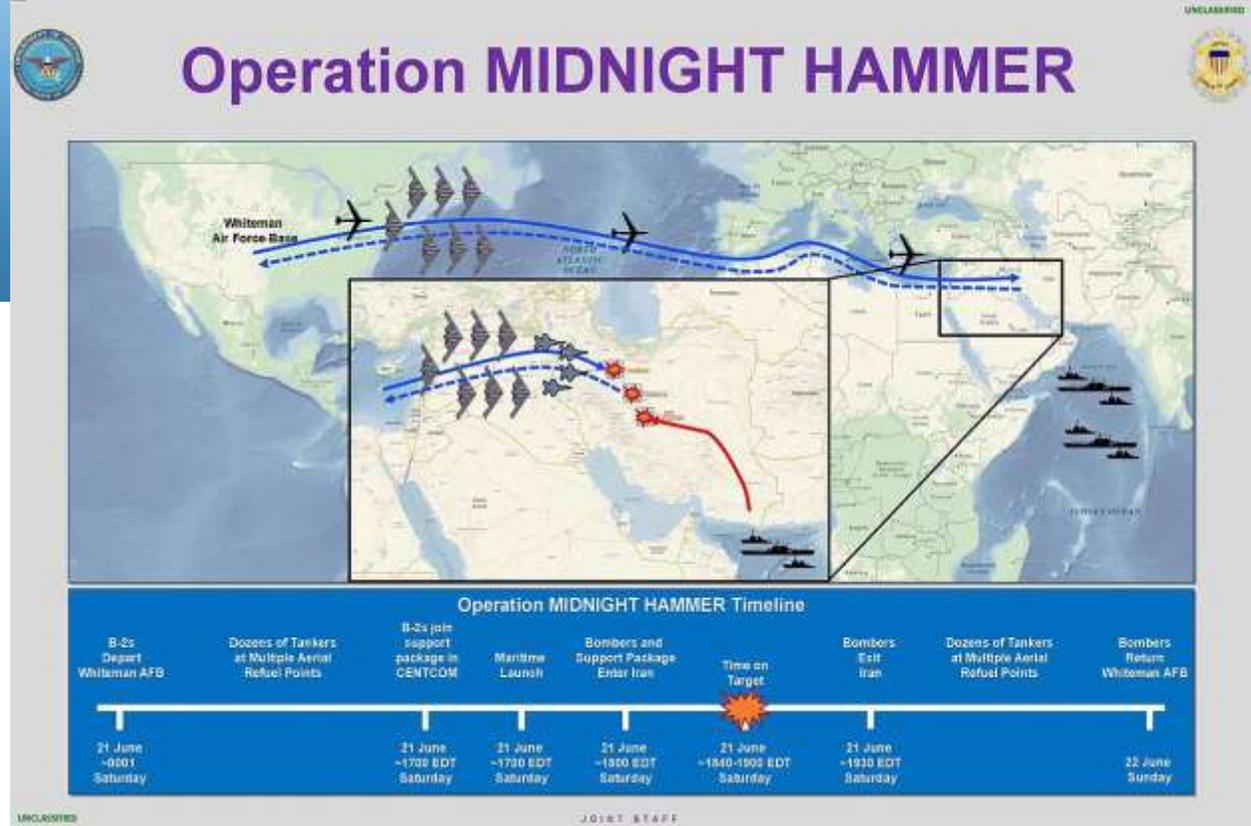
One of 61 buildings damaged by Iranian missiles in Bat Yam, Israel on 6/15/25.



A residential building in Tehran with missile damage, 13 June 2025



Debris after an attack in [Narmak](#) neighborhood of Tehran on 14 June 2025





**Donald J. Trump** ✓

@realDonaldTrump

CONGRATULATIONS TO EVERYONE! It has been fully agreed by and between Israel and Iran that there will be a Complete and Total CEASEFIRE (in approximately 6 hours from now, when Israel and Iran have wound down and completed their in progress, final missions!), for 12 hours, at which point the War will be considered, ENDED! Officially, Iran will start the CEASEFIRE and, upon the 12th Hour, Israel will start the CEASEFIRE and, upon the 24th Hour, an Official END to THE 12 DAY WAR will be saluted by the World. During each CEASEFIRE, the other side will remain PEACEFUL and RESPECTFUL. On the assumption that everything works as it should, which it will, I would like to congratulate both Countries, Israel and Iran, on having the Stamina, Courage, and Intelligence to end, what should be called, "THE 12 DAY WAR." This is a War that could have gone on for years, and destroyed the entire Middle East, but it didn't, and never will! God bless Israel, God bless Iran, God bless the Middle East, God bless the United States of America, and GOD BLESS THE WORLD!

