

[Parot Kdoshot] Episode 72:

“There is something to be done with Gaza, but on one, absolute, condition: that you are strong” - an in-depth conversation with Ini Abadi about Gaza, about Islam and religious fanaticism and about a possible solution to the never-ending conflict.

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Ini Abadi (right) and Yizhar Be'er

He knows Gaza and Islam better than any other Jewish-Israeli I know. A week after the beginning of the October 2023 war in the South of Israel, I conversed with the former governor of Gaza, an expert in Middle Eastern affairs, Ini Abadi, about out-of-the-box solutions to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that unhinges the Middle East.

Abadi, who helped the founder of Hamas, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, during the inception time of Hamas, analyses the reasons behind the growth of the monster that threatens the existence of the State of Israel. He points out the differences between Hamas and ISIS, the ethos of the Islamic Movement

behind Hamas and explains its brutal treatment of the civilian population in the Otef Aza region, in accordance with the laws of war in the Quran.

Abadi also tells what the Egyptian President, Gamal Abdel Nasser, told the masses before the 1967 Six Day War, that he will do to men and women in Israel after its occupation.

Abadi does not believe that occupying Gaza will lead to the elimination of Hamas. He believes that there are other ways to abolish it. For example, the establishment of two states, Israeli and Palestinian, of the same size, which will be adjusted according to the national narratives and interests of all parties. This plan includes the 'right of return' of Palestinian refugees to the Palestinian state, that will expand into the Sinai desert with the consent of the Egyptians. This plan was presented to the previous government and maybe it was dismissed too quickly.

It seemed like a dream plan for all parties. It required only one small effort: to convince the parties.

Ini Abadi has been a guest on several episodes of Parot Kdoshot in the past. To learn more and better understand the current crisis, I recommend on following this episode to the end, as well as listening or reading the seven-episodes series "Gaza - the unknown story".

Watch/ listen, judge and share!

Be'er: Shalom Ini!

Abadi: Shalom to Ylzhari!

Be'er: Would it be true to say that you founded Hamas?

Abadi: These are false words which I know their origin.

Be'er: Tell me then, how did this monster grow? How did it all begin?

Abadi: In 1971 I arrived in the Gaza Strip as the military commander and governor there. After some time, I realised the way of Ariel Sharon, who developed the war in the Gaza Strip into an art form, involved extreme harm to the Palestinian civilians, and indignant civilians are potential recruits for terrorists. In the absence of hope, the civilian population and the terrorists become one and it was necessary to disentangle them. This is the core of my civic actions there.

I needed help. Any kind of help. For example, there was a shift change in the schools at noon, which resulted in a hundred thousand children on the street. They don't do much, but they throw stones and sand on the Israeli soldiers. One hundred thousand children. What can you do?

At that time, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin approached me and offered to help by establishing the Mujama al-Islamiya ("Islamic Centre"). I allowed him to establish this institution, which was philanthropic, an Ottoman association (A type of NGO).

The help that Yassin has offered was by taking care, supporting and controlling the Palestinian youth`. For me, back in '71, this was very important. I had no other solution for these daily children's demonstrations at noon. And I helped him in building football, basket ball and volleyball fields, bowling alleys and playgrounds. His assistance was by keeping the children in the neighbourhoods.

Be'er: Did this thinking actually propelled this phenomenon, Hamas?

Abadi: Look, I want you to think logically. This was in 1971, Hamas was formed fifteen or so years later. Who could have known that, in the distress of those days in the Gaza Strip, that this organization, the Mujama, a philanthropic organization, would grow into an organization like Hamas.

I agree that, if I had a blind spot, it was that I didn't think about the fact that for a football team or a basketball team, on the way to a game against the West Bank team, on the pitch at the Palestine school, there is something that can be manipulated. There are uniforms, everyone is told: "Turn right! March forwards!!". It's actually...

Be'er: Would you have done things differently today?

Abadi: Indeed, there was a kind of pre-military training in it. But he, Yassin, didn't consider it either. Many years passed before Hamas was formed and when the time came and he wanted to act against the Israeli occupation, and not via sports, he said: "Turn right! march towards the Kalashnikov". But that was fifteen years later. I want to say that I didn't know, because I didn't ask, didn't inquire, whether he had a long-term plan back in '71'.

Be'er: Isn't this the master plan for the Mujama al-Islamiya? of the Muslim Brotherhood?

Abadi: No, absolutely not. This charity was a philanthropic organization for the poor.

Be'er: Could it be a front organization? for all these organizations?

Abadi: Of course...

Be'er: I want to tie this back to the current, tragic, events that are happening these days. Later you studied Islam at the Islamic University in Gaza together with Sheikh Ahmed Yassin.

