

# A Yom Hashoah Message, from Disgust to Hope

by [Robert Satloff \(/experts/robert-satloff\)](#)

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



[Robert Satloff \(/experts/robert-satloff\)](#)

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Articles & Testimony

**The Gaza war has inspired prominent Arab media outlets and statesmen to come up with vile new forms of Holocaust denialism, but other voices offer a glimmer of hope.**

**O**n Yom Hashoah 2024, I have two messages. First, at this time of terrible, tragic conflict, let's remember how Middle East actors warp Holocaust memory for political purposes. Take, for example, [this al-Jazeera clip \(https://www.aljazeera.com/program/newsfeed/2024/3/3/israeli-protester-says-israel-is-behaving-like-nazi-germany\)](https://www.aljazeera.com/program/newsfeed/2024/3/3/israeli-protester-says-israel-is-behaving-like-nazi-germany) featuring a wacky Israeli expressing fringe views equating Israel with the Nazis and urging ICC criminal warrants for Israeli leaders.

He is shown demonstrating—something that would never be allowed in Qatar, of course—with images of a large crowd of anti-government protestors, maliciously suggesting that others share his looney-toon view. Beneath is al-Jazeera's 1984-style claim to "truth and transparency." It's not easy to hit the trifecta of Holocaust denialism, Hamas political advocacy, and gross political misrepresentation, but al-Jazeera has perfected the formula.

One even finds this warped, inverted view of "Jews-as-Nazis" among Israel's peace partners. An excellent example is [this breathtakingly shocking \(https://x.com/MEMRIReports/status/1786532187367416238\)](https://x.com/MEMRIReports/status/1786532187367416238) April 22 televised interview with the urbane, sophisticated secretary-general of the Arab League, Ahmed Aboul Gheit, captured by @MEMRIReports.

In it, this former foreign minister of Egypt says not only that Israel, like Nazi Germany, lost any right to self-defense, but that the soul and conscience of the Jewish people went up in the ashen smoke of the Holocaust. It is difficult to imagine something more vile said more matter-of-factly by an Arab official regularly welcomed into the foreign ministries of world capitals.

But my second message is one of hope and promise. This is my annual reminder that, at the darkest moment of Jewish—perhaps human—history, Arabs [made a choice \(https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/among-righteous-lost-stories-holocausts-long-reach-arab-lands\)](https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/among-righteous-lost-stories-holocausts-long-reach-arab-lands).

Some made a choice to join the perpetrators, for example, helping the Nazi SS in Tunisia go door-to-door looking for Jews. Some made a choice to be bystanders, watching (often cheering) as Jews were rounded up for forced labor.

And some, like the courageous but long-overlooked Tunisians [Khaled Abdulwahhab \(https://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/28/opinion/honoring-all-who-saved-jews.html\)](https://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/28/opinion/honoring-all-who-saved-jews.html) and [Si Ali Sakkat \(https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/muslims-who-saved-jews-from-holocaust-commemorated-in-i-am-your-protector-campiagn-a6851356.html\)](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/muslims-who-saved-jews-from-holocaust-commemorated-in-i-am-your-protector-campiagn-a6851356.html), made a choice to protect, defend, or rescue Jews facing persecution and possible death. They are—and certainly ought to be—among the Righteous. (Attention, Yad Vashem.)

Similarly, today, there are brave Palestinian women and men who, in the depths of war and conflict, refuse to join the zero-sum crowd and instead courageously call out for peace and understanding. Imagine if al-Jazeera and other major media would amplify their voice—the voice of [Mohammed Dajani \(https://www.timesofisrael.com/palestinian-professor-who-took-students-to-auschwitz-holocaust-denial-imperils-peace/\)](https://www.timesofisrael.com/palestinian-professor-who-took-students-to-auschwitz-holocaust-denial-imperils-peace/), [Bassem Eid \(https://www.newsweek.com/my-fellow-palestinians-stop-blaming-jewshamas-starving-our-brothers-sisters-gaza-opinion-1875962\)](https://www.newsweek.com/my-fellow-palestinians-stop-blaming-jewshamas-starving-our-brothers-sisters-gaza-opinion-1875962), or others of their ilk—instead of the despicable “Jews-are-Nazis” fringe. That would not quite be a lion-lies-down-with-lamb level miracle but pretty close—it would certainly spark hope about a truly new Middle East. And Yom Hashoah is a perfect day for a little hope.

*Robert Satloff is the Segal Executive Director and Howard P. Berkowitz Chair in U.S. Middle East Policy at The Washington Institute. This article was originally published [on the Times of Israel website \(https://blogs.timesofisrael.com/a-yom-hashohah-message-from-disgust-to-hope/\)](https://blogs.timesofisrael.com/a-yom-hashohah-message-from-disgust-to-hope/). ❖*

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