

# Israel Is Blaming Everyone but Itself for Its Own Disgrace

Thursday 22 February 2024, by [LEVY Gideon](#) (Date first published: 22 February 2024).

*Palestinians ride a donkey cart through a destroyed beach road, amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas, in Gaza City, Monday. Credit: Kosay Al Nemer/Reuters*

There are not many countries so desperate for national honor and pride as much as Israel. Whether it's the Olympics, Eurovision or the backgammon world championship, every Israeli victory in the 16<sup>th</sup> semifinal of a badminton championship evokes "national pride." Every medal in the Taekwondo Championship in Albania "brings honor." A gold medal in the rhythm gymnastic group hoop competition puts it on the world map, the European RSX Surfboards Championship lifts its status among the nations. A former Israeli representing Luxembourg at this year's Eurovision? "Blue and White Pride."

It's unlikely that there is any other country in whose eyes such minor achievements are considered so important. It's as if someone somewhere in the world feels better about Kazakhstan because one of its athletes once won a figure skating competition. In Israel, this is considered a national event meriting a call from the president.

This childish longing for recognition might be touching, even moving – a young country making its way – if not for Israel's forfeit of its honor in the important issues. Deducting its achievements in sports and Eurovision, Israel is a country without honor. Perhaps it imagines that [Eden Golan](#) performing in Malmö will cover up what is happening in Khan Yunis. But, of course, this is a false hope.

It's hard to believe that a country so anxious over its honor acts like it doesn't care about its international standing. The [war in the Gaza Strip](#) has brought Israel's status to an unprecedented low, but Israel has closed its eyes and mind yet again in a childish way, hoping that if it ignores the reality it can ignore the disgrace. It does nothing to improve its standing and dignity and regain a little pride.

It's hard to think of other countries whose conduct has brought it to The Hague twice in the space of a few weeks on the charge of genocide, and for deliberations about what is clearly an illegal occupation. And Israel? It thinks the spit in its face is rain. It blames the damned judge, antisemitism, the world's hypocrisy and wickedness. It will take no part in challenging the accusations against it. They aren't even a matter of interest. All the world's important television networks broadcast the court sessions in [The Hague this week](#), while only Israel ignored it. Not interesting, not important. If we close our eyes, they won't see us. If we ignore The Hague, The Hague will go away.

But The Hague lives and breathes, and its proceedings should have caused great embarrassment and shame for Israel. After the world saw Gaza, saw and cringed – there is no human being who does not react like that – the The Hague hearings followed. Incisive, grounded and serious about the

charge of genocide, and even more so about the occupation. But Israel ignores it.

[Israel will invade Rafah](#), even if it means that its standing in the world's eyes falls further. It won't participate in The Hague's deliberations on the occupation. This will only show it has no line of defense. Israel has given up the remnants of its dignity. It doesn't care about being an ostracized, marginalized country (if the whole world is against us, it doesn't matter how we behave) as long as it doesn't result in any practical measures being taken against it.

But beyond the [U.S. weapons airlift](#), the UN Security Council veto and the absence of sanctions so far, the country, just like a person, has an important asset in its good name. Israel gave that up. Perhaps it has despaired of the world, maybe it has discovered that it can get along without its good name. This is certainly not among the factors it considers before and after every war.

It was not too many years ago that the same world was in love with the State of Israel, when it acted as a member of the family of nations. The world may be cynical and only love power, as Israel tells itself, but there is also justice, international law and moral considerations, civil society and public opinion, and they are important - at least as much as the "honorable" third place in Eurovision 2023.

**Gideon Levy**

---

---

**P.S.**

• Haaretz. Feb 22, 2024 12:37 am IST:  
<https://www.haaretz.com/opinion/2024-02-22/ty-article-opinion/.premium/israel-is-blaming-everyone-but-itself-for-its-own-disgrace/0000018d-ccc5-d081-a39d-ece7eaa00000>