Abadi: Not at the Islamic university, but the college.

Be'er: Okay. With Ahmed Yassin?

Abadi: True.

Be'er: And he even forbade you from leaving your position, and signed a petition for you to stay as the military governor of Gaza?

Abadi: True!

Be'er: you are, without a doubt, one of the leading experts on Islam, with a deep understanding of the reality in the Gaza Strip, at least during your time as the governor. So, I would like to focus our conversation on three topics:

1. Do you think Hamas can be dismantled by military means?
2. Second, how do we explain what happened in the South and how can we explain the cruelty we saw, how does it fit with the ethos of Hamas and Islam? Is Hamas, as Netanyahu says, the same as- ISIS?
3. And third, what shall we do? Is there an alternative?

So, let's start. There seems to be almost a consensus in the Israeli public and among decision makers that this is the opportunity to defeat Hamas, dismantle it and abolish it completely. Is this possible?

Abadi: First of all, you say Hamas. What is it?

Be'er: Okay, you tell me...

Abadi: Hamas is Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiya or the Islamic Resistance Movement. Islamic Resistance. It is the natural successor to the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. Now, in brief, let's sort things. The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt have a vision for the establishment of the first, out of four, Islamic Caliphate in the Arab world. A Caliphate in the Middle East, excluding North Africa. Creation of one united Islamic bloc is the Caliphate we are talking about.

Be'er: That means, we are not discussing a local national organization or a local Islamic national organization, but an organization with much bigger agenda?

Abadi: Yes, it is the successor to the Muslim Brotherhood. Mohamed Morsi, the former president of Egypt, has stated the intentions of this movement, in a draft constitution that led to his downfall. It was not the will of the citizens of Egypt. Certainly, some of those who overthrew him were also those who elected him to be president.

If you'll examine the proposed constitution, you will see that the Islamic vision of establishing a Caliphate is not in accordance with the ideas and worldview of large part of Egyptians. That is why the 2013 coup d'etat happened, and the army took over under the command of Abdel Fattah El-Sisi.

Another idea for a Caliphate is the vision of Daesh (ISIS), al-Dawlah al-Islamiyah fi al-Iraq wa al-Sham. Later this name was changed to Das or IS. Later on, their pretensions multiplied. They no longer stated a territorial definition, but they use Daula Islamia (Islamic State), that is global. And these pretensions also led to their eradication.

The third variation of Caliphate is the Islamic Caliphate in the spirit of Shia and Iran. Present day Iran would have liked to extend its current territorial boundaries, and to take revenge on the Sunni countries, its most bitter enemies, who persecuted Iran for 1,600 years.

Be'er: How does this fit with the current Sunni-Shia cooperation, which is manifested in Iran's support for a Sunni society, in Gaza for example?

Abadi: It's very simple. Iran has a problem. It supports Hamas in Gaza massively, in every aspect with money and military equipment. For example, there are weapons we didn't know existed, which are from Iran.

Be'er: How can you explain this collaboration?

Abadi: Let me explain. Israel has positioned itself as a buffer between Iran and its ambitions and goals in the Sunni Islamic world as the defender of Islam. It's a crazy thing, to take part in an Islamic religious war, especially against the Shia, which is insane.

Israel is doing everything in its power to block Iran's path to nuclear weapons. Israel is attacking Iran's strongholds in the Golan Heights, Israel is threatening the existence of Hezbollah in the North, which is Shia of exactly the same breed as Iran.

In the immediate term, it is very important for Iran to surround Israel with potential fronts: The Golan Heights, Lebanon, Syria. So, why not arm the Muslim Brotherhood in the guise of Hamas in the Gaza Strip? surround the State of Israel and exhaust it.

Be'er: Then These are practical relationships, not ideological?

Abadi: Practical. To create a front surrounding Israel under the control of Iran.

Be'er: Is it possible to dismantle Hamas today by military means?

Abadi: I don't have updated information regarding the abilities and intentions of Hamas. But one thing is clear to me, from the Hamas point of view. Hamas, Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiya, is not a Palestinian organization. The acronym does not include the same words as in PLO. They do not include the P for Palestine. The Palestine Liberation Organization is not a religious organization, but a national secular one. About half of the PLO were Christians. George Habash and others from the other fronts that formed over time and were fully Palestinians.

Be'er: Does Hamas serves another master?

Abadi: That's right, the larger regional Islamic movement.

Be'er: That's why you can't dismantle Hamas locally? Maybe only hurt it?

Abadi: That's very true. More than that, I am sure that not all residents of the Gaza Strip would like the establishment of a religious state in the spirit of the Muslim Brotherhood. not sure. I say this very carefully. It's clear to me that not every citizen wants it. That is why there is a distinction between the Palestinian matter and the Islamic matter.

