

The October 7 War: One Year Later

November 2024

Dr. Jonathan Kaplan



Introduction

- October 7, 2023, Hamas attacked Israeli border villages
- Attack had been planned at least a year in advance - goal was to create as much destruction as possible, were hopes of reaching Tel Aviv
- >1,200 Israelis were murdered, 251 hostages seized - 101 are still being held
- Numerous cases of hostages being murdered, at least a third of those in captivity are presumed dead

Gaza Front

Gaza Strip November 2024





https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israel%E2%80%93Hamas_war#/media/File:October_2023_Gaza%E2%88%92Israel_conflict.svg




Gaza Front

- Israel has decimated Hamas forces
 - IDF claims it has “dismantled” 22/24 Hamas battalions
 - IDF claims to have killed all top Hamas leaders, half of the Hamas military leadership and killed or wounded 60% of Hamas fighters

HAMAS LEADERSHIP

Yahya Sinwar Hamas leader since Jul 2024 and architect of 7 October, 2023 attacks			Ismail Haniyeh Hamas leader from 2017, assassinated on 31 July in Tehran
---	--	--	--

COMMANDERS

		
Saleh al-Aroui Hamas deputy leader and founder of group's military wing, Qassam Brigades	Mohammed Deif Head of Qassam Brigades and mastermind of 7 October	Marwan Issa Deputy commander of Qassam Brigades

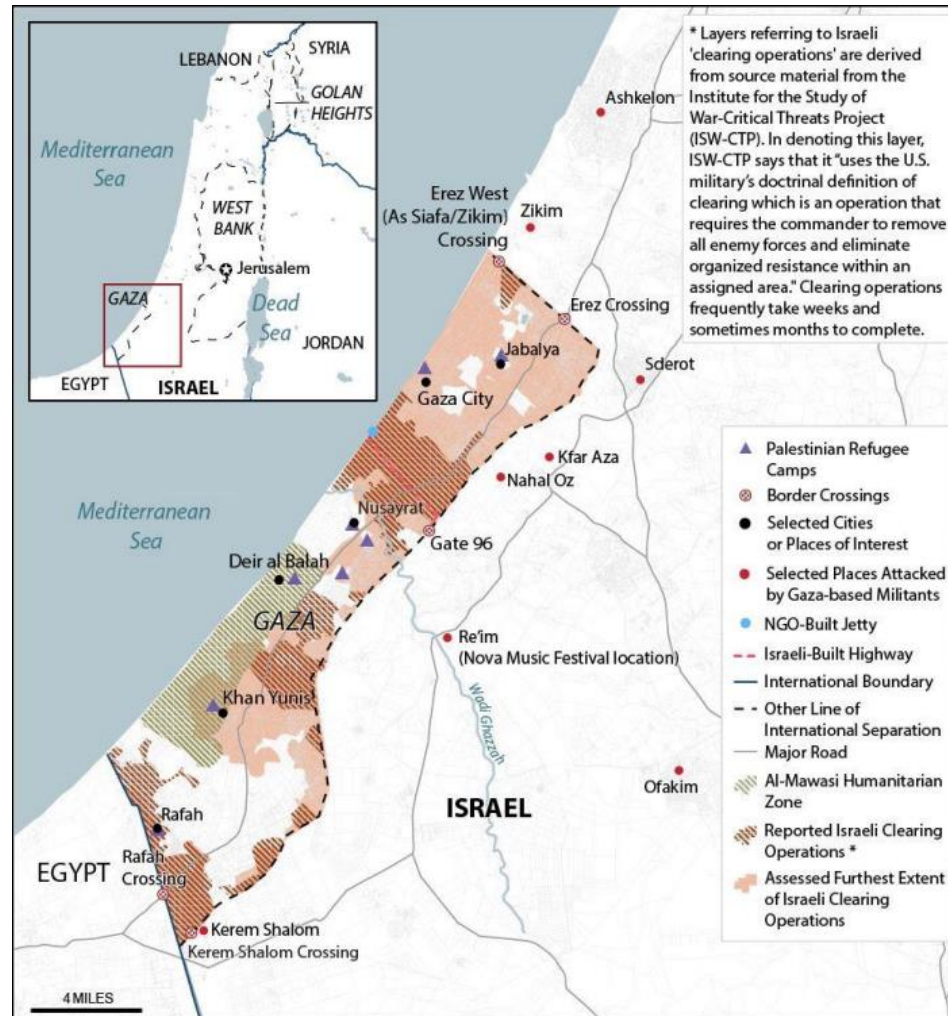
Hamas Leaders Killed

<https://theday.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Hamas-and-Hezbollah-leaders-killed.png>

