

PALESTINIAN YOUTH PERSPECTIVES ON THE OSLO PEACE PROCESS: SUCCESSSES, FAILURES AND ALTERNATIVES

BADIL WORKING PAPER NO. 27



بديل
المركز الفلسطيني
لمصادر حقوق المواطنة واللاجئين



BADIL

Resource Center

for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights

August 2021

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Layout & Design: Atallah Salem

ISBN: 978-9950-339-57-6

Working Paper No. 27:

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August 2021



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This Study is sponsored by the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung with funds of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of the Federal Republic of Germany. This publication or parts of it can be used by others for free as long as they provide a proper reference to the original publication. The content of this study is the sole responsibility of BADIL Resource Center and does not necessarily reflect a position of the RLS.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Introduction
7	Chapter 1: The Oslo Peace Process and Changes on the Ground
9	1. Context and Contents of the Oslo Accords
10	1.1. Oslo I: Framework with no Recognition of Palestinian National Rights
12	1.2. Oslo II: Creation of a Subjugated Palestinian Authority and Fragmentation of the Fragmented
13	1.3. Between Celebrations in the White House Lawn and the Demise of Negotiations
15	2. Oslo Accords' Extension: From Five Years to More than 28
16	2.1. Palestinian Rights and Existence: Ongoing Forcible Transfer Policies, Colony Expansion, and Land Grab
17	2.2. Palestinian Political Arena: Bureaucratized Liberation, Official Politics, and State-Like Institutions Shy of a State
18	2.3. Security Coordination: Increased Security for Israel
20	2.4. Palestinian Economic Capitulation: Neoliberal Policies, Crippled, Donor-Dependent Entity
21	2.5. Palestine's International Presence: Blurred Legal Status, Erosion of Palestinian National Rights, Israeli Legitimacy, and Criminal Impunity
24	Chapter 2: Survey Analysis
24	1. The Oslo Peace Process' Failure and Success
26	2. The Oslo Peace Process' Perceived Successes
29	3. The Oslo Peace Process' Perceived Failures
31	4. Foundational Features' Changes Surrounding the Conflict
36	5. Evaluation of the Involved Parties in the Peace Process
39	6. Political Framework for Resolving the Conflict
43	7. Characteristics of a Future State
45	Conclusion and Recommendations
52	Annex: Survey Variations

Introduction

For the past three decades, the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel have been sporadically engaging in a peace process, known as the Oslo peace process. Negotiations were first put in motion in the 1991 Madrid Peace Conference and then concretely transpired in 1993 with Oslo I, or the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements. Per this agreement, the process' ultimate goal was defined as “achiev[ing] just, lasting, and comprehensive peace between the two parties,”¹ while the initial goals included setting up a framework for further negotiations and establishing a semi-autonomous Palestinian governing body in the occupied Palestinian territory. Both the framework and the governing authority were created, but any hope for peace has now become even more pollyannaish than it was in 1991. Over the past 28 years, Israel's colonial-apartheid regime has materialized more clearly than ever before as its international impunity has increased. Meanwhile, the Palestinian people have experienced an escalation of human rights violations and crimes perpetrated against them, including additional forced displacement and transfer, the annexation of more Palestinian land, the expansion of colonies, and the shrinking of political, cultural, and socioeconomic rights and space.

Within this context, all parties involved in the peace process have recognized that it is failing, or have at least expressed their dissatisfaction with it. In 2018, following the Trump Administration's declaration of Jerusalem as Israel's capital, Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmoud Abbas stated that “Israel has killed Oslo. It has terminated Oslo. Now we are an authority without any authority, and an occupation without land.”² A similar sentiment was expressed in May 2020 in response to Israel's threat to *de jure* annex the colonies in the West Bank when he stated that “the Palestinian Liberation Organization and

1 *Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements*, 13 September 1993, Preamble, available at: <https://peacemaker.un.org/israelopt-osloaccord93> [accessed 23 August 2021].

2 David M. Halbfinger, “Abbas Calls Accords Dead and Blasts U.S.: ‘Damn your Money!’,” *New York Times*, 14 January 2018, available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/14/world/middleeast/abbas-palestinians-trump.html> [accessed 23 August 2021]/

the State of Palestine are absolved [...] of all the [Oslo] agreements with the American and Israeli governments.”³ Israeli Minister Avigdor Lieberman has also asserted that “[i]n the 16 years since the Oslo Accords, we haven’t managed to bring peace to the region, and I’m willing to bet that there won’t be peace in another 16 years, either. Certainly not on the basis of the two-state solution.”⁴ In tandem, the United States (US) under the Obama administration has expressed that a *status quo* has transpired in the aftermath of the Oslo peace process, which is “leading toward one state, or perpetual occupation.”⁵ While the United Nations (UN) Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Nickolay Mladenov, has previously stated that “there is no Middle East peace process,” citing Israelis and Palestinians unreadiness to engage in negotiations.⁶

Irrespective of these clear recognitions of the peace process’ shortcomings, the involved parties continue to spout commitment to it, or abide by it where applicable. President Abbas, for example, stated in the beginning of 2020, in disdain to the Trump Administration’s peace proposal and the US’ involvement, that “We [the PLO] reaffirm our commitment to a solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict based on the two-state solution, [...] on the condition that negotiations will be held to achieve that under international auspices [...] and through an international peace conference based on international legitimacy,”⁷ as if the entirety of the Oslo peace process’ failure is explained by the US’ role as a mediator, as opposed to the framework as a whole. Additionally, soon after

3 Palestine News & Info Agency, “President Abbas Declares End to Agreements with Israel, US; Turns Over Responsibility on Occupied Lands to Israel,” *Archives*, 19 May 2020, available at: <http://english.wafa.ps/page.aspx?id=3QEyYpa117154132029a3QEYp> [accessed 23 August 2021].

4 Joharah Baker, “OPT: Unfortunately, Lieberman is Right,” *Miflah Press Release*, 24 August 2009, available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/opt-unfortunately-lieberman-right> [accessed 23 August 2021].

5 David Remnick, “The Obama Administration’s Final Warning on the Middle East Peace Process,” *The New Yorker*, 28 December 2016, available at: <https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/the-obama-administrations-final-warning-on-the-middle-east-peace-process> [accessed 23 August 2021].

6 Al-Jazeera, “Palestinians Threaten to Quit Oslo Accords over Trump Peace Plan,” *Al-Jazeera News Agencies*, 26 January 2020, available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/1/26/palestinians-threaten-to-quit-oslo-accords-over-trump-peace-plan> [accessed 23 August 2021].

7 Palestine News & Info Agency, in *supra* 3.

the PA considered itself absolved of all agreements it has signed with Israel and the United States, it resumed security coordination with Israel, indeed abiding by Oslo's provisions and thus playing by its rules.⁸ As for the US, President Biden had recently reaffirmed that “we still need a two-state solution. It is the only answer;”⁹ and the UN envoy for the Middle East Peace Process stated that “no one in the international community questions the foundation that any resolution must be based on two-states,” and that a return to negotiations based on this foundation is necessary.¹⁰ This commitment to the peace process does not necessarily apply to Israel, however, which is quick to point fingers at the PA for the Oslo peace process' failure whenever it threatens to cease security coordination or refuses to engage in negotiations. Instead, Israel continues to run its colonial enterprise unhindered and only accepts an agreement that would ensure full Palestinian capitulation, as was the case with the so-called Deal of the Century. Its current Prime Minister, Neftali Bennet, is notorious for his rejection of Palestinian statehood and negotiations, quoted in a speech saying “I will do everything in my power to make sure they [Palestinians] never get a state [...]. No more negotiations, no more illusions.”¹¹

This dynamic between recognizing the peace process' failure, alleging commitment to it, and outright rejecting it, is completely inconsistent and not conducive for reaching a final solution. Thus, the continuity with this process, without addressing or confronting these issues, makes little to no sense – although it is evidently comfortable to all involved parties. The issue that remains is that no alternative solution has been provided. To do so, it is first and foremost essential to understand the peace process in more depth, its foundations, its consequences, and its missteps, in order to ensure an alternative that does not fall victim to

8 David M. Halbfinger, “Reassured by Biden Win, Palestinians will Resume Cooperation with Israel,” *New York Times*, 17 November 2020, available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/17/world/middleeast/israel-palestinians-security-annexation.html> [accessed 23 August 2021].

9 Servet Günerigök, “Biden Says Two-State Solution ‘only answer’ to Israel, Palestine,” *Anadolu Agency*, 22 May 2021, available at: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/biden-says-two-state-solution-only-answer-to-israel-palestine/2250673> [accessed 23 August 2021].

10 United Nations News, “Return to ‘Path of Meaningful Negotiations’, UN Envoy Urges Israelis, Palestinians,” 21 December 2020, available at: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/12/1080542> [accessed 23 August 2021].

11 David Remnick, “The Party Faithful,” *The New Yorker*, 13 January 2013, available at: <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2013/01/21/the-party-faithful> [accessed 23 August 2021].

the same issues. A comprehensive analysis such as that is lacking in the public mainstream discourse, instigating a perpetual commitment to the two-state solution and the peace process as it stands, at least on the leadership level, instead of encouraging a deconstruction of this conception and a reconceptualization of a more suitable alternative that considers the facts on the ground today.

It is also relevant that the Palestinian people were not consulted about the Oslo peace process' conception, and now that the leadership has declared it dead and is yet acting according to it, the same stands whereby the Palestinian people are excluded from discussions on alternative approaches. A particular demographic that has been marginalized and excluded from the peace process are Palestinian youth, also known as the 'Oslo generation.' The Oslo generations' perspective is of utmost importance considering that they were born and/or raised under Oslo's rule and have thus far been forced to carry the grunt of its consequences. Therefore, it is essential to provide them with a platform to express their opinion regarding the Oslo peace process and to include them in crafting alternative solutions – which has also been amiss in the public discourse.

The following paper aims to bridge these two gaps by providing a holistic analysis of the Oslo peace process' impact on the Palestinian people and the Palestinian youth's perspective on the successes and/or failures of the Oslo peace process, its framework, and general features of alternative solutions. To do so, the paper has adopted a mixed methods approach, including a literature review, text analysis, and an opinion poll. Through this, BADIL aims to generate a comprehensive legal, political, and social debate surrounding the peace process and potential alternative approaches from the perspective of Palestinian youth. Central to this paper, therefore, is the Palestinian youth's perspectives and their conceptualization of alternatives for a permanent solution.

Methodology and Research Sample

In order to energize this examination of the Oslo peace process from the Palestinian youth's perspective, a literature review was first conducted by assessing a combination of primary sources, secondary literature, grey literature, UN resolutions, and international conventions. A qualitative interdisciplinary

approach was thus applied by incorporating historical, political, and sociological analyses. This research and analysis informed the survey, which formed the basis of the research method, as it helped specify the type of questions that were included in the survey and their respective framing as per the different components of the Oslo peace process. In drafting the questions for the survey, the most important elements and manifestations of the peace process were brought up to assess the youth's perspective surrounding them as well as their level of knowledge, awareness and interest. The survey included questions that required the youth to describe a final political solution and the characteristics of the state that they would like to live in. Through this, the survey provided Palestinian youth with a platform to share their preference for different alternatives other than the Oslo peace process. An external questionnaire expert was further consulted to ensure that the questions were framed in a neutral manner and followed all the essential components of a survey.

Overall, the process of dissemination occurred online to accommodate for COVID-19 restrictions and to also be inclusive of Palestinians in exile. The survey specified that the target group was Palestinian youth between ages 18-35 and did not accept any responses from different groups. It was shared online through social media platforms and was also sent directly to Palestinian organizations and grassroots communities that have connections to Palestinian youth, in all of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Jerusalem, 1948 Palestine, and in exile.

