



‘Super Sparta’: PM admits Israel faces isolation, calls for self-reliance

Jonathan Lis
and TheMarker

Israel is currently in a “type of isolation,” Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu admitted on Monday, adding that nearly two years into its war in Gaza, the country must adapt.

Speaking at the “Fifty States – One Israel” economic conference hosted by the Finance Ministry’s department of the accountant general, with the largest delegation of American legislators to ever visit Israel, Netanyahu said Israel needs to adjust to the isolation, including by producing weapons, to lessen its dependence on foreign nations.

In addition to its military gains – particularly regarding threats from Iran – Netanyahu warned that new challenges are emerging. “Even when you bring down a major power, other forces rise to the surface. From here I’m going to the Foreign Ministry; I won’t name names,” he said. “Think among yourselves about the risks. The risks don’t disappear; they only change.”

Netanyahu attributed Israel’s isolation to two main causes. The first was “unlimited immigration to Western European nations by Muslim minorities. They aren’t the majority yet, but [they are] a significant, very vocal and combative minority that bends governments. These things affect leaders. They don’t deny this in private conversations.”

“Second,” he added, “countries like Qatar and China sway public opinion



An Israeli army flare drifting over destroyed buildings in the northern Gaza Strip, as seen from southern Israel, Monday.

Leo Correa/AP

through significant investments in social media. It changes Israel’s international situation; we’ll need to invest huge amounts in this.”

“It’s a type of isolation,” the prime minister said. “Can we get out of this isolation? Yes – I am a devotee

of the free market, but we’ll have to have some signs of an autarky,” he said, referring to a self-sufficient economy.

Netanyahu added that Israel will have to act like “Sparta,” famous for its wars with ancient Athens: “We’ll need to develop

weapons industries here. We’re going to be Athens and super Sparta. Over the next few years, we’ll have no other choice. We’ll have to defend ourselves and know how to attack our enemies.”

“We will not be able to approve these enormous proj-

ects,” he added. “We need to cut back the bureaucracy in a draconian fashion. I know this matter will, as usual, meet rejection. There will be rejection by the legal sides. Life is more important than the law. We have no time. We need to act very quickly because the world

is moving with tremendous speed. We need much more flexibility.”

Later, Netanyahu attempted to clarify his remarks while speaking with U.S. lawmakers at the Foreign Ministry. He said that

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IDF weighs ground push into Gaza City; residents still there

Yaniv Kubovich
and Haaretz

Military officials are considering a ground operation in Gaza City in the near future, even though only about a quarter of residents are believed to have fled, while senior defense officials warn that seizing the city would not bring about Hamas’ defeat.

The military said about 300,000 residents have fled southward, as it intensifies steps to encourage evacuation and the Israel Air Force continues to carry out daily strikes on high-rise buildings in the city. The Israel Defense Forces expects most of those still in Gaza City to leave once the ground operation begins.

In an effort to reduce international criticism and preserve American legitimacy to continue the fighting, the office of the Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) issued an update on Sunday regarding the humanitarian situation in Gaza. The agency said reconstruction work has begun on the European Hospital in Khan Yunis, and thousands of tons of medical equipment and medications have been brought into the southern Strip in recent weeks.

The IDF Spokesperson’s Unit said that two more field hospitals are slated for the southern Strip in the coming weeks, and that fuel is being brought in regularly for operating essential systems.

It was also reported that an additional water pipeline from Egypt to the humanitarian zone in al-Mawasi has been activated, and that work is continuing to repair



Eyal Zamir Gil Eliahu

two more water lines. In addition, another power line has been connected to the water desalination facilities. The IDF added that shelters are being established in the southern Strip, under Egyptian auspices, and that over 14,000 family tents and tarpaulins have been brought in. The military said tens of thousands of additional tents purchased by aid organizations and donor countries are slated for delivery to the area in the next two weeks.

COGAT said 300 to 400 aid trucks have been entering southern Gaza each day, with about 80 percent of them carrying food. The agency added that three distribution centers are operating and two more are under construction.

Meanwhile, the Air Force intensified its strikes on Sunday, focusing on the southwestern part of Gaza City. According to reports from the Strip, dozens of families were forced to leave their homes and schools that they had been using as shelters near Al-Quds Hospital in the Tal al-Hawa neighborhood after the army ordered them to evacuate due to imminent attacks.

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Mahmoud Abbas, left, with Qatar’s deputy prime minister. AFP

Qatar’s emir calls Israeli strike ‘state terrorism’

Jack Khoury, Ben
Samuels and Reuters

Qatar’s Emir Tamim Al Thani blamed Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for trying to thwart hostage deal negotiations following Israel’s attack on Hamas leaders in the capital Doha last week.

Israeli efforts in negotiations amounted to “means

of camouflage and prolongation of the war,” he said at an emergency summit in Doha of foreign ministers from Arab and Muslim countries. “[Netanyahu] dreams of turning the Arab world into an Israeli sphere of influence – and this is a dangerous illusion.”