Gaza Front

- Hamas' positions/control centers/ammunition dumps are located in civilian areas and institutions - schools, mosques, hospitals, private apartments, miles of underground tunnels
- Therefore, war with Hamas has been waged in residential areas which has brought tremendous destruction to civilians - some 44,000 Palestinians have been killed (Isr. claims 17,000 Hamas)
- Destruction of homes, infrastructure, essential services
- Problem of critical supplies: Hamas claims that Israel limits the amount of food allowed in, Israel claims that Hamas steals it

Gaza Front



U.S. Naval Institute Staff,
Report to Congress on
Israel and Hamas Conflict,
October 8, 2024,
<https://news.usni.org/2024/10/08/report-to-congress-on-israel-and-hamas-conflict-2>

Gaza Front

- To get to the Hamas operatives, IDF cleared out civilian population
- This has caused massive displacement (UN - 1.9 million) - mainly to “humanitarian area” in South-Central Gaza Strip
- Hamas fighters regroup in areas evacuated by Israeli forces, continue to fight in small cells, kind of guerilla war
- Jewish farms and villages around the Gaza Strip that were evacuated immediately after Oct. 7 have not yet been able to return due to the destruction, continued threats and trauma

Lebanese Front

- Hezbollah attacked Israel with rockets and missiles on Oct. 8 in support of the Palestinians (and ideology to destroy Israel)
- Launched thousands of projectiles, mostly into northern Israel
- Israel responded with drone, artillery and aerial strikes into southern Lebanon
- For almost a year, both sides had limited tactical goals:
 - Hezbollah - sting Israel, show solidarity, avoid major war
 - Israel - contain Hezbollah, focus on war in Gaza

Lebanese Front

- Necessitated evacuation of Israeli border towns and villages
- Intolerable situation for any country, especially for small country like Israel

