

# The New York Times

INTERNATIONAL EDITION | FRIDAY, MAY 21, 2021

## The bonds with Israel are shaking



Nicholas Kristof

### OPINION

If you oppose war crimes only by your enemies, it's not clear that you actually oppose war crimes.

That's a thought worth wrestling with as many experts suggest that both Hamas and Israel are engaging in crimes of war in the current Gaza conflict. For the same reason that we deplore Hamas's shelling of Israel, shouldn't we also demand that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel accept a cease-fire and stop bombings that kill far greater numbers of innocents?

The United States was the first country to recognize Israel upon its founding in 1948, and one of the few things that Democrats and Republi-

**The U.S. ally in the Middle East might "win" in Gaza, and lose America.**

cans have mostly agreed on over the decades is unwavering support for Israel.

"The deep bonds of friendship between the U.S. and Israel remain as strong and unshak-

able as ever," President Barack Obama wrote soon after taking office.

Yet today, especially within the Democratic Party, those bonds are shaking as Netanyahu resists a cease-fire in Gaza. He leaves Americans wondering: Why should our tax dollars subsidize a rain of destruction that has killed scores of children, damaged 17 hospitals and clinics and forced 72,000 people to flee their homes?

President Biden has blocked the United Nations Security Council from calling for a cease-fire. He apparently believes that he can accomplish more with private diplomacy than with public rebukes. "Progress occurs in the Middle East when everyone knows there is simply no space between the United States and Israel," Biden said in 2010.

Alas, it's difficult to spot this "progress." Netanyahu has used American cover to expand settlements and pretty much destroy any hope of a two-state solution. He has winked at domestic extremism, so that at least 100 new WhatsApp groups in Israel (with names like "Death to Arabs") encourage violence against Palestinians. And now he is bombing Gaza and igniting street fighting that President Reuven Rivlin of Israel has called a *KRISTOF, PAGE 15*

*The New York Times publishes opinion from a wide range of perspectives in hopes of promoting constructive debate about consequential questions.*



Solar panels in Binnish, Syria. People whose lives have been upended by 10 years of war have embraced solar power simply because it is the cheapest source of energy around.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY IVOR PRICKETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

## Syria's surprising solar boom

**SYRIA DISPATCH**  
HARANABUSH, SYRIA

**Rebel-held enclaves cut off from the power grid are turning to the sun**

BY BEN HUBBARD

When the Syrian government attacked their village, Radwan al-Shimali's family hastily threw clothes, blankets and mattresses into their truck and sped off to begin new lives as refugees, leaving behind their house, farmland and television.

Among the belongings they kept was one prized technology: the solar panel now propped up on rocks next to the tattered tent they call home in an olive grove near the village of Haranabush in northwestern Syria.

"It is important," Mr. al-Shimali said of the 270-watt panel, his family's sole source of electricity. "When there is sun during the day, we can have light at night."

An unlikely solar revolution of sorts has taken off in an embattled, rebel-controlled pocket of northwestern Syria,

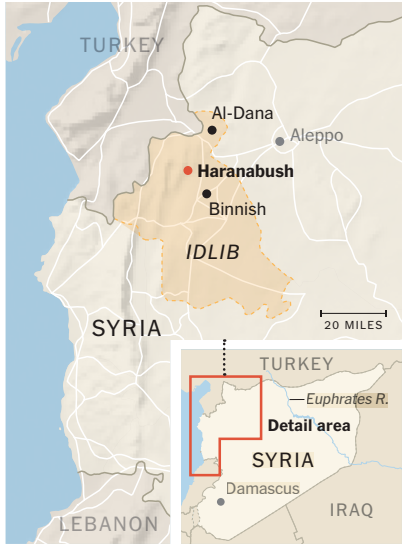


A battery attached to solar panels at Ahmed Bakkar's home in the city of Idlib. "It works for us because it's free energy," he said.

where large numbers of people whose lives have been upended by the country's 10-year-old civil war have embraced the sun's energy simply because it is the cheapest source of electricity around.

Solar panels, big and small, old and

new, are seemingly everywhere in Idlib Province on Syria's border with Turkey, rigged up in twos and threes on the roofs and balconies of apartment buildings, perched atop refugee tents and mounted near farms and factories on huge platforms that rotate to follow the



THE NEW YORK TIMES

sun across the sky.

Many in the West view solar panels as a sign of affluence, and wealthy countries like the United States have invested billions of dollars to promote alternative energy.

*SYRIA, PAGE 4*

## What Apple swallows to get ahead in China

GUIYANG, CHINA

**It gains billions in profits by going along with a surveillance state**

BY JACK NICAS, RAYMOND ZHONG AND DAISUKE WAKABAYASHI

On the outskirts of Guiyang, a city in a poor, mountainous province in southwestern China, men in hard hats recently put the finishing touches on a white building a quarter-mile long with few windows and a tall surrounding wall. There was little sign of its purpose, apart from the flags of Apple and China flying out front, side by side.

Inside, Apple was preparing to store the personal data of its Chinese customers on computer servers run by a state-owned Chinese firm.

Tim Cook, Apple's chief executive, has said the data is safe. But at the data center in Guiyang, which Apple hoped would be completed by next month, and another in the Inner Mongolia region, Apple has largely ceded control to the Chinese government.

