עש"ק פרשת לך לך
13 Cheshvan 5787
October 23, 2026
Issue number 1638

Jerusalem 5:18
Toronto 6:03

ISRAEL NEWS

A collection of the week's news from Israel

From the Bet El Twinning / Israel Action Committee of Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation

Commentary…

'Lech Lecha': Celebrating 'Olim' and their Communities in Israel
By Rabbi Yossi Goldin

Communities around the world will likely discuss aliyah this Shabbat upon reading the story of Abraham's journey. But what about communities in Israel? Is aliyah something worth celebrating?

In the Torah portion Lech Lecha, Jews read the words that began our Jewish people's relationship with this land: Lech lecha me'artzecha u'mimoladetecha u'mibeit avicha, el ha'aretz asher areka—"Go forth from your land, from your birthplace and from your father's house, to the land that I will show you."

Abraham and Sarah were the very first olim. They left behind everything familiar—language, culture, the comfort of a known world—for a land they had never seen on the strength of a promise. Thousands of years later, that same journey is being made by those arriving at Ben-Gurion International Airport almost every week.

And yet, although aliyah sits at the heart of the Zionist story, it is rarely something we stop to celebrate together. That is what Young Israel is setting out to change by launching Shabbat Aliyah timed to Shabbat Lech Lecha.

Most olim mark their anniversary quietly. There is the "Aliyahversary" Facebook post, a family dinner, perhaps a moment of reflection on how far the family has come. These are meaningful moments, but they are personal. The community around them often doesn't notice or pay attention.

Aliyah, though, is not only a personal milestone. It is also a great communal achievement, and it deserves communal recognition. Behind every new immigrant stands a real measure of idealism and sacrifice: careers rebuilt from scratch, parents and grandparents left behind, a new language learned, children navigating a new school system, a new army and a new culture.

This matters most for our children. Children who made aliyah with their parents often didn't choose the journey, yet they carry much of its weight. When a child sees their community recognize that what their family did was brave and important, it reframes their personal story. Aliyah becomes not just something that happened to them, but something to be proud of.

Shabbat Aliyah speaks to two kinds of communities in Israel in two different ways.

In communities made up largely of olim, it is a chance to look around the room and recognize a shared journey. Everyone there knows what the first year was like. Pausing together to acknowledge the challenges builds the kind of solidarity that carries people through the harder times.

In communities that are mostly Israeli-born, Shabbat Aliyah is an invitation to see others in their midst. To appreciate what it took for them to move to Israel and to recognize what they bring with them—to synagogues, neighborhoods and the economy.

New immigrants are not guests in Israel. They are among its builders, and they deserve to hear that from their neighbors.

Our Torah portion is honest about the costs of relocation. No sooner does Abraham arrive than there is famine in the land. The Promised Land does not always greet its newcomers gently. That is exactly why community recognition matters: the challenges are real, and so is the achievement of persevering through them.

For the past three years, Young Israel in Israel and World Mizrachi have been building the Mizrachi-Young Israel Shuls Network: a growing network of olim communities across Israel. The idea is simple. Communities that cater to this sector of the population are often dealing with many of the same challenges, and their rabbis and lay leaders have a great deal to learn from one another.

Our network gives them a way to connect, to support each other and to collaborate.

Shabbat Aliyah is a natural outgrowth of that work with olim communities, creating an opportunity for shared celebration. 42 communities—newer and older, large and small, from the north to the south—will mark the same Shabbat in the same spirit. Some have organized communal meals or Kiddushim; most will invite newcomers to speak about their experiences; some have guest speakers who are themselves olim; and many are using the resources we have provided to spark conversations about aliyah.

God's promise to Abraham ends with a remarkable line: V'nivrechu vecha kol mishpechot ha'adama—"And through you, all the families of the earth will be blessed." Abraham's journey was never only about him. His arrival became a source of blessing for everyone around him.