The questionnaire ran for a total of three weeks and was concluded in May 2021 when Palestinians organized mass protests against Israel's colonial policies in Sheikh Jarrah, violent attacks on Palestinian worshippers in Al-Aqsa Mosque and aggression on Gaza during May 2021 due to an awareness that these events could have a temporary impact on the youth's perspective as such occurrences do not fall within the ordinary *status quo* of the Oslo peace process. By that time, the respondents amounted to 695, with 58.4 percent male and 41.6 female. The age median was 27.4 where participants of ages 30-35 constituted the majority of respondents, that is 39.7 percent. In relation to the participants' place of residence, 42.9 percent were residents of the West Bank, 19 percent of respondents were in exile in Arab states, 16 percent from the Gaza Strip, 13.7 percent from 1948 Palestine, 5.3 percent from Jerusalem, and 2.3 percent in exile in non-Arab states. In relation to the refugee status of participants, 398 participants were refugees,

103 were internally displaced persons, while 194 indicated that they never been displaced before. It is also interesting that 56.8 percent of participants have a bachelor's degree, 20.9 percent have a master's degree, and only 3.5 percent have terminated their education at primary level. In addition, 48.4 percent are employed in the private sector, 26.4 in the public sector, and 25.2 percent in civil society.

The importance of this paper is found not only in the opinion of the 92.7 percent of respondents who believe that the Oslo peace process has failed, but also in the youth's opinion regarding the role of the involved international and regional actors as well as the manifestations of the potential alternative solutions. By considering the youth's perspective, parties and involved actors are enabled to develop a human rights-based approach that will lead to a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace.

Chapter 1:

The Oslo Peace Process and Changes on the Ground

The Oslo peace process refers to a series of negotiations and agreements between Israel and the PLO to ostensibly “achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive peace between the two parties.”¹² With peace as the ultimate objective, the precursory goals of the Oslo peace process involved the establishment of an interim Palestinian authority governing in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the gradual withdrawal of Israeli forces from the occupied Palestinian territory, and the negotiation of a permanent settlement within five years in relation to so-called final status issues, namely Jerusalem, refugees, colonies, security arrangements, and borders.¹³ Accordingly, the Oslo peace process and agreements within were not peace treaties *per se*. Instead, their objective was to establish interim governance arrangements in parts of the 1967 occupied territory and a framework to facilitate further negotiations for a final settlement between the two parties, to be concluded by the end of 1999.

Subsequent to secret negotiations in Oslo in 1993, the peace process culminated in the Letters of Mutual Recognition, signed on 10 September 1993 where Israel recognized the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and the PLO recognized Israel’s right to exist.¹⁴ A few days later, the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements (Oslo I), delineating the anticipated framework for Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territory and Palestinian governance, was officially signed in a public ceremony on the White House lawn, launching the bilateral Israel-PLO negotiations process.¹⁵

12 *Declaration of Principles*, in *supra* 1.

13 *Id.*, Article V(3).

14 *Israel-PLO Recognition: Exchange of Letters between PM Rabin and Chairman Arafat*, 9 September 1993, available at: <https://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/36917473237100E285257028006C0BC5> [accessed 23 August 2021].

15 *Declaration of Principles*, in *supra* 1.

The following year, Israel and the PLO signed the Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area, which detailed Israeli forces partial withdrawal from Jericho and Gaza, implemented the Protocol on Economic Relations, and created the PA with Yasser Arafat as the first president.¹⁶ In 1995, the Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, or Oslo II was signed, building on the foundations of Oslo I and specifically outlining the limited powers and responsibilities of the self-governing Palestinian authorities and once again, laying the foundations for subsequent negotiations.¹⁷

In the years following the adoption of these agreements, the implementation was not progressing as pledged in the Accords' texts, neither in terms of Israeli withdrawal nor in final status negotiation. Additional Israel-PLO Agreements, such as the 1997 Hebron Protocol detailing Israel's withdrawal from Hebron, the 1998 Wye River Memorandum, and the 1999 Sharm El-Sheikh Memorandum, attempted to reinforce implementation and revive negotiations, but failed as implementation stalled and negotiations reached a deadlock. By May 1999, the five years interim period had ended without reaching a final settlement between Israel and the PLO.

In 2000, the Camp David Summit attempted to salvage the Oslo peace process, but was yet again unsuccessful in doing so as the suggested solutions for final status issues were vague at best and at worst in complete denial of Palestinian rights and sovereignty.¹⁸ Not to oversimplify matters, but the ongoing denial of the Palestinian people's fundamental inalienable rights, the overwhelming Palestinian frustration with the Summit's failure, and the overall futility of the peace process was expressed in the eruption of Second Intifada. In 2003, The Roadmap to Peace was introduced, which was evidently a continuation of the Oslo peace process and maintained the same weaknesses featured in the Oslo

16 *Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area (Cairo Agreement)*, 4 May 1994, available at: <https://peacemaker.un.org/israelopt-cairoagreement94> [accessed 23 August 2021].

17 *Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip*, 27 December 1995, available at: <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-185434/> [accessed 23 August 2021].

18 *Trilateral Statement on the Middle East Peace Summit at Camp David*, 25 July 2000, available at: <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-193931/> [accessed 23 August 2021]; See Institute for Middle East Understanding, "What did, in fact, happen at Camp David in 2000?", 28 October 2005, available at: <https://imeu.org/article/what-did-in-fact-happen-at-camp-david-in-2000> [accessed 23 August 2021].

Accords.¹⁹ Thereafter, both the international community and the US have drafted different proposals to assertedly achieve a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace, but have all been rejected or crucially deflated, and the peace process has been in a stalemate since, with no further substantial agreements and little to no hope for its revival.²⁰ For example, the Obama administration attempted to revive Israeli-Palestinian peace talks between 2009-2010 and 2013-2014, but were met by strong Israeli rejection to freeze colony construction, and in fact, an acceleration of colony construction ensued.

The situation on the ground in relation to Palestinian inalienable rights has been adversely altered to an extent where any declaration of sustainable peace on the horizon based on UN Resolution 242, as purported by the peace process, is no more than an exercise in wishful thinking. Despite this, the Oslo peace process continues to not only shape the mainstream discourse surrounding the Palestine Question, but to also control the Palestinian people's lives, indicating its continued relevance. To explicate this, the following chapter will begin by elaborating on the main contents of the agreements as well as the context surrounding the Oslo Accords' inception, and then examining the primary changes on the ground that are attributed to the Oslo peace process, both directly and indirectly.

1. CONTEXT AND CONTENTS OF THE OSLO ACCORDS

In December 1987, the first Intifada erupted in the occupied Palestinian territory against the preceding 20 years of Israeli 1967 occupation, repression, and brutality. In tandem with the political changes at the international level embedded in the collapse of the Soviet Union and the US' engagement in conflict resolution around the world, it has been argued that the Intifada persuaded Israel to engage

19 Richard Falk, "Oslo +20: A Legal Historical Perspective," in *The Oslo Accords 1993-2013: A Critical Assessment*, Petter Bauck and Mohammed Omer, (eds.) (American University in Cairo Press, 2017).

20 The most recent of these proposals is former US President Trump's "Deal of the Century." See BADIL, *Trump's So-Called Vision/Deal of the Century: A Move to End the Palestinian Refugee Issue Through Serious Breaches in International Law* (Bethlehem: BADIL, 2020), available at: [https://www.badil.org/phocadownloadpap/badil-new/publications/research/in-focus/Deal-of-the-Century-Refugee-Issue\(PositionPaper-May2020\).pdf](https://www.badil.org/phocadownloadpap/badil-new/publications/research/in-focus/Deal-of-the-Century-Refugee-Issue(PositionPaper-May2020).pdf); Zaha Hassan, "From Clinton to Obama, U.S. Peace Deals have Paved the Path to Apartheid," *Carnegie Endowment*, 30 January 2020, available at: <https://carnegieendowment.org/2020/01/30/from-clinton-to-obama-u.s.-peace-deals-have-paved-path-to-apartheid-pub-80938> [accessed 23 August 2021].

in peace talks with the PLO in the 1991 Madrid Conference as Israel realized that its occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip is unsustainable.²¹ By November 1988, in continuity with the PLO's concessions approach launched in 1974 by the PLO's Interim 10-point Program,²² the PLO accepted Israel's existence within the Green Line and expressed its willingness to accept a Palestinian state on the remaining land in the territory occupied since 1967.²³ This was widely rejected by Palestinians who perceived it with ill-will towards Palestinian refugees, Palestinians with Israeli citizenship, and more generally threatened the liberation and revolutionary ethos of Palestinian self-determination. In response, Israel's Likud-Labor coalition government formally declared that, despite the PLO's concessions to accept a two-state solution based on the 1967 borders, "there will be no changes in the status of Judea, Samaria, and Gaza other than in accordance with the basic guidelines of the [Israeli] government," and there will be no Palestinian state.²⁴ The PLO and Israel's divergent stances prior to 1993 is an omen for the Oslo Accords' contents, which largely involved the former compromising while the latter was adamant on maintaining its colonial enterprise through a 'process.'

1.1. Oslo I: Framework with no Recognition of Palestinian National Rights

Article I of Oslo I states that the aim of the negotiations is "to establish a Palestinian Interim Self-Government Authority, the elected Council, for the Palestinian people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, for a transitional period not exceeding five years, leading to a permanent settlement based on Security Council resolutions 242 of 1967 and 338 of 1973 [...]."²⁵ It further

21 Noam Chomsky, "The Intifada and the Peace Process," *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*, vol.14, no. 2 (summer 1990), pp. 345-353.

22 PLO Interim Political Program (10-Point Program), 8 June 1974, available at: <https://www.paljourneys.org/en/timeline/historictext/9637/plo-interim-program-ten-point-program> [accessed 23 August 2021].

23 United Nations Security Council, A/43/827, 18 November 1988, available at: <https://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/6EB54A389E2DA6C6852560DE0070E392>.

24 Cited in Noam Chomsky, "The Oslo Accords: Their Context, Their Consequences," in *The Oslo Accords 1993-2013: A Critical Assessment*, Petter Bauck and Mohammed Omer (eds.) (American University in Cairo Press, 2017).

25 *Declaration of Principles*, Article 1, in *supra* 1.

stipulates that the Palestinian Interim Self-Government Authority, the PA, would have a right to self-government within the “West Bank and Gaza Strip territory, except for issues that will be negotiated in the permanent status negotiations: Jerusalem, settlements, military locations, and Israelis [...]”²⁶ Self-rule in matters of education, culture, health, social welfare, direct taxation, and tourism was to happen in different phases as Israeli forces would gradually withdraw from parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This interim period of partial Palestinian self-rule was intended to last for a five-year period in which permanent status negotiations would take place to reach a final agreement on the basis of resolutions 242 and 338. In the meantime, Israel “will continue to be responsible for external security, and for internal security and public order of settlements and Israelis.”²⁷

Oslo I’s framework, which conceived the skeleton for the peace process as a whole, seemed to be premised on a two-state approach, although there was no explicit mention of establishing a Palestinian state in the accord, to achieve a peaceful solution. This implied both legitimizing Israel’s existence and partitioning Mandatory Palestine into two separate entities, diluting the rights of Palestinian refugees and Palestinians with Israeli citizenship. Critically, although the Accords were understood to allude to the prospect of a Palestinian state, the provisions made no explicit reference to the Palestinian people’s inalienable rights (i.e., the right to self-determination or Palestinian refugee rights, as enshrined in UN General Assembly Resolution 3236 of 1974)²⁸ or to Palestinian statehood, independence, and sovereignty. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, which Oslo I indicated would act as the basis for the final settlement, do not encompass the Palestinian people’s national rights, specifically the right to self-determination as well as Palestinian refugees’ right to return (although they do vaguely refer to a “just settlement of the refugee problem”).²⁹ This lack of sincerity to Palestinian

26 *Id.*, Article V(3), in *supra* 1.

27 *Id.*, Annex II, in *supra* 1.

28 General Assembly, Question of Palestine, A/RES/3236(XXIX), 22 November 1974, available at: <https://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/025974039ACFB171852560DE00548BBE> [accessed 23 August 2021].

