

FROM: Avi Melamed, Middle East Expert & Founder of Inside The Middle East Institute

TO: Committee of Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives of the Netherlands

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RE: My Remarks for the Committee's Round Table Discussion on the Middle East
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Avi Melamed's Remarks to the Committee of Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives of the Netherlands Round Table Discussion on the Middle East

Honorable members of the Committee of Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives of the Netherlands and esteemed colleagues. I am honored to address this assembly and engage in a meaningful dialogue on a matter of critical importance.

The Israel-Hamas war is a defining moment in the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the Middle East. With all of the challenges and hardships endured by both Israelis and Palestinians – this pivotal moment also offers a unique opportunity for a strategic transformation toward a positive, constructive trajectory.

To harness this opportunity, we must pursue a three-pronged strategy guided by three pillars:

First, we must curtail the Iranian regime and its proxies, such as Hamas or Palestinian Islamic Jihad's ability to perpetuate the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. With vested interests in escalating tensions, the Iranian regime actively exploits and sacrifices the lives of Iraqis, Israelis, Lebanese, Palestinians, Syrians, and Yemenites to advance its agenda. This aggression has resulted in widespread devastation across the region, as evidenced by the turmoil we see in Gaza, Lebanon, and Syria. . As long as Hamas continue to dictate its genocidal agenda, Israelis and Palestinians will be doomed for death, despair, and destruction. Now, the Iranian regime is attempting to extend its influence into Jordan, utilizing militias along the Jordanian-Syrian border to smuggle drugs, weapons, and rockets into Jordanian territory. This is an enormous strategic threat with severe ramifications both regionally and globally. The international community must take decisive action to mitigate Iran's role in further destabilizing the region.

Second, we must internalize that the prospect of a two-state solution is unattainable in the near term. This acknowledgment is not an indictment of either party but a call to recognize the current realities on the ground. Both Israelis and Palestinians face significant obstacles that preclude them from independently fostering positive change in the conflict's trajectory, much less crafting a path toward peace.

Third, instead of clinging to unattainable ideals and traditional paradigms, it's imperative to pivot and embrace a strategy of gradually constructing a stable framework – a scaffolding - to pave a positive path toward durable coexistence. This innovative approach necessitates thinking outside the box. I propose establishing a regional council comprising key Arab States, with official representation of the Palestinian people, supported by the United States and the European Union. The United Nations would formally authorize this council to initiate, promote, negotiate, and sign agreements with Israel. These agreements would then undergo formal approval by the UN General Assembly, replacing any relevant resolutions from the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). The council will ensure the enforcement of these agreements for a period of 25 years. Among its mandate, the council would facilitate negotiations and lead efforts to build infrastructure for Palestinian independence. This includes vital tasks such as developing Palestinian human capital, reconstructing and demilitarizing the Gaza Strip, and establishing the necessary infrastructure for sovereignty.

To effectively address the conflict between Israel and Gaza in specific and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in general, our strategy must:

1. Confront Iran's Destabilizing Influence in the Region
2. Acknowledge the Impracticality of an Immediate Two-State Solution
3. Create an Official Regional Council Comprised of Key Arab States and Palestinian Representation Backed by the International Community

Achieving a meaningful shift in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict demands a sustained, step-by-step approach – a process of scaffolding building that cannot be rushed. It entails confronting external factors that perpetuate conflict, departing from traditional paradigms, innovative problem-solving, and regional collaboration backed by global support. It necessitates forging a unified regional strategy to pave the way for genuine progress.

Thank you again for an opportunity to discuss and hopefully collaborate on this critical issue that affects Israelis, Palestinians, the Region, And the entire Global Community.

Avi Melamed | Middle East Expert, Author, Educator, Intelligence Analyst, Speaker, and Founder of Inside the Middle East Intelligence Perspectives [ITME] Institute

Avi Melamed is a distinguished Geopolitical Middle East Expert, Intelligence [Analyst](#), [Author](#), [Educator](#), and Founder and CEO of Inside the Middle East Intelligence Perspectives [[ITME](#)].

With a rich history as a former Israeli Intelligence Official and Senior Advisor on Arab Affairs, Avi has been uniquely positioned at the intersection of diplomacy, education, and intelligence.

Fluent in Arabic, English, and Hebrew, Avi is recognized for his profound understanding of current affairs in the Arab and Muslim world and their implications on Israel and the broader Middle East. His deep familiarity with the Arab and Muslim world has enabled him to predict key regional events.

Beyond his governmental and intelligence roles, where he undertook high-risk assignments, Avi's most significant contribution lies in his commitment to education.

His public service journey segued into academia when he was appointed the Fellow of Intelligence and Middle East Affairs at the Eisenhower Institute in Washington, D.C. During his tenure (2013 – 2018), Avi developed an [undergraduate experiential education course](#), which later expanded to Capitol Hill, called "Inside the Middle East: Intelligence Perspectives" [ITME]. The ITME praxis rests on two core pillars: providing apolitical, non-partisan, contextualized education about the Middle East and developing critical thinking and media literacy skills.

Recognizing the course's broader implications, Avi expanded [ITME into a not-for-profit independent institute](#). Today, guided by a diversified Board of Directors, ITME offers a wealth of customized educational programming in Israel and around the world and serves a wide variety of Jewish and non-Jewish audiences of all ages, backgrounds, and ideologies - including students, diplomats, media professionals, policymakers, community leaders, and global figures. With a philosophy that stresses apolitical, non-partisan education about the Middle East and understanding Israel within the broader context of the Middle East, ITME equips individuals with knowledge, resources, skills, and tools equipping them to navigate complex global issues amidst misconceptions and oversimplified narratives. Committed to bridging bridges through understanding, ITME is a testament to Avi's belief in the power of education to empower minds and bridge ideological divides, and his [briefings](#), [seminars](#), [workshops](#), [courses](#), and [tours](#) are acclaimed for cultivating nuanced, comprehensive perspectives, fostering constructive dialogue and understanding and a community rooted in informed perspectives and thoughtful discourse.

In addition to his extensive contributions, Avi has penned several [books](#), including the recent "[Inside The Middle East / Entering a New Era](#)," that serve as vital navigational tools for understanding the region. These publications, along with his [ongoing analysis](#), receive high acclaim, including from across the Arab and Muslim world. Avi's analysis and predictions are frequently sought by business leaders, diplomats, and policymakers.

In May 2023, under Avi's direction, ITME launched a groundbreaking five-part documentary series, [Kav Ha Tefer | קו התפר | The Seam Line. Avi Melamed's Jerusalem Living on the Edge of Eternity](#) is a distinct opportunity to explore the conflict in and over Jerusalem, gain unique insights, uncover perspectives rarely explored by Western media, and understand the Israeli-Palestine conflict and the complex reality of the Middle East. [The Seam Line](#) is a transformative journey toward understanding, cooperation, and constructive dialogue.

Avi is a frequent commentator on Arabic and English international media platforms such as Al-Arabiya, Al-Hura, AP, BBC, CNN, I24 News, FOX, France24, NBC, Sky News, and many more. He is a recognized expert featured in Bloomberg, the Financial Times, the Hill, Newsweek, the New York Post, Reuters, and the Wall Street Journal, to name a few. And is a permanent contributor to USA Today. More of his analysis and interviews can be found on the [ITME Hub](#).

Avi Melamed's distinct expertise offers an unparalleled perspective on a region that is pivotal in shaping global geopolitics, equipping individuals to adeptly navigate the events of tomorrow.

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