

Keeping IDF Soldiers Safe

The debate has been going on since the start of the Gaza war.

It has nothing to do with military strategy, the draft or military deployments. The debate is focused solely on soldier safety and whether the Israel Defense Forces have been providing troops with appropriate and reliable protective equipment, food and medical supplies.

The military has long claimed that it gives soldiers everything they need to fulfill their military mission. And it has repeatedly asserted that its gear is up to date and of the highest military quality.

But critics expressed concern that much of the equipment provided to reserve units, regular army divisions and even elite forces was outdated, ineffective and unsafe. And notwithstanding military rules that prohibit solicitation or acceptance of donations or gifts from donors, many soldiers and soldier support groups did just that.

The volunteer efforts raised hundreds of millions of dollars to purchase helmets, protective eyewear, body armor, rifle scopes and even military fatigues and distributed them to soldiers for their use.

IDF spokespeople and senior officials were adamant in their denial of supply problems and raised concern about the quality and safety of donated gear. They claimed that much of the donated gear was not military grade or otherwise fit for use by IDF personnel.



But according to an October investigative report in *The Jerusalem Post*, the IDF's claims were probably driven by pride and bravado and were not accurate. According to the report, the IDF has faced severe shortages of necessary military supplies for soldiers and was benefiting substantially from donated equipment by a very active volunteer network.

The Jerusalem Post report was based on a classified document presented to the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, which set out the details of the

military equipment crisis. The numbers are staggering, and the report lends credence to the private donor group claims of inadequate supplies and the need for volunteer support.

Then, late last month, the IDF acknowledged the problem. It did so quietly, in the launch of a new website by the Ground Forces and the Ground Technology Division in the Technological and Logistics Directorate that enables soldiers to check anonymously whether their military-issued safety equipment complies with official standards. And echoing the recurring criticism of the volunteer groups, the website says that any ceramic body armor plates manufactured before 2009 and any army-issued helmet made of metal must be replaced.

The critics are vindicated. And their impressive efforts on behalf of IDF soldiers must be recognized and acknowledged.

But there is something else this story tells us. Coupled with the intelligence and operational failures exposed on Oct. 7, the stubborn refusal of Israel's military leadership to acknowledge serious supply and equipment needs of its personnel unquestionably put lives at risk.

Military pride and hubris got in the way of soldier safety. This very disturbing failure by IDF leadership should be added to the list of items to be reviewed when the government starts the long overdue review of Oct. 7 and related activity. ■

Antisemitism Alarm in Labor Market

Antisemitism is often subtle. Very few antisemites openly express their Jew hatred. But it's there. And it often manifests itself through actions and decisions rather than words.

With all that we know about rising antisemitic activity and attitudes it should come as no surprise that discrimination against Jews exists in the labor employment market just as it does in other areas of American life. We have seen reports of educational institutions seeking to "balance" admissions to the detriment of Jewish applicants. Similarly, concerns have been expressed about antisemitism in the publishing world and the mental health field.

But how deep is the problem? And how does one measure the extent of antisemitic bias?

A recent Anti-Defamation League study answers some of those questions. And the answers are disturbing.

The ADL study involved a test conducted by Bryan Tomlin, a labor economist. Over the period of May to October 2024, Tomlin applied through craigslist.org for 3,000 administrative assistant job postings. For each application Tomlin used identical resumes, except for certain characteristics specific to Jewish identity. For example, he used female names like "Rebecca Cohen" that signal that the applicant is Jewish; Israeli names

like "Lia Avraham," and Western European background names like "Kriste Miller."

Tomlin found that Jewish American job candidates need to send 24% more applications to prospective employers in order to receive the same number of positive first responses as Americans with Western European backgrounds and names when applying for the very same jobs. Even more upsetting, Israeli Americans — who were clearly established as American citizens in the study — needed to send 39% more applications to receive the same number of positive responses.

ADL noted that the Tomlin survey results are much different than a study conducted by the University of Connecticut a decade ago, which found that Jewish applicants received significantly higher employer preference rates than applicants from all other religions. ADL attributes the change to mounting negative perceptions of Jews that have developed over the past several years and an increasing number of younger Americans who have been influenced by that thinking and who are starting to take managerial positions with the authority to make hiring decisions.

