

THE WEEKLY PRINT

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JUNE 2, 2026

Cheap, deadly and hard to spot: Hezbollah's drones create urgent security threat for Israel

'You just have Israeli soldiers completely unaware. If you can't hear the drone, if you don't know that it's there until it's too late, it's too late,' said FDD's David Daoud

By Matthew Shea

One of Israel's most urgent emerging security threats is not a sophisticated missile or advanced weapons system, but a small, cheap drone that can be bought online and easily assembled.

Hezbollah's use of first-person view drones (FPVs) — a battlefield tactic widely utilized in the Russia-Ukraine war and now adopted by the Iran-backed terror group — has caused Israeli casualties, threatens civilians and exposed vulnerabilities in Israel's air-defense systems, including the Iron Dome.

The drones are small and inexpensive, but difficult to detect, experts say. The growing threat has caught the IDF off guard and is forcing Israeli officials to rethink how they protect soldiers, border communities and critical defense infrastructure during the fragile partial ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah.

Last Wednesday, a drone attack near the Israeli border community of Shomera killed one soldier and wounded two others. Since the ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon began in April, experts have recorded more than 100 drone attacks on communities in-

side Israel. On Monday, an IDF soldier was killed in southern Lebanon after being struck by an explosive drone sent by Hezbollah.

"These are very simple, unsophisticated drones," Yaakov Katz, a senior fellow at the Jewish People Policy Institute, told *Jewish Insider*. "Imagine a person can watch with goggles almost and be the eyes of the drone, see what the drone sees and literally fly it to wherever it wants its target to be."

Experts said that Hezbollah can purchase commercial drones, or assemble them inside Lebanon using imported parts. But despite their low cost and relative simplicity, the drones are proving difficult for Israel to defend against.

"These are small, they fly very low, so they're not seen or detected mostly by radar," Katz said. "Even if you saw them, you can't necessarily intercept them or destroy them with traditional means of scrambling their radar signal or other electronic warfare capabilities. That is what's making this so complicated for Israel."

The drones have been particularly effective against Israeli soldiers operating in the open, Katz said, turning what was once a

secondary concern into "one of the most pressing issues for Israel." He noted that the drones come in various sizes and carry explosives, including grenades, that are flown directly into Israeli soldiers or other targets.

David Daoud, a senior fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, said this appears to be the "first real conflict" in which Hezbollah has employed these kinds of drones at scale.

"These drones are basically loitering around for a while," Daoud said. "They're not moving at particularly high speeds and you just have Israeli soldiers completely unaware. If you can't hear the drone, if you don't know that it's there until it's too late, it's too late."

Daoud said he has seen footage of drones flying within "a foot or two" of Israeli soldiers who appeared unaware of their presence. That low detectability, he said, can increase the danger not only to soldiers but also to civilians and infrastructure.

"This kind of feeds into the idea that their detectability is very low by design," Daoud said. "Hezbollah has also talked about disabling some of the early warning systems. If Israel's Red Alert is knocked out

in a certain area and then Hezbollah fires a barrage of 100 rockets, suddenly people don't have the ability to know that the attack is incoming. You increase the possibility of Israeli casualties."

Katz said the threat has also taken on a deeply personal dimension for many Israelis. "I have two nephews who are in Lebanon right now," he said. "Everyone knows someone in Lebanon and you're concerned, and that creates a level of anxiety."

"Unfortunately, it's almost every day that we wake up, or in the middle of the day, get reports of another soldier who's been killed by one of these drones," he added. "It just wasn't as important, but now it is, because it's killing people. That now made it one of the most pressing issues for Israel."

Ari Cicurel, associate director of foreign policy at the Jewish Institute for National Security of America, said the drones are also effective because they allow operators to strike with "greater precision and accuracy." He said that Hezbollah has deployed FPV drones similar to those used by Russia against Ukraine, adding that the group has adopted fiber-optic control cables to mimic Russian tactics and evade electronic countermeasures.

"Even if they are smaller, the operator can focus in on sites, loiter, wait for an individual or a site to be a desirable target, and then hit them," Cicurel said. "What we're seeing in particular recently is adding fiber optic cables to them. That is another clear lesson that both Iran and Hezbollah have learned from Russia's use of these drones against Ukraine."

He said the cables help prevent electronic countermeasures from disrupting the drone's communications, creating "a greater challenge" for Israeli forces trying to intercept them.

Daoud said another factor complicating the issue for Israel is that Hezbollah's drones are relatively easy to import from abroad or produce domestically, which makes it easier to conceal them.

"These things can probably be produced

[regularly] given how cheap they are, how easy they are to manufacture, given how unsophisticated they are," Daoud said. "When we talk about these factories, we're not talking about something that requires a high level of sophistication. I could sit at my desk and make 30 of these a day."

One of the most concerning targets is the Iron Dome, Israel's primary air-defense system. Footage released by Hezbollah earlier this month appeared to show a drone striking an Israeli Iron Dome launcher, though experts said the extent of the damage remains unclear.

"In Hezbollah's propaganda they talked about having drones that would be able to disarm the Iron Dome and that's obviously an issue," Daoud said. "The Iron Dome operates off of a radar. If you've made these drones able to go undetected by radar, then a few well-placed drones could either throw off Iron Dome or disable an Iron Dome battery or disable the radar."

"The more these drones are developed by Hezbollah to become more able to evade radar, the more of a problem you're going to have when it comes to Iron Dome," he added. "Israel doesn't have thousands of Iron Dome batteries. Most of them have been deployed to the north. If Hezbollah is able to knock them out, then that's a massive security risk for Israel."

Still, Daoud noted that the Iron Dome remains the "most effective" counter to FPVs despite the liability.

Experts also said Israel was not fully prepared for the scope of the FPV drone threat and is now trying to adapt quickly. But they cautioned that there is unlikely to be a single solution.

"I think they were underprepared," Katz said. "What Israel underestimated was the extent, the numbers, the ranges and its inability to defend itself from them. And that is how we found ourselves in this current situation."

Israel has already adopted some defensive measures used by Ukraine, including establishing protective netting around milit-

ary vehicles. However, Daoud said there is a trade-off.

"If the IDF decides to put all of its Humvees in Lebanon in protective netting, that means they're going to move slower, and when they move slower they're open to different threats from Hezbollah," Daoud said. "So the question is what tactic do you adopt that plugs up one problem and doesn't open you up to another problem."