Be'er: So, I'll ask you a blunt question: if decision makers would consult you, will you say: "use any means now to abolish Hamas" like the government spokespeople, or would you give them a different advice?

Abadi: That's a Great question. I don't know enough to foresee if abolishing Hamas, as was done to ISIS by the international coalition, is possible. Maybe it is, and maybe it isn't. But one thing is clear to me: achieving this goal will be very costly. I would suggest a different approach.

Be'er: Perhaps Hamas's strength is precisely what makes it possible to reach a political agreement with Israel?

Abadi: Never!

Be'er: No?

Abadi: No. Because Israel is an obstacle, a bone in the throat on the path to implement the Islamic idea. I told you that at the beginning. Their goal is an Arab Islamic Caliphate, in the Arab countries.

Be'er: But what about Hudna ("quiet period"), and other forms of armistice made possible by global Islam, or by the Islamic ethos. A long-term Hudna, a long term tactical ceasefire for years, decades?

Abadi: It is possible. Juridically, as far as the Islamic constitution is concerned, it is possible. It is impossible to reach the highest level of peace, and which we didn't achieve, neither in the peace treaties with Egypt nor with Jordan, the level of Sulh ('resolution'). It is impossible to reach the level of Sulh, in the name of Mecca. But it is possible to reach Hudna and Salaam and a ceasefire. It is possible to achieve ceasefire and peace, those can be reached.

There is an outstanding example from the time of the opening of the Suez Canal, following the 1973 Yom Kippur war. Anwar Sadat became an idol in Egypt. He fulfilled the dream of all Egyptians, member of the Muslim Brotherhood or not. So, ask yourself: "Why did the Muslim Brotherhood persecute Sadat? and why Khaled Islambul shot him at that demonstration commemorating the 1973 October War?". During Sadat's visit to the Knesset, he said three times "No more war". This was not understood by the Muslim Brotherhood to be Salaam, but the cancellation of the state of war. As they saw it, he had no right to make a Sulh. It was not by chance that Sadat was murdered by a member of the Muslim Brotherhood. He sacrificed their most cherished thing. For them, Sulh was impossible.

The treaties with Egypt and Jordan are peace treaties, not Sulh. And you should know what Egypt's and Jordan's intentions were when signing these treaties. The definition states: "a continuous cease fire without a time limit". Hudna has a time limit. Salaam has no time limit. But, if one of the two parties comes to the conclusion that the ceasefire period has come to an end, it is allowed according to Islamic law to reengage war, because it is not Sulh, it is only Salaam.

Be'er: So, the state of our relations with Jordan and Egypt is Salaam?

Abadi: Of course. That's why Sadat paid with his life. Because he said: "no more war".

Be'er: Tell me, were you surprised by the brutality of Hamas's latest attack in the south of Israel?

Abadi: No. No.

Be'er: I wanted to hear from you, how actions such as hurting children, women and the elderly; allegations of rape; burning alive soldiers and civilians; beheading soldiers... Are these actions in line with Hamas's or the Islam's ethos?

Abadi: Yes. Hamas, the Muslim Brotherhood and the Quran are one. According to the Quran, idol worshipers have one punishment: death or conversion to Islam, which is the Islamic form of repentance.

Be'er: For Jews and Christians too?

Abadi: The members of the monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Zoroastrian religion, have a discount. They are called "Ahl El-Dhimmah", the protected people. That says it all. 'Protected' means they have no sovereignty, they pay a poll tax, they are humiliated in public but there is no obligation to kill them.

Be'er: So, what are the Islamic rules of war regarding them?

Abadi: First, I'll give you the same answer as before, that this is a pragmatic. Israel's very presence interferes with the Muslim Brotherhood's vision of establishing a Caliphate. It interferes...

Be'er: Was this an outbreak of violence? How would we call it?

Abadi: No. It is the result of a massive, serious, in-depth educational process.

Be'er: Religious education?

Abadi: Of course. I told you, and you should always remember the main thing: there is no Palestine in the name of Hamas, it's Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiya. Islam. Students of the Quran will say that the Jews of the time of the Prophet Muhammad and onwards are not the same Israelites, the followers of Moses, who received the Torah at Mount Sinai.

There is a very strong argument in the Islamic texts against the Tushba (Oral Torah) in Jewish religious literature, the Talmud and the Mishnah, on the grounds that it was created by the people and not divine word. This is the argument made by Islam today, since the days of the Prophet Muhammad. That is, that the present-day Israelites, the present-day Jews, are not the same Jews that the commands in the Quran were meant for.

Be'er: Is this a strict, not a lenient interpretation?

