

An introduction, written in **AUGUST 2006**, to the Italian edition of the book

"A View from the Eye of the Storm – Terror and Reason in the Middle East"

Haim Harari

The original book was published in English in April 2005
By ReganBooks/HarperCollins (N.Y.).

Dear Europe,

There is a tiny holy land in the Middle East, which has largely been the cradle of your moral values, ethics and religion, and which has always been in the eye of the storm. The darkest stains in your history, but also some of your greatest intellectual giants, relate to the people originating from this land. As a true friend, familiar with your continent and with your culture, please allow me to address you with a *mélange* of experience, passion and hope: Experience acquired by my family, which has lived in the "eye of the storm" since the days when Giuseppe Garibaldi was a child; passion of someone who believes that Western Civilization has much to offer to the world and that Israel has a lot to offer to its neighbors; hope of an eternal optimist, who knows that you and we will prevail, but prefers that it happens sooner, rather than later.

Dear Europe, when you are sick, a denial syndrome can be dangerous, even deadly. To ignore the symptoms of a serious illness, in spite of its rapid spread and progress, can kill anyone. Early detection and resolute treatment can save your life, as well as the lives of others who might be infected. In the name of Western Civilization: Do not wait any more. Open your eyes. Wake up!

Are you waiting until traveling by air can be done only in underwear and being tied to your seat, because of new sickening terrorist plots? Are the new habits of searching your luggage, removing your shoes, denying you hand luggage, forbidding fluids and waiting hours in security lines not enough? Are you waiting until fanatics will explode themselves simultaneously in the crowded check-in areas of ten different European airports, in the peak summer travel season, killing thousands of people? Are you waiting for the Iranian embassy to bring rockets in their diplomatic mail, hide them literally under the beds of some of your Muslim citizens and start shelling your cities from the backyards of predominantly Muslim neighborhoods, or from mosques, as they do in Gaza and in Lebanon? Are you waiting until you will have to enclose terrorist infested neighborhoods in your cities and countries by high separating walls? What more should happen before you wake up?

And if you think that I am hysterical, please take note: when my book predicted suicide murders in Europe, before the July 2005 atrocities in London, some of my European friends thought I was hysterical. They were wrong. The London suicide murders did happen. When I described, in the book, a hypothetical story about a man wearing a coat in a hot summer day,

being killed by security guards because he might be wearing a suicide belt, some of my readers believed I was crazy. But a few months later, an innocent Brazilian was killed in London in exactly such an incident. When I complained about fabricated media pictures, I was labeled as being biased, but now we have clear evidence of the Reuters phony photos and of theatrical staged parades of dead bodies of children in front of media photographers in both Gaza and Lebanon. When I wrote that free democratic elections in an incited and uneducated society, with no free press and no judicial system, can only lead to a victory of the worst fanatic and murderous elements, I was told that "we should believe in democracy", only to see, later, the Palestinian Hamas victory and the gains of the Muslim brothers in the Egyptian election. When I talked about sending rockets from a Paris Muslim neighborhood into the Louvre, I was considered out of touch with reality. Indeed, this has not yet happened. But hundreds of cars were burned in the streets of Paris since then and the rockets will arrive, probably via the Iranian or Syrian embassy. Perhaps it will first happen in Brussels, Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Rome or London and not necessarily in Paris. But any way you look at it, I am not hysterical.

We watch a terrorist army acquiring more than ten thousand deadly rockets in the sovereign country of Lebanon (did I say "sovereign"?), which pretends that this army does not exist, while two ministers representing this non-existing army, are members of the Lebanese cabinet. Terrorist groups of this army travel freely through the Lebanese-Syrian border checkpoints, back and forth, to and from their training camps in Iran. Naturally, the Lebanese government neither destroys the private army nor asks the international community for help in dismantling it. This army is fully funded and armed by two other sovereign countries, members of the United Nations, still maintaining elaborate commercial and diplomatic relations with all European countries. But the private army is not declared by Europe to be a terrorist organization and Europe claims not to have clear evidence that Iran and Syria are financing and supplying the terrorists. Perhaps aliens from another planet finance them. Perhaps the flourishing drug business of the Hizbullah manufactures the rockets as a spin-off. "Europe has no proof", say its foreign policy spokespersons. Dear Europe, you see no evil, hear no evil, but you definitely speak evil. What more should happen before you wake up?