The infection of antisemitism is real. And the depth of its reach is alarming. Studies like the Tomlin report

in the labor field will be followed by similar efforts in other targeted areas like housing and various business endeavors.

But studies alone are not the answer. Nor is litigation over hiring bias or other forms of discrimination. While each of those efforts is helpful, the response to antisemitism needs more. It needs your help. And there is a lot you can do:

- Educate yourself and others about Jewish history, culture and Jewish contributions to society.
- Engage in open dialogues to challenge stereotypes and myths.
- Encourage empathy by sharing personal stories of those affected by antisemitism.
- Advocate for legislation that protects against hate crimes.
- Join efforts to build alliances with diverse communities to encourage solidarity and mutual support.
- Use social media responsibly to counteract hate speech and to spread positive messages.

Combating antisemitism is an ongoing process. Every small action helps. We urge you to join the effort. ■

Amnesty International's Antisemitic Agenda



Ruthie Blum

Amnesty International released its latest broadside against Israel on Dec. 5, accusing the Jewish state of committing genocide in Gaza. The nearly 300-page report — “‘You Feel Like You Are Subhuman’: Israel’s Genocide Against Palestinians in Gaza” — is typically mendacious.

Laden with hyperbolic hostility and “proof” gleaned from bogus Hamas data, it portrays Israel’s defensive war against the Iran-backed terrorists as the deliberate attempt by a villainous regime in Jerusalem to annihilate a whole population of Palestinians.

Talk about the inversion of reality — par for the course with the “human-rights organization” that makes a mockery of its mandate. In truth, every accusation in this polemic masquerading as research could and should be directed at Hamas.

Indeed, every word of the diatribe-disguised-as-research could and should have been penned about Hamas. According to Amnesty’s summary of the document, “International jurisprudence recognizes that the perpetrator does not need to succeed in their attempts to destroy the protected group, either in whole or in part, for genocide to have been committed,” since “the commission of prohibited acts with the intent to destroy the group, as such, is sufficient.”

Uh, yes. Hamas failed to achieve its genocidal goal prior to, during and since Oct. 7, 2023. But the will was and still is there.

There’s antisemitic irony for you. According to Amnesty’s own definition, both the acts committed and the intent behind them meet the criteria for genocide.

So as not to be called out for its blatant bias against Jews, Amnesty employs a not-so-neat trick.

The ploy is as old as it is transparent: only mentioning the “atrocities crimes committed ... by Hamas and other armed groups against Israelis and victims of other nationalities, including deliberate mass killings and hostage-taking” in order to stress that the above “can never justify Israel’s genocide against Palestinians in Gaza.”

This sleight of hand allows Amnesty to claim that Israel is engaged in a “campaign of systematic extermination in Gaza, marked by the deliberate targeting of civilian infrastructure, medical facilities and evacuation routes.”

To support its ludicrous lies, Amnesty relies on sources aligned with the Islamic Republic’s aim of wiping Israel off the map. Predictably, the report disregards Israel’s exhaustive efforts to minimize civilian casualties in Gaza — a Herculean challenge given the terrorists’ deliberate use of civilians as shields and cannon fodder.

None of this is surprising. For the better part of two decades, Amnesty has been fixated on singling out Israel for condemnation.

In February 2022, Amnesty labeled Israel an apartheid state. This term, originally associated with South African segregation, has been misappropriated by anti-Israel activists to paint the Jewish state as inherently racist.

Amnesty ignored the active participation of Arab citizens in Israeli society, from serving in the Knesset to holding prominent roles in medicine, academia and law. It omitted the historical context behind Israel’s security measures, designed to thwart relentless waves of Palestinian terrorism, and distorted the legal and political realities on the ground.

During “Operation Protective Edge” against Hamas in 2014, Amnesty accused Israel of grave violations of international law. Overlooking substantial evidence of Hamas’ use of schools, hospitals and mosques as weapons depots and command centers, Amnesty decried Israel’s defensive measures. It issued reports lamenting civilian casualties and damaged buildings while downplaying Hamas’ use of densely populated

areas to provoke such tragedies.

