Timeline of US-NATO Israel Middle East War 2000-2010

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2000 – Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak resigns, marking the end of the Oslo peace process; 2nd Intifada sparked by Ariel Sharon visiting Temple Mount with armed escort; Mohammed Al-Dura killed by Israeli sniper; Bashir Al-Assad inherits the Syrian presidency on the death of his father Hafiz.

2001 – Taliban control 95 per cent of Afghanistan. Their offer to give Osama Bin Laden up to a third country for trial after 9/11 is brushed aside and Bush invades and installs Hamid Karzai;

Russia cedes control of Central Asia to US in "war on terror"; US sets up bases in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan; Pakistan's Musharraf backs the US "war on terror";

Jewish-American Daniel Pearl is murdered in Pakistan and becomes a Western icon (CIA/ Mossad spy?); Hamas popularity increases; Israel targets PLO Chairman Yasar Arafat; Intifada continues with 36 suicide bombings (91 deaths); Sharon calls Arafat "irrelevant"; US official re Arabat and Oslo, "The son of a bitch was too stupid to take it."

2003 – US invades Iraq.

2004 – Arafat dies (poisoned?).

2005 – Earthquake in Pakistan kills 80,000; Ahmedinejad elected president of Iran; Israeli prime minister Sharon withdraws from Gaza, forms Kadima and wins election; Rafik Al-Hariri assassinated in Lebanon, leading to the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon.

2006 – Sharon in permanent coma and deputy Ehud Olmert becomes prime minister; Lebanon invasion results in defeat of Israel and empowerment of Hizbollah; Hamas wins Paletinian elections; Saddam Hussein executed after US-sponsored show trial.

2007 – Hamas kicked out of West Bank government but retains control of Gaza, called a coup by West.

2008 – Mumbai attack – blamed on Pakistan – kills 170; Israel invades Gaza (100:1 ratio of casualties).

2009 – AfPak; Uighur uprising; Ahmedinejad re-elected in face of Western-orchestrated colour/ twitter revolution; Israel elects far right government under Benjamin Netanyahu/

Avigdor Lieberman; Goldstone report documenting Israeli war crimes in Gaza approved by the UN; growing world anti-apartheid campaign against Israel. ***

The Arab and Muslim worlds suffered one tragedy after another in this "decade from hell". Four wars – Afghanistan (2001), Iraq (2003), Lebanon (2008) and Gaza (2009), civil wars – in Sudan, between Sunni and Shia in Yemen and Iraq, between Fatah and Hamas in Palestine, not to mention the almost soccer war between Algeria and Egypt in 2009.

Whoever was responsible for 911 – the official excuse to invade Afghanistan and Iraq – Israel and a bizarre assortment of Israeli agents watched in delight as the Twin Towers came tumbling down. Benjamin Netanyahu famously said just days after 911, "We are benefitting from one thing, and that is the attack on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon, and the American struggle in Iraq." A robust and growing movement of 911 sceptics both in the Arab world and in the West accuse Mossad of orchestrating the tragic events of 911.

The decade was one of confrontation between the West and the Arab/ Muslim world, a "clash of civilisations" as it was dubbed by Samuel Huntingdon in 1993. The West's determination to bring the region to its knees and for it to follow US diktat was further advanced through such initiatives as the Mediterranean Dialogue between Europe, North Africa and the Middle East (including Israel), the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, Partnerships for Peace, and the Gulf Cooperation Council, all of which NATO and the US use to advance its agenda for the region.

There is increasing worldwide disgust with Israeli atrocities against the Palestinians (70 per cent of Germans see Israeli policy as a "war of extermination" and 50 per cent equate its treatment of Palestinians with Nazi treatment of Jews), which has given impetus to a growing BDS (boycott-disinvest-sanctions) movement, and even official Western pressure to end the blockade of Gaza. Yet, because of powerful Israeli lobbies in all Western countries, Western governments have yet to show any real commitment to forcing Israel to negotiate seriously with the Palestinians, and there is little hope that the region will throw off its heavy legacy of conflict and tragedy in the next ten years.

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