

Weekly Commentary 3 – 3rd Commentary for 2024

The biggest geopolitical risks of 2024 – worsened or resolved?

The four biggest risks in geopolitics have gotten worse, or resolved in the last 24 hours. These risks are:

The Taiwan elections;

The war in the Red Sea;

The South African case against Israel in the International Court of Justice; and

The resurrection of Donald Trump’s presidential hopes and the serious bifurcation of the body politic in the USA.

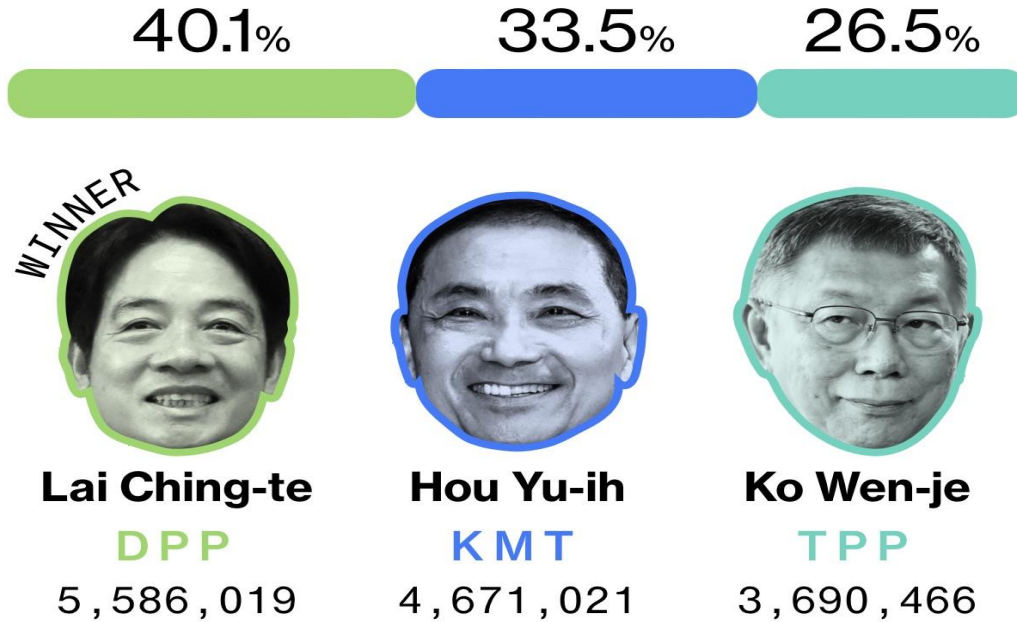
In my humble opinion, the first has gotten better; the second has evolved into a regional conflict and therefore worsened with grave consequences; in the ongoing case at the Hague of the injunction against the government of BB Netanyahu, if there is indeed a “cease and desist” order against Israel, it may throw America into turmoil and will certainly crash its soft power. Finally, the resurrection of Trump’s hopes to run a successful re-election campaign in 2024 is very destabilising, although it may be no worse than having a senile old man who is beginning to show signs of dementia, to stay on as president.

GEOPOLITICAL ISSUE NO 1 - The Taiwanese Election

After a couple of weeks of concern over who will succeed Tsai Ing-wen, the Taiwanese electorate has decided to vote for William Lai Qingde as the president. The final numbers were very revealing:

Share of Presidential Votes

All polling stations have reported



Voters returned the ruling DPP to power, a seeming endorsement of the party’s pledge to maintain Taiwan’s political independence. Both the KMT and TPP had vowed to engage more with Beijing.

Here is my analysis of the electoral results:

Actually, the results are far worse for William Lai than it seems if you also consider that in terms of seats in Taiwan’s parliament, the DPP has won only 52 seats compared with the KMT’s 51, which is almost parity and the new TPP has garnered 8 seats while 2 went to independents. Lai is fxxked. There is no way he can get major reform through the new Parliament, much like Biden in America. For politicians, having no elbow room to act is just about as bad as losing the election.

The statement on the “endorsement of the DPP’s pledge to maintain Taiwan’s political independence says nothing about the true state of politics on the island.

The fact that the DPP “won” is not necessarily the “good news” which geopolitical analysts have been looking for. This outcome has already been widely expected, based on the prevailing polls, and we are all looking for the “change” to see how the electorate’s sentiments have evolved on the major issues that were controversial. And in this respect, this was a big disappointment for the DPP. From the last election’s results four years ago, when Tsai Ing-wen captured 57% of the vote on her ticket, now her successor, the current Vice President, William Lai Qingde’s, share of the vote has dropped precipitously to only 40%.

