



## The War on Gaza: Requiem for the Deeply Held Two-State Delusion

---

By Amir NOUR<sup>1</sup>

(Part Eleven)

*“I am for peace. And I am for a negotiated peace.  
But this accord is not a just peace.”*  
(Edward W. Said)<sup>2</sup>

Over the last fifty years, achieving peace in the Middle East region through the “two-state solution” – i.e., carving out two sovereign Israeli and Palestinian states living side by side – to the irreconcilable century-long Israeli-Palestinian conflict, has consistently been endorsed by the “international community” as the best, if not the only, option. However, so far, it has been impossible for the two protagonists to reach an agreement, in particular since the collapse of the talks brokered by John Kerry in 2014 and the continuing, indeed the accelerated expansion of the illegal Israeli settlements established on Palestinian land in the West Bank and annexed East Jerusalem since 1967. As a result, world powers and leaders have contented themselves with “crisis management”.

---

<sup>1</sup> Algerian researcher in international relations, author of the books “*L’Orient et l’Occident à l’heure d’un nouveau Sykes-Picot*” (*The Orient and the Occident in Time of a New Sykes-Picot*) Editions Alem El Afkar, Algiers, 2014 and “*L’Islam et l’ordre du monde*” (*Islam and the Order of the World*), Editions Alem El Afkar, Algiers, 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Edward W. Said, “*Power, Politics and Culture: Interviews with Edward W. Said*”, Pantheon Books, New York, 2001.

Yet, before<sup>3</sup> – and even more so since – the attacks of 7 October, 2023 and the ensuing unprecedented death toll and destruction caused by the blind and vengeful Israeli reaction to them, as well as the high risk of regional and global conflagration, the international community was still faced with the unescapable reality that there cannot be lasting peace and stability without an agreement that speaks to the national and political aspirations, the security needs, and the human dignity of all the peoples of the region.

Paradoxically enough, both proponents and opponents of the two-state solution are finding new arguments to revive the debate on the way out of a disheartening and bloody situation in the most volatile region of the world. Meanwhile, the “one-state solution” is steadily gaining more and more traction, particularly among Palestinians and their supporters around the world.<sup>4</sup>

### **The Genesis and Enduring Adverse Consequences of a Bad and Unjust Idea**

The idea of establishing two states for two peoples in historic Palestine came together in 1936 when Lord William Robert Wellesley Peel was appointed by the British government to head a commission of inquiry, formally known as “Palestine Royal Commission”, with a view to investigating the causes of unrest among Palestinians and Jews in Palestine, following a six-month-long Arab general strike. The unrest intensified after the April 1920 San Remo Conference awarded the United Kingdom a mandate to control Palestine, which had for centuries been part of the Ottoman Empire, until its dismemberment in the wake of its defeat in the First World War.

In a widely-acclaimed book<sup>5</sup> containing a wealth of untapped archival material and primary sources, Israeli journalist and historian Tom Segev reconstructs in vivid detail the tumultuous three decades of the British mandate in Palestine, when “anything seemed possible and everything went awry”. Tom Segev argues that the British, far from being pro-Arabist as commonly thought, consistently favored the Zionist position, thereby ensuring the creation of the “Jewish state”; and that they did so out of the mistaken and anti-Semitic belief – “a uniquely modern blend of classical antisemitic preconceptions and romantic

---

<sup>3</sup> A Pew Research Center survey (Sarah Austin and Jonathan Evans, “**Israelis have grown more skeptical of a two-state solution**”: <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2023/09/26/israelis-have-grown-more-skeptical-of-a-two-state-solution/>) conducted in September 2023 found that only 35% of Israelis believe “a way can be found for Israel and an independent Palestinian state to coexist peacefully” – a decline of 15 percentage points since 2013. And a Gallup poll (Jay Loschky, “**Palestinians Lack Faith in Biden, Two-State Solution**”: [https://news.gallup.com/poll/512828/palestinians-lack-faith-biden-two-state-solution.aspx?utm\\_source=google&utm\\_medium=rss&utm\\_campaign=syndication#:~:text=Generational%20Divide%20on%20the%20Two,Palestinians%20aged%2046%20and%20older](https://news.gallup.com/poll/512828/palestinians-lack-faith-biden-two-state-solution.aspx?utm_source=google&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=syndication#:~:text=Generational%20Divide%20on%20the%20Two,Palestinians%20aged%2046%20and%20older)) conducted between July and September 2023 found that only 24% of Palestinians (of whom a majority of young people) living in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza supported a two-state solution, down from 59% in 2012.