Meanwhile, Amnesty remained silent on Hamas’ brutal treatment of its own people, including executions of alleged “collaborators” and the forced recruitment of child soldiers. Nor did it acknowledge Israel’s unprecedented measures to warn civilians — via phone calls, leaflets and “roof-knocking” — before conducting strikes.

The aftermath of “Operation Cast Lead” in 2008–09 prompted a similarly warped narrative. Amnesty’s report “22 Days of Death and Destruction” portrayed Hamas as a minor player rather than a bloodthirsty terrorist group that had fired thousands of unprovoked projectiles into Israel.

During the Second Intifada (2000–2005), when Palestinian suicide bombers attacked buses, cafés and nightclubs, Amnesty directed its ire at Israel’s counterterrorism measures, such as the construction of a security barrier to reduce attacks on innocent Israelis.

Despite Israel’s complete withdrawal from Gaza in 2005, forcibly removing every last Jew from the Strip, Amnesty continues to describe the enclave as “occupied.” The pattern is undeniable: Amnesty seizes every opportunity to vilify Israel.

Founded in 1961 by British lawyer Peter Benenson to advocate for prisoners of conscience, Amnesty won a Nobel Peace Prize in 1977 for its defense of human dignity and a United Nations human-rights prize the following year. Once lauded for impartiality, it has devolved into a slanted advocacy group with a pernicious agenda.

Amnesty’s animus toward Israel transcends politics. Naturally. Considering the existence of the Jewish state to be illegitimate means never having to care about the ideological makeup of the ruling coalition in Jerusalem. ■

Ruthie Blum, a former adviser at the office of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, is an award-winning columnist who writes on Israeli politics and U.S.-Israel relations.

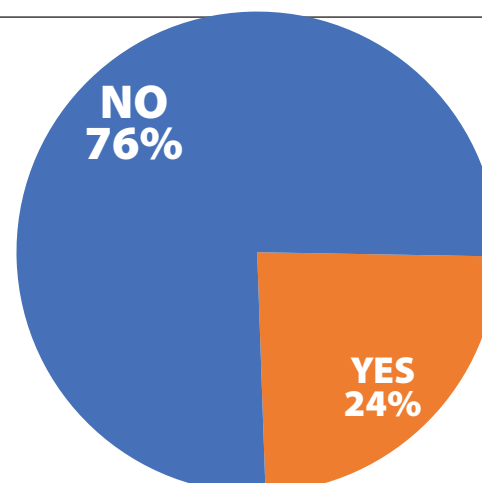
December 5 Poll Results

Do you think that the Israel-Hezbollah cease-fire agreement will hold for the foreseeable future?

Next Week’s Poll

Did you make any charitable donations to any Israel-based organizations this year?

To vote, visit: washingtonjewishweek.com



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What Accounts for the Speed of the Syrian Revolution?

Sarah N. Stern

On Nov. 30, the forces of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, an offshoot of Jabhat al-Nusra, which has been associated with al-Qaeda, rapidly took control of Aleppo in Syria. Hama fell to them on Dec. 5; on Dec. 6, Daraa fell; and on Dec. 7, it was Homs, with the residents eagerly toppling a statue of Syrian leader Bashar al-Assad. By Sunday morning, Dec. 8, the capital, Damascus, was overtaken by the rebel forces. After decades of control by the Assad family, Syria is free of their suffocating grip.

What accounts for the lightning speed of the Syrian revolution?

The answer lies in a tremendous amount of justifiable, internecine hatred.

For over 50 years, the iron fist of the Assad family has ruled Syria. Hafez al-Assad of the Syrian nationalist Ba'ath party hailed from an Alawite branch, beginning his rule in 1971. He was known for his 1982 brutal massacre of approximately 20,000 Sunni Muslim rebel forces in the city of Hama, leading to the term "Hama rules." Translation: mercilessly putting down and crushing one's opposition. The reins of power were supposed to have been passed to Bashar's older brother, Basil, who was tasked with crushing Hama. However, Basil was killed in an auto accident, and the family's rule was reluctantly passed into the hands of Bashir, a Western trained ophthalmologist. His father, Hafez, did not feel Bashir had the stomach to maintain his ruthless style of governance over Syria.