29 United Nations Security Council, S/RES/242, 22 November 1967, available at: <https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/0/7D35E1F729DF491C85256EE700686136>; United Nations Security Council, S/RES/338, 22 October 1973, available at: <https://peacemaker.un.org/middleeast-resolution338>

rights was also confirmed by Oslo's approach to defer Jerusalem, refugees, settlements, security arrangements, and borders to final status negotiations – the issues of most significance to the Palestinians – to final status issues, implying that no guarantees were provided to the Palestinian people that Israel would halt its colonial expansion on Palestinian land, its Judaization efforts in Jerusalem, or meet its obligations to provide reparations to Palestinian refugees. Israel's gradual withdrawal and subsequent restricted transfer of cultural, educational, civil, and societal matters to the Palestinian “self-governing authority”, while Israel assumes responsibility for internal and external security, once again clarified the lack of genuine recognition of Palestinian rights. As is clear to spectators today, the Oslo framework's staunch negligence of Palestinian rights has not only allowed Israel to continue its expansionist, colonial ambitions but has also legitimized such an enterprise, which has, in turn, undermined any realistic prospects for Palestinian self-determination and independence.

1.2. Oslo II: Creation of a Subjugated Palestinian Authority and Fragmentation of the Fragmented

Oslo II, incorporating the 1994 Gaza-Jericho Agreement, the Agreement on Preparatory Transfer of Powers and Responsibilities between Israel and the PLO, and the 1995 Protocol on Further Transfer of Powers and Responsibilities, builds on the declarations and foundations embodied in Oslo I. Some of the most crucial elements of the agreement include: (1) detailing the partial withdrawal of Israeli forces from Jericho and Gaza, (2) establishing the PA with Yasser Arafat as the first president, (3) recognizing the establishment of an elected Palestinian council as a self-governing authority, (4) creating the three administrative areas of A-B-C and specifying the limited powers and responsibilities granted to the Palestinian Council in Areas A and B, (5) regulating economic relations between the two parties, (6) outlining the parameters for security coordination between Israel and the PLO, and (7) setting 4 May 1996 as the deadline for beginning negotiations on the permanent status based on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 and 338.³⁰

The Interim Agreement was largely controversial at the time of its passing. It

³⁰ *Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip*, in *supra* 17.

confirmed the fears expressed after Oslo I: the unwillingness to provide the Palestinian self-government any tangible power and sovereignty. In limiting the Palestinian Council's responsibilities to internal affairs, such as education, health, economy, and culture, and granting Israel full control of external security, Oslo II cemented Israel's ability to enter into the territory anytime it desires to do so and to maintain its grip on Palestinians. The division of Area A, B, and C, where Area A is under Palestinian self-rule, Area B is administered by both the PA and Israel, and Area C is completely controlled by Israel, legitimizes Israeli control over this area and further undermines Palestinian sovereignty and self-determination. Area A and B, the former encompassing 18 percent of the land and the latter 22 percent, were designated in a manner that contained Palestinians as these areas made up the population centers at the time Oslo II was signed, not taking into account the natural growth of these communities that would unfold in following years. In comparison, Area C, which contains all Israeli colonies, makes up 60 percent of the West Bank.³¹ The Agreement thus states that these Israeli colonies and colonizers will remain under Israeli jurisdiction and legislation, with no Palestinian interference, allowing Israel to expand and consolidate its control over the colonies. Additionally, critics were skeptical of the economic and security relations – rightfully so – as both arrangements consolidate Israel's control over the Palestinian people and the occupied territory.³²

1.3. Between Celebrations in the White House Lawn and the Demise of Negotiations

In the immediate years following the adoption of Oslo's framework, hostility towards the peace process was very much present and multiplying. Colony expansion doubled between 1996 and 2000, with the total area increasing by 42 percent.³³ This was visibly inconsistent with Oslo's five-year Israeli withdrawal

31 *Id.*, Article XI.

32 Edward Said, *Peace and its Discontents: Essays on Palestine in the Middle East peace process* (Vintage, 2012).

33 POICA, "Israeli Settlements Dramatically expand in the Occupied West Bank between the years 1996 & 2007," 2 November 2008, available at: <http://poica.org/2008/11/israeli-settlements-dramatically-expand-in-the-occupied-west-bank-between-the-years-1996-2007/> [accessed 23 August 2021].

plan from the occupied Palestinian territory. Israel was also introducing new legislation to consolidate its control over Jerusalem, which was also perceived as contradictory to Oslo's postulation for negotiating final status issues. This coincided with a rise in the pro-settler Likud party in Israel, led by Benjamin Netanyahu, who was opposed to the Oslo Accords since their inception, and had continued referring to the West Bank as 'Judea and Samaria.'³⁴ For Palestinians, doubts were rising as they directly witnessed Israel's lack of commitment to the process and thus, Palestinian resistance activities continued.

As the situation on the ground worsened, negotiations on final status issues were consistently characterized by deadlock, divergent objectives, and seemingly irreconcilable positions. In retrospect, the unsuccessful nature of negotiations and continued deadlock is largely rooted in the methodological pillars and approach undertaken by the process' facilitators and negotiators. Treating Israel and the PLO as two parties on equal footing and acting on the assumption that trust and confidence must be built between them before agreeing on the final settlement, the peace process introduced the five-year interim period to do exactly that, leaving the permanent status agreement almost completely open-ended. This is particularly evident in how the Accords' texts are rampant with details about the day-to-day administration of the five-year interim period, but are void of any details regarding the most important issues and the actual permanent settlement. This gradualism and constructive ambiguity, jointly with the non-recognition of the Palestinian people's inalienable rights and Israel's colonial enterprise, led to the failure of the negotiations as both parties were departing from significantly contrasting points and remained at these points throughout the process. The approach did not build trust, but instead allowed a continuation, and perhaps even an intensification, of the very same circumstances that brought the parties to that point. It is therefore unsurprising that the five-year interim period ended without establishing any concrete agreement grounds for implementing a permanent settlement between the two parties and that attempts to revive the peace process over the past 28 years has repeatedly failed.

34 Quoted in Richard Falk, in *supra* 19.

2. OSLO ACCORDS' EXTENSION: FROM SIX YEARS TO MORE THAN 28

As negotiations went on and new international-led proposals transpired, it has become increasingly important to question whether the “peace process” aimed to achieve a sustainable peace, or to keep the process on life support for as long as possible and to resuscitate it whenever needed. This question becomes particularly important when considering Israel’s colonial scheme which has worked to convert that which is internationally unlawful into a *de facto* reality that subsequently defers Palestinian self-determination, based on the approved Resolution 242, to the realm of fantasies. In effect, the Oslo peace process has conceived a method to transform the internationally-assumed short-term nature of Israel’s occupation into a long-term seemingly immortal occupation by: (1) transferring a select few of its occupier civil responsibilities to the PA, which has in effect blurred the legal lines, (2) forging an illusion of peacemaking to anaesthetize the international community’s concerns, with any ‘clashes’ between Palestinians and Israelis presented as temporary detractions, while (3) creating irreversible conditions, including construction of a network of colonies, colonizer-only roads, by-pass roads, and the Apartheid Wall.

Today, after of more than 28 years of negotiations under international auspices, the 1967 occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip persists following the framework set forth in the Oslo peace process whereby Israel maintains full control and sovereignty over the occupied territory, with a certain degree of self-administration granted to the PA and Hamas, depending on the assigned area. Israel continues to have checkpoints across the West Bank and exercises its military power in the occupied territory as it pleases. The Oslo peace process, and the international community’s respective role in ‘restoring stability and transparency’ in the occupied territory in 2007, has led the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to move in vastly divergent directions. As the PA in the West Bank sought to establish state-like institutions that are bound by Oslo’s framework, especially in terms of security and administration, the Gaza Strip has been under complete Israeli blockade as a form of collective punishment. **Altogether, the Oslo peace process, both that which was explicitly stated in the provisions and that which was left open-ended, has had an undeniable impact on Palestinian rights, existence, politics, security, economy, and international perception.**

2.1. Palestinian Rights and Existence: Ongoing Forcible Transfer Policies, Colony Expansion, and Land Grab

Frankly, the Oslo peace process' vision of securitized peace has unilaterally focused on Israel's security while demoting Palestinian security to nonexistence. With the provisions failing to explicitly condemn Israel's forcible transfer crimes, the peace process has not provided anything that would act as a lever against Israel's unlawful acts. **The continuation of these crimes is not, *per se*, in violation of its Oslo Accords' commitments as nothing in there outwardly demands Israel to stop them; this has, in turn, granted Israel a green light for its forcible transfer policies and practices against the Palestinian people.**

One of the most obvious manifestations of this green-lighting is Israel's expropriation of Palestinian lands and continued colony construction in the West Bank and east Jerusalem. While the Oslo Accords asserted that Area C and east Jerusalem must remain under Israeli control, it did not state that Israel is prohibited from disposing of the land, halting construction, or even safeguarding the rights of Palestinian landowners in these areas. Consequently, Israel was enabled, by means of its legislation and military power, to proceed with land confiscation, denial of use and access to land, which facilitates the forcible transfer of Palestinians. According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), in the years between 2009 and 2021, Israel has demolished 7800 Palestinian-owned structures, including residential, livelihood-related, service-related or infrastructure structures, resulting in the forcible displacement of 11,692 Palestinians in Area C and east Jerusalem.³⁵ Israel further proceeds to transfer Israeli-Jewish colonizers to Palestinian lands and build colonies and outposts. More than 220,000 Israeli-Jewish colonizers live in east Jerusalem, while 442,393 live in the West Bank's Area C, totaling 671,007 in around 150 colonies and 130 outposts.³⁶

35 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Data on Demolition and Displacement in the West Bank," 30 July 2021, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/data/demolition> [accessed 23 August 2021].

36 Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Number of Settlers in the Israeli Settlements in the West Bank by Region, 1986-2018," 2019, available at: https://www.pCBS.gov.ps/Portals/_Rainbow/Documents/SETTLE-2018.html [accessed 23 August 2021].; Peace Now, "Population," and "Jerusalem" in Data, available at: <https://peacenow.org.il/en/settlements-watch/settlements-data/population> [accessed 23 August 2021].

In addition to land confiscation and colonies expansion, the Oslo peace process has not protected Palestinians against residency revocations, administrative detention, child imprisonment, torture, killings, military blockades, and unlawful warfare practices in the Gaza Strip. For instance, Israel has continued its policy of residence revocation in east Jerusalem, whereby more than 14,500 Palestinians have had their Jerusalem residence revoked since 1967.³⁷ In relation to administrative detention and imprisonment, as of mid-July 2021, 540 administrative detainees and 225 child prisoners are held in Israeli prisons, with recorded occurrences of torture.³⁸ Additionally, between 2008 and 2021, almost 6,000 Palestinians were killed by Israel.³⁹ The Oslo Accords have also not ensured that the Palestinian people's right to freedom of movement is upheld, which can be seen in Israel's imposition of the permit regime and the maintenance of checkpoints. Altogether, Palestinian safety and protection has not increased following the Oslo Accords' inception as its focus on day-to-day administration to provide Israel with security was not met with the same level of scrutiny that protects Palestinians from Israel's forcible transfer crimes.

2.2. Palestinian Political Arena: Bureaucratized Liberation, Official Politics, and State-Like Institutions Shy of a State

Over the past 28 years, the political situation in the occupied Palestinian territory has largely resembled a realm of official politics, defined by state-like institutions, bureaucratization and securitization, without an independent, sovereign Palestinian state. The installation of this particular version of Palestinian politics, run by the PA, is a direct consequence of the peace process. To clarify, the Oslo Accords has specifically defined the core sectors within which Palestinian politics is permitted to operate in, which Palestinian political organizations are allowed to participate in the political arena, and the type of political activities considered

37 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "West Bank | East Jerusalem: Key humanitarian concerns," Humanitarian facts and figures, 21 December 2017, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/west-bank-east-jerusalem-key-humanitarian-concerns> [accessed 23 August 2021].

