

# Ep. 20: Why the West must fight Muslim Brotherhood influence

written by Misgav Institute | 26.11.2025

In this episode of Mideast Horizons, Lahav Harkov speaks with Haras Rafiq, Vice President of the Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy, about ISGAP's new report on the Muslim Brotherhood's strategic expansion into the West. Rafiq traces the Brotherhood's evolution from Hassan al-Banna to Yusuf al-Qaradawi and outlines Tamkeen, its long-term doctrine for gaining institutional influence in liberal democracies. He explains how the movement pursues political entry, narrative control, and the reshaping of Muslim communities, and further discusses how groups such as CAIR emerged from this ecosystem. He warns that antisemitism framed as anti-Zionism has become a key recruitment tool and that Islamist ideas have spread in part because Western societies hesitate to confront them.

Rafiq highlights Qatar's central role as the Brotherhood's remaining state patron, from Al Jazeera's dual-track messaging to extensive funding of U.S. universities and describes how ISGAP investigations have begun exposing these soft-power networks. He addresses President Trump's directive to explore designating Brotherhood chapters as foreign terrorist organizations and discusses methods for effectively pushing back against Islamist influence.

In the introductory segment, Lahav maps the history of the Muslim Brotherhood in Israel, tracing its early influence under the Grand Mufti, the emergence of Hamas from its Gaza branch, and the later split between the Northern Branch and the Southern Branch (Ra'am) inside Israel. She explains how the Southern Branch positioned itself as a pragmatic political actor while the Northern Branch was banned for its ties to Hamas and discusses the recent uproar over Islamic Movement charities accused of funneling funds to Hamas-linked entities.



**Spotify:**

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/0gNfCcZvCLp43dXMSrqfp5?si=A9nQTVn3ScCGxEhaWMMKeA&nd=1&dlsi=cb3d6e6bc17c4565>



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# Ep. 19: Benny Gantz Speaks Out: Gaza, the Palestinians, Politics - and Securing Israel's Future

written by Misgav Institute | 26.11.2025

Former Israeli Chief of Staff, Defense Minister and Alternate Prime Minister **Benny Gantz** joins *Mideast Horizons* for one of his most candid and comprehensive interviews since October 7. In this wide-ranging conversation with **Asher Fredman**, Gantz lays out his **new security doctrine**, insists that Hamas will be disarmed, and discusses Israel's evolving strategy toward **Iran, the Palestinian Authority**, and the **Abraham Accords**.

Gantz breaks down:

- Why Israel cannot return to the **pre-October 7 security paradigm**.
- Whether an **international force** can really demilitarize Gaza.
- What happens if Hamas refuses to disarm.
- The day after **Mahmoud Abbas** and the looming crisis in the West Bank.
- How Israel should prepare for a **regional defense alliance** with Saudi Arabia and its Abraham Accords partners.
- The strategic lessons from past Gaza wars — and why Israel must adopt a new **“strategic initiative” pillar**.
- The future of U.S.-Israel military cooperation and debates over American aid.
- Israeli politics and the need for a State Commission of Inquiry into the events that led to October 7.

Direct, thoughtful, and at times blunt, Gantz offers a rare inside look into his thinking about **the next five years**, the risks ahead, and what it will take to secure Israel's future.



**Spotify:**

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## **Ep. 18: Setting the record straight on Iraq, Israel and neoconservatism**

written by Misgav Institute | 26.11.2025

In this episode of Mideast Horizons, Lahav Harkov speaks with Dr. David Wurmser, who served as senior advisor to U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney and special assistant to Under Secretary of State John Bolton. Wurmser offers a rare, behind-the-scenes portrait of Cheney during the Iraq War, recalling his frustration with policymakers who distanced themselves from the conflict when it became politically difficult, and his enduring sense of duty toward the soldiers serving there.

Wurmser reflects on divisions within the Bush administration that shaped the Iraq War strategy. The conflict between advocates of overwhelming force and those favoring a lighter footprint, which relied on supporting a local or exile Iraqi army to take the lead, left the United States caught between conflicting approaches,

ultimately harming the war effort. He critiques the broader American impulse to pursue rapid social transformation in the Middle East, arguing that genuine reform must be gradual and organic. Addressing claims that Israel encouraged the invasion, he stresses that Israeli officials “vehemently opposed” it and repeatedly warned Washington that Iran, not Iraq, was the true danger.

Exploring the intellectual roots of neoconservatism, Wurmser traces its evolution from the moral clarity of the Reagan era to its post-Cold War misapplication, suggesting that one of the Iraq War’s central flaws was “overconfidence in the Iraqi people.” Finally, he revisits the much-debated “Clean Break” paper he co-authored for Benjamin Netanyahu in 1996, clarifying that it did not advocate an American war but called for Israel to assume greater strategic self-reliance and act as a confident, integrated Western ally. “It was the inversion of what people say it was,” he concludes, arguing that Israel had matured from a state in need of protection to a strategic pillar of the West.