The ten thousand rockets are known to be so inaccurate that they usually miss entire cities. Not only they cannot be aimed at a specific building or facility, they cannot be aimed even at a specific town. They are aimed at the Jewish town of Carmiel in the Galilee and often hit the Arab Israeli town of Majdal-Curum, kilometers away. They are aimed at an Israeli military airfield and kill Israeli Arabs in Nazareth. They are aimed at the large city of Haifa and most of the time hit the sea or empty fields outside the city. Israel is so small that some of the rockets fly over Israel and fall in the northern tip of the West Bank. However, five percent of these thousands of rockets do hit inhabited areas and some of them kill children and elderly people, Jewish and Arab. There cannot be the slightest doubt that this vast array of rockets can only be intended to deliberately and indiscriminately kill civilians. No one is pretending otherwise. But Europe thinks that there is no evidence that this is a terrorist organization. Will 100,000 rockets convince you, dear Europe? Perhaps a million? What more should happen before you wake up?

In the first week of the Lebanon war in the summer of 2006, Hizbullah murdered a Jewish grandmother and her five-year old grandson, by one of its rockets. Nothing unusual about that. After all, this is the declared purpose of the existence of the Hizbullah. It is called "resistance". Indeed, a fierce resistance to the existence of Jews in the world. But two days later the Hizbullah rockets accidentally murdered two little Israeli Arab boys, a few kilometers away from the same spot. The leader of Hizbullah went on Television and apologized for killing the Arab little boys, declaring them to be martyrs. The other children were Jewish, hence a

legitimate target. And Europe still claims to have no evidence that the Iranian controlled Hezbollah is a terrorist organization. After all, the president of Iran denies the holocaust, recommends the destruction of Israel and his Hizbullah Bullies destroyed the Jewish community center in Buenos Aires. Are they anti-Semitic? Not at all, "only anti Israeli". Dear Europe, you do know whether the holocaust happened or not, don't you? How can you accept that a UN member nation calls explicitly for a second holocaust? Where is your voice and, especially, where is your action? What more should happen before you wake up?

Hizbullah and Hamas operatives dig dead bodies from their graves and parade them in well staged theatrical productions in front of video and still photographers of the western media. The pictures appear everywhere, some staged and some digitally forged, electronically modified. Children toys, mysteriously always in bright colors and very clean, are "accidentally" found in the midst of the messy and dirty rubble of destroyed Hizbullah buildings and are photographed repeatedly by international media teams. Who would have guessed that Hizbullah facilities contain such sweet teddy bears? But they do! CNN, BBC and other TV crews run through the rubble of the Hizbullah headquarters in Beirut, led openly by a Hizbullah PR director, and always "accidentally" find the same neat photo album of the same happy family with children in the midst of the dirty rubble. Zoom in. Close up. Applause. Thank you very much. Senior CNN correspondents admit explicitly that they are showing to the public only what the Hizbullah wants them to show, but their confessions are aired only on CNN in the US and not on CNN in Europe. What more should happen before you wake up?

Israel withdraws fully from the Gaza strip, only to absorb a constant barrage of primitive rockets aimed at (you know it by now) civilian towns in Israel (referred to as "occupied Palestine" by the President of Iran and the leaders of Hizbullah and Hamas). Israel fully withdraws, with UN blessing, from Lebanon, and for six years is, on and off, being attacked by the Hizbullah "resistance" organization (indeed, resistance to anything the civilized world believes in). Damascus is hosting the leader of the Hamas and providing airport and shipping services to Hizbullah. European ambassadors happily sit there and watch. And when the Americans, in their own clumsy powerful way, try to do something about it, not always in a clever way, not always effectively, the old European Far Left and the European Neo-Fascists join, as always, in a combined anti American and anti Semitic chorus. What more should happen before you wake up?