However, after the Syrian uprising of 2011, with approximately 500,000 people murdered and nearly 13 million people internally or externally displaced — causing a major refugee crisis in Europe — Bashar proved his father exceedingly wrong. With the help of Iran and Russia, the younger Assad maintained the regime's iron grip over Syria, until Dec. 8, 2024.

The hatred of the approximately 74% of the Sunni Syrian population of the Assad regime continues unabated. Why is this?

In early March 2011, a group of children scrawled on the walls of Daraa, in southern Syria, "Assad must go." These children were hunted down and tortured by the regime. Their parents were told that if they ever wanted to see their children again, the mothers must sleep with the regime's commanders. Cans of dog food were sent to their families, with a note, "Herein lies the remnants of your children."

On Aug. 20, 2012, President Barack Obama issued

his famous "red line," concerning the implementation of chemical weapons during the Syrian civil war, saying, "We have been very clear to the Assad regime, but also to the other players on the ground, that a red line for us is we start seeing a whole bunch of chemical weapons moving around or being utilized. That would change my calculus."

Exactly one year and one day later, on Aug. 21, 2013, we saw images on our televisions of scores of young children writhing, convulsing, trembling, and frothing at the mouth, many suffocating to death,

On the positive side, the corridor from Iran through Syria, a major gateway from Tehran to Hezbollah forces inside Lebanon, has been cut off. Iran has been described by Israel as "the head of the octopus," the most destabilizing power in the region, controlling its terror proxies throughout the Middle East.

because of their exposure to sarin nerve gas, at the hands of Bashar al-Assad.

Fifty years of ironclad rule at the hands of the Assad family has rapidly and abruptly come to an end.

There are many individuals who have been tortured by the Assad regime, who are now celebrating. Friends, such as Ahed al Hendi, said, "I left Syria in 2007 after a political arrest that turned my life upside down at the age of 20. It was an experience that cost me friends, a homeland, and led me to live in exile. Today, after 17 years of separation from my city, Damascus, we can finally return. Congratulations to all Syrians! True, the change didn't come at the hands of those we dreamed of as liberators, but the Assad era has ended, cast into the trash heap of history. Congratulations to all of us, the survivors of decades of conscription and brainwashing, and

congratulations to Syria, which now begins a new chapter of its history, written by its own people, free from tyranny."

Yet, we have no idea who is involved in this uprising. There are many elements within the rebel forces. Some may be innocent Sunni Muslims and Christians, whose family members or friends have long been tortured by the Assad dynasty. However, we must bear in mind that the HTS is listed on the U.S. State Department's list of terrorist organizations and that elements of these groups have sworn allegiance to al-Qaeda and ISIS. Who might the rebel forces release from the prisons? Bearing in mind that President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan-controlled Turkey has supported HTS, and Erdoğan has particular antipathy toward the Kurds, what is going to happen to them as people who have been extremely loyal to the United States?

And what does this mean for Israel and for U.S. interests in the region?

On the positive side, the corridor from Iran through Syria, a major gateway from Tehran to Hezbollah forces inside Lebanon, has been cut off. Iran has been described by Israel as "the head of the octopus," the most destabilizing power in the region, controlling its terror proxies throughout the Middle East. Gen. Qassem Soleimani, the head of Iran's Revolutionary Guard's elite Quds Force who was killed in a U.S. drone strike, had been credited with creating the Iranian "ring of fire" strategy around Israel. However, the decisive moves the Israel Defense Forces has made on Hezbollah in Lebanon, on Hamas in Gaza, and with the IDF's Oct. 26 attack on Iranian military targets and nuclear research facilities, much of the Iranian "ring of fire" has been neutered.

Moreover, the Israelis have painfully learned from Oct. 7 that territory is destiny. The brilliant, strategic move of the IDF's conquest of the Syrian part of Mount Hermon on Dec. 8 during this "fog of war" will give the Israelis a border and some necessary strategic depth.