Chinese state employees physically manage the computers. Apple abandoned the encryption technology it used elsewhere after China would not allow it. And the digital keys that unlock information on those computers are stored in the data centers they're meant to secure.

Internal Apple documents reviewed by The New York Times, interviews with 17 current and former Apple employees and four security experts, and new filings made in a court case in the United States this month provide rare insight into the compromises Mr. Cook has made to do business in China. They offer an extensive inside look — many aspects of which have never been reported before — at how Apple has given in to escalating demands from the Chinese authorities.

Two decades ago, as Apple's operations chief, Mr. Cook spearheaded the company's entrance into China, a move that helped make Apple the most valuable company in the world and made him the heir apparent to Steve Jobs. Apple now assembles nearly all of its products and earns a fifth of its revenue in the China region. But just as Mr. Cook figured out how to make China work for Apple, China is making Apple work for the Chinese government.

Mr. Cook often talks about Apple's commitment to civil liberties and privacy. But to stay on the right side of Chinese regulators, his company has put the data of its Chinese customers at risk and has aided government censorship in the Chinese version of its App Store. After Chinese employees complained, it even dropped the "Designed by Apple in California" slogan from the backs of iPhones.

*APPLE, PAGE 8*

## His film scores create their own scene

FROM THE MAGAZINE

**New ways of writing keep Nicholas Britell in demand for his music**

BY JAMIE FISHER

The first time I understood what it is that the composer Nicholas Britell does for a film — understood with my whole body — I was in his studio, listening to a mistake he had made and the way he had fixed it.

Earlier, in a cafe off Lincoln Center in New York, I had asked him about the process of making "Moonlight," the Oscar-winning coming-of-age story he scored for Barry Jenkins.

Britell told me about a scene in which the protagonist's mentor teaches him to swim.

"I was looking at the sequence like, 'Oh, Juan and Little swim,'" Britell said. "It's a beautiful moment. This will be



HENRY NICHOLLS/REUTERS

**Through music, Nicholas Britell helps directors feel what they can't explain.**

something special he can carry with him."

So Britell wrote a sweet piece in F major, an orchestral swell with a clarinet singing a variation on Little's theme on top. He played it for Jenkins. The response was a visceral "nope."

Jenkins urged him to think of the scene as a spiritual baptism. This was the first day of the rest of Little's life. "And I still get moved even just thinking about it," Britell said. "Because I immediately knew."

He began improvising something darker, with the virtuosic feeling of a cadenza. "I was playing it on my keyboard with a kind of fake violence," he said. "Barry was directing me from the couch. And so right there, I just made it in front of him."

In his studio, Britell played me the scene. First he cued up his original attempt — tender movie music that could have scored any rite of passage. Next was "Middle of the World," the music he made with Jenkins. The violin plays jolting waves of arpeggios, wild and exhilarating. Little vanishes into the ocean,

Juan holding him but somehow not protecting him, initiating him into a kind of violent abandon.

The studio, in an apartment overlooking the Hudson River, is dark, and Britell often works with the lights off. He shares the apartment with his wife, the cellist Caitlin Sullivan. There are bookshelves and vintage movie posters on the walls — "Chariots of Fire" greets you at the entrance.

Last year, in February, Britell invited me to watch him and Jenkins at work. The two hadn't previously allowed anyone to sit in on their sessions. They were still early in their work on "The Underground Railroad" — a new 10-part series on Amazon that is based on the novel by Colson Whitehead.

The first piece he played for me at the session was a dark piano sequence only a few bars long, circling the drain of a few dissonant notes. "One of the things we keep discovering is, for some reason, pianos," he said. "Really specific pianos, like slightly warped." He played another sequence to demonstrate. "It's felted" — *BRITELL, PAGE 2*

The New York Times

**The weekend paper that weighs every word.**

Award-winning news, opinion, lifestyle, culture and more. In one concise paper.

Pick up the Weekend Edition.



### NEWSSTAND PRICES

Andorra € 5.00  
Antilles € 4.50  
Austria € 4.00  
Belgium € 4.00  
Bol. & Herz. KWI 5.80  
Britain £ 2.60

Cameroun CFA 3000  
Croatia KUN 24.00  
Cyprus € 3.40  
Czech Rep. CZK 115  
Denmark Dkr 37  
Estonia € 4.00

Finland € 4.00  
France € 4.00  
Gabon CFA 3000  
Germany € 4.00  
Greece € 3.40  
Hungary HUF 1100

Israel NIS 14.00/  
Friday 27.50  
Iraq / Saud NIS 12.00/  
Friday 23.50  
Italy € 3.80  
Ivory Coast CFA 3000

Luxembourg € 4.00  
Malta € 3.80  
Montenegro € 3.40  
Morocco MAD 35  
Norway Nkr 40  
Oman OMR 1.50

Poland Zl 19  
Portugal € 3.90  
Republic of Ireland € 3.80  
Serbia Din 300  
Slovenia € 3.40  
Spain € 3.90

Sweden Skr 50  
Switzerland CHF 5.20  
Syria SLS 3.00  
The Netherlands € 4.00  
Tunisia Din 8.00  
Turkey TL 18

U.A.E. AED 15.00  
United States Military (Europe) \$ 2.30

Issue Number  
No. 42,977