



Adapted from the Hebrew original.

December 12, 2023

To: The War Cabinet

“All for All – and Out”

CIS calls upon members of the War Cabinet to consider embracing the following urgent initiative:

Israel should extend to Hamas leadership a three-part offer:

- The release of all Israeli hostages
- The release of all Palestinian security prisoners
- The prisoners and Hamas leadership to depart from the Gaza Strip to a third country.

Israel should declare that upon acceptance of these terms and receipt of a complete list of hostages:

- The gates of Gaza will be open to unlimited humanitarian assistance, while weapon smuggling will be strictly prevented
- During the Interim Period that follows intensive fighting, the IDF will deploy in a manner that enables Gaza reconstruction
- Israel will cooperate with and assist an international, Arab-regional, and Palestinian effort to establish a mechanism that will assume responsibility for the



management, demilitarization and rehabilitation of the Strip, all under U.S. leadership.

Advantages:

- **Assuming that Hamas responds affirmatively:**
 - The return of all of the hostages
 - Achieving the war objectives of eliminating Hamas governance and its military capacity
 - Ending the war
 - Improved prospects of mobilizing regional and international engagement in implementing the stages of the 'day after' strategy
- **Assuming (more likely) that Hamas rejects the offer:**
 - Israel's offer and Hamas's rejection will:
 - Ease pressure for a premature ceasefire
 - Demonstrate to the hostages' families and the Israeli public that the government is taking the initiative and does not rule out any option for returning the hostages.

Basic assumptions

- Israel cannot maintain normal life with Hamas on our southern border
- Sinwar and his top associates are not expected to surrender, regardless of the price the population – including Hamas activists – pay
- With every passing week, mounting civilian casualties and worsening humanitarian distress will increase international pressure and attempts to



impose a premature ceasefire; Israel's rejection of an imposed ceasefire is liable to create a crisis with the Biden administration and others

- Should senior Hamas leaders survive the war and residual organizational and military capacity remain, the potential for the revival of the threat to Israel's security must be considered
- This CIS proposal offers a response to this scenario as well: Hamas' leadership removal from the Strip will improve the prospects of preventing the revival of the organization in the Strip.

Hamas' calculations/objectives

- Gain time for international and other pressure to mount to stop the fighting
- Remain an influential governing entity [even if not the lead player] at the end of the war
- Emerge from the war as an influential political entity [even in a new guise/name/format]
- Remain an influential military entity [as an armed militia, even if one of several]
- All in the service of taking over the Palestinian Authority/PLO
- In light of Israel's massive response, freeing of Palestinian security prisoners – previously a top priority - has become secondary
- Since the hostages serve as 'human shields' in the leadership's effort to avoid captivity or death, Hamas is expected to hold on to a significant number of hostages, rather than trade them for security prisoners
- Once they run out of options, and having exhausted the potential for dragging out limited hostage releases, Hamas leaders will likely keep a significant number



of hostages in an effort to reach a deal that enables them and secondary echelons to evade a death sentence

- Consequently, it will only be possible to achieve the overarching objective of returning all of the hostages in return for granting Hamas' leaders and senior command a safe exit.

Reference scenario

We must consider the possibility that Israel will not succeed in achieving all of its war objectives and that circumstances will force the cessation of military action while Hamas retains significant residual capacity and holds a considerable number of hostages that it will try to 'trade' for the flight of its top leadership.

Since every day in captivity endangers the hostages' lives, and in light of the assumption that their release will eventually be conditional upon the flight of Hamas' leaders, we propose taking the initiative now: confronting the Hamas leadership with a most generous offer. Its acceptance would facilitate the completion of Israel's mission. Its rejection can help to quell pressure for a premature ceasefire.

Respectfully,

Maj. Gen. (Res.) Matan Vilnai
Chair