

The Israeli War on the Gaza Strip: “The Birth Pangs of a New Palestine/Middle East”

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To truly understand the specific you must understand the general and to master knowledge of the general you must understand the specific.

What is taking place in the Palestinian Territories is related to what is taking place across the Middle East and Central Asia, from Lebanon to Iraq and NATO-garrisoned Afghanistan, as part of a broader geo-strategic objective. All the events in the Middle East are part of a mammoth geo-political jigsaw puzzle; each piece only shows you one picture or a portion of the picture, but when you put all these pieces together you see the grand picture of things.

For these reasons at times more than one event must be discussed to gain greater understanding of another event, but this at times comes at a risk of diverging or extending one's focus in different directions.

The following text is based on several key sections of an earlier and broader text; this text is brief in form but comprehensive in its scope and more focused on the events in the Palestinian Territories and their role in the broader chain of regional events in the Mediterranean region and the Middle East.



The photograph above: Mahmoud Abbas (PA and PLO head) introducing Jalal Talabani, the president of Iraq, to Ehud Barak, the defence minister of Israel.

Operation Cast Lead: The “Birth Pangs of a New Palestine”

The Israeli attacks on the Gaza Strip against the Palestinians are part of a larger geo-strategic project. They are part of the “birth pangs of a new Palestine and Middle East” in the eyes of the U.S. and Israel, but this project will not proceed as envisaged by the U.S. and Israel. There is a wind of change and revolt throughout the Middle East and the Arab World. This process is unleashing a new wave of popular resistance directed against the U.S. and Israel, both within and beyond the Arab World.

“Operation Cast Lead” has been planned for almost a year. The “Shoah” (Hebrew word for holocaust) that Matan Vilnai, an Israeli official, promised the Palestinians has been exposed even though many media sources have attempted to whitewash it.

Israeli officials had warned that they would enter the Gaza Strip since the election of Hamas. The underlying rationale for a campaign against Gaza was that Fatah fighters (supported by the U.S. and Israel) had failed to oust the Hamas-led Palestinian government through a coup d’état. The idea of a coup directed against Hamas was endorsed by the U.S., Britain, Israel, and several Arab dictatorships including Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Egypt.

The publication *NATO and Israel: Instruments of America’s Wars in the Middle East* clearly documents Tel Aviv’s strategic objective to invade Gaza and overthrow the democratic political system of the Palestinians in favour of Palestinian clients.

The Israeli objective is also to “internationalize” the Gaza Strip on the model of South Lebanon, requiring the involvement of NATO and other foreign military forces as so-called

peacekeepers.[1] This modus operandi is very similar to that of Anglo-American occupied Iraq and NATO-garrisoned Afghanistan. The former Yugoslavia is also a relevant example, where a political and economic restructuring process (including a privatization program) was implemented under the surveillance of U.S. and NATO troops. The difference with Lebanon and the Palestinian Territories is that political figures, such as Mahmoud Abbas, willing to implement these agendas are already in place.

From the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative to the Annapolis Conference

The events at issue start with the 2002 Arab Initiative that was proposed by Saudi Arabia in Beirut during an Arab League conference in Lebanon. Saudi Arabia's initiative was in effect handed over to Riyadh by London and Washington in 2002 as part of an Anglo-American military-political roadmap for the Middle East and as part of the Project for the "New Middle East."

The Hamas-Fatah split, the calculated deceit behind Saudi Arabia's role in the Mecca Accord, and the long-term objectives of America and its allies in the Middle East and the Mediterranean littoral have been in the backdrop of the fighting in the Palestinian Territories.

The struggle in Palestine, like in Iraq and Lebanon, does not solely pertain to sovereignty and "self-determination." What is at stake is the imposition of a global neo-liberal economic agenda through force. The latter constitutes a modern form of debt-ridden slavery and privatization, imposed by military force in the Middle East and worldwide.

What is not always understood, is that the Palestinian struggle is being waged on behalf of people everywhere. The Palestinians are in the forefront in the battle against, speaking in a political and economic sense, the "New World Order."

To understand where the path advertised at Annapolis is intended to lead the Palestinians and the entire Levant one must also understand what has been happening in Palestine since the onslaught of the "Global War on Terror" in 2001.

Act I: Dividing the Palestinians through a Hamas-Fatah Split

America and the E.U. have come to realize that Fatah does not represent the popular will of the Palestinian Nation and that representative power will eventually be taken away from Fatah.

This is a central issue for Israel, the E.U., and America, which require a corrupt proxy Fatah leadership to carry out their long-term objectives in the Palestinian Territories and the Eastern Mediterranean, as well as in the broader Middle East region.