Other options could include targeting Hezbollah launch areas and strongholds in Lebanon, Daoud said, though he cautioned that Israel's room to maneuver could be limited by diplomatic considerations, including pressure from Washington to halt hostilities in Lebanon amid negotiations with Iran.

"I think it goes back to the defensive adaptations in terms of needing to prepare for a variety of defenses against the kind of projectiles that our adversaries could be launching," Cicurel said, noting that he believed "putting netting around air defenses" would "prevent drones from reaching them."

Experts said it remains unclear whether Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad or other Iranian-backed groups will adopt the same tactics in future conflicts. But Katz said Israel cannot assume the threat will remain limited to Hezbollah.

"It would be negligent to think that they [other Iranian-backed groups] do not have it," Katz said. "It is easy. It can be bought off of Amazon or at a drone store. You can buy parts and smuggle them in and assemble them on your own without anyone even knowing."

That leaves Israel facing a difficult question: how to defend against a threat that is cheap, widely available and hard to detect, but potentially devastating when used effectively.

"This has to be something that needs to be thought about very seriously," Katz added, "... and I would even say with urgency." ♦

JUNE 3, 2026

Rubio defends Israeli operations in Lebanon, despite Trump-Netanyahu spat

The secretary of state largely defended Israel's strikes in response; 'Israel has a right to act in its defense'

By Marc Rod

Despite President Donald Trump's public acknowledgement of a confrontational phone call with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu regarding Israeli operations in Lebanon, Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Wednesday largely defended Israel's attacks against the Lebanese terrorist group.

He said that Hezbollah reached out to the U.S. government through the Lebanese authorities approximately two weeks ago and said that it would stop launching missiles into Israeli territory if Israel did not attack Beirut. But Rubio said that Hezbollah went back on that agreement and launched rockets at Israel within hours.

"Israel has not conducted massive operations in Beirut for some time," Rubio said at a House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing. "Israel has a right to act in its defense."

Israeli strikes have taken place largely to prevent imminent attacks by Hezbollah forces preparing to attack Israel, Rubio said. He said that Israel's seizure of territory in southern Lebanon has been intended to deny Hezbollah freedom to operate and launch missiles, and that Israel has not been conducting large-scale operations in Beirut.

Pressed on the current U.S. position in negotiations with Iran, particularly in comparison to the first Trump administration's condemnation of the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, Rubio largely focused on the nuclear elements of the deal, but said that Iran's missile program would also be discussed.

He said that Iran would not receive money or sanctions relief unless it agrees to dispose of its highly enriched uranium and give up its enrichment program.

Asked whether the administration would submit any deal reached to Congress, he said that the administration would comply with the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act, which requires such review. He said in a Senate Appropriations Committee hearing in the afternoon that the bill, known as INARA, has "very specific requirements about elements of the nuclear program that would have to be noticed to Congress."

Pressed by Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC) on whether Iran's support for proxy terrorism would be part of any deal, Rubio said that the U.S. would like to see limits on that activity in a deal, but said that there could also be U.S. sanctions "just on that."

He also suggested at the House hearing the U.S. is seeking to address Iran's supply of 20% enriched uranium, in addition to 60% enriched uranium.

Asked about recent comments by Trump describing the Iranian military as moderate, and saying that the U.S. has left it "alone," Rubio drew a distinction between military equipment and capabilities, which the U.S. has targeted, and certain figures inside the regime who have been more open to negotiations with the U.S. or a more conciliatory posture.

He also framed all U.S. operations since the ceasefire as defensive — retaliatory attacks to respond to or prevent attacks on commercial shipping, to which Iran has responded with strikes on facilities throughout the region.

"These are completely defensive in nature. But they are happening in response to an Iranian action. If they don't shoot at those ships, we don't shoot. But we have to

respond," Rubio said. "You have a civilian commercial vessel transiting the straits and they're being targeted by drones."

He denied a report that Iran had threatened to test a nuclear weapon if the U.S. does not make concessions in negotiations.

Asked about congressional action on Iran, Rubio noted that Iranian state media has framed congressional votes in favor of war powers resolutions to block operations against Iran as a victory which would tie the U.S.' hands.

He also said that the administration does not feel it needs an Authorization for Use of Military force to carry out any potential further operations against Iran, but said that the administration would engage with Congress if that occurs and that it would welcome any further congressional authorities.

Pressed by Rep. Joaquin Castro (D-TX) about Israel's alleged nuclear capabilities, Rubio emphasized that Israel has never acknowledged that it has a nuclear program, though most of the world believes it does. "But they've never acknowledged that publicly, and as a feature of our foreign policy, for a variety of reasons, we don't discuss it in that way either," he said.

He said that the State Department might be able to discuss the issue further in a closed session and in a different context than a letter Castro and other Democrats sent to Rubio on the subject.

Rubio also affirmed that Turkey is currently not eligible to receive F-35 fighter jets as long as it operates a Russian S-400 missile defense system, under U.S. statute. ♦

JUNE 4, 2026

UDP faces questions from N.J. Jewish leaders why it stayed on sidelines against Hamawy

Hamawy, despite his past ties to a convicted terrorist, faced minimal scrutiny from outside groups — including many of his primary rivals

By Matthew Kassel

Adam Hamawy's victory on Tuesday in a closely watched congressional primary in New Jersey, which elevated an outspoken critic of Israel whose past ties to a convicted terrorist had drawn scrutiny during the campaign, is raising questions over why the far-left Democrat did not face outside opposition from the pro-Israel group AIPAC or its well-funded super PAC.

Hamawy, who won 28% of the vote in New Jersey's 12th Congressional District, prevailed with a modest plurality over the multi-candidate primary field competing to succeed Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ). With 93% of the vote counted on Wednesday, Brad Cohen, the mayor of East Brunswick and a Jewish Democrat who touted his support for Israel while identifying as an AIPAC member, placed second with 15%. Hamawy is all but assured a seat in Congress next year as the district heavily favors Democrats.

Despite a double-digit deficit, Cohen's performance exceeded many expectations, indicating that he likely could have finished in a stronger position with help from AIPAC's super PAC, United Democracy Project, some local Jewish leaders suggested in interviews on Wednesday.

