

# Opinion | Israel and Gaza, a Few Years From Now

Tuesday 23 January 2024, by [HASS Amira](#) (Date first published: 22 January 2024).

*Destruction caused by Israeli airstrikes in the Gaza Strip, this week.Credit: Adel Hana/AP*

A few years from now, a new father will hug his baby, his first son, and all of a sudden he will be rocked by a memory: a father carrying a baby in his hands, beside him a woman with her hair covered with a hijab and two or three children, all walking south with hundreds of others among shards of asphalt, piles of sand, blurred by the dust being kicked up as they march. Smoke rises from a distance, a drone hums relentlessly above, bombs explode one after the other.

The new father will remember how he – a soldier at the end of his compulsory service – called out over a loudspeaker to order that father (“You, in the green shirt, with the child”) to walk toward the soldiers behind the mounds of earth, standing alongside tanks. Through the clouds of dust, he sees the father handing over his baby to the woman, and with his arms raised in the air, approaching the soldiers.

[It’s a silent movie.](#) If they said something to each other, the new father who was a soldier back then couldn’t hear it. Perhaps at that moment of recollection he will tighten his embrace of his first son. Or perhaps, slightly alarmed, he will hurriedly place his son in the stroller and drink a glass of water as he wipes away the beads of sweat that suddenly dot his forehead. Or maybe he’ll just smile and say to himself: We showed those sons of bitches what it means to slaughter us like sheep. And he’ll kiss his son’s forehead.

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***‘We fell into Hamas’ trap, tens of thousands of people left the country, and now we have a severe shortage of medical and high-tech personnel.***

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*Israeli soldiers on the border with Gaza, last week.Credit: Maya Alleruzzo/AP*

Three or four years from now, a military correspondent will receive classified materials. At an editorial meeting, they’ll wonder if their competitors also received the same documents, and what the military censor will allow them to publish: For the past two and a half years, the military advocate general has been investigating about a dozen cases of point-blank executions of civilians in their homes, after they were separated from their wives and children, and further cases where women were shot at close range as they walked amid the rubble. Some of the names of the suspects who allegedly violated the rules of engagement are particularly embarrassing. The son of someone

famous, an officer who was trumpeted by the media.

[The advocate general](#) has not yet decided whether to file indictments. The identity of some of those killed is also an embarrassment for Israel: One is a British citizen and the United Kingdom has asked for clarification; another is a well-known anti-Hamas senior member of Fatah whom the CIA had pinned their hopes on. A senior editor will recall that there were reports in the Palestinian and Arab media at the time about such executions, but it was impossible to verify them – what else could one expect from the mobilized media, and who could believe the director of a Hamas-run public hospital?

A few years from now, the veterans anti-occupation group Breaking the Silence will map all the former soldiers who came to testify after the war: three young people suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, four reservists [who fought in Jabalya](#), two conscripts stationed at the detention center at the Sde Teiman base, and one female soldier from the IDF Spokesperson's Unit. There are no pilots or drone operators on the list.

Three years from now, activists will erect a monument in memory of the families who were wiped out in the bombings during the war (it will be a four-figure number). The names of the families and all those killed will be etched on a large rock that [will be placed in the dead of night in Drancy](#), a suburb of Paris where the Nazis rounded up Jews before sending them to the death camps.

The monument will be unveiled by one of the survivors of the bombings. The Jewish community will protest "antisemitism and Holocaust denial," and municipal employees will be sent to smash the rock. Or alternatively, the mayor will attend the unveiling ceremony and kiss the survivor, and the Jewish community will shout, "A collaborator, just like the Vichy."

Two years from now, USAID will start inviting bids for a contractor to remove the debris from Gaza and recycle it. The winning bid will be from a company jointly owned by the Egyptian intelligence apparatus, former senior officials at the Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories and a Palestinian contractor from Hebron.

Four years from now, a special committee composed of representatives of the Quartet, Israel, Jordan and Egypt will complete the specification for the reconstruction of Gaza. Until work begins, the Pleasant Travel company from Petah Tikva will win the bidding process to supply 280,000 rainproof tents of various sizes to the remaining residents, and the Empty Out company from Raanana will win the bidding for installing mobile toilets.

USAID will still be drafting the bidding process for the design and reconstruction of the entire sewage and water infrastructure that was completely destroyed in the war. It will also review a proposal by Holy Land Enterprises, Ltd. to create real-size plaster models of all the historical buildings and archaeological sites that the Israel Air Force destroyed in the bombings.

Six years from now, Hamas will win the majority of votes for the Palestinian National Council of the Palestine Liberation Organization in an election held in the Palestinian diaspora and a secret election in their West Bank self-rule enclaves.

Seven years from now, a former senior defense official will say: "We shouldn't have been tempted to launch this war. We fell into Hamas' trap, tens of thousands of people left the country, and now we have a severe shortage of medical and high-tech personnel."

Asked by an interviewer from an international TV station if that isn't what former senior officers always say once they're no longer in the system, he'll shrug. The security official holding his former job will condemn his remarks, and the Knesset will expedite the passage of a law to seize the pensions of former officials who speak out against the policies of the governments they had served.

**Amira Hass**

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**P.S.**

- Haaretz. Jan 22, 2024:  
<https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-01-22/ty-article/.premium/israel-and-gaza-a-few-years-from-now/0000018d-3087-db77-ad9f-ffb726a00000>