To be specific, the new president cannot even form his own government and has to share power with the other two political parties. It will therefore be a tripartite government. How is that a good thing? As such, the most important subject which is of interest to western pundits – whether the DPP can be a strong bulwark against China – has no clear answers. It seems obvious that at 40%, Taiwanese voters have indicated that they don’t favour a confrontational approach against the PRC. If you ask me, an incumbent party in such an election, when it used to have nearly sixty percent of the vote, has now lost half its support to 40%, tells us a lot more than the fact that the DPP has won. The combined opposition of the KMT and the TPP, has now garnered a 60% support rate, when the new comer, the TPP, in such situations in most countries, should win only a single digit share of the total vote. Since KMT stands for greater rapprochement with China, and the newcomer TPP, has also said it prefers conversations with the mainland, where would that leave the new president? Obviously weakened... This is a time for figuring what went wrong for the DPP than to make a meaningless claim for having the largest share of votes that have been given to his party among the three, as Lai did last night.

Clearly in the new legislature, usually a free-wheeling and from what I can remember sometimes an unruly body in which fistcuffs often erupt, I cannot see how Lai be effective... He now faces a legislature which has two other other large opposition parties , which may contest his every action. As in all countries in which the opposition controls 60 percent of the legislature, I think his presidency will be very limiting.

The big surprise is the rise of an entirely new party, the TPP, from scratch, led by political neophyte Ko Wen-jie who acknowledges that he is not a populist because he is professionally a surgeon usually talking to people in the ICU who are not responsive to conversation. He publicly declares he has had no practice at popular politics. But in that respect, his party, the TPP, has done very well. He has found he is communicating well with the new generation in Taiwan. If Mr Ko had found it convenient to work with the KMT before the election, he could have been the winner on stage last night. But he didn’t and that is now history.

The TPP is now riding a new wave in Taiwanese politics. The “young” voters who are no longer loyal to the KMT, seen to be the party that was too close to China, and these TPP voters want their say. This “swing vote” of young voters who have basically also withdrawn their support for DPP is a rising force in Taiwan, because over the next generation, they will become increasingly and progressively influential in Taiwanese politics.

The KMT now seems the outdated party of the past, and DPP is also losing it because domestic issues are rated more important among younger voters than what foreigners think is important – which is the US-China relationship. The followers of Ko have rejected both the DPP and KMT platforms and are seeking a vibrant new approach.

Besides the division in the legislative, William Lai was forced to say, in his acceptance speech last night, that he will have to bring talent into his administration from whichever party they come from. It will be effectively a fragmented coalition government after these election results and while we can salute the Taiwanese for pursuing the path of democracy, they will have a lot of work to do to repair the relationship with the Mainland before they suffer economically from the distractions of such a pluralistic democracy.

How will China react to these election results? The western press kept asking that question in social media. Here is my interpretation. Firstly, it was widely expected that DPP would win weeks before it happened. So the win itself is not a big deal. The new president is not favoured in Beijing because it is well known what his views on reunification are, and the fact that the new vice president, Hsiao Bi Khim who apparently is half American (she also holds an American passport) cannot be good for cross Straits relationships. While China did not get a government that favoured policies that drive towards reunification, the fact that DPP is politically weakened in Taiwan would obviously please Beijing.

As I see it, it would not be possible for China to orchestrate a coordinated approach of the 60 percent in opposition parties to form a united front to push its interests. However, there is obviously plenty of opportunity for Beijing to sow seeds of discord among these fragmented parties and address the most important electoral issues which concern young voters. That would be unaffordable real estate prices and unavailable job opportunities that have been affected by the stand-off over the Taiwan Straits. The young voters of the KMT and TPP will likely be cultivated by China to think like people in Macau and increasingly in HK after 2020, where they can see good economic prospects for themselves and their children in belonging to a reunified China.

Singapore’s former foreign minister George Yeo had a suggestion to resolve the weighty problem of reunification. It is obviously very difficult to bring two former combatants in a bitter civil war to call the other one “boss”. It would be an admission of defeat and pride is at

stake. Mr Yeo suggests that instead of using a One Country, Two System method, as advocated by Beijing, which acknowledges China as the senior partner, it may be possible to come to a new consensus by forming a Chinese Commonwealth, much like postwar colonial Britain did or for that matter, the way ASEAN has coagulated for the ten countries of SEAsia. Both political entities would be equal partners in such an association. It will be one China, settling an issue that should have been undeniable since the Potsdam conference in 1944, and putting the Americans in their place, with double talk about agreeing to the One China policy numerous times but actually selling arms to the Tsai government which is of course a form of diplomatic treachery. And in this ASEAN-type organisation, neither side will be subordinate to the other.

As for the Americans, my humble opinion is at they should stay out of the fray. Now that the immediate threat of war has passed, why stoke up tensions when their country is already overstretched in Ukraine and now the entire Middle East? The Taiwanese are smarter than just looking for a puppet master to pull their strings. They jolly well know that Ukraine was led up a primrose path and now being thrown under a bus. And in a few years, everyone who has any knowledge of military affairs would know that the US will be unable to muster an armada that can challenge the PLN Navy in the western Pacific. If they want to do it now, then it is a high risk which may end up with two carriers sunk by hypersonic missiles. Nah, there will be no war...