<sup>4</sup> Harriet Sherwood, “**Israel-Palestine: Is the two-state solution the answer to the crisis?**”, *The Guardian*, 4 November 2023.

<sup>5</sup> Tom Segev, “**One Palestine, Complete: Jews and Arabs Under British Mandate**”, Little, Brown and Company, London, 2000; originally published in Hebrew as “*Yeme Ha-Kalaniyot: Erets Yisrael bi-tekufat ha-Mandat*”, by Keter Publishers, Jerusalem, 1999.

“veneration of the Holy Land and its people” – that the “Jews turned the wheels of history”. At first, he writes, the British were received as an army of liberation, and both Arabs and Jews wished for independence and assumed they would win it under British sponsorship. The Promised Land had, by the stroke of a pen, become “twice-promised”, and as a result, “confusion, ambiguity, and disappointment were present at the very beginning”. In sum, although the British took possession of “one Palestine, complete”, as noted in the receipt signed by British High Commissioner Sir Herbert Louis Samuel, “Palestine was riven, even before His Majesty’s Government settled in”.

Therefore, as it unavoidably turned out, Britain was caught in the middle of a bloody fight between two competing national movements. There were those in the British administration who identified with the Arabs and those who identified with the Jews; and there were also those who found both repugnant: “I dislike them all equally” wrote General Sir Walter Norris “Squib” Congreve, emphasizing that “Arabs and Jews and Christians, in Syria and Palestine, they are all alike, a beastly people. The whole lot of them is not worth a single Englishman.” For his part, High Commissioner Sir Arthur Grenfell Wauchope (from 20 November 1931 to 1 March 1938) compared himself to a circus performer trying to ride two horses at the same time. Of these two horses, he said in a lecture<sup>6</sup>, “one cannot go fast and the other would not go slow”.

In fact, as Chaim Weizmann rightly observed, the British were fooling the Arabs, fooling the Jews, and fooling themselves.<sup>7</sup> And Segev was equally right to conclude that from the start there were, then, only two possibilities: that the Arabs defeat the Zionists or that the Zionists defeat the Arabs; “War between the two was inevitable”.

With its formal approval by the League of Nations in 1922, the mandate incorporated the Balfour Declaration of 1917, which provided for both the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine for a minority Jewish population and the preservation of the civil and religious – but not the political or national – rights of non-Jewish indigenous Palestinian majority. Desiring political autonomy and resenting the continued Jewish immigration into their ancestral land, Palestinian Arabs disapproved of the British mandate, and by 1936 their dissatisfaction had grown into open rebellion.

The Peel Commission published its report in July 1937, admitting that the mandate was unworkable and, therefore, proposed that Palestine be partitioned into three zones: an Arab state, a Jewish state, and a neutral territory containing the holy places. Even though it initially accepted these proposals, by 1938 the British government recognized that such partitioning would not be feasible, and ultimately rejected the Commission’s report. And by the time the post-World War Two newly-created United Nations Organization voted the infamous Resolution 181 devising the partition of Palestine, in 1947 – giving 56% of historic Palestine along with 80% of the coast and the most fertile land to the Jewish minority side, and only 43% to the Palestinian majority side – the binational idea, and its array of supporting factions, had dissolved, soon to be followed by a civil war in Mandatory Palestine, the confirmation of the termination of the British mandate on 14 May 1948, the

---

<sup>6</sup> *Lecture by Arthur Wauchope, 1 November 1923, Central Zionist Archive, CZA S25/10006.*

<sup>7</sup> *Chaim Weizmann to the JAE, 7 March 1939, Central Zionist Archive, CZA Z4/303/32.*

Israeli “Declaration of Independence” on the same day, and the outbreak, the following day, of the first Arab-Israeli war on 15 May 1948 – which ended with a final armistice agreement concluded in July 1949, also demarcating the so-called “Green Line” which separated Arab-controlled territory from Israeli-occupied territories until the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