While Cohen posted relatively robust fundraising figures, pulling in \$700,000 over the course of the race, he struggled to keep up with Hamawy, a plastic surgeon and Army veteran who claimed just over \$1 million. Notably, Hamawy also drew support from a newly created super PAC, American Priorities, launched as a left-wing counterweight to AIPAC, which spent more than \$1.5 million in the primary to bolster his ascendant campaign.

UDP's conspicuous absence as American Priorities aggressively promoted Hamawy during the final days of the primary allowed

the new group to shape the narrative as he drew skepticism over his efforts to downplay a decades-old association with a radical Muslim cleric convicted of inspiring the 1993 World Trade Center bombing as well as his work for a now-shuttered al-Qaida-linked front group in Bosnia.

Such vulnerabilities were the sort that UDP would presumably have been eager to exploit to thwart an extreme detractor of Israel who had argued against the country's Iron Dome missile-defense system that protects civilians from attacks.

UDP, which looked at all of the candidates in the crowded field, had considered backing Cohen but ultimately determined he did not have a credible chance of winning, according to a source familiar with the situation who spoke on the condition of anonymity to address a confidential matter.

Patrick Dorton, a spokesperson for UDP, defended the group's choice not to engage. "We play in races where we have a reasonable opportunity to win," he explained in a brief interview with JI on Wednesday. "This was a multi-candidate field with obviously the anti-Hamawy vote very split."

"We didn't see a path to victory," Dorton said broadly of the primary. "We did a careful analysis of the race, including polling, and came to the conclusion not to get involved."

Steve Klinghoffer, a Jewish community leader and philanthropist and a former AIPAC board member, strongly disagreed with UDP's assessment. He said he had "numerous conversations" with AIPAC to try to convince the group to get involved in the primary but declined to share what he had been told in response.

"In my assessment, this was a missed opportunity, and it's greatly disturbing," Klinghoffer told JI, calling the primary "highly winnable" and citing "private

polling that showed it would be closer" if AIPAC had devoted its resources to the contest.

Still, Jewish and pro-Israel leaders in New Jersey were largely divided about AIPAC's decision, with some saying they trusted UDP's calculus and others expressing more skepticism about its motivations.

"If they stay out there's a good reason," noted Jason Shames, CEO of the Jewish Federation of Northern New Jersey, who said he spoke with AIPAC about the primary and got the sense that the group did not "see much upside" in being directly involved. "I give them the benefit of the doubt," he told JI, calling the group "very careful" and "more strategic" than critics might think.

Ben Chouake, the president of NORPAC, a pro-Israel advocacy group in New Jersey that endorsed Cohen, said there were more complex challenges at play that had influenced the result beyond AIPAC's decision to hold its powder.

"We supported Brad Cohen and raised a fair amount of money for him and tried to put together a ground game within the Jewish community," he told JI. "But I don't think our community, as a whole, is as unified as it needs to be."

But he believed AIPAC's involvement "absolutely" could have made a difference in the race, saying the vote tally was not insurmountable. "I think it was a worthwhile effort for us," he stressed. "I'm not upset that we did it."

Cohen, who sought to draw attention to Hamawy's controversial past ties in the closing stretch of the race, did not respond to messages from JI seeking comment.

Even as UDP now sits on a nearly \$95 million war chest to use in the midterms, it also has reason to stay on the sidelines, as the AIPAC brand has become increasingly

toxic among Democrats who have vowed to reject its support.

The super PAC had also endured an embarrassing setback in March in a nearby northern New Jersey Democratic special election, where it spent heavily to block Tom Malinowski, a moderate former congressman who had expressed interest in conditioning U.S. aid to Israel. The foray backfired, however — propelling a progressive activist with far more antagonistic positions on Israel to the House.

The reputational damage stemming from that effort still lingers in New Jersey, according to some Jewish leaders. One pro-Israel leader speculated that AIPAC simply “got gun-shy,” after its handling of the March election. Outside the state, UDP has otherwise shown a penchant for caution — most recently investing in a Democratic congressional race in a Maryland district home to a more moderate constituency.

“Unfortunately, it’s a tougher climate for AIPAC and other pro-Israel PACs, especially on the Democratic side,” Mark Levenson, a Jewish community leader in New Jersey, told JI. “The environment has changed.”

Amid a national political landscape now favoring anti-establishment, left-wing sentiment of the sort espoused by Hamawy and his progressive allies in other key races, AIPAC likely “understood its brand had taken a hit, particularly in New Jersey,” said one Jewish Democrat who viewed Hamawy’s election as a troubling sign of the party’s direction. “AIPAC called it wrong previously.”

“My guess is they probably were afraid this time that by coming in to support Brad, it might have harmed a very good candidate,” the activist said on Wednesday, noting it “raises a question of what AIPAC’s strategy” is going forward. “I think they need to also look in the mirror” and “assess this terrain very carefully” in weighing “what they’re going to do in the future.”

Dan Cassino, a political scientist and pollster at Fairleigh Dickinson University, said it was “hard to imagine that there were a lot of Hamawy supporters who would have turned against him because AIPAC was opposed to him,” given their already jaundiced view of the group.

“If AIPAC had gotten involved very early,

and thrown around enough money to dissuade some candidates from running, they could have made a difference,” he told JI. “But once that field was set, I don’t think they could have changed the result,” he said, pointing out the “risk that getting involved in a race that led to another win for a disfavored candidate would hurt AIPAC’s credibility even more.”

Micah Rasmussen, the director of Rider University’s Rebovich Institute for New Jersey Politics, argued it “would be foolish to blame AIPAC for the results of the election,” saying the “single thing that could have changed the outcome is for the field of candidates to have consolidated behind one candidate as a viable alternative to Adam Hamawy.”

“Whatever else might be said about AIPAC, they are not political novices,” he told JI. “No one can believe they sat on their hands because they couldn’t think of anything else to do.”

“You’re really left to wonder,” Rasmussen mused, “whether they view Adam Hamawy as a foil or a lightning rod for Jewish voters across the country.” ♦

JUNE 3, 2026

Bronfman Fellowship CEO: Leadership development programs ‘don’t just belong to one funder’

As ROI shuttered and Wexner fellowships spin off, Rebecca Voorwinde stresses the entire Jewish community’s need to invest in the next generation of leaders

By Jay Deitcher

The article first appeared in eJewishPhilanthropy.