In 2005, Washington and Tel Aviv started preparing for a Hamas victory in the Palestinian general-elections. Thus, a strategy was created before the political victory of Hamas to neutralize not only Hamas but all legitimate forms of resistance to the foreign agendas that the Palestinians have been held hostages to since the "Nakba."

Israel, America, and their allies, which includes the E.U., were well aware that Hamas would never be a party to what Washington foresaw for the Palestinians and the Middle East. Simply stated, Hamas would oppose the Project for the "New Middle East." This geo-political

restructuring of the Middle East required in the Levant, the concurrent implementation of the Mediterranean Union. All along, the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative was a gateway for the materialization of both the “New Middle East” and its implementation through the Mediterranean Union.

While the Saudis played their part in America’s “New Middle East” venture, Fatah was manipulated into confronting and fighting Hamas. This was also done with the knowledge that Hamas’ first reaction as the governing party in the Palestinian Territories would be to try to maintain the integrity of Palestinian unity. This is where Saudi Arabia comes into the picture again through its role in arranging the Mecca Accord. It is also worth noting that Saudi Arabia did not give Hamas any diplomatic recognition before the Mecca Accord.

Act II: Entrapping the Palestinians in Mecca and via a Gaza-West Bank Divide

The Mecca Accord was a setup and a means to entrap Hamas. The Hamas-Fatah truce and the subsequent Palestinian unity government that was established, was not meant to prevail. It was doomed from the outset, when Hamas was deceived into signing the agreement in Mecca. The Mecca Accord had set the next stage; it was meant to “legitimize” what would happen next: a Palestinian mini-civil war in Gaza.

It is after the signing of the Mecca Accord that elements within Fatah led by Mohammed Dahlan (supervised by U.S. Lieutenant-General Keith Dayton) were ordered to overthrow the Hamas-led Palestinian government by the U.S. and Israel. There probably existed two contingency plans, one for Fatah’s possible success and the other contingency plan (and more probable of the two) made in the case of Fatah’s failure. The latter plan was a preparation for two parallel Palestinian governments, one in Gaza led by Prime Minister Haniyah and Hamas and the other in the West Bank controlled by Mahmoud Abbas and Fatah.

The objective of Israel and the U.S. was to divide the Gaza Strip and the West Bank into two political entities under two very different administrations. With the ending of the Hamas-Fatah fighting in the Gaza Strip, the Israelis started talking about a “three nation solution.”

As a result of the Gaza-West Bank split, Mahmoud Abbas and his associates also called for the creation of a parallel Palestinian parliament in the West Bank, a rubber stamp all but in name. [2] Other plans for this so-called “three nation solution” included handing over the Gaza Strip to Egypt and dividing up the Israeli-occupied West Bank between Israel and Jordan.

Furthermore, the Mecca Accord effectively allowed Fatah to rule the West Bank in two strokes. Since a unity government was formed as a result of the Mecca Accord, a Fatah withdrawal from the government was used to depict the Hamas-led government as illegitimate by Fatah. This was while the renewed fighting in Gaza made new Palestinian elections unworkable.

Mahmoud Abbas was also put in a position where he could claim “legitimacy” in the process of forming his own administration in the West Bank, that would otherwise have been seen, by international public opinion, for what it really was: an illegitimate regime, without a parliamentary base. It is also no coincidence that the man picked to lead Mahmoud Abbas’ government, Dr. Salam Fayyad, is a former World Bank official.

With Hamas effectively neutralized and cut off from power in the West Bank, the stage was set for two things; proposals for an international military force in the Palestinian Territories and the Annapolis Conference. [3]

Act III: The Israeli-Palestinian Agreement of Principles and the Annapolis Peace Conference

Prior to the Annapolis Conference, “agreements of principles” were drafted by Mahmoud Abbas and Israel which guaranteed that the Palestinians would not have a military force, if the West Bank were to be given some form of political self-determination.

The agreements also called for the integration of the economies of the Arab World with Israel and the positioning of an international force, similar to those stationed by NATO in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, to supervise the enforcement of these agreements in the Palestinian Territories.

The objective was to neutralize Hamas, legitimize Mahmoud Abbas, to integrate the Palestinian Territories into Israel, and through Palestinian gateway to open Arab economies under Israeli domination.

The visit of the Secretary-General of NATO, Jakob (Jaap) de Hoop Scheffer to the U.A.E., shortly after the visits of George W. Bush Jr. and Nicholas Sarkozy, were conducive to the signing of military agreements between the U.A.E., and the U.S., as well as with France.

