Biden’s deceptive hostage deal threatens Israel’s existence

written by Asher Fredman | 03.06.2024

The deal laid out by US President Joe Biden in his May 31 address on the war in Gaza is disingenuous and disastrous. His remarks reflect the failed paradigms, illusions, and wishful thinking that led to October 7. The plan he described, if implemented, would create an existential threat to the State of Israel.

President Biden’s deceptive and dangerous claims are numerous. Here are a few of the most egregious: The US president began his remarks by declaring that his goal is an end to the war, “one that… creates a better ‘day after’ in Gaza without Hamas in power…” However, the rest of his speech included no concrete steps or road maps for removing Hamas from power. The opposite was true. The proposed outline would ensure that Hamas remained in power and was able to rebuild its military strength.

President Biden assured that “Palestinian civilians would return to their homes… in all areas of Gaza, including the North.” He seemed to be claiming that it would only be civilians that would return to northern Gaza. But the fact is that there would be no way to ensure that Hamas fighters did not return there as well. These fighters aren’t wearing uniforms and their guns are hidden in the hundreds of tunnels that still exist in northern Gaza.

With this plan, Hamas would quickly reassert its control over every inch of the Strip.

Biden then made a statement of unparalleled chutzpah: “The people of Israel should know they can make this offer without any further risk to their own security because they’ve already devastated Hamas forces over the past eight months…” The reality is that Hamas still has many intact fighters and senior leadership – even if it is now operating as smaller terror cells rather than battalions, or laying low until the IDF withdraws.

Once reconstruction began in Gaza, the Islamist terror group would quickly rebuild its capabilities. The idea that leaving Hamas in power does not constitute a severe risk to Israel’s security, especially to those Israelis in the western Negev

region, is ludicrous.

President Biden suggested that the United States would "help forge a diplomatic resolution, one that ensures Israel's security" and that "with a deal, a rebuilding of Gaza will begin… in a manner that does not allow Hamas to re-arm."

He ignores the inconvenient truth that diplomatic resolutions have failed time and again. They failed to prevent Hezbollah from greatly increasing its arsenal following the Second Lebanon War – and they failed to prevent the massive smuggling of weapons to Hamas from Egypt following the previous rounds of fighting in Gaza.

Likewise, the idea that with Hamas still in power, reconstruction could take place without enabling the terrorist group to rearm, is simply laughable. The current war in Gaza has revealed the far-reaching extent to which supplies that entered Gaza over the years, including for humanitarian purposes, were used first and foremost by Hamas, to build its terror infrastructure.

With regard to those who would oppose such a plan, Biden claimed that "the hostages are not a priority for them."

This was a false and outrageous statement.

The fact that there are those who recognize that leaving Hamas in power will destroy Israel's deterrence and encourage countless murderous attacks and kidnappings of Israelis does not mean that they care any less about the hostages. They simply believe that the efforts to free the hostages must take place on the basis of a pragmatic understanding of the Middle East, and of the psychopathic but intelligent enemy that Israel faces.

It is important to realize that while Hamas may be willing to release some of the hostages, it will never release all of them, as they serve as a human shield for its leadership. Under the deal that Biden describes, a ceasefire will continue, and Hamas will remain in power, as long as negotiations over the second stage of the hostage release continue – negotiations that can drag on for years.

Biden then assured that the "United States will always ensure that Israel has what it needs to defend itself."

Let there be no mistake, however. Biden did not say that he supports Israel's right

to destroy the genocidal terrorist organizations bent on its destruction.

He said that Israel will have the right to shoot down rockets fired at its cities, while its citizens hide in shelters. This is the Biden doctrine with regards to Israel: Defense, yes. Offense, no.

President Biden concluded his remarks with the sentence: “It’s time for this war to end and for the ‘day after’ to begin.” This sentence encapsulated the failed paradigms that led to October 7. The idea that if we just stop fighting, the ‘day after’ can begin, is entirely false.

If the fighting stops with Hamas in power, the ‘day after’ will never begin. We will simply return to October 6. Only this time, with zero deterrence, an emboldened ring of terror along all of Israel’s borders, and large swaths of Israel’s territory in the South and North abandoned due to the ongoing terror threats.

To be fair – the degree to which Biden is accurately describing an outline that Israel proposed, and to what degree he is putting his own spin on the deal, is unclear. If an Israeli leader believes that it is necessary and correct to let Hamas win in order to return some of the hostages, then that leader should stand up and say so clearly.

The dilemma is a heart-wrenching one.

The fact is that the deal, as described by President Biden, would create an existential threat to Israel’s very existence. It would lead to countless terror attacks, kidnappings, instability, and war. Israel’s decisions must be based on a clear-sighted recognition of reality, however harsh.

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