That is the story of aliyah in our times as well. Each family that comes home strengthens the country, the community and the Jewish people as a whole. On Shabbat Lech Lecha, as we read of the first journey to this land, we invite communities across Israel to stop, look around, and say thank you to those who have followed in Abraham and Sarah's footsteps. (JNS Oct 21)

The Israel Genocide Lie: Deception by Design
By Sharon Hart-Green

Mass Murder. Rape. Sexual mutilation. Babies burned alive. These were some of the barbaric acts perpetrated by Hamas terrorists when they invaded Israel from Gaza on Oct. 7, 2023. Yet it is the victims of this attack, the Israelis, who are being accused of committing genocide. How can this be? The answer is quite simple. It is part of a strategic cover-up by Hamas to divert attention away from their genocidal crimes.

Much of the media and world institutions have been complicit in spreading this lie about Israel, including the latest recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, Navi Pillay, who was head of a United Nations commission that accused Israel of genocide. Thankfully, some media outlets have called out the sham of awarding a "peace" prize to someone endorsing this modern-day blood libel. The Free Press branded it: "The Death of the Nobel Peace Prize."

Lies about Israel have been circulating for years, especially on college campuses, including at the University of Toronto where I taught for over 20 years. Now, such propaganda is becoming increasingly entrenched.

For example, the University of Toronto and Princeton University both hosted conferences called "The Anti-Zionist Idea" in 2024 and 2025. On the surface, the topic sounds innocuous. Were these conferences dedicated to a scholarly examination of the rise of anti-Zionism? Were pro-Zionist perspectives represented? I clicked on the conference website to check out the details. When I encountered the phrase "the ongoing genocide in Gaza," I realized that these conferences were more of the same: an attempt to use the lie about genocide to demonize Israel and the Jews, though legitimized by being held in "respectable" academic venues.

Let us set the record straight. The charge that Israel is committing genocide has no basis in fact. Just read the conclusions reached by the urban warfare specialist John Spencer, who has studied the war in Gaza at length.

After Oct. 7, Israel attacked Gaza to uproot the terrorist infrastructure and bring home those brutally kidnapped by Hamas. Spencer determined that there is no evidence of genocidal intent on the part of Israel, nor are there indications of a campaign of extermination against the people of Gaza. Quite the contrary: Israel provided massive truckloads of food to Gaza, sent polio vaccines to administer to Gazan children, and warned the population through leaflets and phone calls to move into safe zones to avoid civilian casualties. In fact, the figures show that the Gazan population had actually grown in size since the war began. Nevertheless, like most

conspiracy theories, the genocide charge continues to spread.

So why does this falsehood still have legs? Is it simply a resurgence of antisemitism? Is it a political tool utilized to sow discord? Or is it an attempt to undermine Israel's legitimacy as a sovereign nation?

All of these explanations contain some truth. But they miss something fundamental: The lies about Israel are part of a strategic cover-up, not of crimes committed by Israel but against it.

In fact, the accusation that Israel has committed genocide is not only a lie to conceal the terrorists' crimes — it is also a crucial part of a broader campaign to shift attention away from the stated desire of terrorist groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah to destroy Israel and replace it with an Islamist state.

Let us look at the mechanics of this deception. A key element of this cover-up is inversion: accusations directed at Israel mirror the very acts or intentions of those making the accusations. Israelis are described as "genocide" perpetrators and "baby killers," while the deliberate murder of Israeli civilians, including children, by Islamic terrorists is minimized, contextualized, or pushed out of the discussion altogether.

When Hamas terrorists invaded Israel on Oct. 7, they murdered civilians on a massive scale. This included the barbaric killing of children and babies, at times decapitating them or burning them alive in front of the children's own parents. How do we know this? Because the terrorists filmed it on their body cameras and other devices to show the world. The video clips reveal that they were proud of their savagery, often laughing and celebrating as they raped and murdered. That is, until they realized that the world might be squeamish about hearing about these atrocities and would turn against them.