And here is a Reuters report today that says that the US will recalibrate its intentions in Taiwan after these elections:

U.S. does not support Taiwan independence, Biden says

By [Steve Holland](#), [Nandita Bose](#) and [Trevor Hunnicutt](#) for Reuters

January 14, 2024 12:36 PM GMT

[U.S. President Joe Biden speaks to the press, in Allentown, Pennsylvania, U.S., January 12, 2024. REUTERS/Leah Millis](#)

[WASHINGTON, Jan 13 \(Reuters\) - U.S. President Joe Biden said on Saturday the United States does not support the independence of Taiwan.](#)

[Earlier in the day, the Taiwanese ruling Democratic Progressive Party's \(DPP\) presidential candidate Lai Ching-te came to power, and pledged both to seek talks.](#)

["We do not support independence..." Biden said, when asked for reaction to Saturday's elections.](#)

The United States switched diplomatic recognition from Taipei to Beijing in 1979 and has long said it does not support a formal declaration of independence by Taiwan. It does, however, maintain unofficial relations with the self-governed island and remains its most important backer and arms supplier.

Beijing, which has never renounced the use of force to bring Taiwan under its control, fears that Lai could declare the establishment of a Republic of Taiwan, which Lai has said he will not do.

Biden has previously upset the Chinese government with comments that appeared to suggest the United States would defend the island if it were attacked, a deviation from a long-held U.S. position of "strategic ambiguity".

His comments on Saturday appear to be an effort to reassure Beijing.

Even so, Washington warned just hours ahead of the polls opening that "it would be unacceptable" for "any" country to interfere in the election.

Taiwan, which neighboring China claims as its own, has been a democratic success story since holding its first direct presidential election in 1996, the culmination of decades of struggle against authoritarian rule and martial law.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken congratulated Lai Ching-te on his victory and said the United States "is committed to maintaining cross-strait peace and stability, and the peaceful resolution of differences, free from coercion and pressure." He said the U.S. looks forward to working with Lai and leaders of all parties in Taiwan to advance their "longstanding unofficial relationship, consistent with the U.S. one China policy."

The Biden administration has feared that the election, transition and new administration would escalate conflict with Beijing.

Biden has worked to smooth relations with China, including agreeing to talk through differences on security matters at a California summit with President [Xi Jinping](#) in November. Taiwan's government expects China to attempt to put pressure on its incoming president after the vote, including staging military maneuvers near the island this spring, two senior government officials said. China has never renounced the use of force to bring Taiwan under its control.

In a show of support for the government, Biden plans to dispatch an unofficial delegation to the self-governed island, according to a senior Biden administration official.

The delegation is likely to include some former high-ranking American officials, according to the official, who said the names have not been finalized. Similar delegations have been sent to Taiwan in the past.

China was angered in 2016 when then-President-elect Donald Trump spoke by phone with President Tsai Ing-wen of Taiwan, the first such conversation between U.S. and Taiwan leaders since President Jimmy Carter switched diplomatic recognition from Taiwan to China in 1979.

It seems obvious to this writer that the Americans are getting wise to the fact that the Taiwan election results show that the bankrupt policy of turning Taipei into another proxy waging a war against the PRC will run into a brick wall, as the lack of support among the young voters of Taiwan, if US manipulations continue, will upend the rule of their ally, the DPP. The opposition now has 60% of the vote. As such, Biden needs to say what he does.

GEOPOLITICAL ISSUE NO 2 – The Widening War in the Middle East

The War Against the Houthis

By Anthony Capaccio, Mohammed Hatem, and Jennifer Jacobs for Bloomberg

January 12, 2024 at 7:42 AM

The US and UK launched about 70 airstrikes on Houthi targets in Yemen early on Friday in a bid to stop the Iran-backed group's shipping attacks in the Red Sea.

The Houthis appeared undeterred, vowing to continue targeting commercial vessels and saying they would expand their campaign "very soon." They said all US and UK interests are now legitimate targets.

Oil prices rose more than 4%, with Brent climbing above \$80 a barrel for the first time since late December.

The military action underscores the deepening fallout across the Middle East from the Israel-Hamas war, which has entered a fourth month. The Houthis started attacking ships in mid-November, ostensibly in support of Hamas, and have said they won't back down until Israel stops fighting in Gaza.

The US and its allies have worked to prevent any escalation. But the Houthis have ignored all their warnings over recent weeks to end the assaults, which have roiled global supply chains and pushed up freight costs.

The strikes came hours after US President Joe Biden's top diplomat, Antony Blinken, ended another whirlwind tour of the region to ease tensions.

US and UK Strike Houthi Targets in Yemen After Red Sea Ship Attacks

There were heavy explosions in the Yemeni capital of Sanaa and the port city of Hodeida early on Jan. 12.

The attacks started about 2:30 a.m. Yemen time, with residents in the capital Sanaa and Red Sea port city of Hodeida reporting huge explosions. Other Houthi-held towns were hit including Saada, Taiz and Hajjah, the group said.

