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Palestine

Palestine's fate in light of the onslaught on Gaza

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The current onslaught against the Gaza Strip, accompanied by a dangerous escalation of Zionist attacks in the West Bank, undoubtedly constitutes the gravest stage of the Zionist aggression that has been ongoing on the Palestinian scene since the 1948 Nakba. It is hence a great paradox that this paroxysmic onslaught is likely to produce results completely opposite to those of the war that took place more than three quarters of a century ago. After its tumultuous birth in 1948, the Zionist state was regarded as an illegitimate colonial entity by the Arab countries, despite the legitimacy bestowed upon it by the United Nations. The truth is that the international organization was at that time under complete dominance by countries of the Global North ruling colonial empires, while most of the present member states of the organization were under the colonial yoke, lacking representation in international forums.

The Arab defeat in 1967 led to an Arab retreat from that historical position and acceptance of the legitimacy of the Zionist state within the borders that it had prior to the Six-Day War, by way of acceptance of UN Security Council Resolution No. 242 (22 Nov. 1967), issued less than three months after an Arab summit held in the Sudanese capital, Khartoum, famously proclaimed three No's: "No conciliation, no recognition, and no negotiation." Khartoum's No's were in fact contradicted by their very context, which called for "political efforts" aimed at "eliminating the aggression's results" by obtaining the Zionist army's withdrawal to the pre-war borders.

As for the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), after having strictly rejected Resolution 242 upon its issuance, it gradually adapted to it by adopting the program of an "independent Palestinian state" alongside the Zionist state, until it officially accepted the resolution in 1988, at a meeting of its National Council held in Algiers. This was followed by the Oslo deal in 1993, concluded by Yasser Arafat and Mahmoud Abbas in the belief that it would bring about the desired "independent state", even though it did not even stipulate the withdrawal of the Zionist army from the 1967 territories, but only its redeployment therein outside the areas of high Palestinian population density, nor did it stipulate the dismantling of the settlements, or even the freezing of settlement activity, not to mention the issue of reversing Israel's decision to annex East Jerusalem and that of the refugees' right to return.

The Oslo deal opened the way for the Kingdom of Jordan to join Egypt and the PLO in "normalizing" its relations with the Zionist state. Sadat's regime had seized the opportunity of the third Egyptian defeat in 1973, which it called the "War of the Crossing" (of the Suez Canal) and claimed as a victory, to conclude a separate deal with the Zionist state, inspired by Resolution 242. Egypt recovered the Sinai Peninsula with reduced sovereignty and without the Gaza Strip that was administratively attached to it before the 1967 war. In exchange, Egypt agreed to a complete "normalization" of its relations with Israel at the cost of a temporary rupture of its relations with the Arab countries.

Fifty years after Sadat's "War of the Crossing" and thirty years after the Oslo deal, the "Al-Aqsa Flood" operation took place, intended to be a second "War of the Crossing". It led in reality to a second Nakba, more disastrous than the first in terms of the extent of genocidal massacre, destruction and displacement. While other Arab countries had boarded the "normalization" train in 2020, namely the United Arab Emirates, the Kingdom of Bahrain, and the Kingdom of Morocco (in addition to the Sudanese military clique), the Saudi kingdom is now preparing to join them in order to complete the conditions for the establishment of a regional military alliance that brings together the Gulf monarchies, Egypt, Jordan, and Morocco with the Zionist state under the military umbrella and supervision of the United States, against Iran and any other threat that may imperil the security of the alliance's regional members and the interests of their U.S. godfather.

As for the Palestinian fate, "putting the issue back on the table"—which Hamas is proud of having achieved because

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of its operation, regardless of the enormous human cost of this “achievement”—has led in fact to vigorous international efforts, primarily by the United States, to revive the Oslo project in a way that is even worse than what there was thirty years ago. The goal is to establish a rump Palestinian state on parts of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, subject to strict military control exercised by the Zionist state through the permanent presence of its forces inside the two areas, not to mention the lands that are under Zionist army and settlements control in the West Bank, which Israel will be able to officially annex in exchange for its acceptance of the establishment of the statelet.

To be sure, if Washington succeeds in imposing this scenario that it is pursuing, it will constitute a (temporary) frustration of the intentions of the Zionist far right to achieve the “Greater Israel” from the river to the sea. However, these intentions were beyond reach, in any case, before “Al-Aqsa Flood” provided the opportunity for the Zionist army to reoccupy the Gaza Strip and escalate its operations in the West Bank, along with settlers’ attacks. The fact remains that the best “solution” that could result from the Zionist ongoing genocidal war is worse than what existed before it, and certainly worse than what appeared on the horizon following the Oslo deal.

The people of Palestine will have to cling to its land, rejecting the “soft” displacement (the incentives to immigrate) after the forced displacement, and continue the struggle along a strategy that enables it to advance its cause again, after the great decline that followed the important progress that this cause made at the peak of the first intifada in 1988, a decline that has now reached its nadir. The Palestinian struggle should aim at dividing the Israeli society politically rather than uniting it through indiscriminate acts, by subordinating the necessary forms of armed resistance to the requirements of political and mass action, in order to return to the conditions that followed the invasion of Lebanon in 1982 and the first intifada after it, when a current began to rise among Israeli Jews, called “post-Zionist” at the time, which combined rejection of the occupation and support for the de-Zionization of the Israeli state in order to transform it into “a state of all its citizens”.

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<https://gilbert-achcar.net/palestines-fate-after-gaza>].

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