In the aftermath of the Six-Day (June) War, UN Security Council adopted Resolution 242, on 22 November 1967, in an effort to secure a “just and lasting peace” in the Middle East. The Israelis willingly supported the resolution because it called on the Arab states to accept Israel’s “right to live in peace within secure and recognized borders free from threats or acts of force.” For their part, Arab states reacted in a very disparate way: Egypt and Jordan accepted it from the outset because it called for Israel to withdraw from “territories occupied in the recent conflict”, and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), headed by Yasser Arafat rejected it until 1988 for the main reason that it lacked explicit references to Palestinians and their inalienable national rights. As far as the League of Arab States is concerned, it convened a Summit in Khartoum, Sudan, on 1 September 1967, and adopted the “Khartoum Resolution”, famously known for its “Three Noes” contained in its third operative paragraph<sup>8</sup>, namely: no peace, no negotiation, no recognition of Israel.

Although Resolution 242 – and UNSC’s Resolution 338 adopted on 22 October 1973 following the Yom Kippur/Ramadan War, and calling for a ceasefire and for the implementation of Resolution 242 “in all of its parts” – was never fully implemented, it nevertheless constituted the basis of international diplomatic efforts to end the Arab-Israeli conflict until the 1978 Camp David Accords and remains, to this day, at least theoretically, an important touchstone in any negotiated resolution to this longstanding conflict.

### **The United States Takes Over the Steering of International Peace Efforts**

As history teaches us, efforts aimed at re-building peace almost always follow destructive wars. The two Iraq Wars of 1991 and 2003 paved the way for renewed peace efforts, first within the framework of the 1991 “Madrid Peace Conference”<sup>9</sup> and the 1993 Oslo Accords, and then through such initiatives as “The Middle East Peace Summit” at Camp David<sup>10</sup> in 2000, “The Roadmap to Peace” of the “Quartet”<sup>11</sup> in April 2003, the

---

<sup>8</sup> Paragraph 3 reads as follows: “The Arab Heads of State have agreed to unite their political efforts at the international and diplomatic level to eliminate the effects of the aggression and to ensure the withdrawal of the aggressive Israeli forces from the Arab lands which have been occupied since the aggression of 5 June. This will be done within the framework of the main principles by which the Arab States abide, namely, no peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel, no negotiations with it, and insistence on the rights of the Palestinian people in their own country.”

<sup>9</sup> For more information on the Conference: <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1989-1992/madrid-conference>

<sup>10</sup> Akram Hanieh, “**The Camp David Papers**”, articles, published in *al-Ayyam* in seven installments between 29 July and 10 August 2000, *Journal of Palestine Studies* XXX, no. 2 (Winter 2001):

<https://www.palestine-studies.org/sites/default/files/attachments/jps-articles/jps.2001.30.2.75.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> The *Quartet*, set up in 2002, consists of the United Nations, the European Union, the United States and Russia. Its mandate is to help mediate Middle East peace negotiations and to support Palestinian economic development and institution-building in preparation for eventual statehood. It meets regularly at the level of the *Quartet Principals*

“Geneva Accord”<sup>12</sup> published in October 2003, the Bush administration-convened “Peace Conference at Annapolis”<sup>13</sup> in November 2007, the “Kerry Initiative”<sup>14</sup> in 2013-2014, and the “Paris Conference”<sup>15</sup> of January 2017 intended to “preserve the two-state solution and create incentives that would move the parties closer to direct negotiations.”<sup>16</sup>

The Madrid Conference, co-chaired by George H.W. Bush and Soviet President Michail Gorbachev, marked the first time that Israelis had sat down at a conference table with Arabs since the Geneva Conference in December 1973, and the first time in which all four of the frontline Arab states, as well as Palestinian representatives, sat down with Israelis since the Lausanne Conference of 1949. With the defeat of Iraq at the hands of an American-led military coalition in the Gulf War of January-March 1991 and the end of the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union that same year, the George Bush administration “felt that it had to ‘reward’ the Arab countries, especially Syria, for their participation in the coalition against the Iraqi regime and that ‘the time was right to put an end to Arab-Israeli conflict’, using the immense power and prestige of the United States in the Middle East. To do so, the United States proposed reconvening the international conference provided for by UN Security Council Resolution 338 of 1973, but which had been held in abeyance ever since.”<sup>17</sup>

Contrary to the commonly held belief, the Oslo Accords of 1993 (Oslo I)<sup>18</sup> and 1995 (Oslo II)<sup>19</sup> were not a peace treaty; they were in fact a profoundly asymmetric and imbalanced interim agreement in favor of the disproportionately stronger Israeli side. However, their historic signing, first on the lawn of the White House in Washington D.C, was a moment of great optimism, raising hopes worldwide that a long-sought settlement to a bitter conflict was finally within reach.