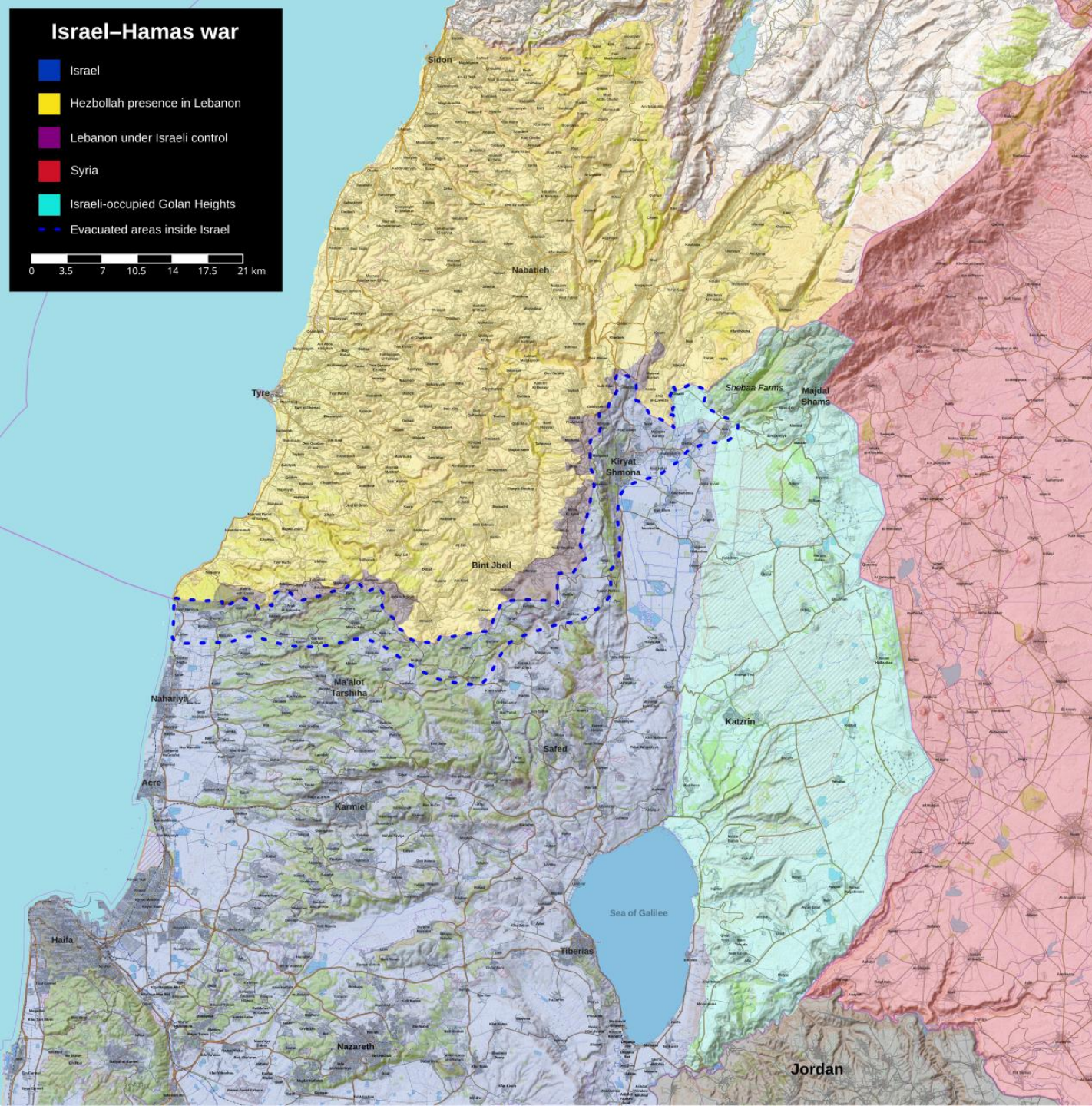
<https://english.almayadeen.net/news/politics/israeli-settlements-in-the-occupied-north-petition-for-compe>



Destruction in Metulla

Lebanese Front

- September 2024, after achieving most of its military aims in Gaza, Israel turned its attention to Hezbollah
 - Sept. 17 & 18: Hezbollah electronic devices explode
 - Sept. 23: Aerial attacks & elimination of Hezbollah commanders
 - Oct. 1: Ground invasion
 - Oct. 29: IDF announced that most of its goals along border were achieved
- IDF released information that it had been infiltrating and destroying Hezbollah infrastructure throughout the year



By Veggies and Ecrusized - Per OpenStreetMap and OpenTopoMap. Evacuation Zone Hezbollah presence Israeli military presence in Lebanon citing Institute for the Study of War., CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=139250993>

Lebanese Front

Hezbollah Leaders Killed

<https://theday.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Hamas-and-Hezbollah-leaders-killed.png>

HEZBOLLAH LEADERSHIP			
Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah Secretary General from 1992 to 27 September, 2024			Hashem Safieddine Widely seen as Nasrallah's successor
JIHAD COUNCIL MEMBERS			
			
Ibrahim Aqil Commander of group's elite <i>Radwan Force</i>	Ali Karaki Commander of Hezbollah's southern front	Nabil Qaouk Deputy head of Executive Council	Fuad Shukur Chief of staff and senior adviser to Nasrallah
GEOGRAPHIC AND SPECIAL COMMANDERS			
			
Mohammed Nasser Commander of <i>Aziz</i> unit of southern front	Taleb Abdallah Commander of <i>Al-Nasr</i> unit of southern front	Ibrahim Qubaisi Commander of Hezbollah's missile unit	Wissam al-Tawil Senior Commander of Radwan Force