The Houthis said there were 73 strikes in total and that five fighters were killed. It's unclear if any there were civilian casualties.

American and British forces hit 16 sites including airports, radar installations and storage and launch sites for drones and missiles, according to the US military.

The US attacked with jets on the USS Eisenhower aircraft carrier, as well as with Tomahawk missiles launched from a submarine and other ships. The UK sent planes from a base in Cyprus.

The Netherlands, Australia, Canada and Bahrain provided support as part of the mission, though they didn't fire missiles.

Biden didn't rule out more strikes. He said the move was a "clear message that the United States and our partners will not tolerate attacks on our personnel or allow hostile actors to imperil freedom of navigation in one of the world's most critical commercial routes."

UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak described the hits on Yemen as "limited, necessary and proportionate" after weeks of "dangerous and destabilizing attacks" by the Houthis against shipping in the Red Sea.

Both countries said the aim was to cripple the Houthis' ability to continue attacking commercial vessels. In the past two months, they've hijacked a car carrier, tried to capture others and attacked dozens with missiles and drones.

On Tuesday, the Houthis launched their largest missile and drone attack to date in the Red Sea. It prompted US and UK forces to shoot down 18 drones and three anti-ship missiles. There were no injuries or damage reported.

Many companies have rerouted their ships away from the Red Sea — which links to the Mediterranean via the Suez Canal — forcing their vessels on much longer routes around southern Africa.

The Houthis had, until now, said they were only targeting Israeli ships or those going to and from the country. Yet some vessels they've assaulted have no obvious links to Israel.

“It's likely that this won't end here,” said Jane Kinninmont, a senior research fellow at UK think tank Chatham House. “But there will be a limit on how directly the US and UK want to get involved. They will not want to be sending any troops into Yemen. What they will be doing is pressing Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Qatar and other Arab countries to join them in reining in the Houthis. There are other levers that can be used other than airstrikes.”

Saudi Arabia said it was following the latest events with “great concern,” highlighting how some of the US's regional allies are uneasy about the strikes.

The kingdom borders Yemen and has been trying to forge a peace deal with the Houthis after failing to dislodge them from power for most of the past decade. The Houthis have attacked Saudi territory in the past, including in 2019 when they claimed a drone and missile hit that briefly knocked out half the kingdom's oil production.

Russia and Iran, which provides funding and training to the Houthis, both said they strongly condemned the airstrikes.

“Iran has a strategy of supporting other groups to further its aims so that it can stay out of the way to some extent itself,” said Kinninmont. “It will be pleased to see the Houthis are taking action and it won't suffer any direct costs from the airstrikes either. So, Iran probably sees this as a win-win.”

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan — a staunch critic of Israeli actions in Gaza — said the US and UK actions were “disproportionate” and could turn the Red Sea into a “sea of blood.”

'Big' Response

In a speech on Thursday, Houthi leader Abdul Malik Al-Houthi vowed a “big” response if the US and its allies proceeded with military action.

“We'll confront the American aggression,” he said. “Any American attack won't go unpunished.”

The strikes embroil the US in yet another fight with an Iranian proxy since the Israel-Hamas war erupted on Oct. 7. American forces have launched attacks in Syria and Iraq in recent weeks against Iranian-supported militias that have targeted American bases — so far without major casualties.

Washington also sent aircraft carriers and other ships to the region in support of Israel and to warn Lebanon's Hezbollah militant group against a full-on attack of the Jewish state.

Hezbollah and Israel have traded fire almost daily since Oct. 7 across the Israeli-Lebanese border. While those haven't escalated, there are growing calls within Israel for the government to act more aggressively against the group.

The fighting in Gaza, meanwhile, continues to rage and Israeli officials say it could go on for months, if not longer. More than 22,000 people have been killed there, according to health officials in the Hamas-run Palestinian territory.

Hamas, designated a terrorist group by the US and European Union, killed 1,200 people during its October incursion into Israel.

Deterring the Houthis won't be easy. The group, which took control of Sanaa in 2014 at the start of Yemen's civil war, holds much of the north-west of the country. It withstood a massive bombing campaign from a Saudi-led coalition that began a year later, and remains firmly entrenched.

The US revoked its designation of the Houthis as a terrorist group in 2021 out of concern the label would harm Yemenis' access to aid, with the conflict having devastated the country. There's been a tentative truce since 2022, but UN-mediated talks involving the Saudis are yet to result in a formal peace deal.

Late last month, the US spearheaded the creation of a maritime task force — dubbed Operation Prosperity Guardian — whose goal was to provide security for vessels transiting the Red Sea. It's largely restricted itself to defending ships coming under attack.