---

*(United Nations Secretary General, United States Secretary of State, Foreign Minister of Russia, and High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy) and the Quartet Special Envoys.*

<sup>12</sup> The “**Geneva Accord: A Model Israeli-Palestinian Peace Agreement**”: <https://geneva-accord.org/the-accord/>

<sup>13</sup> To read the “**Joint Understanding Read by President Bush at Annapolis Conference**”, Office of the Press secretary, the White House, 27 November 2007:

<https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2007/11/20071127.html>

<sup>14</sup> Secretary of State John Kerry, “**Remarks on the Middle East Peace**”, U.S. Department of State, 28 December 2016: <https://2009-2017.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2016/12/266119.html>

<sup>15</sup> To learn more about the Conference:

<https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/country-files/israel-palestinian-territories/peace-process/initiative-for-the-middle-east-peace-process/article/conference-for-peace-in-the-middle-east-15-01-17>

<sup>16</sup> Greg Shapland and Professor Yossi Mekelberg, “**Israeli-Palestinian Peacemaking: What We Can Learn from Previous Efforts?**”, Chatham House, 24 July 2018 (updated on 14 December 2020).

<sup>17</sup> Michael Fischbach, “**Madrid and the Oslo Agreement, 1991-1993: Short-Lived Promises of a Negotiated Settlement**”, *Interactive Encyclopedia of Palestinian Question*, Institute for Palestine Studies, 13 September 2023.

<sup>18</sup> To read the Declaration of Principles: <https://temp.org/resource/declaration-of-principles-oslo-accords/>

<sup>19</sup> The Oslo II Accord, signed in Taba, Egypt, on 28 September 1995, gave the Palestinian Authority self-governing powers in Area A and shared responsibilities with Israel in Area B of the West Bank, with the prospect of negotiations on a final settlement based on UN Security Council Resolution 242 and 338. Area A corresponds to all major Palestinian population centers and Area B encompasses most rural centers. Area C constitutes the territory outside of the enclaves of Areas A and B (representing about 60 percent of the West Bank) that was to remain under full Israeli control but that was to be gradually transferred to PA jurisdiction.

While the seemingly promising negotiations were still ongoing, Edward Said wrote an important collection of fifty essays, later forming the contents of a fascinating book<sup>20</sup> in which he questioned the very foundation of the Accords and incisively cut through the hyperbole in the press surrounding the Accords almost unanimously hailed as a success and a breakthrough for peace.

Very early on thus, Said realized that the imbalance of power between the signees of what he called a “permanent interim agreement” would set up a problematic dynamic that can neither lead to a real peace nor likely provide for one in the future. He also vehemently criticized the “repressive leadership and inflated bureaucracy” of Yasser Arafat, a leadership which has “in a cowardly and slavish way, tried to forget its own people’s tragic history in order to accommodate their American and Israeli mentors”.

Later events proved him right, starting with the interim agreements of Taba, Hebron, and the Wye Plantation that would already limit the next phase, that is to say the infinitely more sensitive and complex postponed issues of refugees, status of Jerusalem, exact borders, settlements, and water. Said believed the “peace process” was an “expedient” and a “foolish gamble that has already done far more harm than good”, because, he added, “Peace requires sterner measures than Arafat, Clinton, and company have, or are ever likely to have, taken. And so, some of us must try to make the effort that our leaders will not make”.

