

Bundeskanzleramt
Bundeskanzler
Chancellor of the Federal
Republic of Germany
Freidrich Merz
Willy-Brandt-Starße 1
10557 Berlin

Your Excellency,

For nearly two centuries, the world's democracies have, with very few exceptions, refrained from fighting each other. Instead, they have stood shoulder to shoulder in the face of the forces of extreme, dark religious fanaticism — forces that despise freedom, reject tolerance, and seek to replace democratic governance with terror and coercion.

The fruits of such fanaticism have been bitter and bloody. We saw them during the Second Intifada, when the Palestinian Authority, led by Yasser Arafat, initiated violence that claimed the lives of 1,300 Jewish and Arab Israelis. And we experienced them again on October 7, 2023, when Israel endured the single deadliest day in its modern history: 1,200 Jewish and Arab Israelis were brutally murdered in an unprovoked and barbaric assault by Hamas. These were not acts of political protest — they were acts of terror, with the stated goal of the annihilation of Israel as a democratic state and the destruction of its people.

Israel today is a robust democracy. Like all democracies, it is home to passionate political debate between the government and its opposition. Such debate is a strength, not a weakness — it is the lifeblood of democratic resilience.

The Israel Defense and Security Forum (IDSF) is a **non-political** 50,000 member organization of which many are retired Generals and senior officers from the Army, Navy, Air Force, intelligence, police and security services professionals. Our work is focused exclusively on matters of national security. We are united not by partisan allegiance, but by a common mission: safeguarding the security, sovereignty, and continued existence of the State of Israel.

It is in this context that we must express — with both respect and urgency — that your recent decision to halt the sale of certain weapons to Israel represents a serious misstep. It appears you have been drawn into an internal Israeli political dispute — a trap — rather than basing your position on Israel's actual policy as approved by its cabinet. Despite the media spin, the official cabinet decision does not call for the occupation of Gaza for settlement purposes. Rather, it affirms three principles that your government has publicly supported in the past, and continues to support today:

1. Hamas can no longer be allowed to rule Gaza.
2. Hamas must be disarmed and can no longer be allowed to threaten Israel.
3. All Israeli hostages — men, women, and children — who are being starved and held in inhumane conditions, must be released immediately, along with those hostages who they have already killed.

These objectives are not only consistent with Israel's right to self-defense under international law, they align fully with the moral and strategic goals shared by democracies worldwide — including Germany.

However, by halting these weapons sales, Germany sends an unintended and deeply dangerous signal: that mass terror, hostage-taking, and the deliberate use of human shields is an effective path to political achievement. Make no mistake — this decision will be celebrated as a victory by Hamas, both in Gaza and abroad. It will embolden not only the leadership of Hamas, but also their sympathizers in the Middle East and in Europe, where extremist networks are already working to undermine democratic societies from within.

The weapons you have chosen to withhold are not tools of aggression; they are tools of defense and precision. They enable Israel to neutralize threats with minimal harm to civilians — a capability that is critical in a conflict where Hamas has built its military infrastructure within and underneath the civilian population. Reducing Israel's access to such means will not save lives; it will prolong the conflict, increase suffering on all sides, and make eventual peace more elusive.

Germany and Israel share a unique and historic relationship, forged in the aftermath of the Holocaust and anchored in mutual commitment to democratic values, human dignity, and the rule of law. This relationship has been tested in the past and has endured because it is based not on convenience, but on principle. Your call for a partial arms embargo risks weakening this foundation at a time when both our nations — and all democracies — must be united in the face of global instability.

In such a moment, leadership requires sophistication. It requires resisting the traps of political misrepresentation. It requires making decisions that strengthen the alliance of free nations, rather than handing propaganda victories to those who oppose everything our societies stand for.

We therefore urge you to reconsider your decision — not only for the sake of Israel's security, but for the credibility and unity of the democratic world. The message you send today will be heard far beyond Berlin and Jerusalem. It will be read in Tehran, in Damascus in Beirut, in Gaza — and in capitals across Europe and the Middle East. Let that message be one of resolve, solidarity, and clarity: that democracies will never abandon each other in the face of terror.

We remain committed to dialogue and cooperation and would welcome the opportunity to engage with your office to discuss how Germany and Israel can work together to protect innocent lives and advance lasting security.

Respectfully,

Ret. Brigadier General Amir Avivi

Ret. Major General Meir Klifi

Ret. Major General Gershon Hacohen

Ret. Head of Department in Shin Bet
Yossi Amarosi

Ret. Lieutenant Colonel Yaron Buskila

Ret. Brigadier General Oren Solomon

Ret. Major General Jerry Gershon

Ret. Supreme in Shin Bet Moshe Puzyalev

Ret. Vice Admiral Eliezer Marum

Ret. Head of Counter-intelligence Department
Shin Bet Yaakov A

Former Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon

Ret. Senior Mossad officer Jack

Ret. Lieutenant Colonel Mordechai Yogev

Ret. Ambassador Eli Yerushalmi

Ret. Major General Harel Knafo

Ret. Brigadier General Giora Martonovits M.D.

Ret. Captain Navy Ezra Mena

Ret. Ambassador Eli Yerushalmi

Ret. Brigadier General Navy Alex Eyal

Ret. Colonel Shin Bet Amit Assa

Ret. Colonel Gidi Levanon

Ret. Colonel Tal Braun

Ret. Brigadier General Erez Winner

Ret. Brigadier General in Police Dubi Yung

Ret. Lieutenant Colonel Tal Nir

Ret. Ambassador Daniel Saban

Ret. Colonel Yoram Levran

Ret. Lieutenant Colonel Boaz Kukia

Ret. Superintendent Police Shosh Raban

Ret. Brigadier General Nati Cohen

Ret. Major Yifa Segel, Adv

Ret. Colonel Oren Zini

Ret. Brigadier General Yossi Kuperwasser

Ret. Brigadier General Mossad General "M"

Ret. Air Force Abraham Assael

Professor Ilan Reiss

Ret. Lieutenant Colonel Maurice Hirsch

Ret. Ambassdor Yoram Ettinger

Ret. Brigadier General Moshe Peled