While this week started with expectations that inflationary pressures around the world were abating, an escalation in geopolitical tensions in the Middle East quickly changed those calculations. The US and UK launched airstrikes on Houthi targets in Yemen to stop its attacks on ships in the Red Sea, actions the group says are in retaliation for Israel's bombing campaign in Gaza. Many companies have rerouted their ships away from the waterway—which links to the Mediterranean Sea via the Suez Canal—forcing vessels on much longer routes around southern Africa. The disruptions in the Red Sea have roiled global supply chains and pushed up freight costs. The Houthis have pledged a “big” response to airstrikes, and oil prices—a key driver of inflation—have ticked up.

The military action also underscores the deepening fallout from the Israel-Hamas war: US President Joe Biden has been working since the Oct. 7 attacks in Israel to prevent a wider conflict -- but the airstrikes did, in fact, expand it. “If anything has changed, it's that the Red Sea may be on its way to becoming a war zone,” Marc Champion writes in *Bloomberg Opinion*, arguing that the strikes play into the hands of the Houthis and their backer, Iran. Biden didn't rule out more strikes.

Turkey and Saudi Arabia expressed concern, while Russia and Iran strongly condemned the attacks. The confrontation pits the US against another Iranian proxy, with US forces in recent weeks launching attacks in Syria and Iraq against Iranian-supported militias that have targeted American bases. It's a strategy Iran has been scripting for years as it assembled what's been called its "axis of resistance" to Israel and the US. Despite the escalating aggression, the strikes on Yemen will probably have a limited impact on the global economy, according to Bloomberg Economics. But the added costs of recalibrating shipping routes and upward pressure on energy prices are, at a minimum, a thorn in the side of central banks trying to bring inflation to a 2% target.

At the rate the Middle East war is expanding, we can be quite sure that Biden's bid for a second term will be over soon.

GEOPOLITICAL ISSUE NO 3 – The Case against Israel at the International Court of Justice

Israel's 'Indictment' For Genocide

By [indi.ca](#) • 11 Jan 2024 • [in Medium](#)

The 1948 Genocide Convention was *immediately* abused to perpetrate more genocide. 'Israel' was founded *the same year*. It's only this year (2024) that Israel is finally being indicted for its crimes. Israel's crime isn't really genocide, which they've been doing for decades. Their crime is doing it too quickly and too obviously, so much so that the International Court of Justice cannot remain blind.

South Africa has filed an 84-page case against 'Israel', which we'll cover highlights of here. What SA has done is collect the genocidal acts, open incitement, and horrific results that we've all seen for the past three months. Israel has destroyed *millions* of years of human life in that time, razed Gaza just as they said they would, and traumatized an entire population, half of them children. Hell, they've traumatized the world, which is why South Africa is making this filing.

I'd say it's a useful collection of links, but I don't hold out too much hope for international institutions doing anything. Law without enforcement — like words without deeds — is ultimately moot. South Africa's filing is good, but the Resistance has to deliver their own summons, with RPGs and an army of orphaned youth.

The 1948 Genocide Convention might as well be 'Israel's' Constitution. They have openly committed every act for decades now. The South African case, emphasizes three points out of five, focusing on the past three months. Those points are "[A] killing Palestinians in Gaza, [B] causing them serious bodily and mental harm, and [C] inflicting on them conditions of life calculated to bring about their physical destruction." We'll go through them one by one,

but I think it's worth reproducing part of the South African introduction at length:

Israel has engaged in, is engaging in and risks further engaging in genocidal acts against the Palestinian people in Gaza. Those acts include killing them, causing them serious mental and bodily harm and deliberately inflicting on them conditions of life calculated to bring about their physical destruction as a group.

We've all seen this happening and we've also seen Israeli officials, leaders, and citizens openly inciting genocide, not to mention American and European leaders and citizens. It's basically a big colonizer pogrom, live-streamed globally. Incitement is usually the hardest thing to prove in a genocide case, but not this time. As they say in the *Big Short*, these guys aren't confessing, they're bragging. As the case goes on:

Repeated statements by Israeli State representatives, including at the highest levels, by the Israeli President, Prime Minister, and Minister of Defence express genocidal intent. That intent is also properly to be inferred from the nature and conduct of Israel's military operation in Gaza, having regard inter alia to Israel's failure to provide or ensure essential food, water, medicine, fuel, shelter and other humanitarian assistance for the besieged and blockaded Palestinian people, which has pushed them to the brink of famine.

Intent aside, there's also what's happening. Gaza is destroyed, almost everyone is displaced, and Israel has purposefully targeted hospitals, bakeries, sanitation, and energy to kill as many people as possible. As the case continues:

It is also clear from the nature, scope and extent of Israel's military attacks on Gaza, which have involved the sustained bombardment over more than 11 weeks of one of the most densely populated places in the world, forcing the evacuation of 1.9 million people or 85% of the population of Gaza from their homes and herding them into ever smaller areas, without adequate shelter, in which they continue to be attacked, killed and harmed. Israel has now killed in excess of 21,110 named Palestinians, including over 7,729 children — with over 7,780 others missing, presumed dead under the rubble — and has injured over 55,243 other Palestinians, causing them severe bodily and mental harm.