38 Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, "Statistics," 14 July 2021, available at: <https://www.addameer.org/statistics> [accessed 23 August 2021].

39 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Data on Casualties," last updated 26 July 2021, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/data/casualties> [accessed 23 August 2021].

'legitimate.' Therefore, this paper finds it essential to question and consider the feasibility and impact of the Palestinian compliance to Oslo's approach in order to achieve liberation and realization of Palestinians rights.

In the Letter of Mutual Recognition signed in 1993, President Arafat recognized "the right of the State of Israel to exist in peace and security" and committed the PLO to "the Middle East peace process, and to a peaceful resolution of the conflict between the two sides and declare[d] that all outstanding issues relating to permanent status will be resolved through negotiations." Israeli Prime Minister Rabin, in response, communicated that the Israeli government "decided to recognize the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people and commence negotiations with the PLO within the Middle East Process."⁴⁰ This exchange – commitment to the peace process for recognition – has morphed into the predominant condition for participation in Palestinian official politics, with the Oslo-assigned PA as the vanguard of this conception of Palestinian politics. Consequently, Palestinian factions that have accepted this condition are allowed to utilize state-like monetary capital to govern in the limited sectors of education, culture, health, social welfare, direct taxation, and tourism. This does not only restrict which Palestinian factions are perceived as legitimate, but it also reduces legitimate Palestinian resistance to one prototype composed of peace and negotiations, with security coordination as a central tenant to the peace process, even when it is no longer conducive to the realization of Palestinian national rights. **The modification of tolerable Palestinian resistance to Israeli colonization as such is evident in the attitudes of both the PLO and Hamas. The former has transformed from a historical revolutionary decolonization force to a signatory to the Oslo Accords. The latter has transformed from an anti-Oslo force to expressing its readiness to support a Palestinian state on the territory occupied in the six days war of 1967 and to get into a long term truce, (which requires and/or amounts to recognition of Israel) to be internationally recognized as a legitimate representative to the Palestinian people.**

2.3. Security Coordination: Increasing Security for Israel

According to a survey conducted in 2016, 67 percent of Palestinians in the West Bank expressed their belief that they are "living in an undemocratic system that

⁴⁰ *Israel-PLO Recognition: Exchange of Letters between PM Rabin and Chairman Arafat*, in *supra* 14.

cracks down on freedoms.”⁴¹ For Palestinians, perceptions that the system is undemocratic is not strictly due to the lack of elections in over a decade – which many recognize as merely a charade – but is instead largely rooted in the Palestinian security apparatus’ guiding logic. In a 2010 poll, 78 percent of Palestinians stated that they believe that the PA’s security forces carry out activities of surveillance, monitoring, and intervention in people’s privacy.⁴² With approximately 44 percent of public servants employed in the security sector and more than 30 percent of funding allocated to the sector,⁴³ it seems almost logical to wonder if such an investment is garnering a sense of security for the Palestinian people. This question becomes important in light of the public perception of the suppression that has resulted due to the Oslo peace process’ values and institutions.

Article II of Oslo II’s first annex stipulates that the “strong police force” founded by the PA in 1995 “will act systematically against all expressions of violence and terror [.]” and “will arrest and prosecute individuals who are suspected of perpetrating acts of violence and terror.”⁴⁴ It additionally states that “[b]oth sides will [...] act to ensure the immediate, efficient and effective handling of any incident involving a threat or act of terrorism, violence, or incitement, whether committed by Palestinians or Israelis. To this end, they will cooperate in the exchange of information and coordinate policies and activities [...]”⁴⁵ These provisions lay the foundations for the nature of the Palestinian security apparatus and the Israel-PA security coordination, as it currently exists, namely by means of a securitized peace conception. Through institutionalizing security arrangements and creating a mirage of peace that is appealing to international spectators, security collaboration enables Israel to continue its colonial project while professing its pursuit for peace. This has accordingly manifested in the

41 Visualizing Palestine, “The PA Guide to Keeping Yourself Occupied,” January 2016, available at: <https://visualizingpalestine.org/visuals/palestinian-authority-occupied#&gid=1&pid=1> [accessed 23 August 2021].

42 Alaa Tartir, “The PA Security Forces: Whose Security?”, *Alshabaka Palestinian Policy Network*, 16 May 2017, available at: <https://al-shabaka.org/briefs/palestinian-authority-security-forces-whose-security/> [accessed 23 August 2021].

43 Julia Lisiecka, “Israeli-Palestinian security cooperation: what next?”, *European Union Institute for Security Studies*, May 2017, available at: https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/Alert_12_Israel_and_Palestine.pdf

44 *Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip*, Annex I, Article II(1)(b)(d), in *supra* 17.

45 *Id.*, Annex I, Article II(2).

PA's monopoly on force, the criminalization of Palestinian resistance, and the protection of Israel under the guise of fulfilling its commitments embodied in the signed Accords.

2.4 Palestinian Economic Capitulation: Neoliberal Policies, Crippled, Donor-Dependent Entity

The rampant deterioration of the Palestinian people's social and economic rights requires examining the Oslo peace process' socioeconomic provisions, especially because it had pledged to end the ongoing poor living conditions. Thus, it was important to explore the opinions of youth about development and economic conditions.

As part of the Oslo peace process, economic relations between Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory, which had largely resembled a *de facto* customs union since 1967, were formalized and institutionalized. The 1994 Paris Protocol, which has molded the Palestinian economy into what it presently is, stated objective was "to lay the groundwork for strengthening the economic base of the Palestinian side and for exercising its rights of decision-making in accordance with its own development plan and priorities."⁴⁶ However, the professed goals of the Protocol were in stark contrast with the specific provisions in the agreement.

In relation to trade policy, for example, the Protocol instituted a one-sided customs union by which Israel's trade policy was imposed on the Palestinian economy. This dictated that the Palestinians not only remain dependent on Israel's trade policy, as was the case in the years prior to Oslo, but they also were obliged to implement a tax policy system suited for a stronger and more established economy,⁴⁷ rather than one suitable for an economy that had been weakened by occupation and domination for over two decades. Similarly, the Protocol stipulated that the monetary and macroeconomic policies for the PA must be dependent on Israel's respective policies. Although a Palestinian Monetary Authority was established, it was not granted the authority to create its own

46 Gaza-Jericho Agreement, Annex IV, in *supra* 16.

47 *Id.*, Article III, Article VI.

currency,⁴⁸ as that symbolizes a level of sovereignty that the Oslo peace process did not intend to provide Palestinians. Through this, the Protocol perpetuated an economic relationship that forced Palestinians to abide by macroeconomic and tax policies which impose Israel's high-cost structure, despite the rather obvious income and development disparities between the two markets. This structural dependency, or perhaps domination, was further reinforced by means of the Protocol's tax clearance system which authorizes Israel to collect Palestinian fiscal revenues and then transfer them to the PA.⁴⁹ In conjunction to the provisions of the Paris Protocol, the Oslo peace process' neoliberal, donor-dependent occupation deference logic has generated an economy rife with unemployment, gross inequality, and underdevelopment.⁵⁰ It is thus questionable whether Oslo has decreased the suffering of the Palestinians or has actually entrenched Israel's economic domination and concurrent Palestinian economic capitulation.

2.5. Palestine's International Presence: Blurred Legal Status, Erosion of Palestinian National Rights, Israeli Legitimacy, and Criminal Impunity

As it appears, the international community continues to uphold the Oslo peace process and regards it as the only means to resolve the so-called conflict. The peace process has liberated the international community of its concerns about peace and justice as the continuation of the cycle of ongoing negotiations ensures that actors feel as if progress is being made or that they are adequately contributing to a solution, even if the outcome is a failure. The US is particularly responsible for acting as if upholding the peace process and maintaining negotiations is more

48 *Id.*, Article IV.

49 *Id.*, Article VI.

50 "The unemployment rate across the Occupied Palestinian Territory is the world's highest, according to the International Labour Organization. In Gaza specifically, over half of the workforce is unemployed, with 78% of women without work. The situation for youth in Gaza – who make up almost 30% of the population – is particularly dire; 70% are unemployed according to the World Bank.", United Nations General Assembly, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, Michael Lynk, 30 May 2019, p. 4, available at: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G19/150/38/PDF/G1915038.pdf?OpenElement> [accessed 23 August 2021]; International Liberation Organization Regional Office for Arab States, *The Occupied Palestinian Territory: An Employment Diagnostic Study* (Beirut: ILO, 2018), available at: https://www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ILOSTUDY_040418.pdf.

politically practical than exerting pressure on Israel to halt its colonization and publicly acknowledging that the current facts on the ground have increasingly made Palestinian sovereignty an illusion.⁵¹ The international community has thus far failed to formally acknowledge that, as stated by former Special Rapporteur Richard Falk, the Oslo peace process “appears to have been an insidious roadblock that diverted the Palestinian struggle for self-determination while granting time to Israel to expand its territorial claims and virtually extinguish any realistic prospect of realizing Palestinian rights in the near future.”⁵²

The Oslo peace process has helped blur the legal status in the occupied Palestinian territory, perhaps granting Israel legitimacy and impunity. Oslo’s implementation did transfer limited self-governance to the PA on some parts of the West Bank, while the redeployment of the Israeli army around the Gaza Strip in 2005 enabled the latter to also be under its own civil governance, but Israel has regained full control of civil matters soon after the subsequent blockade in 2007.

This form of occupation, although rampant with adversity of its own for the Palestinian people, has generated a certain emblem of normality and autonomy, different than the direct military occupation that controlled the Palestinian people’s lives from 1967 until Israel’s partial withdrawal in 1993 after the introduction of the Oslo Accords. **The installation of the PA in the occupied territory is labyrinthine, to say the least. It has enabled Israel to persist its colonization enterprise, but with a level of impunity unafforded to it prior to the Oslo peace process and PA rule, as Israel now hides behind an authority obliged to carry out security functions through which the occupying power gets benefits, while the PA is still clinging to the illusion of transforming from a self-government authority to an independent Palestinian state.** The Oslo provisions pertaining to Area C and Jerusalem have particularly enabled it to manipulate the legal status. These two, together — the tasks of the PA (objectively, regardless of the PA’s will) and the provisions of the Accords — have granted Israel legitimacy and impunity on the international level.

Since the beginning of the Oslo peace process, Israel’s diplomatic relations have

51 See BADIL, *Trump’s So-Called Vision/Deal of the Century*, in *supra* 20.

52 Richard Falk, in *supra* 19.

soared, increasing its international legitimacy despite its international crimes. The most recent normalization of diplomatic relations between Israel and Arab states is evidence to that.⁵³ More importantly, however, is the impunity that this increasing legitimacy grants Israel (see pp. 31-32). To illustrate this, the US, European Union, and UN have repeatedly imposed weapons embargos, economic sanctions, and military actions on the grounds of upholding international law and protecting the rights of civilian populations, such as Libya, Iraq, Myanmar, and Iran to name a few.⁵⁴ But, Israel has remained protected from such measures and exempted from international law and human rights, even after its aggressions on Gaza in 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2018, and 2021. Israel remains in a vortex of continuous lack of accountability measures for its systematic and pattern military attacks on Palestinian civilians, siege on Gaza, collective punishment, and forcible displacement of Palestinians (see pp. 32-35).

In relation to the Palestinians, the seemingly irreversible situation that Israel has created on the ground and that its impunity has created on the international sphere, have generated an erosion of the Palestinian people's national rights. In the discourse surrounding Palestinian rights, the Palestinian refugees' right to return is rarely discussed anymore, with even PA politicians surrendering this right.⁵⁵ As for the right to self-determination, it has been reduced to a right to be exercised on less than 18 percent of the West Bank, which constitutes approximately 4 percent of Mandatory Palestine, which is not surprising considering Israel's colonial expansion in Area C.