Lebanese Front

- Israel claims it has killed 2,000 Hezbollah fighters and 70% of its 150,000 missiles as well as most of the Hezbollah infrastructure near the Israeli border
- Hezbollah continues to fire missiles at Israel mostly north of the Haifa-Tiberias line, and to go beyond this with UAVs including attack on PM Netanyahu's home in Casearia
- Northern settlements continue to be hit daily
- Israeli responses in southern Lebanon have caused displacement of some 1.4 million people from their homes

West Bank

- Hamas and other local organizations have tried to recruit WB residents to carry out terrorist activities to ignite the area
- Iran has been supporting this through funds and weapons
- 5,435 attacks October 2023-September 2024 conducted by terrorists from the West Bank and Jerusalem
- 1,407 cases of Jewish settler violence in the West Bank

Iran - Support for 7-Front War



<https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/irans-islamist-proxies>

Iranian Front

- April 13, 2004 - Iran launched 170 drones, over 30 cruise missiles, and more than 120 ballistic missiles at Israel in response to Israeli bombing of Iranian embassy in Damascus to kill Mohammad Reza Zahedi, Commander of Quds Force which backs Hezbollah
- Almost all were shot down by Israel with help from US, Jordan, Britain and France - little damage was caused
- April 19 - Israel retaliated with strike on air defense radar site at an airbase near Isfahan

Iranian Front

- Oct. 1, 2024 - Iran launched some 200 ballistic missiles in response to Israel's targeted hits on Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Teheran and Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah in Beirut (which also killed Islamic Revolutionary Guard general)
- Almost all missiles were shot down by Israel with help from US and Jordan - little damage to Israel
- Oct. 26 - IAF hit 20 locations in Iran and other locations in Iraq and Syria - estimates are that it put back Iran's missile production capability for at least a year
- Are expectations of imminent Iranian attack on Israel

International Front

- A major anti-Israel and antisemitic campaign in the US and Europe was initiated immediately, well before the emergence of the humanitarian crisis in Gaza - millions of messages were sent by bots on social media, instructions to protest groups
- Key messages: Israeli genocide vs. Palestinians, “From the River to the Sea” = destruction of Israel, justification of Hamas attack as resistance to occupation, call for ceasefire leaving Hamas in power, opposition to US support for Israel
- Anti-Israel protest, Times Square, October 8, 2023 ([See National Review, Oct. 8, 2023](#))



International Front

Global Demonstrations in Response to the Israel-Palestine Conflict

7 - 27 October 2023 | The Hamas attack on southern Israel and subsequent Israeli military operations in the Gaza Strip have triggered a wave of protests and rallies around the world. During the first three weeks of the current round of hostilities, ACLED records approximately 4,200 demonstration events related to the conflict, accounting for 38% of all demonstration events reported globally.

