



‘Hudna’-winked: No ‘ceasefire’ – and what Trump can do

AFTER 14 months of combat on Israel’s borders, no “ceasefire” actually exists, contrary to almost every news report in the world. As pundits cover the complexities of the Middle East, news agencies interpret a lull in hostilities as an “armistice” or a “ceasefire,” which brings to mind to the armistice that led to the end of hostilities in World War I. The war terminated on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month (November 11, 1918), paving the way to the Versailles Peace Treaty and the genesis of the League of Nations.

However, the world of journalism and diplomacy ignore the clearly enunciated message conveyed in Arabic in Arab media: That the Israel-Hezbollah “ceasefire” announced on is no more than a *hudna* (a pause intended only for rearmament), or a *tahdiya* (a temporary halt in hostile activity which can be violated at any time), or at best a *hudaybiyyah* (no fighting for 10 years named after the Treaty of al-Hudaybiyyah in 628 AD), and certainly not a *sulh* – the Arabic expression for a cessation of hostile activity ahead of making peace and reconciliation with an enemy.

The authoritative *Islamic Encyclopedia* (published in London in 1922) defines a “*hudna*” as a “temporary treaty” which can be approved or abrogated by Islamic religious leaders, depending on whether or not it serves the interests of Islam; a *hudna* cannot last for more than 10 years.

The *hudna, tahdiya* or *hudaybiyyah* offered by Hezbollah and Hamas do not compare to the *sulh* of *al-Mu’ahada* (a peace treaty), such as the treaty that Egypt signed with Israel in 1979 and the treaty that Jordan signed with Israel in 1994.

How many readers remember that three *hudnas* that already occurred between Israel and Gaza? And how many remember what actually occurred during those *hudnas*? Well, the people in Sderot and the Negev region of southern Israel remember clearly. Let us refresh our memories.

From November 26, 2006, until May 15, 2007, a *hudna* between Hamas and Israel went on for almost six months. One cannot ignore the statement made by Hamas five days before the *hudna* went into effect: “Hamas’s military wing will stop the rocket fire when residents evacuate the city of Sderot.” (from November 21, 2006) During that *hudna*, Gazans launched some 315 missiles targeted at Sderot and the western Negev, according to an IDF spokesman.

There was another *hudna* with Gaza that lasted until the end of December 2008, which witnessed 878 rocket attacks from Gaza. And there was a *hudna* from the end of Operation Cast Lead on January 18, 2009, to the first day of Operation Pillar of Defense on November 12, 2012.

During that period, approximately 2,000 rockets and missiles were fired from Gaza, sending a million Israelis to shelters. From the end of Pillar of Defense through June 30, 2014, some 300 aerial attacks were launched from Gaza towards southern Israel during yet another tenuous *hudna*.

What country would tolerate one missile fired into its territory – and agree to only a *hudna, tahdiya* and *hudaybiyyah* that will yield yet more rocket attacks by terrorist groups? Why then does Israel embrace what is no more than a *hudna*?

From sources in the offices of the Israeli prime minister, defense ministry and foreign ministry, there is one primary reason: The November 2024 White House decision to delay the dispatch of vital munitions to Israel, without which it is impossible for the IDF to pursue this war.

You don’t have to be a rocket scientist to know that US President Joe Biden is retiring. What directives would Israel like to see from the returning president, Donald Trump? Here are my top 10:

1. Provide Israel with all the aid and arms it needs to finish the war against Hamas and Hezbollah;
2. Strictly supervise US humanitarian aid to Gaza;
3. Stop funding the Palestinian Authority’s armed forces
4. Enforce the Taylor Force Law and condition aid to the PA on a repeal of the Palestinian ordinance that mandates a salary for life (Slay for Pay) to anyone who murders a Jew.
5. Enforce the US-UNRWA Accord, which conditions US aid to UNRWA on an overhaul of its educational program;
6. Stop US support for the Palestinian school curriculum advocating war against Israel and the Jews;
7. Sanction the offices of Palestinian media outlets that incite war and terror;
8. Demand that the PLO finally cancel its charter to exterminate the Jewish state;
9. Insist that the Palestinian National Council finally ratify the DOP (Declaration of Principles) from the Oslo Accords.
10. Expand the Abraham Accords to stop funding UNRWA and align as many states as possible in the region against Iran. ■



MARC ISRAEL SELLEM

A poster congratulating President-elect Donald Trump in Jerusalem’s German Colony.

condition aid to the PA on a repeal of the Palestinian ordinance that mandates a salary for life (Slay for Pay) to anyone who murders a Jew.

5. Enforce the US-UNRWA Accord, which conditions US aid to UNRWA on an overhaul of its educational program;
6. Stop US support for the Palestinian school curriculum advocating war against Israel and the Jews;
7. Sanction the offices of Palestinian media outlets that incite war and terror;
8. Demand that the PLO finally cancel its charter to exterminate the Jewish state;
9. Insist that the Palestinian National Council finally ratify the DOP (Declaration of Principles) from the Oslo Accords.
10. Expand the Abraham Accords to stop funding UNRWA and align as many states as possible in the region against Iran. ■

David Bedein has conducted independent news investigations of the PLO and UNRWA since 1987. He is the author of UNRWA: Roadblock to Peace and Genesis of the Palestinian Authority, and offers Zoom sessions presenting his 26 films shot on location in UNRWA camps. Details on donations, films and research at <https://israelbehindthenews.com/>