



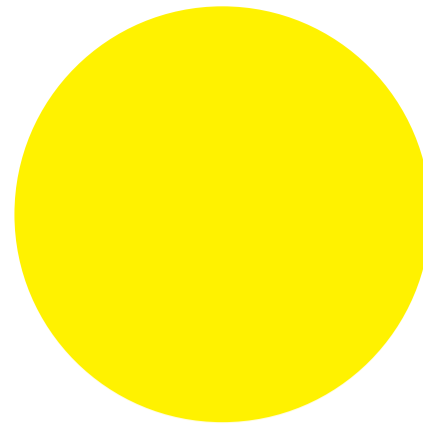
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2 >



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8 >



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2 >

US goals for cease-fire in Gaza



By **Abdolreza Faraji-Rad**
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OPINION EXCLUSIVE

As per reports, the United States is gearing up to table a draft resolution at the Security Council for a temporary cease-fire in the Gaza Strip. The US has

shot down several peace proposals and blocked Algeria's suggestion yesterday.

Washington's opposition to these peace initiatives, especially as the death toll among Palestinians nears 30,000, has cast doubt on the global standing of the United States. The ongoing protests against Israel and the growing sympathy for Palestinians worldwide, particularly in Western nations, have added to these concerns.

With the likelihood of an Israeli ground assault on Rafah in Gaza's southernmost region on the rise, the US is laying out a cease-fire plan to prevent further Palestinian casualties and mitigate its international repercussions. However, this proposal is only a temporary measure, not a permanent solution.

A temporary truce may serve Israel's interests more than Hamas', given the uncertainty surrounding the cessation of Israeli attacks and the release of captives held by Hamas. Netanyahu aims to leverage a possible temporary cease-fire to secure the release of prisoners, bolster his forces, and prolong the conflict. He believes that ending the war would spell the end of his cabinet, indicating his reluctance to halt the war at this juncture.

While mediators like Qatar and Egypt are striving for a lasting cease-fire and an end to the conflict, the US is not yet on board with a permanent truce. Washington seeks to quell the current volatile situation through a cease-fire, prisoner release, and subsequently, exert pressure on Israel at a later stage to end the conflict and pursue its plan for resolving the Israeli-Palestinian issue sans the Netanyahu cabinet and Hamas.

The US strategy appears to revolve around formalizing the concept of two states, envisioning an independent Palestinian state coexisting with Israel. Netanyahu's cabinet opposes this notion. Opposition within Israel against Netanyahu's hardline cabinet is mounting, with many anticipating its premature downfall post-conflict. The US is closely monitoring Israel's internal dynamics and aims to execute its plan in collaboration with Arab nations, the European Union, and potentially with backing from China and Russia, contingent on Netanyahu's exit.

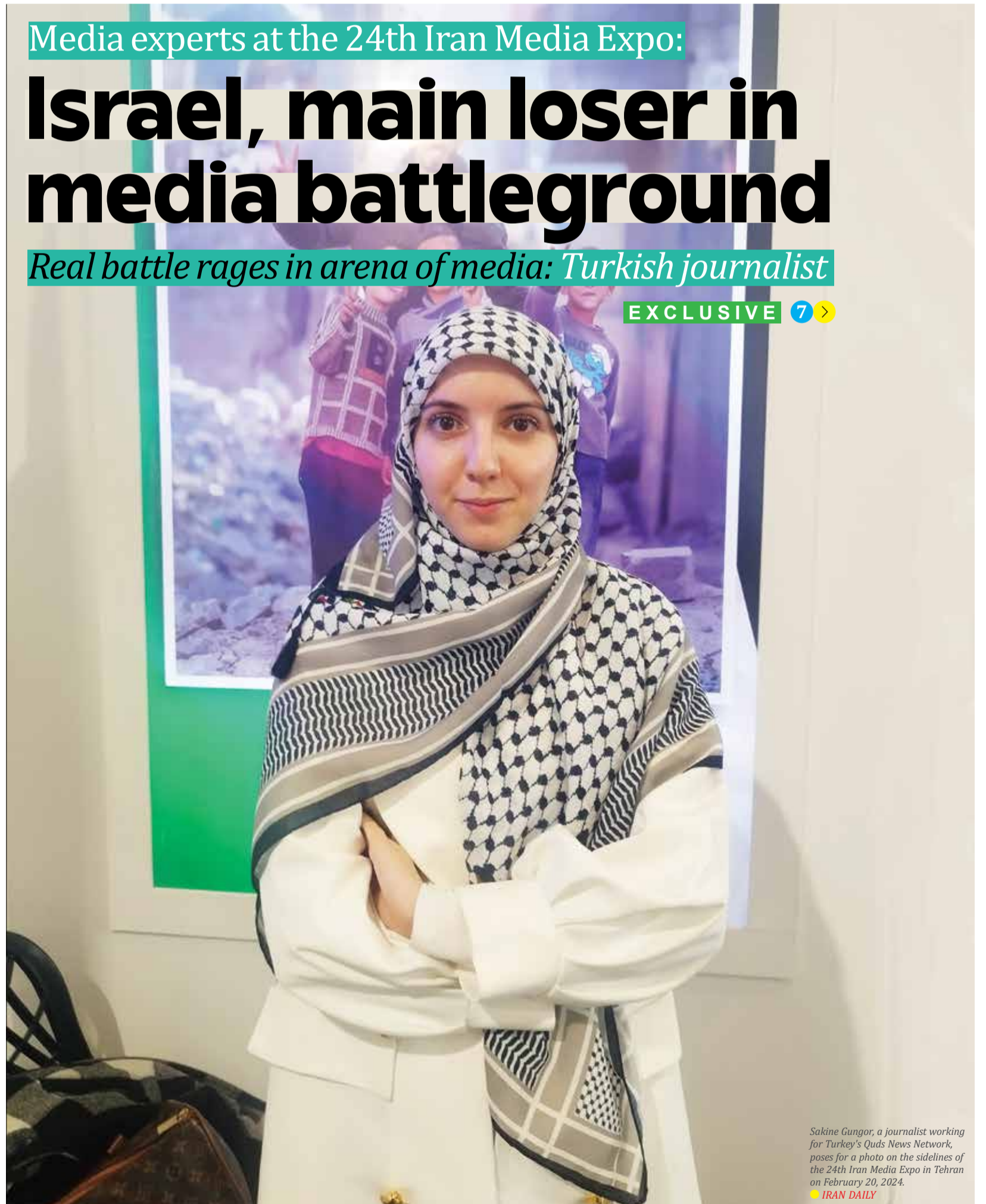
The US is open to adjusting its strategy with a more moderate Israeli government in place—a blueprint to end the conflict. The administration of Gaza would be transferred to the Palestinian Authority, with Hamas transitioning from a military entity to a political faction within the PA. This shift aims to advance the establishment of a Palestinian state and normalize Israel's relations with Arab nations. Such a move would be advantageous for the Democrats and President Joe Biden. However, the fate of this plan during the implementation phase remains uncertain.

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Sakine Gungor, a journalist working for Turkey's Quds News Network, poses for a photo on the sidelines of the 24th Iran Media Expo in Tehran on February 20, 2024.

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