In the past two years, Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies shuttered both its eponymous leadership development fellowship and its ROI Community for young Jewish “change-makers.” For two decades, these initiatives have produced many leaders of Jewish organizations and movements not only in the United States and Israel but around the world.

Schusterman is one of several philanthropic heavyweights to close or shift leadership initiatives, followed by the soon-to-

shutter Dorot Foundation, which runs a 10-month professional fellowship in Israel, and the Wexner Foundation, which told alumni last week that it is spinning off its flagship leadership programs into an independent nonprofit.

“There’s a change happening that no one is discussing,” Rebecca “Becky” Voorwinde, CEO of The Bronfman Fellowship, told *eJewishPhilanthropy*. Philanthropist-funded leadership fellowships “have mostly fallen out of favor in the last few years, at the same time as younger people are expressing views that don’t match the standard thinking of prior generations. And, I think there’s a cor-

relation between this generational attitude to institutions and the overall demise of these programs as ‘pet projects’ of specific philanthropists.”

Voorwinde spoke with eJP about philanthropists welcoming new perspectives, viewing leadership initiatives as a communal benefit and grappling with generational divides.

The interview has been edited for length and clarity.

Jay Deitcher: *How can an organization hope to invest in a leadership pipeline while recognizing this new generation might want to do things differently or see things differently,*

especially related to Israel and the breakdown of Jewish denominations?

Rebecca Voorwinde: The best leadership programs in the Jewish community over time have been programs that take the long view and recognize the value of investing in young people without assuming that you're putting something into the slot and it's coming out the way you want it exactly.

The leadership programs that the Jewish community has been built on for the past 40 years are programs that understood leadership education as a deep process of working with people on the character level, on the interpersonal level, giving them space to grow their point of view, giving them space to try on different directions for their leadership, introducing role models [and] introducing great Jewish learning.

If one expects that those young people are going to reflect back the views of a different generation, you're not going to see that. You're going to see change and evolution as young people take in the realities of their time and also metabolize the tools and resources and ideas and texts that have been the anchor for the Jewish people for a really long time.

If you have the patience as an organization or as a funder to take the long view, you will be pleasantly surprised working with young people and seeing them turn into individuals who can imagine solutions for the future that we couldn't imagine today. But if what you're doing is investing in a person and you want the [return on investment] to be a replication of a set of values or views exactly verbatim of the current norms or standards, that's not really leadership work, that's ideological think tank work. There's certainly a place for that in the Jewish community, but that's not the same thing as cultivating character or cultivating Jewish leadership.

JD: *What does our community lose when we don't have these leadership programs?*

RV: We are at risk right now of being hyper-focused on responding to crisis after crisis and being reactive as a community. When we invest in young people, when we give space for young people to imagine the future that they'd like to co-create, what we get is a more enriching and more exciting and more inspiring Jewish future and more joyful Jewish future.

You look at some of the institutions that have been created over the past 20, 30 years, projects like Sefaria or Keshet or some of the writers and artists that have emerged, within our community — we have Daniel Handler, who's Lemony Snicket, or [journalist] Matti Friedman or [nonfiction author] Judy Batalion, I could go on and on. You see creativity emerge because these individuals were given space to incubate their sense of where they belong and who they are.

Another thing that is really important is the cross-pollination that happens when investing in pluralistic projects. When you have young people who are leaders coming from a wide spectrum of backgrounds, identities and career paths, and you build community for those folks that's durable across difference, it helps to break down silos within the Jewish community, denominational silos and ideological silos, but it also breaks down the silos of Jewish professionals only working with Jewish professionals.

One of the things that's really unique about a lot of the projects that have existed for a long time but that are shifting right now [is that] these fellowships weren't exclusively for Jewish professionals. Often, they were either pre-professional in the sense that it was somebody who was high school age, like the Bronfman Fellowship, or college age, like Dorot or the Schusterman ROI program, which was often people who were entrepreneurial, but that wasn't always their day job.

JD: *Every organization has a line set on Zionism, but right now, people are defining the word Zionism very differently from one another. People aren't necessarily speaking the same language. How can an organization balance guiding this new generation and trusting them?*

RV: I'm a true card-carrying member as a pluralist, and I deeply believe in the importance of pluralism now more than ever, and I'm very lucky to work for an organization that centers pluralism as a deep and true value.

At its best, pluralism is where people can respect and value one another and recognize that we are living in a shared reality and that we need to find shared collaborative ways towards a better future for all, not just towards a better future for some.

When there are significant ideological differences on major topics that are painful

even, one of the things you do is you help people figure out how to build relationships that are durable enough that they can hear each other's realities, ask each other to understand better one another's views and stories and perspectives, and care about each other. That then allows for a much larger container where you can absolutely talk about definitions of Zionism, or definitions of whatever it might be, but it's within the context of those relationships.

Many young people have anxiety and concern that Jewish institutions want something from them, and I would like to say, "Yes, Jewish institutions do want something from them, but maybe something different than they think." I would like them to feel that Jewish institutions want them to bring their full, authentic selves into community with one another, and a lot can emerge from there.

What they're feeling is that they're being asked to sign on to a set of ideas without room to bring themselves in, and what can happen is that you have people who either check out completely or create alternative, siloed institutions, which are competing with one another.

There'll always be some competition in Jewish life, and we have that since the beginning of our tradition, but hopefully we're still looking towards finding a shared we.

JD: *I was recently at the Jewish Funders Network conference, and in the opening plenary, one of the speakers said to the audience, 'If you are in this room, you are establishment.' How can an organization show young Jews that they can truly come as they are and truly bring their ideas, no matter how off the derech?*

RV: A lot of that requires highly skilled educators, not just in the sense of being the kinds of individuals that have Jewish text knowledge or historical knowledge, but also people with high [emotional intelligence] who have a sense of how to build a group, how to build a space that models warmth, openness and creativity.

JD: *How has the fellowship changed in your 18 years working for Bronfman, especially as the way America relates to Israel has changed and how Israel is taught has changed?*

RV: The fellowship started in 1987, so we're entering the 40th year. For the past 13 years, we've continued to receive support as a not-for-profit from the Samuel Bronfman Found-

ation, and we also have grown our fundraising from the wider Jewish community.

Thinking about generational change, Edgar [Bronfman's] son, Adam Bronfman, really stepped up as that next generation leader and said, "I believe in this project that my dad started, but I also want this project to be able to be seen as a talent bank for the Jewish community more broadly."

