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**Palestine**

# **“A turning point in the Palestinian struggle”**

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**Since the Great Strike of 1936, Palestine has not experienced a collective action by its people as vast and as strong as that which is now taking place. In all previous militant stages, the action was confined to one or more specific regions, supported by the rest of the Palestinians. Today Palestine has risen with all its population towards a new stage whose paths are cleared by the people on the ground, these young people who, day and night, are in the streets of Lod, the tunnels of Gaza, the squares of Haifa or the mountains of Jenin.**

## **“This war is different”**

Gaza, that open-air prison, once again saw its skies ablaze with missiles and the colonizer's anger. Since the guns fell silent, 55 days after the start of the 2014 clashes, the war has not stopped in Gaza, it has instead taken another form: blockade, negotiations on reconstruction and starvation of the inhabitants, orchestrated by Israel with the complicity of regional regimes and the so-called international community. For its part, the resistance in Gaza, with all its factions, continued to strengthen its capacities. Israel has repeatedly threatened an operation against Gaza, and the resistance has asserted its readiness to confront this threat. No one was unaware that the battle for Gaza was inevitably to come. The only unknown in the equation was the context and the timing.

“This war is different”: a phrase you hear among Gazans with every war and every escalation. But this battle is genuinely different, whether in the unprecedented unanimity in supporting the resistance, or in its evolving capacities, or because of the feeling that Gaza is no longer alone. It is also different because of the enormity of the destruction that the colonial state's missiles inflicted on humans and buildings.

## **Gaza was not alone**

Because with the acceleration of the course of events in Jerusalem and the call of some inhabitants of the city that Gaza to enter the front line, the people of Gaza have not hesitated in turn to put pressure on the leaders of the resistance factions, demanding support for Jerusalem, despite their full awareness of the risk of killings and devastation that this could entail for them. This is why the few voices that criticized the rocket strikes at the start of the clash remained marginal, since most of them came from outside the besieged Gaza Strip, and they quickly fell silent because of the unprecedented broad popular support for the action of the resistance.

It's certain that the military and political leaders of the resistance factions heeded these demands. But the most decisive factor remained the resistance's conviction that this was the most appropriate time for a confrontation that would come sooner or later. With the launch of the resistance's first rocket salute, settlers stormed the area around the al-Aqsa Mosque and cheers from Palestinians spread across the country.

For more than a decade, the inhabitants of Gaza have become accustomed, during wars and waves of escalation, to bearing the brunt of the battles on their own, while in the rest of Palestine the question was confined to demonstrations of support in the West Bank (when the Palestinian Authority allowed this) and the same was true in the occupied interior (within the limits of Israeli goodwill). The great surprise of this clash is that Gaza was not left alone to the murderous Israeli machine, despite the repression by the Authority in Ramallah of any solidarity action and any attempt to defy the colonial state from the areas of the West Bank it controls. The inhabitants of all the towns

and villages of Palestine came out, from Jaffa and Haifa to the Triangle [of Galilee], to Al-Jalil and Al-Naqab. The city of Lod has become the icon of the most violent clash, thus belying the legend of “the specificity of the situation inside the Green Line”. All of this revived Palestinians’ ability to dream and their full readiness to rise up to continue the battle for freedom.

## Palestinians surprise themselves

This shook Israel and was a traumatic wake-up call for its people. The army and intelligence services considered Gaza as a secondary front which could simply be placed under siege, while buying the silence of the resistance by allowing the passage of some goods and aid, which allows people to survive, nothing more. As for the other front, the enemy believed they had already settled the business and had moved it away from the heart of the conflict since the Nakba of 1948. But Tel Aviv, once far away from the battlefields, has received a deluge of rockets, and the Palestinian masses are now revolting in the very heart of the main cities of the colonial state. There is no longer a safe place in Israel. And it gave a great moral boost to the people in Gaza, who began to closely follow all the information and images of what is happening in the towns and villages, from which they had been driven. Better still, for many of them, talking about return or release now seems a question to be discussed rationally and no longer a dream that is difficult to achieve. This is how the Palestinians have surprised themselves, as if discovering an extraordinary strength enabling them to overcome all the shackles of the dream.

It is in this sense that the Gazan activist, Awssaj, wrote on his twitter account: “The best thing will be that after these days, when you talk about the liberation of Palestine, you will be taken for. an optimist, but never again for a dreamer, or even for a madman”. For his part, Rafat Abu Aish tweeted from Bir Essabâa: “Even if the liberation does not take place today, it is enough that everyone has realized that it is possible!”. [...]

No one yet knows how this round of the conflict will end, what is certain, however, is that it has broken all the political ceilings created by the various Palestinian political parties, which must also rethink their action in the light of this event or disappear. Likewise, the impact of this round on the conscience of the Palestinians will remain engraved as a turning point in the history of their struggle. And despite the great pain and deep wounds, the people, with Gaza’s usual stubbornness, refuse to be victims, they prefer to be the spark that ignites the flame.

*Translated from the French version in [l'Anticapitaliste](#). Full version in French and Arabic on [Assafirarabi](#). Translated by Saïda Charfeddine.*

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