

Is War in Gaza Unavoidable?

by [Ghaith al-Omari \(/experts/ghaith-al-omari\)](/experts/ghaith-al-omari), [Grant Rumley \(/experts/grant-rumley\)](/experts/grant-rumley)

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A deal brokered by exiled Fatah leader Mohammad Dahlan may have fended off a war this summer, but it raises the likelihood of conflict in the future.

Earlier this summer, it seemed like war in the Gaza Strip was inevitable. Israel had accepted Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud Abbas' request to cut off electricity for the approximately two million Gazans who live under Hamas rule. Abbas hoped to pressure Hamas into relinquishing control over the strip, which was plunged into darkness as the cornered faction faced pressure from Israel and Abbas on one side and Egypt on the other. It seemed only a matter of time before Hamas lashed out. That is, until an unlikely savior emerged: exiled Fatah leader Muhammad Dahlan. The archrival of Abbas rushed to Egypt and brokered an agreement between Cairo and Hamas for an emergency fuel shipment. As the situation calmed, Dahlan announced a new arrangement for Gaza: he would raise money for Gaza abroad. In return, Hamas would allow his supporters to return to Gaza and operate freely there...

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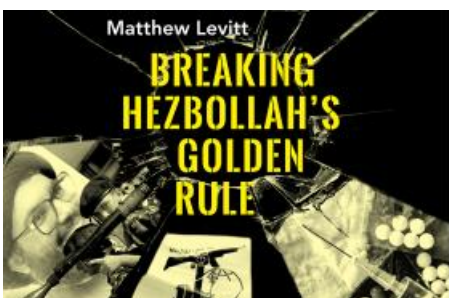
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