In the last five years, we went from raising a little over \$100,000 from our community in 2021 to raising over \$1 million from our community in 2025.

We run a fellowship for North American high school students and a fellowship for Israeli high school students. In the last few years, we've built out almost four weeks of content for the North American students that takes place in America [unlike in the past when we had them only learn in Israel] because if we're really serious about being a Jewish identity program for both Israelis

and North Americans, then we need to give North American Jews space to think about what shapes them in their home environment and what their sense of responsibility is to the place in which they live, in addition to what their relationship to Israel is and what their relationship to Jewish peoplehood is and what their relationship to Jewish texts and ideas and spirituality.

Another significant shift for us has been integrating more active arts experiences and engaging with working artists. You can gain a lot of inspiration as a Jewish person through the arts today, and unfortunately, there isn't a lot of support for Jewish artists right now.

Another example is when I first started working at Bronfman 18 years ago, we didn't spend even one minute with Palestinians when the group would be in Israel. Today, we have a pretty robust approach to how we integrate Palestinian perspectives into the

time that this group is in Israel. Proportionally, it's still a very small part of the program, but it enables the group to grapple with the diversity of Palestinian experiences and with these serious challenges that Israel is facing when it comes to creating a shared future and shared society.

JD: *Can you tell me about your increase in fundraising and what you've learned?*

RV: The benefit of these in-depth leadership programs that have a long arc to them [is that] they were mostly created by individual funders, and it's time for the whole Jewish community to grow up a little and recognize that these have been some of the most important engines for creativity and leadership in the Jewish community for the past 40 years. They don't just belong to one funder. They are an asset for the whole Jewish community. ♦

JUNE 2, 2026

Khanna's hostile turn towards Israel divides Silicon Valley Jews

His critics once saw him as an ally, but fear he's pandered to extremists as he raises his national profile ahead of the 2028 presidential election

By Marc Rod

Rep. Ro Khanna's (D-CA) emergence as a leading Democratic party critic of Israel — while affiliating with and embracing individuals and groups that have been accused of antisemitism and support for terrorism — is creating divisions within the local Jewish community in his Silicon Valley-centered district.

While Khanna maintains unified support from Jewish elected officials in the district, other Jewish community leaders say they feel abandoned, ignored and even attacked by their congressman, whom they once saw as an ally, as he faces what could be his most credible primary challenge in years.

For some in the district, ties with the congressman have been strained for years, and were further inflamed by the March attack on two Israeli Americans in San Jose's

Santana Row shopping district.

Khanna strongly condemned the attack but some in the community said his words rang hollow after months of escalating anti-Israel rhetoric. Some Jewish leaders in the district say that they saw a direct connection between Khanna's incendiary language condemning the Jewish state and attacks such as the one their community experienced.

Two days after the attack, Khanna posted about how he is "proud to stand" with Maine Senate candidate Graham Platner and New York Mayor Zohran Mamdani, as well as to join far-left streamer Hasan Piker's show, all of whom have faced criticism from the Jewish community — comments that prompted condemnation by Anti-Defamation League CEO Jonathan Greenblatt.

Jewish leaders in the district who are now critical of the congressman said the community's relationship with Khanna started out strong when he was first elected in 2016, but has significantly deteriorated over time, particularly in the past few years. Khanna's Silicon Valley district includes substantial, concentrated Jewish and Israeli-American communities.

Tali Klima, a spokesperson for Bay Area Jewish Coalition Action, a local grassroots advocacy group, said that Khanna was "warmly welcomed" by the Jewish community when he was first elected and that many in the community had supported him.

Khanna traveled to Israel three times while in office, and has expressed support for the Abraham Accords, voted in 2019 to condemn the Boycott, Divestment and

Sanctions movement, condemned calls to “globalize the intifada,” voted in early 2024 to condemn the slogan “from the River to the Sea, Palestine will be free” and introduced a Holocaust education resolution in 2024. Amid rising antisemitism in recent years, he has touted appointing a point of contact for addressing antisemitism in the district on his congressional team.

But, Klima and other critics said, they’ve seen the congressman’s posture change over time.

“He’s become more and more divisive and more extremist in his views, that we never heard when he was first elected, especially since Oct. 7. It’s been a massive shift in the way that he communicates about things that we care about,” Klima continued.

“At this point, the community has really lost trust in him,” Klima said. “Much of the community is afraid of him, and much of the community is also very angry and feels betrayed by him.”

Khanna has frequently and repeatedly accused Israel of genocide, was among the first lawmakers to endorse calls for cutting off U.S. support for Israel’s Iron Dome missile-defense system and led an effort for U.S. recognition of a Palestinian state, among a range of other stances and votes, and has repeatedly faced scrutiny for his affiliations with groups and individuals condemned by the Jewish community.

Later this week, he’s set to offer an amendment to strip a provision advancing U.S.-Israel cooperative programs out of the 2027 defense bill. Though one former Biden administration called the provision “quite unremarkable” and in keeping with existing programs, Khanna called it a “fusion” of the U.S. and Israeli militaries to prevent scrutiny and accountability for U.S. aid to Israel.

Jewish elected officials supporting Khanna, in statements shared with *Jewish Insider*, praised the congressman for his support for a two-state solution and for engaging with local Jewish communities.

“Having participated in local town halls with Representative Khanna and spoken with him about various community concerns, I am thankful for his commitment to open dialogue and remaining accessible even when we disagree,” Assemblymember Patrick Ahrens said. “His dedication to

peace and justice for all people and support for a two-state solution is laudable. He has been a leader for accountability and transparency with the Trump Administration, particularly with the bipartisan push for the release of the Epstein files.”

State Sen. Josh Becker added, “While Congressman Khanna gets a lot of ink for his criticism of Israel he gets less for his vocal support of a two state solution and Israel as a safe democratic Jewish state.”

Others, such as San Jose City Councilmember David Cohen, more broadly praised him for his work on local issues.

“Times are very difficult these days in Washington D.C., and Congressmember Khanna remains a steady advocate for our region and economy. We need people who understand the tech industry and also who bring money back to our community from the federal budget,” Cohen said. “He has shown courage and has been willing to face his constituents at monthly town hall meetings ever since he was elected. While I don’t agree with every position he takes, I admire his thoughtfulness and transparency.”

Cohen declined to speak further on Khanna’s foreign policy work or his relationship with the local Jewish community.