Israel has also laid waste to vast areas of Gaza, including entire neighbourhoods, and has damaged or destroyed in excess of 355,000 Palestinian homes, alongside extensive tracts of agricultural land, bakeries, schools, universities, businesses, places of worship, cemeteries, cultural and archaeological sites, municipal and court buildings, and critical infrastructure, including water and sanitation facilities and electricity networks, while pursuing a relentless assault on the Palestinian medical and healthcare system.

Israel has reduced and is continuing to reduce Gaza to rubble, killing, harming and destroying its people, and creating conditions of life calculated to bring about their physical destruction as a group.

This basically covers it. It's an open-and-shut case if it weren't still an open wound, and 'Israel' hadn't bombed all the hospitals to keep people bleeding and dying from infections. The deaths from starvation and disease will at least double the current count and Israel is doing this on purpose. They are bombing and starving a population of largely children to

death in front of the whole world, traumatizing everyone with eyes and a heart.

We'll go through the case point by point, but make no mistake. Nobody's coming to save these people. The brave Axis of Resistance is liberating themselves, while these judges merely deliberate.

A) The Killing

I'm just going to reproduce the Genocide Convention in each section because it's short.

In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

A) Killing members of the group;

B) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;

C) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;

For highlights I rely on @hanooonz, who describes herself as a “*Palestinian, lawyer, certified hater (she/her)*,” which is more qualified than me. I merely add commentary as a rando Sri Lankan, in solidarity.

The first charge is killing, which one can know from the topline number of 30,000 and climbing. I remember saying 10,000 just weeks ago, which shows you how insanely bloodthirsty the Israelis are. As in any war — many more will be killed by deprivation and disease, which Israel is ‘strategically’ doing. This isn’t a normal murder case, it’s a mass murder in progress. As the filing notes:

And as Ms. Hanooonz, esquire summarizes “*Approximately 1 in every 100 people has been killed. 1 Palestinian in Gaza is killed every 4 minutes. Hundreds of multigenerational families have been killed in their entirety, with no remaining survivors.*”

I hate the fact that these individual lives lost have to be put in pithy statistics to elicit sympathy. They are people and each death is a universe. As the Holy Quran (ie, Allah) says,

That is why We ordained for the Children of Israel that whoever takes a life— unless as a punishment for murder or mischief in the land — it will be as if they killed all of humanity; and whoever saves a life, it will be as if they saved all of humanity.

I feel like Israel has killed humanity a thousand times over. The highlighted part about men executed in front of their families is just one example. Israel and America have executed tens of thousands of people in front of the whole world. And they're still going.

B) The Trauma

In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to

destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

A) Killing members of the group;

B) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;

C) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;

The second part of the Genocide Convention being used by 'Israel' as an instruction manual is *causing them serious bodily and mental harm*. Everyone in Gaza is traumatized, and everyone in the world by watching this happen. Children being amputated without anaesthetics, children are self-harming in constant fear, and adults that have to be there with them, somehow trying to make this all make sense and keep their own sanity. It's impossible. I talk about the children, but women and men have no less right to bodily and mental integrity. The traumatization is total.

As the case states (via Hanooooz), "*Children are telling us that they would rather die than continue living in Gaza right now.*" And Israelis are gloating about it. "*Images of mutilated and burned corpses are circulated in Israel via a channel called '72 virgins — uncensored.*" Not to mention the social media of Israeli soldiers and citizens. It's really ugly.

Proving intention once again, hospitals have been targeted over and over, while Israel mainly runs from open combat. The suffering is the point, and American weapons have been utilized to *maximize* the atrocities. This is just a textbook genocide, civilians being rounded up, stripped and led into stadiums, tortured and executed or just disappeared. And Israel brags about this. As if these are victories. They are losing the war and winning the genocide. It's really cowardly.

C) The physical destruction

In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

A) Killing members of the group;

B) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;

C) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said, "*we will turn Gaza into an island of ruins,*" which is precisely what they've done. The singular image of the '*conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction*' has been Israel's repeated and targeted attacks on hospitals. As the case states:

Israel has bombed doctors in their wards, in their homes, ambulances on the street, sniped patients in the halls. Just absolute lack of humanity, designed and planned (people had meetings about this!) to make Gaza unliveable.

The dead cannot even rest! Israel digs up and defiles the bodies! Israel bombs people with massive American munitions which damage limbs if not life, and then forces those people to undergo amputations without anaesthesia! Pregnant women must undergo c-sections without anaesthesia. And this is all *intentional*. The horror, the horror. The cruelty and the calculation.

Israel has also targeted and destroyed 'life-sustaining infrastructure' in general. Homes, every single university, schools, teachers, professors, mosques, churches, ancient buildings and new. As the case states, "*Across Gaza, Israel has targeted the infrastructure and foundations of Palestinian life, deliberately creating conditions of life calculated to bring upon the physical destruction of the Palestinian people.*"

What ties this all together is the open and frankly insane incitement. This is just a sample and there's more being added every day.

