

## **Perspectives for the post-war period in Gaza**

(January 2024)

Unfortunately, it is impossible to predict how long the war in Gaza will last. And the Israeli soldiers and hostages and their families, as well as the more than 120,000 evacuated Jews, will have the same question in their hearts that David posed to the Holy One of Israel: "How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long will I have anxiety in my soul? Anguish in my heart by day? How long will my enemy rise up against me?" (Psalm 13: 1-2)

Although unfortunately there is no end to the war in sight, a number of proposals and statements for the period afterward can be read.

The LORD "changes times and seasons; He removes kings and sets up kings" (Dan 2:21).

Yes, it is to be expected that there will be a change in the political and military leadership as well as in the intelligence services.

Before I name some of the ideas that have recently emerged for the period after the end of the war against Hamas, I would like to address two aspects that, in my opinion, are of fundamental importance.

- a) For decades, the world has assumed that the Palestinians are a separate people who therefore deserve land and international recognition. In the 1960s, Yasser Arafat blinded politicians, the media, and the global public with this lie. In truth, those who call themselves Palestinians are Arabs like everyone else (some of their own politicians have even pointed this out) and have never had their own culture, language, or religion.

Now is the (long overdue) time to expose this lie and draw conclusions from it when it comes to future solutions.

- b) The second aspect concerns UNRWA (UN Relief and Works Agency), an UN agency specialized for "Palestinian refugees." Unlike the UNHCR, which is responsible for the world's more than 100 million other refugees and which strives for lasting integration into their new host countries, this is not the case with UNRWA: it limits itself to providing humanitarian aid. The State of Israel has repeatedly urged the closure of the refugee camps, but the UN (!) has prevented this through concrete resolutions. This does

not end the situation of the “Palestinian refugees” but deliberately perpetuates it. The situation is thus intended to remain an open wound, a political weapon against Israel. Furthermore, only among Palestinian refugees have their descendants been considered refugees since 1948, thus representing a constantly growing population – utter nonsense!

It would now be the (long overdue) time to expose the lie of the artificially inflated number of refugees and to dissolve UNRWA, which is financed with hundreds of millions of Euros by Western nations, especially since its approximately 30,000 employees are almost 100% linked to Hamas.

If these two historical distortions a) and b) could be eliminated, I believe the political pressure on Israel would be significantly reduced and the view would become clearer for meaningful future prospects in the Gaza Strip.

What ideas are currently being considered and discussed?

1. Indeed, there are initial voices from Israel calling for the dissolution of UNRWA.
2. Netanyahu sees the demilitarization of the Gaza Strip as one of the crucial prerequisites for a peaceful future. The question is whether this can truly succeed. Experiences following the Second Lebanon War in 2006, for example, show that UN Security Council Resolution 1701, which called for the disarmament of all armed groups (except Lebanon's official army) and prohibited the stationing of weapons and armed forces in the defined area beyond Israel's northern border, was completely ignored. Incidentally, in 2014 the EU officially declared its commitment to the demilitarization of Gaza, as enshrined in the Oslo Accords...
3. Since it is questionable whether demilitarization will succeed, the plan is to establish a security zone of, for example, 2 km. The so-called Philadelphia Corridor (8.7 miles from Gaza to the Egyptian border) would be controlled by Israel, and a permanent naval blockade would be established.
4. A division of the Gaza Strip into a northern and a southern part is also proposed for the period after the end of the war in order to be able to take better security measures (in accordance with the experience of the war).
5. The domestic intelligence agency Shin Beth and the IDF (army) are considering entrusting recognized clans in Gaza with the administration and distribution of humanitarian aid, dividing the area into districts.
6. There are proposals to expel Hamas, arrest Hamas leaders in J&S, demand the closure of the Hamas office in Turkey, and pressure Qatar to expel

Hamas through an international campaign. The Romanian ambassador spoke of "de-Hamasification," similar to the denazification of Germany by the Allies.

7. One idea is that Qatar, Iran, Egypt, Jordan, and Turkey should accept the Palestinians to their states. Whether this can be achieved is highly questionable. (In Jordan, for example, where at least 50% of the population is made up of Palestinian refugees, a Palestinian assassinated King Abdullah I in 1951, King Hussein only narrowly escaped an assassination attempt in 1970, and a civil war ensued.) Netanyahu initially supported the idea of a voluntary(!) settlement of Gaza residents outside Gaza, but then rejected it under American pressure. "We have no intention of displacing the civilian population. We are fighting against Hamas, not against the Palestinian population." (However, according to a December 2023 survey, 72% of Palestinians said Hamas "acted correctly" on October 7, and 89% said it did not commit a war crime.) Blinken: "Palestinian civilians must not be pressured to leave Gaza."
8. Should the PA, Fatah, be involved in Gaza? Netanyahu and (defense minister) Gallant reject this until they have implemented reforms. If the PA is truly serious about change, it should first demonstrate this in J&S, Netanyahu says. The PA (founded in 1994 under the Oslo Accords) operates with almost no transparency and is riddled with corruption; there have only been two elections since 2005. The PA is no less hostile than Hamas—although often portrayed as more moderate— and Abbas has repeatedly stated that he will never recognize Israel as the national state of the Jewish people. Significantly, he has not uttered a single word to condemn the October 7 massacre. Netanyahu: "The expectation that the PA will demilitarize Gaza is a pipe dream." The question is also what direction the PA will take once Abbas is no longer fit to hold office.
9. But the current PA Prime Minister, Mohammed Shtayyeh, is currently working with the US on a post-war plan. He says the destruction of Hamas is unrealistic, given its presence in Lebanon, Israel, and Qatar. International officials have proposed Salam Fayaad, who served as PA Prime Minister from 2007 to 2013, to administer the Gaza Strip. Opposition leader Lapid points to the 26,000 PA officials in Gaza who are not affiliated with Hamas, saying they could be used to build administrative infrastructure.
10. Should Israel occupy the Gaza Strip? The US fears that Israel will do so if there is no agreement on a Palestinian political body.