While in the U.A.E., Secretary-General de Hoop Scheffer stated, in substance that it is only a matter of time before NATO gets involved in the Arab-Israeli Conflict.[4] The Secretary-General of NATO also mentioned that this would happen once a viable Palestinian state was formed. What de Hoop Scheffer really meant was that NATO would become involved in the Palestinian Territories once a Palestinian proxy state under Mahmoud Abbas would be formed. He also mentioned that there would be no recognition of Hamas by NATO.

Hamas has outlived its usefulness to Israel and its partners. Fatah could also have been used to attack the Gaza Strip again. Fatah is also an Israeli partner in the campaign against the Gaza Strip. Israeli media had reported in September 2008 about the attacks on the Gaza Strip as being a joint Israeli-Fatah plan to militarily oust the Hamas-led Palestinian government.[5]

When the Annapolis Conference was hosted by the U.S. government, pundits and analysts worldwide termed the summit as without substance and as a move to undue everything that it owed to the Palestinians, including the right for Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and lands. The Annapolis Conference was only an extravagant do-over of the carefully crafted 2002 Saudi-proposed Arab Peace Initiative tabled to the Arab League.

Act IV: Coming Full Circle, back to the Saudi Arabian 2002 Arab Peace Initiative

The people of the Middle East must open their eyes to what has been planned for their lands. The Agreement of Principles, the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative, and the Annapolis Conference are all a means to the same end. All three, like Israel, have their roots in establishing economic hegemony in the Middle East.

This is where France and Germany converge with Anglo-American foreign policy. For years, even before the “Global War on Terror,” Paris had been calling for a troop contingent from

either the E.U. or NATO to be deployed to Lebanon and the Palestinian Territories.

In February 2004, Dominique de Villepin, France's foreign minister at the time, stated that once the Israelis left the Gaza Strip foreign troops could be sent there and an international conference could legitimize their presence as part of the second phase of the Israeli-Palestinian Roadmap and as part of an initiative for the Greater Middle East or the "New Middle East." [6] This statement was made before Hamas came to the scene and before Mahmoud Abbas' Agreement of Principles. However, it did follow the 2002 Saudi-proposed Arab Initiative. There is a clear link.

It is clear that the events unfolding in the Middle East are part of a military roadmap drawn before the "Global War on Terror." Even the economic donor conferences held for Lebanon after the Israeli attacks in 2006 and the ones being talked about now for the Palestinians are linked to this restructuring agenda.

It is now time to study Nicolas Sarkozy's proposals for a Mediterranean Union. The economic integration of the Israeli economy with the economies of the Arab World will further the web of global relationships being tightened by the global agents of the Washington Consensus. The 2002 Arab Peace Initiative, the Agreement of Principles, and Annapolis are all phases for establishing the economic integration of the Arab World with Israel through the Project for the "New Middle East" and the integration of the entire Mediterranean with the European Union through the Mediterranean Union. The presence of troops from both NATO and E.U. members in Lebanon is also a part of this goal.



Towards Establishing a Palestinian Dictatorship: More Plans to Oust Hamas underway?

The Israeli attacks against the Gaza Strip and the Palestinian people are an attack against democracy and freedom of choice. Israel, the U.S., Saudi Arabia, and their allies have wasted no time in recognizing Mahmoud Abbas as the legitimate leader of the Palestinians even though his term of office has finished.

Despite claims of supporting democracy and self-determination throughout the Middle East, the foreign policies of the U.S., Britain, France, Germany, and the E.U. are opposed to any genuine self-determination or democracy in the Middle East because any freedom of choice for the populations of the Middle East would act as a barrier and spoiler to the economic interests of these powers. This is exactly why dictatorships are the ideal form of government in the Middle East in regards to Anglo-American and Franco-German foreign policy interests.

The Palestinian Territories are not an exception to this. The U.S., Israel, their allies, and the corrupt oligarchs of the upper circle of power within Fatah are set on establishing autocratic rule in the Palestinian Territories. To the satisfaction of planners in Israel and the U.S. the Hamas-Fatah split has helped push back the democratic path that the Palestinians were following through the election of their own leadership and has cleared the way for attempts to establish dictatorial Palestinian proxy administrations in the future. The process has already started in the West Bank.