Gulf leaders said on Monday that the Gulf Cooperation Council’s joint defence body will meet in Doha following the strike. In a statement, the leaders called for measures to activate the bloc’s “joint defence mechanism,” without providing further details.

According to the GCC treaty – a political union that includes Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates – any attack on one of the GCC countries is considered a threat to all member states.

Al Thani on Sunday said

that “What happened can only be described as state terrorism.”

Reuters reported on Sunday that Israel’s strike, as well as other actions it has taken, threaten efforts to normalize ties with Arab nations, according to an updated draft resolution from

the Arab-Islamic summit. “Reaffirm that the brutal Israeli attack on Qatar and the continuation of Israel’s hostile acts including genocide, ethnic cleansing, starvation, siege, and colonizing activities and expansion policies threatens prospects of peace and coexistence in the region and threatens

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Several other suspects detained

Police raid office of May Golan over ‘misuse of nonprofit funds’

Josh Breiner
and Chen Maanit

Police raided the office of Social Equality Minister May Golan on Monday and summoned her for questioning in connection with an investigation into alleged fraudulent employment and the misuse of public funds for private purposes through nonprofit foundations.

An attorney close to the minister was also arrested on Monday morning, and police said they would seek to extend his detention following questioning at the police’s Lahav 443 investigative unit.

Officers discovered a drug laboratory in the home of another one of Golan’s close associates.

Golan told police on Monday morning that she would agree to come in for questioning on Monday afternoon. However, in a public statement in the afternoon, she threatened not to cooperate unless the police release all her associates.

“I grew up with drug addicts and prostitutes,” she wrote. “I am not moved by the threats of a former attorney general with a con-

flict of interest who is inviting me for questioning because she cannot tolerate my criticism of her and her vile activities against the Israeli government and the Israeli people.”

Several additional suspects were also detained in their homes and taken in for questioning. According to a police source, one of them is a close associate of National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir and the head of a nongovernmental organization.

The investigation into Golan’s conduct was launched following a report that aired earlier this year on Channel 12 News, which alleged she had misused funds from a nonprofit she founded and mistreated staff members in her office.

According to the report, the nonprofit founded by Golan to fight against the presence of asylum seekers in south Tel Aviv, named Hebrew City, received substantial donations that were never spent on their intended purposes.

Golan allegedly received a monthly salary of thousands of shekels from the organization, a payment that is considered illegal

due to her sitting on its board.

The report also claimed that Golan’s close associates arranged government jobs for their relatives. One of the associates, attorney Ehud Gabay, was also listed as a board member of Hebrew City and received payment from the Knesset and the organization for services that included legal counsel ahead of a lawsuit that was never filed.

Golan dismissed the allegations, calling the report false and claiming that the recordings featured in it were “created by AI.”

In July, Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara and State Prosecutor Amit Aisman ordered an investigation of the minister on suspicions of bribery, fraud, breach of trust and submitting a false affidavit.

Several individuals, including senior figures close to the minister, have already testified in the case. However, since Golan, as a sitting Knesset member, holds parliamentary immunity and cannot be arrested, police must coordinate the timing of the interrogation with her.

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Olivier Fitoussi

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Haaretz Toronto confab explores Palestinian sovereignty after war

Haaretz

If Israel moves ahead with its plans to conquer Gaza City, the consequences would be dire, prominent Israeli opposition figures and experts warned on Sunday at a special Haaretz conference held in Toronto.

The speakers urged Canadian and other Western leaders to use their clout to bring an immediate end to the war and lay the groundwork for Palestinian sovereignty.

Demanding an immediate end to “this war of annihilation,” Arab Israeli lawmaker Ayman Odeh, leader of the Hadash party, told conference participants: “Enough of war. Enough of bloodshed. Enough of destruction. Enough of atrocities. Because a mother from Rafah and a mother from Nir Oz cry out the same cry: Enough! This is what is needed now, and this is what the majority of the people demand: Stop the war of destruction in Gaza. Bring a comprehensive deal that will save lives.”

The full-day conference, titled “Israel, Gaza, and What Comes Next,” was jointly sponsored by the New Israel Fund of Canada and JSpaceCanada, both progressive Jewish organizations critical of the Israeli



Yair Golan at the Haaretz conference in Toronto.

Anat Mazor

government. The speakers included current and former Israeli and Canadian politicians, journalists, academics and Israeli and Palestinian peace advocates.

The recognition of a Palestinian state, Odeh told the crowd, was not a “prize,” but rather a “basic right.”

Dan Meridor, a former justice minister who spent most of his political career in Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s Likud party,

charged that the government’s mishandling of the war in Gaza has jeopardized Israel’s international standing and moral authority.

“Wars cannot take long. You need to understand, when you decide to go to war, you must limit the time, even if you are right,” he said. “If you are too strong, you become a villain. If you are too weak, you become the underdog.”

To preserve Israel’s demo-

cratic and Jewish character, Meridor said, a two-state-solution was essential. “There is no Jewish state without a Palestinian state,” he said.

Netanyahu’s goals

Noting that Israel Defense Forces Chief of Staff Eyal Zamir had opposed the government plan to conquer Gaza City, calling it a “death

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