Or, as my dear friend Mosab Hassan Yousef puts it, "This might just be another country in the establishment of a worldwide Islamist caliphate."

And this will be sitting on the borders of Israel. President-elect Donald Trump has said he does not want to send more troops there, nor does President Joe Biden. It seems — as always — that it will be left up to Israel to remain vigilant. ■

Sarah N. Stern is the founder and president of the Endowment for Middle East Truth (EMET), a think tank that specializes in the Middle East.



Israel's Gift

Clifford D. May

Do you recall the Cedar Revolution? Almost 20 years ago, the Lebanese rose against Syria's domination of their country, including an occupation force of roughly 14,000 Syrian troops and a government that was all too eager to do Damascus' bidding.

The Cedar Revolution slogan: "Freedom, Sovereignty, Independence."

The Lebanese now have a chance to say those words again; to fight Cedar Revolution 2.0. To end the domination of Tehran and Hezbollah, the Islamist regime's foreign legion, and those toadies who collaborate with them.

This opportunity is a gift from Israel. Are there Lebanese patriots with the guts and gumption to take advantage of it?

I'll return to that question in a moment, but first a bit of context.

Lebanon is a beautiful land of forests, mountains and seashore. Its population is diverse. But diversity is not its strength.

From 1975 to 1990, Lebanon's main ethnic and religious communities — Shia, Sunni, Maronite Christian, Druze — were embroiled in a bloody civil war.

Hezbollah was founded by the imperialist regime that came to power in Tehran in 1979, as the Lebanese branch of its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. Hezbollah has since murdered hundreds of Americans, dragged Lebanon into multiple conflicts with Israel and embroiled the country in Syria's long civil war.

Hezbollah's most recent conflict with Israel ended — or perhaps just paused — with a recent cease-fire agreement. More on that in a moment, too.

For centuries, the land we now call Lebanon was a possession of the Ottomans, Muslim imperialist settler-colonialists whose capital was in Istanbul.

That metropolis, you should know, was earlier called Constantinople and it was the capital of the Christian Byzantine Empire until the Ottomans conquered it in 1453.

When the Ottoman Empire collapsed following World War I, the League of Nations — the "international community" of the era — gave the French Empire a "mandate" to administer Lebanon and help it develop into a nation-state.

Lebanon formally received its independence in 1943, though French troops didn't withdraw until three years later.

The political structure that Lebanon adopted might be called identitarian. Its goal was diversity,

equity and inclusion through sectarian power-sharing: a Maronite Christian was always to serve as president, a Shi'ite as speaker of Parliament, a Sunni as prime minister.

But Hezbollah, with Tehran's money, guns and support, came to overpower all the other sects and factions.

Both the 1989 Taif Agreement and the 2004 U.N. Security Council Resolution 1559 called for disarming Lebanese militias.

But Hezbollah's leaders were not about to voluntarily lay down their weapons, and no one dared attempt to force them. Many Lebanese, mainly Shi'ites but not only Shi'ites, supported Hezbollah and Tehran for a variety of reasons.

In 2006, Hezbollah precipitated a war with Israel. After 34 days, under the newly passed U.N. Security Council Resolution 1701, the Israelis ceased firing and withdrew.

In exchange, Hezbollah was to pull out of southern Lebanon, from the Litani River to the northern Israeli frontier, under the supervision of the Lebanese Armed Forces and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon.

