

# We won't know what happens next

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04/08/2024



Shireen Abu Akleh, an Al Jazeera journalist killed by Israeli forces while on assignment in the West Bank

Anna Johnson — “[The terrorist channel Al Jazeera will no longer broadcast from Israel,](#)” wrote Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on the social media site X, hours after Israeli lawmakers passed a law allowing the Prime Minister to ban any foreign outlets he deemed a threat to national security. Netanyahu’s government has [repeatedly criticized](#) the news outlet, [claiming it has ties to Hamas](#) which Al Jazeera denies. The ban would prevent Al Jazeera, one of the most widely consumed sources of news from the Middle East, from operating in Israel for at least 45 days with an option to extend. It has previously been [banned from or blocked](#) in Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Egypt.

Al Jazeera operates as a [non-state actor](#) inside Israel as [one of only a few](#) international media outlets on the ground in Gaza during the war with Israel. [U.S. officials](#) have said the coverage coming from Al Jazeera’s reporters accounts for a lot of what we know about what is happening in Gaza. The media outlet has a history of being critical of Netanyahu and his government and this is [not the first time](#) Israel has sought to shut them down. Al Jazeera says the law banning them from operating in Israel is part of an “[ongoing assault](#)” on the media by Netanyahu. They say they will continue to report from Gaza despite the new law. [Press freedom watchdogs](#) have expressed concerns over the scope of the law, saying that allowing the government to ban any media outlet leaves every outlet in the area vulnerable. As a non-state actor operating inside Israel, Al Jazeera works outside of direct

government control. Their actions, while determined by their relationship to Israel are not subject to government approval. The negative relationship between the state and non-state actor has created the circumstances within which Israel has felt empowered to ban Al Jazeera.

Despite operating as an independent media organization, Al Jazeera is still directly involved in [regional](#) disputes between Israel and its neighbors. A significant portion of the outlet’s funding comes from the Qatari royal family, giving them some influence over their coverage even though Al Jazeera insists it has editorial independence. United States Secretary of State Anthony Blinken has even [reportedly asked the Qatari Prime Minister](#) to moderate Al Jazeera’s coverage of the war. The relationship is further complicated by Qatar’s critical role [hosting cease-fire negotiations](#) between Israel and Hamas. Since they’ve been feuding with Israel, Al Jazeera’s actions as a non-state actor connected to Qatar have made the international relationship between Qatar and Israel tense. Moving forward, both states will have to reevaluate their relationship with each other and with Al Jazeera. Photo Credit: [Al Jazeera Media Network](#), [CC BY-SA 4.0](#), via

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