Thousands of Iraqis are murdered by other Muslims and hundreds of thousands of Sudanese are slaughtered by Arabs in Darfur, but Europe is up in arms about one thousand dead Lebanese, half of whom are Hizbullah terrorists. It is not the dead people who matter to Europe. It is who killed them. If it is other Muslims, send it to page 10. If it is Israel, in self-defense, it is a front page "war crime". Call the UN for an emergency session! One day, thirty Iraqis are murdered in Shiite Najaf by a Sunni suicide murderer. The next day, dozens of Iraqis are shot in the streets of a Sunni neighborhood in Baghdad by Shiites. And some Europeans still believe that this is done against the Americans, or by the Americans, or that it has anything to do with Israel! Wouldn't they try to kill Americans, if this would be the purpose? For every American killed in Iraq, there are hundreds of Iraqis senselessly murdered by other Iraqis. For every attempt to hurt the Americans, there are dozens of attacks on innocent Iraqis. Who is funding them? Who provides weapons, explosives, reconnaissance and intelligence? Not the poor hungry Iraqis. Who finances the Shiite murderers in Iraq, so close to the Iranian border? Who is funding the Sunni murderers in Iraq? I do not know. But I have no doubt that European intelligence services do know. I do know that the Sunni Palestinian Islamic Jihad is fully paid by the Shiite Hizbullah and I know who pays the Hizbullah. But the French foreign minister

visits Beirut and states that Iran is playing a constructive role and Mr. Prodi asks for help from Iran. What more should happen before you wake up?

A misguided, but idealistic, young Italian decides to spend his vacation by arranging a summer camp for Palestinian children in East Jerusalem. He is stabbed to death by a Palestinian terrorist (or "resistance fighter", you can choose your words) in the middle of the street. Medical and social volunteers, who try to help Iraqis, are kidnapped and beheaded. Money contributed in Europe for earthquake relief in Pakistan is used to finance the latest suicide plot against flights from the UK to the US. Israel withdraws from Gaza and leaves intact greenhouses that could provide employment to numerous unemployed Palestinians. The greenhouses are destroyed, under the supervision of the Hamas and their metal parts are sold as scrap metal or used as raw material for more primitive rockets. The greenhouse area becomes a launching pad for rockets into Israeli villages. After all, they get a better salary for trying to kill Israelis than for growing strawberries and flowers. And the EU tries to find ways of sending money to these people. What more should happen before you wake up?

Perhaps the so called international human rights organizations should react? Oh, yes, they do, by one proclamation after another, denouncing Israel. The secretary general of the UN is critical of Israel, both in Gaza and in Lebanon. Not one word about thousands of rockets deliberately sent from both areas towards Israeli civilians, when Israel is not occupying one centimeter of their land. The brand new "Human Rights Council", the new improved version of the old UN "Human Rights Commission" (yes, the revised version of the grotesque body previously chaired by Libya) is calling an emergency meeting in order to condemn Israel in the Lebanese context. "This Council represents a great new chance for the United Nations, and for humanity, to renew the struggle for human rights" says the UN leadership. But in the long six-week (repeat: six weeks) history of this new council, this is already the second extraordinary emergency session. The first session was called in order to denounce Israel in connection with the Palestinian terror. Did I hear anyone in Europe protesting? Did Europe announce that it will have nothing to do with this farce at the "Human Rights Council"? Why do we hear about EU financial humanitarian aid for the Lebanese and not for the Israeli civilians whose houses and schools were destroyed by the terrorists? Perhaps we are still waiting for the proof that these are terrorists. Evenhanded Europe, can you please explain why Lebanese civilians are dearer to you than Israelis? Perhaps, the argument goes, because more Lebanese died than Israelis. Ah, but many more Germans died in World War II than British and French combined. Hitler must have been right! Did you realize that when the Lebanese government announces daily the number of dead civilians, they include among them the hundreds of dead Hizbullah terrorists, because they are not soldiers? Did you realize that when Kofi Annan talks about Palestinian casualties in the conflict with Israel, he always includes the suicide murderers in the count? Has anyone mentioned this in Europe? What more should happen before you wake up?