They're not even trying to hide it. This is a genocide in plain sight. Only justice remains blind.

D/E Preventing birth and stealing children

Finally, we'll briefly discuss the two parts of the Genocide Convention South Africa doesn't rely on, though these atrocities are also happening. Killing the unborn or being born, and stealing children.

In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- A) Killing members of the group;*
- B) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;*
- C) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;*
- D) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;*
- E) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.*

As we've seen, bombing hospitals and leaving incubators to die and horrifyingly decompose certainly prevents births. As does forcing mothers to undergo c-sections without anaesthesia, and bombing maternity hospitals, and sniping them in the streets, and preventing them from having access to clean water and food.

Israeli soldiers have also kidnapped Palestinian children. The full horror of what they're doing is yet to be known. But I think we've seen enough. The Genocide Convention warrants prosecution for *any* of these acts. And 'Israel' has done them all.

Conclusion: No Conclusion

Read the case yourself, or read through Hanooooz's highlights. Or just trust the evidence of

your eyes, ears, and heart. Blow through the fog of war blown by the colonial media, trying to incite *another* genocide against ‘*merciless Savages*’, long after everyone knows better. This is the most well-documented genocide in human history and it’s happening live and 24/7. People are losing their lives every day, in front of us. It’s a global act of terror, brought to you by Israel and America, and they’ve already gotten away with so much. And this case won’t stop it.

At best the International Court of Justice will write an injunction (to further hear the case), which no one will enforce. Because international institutions are a farce, because the ‘rules-based order’ is precisely the *violation* of international law, and because — as Gramsci put it — the old world is dying and the new world still struggles to be born.

There is no conclusion in this text, only a litany of contusions upon the human soul. There is no resolution from these institutions, that will have to be won by the blood of many more martyrs — some fighters, some fallen — may Allah receive them all. While South Africa has done yeoman work in documenting the *reason* for resistance, it’s all a (literally) dead letter without works. Without the praxis of resistance. Hence it is not enough to condemn the offenses of Israel while also condemning the brave fighters defending these people.

So let me add some clarity the South Africa filing *doesn’t*. The filing also (lightly) condemns the Al Aqsa Flood of October 7th, and it shouldn’t. That act of great bravery was Palestinians breaking out of their concentration camp to attack their captors and take hostages to get the release of so many more. The Israeli response was to turn their concentration camp into an extermination camp, in front of the whole world. They were fighting the slow-motion genocide of the Palestinian people over genocide, and Israel accelerated the process in response.

To support Palestinian freedom and condemn their freedom fighters is uselessness and moral cowardice. The Palestinians are a peaceful people who have known nothing but genocidal war since the colonizers dumped their guilt and greed upon them, in 1948. The cunning colonizers violated the Genocide Convention as soon as it was written and they will never listen to reason. They have to be resisted by any means necessary, a lesson the Palestinian people have learned most painfully, written in so much blood and suffering.

It’s not for posturing bystanders— especially from the comfortably genocidal West — to judge them. Whatever these ICJ judges rule, the Palestinian case is indomitable, indubitable, and being fought not in court, but in the streets and tunnels of Gaza, in the narrows of the Red Sea, in the hills of Lebanon, in the oilfields of Iraq and Syria; everywhere the Carbon Crusaders violate, leading inevitably, inexorably to the Al Aqsa Mosque in occupied Al Quds. Peace be upon the Palestinians and war upon the genocidal maniacs persecuting them. Lawyers can’t say that but I ain’t a lawyer. I don’t just hope that ‘Israel’ loses in court. I hope they lose it all.

The problem for Israel and the Americans is that if the ICJ issues a Cease and Desist order to the government of Netanyahu, then there is a legal risk that the US will be implicated as co-defendant. In that event, this will be a serious blow to America’s soft diplomacy.

The fact that the case is being heard right now is already a degradation of Uncle Sam's prestige.

GEOPOLITICAL ISSUE NO 4 – America at war with itself...

Geopolitical analyst Ian Bremmer says the US is now at war with itself, referring to the bitter contest between the Democrats led by Biden and the other half of the country led by Donald Trump. Here is a more detailed account in the National Review.

NATIONAL REVIEW

By Audrey Fahlberg 13 Jan 2024

Bottom of Form

Des Moines — Former president Donald Trump heads into the January 15 Iowa caucuses with the support of 48 percent of likely caucus-goers, according to an [NBC News/Des Moines Register/Mediacom poll](#) released Saturday evening, the highest support for a front-runner the poll has ever recorded ahead of an Iowa caucus. His closest challenger, former South Carolina governor Nikki Haley, trails him by 28 points with support of just 20 percent of likely caucus-goers, with Florida governor Ron DeSantis clocking in at 16 percent and ex-pharmaceutical CEO Vivek Ramaswamy at just 8 percent.

