

Veni, vidi, vici

written by David M. Weinberg | 27.06.2025

The masterful and without-question successful assault on Iran has restored Israel's deterrent power and vastly improved its strategic situation. The fact that the US closely partnered with Israel to (apparently) finish off the three main Iranian nuclear-bomb development sites further enhances Israel's muscular reputation and enriches the regional strategic architecture in Israel's favor.

With Iran firmly defeated (even though it claims otherwise), broader regional partnerships on the Abraham Accords model can now ensue. Mainly this means some degree of Saudi-Israeli public reconciliation, and maybe even accords with Syria and Lebanon, too.

As Julius Caesar wrote in a letter to the Roman Senate after a swift and decisive victory in battle: Veni, vidi, vici – I came, I saw, I conquered. This famous military pronouncement can certainly be applied to the Israel-Iran war. Israel flew more than 300 air sorties over the Islamic Republic without interference, it had a clear and complete window into every Iranian nuclear and missile site, and it rapidly conquered them.

Veni, vidi, vici – amen.

Indeed, it is perfectly appropriate to celebrate the near-miraculous victories of Operation Rising Lion and to enjoy the strategic breather bought by the prowess of the Israel Defense Forces and related intelligence agencies.

The war against Iran is far from over

The fact that wars against radical Islam and the evil regime in Tehran are not over – and that struggles against other radical and threatening actors in the region like Turkey may be ahead – should not detract from this moment of triumph.

THE DIFFICULT question that I have been asked by every person in the world over the past two weeks is this: How can it be that the Israeli military and political leadership that so craftily planned this offensive and so effectively struck at Iran and previously at its fearsome Hezbollah proxy force in Lebanon, could have collapsed so stunningly before the much smaller and weaker Hamas army in Gaza?

Why were the IDF and Shin Beit (Israel Security Agency) astonishingly unaware of the more than 700 kilometers of attack tunnels and bunkers dug by Hamas? Why did they have no real-time intelligence of the Hamas invasion plan of October 7, 2023? Why did the military have almost no defensive forces at the ready along

the border with Gaza? Why did it have no battle plans or troops truly trained for the re-conquering of Gaza and obliteration of the savage terrorist group? Why has it taken so long – 21 months and counting! – to defang Hamas?

Alas, the sad answer to these many hard questions can be supplied in one word: Oslo.

The Oslo “peace process” birthed by Shimon Peres and Yossi Beilin alongside Yasser Arafat blinded Israel to the threat of genocidal Palestinianism.

The overpowering Oslo narrative was that Palestinians were on the path to partnership with Israel; that with tens of billions of dollars of Israeli and global support they would build a society of prosperity and peace; that with the guns Israel gave them, the Palestinian “Authority” would impose standards of democracy and stability.

Therefore, there was no longer any need for Israel to plan for all-out war with the Palestinians. There might be the need for occasional IDF operations to interdict residual Palestinian terrorism or the need to buy off Fatah and its rival Hamas faction with funds (such as from the EU or Qatar), but no Palestinian grouping could or would dare mount an existential-level assault on Israel.

No need to fear this, no need to watch for this, no need to prepare for this! There certainly was no need to contemplate permanent deconstruction of the deleterious Palestinian mini-states emerging in Judea and Samaria (the West Bank) and Gaza. Or so the thinking went.

ISRAELI MILITARY and political echelons whole hog swallowed the “peace with the Palestinians is upon us” paradigm. World leaders joined the party, driving a discourse of Palestinian purity, of holy Palestinian rights in which their demand for independent statehood was sacrosanct – while ignoring the poisonous, denialist-of-Israel vector of Palestinian politics.

This officious template filtered out any variant views, subjugated any different thinking, snowed under any preventative military planning, stripped IDF ground forces of budgets and personnel, and otherwise routed preparedness for confronting a Palestinian “enemy.” Yes, a Palestinian enemy, not a peace partner. This is what left Israeli leadership unsuspecting and thoroughly ill equipped to battle Hamas. I fear that even today Israel is conceptually unready to confront the Palestinian monster forces amassing in Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria (with Iranian backing).

In contrast, Israeli leaders and their military-intelligence establishment have never entertained any doubts about Iran (and its non-Palestinian Hezbollah proxy force in Lebanon).

For more than 45 years since the Islamic revolution, Iran has been on a path of inevitable confrontation with Israel, seeking the annihilation of Israel out of clearly articulated theological-eschatological imperatives and hegemonic aspirations. It was always clear to Israel that Iran’s military and nuclear programs

would have to be interdicted by the Jewish state, if not by global powers.

About Iran, there were no warmhearted, mushy misconceptions.

Therefore, Israel prepared accordingly. Its intelligence forces spent decades and millions of workforce hours penetrating every nook and cranny of the wicked Iranian regime and its military-nuclear juggernaut. Israel knew how and where to target every rogue Iranian and Hezbollah leader with missiles, drones, and exploding beepers. Israeli air force pilots had trained for years for the grueling 1,600-kilometer flight to Tehran.

But again, on the front much closer to home, on the Palestinian front where peace was divined to develop, no such provisions were made. War was simply out-of-mind, and Israel was caught off guard in every way – militarily, diplomatically, and societally.

IN MY view, the fact that Israeli society and the Israeli military recovered quickly from the shock of October 7 and have fought ferociously and with good success against Hamas is a greater miracle than the wonders of Rising Lion.

Israel's brave conscript soldiers and reservists, along with their middle-ranking commanders (the lieutenant colonels and colonels on the battlefield with their troops), are the greatest heroes of this generation (not to mention their families at home.) These valiant Israelis are future leaders of Israel.

Therefore, now is the time to repair the errors of Oslo, to fix the blindness and blunders that led to October 7, and to carry forward from the victories over Iran to convincing victory over Hamas.

Make no mistake: Hamas retains significant residual power in Gaza. As long as this is the case, there will be no reconstruction for Palestinians there, and no security for Israel. No foreign government or NGO will enter Gaza to rebuild, and no Israeli will return to the once-magnificent towns and farms in southern Israel on the Gaza periphery.

There is much more work to do destroying Hamas's terror attack tunnels, eliminating Hamas leaders, extinguishing Hamas as the ruling authority in Gaza, and forcing the release of hostages. Given the right military approach and sufficient diplomatic backing, these are not impossible goals.

Now is not the time to rush headlong into a ceasefire with Hamas that will bring neither immediate hostage release nor long-term security to Israel, nor real relief to Palestinians.

There is a broader point to be made here. As Einat Wilf has written, "Victories in the place of ceasefires with Palestinians are necessary for the unconditional defeat of jihadism against Israel. Only with such defeat will the Palestinians ever be able to direct their energies to creating better lives for themselves, in tandem with Israel."

The leaders of Israel and the US may have their political reasons for topping their successes against Iran with a feat of instantaneous ceasefire in Gaza, but I

question the wisdom of this. Vanquishing Hamas is no less necessary and feasible than the setback of Iran. Published in The Jerusalem Post, June 27, 2025.