Abadi: Of course. It's strict. These present-day Jews are not the Israelites who left Egypt and received the Torah, but people who falsified the Torah. And that all the Jewish sacred scripture was written by Jewish scholars who the Quran calls "masters of knowledge".

It's true, they say, that God gave the Jews their religion, to these scholars, to Chazal (Jewish historic sages). But the present-day Jewish sacred scripture, that existed since the days of the Prophet Muhammad, is not Moses's Torah.

There are comprehensive essays on this subject. One of the best works, which I recommend every Israeli should read after they learn Arabic, is by Sayyid Muhammad Tantawy, who was the Mufti of Egypt. His doctoral thesis is called "The Children of Israel in the Quran and Literature" or Banu Isra'il fil Quran wa as-Sunnah.

The book presents the argument I mentioned, and it is based on the Quran. The book states that the scripture that is used by present-day Jews is false. And present-day Jews includes Jews as far back in time as the days of King Solomon, King Ahaz, King Josiah and others, which the book discusses many details. The book states that they are idolaters, sinners and falsifying the Torah.

Be'er: So, I would like to ask you this: we have extensive literature, Chazal, criticism, theological debates and the like, and thus not everything in the Torah was accepted by present-day Judaism. For example, the biblical command to execute those who curse their parents, was not adopted. What I want to ask, is whether in Islam there are also internal debates, are there different schools of thought?

Abadi: No! Definitely not. That is, the sanctity of life is one of the basic elements of Judaism. In Islam this principle is absent. The Quran has not a shred of mercy for those who disagree with the spirit of Quranic Islam. It is beyond discussion. This applies not only with regards to Judaism but to fellow Muslims and fellow countrymen. I want to remind you that during Hamas's takeover of Gaza Israel intervened to rescue PLO members from the clutches of their religious brothers, on the grounds that they are not Muqawama Islamiya (Islamic resistance).

Be'er: Hamas considered the PLO members to be some kind of infidels?

Abadi: Of course. You asked about the actions in Kfar Aza and Be'eri. I'm talking about their relationship with fellow Palestinians.

Be'er: Can you speculate what were the orders or instructions that were given by Hamas to the fighters who took over the settlements in Otef Aza region with regards to the treatment of civilians? Did Hamas give instructions, or were they given a free hand?

Abadi: I don't know...

Be'er: based on your knowledge of the Islamic ethos?

Abadi: That's something else. I don't know what operational commands were given to the infiltrators to the Otef. I don't know. But I am sure of one thing, which supported what happened in these settlements. Education! School! Hamas's educate to view anyone who opposes the essentials of Quranic Islam as a punishable by Death.

Now, about the cruelty. Islam's nature is to be cruel. Hamas is Islam, not a Palestinian national movement. It's a completely different story.

Be'er: If there is no intra-Islamic debate of these issues, then how Islam treats people under occupation and the enemy?

Abadi: A debate requires expressing different opinions and attempting to convince.

Be'er: Is there a Chazal equivalent in Islam? The hooligans who are discuss in topics raised in the Quran?

Abadi: No! Your words are heresy. The divine word in the Quran is absolute. Final. The complete truth. There are interpretations to the Quran, true. But in many places and forms, The Quran mentions many times and in different variations who the enemies of Islam are. They have one sentence, to be executed by beheading.

Look, there is a story that should have been taught in ourschools, as it concerns us and is very to-date. There were three Jewish tribes in Arabia, which the Prophet Muhammad met in 622, during what is known as the Hijrah, which is journey from Mecca to Medina. At that time, the Prophet was cut off from his family who ambushed him, didn't love him and persecuted him. So, he found refuge with the Jews. Three Jewish tribes: Qainuqa, Banu Nadir and Qurayza. At first he tried to build an impossible religious pact with the Jews and made huge concessions to the Jews. But there was one obstacle, which he was not ready to give up.

Remember, the Prophet Muhammad teaching of Islam included, as a result of the interaction and the aim to collaborate with the Jews of Yathrib, those three Jewish tribes. The Prophet said "We will pray like you, three times a day. We will pray towards Jerusalem. We will fast on Yom Kippur. We will not eat pork and we will perform circumcision".

This alliance did not bear fruit. As a result, the Prophet told the Jewish tribes: "go away!". Two tribes left immediately. A third tribe insisted on staying. So, the Prophet slaughtered them, to the last of them. All the tribe's members were led to a large pit and were beheaded. Why? Because they insisted on staying. This was unacceptable. "Since I decreed that there will be no members of other religions except Islam in the Arabian Peninsula, you will be beheaded".

Be'er: Why beheading? Is it to establish deterrence? To humiliate?

Abadi: Yes. Everything you mentioned...

Be'er: But we know of other sentiments in the Quran, more humane ones, like: "You shall not kill, not even a tree" and so on?

