

# “AN EXPERT VIEW FROM ISRAEL”

Series Report #8I



## SUMMARY OF A ‘MIDDLE EAST FORUM’ WEBINAR



10 AUGUST 2022



*In a brief ‘Webinar’ session organized by the Washington based MEF, in the absence of Ashley Perry, the MEF’s Alex Selsky a former advisor to Prime Minister Netanyahu in 2010-13 provided a briefing on the subject of the recent outbreak of violence between Israel and the ‘Palestinian Islamic Jihad’.*

### SUMMARY OF COMMENTS BY ALEX SELSKY

- ‘Operation Dawn’ that started suddenly and lasted for three days was initiated by Israel due to an escalation of impending security concerns.
- The crisis started when a person belonging to the ‘Palestinian Islamic Jihad’ was arrested a few days before, leading to an intense situation of instability in the border areas with Gaza (with all Israeli citizens warned to remain indoors).
- However, within 3 days of this new situation, the Israeli army struck and killed all the military leadership of ‘Palestinian Islamic Jihad’ in Gaza and arrested all their major leaders and activists in Judea and Siomara.
- It was noted with interest that at no time during this confrontation, did Hamas in any way enter the fray.
- In short the operation was an extremely successful one in which despite the fact that more than 1000 rockets were fired at a number of Israeli cities including suburbs of Jerusalem, no Israeli casualties were reported.
- It was also noted that prior to the launching of these operations, the Secretary General of ‘Palestinian Islamic Jihad’ was in Tehran, giving further impetus to the belief that these incitements were being made with the collaboration of the Islamic regime in Iran.
- At the same time, the operation was a clear signal of Israeli single mindedness and determination pointed towards other rejectionist forces such as Hamas and Hezbollah.
- On the political side, at a time when party primaries for Likud and Labour had been completed, the operation was a huge boost for both Yair Lapid and Benny Gantz. Polls following the operation showed that 66% of Israelis public were happy about the operation while 73% were satisfied with the performance of the Defence Minister, Benny Gantz.
- The operation further consolidate the credentials of Prime Minister Lapid who was often accused in the past of not having any military background or proven capabilities for acting in such matters.

- Another key factor that was highlighted was the fact that this operation could not have happened – as indicated most elaborately by the Number 2 man in the Raam Party – had the coalition government still been in power.
- Alex Selsky ended his presentation by saying that no matter how successful perceptions were of this operation, it was a fact that the ‘Palestinian Islamic Jihad’ which is a much smaller group than either Hamas or Hezbollah who were far more able and capable had managed to fire some 1000 rockets at Israeli cities.
- He ended by saying that this was cause for serious concern and as such the victory achieved at the conclusion of ‘Operation Dawn’ should be digested with a large pinch of salt.