But others in the community feel that their concerns aren’t being heard or listened to by the congressman. Daniel Klein, CEO of Jewish Silicon Valley, a Jewish nonprofit which runs a local JCC and other community programs and resources, said he’s communicated to Khanna directly that he thinks the legislator is out of step with his constituents.

“The fact that an elected official like Khanna defends [people like Hasan Piker and Zohran Mamdani] and their dangerous antisemitic views is not only shameful — but it also actively endangers the lives of Jewish people both in his district and around the country,” Oleg Ivanov, executive director of StandWithUs Northern California, said.

Ivanov also accused Khanna of spreading a “blood libel” in accusing Israel of genocide in Gaza.

Oded Shekel, executive director of Bay Area Jewish Coalition Action, emphasized that members of the Jewish and Israeli community in Khanna’s district feel afraid,

isolated and that they have to hide who they are, and don’t feel they’re getting the support they expect from their congressman.

Shekel said that he doesn’t necessarily think Khanna is personally or openly antisemitic, but that he is supporting and rationalizing extreme voices, to the point that has made many Jews like him feel that Khanna is the “strongest voice [that] hurts Jews in his district.”

Khanna joined a town hall in 2024 hosted by the Bay Area Jewish Coalition — a separate entity from Bay Area Jewish Coalition Action led by the same individuals — but the relationship has soured since then.

Sunnyvale Mayor Larry Klein, a Khanna supporter, said he’d attended the BAJC town hall, and met with Jewish community members alongside Khanna to discuss the challenges that Jewish high schoolers were facing from antisemitism in the district, and how the congressman could address them.

“Good to hear directly from High School Students and their parents on the district issues,” Mayor Klein said in a statement. “It was valuable to hear firsthand about the harassment that Jewish Students had endured.

Mayor Klein also praised Khanna’s “bipartisan approach to leadership” on issues including “working to halt reckless foreign intervention” and the release of the Epstein Files, saying that Khanna, “consistently puts principles over politics.” He also praised Khanna’s engagement with constituents more broadly and work on securing federal funding for the district.

Daniel Klein of Jewish Silicon Valley described Khanna’s stances and statements as hostile to the Jewish community. He said that the violent attack in Santana Row, and other similar incidents, are the “natural maturation” of the rhetoric Khanna has used and elevated.

“I appreciate the congressman being outraged” about the Santana Row attack, “but statements and what he normalizes and who he platforms before these incidents, and then who he chooses to stand with and platform and normalize after these incidents, makes the community feel unseen and unsupported by the congressman,” Klein said he told Khanna’s office in the wake of

the attack.

Yet, Klein said, Khanna's rhetoric does not appear to have shifted substantially since the March attack.

Klima echoed that, expressing frustration that Khanna's condemnation of the attack was quickly followed by a return to his usual rhetoric and activity.

In addition to Jewish elected officials backing him, Khanna maintains support among segments of the local Jewish community. Ben Linder, a J Street board member who lives just outside Khanna's district, told *JI* he continues to strongly support the congressman. J Street has endorsed Khanna, but Linder spoke to *JI* in a personal capacity, not on behalf of the progressive Israel advocacy group.

"I'm a big fan of Congressman Khanna," Linder, who was born in Israel and moved to the U.S. in high school, said. "The majority of the Jewish community is squarely behind him and very aligned with him," Linder continued, emphasizing that he has seen Khanna speak on multiple occasions to busy synagogue audiences.

He called critics "out of touch with the view of the majority of Jews right now" both in Khanna's district and nationally, pointing to a *Washington Post* poll last year that found a majority of Jews are critical of the way the war in Gaza has been conducted.

He asserted that discontent with Khanna traces to a "vocal minority in the district, mainly led by right-wing Israeli expats that dislike Congressman Khanna" and are "out of touch with where our community is."

"I consider Ro Khanna very pro-Israel. He is clearly anti-Netanyahu and anti- the policies of Israel's right wing government, but so am I, and, I think, so are the majority of Jews in this district," Linder said.

Critics of Khanna said that the congressman's activity following the Santana Row attack matches a pattern they've observed repeatedly when Khanna is called out for conduct or statements they find offensive — Khanna will apologize, or offer targeted condemnations, but won't substantially change his behavior, and ultimately continues doubling down.

They said this pattern ignores the way that Khanna's own rhetoric is fueling anti-

semitism.

Klima emphasized that Khanna's constituents have come to him on numerous occasions asking him to dial down his rhetoric. At this point, she said, his "symbolic condemnations" of antisemitism "ring very hollow."

"He's speaking out of both sides of his mouth, basically," she said, adding that, as a longtime congressman, his comments "[legitimize] this rhetoric," driving similar activity from other local officials as well.

Ivanov said it's easy for Khanna to denounce antisemitic attacks or vandalism, "but as soon as he does that, he continues to spread the antisemitic conspiracy theories, to defend antisemitic speakers that are out there every day, fueling the antisemitism that leads to these actions."

"We will not accept Khanna's pro-forma denunciation of antisemitic incidents while he himself continues to fuel antisemitism and defend antisemites," Ivanov said.

Linder, the Khanna supporter, argued that Khanna has made clear that he "will speak with anyone" and "dialogues with people he disagrees with, and I respect that." Khanna has expressed similar sentiments to *JI* in the past.

Linder said he strongly disagreed with the notion that Khanna's rhetoric is fueling violence, and emphasized that the Santana Row attack was not charged as a hate crime.

"I don't believe there was sufficient evidence to show that it was hate-motivated," Linder said. "The congressman came out very quickly and denounced that attack, denounced the violence, and I fundamentally am not a subscriber to the notion that criticizing Israel fuels antisemitism. I see a clear delineation between criticism of Israel and Jew hatred. I don't believe the two are connected. As a matter of fact, I think some of the actions of Netanyahu and the Israeli government, the extreme right Israeli government foment antisemitism."

Shekel, a Khanna critic, said that, during conversations with Khanna about antisemitism that community members are facing, Khanna has expressed sympathy while pivoting to emphasize his disputes with various Israeli government policies.

"We feel that he is fixated, obsessed with

Israel," Klima added.

Klein said that some in the community see Khanna as not only ignoring their concerns but attacking the Jewish community for elevating those issues in the first place. He pointed to an incident in which Khanna shared on his X account a clip of Holocaust denying social media influencer Ian Carroll as one such instance.