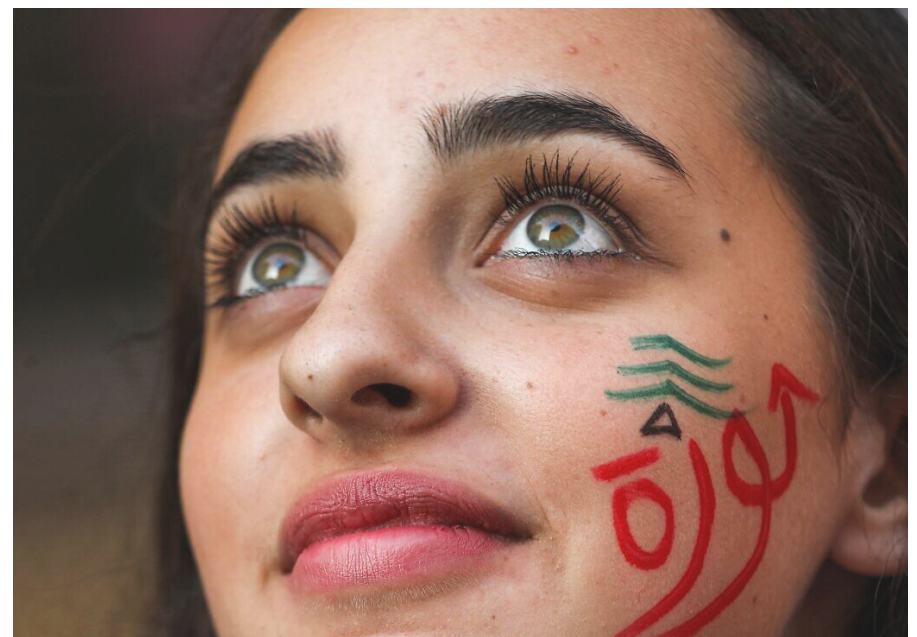
Instead, both the LAF and UNIFIL did nothing — or actively collaborated with Hezbollah, which has now spent almost two decades emplacing missiles in schools and mosques, building underground fortresses and storing chemical weapons.

All this was in preparation for a future invasion of Israel that was to be followed by massacres, hostage-taking and, if possible, the conquest of the Galilee and other northern Israeli territories.

Had this plan been carried out in coordination with Hamas' invasion of Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, along with missile barrages from Iranian territory, and strikes by the Houthis in Yemen and Shia militias in Syria and Iraq, who knows how many Israelis might have been killed? Who knows whether Israel would have survived?

For reasons about which we can only speculate, that didn't happen. But on Oct. 8, Hezbollah demonstrated solidarity with Hamas by firing missiles at northern Israeli communities. These strikes continued for more than a year. Tens of thousands of Israelis have had to abandon their homes.

Enormous numbers of Iranian missiles were launched against Israel from Iranian soil in April and October of this year, and sporadically by the Houthis.



A woman wearing face paint depicting a Lebanese cedar tree and the Arabic word "revolution" looks on during a demonstration on the sixth day of protest against tax increases and official corruption in the center of the capital Beirut's downtown district on Oct. 22, 2019.

Israel's missile defense systems, augmented by American systems, minimized damage and, in response to Tehran's attacks, Israel destroyed Iran's air defense systems.

In September, the pagers carried by hundreds of Hezbollah operatives suddenly exploded. Days later, an Israeli airstrike killed longtime Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah deep in his bunker.

The Israelis then proceeded to destroy hundreds of Hezbollah missiles, launchers and weapons caches. Most of the group's senior leadership has now been eliminated.

The cease-fire the Biden administration recently arranged has left Israelis arguing among themselves.

Critics contend that it will allow Hezbollah to get up off the mat, and that it doesn't ensure that displaced Israelis can return to their homes.

My reading is that, on balance, the Israelis come out ahead. President Biden was adamant to achieve a "diplomatic solution," and the Israelis need a prompt resupply of American munitions. That now appears to be in train.

The Israelis are already responding forcefully to Hezbollah violations of the cease-fire.

And next month, President Trump will bring a new approach to the Tehran-fueled conflicts of the Middle East.

But back to the Lebanese. They now have a chance to remove the imperial yoke Iran's rulers put around their neck and regain their freedom, sovereignty and independence. The LAF, long funded and trained by the United States, should at least attempt to disarm a crippled Hezbollah.

Lebanese patriots need to ask themselves two very Israeli questions: If not now, when? If not us, who? ■

Clifford D. May is the founder and president of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies.



On a Mission to Auschwitz, I Found Hope Amid the Ashes

William C. Daroff

Last month, I returned to Poland for my fifth visit, this time as part of the European Jewish Association's annual mission to Auschwitz. The gathering brought together Jewish and non-Jewish leaders from across Europe and beyond, united by the urgency to confront rising antisemitism and the shared challenges of our time.