53 Dan Efron, "How Arab Ties with Israel became the Middle East's New Normal," *Foreign Policy*, 21 December 2020, available at: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/12/21/arab-ties-israel-diplomacy-normalization-middle-east/> [accessed 23 August 2021].

54 See Mads Gilbert, "Israeli Impunity," in *The Oslo Accords 1993-2013 A Critical Assessment*, Petter Bauck and Mohammed Omer (eds.) (American University in Cairo Press, 2017).

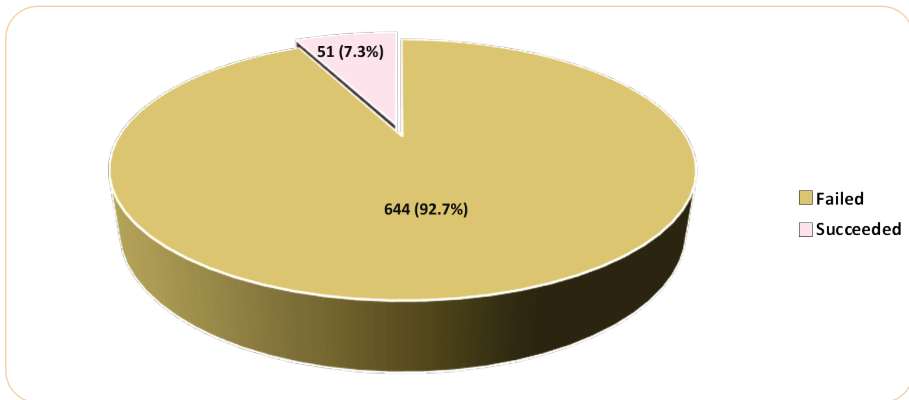
55 See Harriet Sherwood, "Mahmoud Abbas outrages Palestinian refugees by waiving his right to return," *The Guardian*, 4 November 2012, available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/nov/04/mahmoud-abbas-palestinian-territories> [accessed 23 August 2021].

Chapter 2:

Survey Analysis

1. THE OSLO PEACE PROCESS' FAILURE AND SUCCESS

Question 1: In your opinion, did the Oslo Peace Process fail or succeed?



This question aims to understand the extent to which Palestinian youth between 18-35 years old believe that the Oslo peace process has succeeded or failed. In the survey's introduction, the criteria for success was defined according to the peace process' founding premises and professed objectives, namely achieving peace between the two parties, establishing an interim PA, and negotiating final-status issues – Jerusalem, refugees, settlements, security arrangements, and borders — to facilitate reaching a permanent settlement based on Security Council resolutions 242 of 1967 and 338 of 1973 within a five-year transitional period.⁵⁶

As shown in the table above, 92.7 percent of respondents believe that the Oslo peace process has failed while 7.3 percent believe that it has succeeded. These results, whereby the overwhelming majority of Palestinian youth believe that the peace process has failed, are a clear indication of Oslo's failure 28 years following

⁵⁶ *Declaration of Principles*, in *supra* 1.



Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs Shimon Peres signs Oslo I at the White House on 13 September 1993 in Washington D.C. (©AP)

its inception. This belief is attributed to a variety of factors, namely the deadlock in Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, lack of a concrete political outcome for the peace process and negotiations, marginalizing youth participation, continued division among Palestinians, lack of a comprehensive national strategy, enduring implementation of Israel's colonial-apartheid policies which include land confiscation, forcible displacement, undermining Palestinians' national existence, and dominating every aspect of their lives.

Although the percentage of those who believe that the Oslo peace process has succeeded amounts to 7.3 percent, a comparatively meager ratio, it is striking that 39 percent of those in this group are living in the Gaza Strip (20 out of 51 participants). This makes up 18 percent of the respondents from the Gaza Strip, which is the largest compared to the other Palestinian groups participating in the research (West Bank, Jerusalem, and the exile). Such an outcome is especially compelling considering that Palestinians in the besieged Gaza Strip have arguably suffered the most since the beginning of the Oslo peace process. Perhaps this belief in Oslo's success is due to an assessment that is not based on the extent to which it has achieved its stated goals, but rather the extent to which living conditions have improved in the West Bank, particularly when compared to the current devastating living conditions in the Gaza Strip. It is reasonable for some to assume that the poor living conditions in the Gaza Strip are a result of Hamas'

rule, which officially rejects the Oslo peace process, while the improved living conditions in the West Bank are attributed to the PA's rule in the West Bank, which is intimately involved in Oslo. In other words, the PA in the West Bank, established by the Oslo Accords, presents a political alternative to the difficult conditions endured by Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

In contrast, the results show that Palestinians in occupied Jerusalem and the distant exile (foreign countries) do not believe that the Oslo peace process has had any success, with zero percent viewing the process as a success. This may be due to Palestinians feeling that they have been excluded and their rights have been ignored by Oslo and/or that the PA is incompetent, as evidenced by a mere 6.4 percent in the West Bank believing that the Oslo peace process has succeeded, 6.3 percent in 1948 Palestine, and 4.5 percent in Arab countries.

2. THE OSLO PEACE PROCESS' PERCEIVED SUCCESSES

Question 2 (a): **Please determine the level of significance of each of the following aspects of the peace process' success/accomplishments.**

	Significant	Somewhat Significant	Insignificant
Establishment of the Palestinian Authority	63.3	28.6	8.2
Recognition of a Palestinian state (non-member observer state in the United Nations)	61.2	22.4	16.3
Security protection for Palestinians in the 1967 occupied Palestinian territory	8.2	28.6	63.3
Recovery of the Palestinian economy	18.4	42.9	38.8
Improved living conditions for Palestinian individuals	20.4	42.9	36.7
Withdrawal of Israeli occupation forces from city centers and villages	34.7	22.4	42.9
Liberation of thousands of political prisoners	16.3	30.6	53.1
Providing better prospects for achieving Palestinian national rights (self-determination, independence, and return)	24.5	28.6	46.9

This question exclusively targeted the 51 participants that expressed in the first question their belief that the Oslo peace process was successful. Upon close analysis of the percentages above, it becomes clear that the respondents' answers

are somewhat inconsistent and conflicting. For instance, 63.3 percent of those who believe that the peace process has succeeded (31 participants) indicated that the establishment of the PA is a significant manifestation of Oslo's success. However, 63.3 percent (31 participants) also believe that the Oslo peace process was insignificant in providing security protection for Palestinians in the 1967 occupied Palestinian territory, illustrating that the process has not provided a sense of security. Thus, it is legitimate to question on what basis those individuals believe that the establishment of the PA is a success when the same group believes that it has failed to provide sufficient security protection for Palestinians.

As evident in the Oslo Accords' text, the Palestinian security sector was not conceived to protect Palestinians; it was instituted by the Oslo peace process to suppress anti-colonial liberation activities and anti-Oslo resistance activities, which in turn requires the PA to protect the colonizing power's rule.

In fact, the Palestinian security sector, from the outset, has not only increased Palestinians' insecurity through Palestinian-imposed internal repression in the occupied territory, but it has also failed to protect Palestinians from the main perpetrator of their insecurity, which is the Israeli apartheid-colonial regime. While Israel carries out its forcible transfer policies of dispossession, colony expansion, and land confiscation, these policies are not regarded as falling within the definition of "terrorism and violence" assumed in the Oslo Accords since they are state-sanctioned, unlike liberation activities, and Palestinians are thus left vulnerable to Israeli international crimes.

With the exception of establishing the PA and recognizing Palestine as a non-member observer state in the UN, the above table shows that the indicators for Oslo's success are significantly low, especially in regards to providing security protection (8.2 percent), liberation of prisoners (16.3 percent), economic recovery (18.4 percent), and improved living conditions (20.4 percent). Overall, the average for the peace process' manifestations/indicators of success, according to the 7.3 percent that believe that it had succeeded, amounted to 30.5 percent believing that these manifestations were significant, 30.5 percent believe they were somewhat significant, and 39 percent believe that they were insignificant. Accordingly, the largest proportion of this group considers that the indicators of success presented above are insignificant, which, once again, begs the question

of whether these respondents who believe in its success are fully knowledgeable of what success entails or not.

When considering the context surrounding the commencement of the peace process in the 1991 Madrid Conference and the 1993 Oslo negotiations later, the Palestinian people's expectations for the peace process were divided into two main parts: (1) direct improvements in the level of their security, liberation of prisoners, improved living and economic conditions, and (2) creating more suitable political conditions, reaching a peaceful permanent settlement that guarantees independence, self-determination, and a just solution for refugees. According to the above table, however, it appears that the Oslo peace process, even for those who believe that it has succeeded, did not achieve significant levels of success, neither in regards to the palpable, near-attainable rights or the long-term national rights.

Notably, respondents' answers appear to be significantly different based on their gender, whereby most of those who believe that the Oslo peace process has succeeded per the abovementioned attributes are male (see Table 3, p. 54). This could be attributed to several different factors, the most important of which is: the scope of involvement in the Oslo establishment and the extent of benefiting from it therein, particularly the institutions and decision-making entities that emanate from it. To further clarify, less females are directly benefiting from the Oslo regime. In 2018, 26 percent of public sector employees were women.⁵⁷ With regards to decision-making processes in 2019, 13.6 percent of the council of ministries were women and 11.2 percent were involved in diplomacy.⁵⁸ In relation to the PLO, women's participation in the National Council and the Executive Committee amounted to 10.6 percent and 6.7 percent respectively as of 2018.⁵⁹ In contrast, these differences based on gender largely fade in the following question about the Oslo peace process' failure as the gender variations were insignificant.

57 Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "The Palestinian Statistics Authority, in Cooperation with the Middle East Business Journal and the Mass Institute, are Organizing a Symposium on Women's Economic Statistics, are they just numbers or a tool for measuring and changing policies?," 24 July 2018, available (in Arabic) at: <https://www.pcbs.gov.ps/postar.aspx?lang=ar&ItemID=3199> [accessed 23 August 2021].

58 Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, *Women in Decision-making Positions* (Ramallah: PCBS, July 2020), pp. 37 – 39, available at: <https://www.pcbs.gov.ps/Downloads/book2536.pdf>.

59 *Id.*, p. 30.

3. THE OSLO PEACE PROCESS' PERCEIVED FAILURES

Question 2 (b): Please determine the level of significance of each of the following aspects of the Oslo Accords' failure/ shortcomings.

	Significant	Fair (somewhat significant)	Insignificant
Undermining the Palestinian people's right to self-determination	59.2	7.9	32.9
Undermining the development of an independent Palestinian economy	57.8	12.5	29.7
Inability of the Palestinian Authority to ensure the Palestinian people's security and safety	76.2	12.9	11.0
Constant land confiscation, property demolitions, and dispossession	92.9	4.9	2.2
Increased institutionalized and systematic discrimination	80.2	15.9	4.0
Ongoing expansion of colonies and implantation of colonizers	94.0	4.1	1.9
Continued denial and negligence of Palestinian refugees' rights	92.4	5.2	2.4
Bleak prospects for peace between Israel and the Palestinian people	78.4	15.4	6.2

This question exclusively targeted those who expressed that the Oslo peace process has failed in the first question, amounting to 92.7 percent of the research sample. It aims to assess the significance of the manifestations of Oslo's failure, bearing in mind that the above mentioned are not comprehensive of all of the peace process' indicators of failure.

The results illustrate that 94 percent of the research sample believe that the ongoing expansion of colonies and implantation of colonizers is the most prominent manifestation of the Oslo peace process' failure. The second most prominent, amounting to 92.9, involves the constant land confiscation, property demolitions, and dispossession. Additionally, 92.4 percent of the research pool believes that the continued denial and negligence of Palestinian refugees' rights is also one of the most prominent indicators of Oslo's failure.

