

Israel's Mainstream Brought Us to The Hague, Not Its Lunatic Fringes

Sunday 28 January 2024, by [LEVY Gideon](#) (Date first published: 21 January 2024).

Isaac Herzog, Yoav Gallant, Israel Katz: Israel's president, defense minister and foreign minister. The president of the International Court of Justice in The Hague, Joan Donoghue, chose to cite all three of them as evidence of suspicion of incitement to genocide in Israel.

The judge did not cite the [far-right fringes](#), neither Itamar Ben-Gvir nor Eyal Golan; neither retired generals Giora Eiland (let epidemics spread in Gaza) nor Yair Golan, the man of peace and diagnostician of processes (let Gaza starve).

The third of the provisional measures issued by the court Friday, signed by former Israeli Supreme Court President Aharon Barak, [Israel's ad hoc judge in the case](#), orders Israel to take all measures within in its power to prevent and punish direct and public incitement to genocide of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

It would appear that Israel must now investigate, and possibly punish, its president and two most important cabinet ministers, and they should have been summoned by the police as early as Sunday morning. Israel will not do this, of course, but it is impossible to ignore the suspicions raised by the court regarding the very heart of Israel.

[The ICJ ruling](#) is a masterpiece of caution and moderation. Only in Israel, which deceives itself and denies to distraction, can one "breathe a sigh of relief" and even "celebrate" in its wake. A state that is on trial for genocide in the court of the United Nations should be ashamed of itself and not celebrate anything.

A state whose president and senior ministers are suspected of inciting genocide should wear sackcloth, not marvel at its own great imaginary accomplishment. Every Israeli should have squirmed in their seat Friday from the mere fact of the trial, and felt a deep sense of shame and humiliation upon hearing the explanations for the ruling.

An Israeli tank takes position at the western entrance of Khan Yunis' refugee camp as Palestinians flee with a few belongings to safer areas further south in the southern Gaza Strip, on Thursday. Credit: AFP

There may be Israelis who heard for the first time what their country has done and continues to do in Gaza in this war. This time, not even its [propagandist media](#) - which had protected them until now with infinite dedication, showing them nothing - could rush to their aid.

It is a little more difficult to accuse this court of antisemitism now, after it did not order Israel to stop the war. This did not bother the Channel 13 News political correspondent.

Moriah Asraf Wolberg, wearing a necklace with a pendant in the shape of Israel including the West Bank, did not concede to the antisemites of The Hague; she continued to recite the mantra that the court is hypocritical, and the world is hypocritical and Israel is waging the most just and moral war in the world. Anyone who wants to believe this even after the order of the court in The Hague is welcome to do so; one may believe any fiction.

A house destroyed in a deadly Israeli strike in January 9. The writing reads: "Children remaining under the rubble, Oman, Abdullah and Massa".Credit: Mohammed Salem / Reuters

Above all, however, we must pay attention to the wisdom of the court, which focused on Israel's mainstream, not its fringes. Herzog, a former Labor Party chairman and the most unifying, statesmanlike person in Israel; Gallant, whose dismissal was [physically prevented by the protest of the center-left](#); and Katz, who despite calling Saturday for the prosecution of the head of the UNRWA refugee agency (!), is considered relatively moderate.

They are the main suspects in the incitement to genocide. The incitement to the genocide of the Palestinian people may have been invented by Meir Kahane, but it's already nearly in the public domain.

In post-October 7 Israel, the proper reaction to the punishment of Gaza is: "It is an entire nation out there that is responsible," in the words of the [president who signs shells](#); "I have released all restraints. ... We are fighting human animals," as the defense minister said - when he was head of the IDF Southern Command he was fond of calling for cutting off "the head of the snake" - or: "They will not receive a drop of water or a single battery," as Israel's No. 1 diplomat, Foreign Minister Katz, threatened on October 13, when he was serving as energy minister.

The judges in The Hague diagnosed perfectly what we here refuse to admit: Israel's problem is its mainstream, not its lunatic fringes. It is the mainstream that brought us to The Hague, it is the mainstream that incited to genocide, after Israel convinced itself with unbelievable ease that after October 7 everything is permitted. Fortunately, in The Hague they seem to think differently, very differently.

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P.S.

• Haaretz. Jan 21, 2024 12:38 am IST:
<https://www.haaretz.com/opinion/2024-01-28/ty-article-opinion/.premium/israels-mainstream-brought-us-to-the-hague-not-its-lunatic-fringes/0000018d-4c67-d561-a5bd-6defcc0e0000>