DONALD J. TRUMP,  
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**28.9k** ReTruths **124k** Likes

Jun 24, 2025, 12:02 AM

## The Netanyahu pardon

- Pre-conviction
- No admission of guilt
- No apology or remorse
- No pledge to resign

## The Netanyahu pardon

- Pre-conviction
- No admission of guilt
- No apology or remorse
- No pledge to resign

But...

- It frees the Prime Minister from control by the Religious Zionists
- What will he do then?

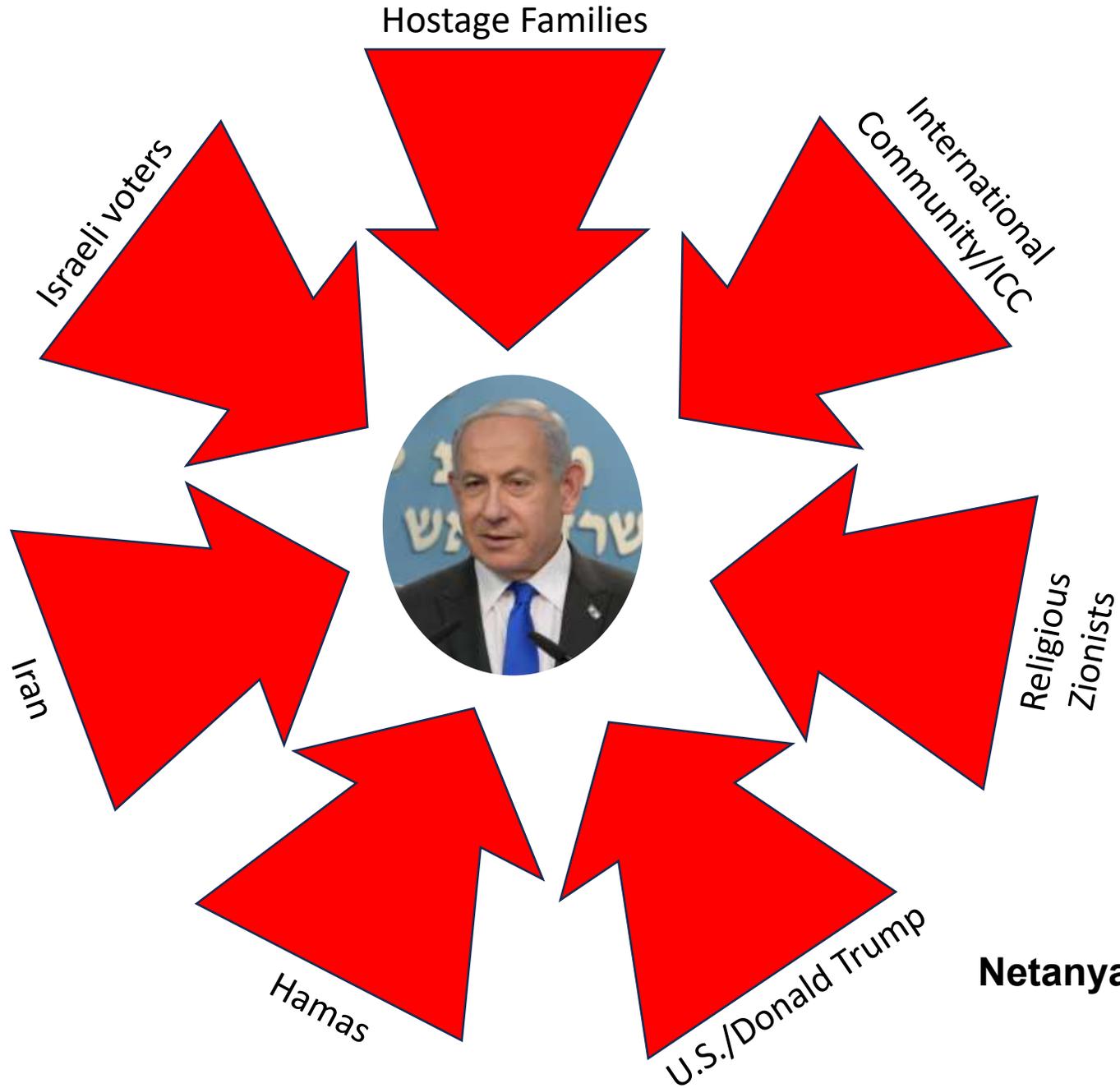
