



# PM must choose global isolation or end to the war

Gulf states pushing Trump for deal that halts fighting; Qatar: No advances for weeks

Analysis **Chaim Levinson**

In the next day or two U.S. President Donald Trump and his right hand man Steve Witkoff will have to make a strategic decision: whether to confront Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu openly and publicly and force on him a cease-fire and an end to the war, or to give in and let Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich carry out his plan to destroy Gaza. The diplomatic cauldron is on the verge of boiling over, and it looks as though there's no more time.

As of Tuesday afternoon, the negotiations in Doha have failed, the positions of either side remain unchanged. Hamas wants a deal to release all the hostages in exchange for prisoners, Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and an end to the war. Israel, as Netanyahu said to the camera to torpedo negotiations, wants to receive several hostages now, and to continue the war afterwards. Because Hamas isn't stupid, it has no interest in Netanyahu's partial, obvious, transparent and predictable plan.

During the negotiations in Doha, there was a momentary illusion that there was a change, after the ne-

gotiating team agreed to discuss the end of the war. But these were unproductive fruitless words, and the two sides are entrenching themselves in their positions. Israel has a series of demands that it's positing as a precondition, and is unwilling to discuss their nuances: demilitarizing Gaza and exiling the Hamas

**Report: Matan Zangauker is ill**  
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leaders. How many? Where? What's the definition of demilitarization? What are the security mechanisms?

They're unwilling to discuss these things. Only later on. The hostages of course don't interest Netanyahu very much. As they said this week on the propaganda channel (the pro-government Channel 14), this is a private tragedy of 20 people, not a national issue. Not something dramatic like a demonstration outside a beauty salon. (In March, 2023, Netanyahu's wife railed at protesters who

demonstrated outside a Tel Aviv salon where she was getting her hair done).

The Qatari intermediaries, who are very interested in an end to the war, are pressuring Hamas to agree to a partial deal, in exchange for a public American declaration by the U.S. president that this is a stage on the way to ending the war. Hamas disagrees, and is demanding a written American promise to Qatar with punitive measures against Israel if it violates this promise.

As of this moment, the Americans don't want to give Qatar such a document, only an oral promise. On Tuesday at a gathering of the Economic Forum in Doha with the participation of Bloomberg, Qatari Prime Minister Mohammed Al Thani accused Israel of making the negotiations difficult for political reasons.

Whether or not the Israeli delegation returns, ultimately this is an American decision. The White House has changed its tune regarding Israel in the past month. Trump has had enough with the war, which is delaying his grandiose Gulf plans and his chances of receiving the Nobel Peace Prize.

In talks with the hostages' families, in briefings to the

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Mourners at the funeral for Yosef Yehuda Chirak on Tuesday.

*Oren Ben Hakon*

## Soldier killed by friendly fire; 87 Gazans killed; aid trucks not reaching destinations

Bar Peleg

Sgt. Yosef Yehuda Chirak, 22, was killed in the northern Gaza Strip on Monday. A probe by the Israel Defense Forces determined that he was shot by soldiers in a unit that was securing the area while he and other soldiers were inspecting a tunnel shaft. Chirak was the first IDF soldier to be killed since the IDF expanded ground

operations in Gaza late last week. He was buried on Tuesday on Mount Herzl in Jerusalem.

The Hamas-run Health Ministry said that 87 Gazans were killed and 290 were hospitalized in the past 24 hours.

Also Tuesday, the IDF reported that 93 United Nations trucks carrying humanitarian aid entered Gaza. However, none reached their destination due to traffic,

logistics and security problems, the UN said in its daily briefing. The trucks, mainly carrying baby food, are stuck on the Palestinian side of the Kerem Shalom crossing. Sources in aid organizations in the Strip told Haaretz that despite the Gaza crossings opening on Tuesday for aid entry, the humanitarian situation is still critical.

"Since the crossing opened, a maximum of 30

trucks have entered per day – only five percent of the daily average that entered in the past, which was about 600 trucks per day during the truces," one of the activists said. Most of the trucks include only flour and canned goods, without fruit, vegetables, meat or other basic products. "This is a diet that keeps people on the brink of starvation – nothing more," he said.

Chirak, 22, from the West Bank settlement of Harasha, served in the 401st Armored Brigade's 601st Combat Engineering Battalion.

He is survived by his parents, three sisters and his widow, Emuna, whom he married seven months ago.

Chirak was raised in the City of David, a settlement in East Jerusalem's Silwan

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## U.K. says it will pause free trade talks with Israel

**Liza Rozovsky,**  
**Hagar Shezaf and Reuters**

The U.K. has decided to freeze negotiations for a free trade agreement with Israel on Tuesday, and sanction several key Israeli settlers "supporting violence against Palestinian communities in the West Bank", amid Israel's expansion of operations in Gaza. The U.K.

said that the offensive was hurting the countries' relationship. Israel condemned the move.

"While the British government remains committed to the existing trade agreement," the British statement read in Hebrew, "it is not possible to move forward with discussions on a new and upgraded trade agreement with the [Prime

Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu government, which is promoting particularly bad policies in the West Bank and Gaza."