Klein said he and representatives of the local Jewish Community Relations Council sat down in person with Khanna's staff about the video — "not only the fact that this person was platformed, the person wasn't taken down immediately, and instead of listening to the Jewish community's concerns, at least publicly, he seemed to attack the Jewish community instead."

Klein also characterized Khanna as deflecting the concerns of the local Jewish community in conversations, offering a variety of excuses, including pointing to national polling on Israel policy issues.

"The organized Jewish community is telling you exactly where the majority of the Jewish community stands, and if you choose not to listen, it is not due to lack of knowing where your constituents are. It's a choice," Klein said. "It's a choice at that point, and then that begs the question of why the member of Congress is choosing to ignore the Jewish community while also at the same time saying he's being responsive to the Jewish community. That's a contradiction I don't have the answer to."

Critics in the district see a political motivation behind Khanna's rhetoric and positioning.

Ivanov said that he first met Khanna several years ago, when Ivanov was working for the American Jewish Committee. The congressman at the time emphasized "the importance of maintaining progressive support for Israel in American society. That has obviously changed over the past few years, where he has embraced this tide of vilification of Israel as a way to appeal to the rising popularity of bashing Israel among certain voters," Ivanov said.

Klima said that the "general sentiment" among members of the Jewish community is that Khanna's stance is "opportunistic" and that he's following anti-Israel trends for

the sake of popularity, rather than any “deeply held view.”

“We feel like he’s throwing us, his constituents, under the bus for his political game, because he feels like this is a win for progressives,” she said.

The congressman is widely seen as preparing for a presidential campaign in 2028.

Khanna’s frequent commentary about the “Epstein Class” — he was one of the leading advocates in the House for releasing files related to sex offender Jeffrey Epstein — has also set off alarm bells for Khanna’s critics.

Klima said that many in the Jewish community read those references as code for

the Jewish community writ large, “because of our history with him, our recent history with him.” She said that Khanna’s pattern of rhetoric and actions has sowed distrust of him and his motives.

Khanna has dismissed the notion that the phrase is antisemitic, pointing to Jewish elected officials who have also spoken about the “Epstein Class.”

Critics in the district say that Khanna has a lot of work to do to repair his relationships with the Jewish community — and that it will take more than the pro forma condemnations of antisemitism that they feel he’s been offering over the past few years.

Klein encouraged Khanna to “stop feed-

ing the extreme left and the alt-right” on social media and called on him to apologize for “ignoring the Jewish community,” and “actually start listening to the organized Jewish community,” rather than the “fringes.”

Klima said that she is fed up with what she sees as “symbolic gestures” by the congressman.

“We feel like we’re just pawns in his political game, because the very next day, he’s back to the ‘genocide’ and his political obsession,” she said. “[He] is clearly hurting us and it needs to be something much deeper than just a statement.” ♦

JUNE 2, 2026

Mamdani-backed House candidate has inflammatory past and extremist reading list

Darializa Avila Chevalier railed against Democratic leaders and U.S. veterans, and co-hosted a podcast with Oct. 7 cheerleader

By Will Bredderman

New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani’s favored candidate to topple Rep. Adriano Espaillat (D-NY) has a history of extremist sentiments — with commentary assailing Israel, interracial relationships, “white liberals” and the U.S. flag and military.

Inflammatory posts by Darializa Avila Chevalier, that have received coverage in the *New York Post*, *Politico*, and *AM New York*, include: lambasting Black and Arab men for “fetishizing ugly colonizer women,” boasting of wiping her hand on the American flag, attacking former President Joe Biden as a “rapist,” declaring “f*** [Vice President] Kamala Harris,” demanding “No more police at all ever,” asserting Mayor Bill de Blasio “hates Black people” and is “a piece of shit” and calling American military veterans “child murderers” guilty of “war crimes.”

Jewish Insider reviewed additional tweets, including one announcing “I can’t stand white liberals” and another questioning whether watching a film with Israeli

American actress Natalie Portman — a longtime critic of Israeli government policies and its leadership — would constitute “breaking the boycott.”

Her Twitter bio at the time of the latter tweet in 2019 was “how communist of you” and included the hashtag #FreePalestine. At the time, Avila Chevalier co-hosted a podcast called “They Are Just Deportees” with John Jay College instructor Nick Rodrigo, who attracted attention following the Oct. 7, 2023, Hamas attacks on Israel when he offered multiple shout-outs at a rally to the Palestinian terrorists who murdered, sexually assaulted and abducted Israeli civilians.

“Shout out to the resistance! The resistance storming that wretched border wall on Oct. 7. They are doing their resistance and they are freeing themselves and in turn freeing us,” he said at the event.

Avila Chevalier herself later became a leader of Columbia University’s 2023 anti-Israel encampment movement.

Avila Chevalier did not respond to a question from JI about whether she agreed

with this statement, or to any queries for this article. The Miami native recently told CNN, however, that she has “grown considerably” since writing many of her past posts.

But the candidate’s profile on The Story Graph, a social site page that allows users to share their reading habits, indicates an interest in the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a U.S.-designated Marxist terrorist group that participated in the 2023 assault. The page lists her as “Currently Reading” Primo Levi’s *Survival in Auschwitz* — and also *The Trinity of Fundamentals*, a novel by Wisam Rafeedie, a prominent PFLP member who once ran the organization’s publishing house.

The tome was translated and published by 1804 Books, an arm of the People’s Forum, itself part of Shanghai-based financier Neville “Roy” Singham’s international network of pro-China, pro-Russia, pro-Iran nonprofits.

Her “Recently Read” page, meanwhile,

lists two books by PFLP spokesman Ghasan Kanafani. During Kanfani's tenure, the PFLP became notorious for masterminding the slaughter of Israeli citizens and Puerto Rican Christian pilgrims at Lod Airport in

1972, and subsequently pioneering the terrorist practice of skyjacking.

Avila Chevalier is the latest and last of Mamdani's endorsed congressional candidates, who also include Assemblymember

Claire Valdez — seeking to succeed retiring Rep. Nydia Velazquez (D-NY) — and former city Comptroller Brad Lander, who is challenging Rep. Dan Goldman (D-NY). Primary day is June 23. ♦

JUNE 2, 2026

Ahead of economics confab, Israel's former top banker says government must rebuild public trust

Karnit Flug warns country facing severe economic strains from war debt and defense spending, says philanthropy can help boost education initiatives

By Justin Hayet

The article first appeared in eJewishPhilanthropy.

