

Will this Conference that Celebrates the Palestinian Revolutionary Struggle Cut Through the Still Deafening Media Static of Israel's "Narrative?"

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Although the world has stood up for Palestine repeatedly through widespread global demonstrations against Israel's crimes (see The Electronic Intifada's [video clip](#) of May 2021), it still takes a lot of courage for Palestinians to stand up for themselves and declare a clear and unapologetic revolutionary path for their liberation.

That courage will be on full display at the upcoming Alternative Palestinian Path (Masar Badil) [conference](#) in Madrid, Spain (October—November 2021). The General Preparatory Committee of the conference has been working hard for over a year to mark the end of the Madrid-Oslo process, declare a new revolutionary commitment and chart a path towards a new stage of struggle for the liberation of Palestine.

Despite all past tragic setbacks, Palestinian resistance and courage have never waned; the history of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) is [the history of a revolution](#).

The best place to learn about this history ahead of Masar Badil is on the site The Palestinian Revolution ([Learn the Revolution](#)), a bilingual Arabic/English online learning resource that explores Palestinian revolutionary practice and thought from the Nakba of 1948, to the siege of Beirut in 1982:

The Palestinian revolution took on huge global significance, drawing on energies and resources from across the world, while influencing politics, thought, and culture throughout it. The website introduces readers to this remarkable phenomenon entirely through primary and contemporary sources.

It is this revolution, derailed since Madrid-Oslo of 30 years ago to the day, that Masar Badil aims to revitalize in Madrid now.

But will this conference that celebrates the Palestinian revolutionary struggle for liberation cut through the still deafening media static of Israel's "narrative?" And by static, I mean such loaded questions as the one put to me by [Eyal Nhaisi on Facebook](#): "Do i understand you correctly.. you want to delete Israël (from the river to the sea) and replace it with a country called Palestine?"

Or what about the static displayed on Canary Mission that conflates Zionism with Judaism and sees the Palestinian struggle for liberation in the following insidious terms: as defending and inciting violence against Jews (after all, "hasn't the term 'intifada', [let alone 'revolution'], carried the connotation of violence?"), supporting Hamas and spreading anti-Semitic conspiracy theories, glorifying and defending terrorists and terrorism, demonizing Israel, and (horror of horrors) engaging in BDS activity?

[Eyal Nhaisi](#)'s question above is on the minds of many people, including some who support Palestinians in their struggle, supporters who don't seem to understand that apartheid and inequality are not what's wrong with Israel. Rather, what's wrong is Israel's very existence as a settler-colonial Zionist Jewish entity in Palestine.

An example of the above confused mentality was recently expressed by American writer Michael Chabon, who [says](#) that he supports the Palestinian people in their struggle because he wants Israel "to survive and thrive." He says this while simultaneously considering joining the boycott of Israeli publishers [as Irish writer Sally Rooney has done] in the future.

Will the revolutionary struggle for Palestinian liberation end up deleting Israel and "replacing" it with a country called Palestine? As I responded to Eyal on Facebook, this language is inappropriate. Palestine cannot "replace" Israel. Palestine is already placed there!

If the Palestinian struggle for liberation succeeds (most Palestinians and their supporters believe when, not if), the Palestinian Nakba will be reversed, all Palestinian rights in their homeland will be restored and restitution made. Only then, as Omar Barghouti [put it](#) back in 2013, can we begin to focus on the ethics and mechanics of decolonization:

Accepting modern day Jewish Israelis as equal citizens and full partners in building and developing a new shared society—free from all colonial subjugation and discrimination, as called for in the democratic state model—is the most magnanimous, rational offer any oppressed indigenous population can present to its oppressors. So don't ask for more.

The conference comes as Israel is [set to approve](#) the construction of 4,400 new Jewish housing units in the West Bank, 3,109 in existing Jewish colonies and 1,300 in the heart of Palestinian villages.

Chabon's confusion will disappear if we all *finally* understand the Palestinian struggle within the historical framework of decolonization struggles, part of a late twentieth-century drive of colonial peoples to become sovereign nation-states, just as the former colonial Algeria, Kenya, Southern Rhodesia, Angola, Mozambique and apartheid South Africa did.

Achieving this goal, says Masar Badil's conference [statement and call](#), requires

taking up this national responsibility at the individual and collective levels. It also

requires collective convergence and cooperation to achieve a clear framework of struggle and direct and strategic objectives. Above all, it requires a willingness to sacrifice and broad popular participation in rebuilding our national and popular institutions on the one hand, and confronting the Zionist movement, its institutions and its racist colonial entity in occupied Palestine on the other hand, without neglecting the need to confront simultaneously the project of the Palestinian class that monopolized political decision-making and squandered the sacrifices of the Palestinian people. The major national achievements of the people were destroyed and this sector established, through the disastrous Oslo Accords, a powerless and illegitimate authority, which is the authority of “limited self-government” in areas and cities within the occupied Palestinian West Bank.

Which is why, as I pack my bag to travel to Madrid, I am most excited about the event that will take place on Sunday, October 31, 2021: Popular March for Palestine—Open discussion with the organizations and institutions participating in the conference.

Yes, we are not afraid and we are not alone today.

Related: [A Giant Leap for Palestine? Stay tuned!](#)

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Featured image: [Rima Najjar: Packing my bags to travel to Madrid, Spain: [The Alternative Palestinian Path Conference](#) (Towards a new revolutionary commitment) October-November 2021]

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