Israel responded by saying that the trade negotiations were not supported by the entire British government beforehand anyway, and added that a new deal would benefit both countries.

"If, due to anti-Israel obsession and domestic political considerations, the British government is willing to harm the British economy – that is its own prerogative," the Israeli Foreign Ministry statement read.

"The British Mandate ended exactly 77 years ago. External pressure will not divert Israel from its path in defending its existence and

security against enemies who seek its destruction," the statement added.

Israel's ambassador to the U.K., Tzipi Hotovely, was summoned to the British Foreign Office following the expanding operation.

Moreover, the U.K. announced it would impose sanctions on multiple prominent West Bank figures, including veteran settler ac-

tivist Daniella Weiss, head of the Nachala movement.

Sanctions will also be imposed on Eliav Libi, a member of the Farms' Union leadership, and on Zohar Sabah, a settler and farm owner in the Jordan Valley, for involvement in threatening, perpetrating, permitting and supporting

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A fake arrest warrant for PM in Paris. *Geoffroy Van Der Hasselt/AFP*

### U.S. Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee in interview

## 'I'm asking if there must be a separate Palestinian state'



Mike Huckabee at the U.S. embassy in Jerusalem.

*Olivier Fitoussi*

**Liza Rozovsky**

U.S. Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee has insisted in recent interviews that there are no rifts or disagreements between the White House and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government. Huckabee says that while the United States is acting based on its own national

interests, it will not forget Israel.

In an interview with Haaretz, he was ambivalent about the future establishment of a Palestinian state, said that he is convinced that Turkey does not want Syria to pose any threat to Israel and refused to say if Qatar will be a donor to the organization that will provide hu-

manitarian aid to Gaza.

Many, including Israeli officials, interpreted Vice President JD Vance's cancellation of his visit to Israel as a result of the failure of the Gaza cease-fire negotiations, leaving him with nothing to "celebrate" here.

"Getting Edan Alexander out was a success. We want to get all the hostages out – that

would be an even bigger success. But the reason they're not out yet isn't because of President Trump or because of the Israeli government. The reason is Hamas."

*In my understanding, Hamas is saying it's willing to discuss the terms of surrender or non-surrender, but only if it receives an explicit guarantee that Israel will fully withdraw from Gaza, that there'll be no reoccupation of the Strip and that the fighting will end.*

"I can't speak to the details of what's being discussed with Hamas, and I'm not sure I'd trust anything they say. They massacred civilians – not just murdered them but mutilated their bodies and subjected them to unspeakable humiliation. For them now to pretend they're engaged in trustworthy negotiations requires an extraordinary leap of faith."

Referring to the chances of securing a cease-fire and the return of the hostages, he adds, "There have been cease-fires, but they haven't led to the release of all the hostages. I'm not going to compare the actions of the

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*Christopher Michel*

**haaretz.com**

### Opposition MK's statement sparks backlash:

## Israel risks pariah status, 'sane state doesn't kill babies as hobby'

**Noa Shpigel and Jonathan Lis**

Opposition party leader Yair Golan of The Democrats warned that Israel's conduct in Gaza risks putting it on a path to become a "pariah state," and called for replacing Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's "vengeful, unintelligent, and immoral" government. His comments drew opposition from government ministers and opposition leaders.

In an interview with Kan public radio, Golan said Israel was "on the path to becoming a pariah state, like South Africa once was, if it does not return to acting like a sane country." He added that a "sane state does not wage war against civilians, does not kill babies as a hobby, and does not set goals for itself like the expulsion of a population."

"I strongly condemn Yair Golan's wild incitement against our heroic soldiers and against the State of Israel," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in a statement.

"The IDF is the most moral army in the world, and our soldiers are fighting a battle for our very existence."



**Yair Golan**

*Itai Ron*

**Political arrests**

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Following the wave of public criticism, Golan clarified that the intent behind his words "was clear: The war is the realization of fantasies of [Finance Minister Bezalel] Smotrich and [National Security Minister Itamar] Ben-Gvir. And if we allow these fantasies to become real, we'll become a pariah state."

The Democrats' leader added that while "the IDF is moral and the people are honest, the government is crooked. The war [in Gaza] needs to end, the hostages

returned and Israel rehabilitated."

The Democrats chair also criticized the government's conduct, saying it is "full of vengeful, unintelligent, and immoral individuals who lack the ability to run a country in a time of emergency – people who have nothing whatsoever to do with Judaism." Golan called for the government to be replaced "as soon as possible, so that the war can come to an end."

According to Netanyahu, Israel is "waging a multi-front war and leading complex diplomatic efforts to free our hostages and defeat Hamas," adding that "Golan and his friends on the radical left are echoing the most despicable antisemitic blood libels against IDF soldiers and the State of Israel."

IDF Chief of Staff Eyal Zamir issued an official condemnation of Golan's comments, saying any such comment "casts doubt on the ethicality of the IDF's actions and the morality of its fighters."

Israeli troops "operate against our enemies, out of loyalty to the IDF's values,

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