The Israeli economy finds itself at a crossroads, facing greater strains from increased defense spending and high interest payments for war-related debt after more than 2 1/2 years of conflict, resulting in cuts or stagnation for education and welfare budgets. This also comes during a period of social and political division, particularly as Israel prepares for a national election later this year.

To consider how the country can emerge from this situation stronger, the Israel Democracy Institute is gathering the country's top policymakers, economists, business leaders and civil servants to discuss these issues on Tuesday and Wednesday in its annual Eli Hurvitz Conference (formerly known as the Caesarea Conference), which is being held at the Orient Hotel in Jerusalem.

Featured speakers include Eli Hurvitz, CEO of the Trump Foundation (no connection to the U.S. president); Amir Yaron, governor of the Bank of Israel; Avigdor Liberman, head of the Yisrael Beiteinu party; Mansour Abbas, chairman of the Ra'am party; Benny Gantz, chair of the Blue and White party; Yair Lapid, opposition leader; and Rebecca Caspi, director general of Jewish Federations of North America's Israel office.

Ahead of the conference, *eJewishPhilanthropy* spoke with Karnit Flug, the past governor of the Bank of Israel and senior fellow for economic policy at IDI's

Center for Governance and the Economy, about the challenges facing the Israeli economy and her recommendations for how to overcome them, primarily through rebuilding public trust and halting divisive sectoral spending, as well as what philanthropy can do to help.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

Justin Hayet: *IDI is primarily focused on strengthening Israel's democratic institutions. This conference and your research are focused on the fiscal and economic implications of the national budget. What is the fundamental link between how the government manages its money and the long-term health of Israel's democracy?*

Karnit Flug: Both are very important for the health of the country. We talked in a previous conference about how the erosion of the strength of the democratic institutions is a risk to the economy. And there is research beyond Israel — global research — to support this, such as the extensive research of Daron Acemoglu [the 2024 Nobel laureate], who demonstrated that the strength of democratic institutions is a fundamental driver of economic growth and prosperity. There is a clear link. Our current conference is focused not on the institutions but on the economic management of Israel and how it can ensure its growth and the success of the economy and stability and resilience after 2 1/2 years of continuous conflict, which obviously has a lot of different channels of effects on the economy.

JH: *How do you assess the current state of the*

Israeli social contract? Has it been strengthened or strained by the challenges of the last few years?

KF: In some ways, we've seen it especially at the start of the war — the mobilization of the whole society, different parts of society, in trying to help the communities that were hurt. And there was a sense of solidarity, a very strong sense of togetherness. But then there is a frustration about the insufficient response of the government to the social challenges that are resulting from the war. And there is a growing frustration because [certain] communities are not addressed sufficiently, and the rehabilitation has been very slow. The budget does not seem to reflect the internalization of the challenges that are resulting from the very long war.

JH: *Your presentation at the conference will highlight the dangers of sectoral budgeting and a lack of long-term planning. For international funders and those within the Jewish philanthropic world, what is the single most critical finding in your work that should change the way they engage with Israel right now?*

KF: Civilian spending will remain severely constrained by increased defense obligations and rising interest payments on war-accumulated debt. As military spending remains elevated, the pressure on civilian services will only intensify.

I think where philanthropists can make a difference is expanding their spending on education programs for specific groups that are underprivileged and do not get sufficient support. And it's particularly important in

the geographic periphery and the socioeconomic periphery. The other area is supporting the process of getting the ultra-Orthodox community to acquire the necessary skills to successfully engage in the labor market. And then there are a lot of needs in supporting communities hurt by the continuous war. The needs will only grow because of the very tight budgetary situation.

JH: *We are seeing a transition from emergency funding to long-term resilience funding. How can funders pivot from “putting out fires” to leveraging their capital to incentivize the structural reforms that the government seems unwilling to undertake?*

KF: There are places where the philanthropists can work with the government and condition its funding on tying it to reforms, for example, in the education system. Israel underfunds education in general. The per-student budget is relatively low, but we also have a lot of room for reform in the education system. We have four different systems [state, state-religious, Arab and Haredi] with different standards and management. For example, in the basic state system, there are very rigid rules in terms of the relationship with the unions of the teachers, and there are very few incentives for excelling. If philanthropists get into the areas of education and tie their [financial] support to the way the

system is reformed, this can also incentivize the teachers and policymakers to move in the direction we would like to move.

JH: *What is the one urgent hard truth about Israel’s fiscal trajectory that must be addressed head-on?*

KF: The reality is that we face higher defense spending and rising interest payments. We cannot fund these and our civilian needs by simply increasing the deficit — we must reduce our debt, which will require higher taxation. However, that tax hike is only possible if we rebuild public trust that these revenues will benefit society at large, rather than specific interest groups.

The issue of rebuilding trust is extremely important. One important element of that is eliminating the coalition money, which is directed towards specific groups, based not in professional analysis as to how best serve the public but rather on political interests. This is particularly problematic in the current economic circumstances, where the needs have mushroomed. [The government] still allocates significant resources to interest groups in a way that goes against the long-term goals.

Another element that is forgotten — but eroded the trust — is that we have some 35 ministries. Many of them were created in order to appease coalition members, and not

only are they unnecessary, but they disturb one another because the territories of their are not well defined. We are not talking about a huge sum of money, but [this government] creates fictitious ministries for coalition purposes. This adds to the erosion of trust in the government. These things should be eliminated in order to be able to introduce higher taxes. When we talk about higher taxes, we are talking about taxes that broaden the tax base because there is a part of society that pays heavy taxes and another that does not, but more broadly, the overall tax revenue that Israel collects relative to gross domestic product is lower than the median OECD country.

JH: *For the philanthropic community, what does an “apolitical” support strategy look like in practice, and is it possible to engage without being drawn into the political fray?*

KF: Actually, I think a good example of apolitical advice is what we’ve discussed. Economic policy needs to be directed at growth, reducing social gaps, and improving the quality of life for Israeli citizens. The economic analysis that underlies these solutions is inherently apolitical. We have very fruitful discussions with professional staff across the relevant ministries, including the Ministry of Finance, regardless of which political party holds the leadership. ♦