Three decades later, the consensus is that the Oslo accords have failed. Indeed, today’s Israeli-Palestinian reality is marked by “a massive expansion of Israel’s settlement project, a gradual erasure of the Green Line, a symbiosis between Israeli security forces and the settlers, and an authoritarian and divided Palestinian leadership, with the Palestinian Authority acting as Israel’s sub-contractor. Israel’s regime of control also separates between Palestinian groups, with each group given a different set of limited rights. While the Oslo process had the potential to transform a predominantly ethnic struggle into a conflict over land and borders, the ramifications of the one single regime that has replaced the Oslo order cannot be underestimated”.<sup>21</sup>

With the failure of the two sides to reach a peace agreement despite – or perhaps more accurately, because of – the role played by the partial U.S. mediator, the Accords allowed Israel to maintain full control over more than 60 percent of the West Bank (marked in the Oslo I agreement as Area C), including over its settlements and army bases. The PA retained administrative control in Area A, a mere 18 percent of the West Bank, where the majority of West Bank Palestinians live. Since the interim agreement did not include any moratorium on settlement expansion, Israel created facts on the ground. A close examination of settlement growth shows that “in 1993, the year of the first Oslo accord, 273,900 Israeli settlers lived in the occupied Palestinian territories: 116,300 in the West Bank, 4,800 in the Gaza Strip, and 152,800 in East Jerusalem. In 2000, the year of the failed Camp David summit, this number had grown to a total of around 372,000 Israeli settlers. In 2016, when the Kerry mission talks broke down, the total number of settlers in

---

<sup>20</sup> Edward Said, *“The End of the Peace Process: Oslo and After”*, Pantheon Books, New York, 2000.

<sup>21</sup> Rafaella A. Del Sarto and Menachem Klein, *“Oslo: Three Decades Later”*, *Israel Studies Review*, Volume 38, Issue 2, Summer 2023.

Palestinian territories had more than doubled compared to the beginning of Oslo: from 273,900 to around 613,700 settlers. Notably, in the same time span, the number of Israeli settlers in the West Bank had more than tripled (from 116,300 to 399,300). Today, over 465,000 Israeli settlers live in the West Bank and another 230,000 live in East Jerusalem. Whether the massive expansion of the settlement project was an Israeli negotiating tactic during Oslo or a response to pressures from the Israeli right, the fact remains that since the Oslo Accords, Israel has constantly expanded its settlements and their population on a massive scale – independently of whether negotiations were taking place or not”.<sup>22</sup>

Thereafter, against the backdrop of the seismic shift in the global geopolitical landscape brought about by the September 11th, 2001 events, and the dismal failure of the Oslo Agreements to achieve the hoped-for “two-state solution” within the intended time frame, the collective Arab stance toward Israel evolved dramatically. Thus, in 2002, during their annual summit in Beirut, Lebanon, the twenty-two members of the Arab League proposed the Arab Peace Initiative (API), which called for normalizing relations with Israel on the condition of the establishment of a viable Palestinian state. The API was initially meant to be a framework to peacefully end the decades-old conflict. While that framework still remains intact today, “the API has played a different function since the Arab Spring jolted the region into an intense zero-sum game between Saudi Arabia and Iran. From then on, Saudi official discourse treated the API as a focal point in the Kingdom’s pragmatic policy toward Israel. It gained a simultaneous function that allowed the Saudis to express their willingness for cooperation, yet still distance themselves from such willingness by emphasizing the centrality of Palestinian rights”.<sup>23</sup>

Later on, with successive bilateral (Israeli-Palestinian), regional, and international peace efforts failing and falling to the wayside, the API was eventually overshadowed, if not clinically dead, when the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, Morocco and Sudan – with regional political mastodon Saudi Arabia programmed to be next – signed normalization agreements with Israel in 2020 and 2021 within the framework of President Trump-brokered Abraham Accords<sup>24</sup>, without guarantees for Palestinian rights.

The UAE showed the way in this regard. On the pretext of stopping Israel’s plan to annex 30% of the West Bank, in July 2020, Abu Dhabi engaged in negotiations with Tel Aviv to normalize relations, further encouraged by and “sweetened” with a US offer to sell the wealthy pro-Western emirate 50 F-35 combat jets; an offer that has not materialized so far, while hundreds of those highly technologically advanced fighter jets have been sold by Washington to its other allies around the world, including, of course, Israel.

The tiny and vulnerable kingdom of Bahrain quickly followed suit. And in December 2020, in a joint declaration between the US, Morocco, and Israel, Rabat and Tel Aviv agreed to normalize relations; and to “recompense” the Alawite monarchy, President Donald Trump, having lost the re-election one month earlier and just a few days before he left

---

<sup>22</sup> Figures provided by the Foundation for Middle East Peace 2012 and Peace Now 2023a, 2023b.