So, within hours of the Oct. 7 massacre, they launched a propaganda campaign to cover up their crimes. The storyline was effectively turned on its head: Israel and the victims of the October 7 attack were immediately recast as the primary perpetrators of violence, even though the Israeli army did not enter Gaza for weeks after Oct. 7.

How does such a false narrative gain traction? Through repetition.

If you pay attention to how this type of propaganda works, you will see that repetition is crucial. The same words, slogans, and accusations are repeated across different countries and institutions until they become familiar and, eventually, accepted as self-evident. Thus, if you listen closely, you will hear the same slogans chanted at university demonstrations in Berkeley and Oxford, at protests outside synagogues in New York and Paris, and at marches through Jewish neighborhoods in Toronto and Amsterdam. Media outlets, educational institutions, elected officials, and unions pick up the slogans and use them for their own purposes, whether it be to win votes, curry favor with segments of the population, or raise money.

One of the most prominent slogans is: "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free." Free from what? From Jews, of course. You don't need an advanced degree in Middle Eastern history to know what that means. It is the intent to destroy an entire population. In other words, genocide. Indeed, that is the stated goal, as made explicit in the Hamas Charter. It states: "Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it, just as it obliterated others before it."

This brings us back to the university conferences. What happens when an academic gathering begins with the false assumption that Israel is committing genocide?

If scholars tell an audience that Israel is engaged in genocide and therefore represents a uniquely evil and illegitimate state, the discussion has already moved beyond an examination of evidence. The conclusion has preceded the investigation. It also serves the dual purpose of providing the perfect excuse to exonerate the terrorists and their heinous crimes. Without the genocide lie and other related libels, there would be no grounds for vilifying Israel. The terrorists would stand naked, their evil exposed. And all their justifications and fabrications would come crashing down like a house of cards.

But so long as academics and U.N. bodies continue to spread lies about Israel in order to cover up the Islamists' genocidal intentions toward Israel and the Jews, they are the best helpers the terrorists could ask for. (Washington Examiner Oct 17)

The writer has served as Associate Professor in the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations at the University of Toronto, is the author of Come Back for Me: A Novel. and is a long-time BAYT member

---

How 'Palestine' Conquered France By Brendan O'Neill

I'm old enough to remember when we called it 'conquest' when a mob of masked men stormed a town hall or a parliament building to raise the flag of a foreign nation. I can recall a time when the violent invasion of a nation's high seats of civic power by a faceless swarm draped in the standard of a distant land was considered an act of brazen, treasonous hostility. So why do so many insist on referring to the thuggish usurping of the streets of Paris and beyond by gangs flying the Palestine flag as a 'protest'?

The scenes from France on Saturday were apocalyptic. Even in a nation famous for its street-fighting, the scale of destruction was wild. Across the capital, entire boulevards were reduced to smouldering, ash-choked wastelands of incinerated vehicles, blown-out storefronts and acrid clouds of tear gas. There were running battles between the thugs and the cops, the former armed with jagged chunks of pavement, the latter with truncheons and gas. Even the city's leftie custodians were forced to break script and admit the truth. Socialist mayor Emmanuel Grégoire said vast swathes of Paris had been 'devastated'. His deputy, Lamia El Aaraje, said it was destruction of the like we've 'never seen before'.

It was the sight of the beautiful town hall of Limoges being devoured by fire that really shook France, and the world. A palatial citadel of public life, it was built in 1883 and made a protected monument in 1975. On Saturday, a mob set fire to a cop car outside the town hall, then smashed the hall's windows, clambered in, and set fires with cruel abandon. The flames licked upwards and engulfed the roof, causing it to cave in. The bell tower came crashing down. As many have pointed out, it survived two world wars but it could not survive the unleashed juvenile rage of 'the New France'.

For me, even more disturbing than the mob's desecrations in Limoges was their brutish shoving aside of Marianne in Marseille. Masked gangs stormed into the city hall there. They cried 'It's the revolution!' before hurling a bust of Marianne to the cold, stone floor. Marianne, of course, is the female personification of the French Republic, the proud-busted woman who embodies liberty, equality, fraternity and the rule of reason. It was less violent than the architectural nihilism in Limoges but more telling: we are witnessing nothing short of a mob jihad against the French Republic.