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## **Ep. 17: Fighting Antisemitism in Zohran Mamdani’s New York - with Jonathan Greenblatt**

written by Misgav Institute | 26.11.2025

<https://youtu.be/4x-FDWDBxQo>

In this episode of Mideast Horizons, Lahav speaks with Jonathan Greenblatt, CEO of the Anti-Defamation League about the rise of antisemitism and political extremism in the U.S. following Zohran Mamdani's election as mayor of New York. Greenblatt calls Mamdani's victory historic but troubling, highlighting his record as an anti-Zionist activist who has celebrated convicted terrorists and promoted boycotts of Israel.

Greenblatt details the ADL's response: a public tip line for antisemitic incidents, expanded research tracking hate in New York, and a "Mamdani Monitor" to follow municipal policies and appointments affecting Jewish residents. He warns that antisemitic incidents are at record highs, and that Jewish and Israeli New Yorkers increasingly fear expressing their identity in public.

He stresses the ADL's nonpartisan mission, noting its work with and criticism of both Republican and Democratic administrations, and highlights the challenges of combating online hate amplified by social media algorithms.

In the first segment, Lahav recounts the saga of Israel's Military Advocate General, who is accused of ordering the leak of a video showing alleged abuse of a Palestinian detainee at Sde Teiman prison. The 2024 release sparked global outrage and debate over Hamas prisoners. Lahav explains how police found she had orchestrated the leak, leading to her suspension, disappearance, and arrest, and how the scandal has shaken confidence in Israel's legal system.



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# Ep. 16: The War for the Future of MAGA - with Josh Hammer

written by Misgav Institute | 26.11.2025

In this powerful episode of Mideast Horizons, Lahav Harkov and Asher Fredman speak with Josh Hammer, senior editor-at-large at Newsweek, syndicated columnist, and author of *Israel and Civilization: The Fate of the Jewish Nation and the Destiny of the West*. Hammer dissects the growing ideological rift inside the MAGA movement—between conservatives who see America and Israel as joint pillars of Judeo-Christian civilization, and a “woke Right” drifting toward isolationism, conspiracy theories, and even antisemitism.

He discusses how voices such as Tucker Carlson and Candace Owens have turned their platforms into vehicles for anti-Israel narratives, and why their attacks on Christian Zionists reveal a deeper cultural struggle over faith, truth, and the moral foundations of the West. Hammer argues that defending the U.S.-Israel alliance today means defending the very biblical inheritance that underpins Western civilization, and suggests a new path forward for Jewish-Christian solidarity and combatting antisemitism.

In a moving reflection, Hammer speaks about his late friend Charlie Kirk, describing his courage, loyalty, and deep biblical faith, and the importance of carrying forward his legacy of building bridges between Jews and Christians. He also discusses Candace Owens’ libelous claim that he had foreknowledge of Kirk’s assassination.

In the first segment, Lahav and Asher discuss the ceasefire breakdown in Gaza, Jordanian King Abdullah’s remarks about the limits of a proposed Muslim-led stabilization force, and the realities of Hamas’s continuing control over much of the population. They analyze the Qatari regime’s deep ideological support for terrorism as evidenced by the recently surfaced posts of Qatari spokesman Majed al-Ansari, and explore the risks that Gaza could become a new front in a wider Middle East conflict. Finally, they turn to Israeli politics, assessing the Netanyahu government’s fragile coalition, the looming Haredi draft crisis, and the early maneuvering ahead of possible elections.



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# Ep. 15: The Battle for Gaza's Future - with Ahmed Fouad Alkhatib

written by Misgav Institute | 26.11.2025

In this gripping episode of *Mideast Horizons*, Asher Fredman speaks with Ahmed Fouad Alkhatib, a Gazan analyst and reform advocate now based in Washington, DC, whose family has lived through every stage of Gaza's tragedy. Ahmed shares his deeply personal story of loss, survival, and determination to speak truth about Hamas's rule and the grim reality facing ordinary Gazans after the ceasefire.

He describes how Hamas has reasserted its control through brutal retribution and violence, even as Gaza lies in ruins. Al-Khatib offers a sobering assessment of the group's enduring power and the challenge of bringing about its disarmament, despite growing opposition to its rule. He outlines his plan for an effective international stabilization force — with real authority, extensive capabilities, and broad international backing — as the most realistic path toward restoring order.