<sup>23</sup> Aziz Alghashian, “A Revived Arab Peace Initiative from Saudi Arabia Could Save the Middle East”, *The Cairo Review of Global Affairs*, Winter 2024.

<sup>24</sup> U.S. Department of State, “The Abraham accords”: <https://www.state.gov/the-abraham-accords/>

office, decided unilaterally, through a simple tweet<sup>25</sup>, that the U.S. recognizes Morocco's sovereignty over the illegally occupied territory of Western Sahara, thus acting one of the most shocking U-turns in American foreign policy.<sup>26</sup>

As for the internally torn and externally fragilized Sudan, it was, in the same month of December, removed from Washington's sanctions list against "state sponsors of terrorism", and in January 2021, signed the Abraham Accords Declaration, but has yet to formally sign a bilateral agreement with Israel, deeply engulfed as it is in a devastating and unending civil war.

Finally, as is well-known today, the prospect of the signing of a groundbreaking – and far greater prize for Israel than the other Gulf emirates – Saudi-Israeli agreement within the same framework was only thwarted by the 7 October 2023 assaults, to the great dismay of the "Arab normalizers" and their Western backers and protectors.

By all accounts, as observed by Ambassador Chas freeman: "Israel has essentially exhausted its military options. It can do more of the same but more of the same will not bring it peace. Only a reconciliation with the Palestinians and Israel's Arab neighbors can do that. In this context, it must be said, the so-called Abraham accords are a diversion, not a path to peace."<sup>27</sup>

### **The Knesset Writes the Epitaph of the Two-State Solution's Grave**

Less than two months before he died, the famous statesman and veteran of American diplomacy Henry Kissinger did an interview<sup>28</sup> – most probably the last he would ever do. In it, he said the two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was no longer viable and that it "doesn't guarantee that what we saw in the last weeks [the 7th of October attacks] won't happen again". He added: "I believe the West Bank should be put under Jordanian control rather than aim for a two-state solution which leaves one of the two territories determined to overthrow Israel".

And on 18 July 2024, the Knesset put the final nail in the coffin of the two-state solution. Indeed, Israel's parliament passed a resolution<sup>29</sup> that overwhelmingly and firmly opposes the establishment of a Palestinian state. Such a state in the heart of the Land of Israel, the motion reads, "will pose an existential danger to the State of Israel and its citizens, perpetuate the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and destabilize the region", and "Promoting the

---

<sup>25</sup> [https://x.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1337067019385057290?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Etfw](https://x.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1337067019385057290?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

<sup>26</sup> To read the official "Proclamation On Recognizing The Sovereignty Of The Kingdom Of Morocco Over The Western Sahara", The White House, 10 December 2020:

<https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/presidential-actions/proclamation-recognizing-sovereignty-kingdom-morocco-western-sahara/>

<sup>27</sup> Sharmine Narwani, "Ambassador Chas Freeman: 'The Abraham accords are a diversion, not a path to peace'", *The Cradle*, 26 August 2024.

<sup>28</sup> Rolf Dobelli, "Henry Kissinger's (Maybe) Last Interview: Drop the 2-State Solution", *Politico magazine*, 12 February 2023.

<sup>29</sup> Jacob Magid, "Knesset votes overwhelmingly against Palestinian statehood, days before PM's US trip", *The Times of Israel*, 18 July 2024.



idea of a Palestinian state at this time will be a reward for terrorism and will only encourage Hamas and its supporters to see this as a victory, thanks to the massacre of October 7, 2023, and a prelude to the takeover of jihadist Islam in the Middle East.”

The resolution was co-sponsored by parties in Netanyahu’s coalition together with right-wing parties from the opposition. It passed with 68 votes in favor, and only 9 lawmakers, all from the Arab-majority Ra’am and Hadash-Ta’al parties, voted against it.