One could argue that based on the results above, the level of significance assigned by the respondents for each of the peace process' manifestations of failure is dependent upon the extent to which each manifestation is noticeable and tangible, is reported on often in the media, and is periodically referenced in politicians' statements. Despite the interconnection and interdependence of these manifestations and the difficulty in truly separating one from another, the vast majority of respondents leaned towards evaluating the manifestations that directly impact their lives as significant – that is, the manifestations that have tangible material impact and are measurable more clearly than others. Nevertheless, this does not detract from the significance of the other manifestations of failure, but rather reflects how much the others directly affect Palestinian livelihood. Expansion of colonies, for instance, which respondents are able to clearly see, was ranked more significantly than the undermining of self-determination.

These results are unsurprising considering that they are concurrent with an increased expansion in colonies and land confiscation over the past three years as the issue has become one of the most prominent items in the electoral campaign for Israel's competing political parties. Former US President Donald Trump's Administration (2016-2020) also constituted a suitable political climate for Israel to continue expanding its colonies and confiscating Palestinian lands as it was not complicit in this crime, but even declared that the US no longer considers Israeli colonies illegal despite their international status as such.

In relation to the third most significant manifestation, the denial and negligence of Palestinian refugees' rights, its endured protraction under the Oslo peace process has increased refugees' suffering in host countries. This is specifically the case in Lebanon in light of the discriminatory and racist policies and practices targeting Palestinian refugees as well as in Syria where Palestinian refugees have been exposed to secondary displacement.⁶⁰ In line with this, the data demonstrates that 95.2 of Palestinians in Arab countries believe that neglecting the rights of refugees and displaced persons is one of the most significant manifestations of Oslo's failure, while 100% of Palestinians in other foreign countries believe that.

60 BADIL, *Stop the Ongoing Discrimination Against Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon*, Research in-Focus, (Bethlehem, Palestine: September 2019), available at: <http://badil.org/phocadownloadpap/badil-new/publications/research/in-focus/Lebanon-Pal-Ref-Rights.pdf>.

4. FOUNDATIONAL FEATURES' CHANGES SURROUNDING THE CONFLICT

Question 3: According to you, how have the following features changed over the past 3 years?

	Increasing	Stable	Decreasing	Unsure
Normalization of relations between Israel and neighboring Arab states	93.8	2.2	2.4	1.6
International diplomatic support to Israel	74.8	14.4	6.8	4.0
Participation in Palestinian resistance	5.8	58.1	21.4	5.8
Israel's impunity as an occupying power	69.1	22.0	4.7	4.2
Israel's stability and development	79.1	12.2	7.1	1.6
The Palestinian people's stability and development	6.9	15.5	76.4	1.2
Presence of the Zionist-Israeli narrative in the international arena	58.3	23.6	11.1	7.1
The Palestinian international solidarity movement's influence on states' positions	14.7	37.6	37.6	10.2
International support for the Palestinian people's inalienable rights (self-determination and right of return)	8.6	29.9	56.3	5.2
Palestinian people's unity	9.2	24.3	63.7	2.7
Presence of the Palestinian case in the international arena	10.6	27.1	58.3	4.0
Prospects of establishing an independent and sovereign Palestinian state	5.5	14.8	73.4	6.3

This question was directed to all respondents, those who believe that Oslo failed and those who believe it succeeded, as both groups are able to evaluate the changes observed in the presented features. The item aims to analyze the youth's perspectives regarding changes in these features over the past three years (2018-2021). At first glance, the results in the table reflect the Palestinian youth's level of awareness and knowledge about developments relevant to the Palestinian cause. Respondents' answers were predominantly consistent and complementary, exhibiting a genuine interest in political developments. Indeed, the high percentage of consensus amongst respondents of both groups in relation to a number of features can be considered an indication of the uncertainties and inconsistencies in the responses of those who believe that the Oslo peace process has succeeded, as previously alluded to in Question 2(a).

According to the data provided in the table above, 93.8 percent of the sample believe that Arab-Israeli normalization has increased over the past three years. In relation to Israel's stability and development, 79.1 percent indicated that it has increased. Compared to the Palestinian people's stability, 76.4 percent of respondents believe that it has declined over the same period of time. Additionally, 74.8 percent believe that international diplomatic support for Israel has increased, while 56.3 percent believe that international support for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people has declined. According to 69.1 percent of respondents, Israel's impunity as the occupying power has increased, compounded with 58.3 percent perceiving an increase in the presence of the Zionist-Israeli narrative at the international level. The same exact percentage, however, believes that the presence of the Palestinian cause on the international arena has declined. Based on these responses, it is observable that respondents are aware of both the Palestinian cause's decline at the national, regional, and international levels as well as the strategic gains that Israel has acquired as a result of the peace process. The research sample has thus demonstrated a belief that the Oslo peace process has not only failed to achieve its allegedly declared goals, but has also served the Zionist-Israeli enterprise's advancement in Mandatory Palestine.

The high rate of those who believe that normalization has increased over the past three years is explained by the Trump-led normalization agreements signed in 2020. In August 2020, the United Arab Emirates and the Kingdom of Bahrain signed the Abraham Accords, normalizing relations with Israel. Subsequently, Sudan and Israel signed a normalization agreement in October 2020 and Morocco followed suit in December of that year.⁶¹ As these agreements were unfolding, the Arab League failed to assume a unified position denouncing the normalization agreement, which reflects a decline in the Palestinian cause's position at the official Arab political level and a tendency to accept normalization as an inevitable outcome.

It is interesting to note that the respondents' belief that Israel's stability,

61 Lara Jakes, Isabel Kershner, Aida Alami and David M. Halbfinger, "Morocco Joins List of Arab Nations to Begin Normalizing Relations with Israel," *New York Times*, 10 December 2020, available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/10/world/middleeast/israel-morocco-trump.html>.

development, international diplomatic support, and impunity have increased is almost directly negatively correlated to their belief that all of these features have decreased in relation to the Palestinian people. The same is true concerning their perspective surrounding the proliferation of the Zionist-Israeli narrative on the international sphere in contrast to that of the Palestinian narrative.

In addition to an increase in normalization and the corresponding trivialization of the Palestinian cause on the Arab political arena, an unprecedented US-bias towards Israel has defined the past three years. Compared to previous administrations' declarations of full support for Israel, the Trump Administration assumed an outright hostile position against the Palestinians, particularly by denying their rights and undertaking punitive measures against them. For example, the US cut its funds to the PA and the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA)⁶² as well as recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and transferred its US embassy there, in contravention with the internationally recognized *corpus separatum* legal status of Jerusalem,⁶³ and the United Nation's resolutions confirming the illegality of Israel's annexation of Jerusalem.⁶⁴

The US further encouraged its allies to take similar measures, especially with regards to recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and moving their embassies to the city. The European Union, for instance, implemented policies that endorsed Israel's colonial enterprise and undermined Palestinian resistance. In 2019, the European Union imposed political conditions on Palestinian civil society that criminalized the Palestinian struggle.⁶⁵ It further passed resolutions in 2020 and 2021 which alleged that the PA's curriculum instigated violence and

62 BADIL, *Understanding the Political Underpinning of UNRWA's Chronic Funding Crisis* (Bethlehem: BADIL 2018), Bulletin No. 27, available at: https://www.badil.org/phocadownloadpap/Badil_docs/bulletins-and-briefs/bulletin-no27-unrwa-financial-crisis.pdf

63 United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 181 (II). Future Government of Palestine, A/RES/181(II), 29 November 1947, available at: <https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/0/7F0AF2BD897689B785256C330061D253> [accessed 23 August 2021].

64 *See*, in particular, UNSC S/RES/252 (1968), S/RES/267 (1969), S/RES/271 (1969), S/RES,298 (1971), S/RES/465 (1980), S/RES/467 (1980), S/RES/478 (1980).

65 BADIL, *European Union Conditional Funding: Its Illegality and Political Implications* (BADIL: Bethlehem 2020), Position Paper, available at: [https://www.badil.org/phocadownloadpap/badil-new/publications/research/in-focus/EuropeanUnionConditionalFunding\(PositionPaper-April2020\).pdf](https://www.badil.org/phocadownloadpap/badil-new/publications/research/in-focus/EuropeanUnionConditionalFunding(PositionPaper-April2020).pdf)

thereby pressured it to alter its curriculum.⁶⁶ The support provided by both the US and European Union has allowed Israel to continue pursuing its racist,⁶⁷ colonial-apartheid policies which violate the Palestinian people's rights without any retribution or accountability.⁶⁸

In the midst of these political conditions that facilitated Israel's colonialism and isolated the Palestinians, the Palestinians have not succeeded in developing a comprehensive unified national strategy to confront these challenges. Reconciliation agreements between Fatah and Hamas faltered, deepening the division among Palestinians. In contrast, national resistance was sporadic and decentralized due to the absence of a clear national strategy. The lack of this strategy has had an undeniable impact on the global Palestinian solidarity movement and international support, consequently contributing to the decline in the presence of the Palestinian cause at the international level.

The Oslo peace process has provided Israel with a veil of legality for its colonial-apartheid regime as it has simultaneously neglected the Palestinian people's inalienable rights and enabled Israel to continue colonizing the West Bank and east Jerusalem. This was particularly so by means of the Oslo Accords, which classified 60 percent of the West Bank as Area C and permitted Israel to maintain its authority over Jerusalem.⁶⁹ Accordingly, Israel was awarded a green light to continue its confiscation of the Palestinian people's lands, building colonies,

66 BADIL, "Badil Rejects the European Parliament's Israeli-influenced Allegations about Palestinian Textbooks," 7 May 2021, Press Release, available at: <https://www.badil.org/en/publication/press-releases/93-2021/5141-pr-en-070521-09.html> ; BADIL, *Israel's Apartheid-Colonial Education: Subjugation Palestinian Minds and Rights* (BADIL: Bethlehem 2020, Working Paper No.26, available at: <https://www.badil.org/phocadownloadpap/badil-new/publications/research/working-papers/WP26-right2education.pdf>

67 BADIL, *The Nation State Law: The Culmination of 70 Years of Israeli Apartheid and Colonization* (BADIL: Bethlehem 2018), Position Paper, available at: [https://www.badil.org/phocadownloadpap/badil-new/publications/research/in-focus/NationStateLaw\(PositionPaper-BADIL-Oct2018\).pdf](https://www.badil.org/phocadownloadpap/badil-new/publications/research/in-focus/NationStateLaw(PositionPaper-BADIL-Oct2018).pdf)

68 United Nations General Assembly, "Seven Decades of Impunity: The United Nations Human Rights Council Must Hold Israel to Account," A/HRC/38/NGO/119, 13 June 2018, available at: [http://www.badil.org/phocadownloadpap/badil-new/legal-advocacy/un-submissions/human-right-council/2018/Joint-Written-Statement-38th-UNHRC-Item7-Seven-Decades-of-Impunity\(13June2018\).pdf](http://www.badil.org/phocadownloadpap/badil-new/legal-advocacy/un-submissions/human-right-council/2018/Joint-Written-Statement-38th-UNHRC-Item7-Seven-Decades-of-Impunity(13June2018).pdf)

69 *Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip*, Article XI, 27 December 1995, available at: <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-185434/> [accessed 23 August 2021].

forcibly transferring the rightful landowners, and implanting colonizers to replace them.

Approximately 28 years following the process' inception, it is becoming increasingly evident that the PLO's recognition of Israel's right to exist, and its corresponding acceptance of its existence as a natural entity in this land, has had a detrimental impact on the Palestinian cause. This recognition has, in fact, paved the way for Arab-Israeli normalization whereby ten years following the signing of the Oslo Accords, the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative commenced, marking the beginning of extensive normalization with Israel.⁷⁰ The problematic nature of these normalization efforts lies in the fact that such initiatives avoided addressing the roots of the conflict and were instead focused on every party's self-interested intention to prove its 'readiness for peace.' Consequently, Israeli colonization was recognized and endorsed as a mainstay in Mandatory Palestine, while Arab states utilized normalization efforts as a justification for disavowing their obligations towards the Palestinians, distancing themselves from the Palestinian cause, and diluting the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people.