11. Defense Minister Gallant does not envision an Israeli civilian presence in the Gaza Strip. (Minister Smotrich strongly disagrees.) Netanyahu "made it clear that there is no intention to permanently occupy Gaza."
12. But Gallant's list of proposals includes giving Israel full security control and the right to carry out necessary military action in Gaza (which Netanyahu supports), overseeing the civil administration, and being responsible for inspecting imported goods .
13. A multinational task force led by the US, including European and moderate Arab nations, possibly with the involvement of the UN, the World Bank, and aid organizations, is proposed, responsible for civil affairs and economic reconstruction in Gaza. Existing Palestinian administrative mechanisms would be maintained, and local authorities would cooperate with the international body on the distribution of water, electricity, and humanitarian aid. (Given Israel's previous experience with international support, such as UN relief forces, the task force could quickly become a "task farce".)  
It is already becoming apparent that nations earmarked for the task force are making their participation conditional on the PA being the governing body to unite Gaza with Judea and Samaria (J&S) in order to eventually achieve a two-state solution.
14. Gaza and J&S as a physical unit? That would completely divide the Jewish state. But Abbas said in his conversation with Blinken that Gaza is "an integral part of the Palestinian state; it cannot be separated or cut off."
15. The idea of a two-state solution, Israel and a Palestinian state "side by side," as ultimate solution, has unfortunately not been eradicated from the minds of prominent politicians in the US, the EU, and Germany despite recent events. "Side by side" would, after all, extremely affect the J&S area in central Israel, and the Palestinians claim the entire territory from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean. Blinken promised Abbas "tangible steps toward a Palestinian state" in January.  
If not now, when, after all the demonic massacres, would it finally be time to wake up and bury the completely misguided idea of a two-state solution (which, by the way, is even rejected by the majority of Palestinians)?
16. After the discoveries in the Gaza Strip have shockingly revealed the years of indoctrination of children and the abuse of the population for the inhumane goals of Hamas, there are now rightly calls for a completely new education system both in Gaza and for the Israeli Arabs in J&S and the Palestinians in Jordan.

We can see, then, that in the struggle for a reasonable solution, politicians have very different approaches. We should remember that whenever Israel withdrew from territory granted by the Lord, this did not contribute to calm or even peace, but rather led to further hostile incursions. This was the case when Israel renounced its claim to the conquered Temple Mount in 1967; when it withdrew from Sinai in 1982 (where ISIS and others had taken hold); when it vacated southern Lebanon; when it handed over biblical cities in Jerusalem and Jerusalem (such as Jericho, Bethlehem, and Hebron) to the Palestinian Authority in 1993; and when it voluntarily expelled the Jewish residents of the Gaza Strip in 2005.

But do we also find clues in the Bible about how the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob envisions the future in the Gaza Strip?

For the end times, for the "day of the LORD's wrath," we read in Zephaniah 2:4-7: "For Gaza will be forsaken, and Ashkelon will become a desolation. Ashdod will be driven out at midday, and Ekron will be uprooted. Woe to the inhabitants of the sea coast, the nation of the Cherethites! The word of the LORD concerning you is this: 'O Canaan, land of the Philistines, I will destroy you, so there shall be no inhabitant .' And the sea coast will become pasture lands, cisterns for shepherds, and sheepfolds; it will be a land for the remnant of the house of Judah . They will graze therein and lie down in the houses of Ashkelon at evening, for the LORD their God will intervene for them and restore their captives".

Although today's Arab "Palestinians" are not descendants of the Philistines (a non-Semitic people) mentioned in the Bible, since the text specifically speaks of Gaza, we can certainly use the prophecy to shed light on Gaza's ultimate future. What can we discern?

- The area in and around Gaza will be completely freed from enemies by the Holy One of Israel.
- The area is reserved for God's people.
- The "land by the sea" is to become pastureland.

Before being handed over to the PA, Gaza was primarily used for agriculture. This is evidently God's intention for the distant(?) future.

The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is the LORD of history. He will come to His purpose!