Commenting on the resolution put forward by his own right-wing opposition party New Hope-United Right faction, Party chairman Gideon Sa’ar said that the resolution decision is intended to express the blanket opposition that exists among the [Israeli] people to the establishment of a Palestinian state, which would endanger Israel’s security and future, and that it “signals to the international community that pressure to impose a Palestinian state on Israel is futile”.<sup>30</sup>

Also, expressing the exact same mindset and feelings, albeit in a more candid and crude manner in a clip<sup>31</sup> from an English-language Israeli podcast, hosts Naor Meningher and Eytan Weinstein discussed the idea of eradicating all Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza. Weinstein said: “If you gave me a button to just erase Gaza, every single living being in Gaza would no longer be living tomorrow. I would press it in a second”, claiming that “most Israelis” would do the same. Meningher added that they would also want to wipe out Palestinians in “the territories” because “that’s the reality we live in, it’s us or them, and it has to be them.” In a later episode, the two discussed what they deemed to be Israel’s failures in its ongoing war on Gaza, with Weinstein saying that the government should stop “trying to get international acceptance” and “instil sovereignty over and annex the West Bank, Gaza... make it all Israel”. Weinstein went on to say that Israel’s “50-year plan” should involve conquering Lebanon. CBC journalist Evan Dyer shared the clip on X, pointing to Meningher’s former media roles in Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s last five political campaigns. “This is not a fringe show or fringe people... the show is as mainstream as it gets,” Dyer wrote, citing a review of the podcast by Times of Israel that billed it as a “platform for free and open conversations”. In response, the podcast posted a gif of a finger pressing a red button.

Mustafa Barghouti, the Secretary-general of the Palestinian National Initiative, slammed the passing of this resolution and summed up what that move really means in practice, highlighting the fact that “No Zionist party from both the government and the opposition voted against the resolution”<sup>32</sup>, which “represents a rejection of peace with Palestinians and an official declaration of the death of [the] Oslo agreement.”

Similarly, senior Palestinian Authority official Hussein al-Sheikh condemned the resolution, saying the Knesset’s rejection “confirms the racism of the occupying state and

---

<sup>30</sup> Noa Shpigel, “*With Gantz’s Backing, Israel’s Parliament Passes Resolution Opposing Palestinian Statehood*”, Haaretz, 18 July 2024.

<sup>31</sup> Katherine Hearst, “*Popular Israeli podcasters call to ‘erase every living being in Gaza and West Bank’*”, Middle East Eye, 4 September 2024:  
<https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/israeli-podcast-hosts-call-erase-every-living-being-gaza-and-west-bank>

<sup>32</sup> Mustafa Barghouti was likely referring to the lawmakers from opposition Leader Yair Lapid’s center-left Yesh Atid and the more left-leaning Labor Party, who left the plenum to avoid backing the measure, even though they had previously spoken in favor of a two-state solution.

its disregard for international law and international legitimacy, and its insistence on the approach and policy of perpetuating the occupation forever”.

For his part, United Nations Secretary-general António Guterres declared that “Recent developments are driving a stake through the heart of any prospect for a two-state solution (...) We must change course. All settlement activity must cease immediately.”, adding that the settlements were a flagrant violation of international law and an obstacle to peace with Palestinians.

In trying to plan for a post-7 October 2023 future, world leaders are obstinately looking to and seeking inspiration from the outmoded and ineffectual visions and initiatives of the past. Joe Biden is calling for a new peace process: “When this crisis is over, there has to be a vision of what comes next, and in our view, it has to be a two-state solution”<sup>33</sup>, he said in one of his many public statements about the nearly year-long war on Gaza. British prime minister Rishi Sunak and French president Emmanuel Macron have made similar comments, and so have several League of Arab States and Organization of Islamic Cooperation summits. Most recently, the Spanish government hosted a meeting<sup>34</sup> with the Arab-Islamic contact group and European officials bringing together the Secretary-general of the Arab League, the EU Foreign Policy Chief, the Minister of State for Qatar, and the foreign ministers of Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Norway, Türkiye, and Egypt. Speaking to journalists, Spanish foreign minister Jose Manuel Albares emphasized that the contact group is currently “united in implementing the two-state solution.”

All things considered, however, the “peace process” through the two-state solution is well and truly dead; and it is past time for everyone to carry it to the graveyard of failed ideas, and there to whisper “*requiescat in pace*”!<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> *The White House, “Remarks by President Biden and Prime Minister Anthony Albanese of Australia in Joint Press Conference”, 25 October 2023.*

<sup>34</sup> *Sertac Aktan, “Spain hosts high-level meeting on Israel-Palestine two-state solution”, Euronews, 19 September 2024.*

<sup>35</sup> *Latin phrase for a familiar prayer in the Church’s liturgy meaning “may (the deceased) rest in peace”, to which the response is “Amen”. It is customarily abbreviated R.I.P.*