Key Numbers

demonstration events worldwide

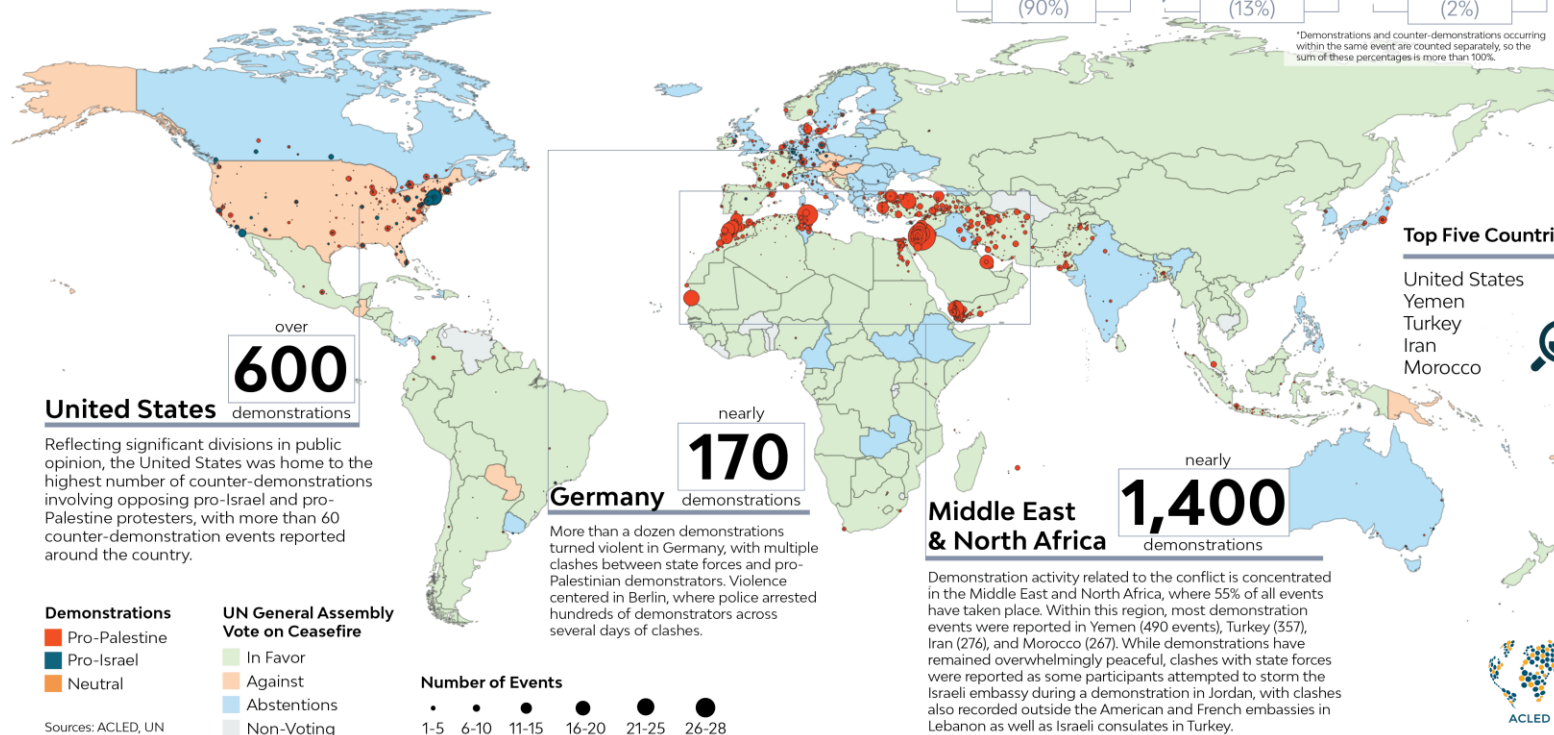
4,200

Pro-Palestine demonstrations*
Over 3,700
(90%)

Pro-Israel demonstrations*
Over 520
(13%)

Neutral*
Approx. 100
(2%)

*Demonstrations and counter-demonstrations occurring within the same event are counted separately, so the sum of these percentages is more than 100%.

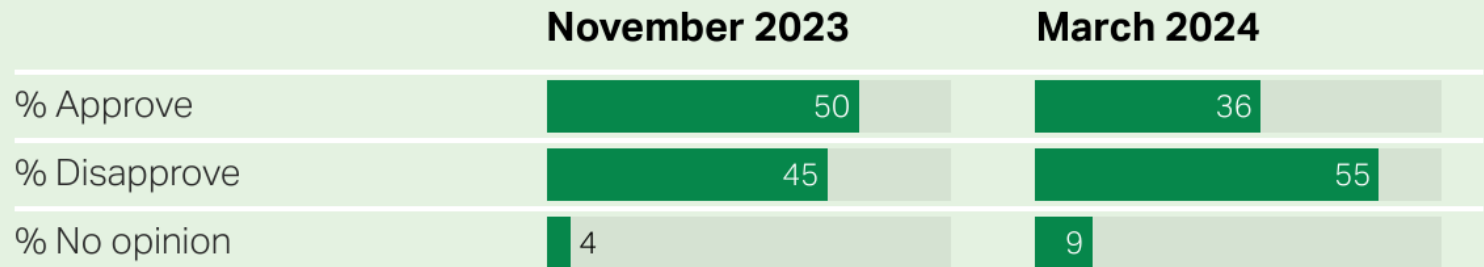


https://acleddata.com/acleddatanew/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/ACLED_Israel-Palestine-Global-Demonstrations_2023-1.png

International Front

Americans Have Shifted to Disapproval of Israeli Military Action in Gaza

Do you approve or disapprove of the military action Israel has taken in Gaza?