Abadi: I don't see the relevance of your statement to what I'm saying. Sure, there is mercy. But for whom? you should ask. Anyone who stands in the path of Islam and does not follow its commands, "there will be no members of other religions except Islam in the Arabian Peninsula" in the days of the Prophet. And this is the Quran, this is the divine word. Anyone who behaves differently is liable to beheading, death.

Be'er: Among the scholars or the thinkers, to this day none said: "we live in a different time; maybe we should interpret the Quarn differently"?

Abadi: Of course, there were...

Be'er: So, is there such a debate?

Abadi: Of course, there is. King Hussein's great grandfather corresponded with Henry McMahon during the Arab Revolt and the occupation of Isarel-Palestine by the British in 1916. Hussein was a scion of the Hashemite house, who were responsible for the holy places in Arabia. He signed a peace treaty with Israel. Anwar Sadat was a Muslim, who signed a treaty agreement with Israel. But Hussein did not say: "no more war". Sadat said it and paid with his life. As I already said, according to Islam, there may be days of truce, as long they may be, but any truce cannot let go of what cannot be given up, mended or softened.

Be'er: Netanyahu is equating Hamas with ISIS. Is this comparison true?

Abadi: To some extent it is true.

Be'er: Are there differences between them?

Abadi: Of course. ISIS's global pretensions, with the establishment of IS. We discussed this earlier. The pretensions of the Muslim Brotherhood, on the other hand, are limited.

Be'er: What do you mean by "limited"? Localised?

Abadi: You forget what I said more than twice before: Hamas is the successor of the Muslim Brotherhood. It is their natural inheritor in spirit. Hamas's goal is to establish Caliphate in the Arab region, where there is no place for any secular political entity.

Be'er: if I understand you correctly, the difference between Hamas and IS/ISIS is that IS has global pretence.

Abadi: True, IS removed any boundaries on their wish for the extent of the Islamic State. Hamas's goal is a state. It is a territorially defined Islamic Caliphate, in the Arab region, in which Israel is stuck like a bone in the throat. So, Hamas's motivation, in the spirit of the Muslim Brotherhood, is clearly to eliminate Israel. This is an immediate obstacle in the way of the dream to establish a Caliphate in Arab region.

Be'er: During your time as governor, when you sat down with Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, did he talk about these topics?

Abadi: Wait, I want to get something... (gets up and returns with two thick books).

Look, these are the two volumes from which I learned Islam. The teacher was a very special person. I was attached to him, and he was attached to me. He was the Imam of Gaza, Sheikh Hashem Khuzander. He taught me from these two books. I want you to see the title of the books. "Banu Isra'il fil Quran wa as-Sunnah". That is, the Children of Israel according to the interpretation of the Quran. Everything is written here.

Be'er: In episode 67 of Parot Kdoshot, we discussed at length your proposal to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The establishment of two states, Israel and Palestine, and the Palestinian state includes, among other territories, an area of 22 thousand kilometres that the Egyptians will contribute for the benefit of ending the conflict.

Abadi: Not contribute but sell. For its full value.

Be'er: So far, I did not encounter any indications that the Egyptians would consider giving up, even for a narrative or symbolic facade, a single grain of sand from Sinai, just as they did not give up Taba, for example. I don't want to repeat all the details, since it is discussed in detail in episode 67. But let's return to the current situation we are in. Your view about modern Islam evokes a lot of pessimism. In other words, the conclusion is perhaps that it is impossible to compromise with Islam. It is impossible to reach an agreement.

Abadi: No, I didn't say that. It is possible to have a peace treaty with Islam, similar to the treaties with Egypt and Jordan.

Be'er: What is required to achieve peace?

Abadi: If you ask me, I can't say whether it is possible to eliminate Hamas, like ISIS was eliminated by the coalition forces. One thing I am certain of, it will cost a terrible price.

There is another way to handle Hamas, it is admittedly a long-term plan, but it is very practical. Our goal is to disentangle Hamas, or whatever is left of it after the war, and Gaza, without risking the lives of too many soldiers, while discouraging the motivations of the civilians in Gaza to fight Israel. This approach will result in Hamas's decline and contraction.

Be'er: You mean, in essence, to weaken Hamas's ideology, and not just the physical body?

Abadi: Yes. Look, today in Gaza, as is the case for any concentration of Palestinian refugees elsewhere in the world, there is no hope. Not just today, but for over seventy and eighty years.

Be'er: So, you are saying that the beating heart of the conflict are the refugees?

Abadi: Of course!

Be'er: Why?