The prime minister of Lebanon, a clear accomplice of the Hizbullah, by omission and by submission, but not by commission, sheds tears publicly, in front of world media and Arab league foreign ministers, about the forty civilians who were just murdered indiscriminately by Israel, only to sheepishly admit, a few hours later, that actually one person was killed in that attack, not forty. But the entire world has repeatedly watched the well acted phony drama of tears, with numerous replays by all networks, long after the truth came out. Few people have bothered to read the small print of the admission that this was a total fabrication. But we have already seen this movie, a few years ago, in the Jenin "refugee camp", where people have been deliberately kept by the UN and by the Palestinians, for four generations(!), as refugees, only half an hour drive from where their grandparents used to live sixty years ago. Arab satellite TV

networks repeatedly broadcast pictures of mutilated bodies, some real, some being deliberately paraded in front of the cameras and some being dug from old graves. A gut wrenching dead body of a little girl, killed in Gaza when she fell from a swing, is paraded in front of news cameras, shown repeatedly around the world as an Israeli bomb victim. Shares of Hizbullah, Hamas and Iran go up in Muslim street markets. Shares of moderate Arab regimes go down. Do we hear about it from the European media? What more should happen before you wake up?

How would you defend yourself against a deadly rocket, launched into your civilian population centers, from the terrace of an apartment building, without destroying the building and hurting its dwellers? Perhaps you are supposed to simply announce: "I am not allowed to defend myself". How can you destroy the next rocket, before it is launched, if it is hidden inside an apartment of a family with children, or if it is transported in an unmarked family car? And if you defend yourself in any way, does that make you a war criminal, because civilians died together with the terrorists? When I discussed in my book the need to rewrite international law, both purists and jurists smiled cynically at the naïve scientist, who is expressing views on matters of law. I am the first to plead ignorance and incompetence in matters of international law, but please answer my questions: Can you destroy the building in which the missiles are hidden in bedrooms and from the terrace of which they are launched, or are you forbidden to defend yourself at all? Can you recommend an alternative? Do I have to read every day in European newspapers accusations about Israel violating international law, while no one is answering this simple question? How will you, dear Europe, react when the rockets will be launched against you? In Kosovo, without rockets, you invited the American bombers to solve the problem. Numerous innocent civilians were killed, at your service. You did not complain much. Will you invite the Americans to defend your cities, when the rockets arrive? Will you then enjoy their protection and accuse them of war crimes, when they blast a building full of rockets and, in the process, kill innocent civilians? What more should happen before you wake up?

Dear Europe, you live inside a nice and clean bottle, surrounded outside by deadly poison. The bottle is transparent. You can see clearly what is happening outside, but in order to do so, you must uncover your eyes. At the moment, Israel has the unfortunate fate of being the cork of that bottle. The eye of the storm has become the cork of the bottle. The metaphor has changed, but not the role. The poison is leaking into the bottle and no one inside is acknowledging it. And the cork is attacked on both sides: With deadly weapons from the outside, and with deadly words and pictures from the inside. America had its wake-up call on September 11, 2001. It made terrible mistakes since then, but it is fully awake. Some segments of its society are also in denial, but even they are awake. In my book I made the simple geographic observation that "when America wakes up, Europe is out to lunch". Dear Europe, your lunch break is too long and you are now extending it into a siesta. There is a war outside and you are going to be part of it. The sooner you act, the fewer victims will die, both in Europe and in the Muslim world. Appeasement is not an option and neither is hesitation. You are guaranteed to be on the winning side, for the sake of civilization and also for the sake of millions of honest innocent Muslims, who will eventually pay the highest price for the madness of their leaders. But you cannot win while in denial and certainly not before you open your eyes. What more should happen before you wake up?