# **The Trump Peace plan**

# **The Trump Peace plan**

(It's rumored that he wants a Nobel Peace Prize)



September 29, 2025, at the White House US President Donald Trump says Israel and Hamas have "signed off on the first phase" of his 20-point Gaza peace plan.



**Netanyahu under pressure**



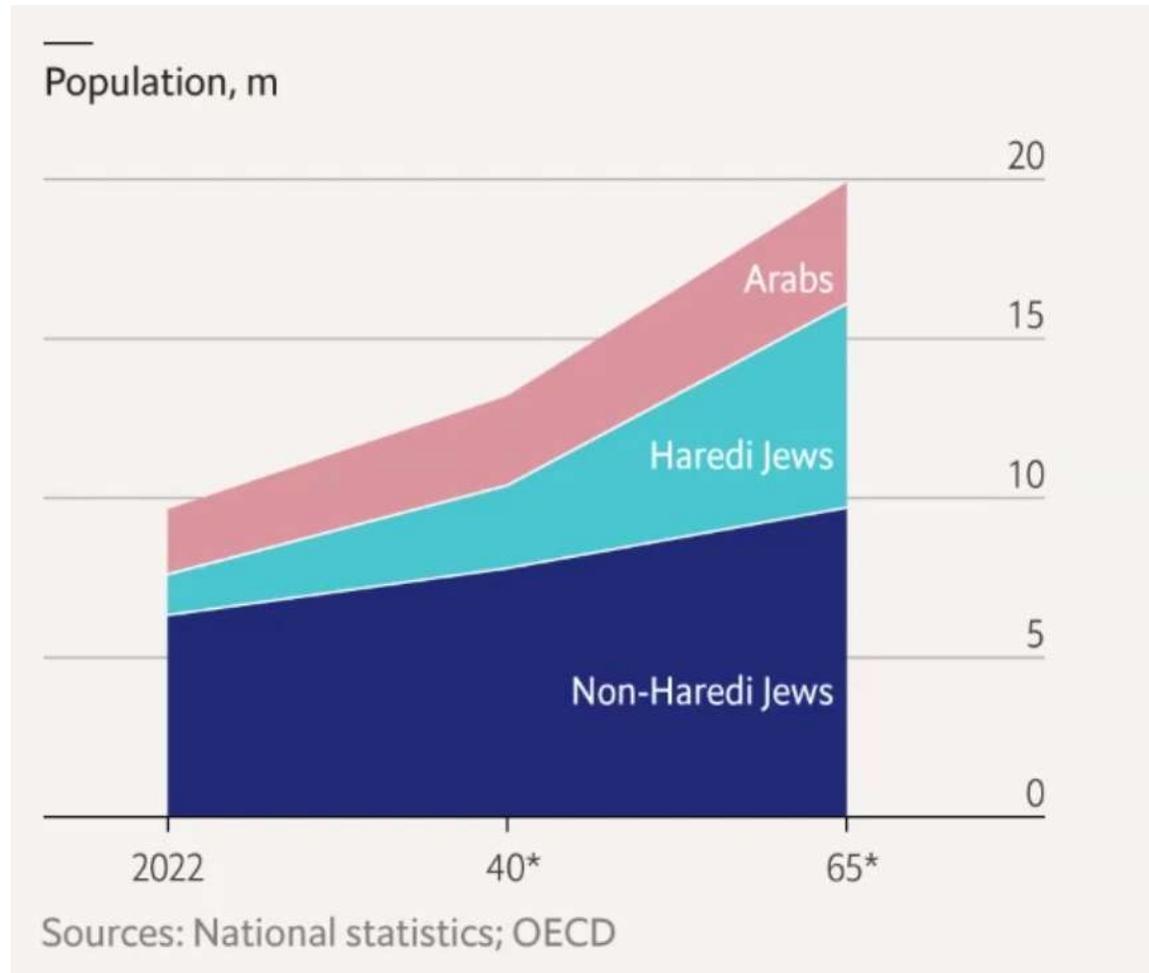
Homes, hospitals, schools, water, and sanitation facilities - have been destroyed or severely damaged. WHO estimates it will take billions of dollars of investment to recover.