Abadi: Because a typical resident in the West Bank is, for most, not a refugee. They don't live like a refugee. Remember what we discussed many times before: the Right of Return, Haq al-'Awdah, is at the heart of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Yasser Arafat was a Palestinian. Hamas isn't. Hamas is Egyptian. It's two different entities. In the acronym of the PLO, the P stands for Palestine. It is an organization whose goal is to liberate the territory of Israel from the Jews and bring back its indigenous inhabitants. The Right of Return.

The alternative to the elimination of Hamas is a project that is not easy, not simple, complex, problematic, expensive, but not as expensive as the price of the attempt to eliminate Hamas by military force. And even if Hamas is eliminated, won't there be a parallel organization to take its place? What kind of nonsense is this idea? It is necessary for the State of Israel, considering its values and recent events, to

understand that the solution to the Palestinian question must not be delayed any longer.

The Palestinian problem has two components, which must be considered, without which there is no settlement: The Right of Return and Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine. Without these two things, the bloodshed will never end. There is great motivation to solve it now because of the years that have passed. Remember that the refugees are at the heart of the Palestinian problem. I'm not saying that there aren't other issues apart from the refugees in the refugee camps in Gaza, in Jordan, in Lebanon and in other places. But that from my point of view, the motivation to fight, which persists indefinitely, can only keep going and become stronger. This is the tragedy the Palestinians have been experiencing for over seventy and eighty years.

Yizhar, We, the Jewish Israelis, who suffered tragedies and persecution throughout history, should be mindful to this tragedy. Because it's in our nature.

As I said more than once, the size of the Shatti refugee camp is 700 dunams. It is less than three quarters of a square kilometre, in which over 30,000 people live. To understand the meaning of these absurd numbers, one should live there for a week. Sleep with them, be with them. You will see that in a room of three-by-three metres, 18 people live. It is the only way possible to house over thirty thousand people in an area of less than three quarters of a square kilometre, without regular supply of water, without electricity, without sewage.

The long-term alternative to abolish Hamas is to dry it up, to disentangle it off from the Palestinian tragedy, through the establishment of two states for the two peoples

The Israeli political left is delusional, stupid, because let's say there wasn't a single settlement, today there are 520 thousand Jews in the West Bank. Areas A and B are full of existing inhabitants, but area C is less full. Is it possible to exercise the right of return there, an area of six thousand kilometres, without a single Jew? Have you forgotten that before the 1967 Six Day War, Israel fought wars with the Arab states over the question of Palestine? I mean, this question doesn't stem from the Six Day War. It stems from the beginning of Zionism. The third Aliyah. Not the first Aliyah, not the second, the third Aliyah. But this is not the place to explain why the origin is the third Aliyah.

Be'er: But, your proposed solution via the establishment of two states means that parts of the Palestinian state will also be on Egyptian territory. It depends on the good will of a third party.

Abadi: Wait, I'll answer this immediately. I will first repeat what I said more than once. How can you explain the definite, proven fact, that during a single month, on August 1971, relocated more than 30,000 people from the Shatti and Jabaliya refugee camps.

Be'er: Voluntarily?

Abadi: Voluntarily. Not a single shot fired...

Be'er: For resettlement?

Abadi: Of course. To resettle in a place that has a drop of water, electricity and food. Thirty thousand! Show me another case during the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that anyone resettled so many ...

Be'er: **The Palestinians said you used to address them like George Habash** (General Secretary of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine).

Abadi: Moshe Dayan once asked them: "Why do you like him (the governor Ini Abadi) so much?". They told him, "He's addressing us like George Habash..."

Be'er: **They would carry you on their shoulders. Their military governor.**

Abadi: That's true.

Be'er: **I must mention, as a side note, that when you were the governor of Gaza and intended to resign, dozens of local leaders signed a petition against the resignation.**

Abadi: I was about to complete my job because it was time to go home. And I saw that I had brought Gaza to a satisfying state for me to move on. So, the mayors, the neighbourhoods' Mukhtars (village chiefs) of the cities in Gaza, the Mukhtars of the refugee camps, teachers, doctors, merchants, lawyers, they all wrote a petition to Dayan to reject my resignation.

Be'er: **Among the signatories of the petition was Sheikh Ahmed Yassin.**

Abadi: And others. Among the people behind this petition was a relative of Ismail Haniyeh, Muhammad Rabah Haniyeh.

Be'er: **And they demanded from Dayan, the Minister of Defence, to reject your resignation.**

Abadi: That he rejects my resignation.

Be'er: **This is, in my opinion, an extraordinary case in history. That the occupied people demand that the occupier leave an appointed military governor in place.**

Abadi: I did my best to disentangle this Gordian Knot between the suffering population and terrorism. And they, the Gazans, helped me fight terrorism.