In general, the ratios among the respondents are close when analyzed based on the variables of gender and place of residence, as it reflects a consensus amongst the research sample that the Oslo peace process has served the interests of Israeli-Zionism more than it served the Palestinian cause. Interestingly, when looking at education level variable, a direct relationship is found between the level of education and the belief that Arab-Israeli normalization and Israel's stability and development have increased. To further clarify, those who have received a higher education (diploma, Bachelors, Masters) perceive that the above features have increased based on the Israeli-Zionist interests and in a way that does not serve the Palestinian cause. It seems that this is due to the fact that those with higher education are more involved and knowledgeable of political developments.

In conclusion, an examination of the data above reveals that the Oslo peace process was not limited to serving Israel and undermining the rights of the Palestinians, but rather progressed into a framework that has legitimized Israel's colonial and racist policies.

70 See The Guardian, "Arab Peace Initiative: Full Text," *The Guardian*, 28 March 2002, available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2002/mar/28/israel7>.

5. EVALUATION OF THE INVOLVED PARTIES IN THE PEACE PROCESS

Question 4: How would you evaluate each of the following parties' roles (UN, Quartet on the Middle East, European Union, Arab League, and US) in the following areas of the peace process (upholding the Palestinian people's legitimate rights, respecting the concluded agreements between the concerned parties, and enforcing accountability measures and holding parties responsible for violating Palestinian human rights)?

	United Nations	Quartet on the Middle East (UN, USA, EU and Russia)	European Union	Arab League	United States
Upholding the Palestinian people's legitimate rights					
Very Effective	2.6	1.4	2.3	2.3	0.9
Effective	12.5	6.5	21.2	16.1	3.9
Ineffective	50.5	48.3	50.5	33.8	29.4
Very Ineffective	32.7	39.9	21.7	44.5	63.7
Unsure	1.7	3.9	4.3	3.3	2.2
Respecting the concluded agreements between the concerned parties (Palestine and Israel)					
Very Effective	1.2	0.9	1.3	2.7	1.7
Effective	7.6	6.9	15.8	11.2	5.5
Ineffective	43	47.5	51.2	34.5	28.5
Very Ineffective	42.3	39	25.3	47.1	60.3
Unsure	5.9	5.8	6.3	4.5	4
Enforcing accountability measures and holding parties responsible for violating Palestinians' human rights					
Very Effective	0.9	1.2	0.9	1.2	0.9
Effective	4.6	2.4	10.1	6.9	1.7
Ineffective	35.4	37.7	46	32.5	23.6
Very Ineffective	55.1	54	37.1	54.8	70.6
Unsure	4	4.7	5.9	4.6	3.2

This question examines the effectiveness of the mentioned parties by considering their role in upholding the Palestinian people's legitimate rights, respecting the concluded agreements between the concerned parties, enforcing accountability measures and holding parties responsible for violating Palestinian human rights. The importance of this question lies in two goals: (1) identifying the extent to

which Palestinian youth are aware of the responsibilities of the international parties which have been involved in the peace process for over 30 years and (2) exploring the degree of confidence they have in these parties' abilities to advance the Palestinian people's rights.

The results illustrate that the vast majority of respondents are aware of the international parties' respective roles in the peace process. This is clear when observing the variances in the variables for the role of each party separately and in estimating their effectiveness. For example, in relation to upholding the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, 83.2 percent believe that the role of the UN is ineffective and 90.5 percent consider it ineffective in enforcing accountability measures and holding the parties responsible for violating Palestinian human rights. This reflects the respondents' knowledge of the declared positions of the parties involved in the peace process, and the practical measures, or lack thereof, that guarantee the rights of the Palestinians.

The majority of respondents believe that these five parties have failed to play an effective role in the peace process, specifically with regards to upholding the Palestinian people's legitimate rights, respecting the concluded agreements between the concerned parties, and enforcing accountability procedures and holding the parties responsible for violating Palestinian human rights. According to the results, respondents believe that since the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993, the mentioned parties have not succeeded in achieving any significant progress in these specific areas of the peace process.

Two primary findings are worth emphasizing here:

1. The research sample's awareness of the ineffectiveness of the parties involved in the peace process, considering the Palestinian leadership's almost complete dependence on these parties and its insistence on internationalizing the Palestinian cause in order to find solutions to it. This contradiction between the respondents' perspectives and the Palestinian leadership's approach, reflect a gap between the official leadership and the Palestinian people, the absence of a grassroots popular political program, and the negligence of the Palestinian people's perceptions and role.

2. The extent of frustration and/or lack of confidence in the international community and an unwillingness to rely on it which is reflected in the respondents' confidence that all parties have been ineffective.

The respondents' confidence that the US does not play an active role in the peace process for the benefit of the Palestinian people is attributed to several different factors, the most important of which is its relentless favor towards Israel as was palpable by the Trump Administration's policies. In relation to the role of the UN, it is likely that Palestinian youth believe it ineffective due to the Security Council's imbalance of power and the US' perpetual use of its veto power which has prevented the UN from taking any practical measures in favor of Palestinian rights. At the level of the Quartet, which includes the US, Russia, the UN, and the European Union, its perceived ineffectiveness by the respondents could be attributed to the US' biased position, the UN's inability to pass effective resolutions, and the lack of a political will of the remaining parties.

In comparison, the research sample's opinion slightly differs regarding the role of the European Union and the Arab League. The majority of those polled believe that these parties have failed to play an effective role in the peace process. However, they also expressed their belief that the European Union and the Arab League have played a more effective role than the US, the Quartet, and the UN. Nonetheless, the percentage of those who believe that the European Union and Arab League were effective in **upholding the rights of the Palestinian people**, for example, did not exceed 23.5 percent and 18.4 percent respectively. As shown by these results, the respondents do not necessarily believe that the Arab League and the European Union have played an effective role in upholding Palestinian rights, but rather that they played less of an ineffective role compared to the US, Quartet, and UN. This is perhaps due to the relatively neutral positions that the Arab League and European Union took towards the Palestinian people, in comparison to the bias that the other parties assumed.

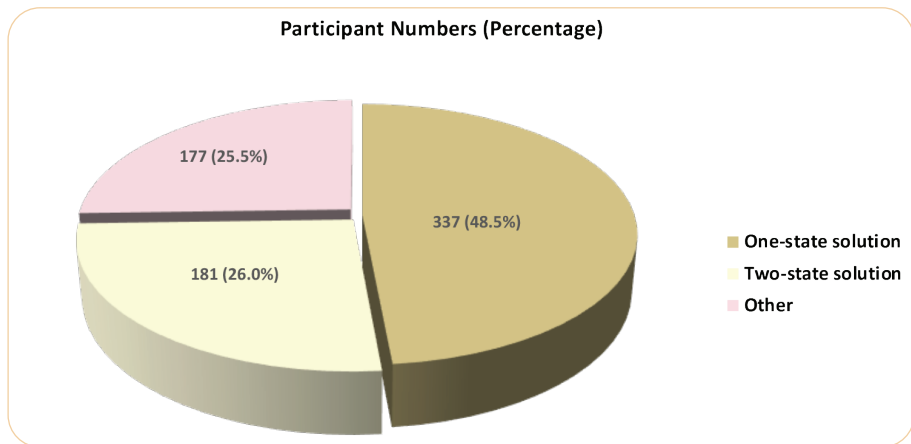
The majority of respondents believe that all the involved parties have failed in terms of **respecting the concluded agreements and enforcing accountability measures**. The reasons for this belief are unlikely to differ

from the reasons mentioned above, which can be summarized in the incessant bias of the US, the inability of the UN to assume an effective role, and the absence of the political will of the remaining parties to effectively implement practical measure that ensure compliance.

Importantly, the changes on the ground imposed by Israel are in contravention with the Oslo peace process, implying that the agreements no longer have any importance except acting as a means to enforce Palestinian compliance with Israel's colonization. It is thus only logical that participants' overall opinion was that the parties have been largely ineffective in **respecting the agreements and enforcing accountability measures** as such measures require practical procedures, none of which have been executed, as was particularly perceived by the research sample.

6. POLITICAL FRAMEWORK FOR RESOLVING THE CONFLICT

Question 5: **Which one of the following do you believe is the most appropriate general political framework for resolving the conflict?**



The question above requests participants to choose which political framework they perceive as the most appropriate for reaching a permanent settlement. Importantly, this question was not intended to serve as a referendum on the one-state or two-state solution, but was used to understand the sample's

opinion about both the nature of the political framework and on Oslo itself. As it is recognized that the two-state solution is a fundamental building block of the Oslo peace process, it is safe to assume that the answers to this question reflect the Palestinian youth's degree of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with not only the political framework, but also with the Oslo peace process as a whole. Accordingly, this question is of particular importance for analyzing the compatibility of the Oslo peace process and its principles with the desire and will of the rights holders themselves as this compatibility plays a decisive role in determining the success or failure of the peace process itself.

The table above shows that 48.5 percent, or the largest proportion of the research sample, believe that a one-state solution constitutes the most appropriate political solution to resolving the conflict, while 26 percent believe that a two-state solution is the most appropriate solution. On the other hand, 25.5 percent chose the "other" option, which includes other political views, namely an independent Palestinian state from the river to the sea over all of Mandatory Palestine. The explanation provided by respondents when choosing "other," is divided into two groups: the first group does not oppose the presence of Israeli-Jews in Mandatory Palestine as long as they do not constitute a separate political entity, while the second prefers the return of Israeli-Jews to their countries of residence prior to the Zionist-Israeli colonial project. It is thus clear that even those who chose the "other" solution are believers in the one-state solution, but they differed over the fate of the colonizers and their position in the demographic structure of the state. Thus, in reality, the percentage of those who believe in a one-state solution is 74 percent.

These results allude to a number of factors that have perhaps prompted a majority of the research sample to choose a one-state solution — irrespective of the one-state's character and demographics —which include the following:

1. The failure of the Oslo peace process to achieve its goals and reach a final settlement, namely establishing a sovereign Palestinian state on the 1967 borders. This process has not only led to the Palestinian people's increased fragmentation and isolation, but has also allowed Israel to continue confiscating land, expanding its colonies, and implanting a large number of Jewish-Israeli colonizers in Palestinian lands.

2. With Israel controlling all aspects of life within the West Bank and Gaza Strip and subjecting the Palestinian people to a single but multilayered colonial-apartheid regime, hopes for establishing a sovereign Palestinian state based on Oslo's vision have been reduced. The PA's rule, which was intended to be transitional until a sovereign Palestinian state is created, is close to non-existent in approximately 60 percent of the West Bank, classified as Area C. The PA's absence in most areas of the West Bank, and Israel's corresponding exploitation of these areas to implement its colonial enterprise, definitively illustrate that the facts on the ground no longer favor the establishment of a Palestinian state on the borders of the land occupied in 1967.
3. The youth's responses in earlier questions have revealed their majoritarian belief that achieving the Palestinian people's national rights under the two-state solution is not possible, especially in regards to the right of return and the right to self-determination. For instance, 92.4 percent of respondents indicated in the Question 2(b) that neglecting the rights of displaced Palestinian is one of the most apparent manifestations of the Oslo peace process' failure. As such, it is reasonable to assume that the Palestinian youth believe in the political framework of the one-state solution because it is more likely to guarantee the rights of Palestinian refugees and displaced persons, especially their right to return to their original homes.

Considering that the Oslo peace process is the living embodiment of a two-state solution, its approach to the Palestinian people's inalienable rights can explain the youth's tendency to believe in a one-state solution. In the case of Palestinian refugee rights, for instance, the peace process has failed to adequately address these rights and instead designated them to a final-status issue. As for the right to self-determination, Oslo excluded the Palestinians inside the Green Line and the diaspora from exercising this collective right, treating it as a right connected to geographical realities rather than the people's historical existence and legitimate-national rights. This approach towards the Palestinian people's inalienable rights has created a sense of disorientation and raised many questions, none of which have been answered by the Oslo Accords or the resulting institutions and facts on the ground.