## **The Plan:**

1. Gaza will be a terror-free zone that does not pose a threat to its neighbors.
2. Gaza will be redeveloped for the benefit of the people of Gaza.
3. The war will immediately end. Israeli forces will withdraw to the agreed upon line. All military operations, including aerial and artillery bombardment, will be suspended, and battle lines will remain frozen until conditions are met for the complete staged withdrawal.
4. Within 72 hours of Israel publicly accepting this agreement, all hostages, alive and deceased, will be returned.
5. Once all hostages are released, Israel will release 250 life sentence prisoners plus 1,700 Gazans who were detained after 7 October 2023, including all women and children detained in that context.
6. Once all hostages are returned, Hamas members who commit to peaceful co-existence and to decommission their weapons will be given amnesty. Members of Hamas who wish to leave Gaza will be provided safe passage to receiving countries.
7. Upon acceptance of this agreement, full aid will be immediately sent into the Gaza Strip, including rehabilitation of infrastructure (water, electricity, sewage), hospitals and bakeries, and entry of necessary equipment to remove rubble and open roads.
8. Entry of distribution and aid in the Gaza Strip will proceed without interference from the two parties.
9. Gaza will be governed under the temporary transitional governance of a technocratic, apolitical Palestinian committee, made up of qualified Palestinians and international experts, with supervision by a new "Board of Peace," chaired by President Donald J. Trump, until such time as the Palestinian Authority has completed its reform program.
10. A Trump economic development plan to rebuild and energise Gaza will be created by a panel of experts.

11. A special economic zone will be established with preferred tariff and access rates.
12. No one will be forced to leave Gaza, and those who wish to leave will be free to do so and free to return.
13. Hamas and other factions agree to not have any role in the governance of Gaza, directly, indirectly, or in any form. All military, terror, and offensive infrastructure, including tunnels and weapon production facilities, will be destroyed and not rebuilt. There will be a process of demilitarisation of Gaza supported by an internationally funded buy back and reintegration program.
14. A guarantee will be provided by regional partners to ensure that Hamas, and the factions, comply with their obligations and that New Gaza poses no threat to its neighbors or its people.
15. The United States will work with Arab and international partners to develop a temporary International Stabilisation Force (ISF) to immediately deploy in Gaza. The ISF will train and provide support to Palestinian police forces in Gaza, and will consult with Jordan and Egypt who have extensive experience in this field. The ISF will work with Israel and Egypt to help secure border areas, along with newly trained Palestinian police forces. A deconfliction mechanism will be agreed upon by the parties.
16. Israel will not occupy or annex Gaza. The IDF will hand over the Gaza territory it occupies to the ISF, save for a security perimeter that will remain until Gaza is properly secure from any resurgent terror threat.
17. In the event Hamas delays or rejects this proposal, the above, including the scaled-up aid operation, will proceed in the terror-free areas handed over from the IDF to the ISF.
18. An interfaith dialogue will be established based on the values of tolerance and peaceful co-existence to try and change mindsets of Palestinians and Israelis by emphasizing the benefits that can be derived from peace.
19. While Gaza re-development advances and the PA reform program is carried out, conditions may finally be in place for a credible pathway to Palestinian self-determination and statehood.
20. The United States will establish a dialogue between Israel and the Palestinians to agree on a political horizon for peaceful and prosperous co-existence.

# The Future



The Economist

# Israel and Palestine



Chris Schaefer

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