Looking ahead, he argues that Gaza's future depends not on slogans but on a new mindset of radical pragmatism: a turn from resistance to rebuilding, from victimhood to responsibility, and from endless conflict toward a vision of

coexistence and renewal.



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# Ep. 14: What Happens Next in Gaza?

written by Misgav Institute | 26.11.2025

On this week's episode of Mideast Horizons, Lahav and Asher speak with Prof. Kobi Michael, one of the world's top experts on Israeli-Palestinian relations, who served as a founding Commander of the Israeli-Palestinian security cooperation apparatus. Prof. Michael, who today serves as a Senior Fellow at the Misgav Institute for National Security, argues that Hamas' DNA will not allow it to truly change, and that the terror group has no intention of demilitarizing. He presents a plan for establishing an alternative to Hamas in parts of Gaza, and for working with President Trump to ensure continued close U.S.-Israel cooperation even in the face of renewed terror activity in the Strip.

Prof. Michael also draws on his vast experience to analyze the challenges and threats likely to arise from the Palestinian Authority in Judea and Samaria (West Bank) in the near future. He suggests potential paths forward toward realizing Palestinian national aspirations in a way that does not endanger the security of the State of Israel.

In the first segment, Lahav and Asher discuss overlooked aspects of President Trump's speech to the Israeli Knesset, and of the "Declaration for Enduring Peace and Prosperity" signed by the U.S., Egypt, Qatar, and Turkey at Sharm el-Sheikh. They analyze the current prospects for expanding the Abraham Accords and regional cooperation, including with Indonesia. They also explore the key issues and complexities that will arise in the upcoming stage of negotiations on Phase 2 of President Trump's 20-point plan.



**Spotify:**

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# Ep. 13: Trump's Peace Plan and the Future of U.S.-Israel Relations

written by Misgav Institute | 26.11.2025

In this episode, Lahav and Asher speak with Dr. Victoria Coates, former Deputy National Security Advisor under President Trump and now Vice President of The Heritage Foundation, about the Trump peace plan's chances for success and its impact on the future of U.S.-Israel relations. Dr. Coates explains why the U.S.-Israel alliance is vital to American national security, how to counter antisemitism on college campuses, and what role Israel should play in America's strategy vis-à-vis China. In the first segment, Lahav and Asher delve into Hamas' response to Trump's peace plan and its implications for the next stage of negotiations. They also analyze Israel's successes and failures in handling the PR challenge posed by the latest Gaza flotilla, led by Greta Thunberg, and discuss the potential timeline

for upcoming Israeli elections.



**Spotify:**

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## Ep. 12: Live Episode - What Does the Trump Deal Mean for Israel?

written by Misgav Institute | 26.11.2025

<https://youtu.be/0pO0BLqQnnI>

In this week's episode of *Mideast Horizons*, Asher and Lahav go live after U.S. President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's press conference presenting the 20-point plan to end the war in Gaza. The co-hosts discuss the likelihood of Hamas agreeing to release all of the hostages, the contradictions in the statements about what will happen if Hamas rejects the deal, a possible role for the Palestinian Authority, and the nature of a future international force in Gaza.

While hopeful that the deal will lead to the rapid return of all the hostages, they also express skepticism about the plan's ability to achieve lasting peace, citing Hamas's determination to maintain its power on the ground and the political implications for Israel's government.

This week's guest is Dr. Adi Schwartz, a leading expert on the Israeli-Palestinian arena and co-author (with Dr. Einat Wilf) of the book *The War of Return*. Dr.

Schwartz argues that the Palestinian refugee issue, perpetuated by UNRWA, is a core obstacle to peace and that any plan to end the war in Gaza will not be effective without addressing this issue.

Schwartz emphasizes UNRWA's artificial inflation of the number of Palestinian refugees to over six million, compared to fewer than 10,000 actual Palestinian refugees under international refugee-status criteria. He contends that this status fuels the Palestinian narrative of a "right of return" to Israel, preventing acceptance of Israel's existence as a Jewish state. Schwartz argues that without ideological change, reconstruction efforts will only lead to further conflict.



**Spotify:**

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# Ep. 11 - Countdown to snapback sanctions on Iran

written by Misgav Institute | 26.11.2025

<https://youtu.be/pL9nM4svvHE>

This week's episode features sanctions expert Richard Goldberg, who recently left the Trump administration, discussing the upcoming snapback sanctions on Iran. Rich explains the process that is set to take place later this month, and the significance of restoring international sanctions on Iran's nuclear and missile programs. The conversation delves into the strategic and economic impact of sanctions on Iran, stripping Iran of international legitimacy for its nuclear and

missile activities and weakening its economy. The episode also explores the importance of US-Israel missile defense cooperation, and why the U.S. can't seem to quit cooperation with Qatar.



**Spotify:**

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