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A View from the Eye of the Storm

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In 2004, internationally known physicist Haim Harari was invited to address the advisory board of a major multinational corporation. In a short speech he offered a penetrating analysis of the components of terror, and presented a passionate call for a new era in the Middle East. The speech, entitled "A View from the Eye of the Storm," was not intended for publication, but when a copy was leaked and posted onto the Internet, it caused a worldwide sensation, eventually being translated into more than half a dozen languages. Now—as the modern era of Islamic terror continues to unfold—Harari reaches further, to offer this serious yet accessible survey of the landscape of Middle Eastern war and peace at this challenging crossroads in history.

Moving beyond the sterile discourse of foreign affairs journals, Harari encourages the world to view the Middle East through the eyes of a "proverbial taxi driver," a man on the street whose wisdom (and sense of humor) outstrips that of the experts. And, as he observes, to anyone familiar with the Middle East from a taxi driver's perspective, the "persistent ugly storm" engulfing the Arab world is far more than a territorial battle with Israel: It is an "undeclared World War III" that rages from Bali to Madrid, from Nairobi to New York, from Buenos Aires to Istanbul, and from Tunis to Moscow. The sad result is that much of the Arab world has become an "unprecedented breeding ground for cruel dictators, terror networks, fanaticism, incitement, suicide murders, and general decline." And unless the free nations of the world mobilize to stop it, Harari argues, this new world war will continue to cause bloodshed on all continents.

As a fifth-generation Israeli-born observer, Harari includes a thorough response to the conventional wisdom about Middle Eastern affairs, including a frank dissection of the media's lopsided portrait of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Drawing on his family's two centuries of life in the Middle East, he offers a compelling catalog of the steps necessary to reach a lasting peace between Israel and the Palestinians—steps, he writes, that are "inevitable—not because everybody accepts them today, but because all sides must accept them before peace can be achieved." And he urges the civilized world to combat terror by isolating its state sponsors, blocking its funding, and promoting education, women's equality, and human rights reform.

Eloquent in its simplicity, written with passion, humor, and the directness of a scientist who has spent a lifetime explaining his work to the general public, *A View from the Eye of the Storm* is that rare book with the power to change hearts and minds.

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