Ep. 37: The Arab Case for Israel – Hussain Abdul-Hussain on Hezbollah, Iran & Peace

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https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g3GWdqWaP3o&list=PLxW7fsl7ssiXgCfAVIUqlVwTUyiTtNqj7&index=9

In this episode of Misgav Mideast Horizons, hosts Asher Fredman and Lahav Harkov are joined by Hussain Abdul-Hussain, Research Fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies and author of The Arab Case for Israel, for a wide-ranging conversation on Lebanon, Hezbollah, Iran, Iraq, Shia Islam, and the future of Arab-Israeli peace.

Born to an Iraqi father and Lebanese mother, Hussain grew up between Saddam Hussein's Iraq and civil-war Lebanon, later becoming a journalist in Beirut before moving to Washington. He shares the personal journey that led him from anti-Israel slogans to a radically different conclusion: that Israel is not the source of the Arab world's problems, but a potential asset for Arab prosperity, stability, and peace.

Hussain explains why Lebanon has never fully recovered its sovereignty since the rise of armed factions operating outside the state, from the PLO to Hezbollah. He argues that Hezbollah has kept Lebanon trapped as a hostage state, and that the current moment may represent a rare opportunity for Lebanon to disarm Hezbollah, restore sovereignty, and move toward peace with Israel. He also offers sharp criticism of the regional and international actors — including Iran, France, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt — whose policies he says have often held Lebanon back.

The conversation also dives into **Iraq's future after Saddam**, the rise of Iraqi patriotism, the limits of Iranian influence among Arab Shia, and why Iraq's Shia parties are increasingly cautious about appearing to serve Tehran's interests. Hussain explains why corruption, weak rule of law, and oil dependency remain major obstacles to Iraq attracting serious investment and becoming a stable regional power.

In one of the episode’s most important segments, Hussain challenges common assumptions about **Shia Islam, Iran, Jerusalem, and Israel**. He argues that the Islamic Republic imported ideological ideas from the Muslim Brotherhood and politicized Shia theology in a way that was foreign to traditional Shia thought. He explains why Khomeini’s revolution transformed Israel into a Shia political enemy — and why many Arab Shia, especially in Iraq, still do not accept Iran’s doctrine of rule by the jurist.

In the opening segment, Asher and Lahav analyze the latest developments across the region: Iran’s missile and drone attacks on the UAE and Oman, Israel’s security support for the UAE, the failure of Europe’s “de-escalation” reflex, the difficulties in negotiations with Lebanon, and the growing possibility of renewed escalation in Gaza as Hamas refuses to disarm.

👉 **Spotify**: https://open.spotify.com/episode/0gNfCcZvCLp43dXMSrqfp5?si=A9nQTVn3ScCGxEhaWMmKeA&nd=1&dlsi=cb3d6e6bc17c4565

👉 **Apple:** https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/countdown-to-snapback-sanctions-on-iran/id1822734204?i=1000727151332