One thing united the Marianne desecrators of Marseille and fire-starters of Limoges and the monument-climbers of Paris – many were proudly draped in the Palestine colours. Young men sported the flag across their backs as they watched that bell tower fall to their fiery, fatuous wrath. It was hung in pride of place in Marseille city hall once Marianne had been unceremoniously dispensed with. It was waved everywhere in Paris. At Place de la Bastille, and at Place de la République, where vast Pally flags fluttered solemnly at the feet of the great monument to Marianne as flumes of grey smoke rose into the autumn air.

Can everyone just stop it with the 'school protests' shit now? Or the drivel about this being a protest over the 'cost of living'? It should be clear to all that we are watching the violent undoing of the French Republic itself. A great society coming apart at the seams. Tragically, the fuse for this anti-republican savagery was lit by the republic itself – by its leaders' wilful throwing open of France's borders to half the world, their supine abandonment of the ideals of assimilation, and their suicidal indulgence of the intifada frenzy that swept France in the wake of the Hamas pogrom of 7 October 2023. The mob might be starting the fires, but the elites gave them the matches.

This is why the omnipresence of the Palestine flag matters – it confirms France is being consumed by the flames of anti-Westernism, by a nihilistic disdain for the very virtues of our civilisation. For that is what the so-called Palestine cause now embodies – not concern for the Palestinian people but contempt for 'the West'. Not a desire for a ceasefire in the Middle East but a longing for fire here at home.

Some of us have argued for a while that the Islamo-left's

hysterical, disproportionate, bigoted and at times demented loathing for the Jewish State is proof that Israel has been made into the whipping boy of modernity, into the scapegoat, the sin-eater, of the West and all its supposed crimes. That the birthplace of the Enlightenment is now being burnt down by mobs draped in the Palestine flag proves this beyond doubt.

As one commentator notes, the 'Palestinian cause' seems to have become 'a symbol of protest against Western institutions, national identities and political establishments', even in situations that 'have nothing to do with Israel or the Palestinians'. It's the great, mad omnicause – a raging engine of grievance that absorbs every local resentment and every anti-Western pathology into a single, holy crusade. The actual geopolitics of the Levant are irrelevant to the Palestinianism that has swept the West, except, of course, that many of these people long for the annihilation of the Jewish State as a proxy for Western sin. What Palestinianism really adds up to is a cult of self-loathing. The keffiyeh is the mask the death of the Enlightenment wears.

This is the intifada coming home. The West's craven failure to hold the moral line after 7 October, its indulgence of the Islamo-left mobs who hailed Hamas and libelled Israel, has started a fire of anti-civilisational hysteria that it will be incredibly difficult to put out. The nation that erodes its borders, tells newcomers their culture is just as valid as ours, fails to assimilate its foreign-origin youths and coaches its own young to feel shame over their national history is a nation that has signed its own death warrant.

Gavin Mortimer at the Spectator made a striking observation. The far-left agitators in France are mostly white, while the looters and cop-fighters 'appear to be of immigrant background'. 'The people seen on television forcing their way into the city halls of Marseille and Lille were mainly white', he said, where the store invaders of Paris and Bordeaux were non-white. This is the New France. The New Europe, in fact. A place where there are youths who have no real roots in society, and youths whose roots have been violently torn up by institutions that have incited them into national self-loathing. Youths who are unassimilated, and youths who are from here but are constantly taught to hate 'here'.

Entitled whites, young Muslim irritants, foreign-born louts, Islamist troublemakers, post-Enlightenment leftists and sanctimonious pricks who hide their hatred for the West behind a love of Palestine – that's France now. Who's next? Germany? Britain? We have so much work to do. (Spiked Oct 19)

The Return of the "Camp of Stability"?