The [DMR](#)'s final pre-Iowa survey is a devastating sign for DeSantis, who has spent the entire presidential cycle staking his campaign on Iowa and telling supporters he would win the state. The poll also means expectations are now sky-high for Trump, who has an even higher lead among first-time caucus-goers in the poll. Meanwhile Haley, who has kept expectations low in Iowa, is hoping she can ride the momentum of a second-place finish there to a surprise upset in the Granite State on January 23.

“One of the kind of softer skills, if you will, of high-level politics is managing expectations,” said Timothy Head, executive director of the Faith and Freedom Coalition. “In the closing days, if not hours, there also is a pretty concerted effort to make sure that that the candidate is exceeding expectations and not falling short.”

Monday's caucus will also be a test of the pro-DeSantis super PAC Never Back Down, which has taken charge of the candidate's ground game while simultaneously becoming a political liability for the group over its string of firings, management issues, and last-minute ad cancellations in the state. A spokesperson for the group told NR that its volunteers have knocked target voters' doors five times each in Iowa and nearly a million in total.

But polls suggest the candidate still has little to show for it.

“I’ve been surprised that DeSantis has kind of stalled and maybe lost some ground, even though they’ve got probably one of the best ground games,” said Steve Scheffler, Iowa’s RNC committeeman. “I would say Trump and DeSantis probably have equally really, really good ground games.”

“Nikki’s was a little bit weak, but then they she got endorsed by Americans for Prosperity,” he said of the Koch-backed super PAC that is spending millions on her behalf in the primary. “That brought in a lot of paid staff and volunteers.”

The survey comes as most Americans are [steeling themselves](#) for an unwanted rematch between Trump and President Joe Biden — two polarizing and unpopular figures who remain their respective parties’ most likely nominees.

Haley had a had a thinly veiled message for prospective Iowa supporters who may have reservations about Trump’s electability in November in the increasingly likely scenario that he wins the nomination. “Don’t complain about what happens in a general election if you don’t participate in this caucus. It matters,” she said during a Friday evening tele-town hall with Pottawattamie County Republicans.

If Trump reaches the stage when he is nominated as the Republican candidate, there will be uproar in the various wars above and in NATO. Trump has no appetite for foreign adventures, given his entire policy approach which is nationalist, with America being placed ahead of others in economic policy first. He will likely immediately end the Ukraine project, which will see Zelensky get deposed, the country collapsing and he will accentuate the ongoing disagreements that now exist in NATO.

As the prospect of Donald Trump reclaiming the U.S. presidency looms, the world braces for a potential shift in the NATO alliance and the broader geopolitical milieu. Trump’s first term was characterized by a disruptive approach to global politics, casting doubts over the steadfastness of U.S. commitments abroad. Should he return to the Oval Office, the implications for NATO and the international order could be massive.

Trump’s stance on NATO has long been transparent, with assertions that the alliance is obsolete and allies are not pulling their financial weight. This has torn up the Alliance during the last two years in the Ukraine project and no other is willing to come up with cash for Kyiv. This scepticism poses a stark contrast to traditional U.S. policy, which has historically underscored NATO’s significance for European and North American security. Anne Applebaum of The Atlantic, a war-hawk, anticipated that “Trump will abandon NATO,” asserting that even without a formal withdrawal, Trump’s actions could undermine the core tenet of collective defence, central to NATO’s effectiveness.

The ripple effects of such a stance would reverberate beyond NATO’s remit. It is surmised that a Trump 2.0 administration would abandon support for Ukraine, which has relied heavily on U.S. military aid amidst Russian aggression. A realignment of U.S. priorities under Trump could reshape Europe’s security landscape, forcing an recalibration of strategies among NATO members. As Orysia Lutsevych of Chatham House explained, this would necessitate a significant strategic shift for Kyiv and potentially lead to Europe pressuring Ukraine into accepting an armistice with Russia. [What’s wrong with that?]

The broader implications of a second Trump presidency may not be limited to military alliances. His re-election could signal a retreat of U.S. leadership in addressing global challenges such as climate change, and open the door to greater assertiveness by other powers like Russia and Iran. Nations, particularly those in Europe, may find themselves

recalculating alignments and perhaps cozying up to other major powers, as smaller, vulnerable countries seek to navigate an increasingly multipolar world.

In a political landscape where the implications of a Trump return are weighed, it is not just military strategies that are under review. Trump's disdain for multilateralism and preference for unilateral action could redefine the U.S.'s role on the global stage. With democratic norms at risk and judicial independence threatened, the international community may face an America shifting towards the avoidance of using government agencies to become more political. The potential consolidation of power and purging of perceived disloyal elements from government agencies would mark a departure from traditional democratic governance.

In my humble opinion, I have seen Trump 1.0 being disruptive. At that time, I thought it was, well, disruptive. Having seen the policies of Biden, which have led to hundreds of thousands of people dying in Ukraine and the Middle East, through callous war-mongering policies, I have come to the view that Trump 2.0, while it may not make the world a better place, is unlikely to make it worse.

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Un-Influencer in a World full of Hubris