GALLUP®

<https://news.gallup.com/poll/642695/majority-disapprove-israeli-action-gaza.aspx>

Gallup Poll showing US change from majority approval (Nov. 2023) to majority disapproval (March 2024) of Israeli military action in Gaza

International Front

- Intergovernmental Organizations generally see Israel as responsible for humanitarian crisis

<https://www.un.org/unispal/document/january-2024-monthly-bulletin-31jan2024/>



January 2024
Volume XLIX, Bulletin No. XIII

Contents

I. UN Secretary-General reports on implementation of Security Council resolution 2712 (2023).....	3
II. 32 UN human rights experts welcome start of ICJ genocide hearings and reiterate call for ceasefire 7	
III. UNICEF reiterates children in Gaza still at the sharp end of unrelenting war.....	9
IV. WHO underscores Gaza health system is hanging by a thread.....	10
V. UN human rights experts say Israel is destroying Gaza's food system and weaponizing food.....	11
VI. UN Women calls for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire and unhindered humanitarian access for Gaza	13
VII. UN Human Rights Office in OPT pleads for an immediate ceasefire, humanitarian aid, and for all hostages to be released.....	14
VIII. UNFPA calls for scale-up of humanitarian aid and improved access to sexual and reproductive health care for the women and girls of Gaza	15
IX. UN Secretary-General briefs Security Council ministerial meeting after 100 days of Gaza war....	16
X. Palestinian Rights Committee addresses the Security Council ministerial level meeting	20
XI. UN Humanitarian Coordinator stresses that humanitarians are struggling to provide displaced people with basic services.....	21

International Front

UN world court calls for prevention of genocidal acts in Gaza



<https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/01/1145937>

January 26, 2024

International Front

ICC seeking arrest warrants for Hamas leaders and Israel's Netanyahu



Karim A. A. Khan

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/05/1149966>

May 20, 2024 24

Continuing Challenges: Hostages



Continuing Challenges: Hostages

- Freeing the hostages: military priorities? coalition politics? sanctity of life? mutual responsibility?



Continuing Challenges: Gaza

- Humanitarian Crisis due to bombing and displacement of population
 - Food and water shortage (1.84 million - 86% of the total population - are facing high levels of acute food insecurity at crisis level or worse)
 - Spread of disease (polio) and collapsed health system
 - Shelter for the winter
 - Lack of fuel/energy
- Ceasefire dilemma: Relief for civilians/Opportunity for Hamas



Continuing Challenges: Gaza

- Parameters for a future administration of the Gaza Strip:
 - Acceptable to Israel (which is subject to US influence)
 - Security concerns (no Hamas/PIJ)
 - Political concerns (involvement of PA, issue of Palestinian State)
 - Backed financially by the international community (at eventual cost of \$80 Billion over decades)
 - Supported politically by the moderate Arab states
 - Tolerated by the Palestinians in long run
- Main option: Multi-national force + security zone

Continuing Challenges: Gaza

- Return of Israeli evacuees
 - 200,000-250,000 Israelis evacuated areas bordering on Gaza Strip and Lebanon
 - The Israeli government approved a 5-year \$4.9 billion plan to rehabilitate and develop the Gaza envelope area
 - Also approved rehabilitation plan of \$270 million for northern Israel to be used in 2024 - long-term plans are expected soon
- What will encourage people to return?

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:100824_nir_oz_-_photos_from_the_black_sabbath_PikiWiki_Israel.jpg



Underlying Issues

- Future of Israeli-Palestinian conflict - is there a way out?
 - Israeli supremacy is unsustainable: must be inclusive solution
 - Israeli concessions endanger its existence due to jihadist extremists
- Right-wing hold of Israeli government/weakness of PA
- Saudi vs. Iranian dominance in the region
- Role of US in the Middle East (vs Russia, China, Iran, N. Korea?)
- Revival of Jew hatred from the radical left, the extreme right and jihadist elements

Thank you!

