



# The Sabra Report

## US Criticism of Israel Encourages Hamas, Netanyahu Says

Lazar Berman, Times of Israel, March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024

### Recap:

Gaps in Israel-US relations widened as American Democratic leaders advocated for significant shifts in Israel's war aims and government. US President Joe Biden stated that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's approach to the conflict with Hamas is "more harmful than beneficial" to Israel.

### The Context:

- ✦ Following Hamas's October 7<sup>th</sup> massacre in southern Israel, in which 1,200 were slaughtered and 253 were kidnapped into Gaza, America has provided military support to Israel, including weapons supply and naval deterrence in the Mediterranean, while also offering diplomatic cover in international forums like the United Nations Security Council.
- ✦ In recent months, with the devastation in Gaza and a high death toll among Palestinians, Biden has expressed frustration over his inability to alter Israel's military course. Publicly, he has criticized Netanyahu's coalition and has become increasingly vocal about Israel's reluctance to open more land crossings for humanitarian aid. Last week, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer called for new elections in Israel, saying that Netanyahu has "lost his way." As the highest-ranking Jewish official in America, and a staunch advocate for Israel, Schumer's call for new elections garnered significant attention [1]. Republican House Speaker Mike Johnson said he will extend an invitation to Netanyahu to address Congress.
- ✦ Israel insists on continuing the war until Hamas is completely eradicated, which would involve expanding its offensive to Rafah. The Biden administration urged Israel to refrain from deploying ground troops into Rafah, citing the massive presence of Palestinian civilians who have sought refuge there following Israeli directives to move south [2].
- ✦ This week, Netanyahu defended his handling of the war on American television, saying critics of his policy don't target him but the entire people of Israel, who are united in their resolve to destroy Hamas. [3]. Minister Benny Gantz said Schumer was "inappropriate to go to a sister democracy and try to replace the elected leadership there [4]." According to Israeli officials, the US has slowed the pace of its military aid to Israel compared to the beginning of the war and Israel is believed to be running low on artillery and tank shells. White House national security spokesman John Kirby insists America will "continue to support Israel with their self-defense needs [5]."

### Conversation Points:

- ✦ Why do perceived disagreements between the US and Israel embolden Hamas?
- ✦ Does America view Israel's aim to eliminate Hamas as self-defense?
- ✦ Has the Democrats' position on Israel changed in anticipation of a challenging election year?
- ✦ What happens if Israel becomes a partisan issue in the US?

### Notes:

1. [Totally inappropriate: Netanyahu condemns Schumer for meddling](#), SOPHIE GARDNER, Politico, March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024.
2. [Netanyahu acknowledges a dispute with the U.S. but says Israel will press on into Rafah](#), New York Times, March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024.
3. [Israel said to complain of slowdown in US arms deliveries amid growing rift](#), MICHAEL HOROVITZ, Times of Israel, March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024.
4. [Totally inappropriate: Netanyahu condemns Schumer for meddling](#), SOPHIE GARDNER, Politico, 03/17/2024.
5. [Israel said to complain of slowdown in US arms deliveries amid growing rift](#), MICHAEL HOROVITZ, Times of Israel, March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

**DON'T MISS AN ISSUE!**  
**SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTER AT**  
[www.sabrareport.com](http://www.sabrareport.com)