Be'er: **How many years have passed since?**

Abadi: Many years have passed since. 50 years. And it doesn't get any easier. The tragedy accelerated and became more and more entrenched.

Now, you asked me about the third party, Egypt. I am most certain that the proposal to establish a sister state alongside Israel on the western side of the Negev-Sinai border is possible, and even serves Egypt. Let me explain. Egypt under El-Sisi's regime today is over million square kilometres. There is not a single Egyptian in the Western Desert. So, the territory is not the obstacle. Egypt's main difficulty today is the goal to restore its role as Arab leader, an alternative to the Caliphate of the Muslim Brotherhood, who live in Egypt.

Be'er: So, they will take Hamas, the stepson of the Muslim Brotherhood, into their territory?

Abadi: Wait. Considering Egypt's goals under the leadership of El-Sisi, 22,000 square kilometres of sands, which are like Haluza sands, is nothing for Egypt. But it is not enough. Israel must do more. Because of the events of the War of Independence and the departure of 800 thousand Palestinian refugees that became five million with time, El-Sisi's consent should also be accompanied by a substantial financial compensation, because Egypt is broke. Very poor. Egypt isn't the Gulf states, it's not Saudi Arabia. Money and prestige are very important to the Egyptians. Much more than 20 thousand square kilometres near the border with Israel.

But territory isn't enough. To demonstrate Israel's rightful place in the territory of Israel and its commitment to resolving the Palestinian tragedy, several more steps must be taken. The establishment of Palestinian-Israeli agencies whose work will bond the sister nations. The first agency should handle construction, the second agency water and electricity, the third agency development and the fourth agency should administer matters relating to Har haBayit (or Haram al-Sharif, the Temple Mount). In the background of these four joint agencies, there will be a principal agency for raising funds from around the world. And there is money to be raised. There are many, many around the world that would be very willing to contribute financially to help both Israel and the Palestinian cause.

Be'er: But you, who know the Islamic ethos and the Islamic and nationalist movements so well. Do you imagine the possibility that not only that the Egyptians, but also that the Palestinians will give up the Right of Return and settle in Sinai?

Abadi: The Right of Return, Haq al-'Awdah, is a slogan that gives hope. It gives hope but it doesn't guarantee that it can be implemented. The common Palestinian act of keeping the key to the house the family left in 1948 exists because of mental, physical, and financial distress. Otherwise, Yizhar, seriously, explain to me, what, apart from my convincing arguments, motivated over thirty thousand people to get up and leave the refugee camp? They were motivated by one thing, my ability to get them out of there. Despite the opposition of UNRWA, The United Nations Relief and Works Agency. And they are no longer refugees.

And remember, I visited every family whose house was voluntarily destroyed, and talked with them. Endless long nights. I offered them three things, with Dayan's consent: Whoever chooses so, can return to Israel. Whoever chooses so, can be rehabilitated in the West Bank. And whoever chooses so can be rehabilitated in Gaza. Not a single family expressed a desire to return to Israel. With various reasons, some of them absurd. Only 72 families out of thirty, over thirty thousand people! Yizhar, in one month! This was unprecedented. Only 72 families went to the West Bank and settled there. The vast majority chose to be rehabilitated in Gaza. What was their motive for asking me to help them?

Be'er: Practical? Economical?

Abadi: Life in a refugee camp is impossible. During the long nights I spent with them, they told me their heart's desires. They had a desperate call: 'Wasae, wasae, wasae', more space. 18 people in one room, for 80 years, it's impossible.

Be'er: But for this dream of resolving the conflict to come true, you need trust first, and you need the agreement of the three parties.

Abadi: The mistreatment that exists since then, after the Yom Kippur War to these days, has created great distrust. But I believe that the scale of deprivation of the majority of the Palestinian refugees will overcome the obstacles, and that it will be possible to execute this plan.

Be'er: Have you met, or do you know someone, in the Israeli leadership, or in the political or military apparatus, today or yesterday, who knows and understands the full picture, and thinks like you or arrived to a similar conclusion?

Abadi: I don't want to answer your question in the way you asked it, because I don't know. Have I heard anyone say the same things? No. Are there people who consider the core of the conflict, and are looking for ways to solve it, and thus rescind Hamas? Without killing it and only rescind it? I did not hear of such plans. And I don't know if such plan exists or not. I don't know. I haven't heard of one. I have no doubt, no doubt, that what I am suggesting is the complete opposite to Israel's actions from the days of the Oslo Accords, Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat, to the present day.

Be'er: Did Oslo have a chance?

Abadi: No. Oslo had no chance, because Arafat did not stop, even for one second, when travelling from Gaza to Ramallah or Jerusalem, to call out of the window of the car, to call "The Right of Return". You must understand, that in the Oslo Accords, with their focus on territories A, B, and C, there was no resolution to the Haq al-'Awdah.