By late-2008 Hamas had clarified that it intended to field its own candidate for the the post of Palestinian Authority president in the Palestinian election that was supposed to be held in January, 2009. This is a direct challenge to the power that Mahmoud Abbas and the leaders of Fatah hold through control of the office of Palestinian Authority president. Mahmoud Abbas and Fatah had rebuffed Hamas, before the Israeli attacks on the Gaza Strip, by declaring that such an election would not take place until Hamas surrenders its authority to Mahmoud Abbas and the Palestinian prime minister and government in the West Bank that Mahmoud Abbas has handpicked outside the democratic process.

In retaliation the Hamas-led government in the Gaza Strip declared that it will refer to the Palestinian legal code. Palestinian law which stipulates that in such situations the role and post of president would be transfered to the speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), the parliament of the Palestinians, for an interim period. Ahmed Bahar, a member of Hamas, is currently in the position of speaker of the PLC.

Crushing Palestinian Democracy: Middle Eastern Geo-Politics and Palestinian Governance

In link to this move to oust Hamas are the broader geo-political and strategic initiatives for encircling and confronting Syria and Iran. [7] Israel with the help of Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, had been trying to negotiate a one-sided truce with the Hamas-led Palestinian government in the Gaza Strip for months. This move was launched simultaneously with Israeli initiatives linked towards Hezbollah, Lebanon, and Syria.

These Israeli initiatives are a means to dismantle and dissolve the *Resistance Bloc*, a coalition of nation-states and non-state actors againts foreign control and occupation within the Middle East. This grouping includes, amongst others, the Arab resistance movements in Anglo-American occupied Iraq, the Palestinian Territories, and Lebanon. It has challenged the Washington Consensus and the economic reconfiguration of the Middle East that is being implemented through such actions as the Anglo-American invasion and occupation of Iraq.

Tel Aviv was going nowhere in its negotiations with Hamas and favours the establishment of an autocratic Fatah administration in the Gaza Strip that will readily comply to Israeli edicts. This would also free Tel Aviv for any confrontations with Lebanon, Syria, or/and Iran.

The Final Act: The Power of the People: The Act yet to be Played Out

The breaches of the Rafah Crossing between Egypt and the Gaza Strip were a sign of the crumbling of tyranny, but there is still a long way to go. [8] The mass protests worldwide from Egypt and the Arab World to Europe and Asia are a sign that the “Second Superpower” — the power of the people — is rearing its head.

In the end it will be the people who will decide, against the interest of the politicians and their economic power brokers.

The people see beyond the issues of nationality, ethnic division and man-made boundaries. They believe in justice and equity for all and they feel a pain in their hearts when they see the suffering of others, no matter the differences.

Worldwide, those that are just and honourable are a nation to themselves — whether they are Israelis or Arabs or Americans — and it will be their choices that will decide the direction of the future.

The Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, which includes a diverse spectrum of groups from Hamas to Communists (e.g., the Marxist Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine) and Christians, have done what the military forces of Jordan, Egypt, Syria, and Iraq could not do.

The Israeli massacres in the Gaza Strip will prove to be a historic turning point and the catalyst behind change.

The political and strategic map of the Middle East and the Arab World will be changed, but not in favour of Israel, the House of Saud and the dictators of the Arab World.

Change is coming.

NOTES

[1] Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya, NATO and Israel: Instruments of America’s Wars in the Middle East, *Centre for Research on Globalization* (CRG), January 28, 2008.

[2] Khaled Abu Toameh, PLO to form separate W. Bank parliament, *The Jerusalem Post*, [January 14, 2008](#).

[3] Emine Kart, Ankara cool towards Palestine troops, *Today’s Zaman*, [July 3, 2007](#).

[4] Jamal Al-Majaida, NATO chief discusses alliance’s role in Gulf, *Khaleej Times*, [January 27, 2008](#).

[5] Avi Isaacharoff, PA chief of staff: We must be ready to use force against Hamas to take control of Gaza, *Haaretz*, [September 22, 2008](#).

[6] Dominique René de Villepin, Déclarations de Dominique de Villepin à propos du Grand Moyen-Orient, interview with Pierre Rousselin, *Le Figaro*, [February 19, 2004](#).

[7] Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya, Beating the Drums of a Broader Middle East War, *Centre for Research on Globalization* (CRG), [May 6, 2008](#).

[8] Days after the Rafah Crossing was opened to free movement Mahmoud Abbas, the Israel government, and the Egyptian government all pushed for Fatah to take armed control of the

Rafah Crossing and close it to the Palestinian people. Not only is this a sign that none of these players care about the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip it also illustrates that Mahmoud Abbas has no interest in the welfare of Palestinians. The Rafah Crossing also has an E.U. monitoring security force that implicates the E.U. as an accomplice in the oppression of the Palestinians.

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