By Colonel (res.) Dr. Eran Lerman

How Houthi Gains Affect Saudi Policy

The key to understanding the recent changes in the Saudi leadership's conduct and outlook, after it had appeared that Riyadh was basing its strategic alignment on its partnership with Turkey and Pakistan under the Mecca Alliance, is the substantial battlefield gains made by the Houthis after Saudi Arabia itself chose to resume fighting on the ground. The Houthis captured another substantial stretch of Yemen's coast and gained effective control of the Bab el-Mandeb Strait. Moreover, they declared that they would bar Saudi ships from passing through the Red Sea. In their contacts with Washington, by contrast, they made clear that they would not attack American—or even Israeli—ships. The United States has sent a clear message that it is unwilling to help the Saudis in their predicament, as the administration continues to focus on keeping all options open regarding Iran. Mohammed bin Salman's dilemma has thus become even more acute.

Turkey and Pakistan should in theory have been able to back Riyadh after its military weakness was once again exposed (despite the quality and quantity of military equipment it has amassed over the years). In practice, however, as the crisis worsened, Riyadh's partners—even if they have declared that they were "activating" the treaty—offered little beyond largely symbolic contributions. Turkey's contribution was, moreover, problematic: it sent to Yemen proxy elements, Syrians with jihadist backgrounds who had hardly distinguished themselves in earlier fighting in Somalia.

The meeting in the UAE thus suggests three conclusions reached by Saudi leaders:

1. The Mecca Alliance has proved to be largely empty of any real content. It offers little beyond declarations, token troop deployments, and Turkey's willingness to "contribute" elements of Syrian jihadist militias to the fighting in Yemen.
2. Saudi Arabia has paid too high a price for its rift with the UAE in recent years; most importantly, the two countries' support for rival forces in Yemen has meant that, instead of uniting against the Houthis, those forces have neutralized one another. Part of the issue has been the personal rift between Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) and UAE President Mohammed bin Zayed (MBZ), once considered a friend and even a "mentor" to the younger Saudi.
3. Israel, despite the kingdom's firm insistence that normalization depend on progress toward a Palestinian state, has much to offer to Saudi Arabia in view of the threats it faces, as demonstrated by Jerusalem's assistance to the UAE, including the deployment of missile-defense systems.

The Other Participants and Their Considerations

Egypt's participation in the meeting in the UAE shows that it maintains close ties with Abu Dhabi (which has invested tens of billions of dollars in Egypt) despite its rapprochement with Turkey in recent years, including some military cooperation. Cairo also continues to cultivate its relationships with Greece and Cyprus and remains mindful of the sensitivities surrounding its peace treaty with Israel. Moreover, the Egyptian regime retains a deep, fundamental hostility toward the Muslim Brotherhood and its supporters.

Saddam Haftar's presence also matters in strategic terms. He is the son of Khalifa Haftar, the ruler of eastern Libya (Cyrenaica), a client of Egypt. Not long ago, Khalifa Haftar was a bitter enemy of the Turks, who intervened militarily against him in 2019. More recently, they have opened channels of dialogue with him as they seek to draw Egypt into a neo-Ottoman sphere of influence. He should nevertheless still be seen as an opponent of Turkey's ambition to dominate the eastern Mediterranean, an ambition reflected in Ankara's ties to the rival government in Tripoli.

Jordan's participation is of importance to Israel. Recent attacks on American bases in Jordan have underscored the gravity of the Iranian threat—and thus the importance of closer security cooperation between Amman and Jerusalem.

Morocco's role in the Abu Dhabi meeting is also noteworthy: its security ties with Israel are closer than ever. At the same time, the move to appoint Fatima Zahra al-Mansouri as the kingdom's first woman prime minister sends a clear message rejecting the agenda of Islamic radicalism and affirming Morocco's unequivocal place in the camp of stability. Recent events have once again demonstrated that this camp remains relevant.

