**Canal and Gaza Conflict**

[Amina Amin Kanju](https://www.nation.com.pk/columnist/amina-amin-kanju)

November 07, 2023

[Opinions](https://www.nation.com.pk/opinions), [Columns](https://www.nation.com.pk/columns)

It has been reported that the attack on October 7th by Hamas had been in planning within Gaza for two years. Gaza, a small region plagued by the presence of Zionist infiltrators and spies who use bribery and threats to manipulate ordinary Palestinians into betraying their own people. This raises the question, with some justification, of why there was such a significant intelligence failure, allowing the attack to catch the Israeli military off guard. In terms of access to eavesdropping technology and defense capabilities, there are few better-equipped militaries worldwide, except perhaps the United States, which also maintains secret supply bases in Israel. Israel’s Mossad is renowned for its intelligence gathering and infiltration abilities. Yet, on October 7th, Hamas fighters breached security fences, infiltrated a music festival and local kibbutzim, and even flew in on paragliders without encountering any significant resistance. How did this happen?  
Gaza is currently facing heavy bombardment led by the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is pushing for the implementation of the Ben Gurion Canal Project, a rival to the Suez Canal in Egypt. Plans for this canal have been in the works for decades, and this conflict undoubtedly has economic incentives. The proposed canal would originate in the port city of Eilat, the southernmost city in Israel, and potentially pass through or very close to Gaza. The United States and Israel secretly devised this plan in 1963, including the storage of 500 nuclear bombs in the Negev Desert. The Suez Canal is undeniably one of the most strategically important assets globally, connecting the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea. It’s so vital to global trade that in 1956, Israel, along with Britain and France, attacked Egypt when it attempted to nationalize the Suez Canal. It’s located at the intersection of three continents and two bodies of water, facilitating 12% of global trade and 30% of the world’s container traffic.  
Recently, the Egyptian President, Sisi, was allegedly approached with an offer to accept Israel’s plan to relocate Palestinians from Gaza to the Sinai Desert, in exchange for financial support and the wiping of Egypt’s national debt by the United States. Furthermore, the United States exerted pressure on Ethiopia not to fill its reservoirs, which is advantageous for Egypt. Egypt is being coerced to accommodate Gaza residents in a desert, raising questions about fairness. Some might wonder why the United States doesn’t consider offering one of its own states, like Illinois, to the Jewish population.  
The Ben Gurion Canal project would solidify Israel’s and the United States’ control over the world’s most crucial shipping route, granting them total dominance over global trade. The Red Sea, which would feed into the canal, already hosts a significant presence of Israeli and American troops. Israel’s largest military base is situated in the Red Sea in Eritrea. This base was reportedly targeted by Yemen in support of Gaza. Yemen plays a critical role in resistance efforts and is located near Eritrea, in the Gulf of Aden, a key area through which tens of thousands of ships, including numerous petroleum vessels, pass annually. The United States has been striving to control this vital shipping area by stationing troops in Djibouti, Somalia, known as the Horn of Africa, and has supported Saudi Arabia in its actions against Yemen. The war in Yemen has lasted over six years and has had devastating consequences, with limited media coverage. Additionally, Yemen possesses an essential geostrategic asset in Socotra Island, located at the crossroads of the Gulf of Aden, the Arabian Sea, and the Indian Ocean.  
Following the normalization of ties between the UAE and Israel, the UAE established spy bases and military presence in the Socotra Islands. This area is of great importance to both Iran and China, as it serves as a crucial shipping route. Iran requires it for fuel exports, while China, as the world’s largest economy and trading partner for many nations, relies on it heavily. There is an ongoing de facto cold war in this region, with various incidents, such as Israel’s attempts to disrupt Iranian fuel shipments, Britain’s involvement in ship hijacking, and American actions. Egypt has the potential to halt the conflict in Gaza immediately by closing the Suez Canal, a decision that might have substantial economic consequences. It could undermine the Suez Canal’s significance. The role of Saudi Arabia in this situation is also a subject of inquiry. Could they use their leverage by temporarily halting oil production as a means to influence the situation in Gaza?  
Additionally, this text calls for greater unity and action among Arab and Muslim nations in response to the ongoing conflict in Gaza and the broader geopolitical challenges in the region.