Be'er: But the agreements included symbolic solutions for the right of return.

Abadi: It is impossible for the Palestinian people to ever agree to partial solutions, and not a full, complete, total solution to the Palestinian refugees.

Be'er: And Jerusalem.

Abadi: And Jerusalem.

Be'er: But, maybe, we are simply in the midst of a religious war? While the Jewish Temple Mount Faithful movements igniting the situation on the Temple Mount and the West Bank settlers...

Abadi: You're telling me? But this is an internal Israeli problem.

Be'er: No, it's on both sides...

Abadi: Wait. From the road to Ramallah, route 90, through the towns and villages that surround Jerusalem. From Bayt Sahur, Bethlehem, to Ramallah. All of this area should form East Jerusalem, the capital of Palestine, in the way I described earlier.

With a joint agency, which seats in one room, in one office, should take care of the agenda for the Temple Mount. The prayers, of all parties, including Christians...

Be'er: Before we finished, Abadi told me about the promise made by the President of Egypt, Gamal Abdel Nasser, to the Egyptian masses before the Six Day War (1967), of what will be done to the men and women of Israel after its occupation.

Abadi: During the period just before the Six Day War, and before the Egyptian army entered Sinai, and expelled the UN Emergency Force. When Nasser entered Sinai, the UN Secretary General said: "these soldiers were not meant to be trampled under the chains of Egyptian tanks". And the Egyptian army crossed into Sinai, brazenly, and in broad daylight, in sixes. It was preceded by days of waiting, before the IDF entered Sinai.

At that time, above every stage, not once, not for an hour, not for two hours, Nasser repeatedly said: "When I can, we will roll your heads, you men, like gravel on the sides of the roads, and we will violate the women until they die" (repeats twice).

Be'er: He spoke to the people? Are the people who go to mosques familiar with these words?

Abadi: He spoke to the families of his soldiers, who are devout Muslims.

Be'er: Instilled in them a fighting spirit? Based on the familiar Islamic ethos, which doesn't recognise secularism?

Abadi: Yes. No secularism. In general, to present day.

This sentence echoed in my head all these years, and I wanted to know the source of Nasser words. So, I stayed up many long nights looking for the source. And I found it.

In relation to the captive woman. The 'Sabia', who can be both a girl and a woman. There is a lot of discussion in the Quran about this topic. So, I formulated a note for myself, and maybe for my students. Where did the ideas underlying Nasser's statement come from? The discussion of female captives in the Quran is comprehensive. Its long and thorough. What can be done to captive women? The Quran is very explicit and extensive regarding the fate of the female prisoners of war.

Be'er: There are no instances in the Quran where it states: "take care of the captives and don't hurt them"?

Abadi: A captor is allowed to do whatever he wants with female captive, including execution.

Be'er: So, I ask you, are there other instances in the Quran that present a different treatment of captives?

Abadi: No, you need to understand. Captives are always enemies. The enemies of Islam cannot be spared. I agree that, if the infidels in the eyes of Islam are strong enough to stand up for themselves, then it is permissible to make peace with them.

Be'er: Your description is very pessimistic.

Abadi: Very. Islam treats members of other religions harshly. It was already present in the early days of Islam.

Be'er: So, on the one hand you present a pessimistic information. And on the other hand, you say that something can be done?

Abadi: Yes. Everything I said that can be done, assuming one absolute and definite condition, that you are strong.

Be'er: This is basically what the people on the political right say: "that enemies understand only power!".

Abadi: You need to be strong not to hit. You need to be strong to prevent your enemy from hitting you. If you are not strong, leave this place. If you are not strong enough, listen to me! Leave this place, fast. But if you are strong, Islam states that there are intermediate ways, which exists due to the enemy's strength that is greater or equal. These are practical considerations. Islam is very practical.

This was episode 72 of Parot Kdoshot: "There is something to be done with Gaza, but on the one, absolute, condition: that you are strong" - an in-depth conversation with Ini Abadi about Gaza, about Islam and religious fanaticism and about a possible solution to the never-ending conflict.

Since the beginning of the events in the South, the "Parot Kdoshot" (Sacred Cows) project has entered war status. In the near future we will be publishing filmed and broadcast interviews and conversations at a higher frequency than usual. These episodes relate to current events but add critical social and cultural knowledge that you will not see in regular broadcasts, featured on the television channels.

All the extensive work invested in investigations, interviews, photography, recording, editing and more, is done voluntarily. To continue the work, we urgently need volunteers; people who are qualified in Hebrew-English translation and video editing. A financial contribution to help finances the project will also be welcomed.

We need you. More details on the Parot Kdoshot website www.parotk.com