

# LA Jews for Peace Policy Statement

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## Has Israel Forfeited America's Unconditional Support?

The United States has a deep commitment to Israel security. But that commitment must not be unconditional. Otherwise it gives Israel total control to undermine American sovereignty.

That question is particularly relevant now because within twelve hours on July 30, 2024, Israel recklessly assassinated a top Hezbollah leader in Beirut and a top Hamas leader in Tehran. Those assassinations bring the Middle East, once again, to the brink of a regional war that could drag the United States into the fighting.

Fuad Shukr was a senior military commander of Hezbollah and a close adviser of Hezbollah's secretary-general Hassan Nasrallah. He was assassinated by bombing of his home in Beirut.

Ismail Haniyeh was chair of Hamas' Politburo and leader of the ceasefire/hostage release negotiations. He was assassinated by a remotely detonated bomb planted months ago in an Islamic Revolutionary Guard guesthouse in Tehran.

The assassinations triggered this major crisis, yet the Haniyeh assassination is likely a strategic error. Haniyeh was the Hamas leader who led the hostage release and ceasefire negotiations. For over a decade, as head of Hamas' political faction, Haniyeh promoted moderate positions about Palestinian unity and a long-term peace (*hunda* in Arabic) with Israel. Clearly Haniyeh's assassination stops ceasefire and hostage-release negotiations.

Another issue with the Haniyeh assassination in Tehran is that it is likely to weaken P.M. Pezeshkian, the new, moderate Iranian president in his power struggle with Iranian hard-liners. This will set back any possibility of a renewed Iranian Nuclear Deal.

Nevertheless, [President Biden said the U.S. stands ready to help defend Israel](#), and has already deployed a naval carrier task force to the region. The presence of U.S. forces will embolden Israel in its expected response to the retaliation by Hezbollah and Iran for the assassinations.

The U.S. claims its deployment is to reduce tensions in the region. But unconditional US military aid for Israel and vows to defend Israel no matter what it does has the opposite effect. It emboldens Israel and pushes the region closer to a region-wide war that the United States will find itself fighting.

**LA Jews for Peace** understands that the United States has a deep commitment to defend Israel from aggression. But the present crisis was triggered by Israeli aggressive assassinations on July 30. The question is: should the U.S. government defend Israel from retaliation for its reckless aggressiveness?