In the U.S., where President Trump has shown troubling displays of sympathy for the Mecca Alliance, the military establishment—specifically CENTCOM—has deep, established ties with the countries of the camp of stability. Those ties also include Israel, which since 2021 has been within CENTCOM's area of responsibility and participates in the integrated regional air-defense arrangement. U.S. participation in the meeting reflects its regional ties.

Israel's Role

The prime minister's visit to the UAE at this time, in connection with the meeting, thus suggests that a return to deeper regional partnership may be possible – given the Houthi crisis and the possibility of renewed escalation with Iran, as long as its nuclear activity requires constant monitoring and Washington keeps all its options open.

There is a solid basis for cooperation across a spectrum of military, security, and intelligence matters. The displeasure over the assignment of an Omani copilot to a Flydubai flight to Israel is justified, but must not cloud the broader, important relationship with the UAE. Politically, a single meeting does not yet herald sweeping change, particularly when the Arab side has not publicized it officially. It may nevertheless point to a way forward if Israel makes wise use of the opportunity and handles issues sensitive to the Arab

world with care and sound judgment. Throughout, the struggle against Iran and the desire to undermine the regime in Tehran remain the overriding concern, with all that this entails over the long term. In the meantime, Saudi Arabia's insistence on barring Israeli aircraft from landing in the kingdom to evacuate the Flydubai passengers, along with the denial that it participated in the meeting, shows that obstacles remain before this potential can become an overt reality.
(Jerusalem Institute for Strategy and Security Oct 7)

This is not the Country with which Israel Signed a Peace Treaty
By Ruth Wasserman Lande

The peace treaty with Egypt is vital to Israel. The fait accompli of decades without war, even in the absence of true normalization, is no small feat in this neighborhood.

However, particularly in the wake of Oct. 7, it is critical to ask: Is today's Egypt the same country Israel signed a peace agreement with? Is Egypt's interest in maintaining stability, alongside its relentless crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood at home, still enough for Cairo to preserve its strategic treaty with Israel?

Recent visits by the Chinese president and the Qatari prime minister to the Egyptian capital illustrate that the Egyptian regime is seeking to diversify its revenue streams while demonstrating a willingness to accommodate foreign powers seeking a foothold in Egypt.

For years, Qatar was a major red flag for Egypt. The wealthy emirate sheltered elements of the Muslim Brotherhood—despised by the Egyptian regime—and frequently used Al Jazeera to criticize Cairo. Recently, however, Qatar has enjoyed a diplomatic thaw with the Egyptian leadership. Mohamed Shinawi, official spokesperson for the Egyptian presidency, recently posted in Arabic about the Qatari prime minister's visit, noting that discussions focused on expanding Qatari investments in Egypt, particularly in infrastructure.

But the price Egypt will pay is clear: A Qatari foothold means a move toward a more conservative form of Islam. It would be wise for Israel and the West to understand the implications.

Egypt's dire economic crisis, high illiteracy rates, lack of youth employment and absence of significant growth engines weigh heavily on the country's leadership. The regime's primary fear remains a popular uprising, particularly one driven by its youth, who make up the vast majority of the population. Every effort by the regime to curb the birth rate has failed: Of roughly 120 million Egyptians, more than 60% are under the age of 30.

Furthermore, the escalation between the United States and Iran, alongside maritime blockades, has dealt a severe financial blow to the Egyptian economy over the past year. This shock has manifested in a currency devaluation of at least 8%, coupled with a steep rise of nearly 17% in fuel prices.

All this has exacerbated inflation, directly affecting every Egyptian household. Breadlines are a familiar reality in Egypt, but any further economic distress that squeezes the pockets of ordinary citizens heightens the danger of internal instability and unrest against the regime.

At the same time, Egypt faces acute tension with Ethiopia over water rights and the division of the Nile. It confronts similar friction along its long and volatile border with Libya, fueled in part by Turkey's creeping influence in the North African country. And, of course, Egypt remains deeply unnerved by the Palestinian issue on its doorstep, driven by geographic proximity and a constant fear that the problem will spill over into Egyptian territory.