I laid a wreath at Birkenau — a somber reminder of the atrocities our people endured and a call to action against the resurgence of hatred today — and I was honored to give the keynote address.

Krakow has always been a city of profound historical and personal significance to me. Nearly 30 summers ago, between my undergraduate and graduate studies in the U.S., I first walked its streets as a student at Jagiellonian University, delving into the history of Eastern European Jewry and the Holocaust. Living just down the hall from me in the dormitory was Heidi, a graduate student at NYU I did not yet know but who would soon become my wife. Our shared experiences in Krakow formed the foundation of our life together. Returning to this city now, decades later — having raised two daughters who for me symbolize Jewish resilience and continuity — reminds me of the miracle of our survival.

I visited Krakow again to work on Jewish-Polish reconciliation and yet again in 2022, in the early days of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, when the shadow of war once again loomed over Europe. But this time, my return was marked by a different crisis: the resurgence of antisemitism, fueled by the Oct. 7, 2023, massacre in Israel and violent acts like the recent attacks on Jews in Amsterdam after a soccer match.

The parallels between the past and present are stark and chilling. Standing in Krakow, just weeks after Jews were hunted in the streets of Amsterdam, I could not help but reflect on the 86th anniversary of Kristallnacht. Then, as now, hatred unchecked has spiraled into violence. That history has left us with scars, but also with lessons to be learned — first and foremost that we cannot remain passive in the face of such threats. There are other lessons as well:

From mourning to mobilization: Oct. 7 marked the deadliest day for the Jewish people since the Holocaust. The slaughter of 1,200 Israelis — most of them civilians engaged in mundane, life-affirming acts — was a shattering moment for our community.



The author, right, and Dumisani Washington, CEO of the Institute for Black Solidarity with Israel, lay a wreath in memory of the Jewish victims at Birkenau, Nov. 26, 2024.

Yet the horror did not end there. The massacre was celebrated in Western capitals, with protests erupting in support of Hamas's barbarity. Social media amplified the vitriol, emboldening antisemites to bring their hatred into the public square.

Amidst this darkness, however, we have witnessed extraordinary resilience. Across the Diaspora, Jewish communities are rising to meet this moment. In the United States, synagogues are fuller, Jewish symbols are more visible, and advocacy has reached unprecedented levels. These are not mere reactions to trauma but acts of defiance and pride.

I've seen this firsthand in the mobilization of Jewish advocacy groups at school boards, city councils, and Congress. This grassroots activism is making a tangible difference, from securing protections for Jewish students on campuses to advancing the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of antisemitism in state legislatures. These efforts demonstrate that enduring is not a passive act — it is a proactive, determined stance against those who seek to harm us.

Unity and self-defense: The Holocaust and Oct. 7 remind us of the perils of statelessness and the necessity of a strong, secure Israel. The State of Israel is an indispensable guarantor of Jewish safety. Its ability to defend itself and to serve as a refuge for Jews worldwide is central to our collective strength.

But this moment also demands unity. The divisions that occasionally splinter Jewish communities must be set aside in the face of existential threats. From the exiles of antiquity to the pogroms of the shtetl, from the Holocaust to the atrocities of Oct. 7, history has shown that Jewish survival depends on our ability to stand together.

Hope amid the ashes: To return to Krakow, a place steeped in Jewish history and scarred by unspeakable horrors, is to confront both the depths of our suffering and the heights of our resilience. As I stood at Birkenau, I was reminded of the enduring spirit of our people. We are here. We endure. And we will not be cowed.

But hope alone is not enough. It must be paired with action — political advocacy, education and the relentless pursuit of justice. Our history is one of perseverance and progress. We have faced darker days and emerged stronger. As I reflect on the mission to Krakow and the work that still lies ahead, I am inspired by the unity and determination of our community. Let us ensure that this moment of reckoning becomes a turning point for global Jewry — a moment when we not only endured but rose to build a stronger, safer future. ■

William C. Daroff is CEO of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.