The quiet inroads made by Turkey, Qatar and China in Egypt, however counterintuitive, have been underway for several years. This push is designed to fill the void left by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, Egypt's traditional financial backers, which have grown weary of bankrolling Cairo. Furthermore, Egypt's military pivot toward these new partners aims to diversify its defense sources, driven by the belief that relying solely on the United States is no longer a viable strategy.

During the 12-day war between Israel and Iran, Egypt's official stance backed the Islamic Republic—a move that should have set off major alarm bells among Israeli decision-makers. Sunni Egypt, which has long viewed Shi'ite Iran with deep suspicion and has repeatedly expelled Iranian diplomats over espionage scandals, displayed a striking alignment with the regime in Tehran.

Even the longstanding personal animosity between Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and his Egyptian counterpart, Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, has virtually vanished. Recently, the two nations even held joint military exercises for the first time in years. This rapprochement is well-documented and indisputable.

Moreover, the high-level visit by the Chinese president was intended, among other things, to signal to Washington that Cairo has options. Egyptian-Chinese ties align neatly with China's Belt and Road Initiative, through which massive infrastructure investments in developing nations secure Beijing a foothold and leverage over local decision-makers.

Egypt is, in fact, pursuing a policy of strategic duality toward its partners.

It has adopted a similar duality toward Hamas. Cairo understands, perhaps better than anyone, what Hamas truly represents, given its roots as an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood. Yet despite this understanding, and perhaps even because of it, Cairo struck a tacit arrangement with the group prior to Oct. 7: Hamas would refrain from cooperating with jihadist cells operating in the Sinai Peninsula, and in return, Egypt would not impede Hamas from arming itself through cross-border smuggling aimed at Israel.

All of this is difficult to digest after more than four decades of strategic peace between the two nations. However, it is essential to recognize that the Egyptian leadership still perceives Israel, and particularly its current political establishment, as an adversary. This message is systematically communicated to the next generation through official school curricula and textbooks. It is reinforced across state-controlled media, cinema and cultural institutions.

This view is held not only by the vast majority of the Egyptian public but also by the inner circle at el-Sisi's Ittihadiya Palace. While el-Sisi recently made measured public statements affirming that Egypt seeks no war with its neighbors, hostility takes many forms; outright war is merely its most extreme manifestation.

The prevailing mindset in Cairo is that it serves Egyptian interests to keep Israel constantly bogged down in military confrontations with various regional threats. For instance, the Egyptian regime has turned a blind eye to Egyptian Bedouins smuggling firearms via drones to criminal networks in the Negev. This issue has drawn almost no scrutiny in Israeli public debate, even though a similar operation originating from the Israeli side into Egypt would be treated as nothing less than a casus belli.

At the same time, Egypt is training tens of thousands of Palestinian police officers on its soil, intending for them to serve as a security force in Gaza on the "day after." This comes even as there are already roughly 70,000 armed Palestinian security personnel in Judea and Samaria, itself a blatant violation of the agreements Israel signed with the Palestinian Authority in Oslo.

As a general rule, Egypt's push for an independent Palestinian state in Gaza and Judea and Samaria is rooted in its desire to untether itself from the Palestinian issue altogether. By doing so, Cairo hopes to permanently remove from the table any future demands to open its border with Gaza while minimizing the risk of the conflict spilling into Egyptian territory.

Recognizing that the Egyptian regime operates under intense internal and external pressures, Israel must base its strategy on four primary pillars:

Direct diplomatic channels: Establish a direct, high-level diplomatic line to el-Sisi and his innermost circle to manage crises and capitalize on opportunities in real time.

Military readiness: Prepare for every security contingency in light of the disproportionate military buildup on the Egyptian side of the border.

Energy leverage: Strategically leverage Israel's natural gas exports, given Egypt's critical dependence on energy supplies.

Countering incitement: Demand that Cairo actively move to curb the virulent anti-Israel and antisemitic rhetoric prevalent in Egyptian public discourse, using both existing economic levers and diplomatic backing from the United States. (JNS Oct. 21)