Upon considering the results' variations, it is noticeable that 73.6 percent of refugees and 70.9 percent of internally displaced persons voted in favor of a one-state solution, while 76.8 percent of those who have not been displaced chose a one-state solution over a two-state one. On the one hand, these results reflect displaced persons' awareness that the two-state solution will not achieve their rights in general and their right of return in particular. On the other hand, it also reflects the research sample's general lack of belief, including those who have not been displaced before, in the two-state solution (that is, Oslo's approach) as a framework for resolving the 'conflict.'

The differences in believing in a one-state also appears when looking at the educational level variable (see Table 7, p. 57) as this variable is positively correlated to the belief in the one-state solution. The higher the educational level, the higher the percentage of choosing the one-state solution as the most appropriate political framework.

It is also interesting to note the changes in regards to the variable of the labor sector (see Table 7, p. 57) where the percentages of those who believe in the one-state solution are as follows: 60.4 percent are employed in the civil society sector, 51.5 percent in the private sector, and 42.5 percent work in the public sector. These results are interesting in that it is revealing of individuals' backgrounds and self-interests. For instance, it is coherent that those employed in the civil society sector are likely to adopt an approach that is based on the realization of rights, which is evidently unachievable under the current two-state solution. As for the private sector, those partaking in it undoubtedly have a greater interest in the one-state solution given the economic difficulties that have arose under the two-state solution, including importing, exporting, and market expansion. In considering those employed in the public sector, it is expected that their belief in a one-state solution would be lower than other sectors considering that they work in institutions affiliated with the PA, implying that their work in this sector acts as some type of a silent approval of a two-state solution.

7. CHARACTERISTICS OF A FUTURE STATE

Question 6: Please evaluate each of the following characteristics' importance for the state you desire to live in.

In this question, participants were asked to express their preferences for the state that they desire to live in, regardless of the political solution for resolving the conflict (one-state or two-states). For the purposes of this study, simplified definitions of each term were provided for the participants.

According to the opinions of the surveyed category, the importance of these characteristics is ranked as follows:

According to the opinions of the surveyed category, the importance of these characteristics is ranked as follows:	
Social welfare state: state guarantees minimum rights for standards of living, housing, health, education, and work	91.8
Civil: citizenship is primarily based on respecting and ensuring the enjoyment of human rights without any discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, or gender	91.6
Democratic: necessitates political pluralism, periodic elections, and peaceful transition of power	91.0
Secular: entails the separation of religion and politics without prejudice or discrimination against any religion	68.5
Socialist: a system based on public state ownership of the tools and means of production (land, factories, etc.) and respective distribution	52.7
Religious: religious laws form the foundation for governance and legislations	52.5
Liberal capitalism: a free-market system is applied in economic affairs	41.5

The above results indicate the respondents' desire for the future state to be characterized by a political and economic system that guarantees civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. The classification of these characteristics is arguably based on the system's ability to guarantee rights on the basis of full citizenship within the framework of a democracy. Notably, the research sample was more decisive in expressing the states' characteristics than the form of the final solution (one or two states), indicating respondents' aspirations for a rights-based solution above all else.

The respondents' preferences can be viewed as an evaluation of the Oslo period, and the resulting economic, social, and political policies that have failed to provide just laws that protect marginalized social groups, including the working class, and have instead reinforced socio-economic class structures. It also reveals an additional form of human rights violation that has emanated as a result of the PA's monopoly of power and abuse of the resources by a select political class, or political groups, in the absence of political pluralism.

On the contrary, the socialist, religious and liberal capitalist systems were ranked at the lower end of respondents' priorities in the formation of a future state. In terms of political rights, this trend reflects the necessity of a democratic civil political system based on full citizenship and without discrimination on the basis of religion. In terms of social and economic rights, these priorities lean towards rejecting any economic system that monopolizes resources and that is not based on social justice and the fair distribution of wealth among citizens.

In considering the gender variable in this question, it is noteworthy that the percentage of females who chose the secular and civil systems is higher than that of males. While 74.7 percent of females chose a secular state and 94.8 percent chose a civil state, the percentage of males who chose a secular state amounted to 64.1 percent and 89.4 percent for a civil state. In contrast, the percentage of females who desire to live in a religious state was 47.1 percent, while 56.4 percent of males indicated their desire to live in a religious state.

This discrepancy between males and females is due to a number of factors, the most important would be the use of religion by men for the deprivation of women of their rights. It is also contributed to the patriarchal structure of society, reinforced by the PA, that prevents women from fully exercising their political rights, and at best confines them in a quota system that does not treat women per their level of competence.

Conclusion

In essence, the Oslo peace process has met its initial goals of establishing a semi-autonomous Palestinian governing authority and setting up a framework for further negotiations, but has not achieved its purported ultimate goal of reaching peace and a final settlement between Israel and the Palestinians. Palestinians have indeed become skeptical of whether that was ever truly the ultimate goal, with more than 92 percent of Palestinian youth believing that the Oslo peace process was a failure. Based on the conducted survey, Palestinian youth, even the 7.3 percent that stated that the process was successful, believe that it did not achieve significant levels of success, neither in regards to the palpable, near-attainable rights or the long-term national rights. Not only do they believe that the Oslo peace process failed to achieve its declared goals, but that it also enabled Israel to continue its colonial enterprise unabated in Mandatory Palestine. The peace process' outcome, according to Palestinian youth, was not limited to increasing its strategic gains nationally, regionally, and internationally while undermining the Palestinian people's inalienable rights, but it even transformed into a framework that has legitimized Israel's colonial, expansionist ambitions. This has come at the expense of the Palestinian people's security, safety, economic stability, and collective identity.

The Oslo peace process, particularly the impunity that it has granted Israel through transferring its responsibilities to the PA, has contributed towards the creation of a fragmented Palestinian people and economy. Israel's closure and permit regime, checkpoints, colony expansion, *de facto* and *de jure* annexation – all facilitated by Oslo's Areas A-B-C division – restricts freedom of movement of both people and goods which has in turn created sub-economies within the Palestinian economy, comprised of east Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, southern West Bank, northern West Bank, central West Bank, and the Palestinian economy inside Palestine 1948. In a study conducted in 2007, the World Bank estimated that the Palestinian economy loses six percent of its GDP, amounting to \$229m, as a result of Israeli checkpoints in the West Bank.⁷¹ The Israeli system of

71 Cited in Yara Hawari, "Money can't fix' Palestine's occupied economy," *Al-Jazeera*, 27 January 2020, available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2020/1/27/money-cant-fix-palestines-occupied-economy> [accessed 23 August 2021].

checkpoints and closure has not been crucially eased or changed since then. The complete military blockade imposed on the Gaza Strip restricts the entry of almost all goods from the West Bank, which has destroyed the manufacturing and agriculture sectors, resulting in a stark unemployment rate of more than 40 percent of the population.⁷² Likewise, Oslo II's designation of 60 percent of the West Bank as Area C, and 35 percent of Gaza's farmland as a "buffer-zone,"⁷³ has stunted economic development, with the former containing the most fertile lands and natural resources in the West Bank. Studies have estimated that the limited access to Area C costs the Palestinian economy 35 percent of its GDP annually and contributes to the unemployment of 110,000 Palestinians.⁷⁴

Additionally, the Oslo peace process has contributed to the neoliberal structure of the PA, resulting in deep economic inequality, particularly for the working class. Due to Western pressure in the form of international donors, the PA implements economic policies that are damaging for development, such as reduction of public spending and debt-based consumerism. In the West Bank, the private sector has loans amounting to \$2.8bn, while private individuals owe close to \$3.2bn to banks.⁷⁵ This debt has multifaceted manifestations for Palestinian society. For one, it creates an apparition of economic stability and development in the shape of skyscrapers, luxury cars, and deluxe houses, which is nothing more than a façade to conceal the reality of colonization and domination of the Palestinian people. Further, it promotes depoliticization, alienation, and an additional angle of domination and repression. With more than 150,000 Palestinians employed

72 Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Labor Force Survey (October-December 2020) Round (Q4/2020), 15 February 2021, p. 8, available at: https://www.pcbs.gov.ps/portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/Press_En_15-2-2021-LF-en.pdf

73 United Nations General Assembly, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, Michael Lynk, 30 May 2019, p. 4, available at: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G19/150/38/PDF/G1915038.pdf?OpenElement> [accessed 23 August 2021].

74 United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, "The staggering economic cost of occupation; the Palestinian economy would be at least twice as large without Israeli occupation," *Press Release*, 6 September 2016, available at: <https://unctad.org/press-material/staggering-economic-cost-occupation-palestinian-economy-would-be-least-twice-large> [accessed 23 August 2021]; MIFTAH, "Fact Sheet: The Jordan Valley," 5 July 2017, available at: <http://www.miftah.org/Display.cfm?DocId=26418&CategoryId=4> [accessed 23 August 2021].

75 See Yara Hiwari, in *supra* 52.

in the PA and approximately 130,000 working in Israel,⁷⁶ Palestinians are disincentivized from engaging in resistance activities which could threaten their employment, and cause them to default on their loans and lose their homes, cars, or other properties.⁷⁷ **Indeed, the Oslo peace process ensured that the economic sphere functions as yet another channel to entrench the Israeli-Zionist colonial enterprise by means of reducing the Palestinian people to homo economicus, or economic beings focused on their economic well-being and maximizing their personal utility.**

Accordingly, it is evident that the Oslo peace process' goal as a whole was not peace; rather, it was keeping the process on life support for as long as possible and to resuscitate it whenever needed. Through this, Israel was able, and continues to be able to, convert that which is internationally unlawful into a *de facto* reality which subsequently defers Palestinian self-determination to the realm of fantasies. In effect, the Oslo peace process transformed the internationally-assumed short-term nature of Israel's occupation into an ongoing colonization under the guise of a prolonged occupation by: (1) transferring a select few of its occupier civil responsibilities to the PA which has in effect blurred the legal lines, (2) forging an illusion of peacemaking to anaesthetize the international community's concerns with any 'clashes' between Palestinians and Israelis presented as temporary detractions, while (3) creating irreversible conditions, including construction of a network of colonies, colonizer-only roads, by-pass roads, and the Apartheid Wall.

In addition to the Oslo peace process' framework proving detrimental to the Palestinian people's national rights and realistic prospects for self-determination, the parties involved in the process have lost the Palestinian youth's confidence as they perceive that all involved parties have been ineffective. Palestinian youth also indicated their skepticism of the PLO's approach to institutionalize the Palestinian struggle and internationalize it in order to adjust it to match the Oslo peace process.

76 Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "The current status of the Palestinian labour force in 2020," 2020, available at: https://www.pcbs.gov.ps/portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/Press_En_29-4-2021-workers-en.pdf; Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "The Labour Force Survey Results 2019," 2019, available at: https://www.pcbs.gov.ps/portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/Press_En_13-2-2020-LF2019-en.pdf

77 See Andy Clarno, *Neoliberal Apartheid: Palestine/Israel and South Africa after 1994* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2017).

In fact, it is discernible that there is an overwhelming rejection of the peace process as a whole due to both its framework and the parties' ineffectiveness. This is confirmed by the research sample's belief that a one-state solution is the most suitable political solution to the conflict, standing at 74 percent of respondents. Such a response represents a rejection of and disbelief in the Oslo peace process considering that central to Oslo's approach is this conception of a two-state solution in the best-case scenario, and in the worst-case scenario, a feeble entity with limited autonomy. In describing the type of state that respondents would like to live in, more than 90 percent indicated that they would like to live in a social welfare state, civil, and democratic, illustrating their prioritization of a state that is rooted in full political, social, and economic rights. The current *status quo* and the Oslo peace process herein has not guaranteed the Palestinian people's rights and has indeed worsened them; their prioritization of a system that gives them rights functions as yet another rejection to the peace process. It is further almost immediately discernible that such a system that would provide Palestinians with rights necessitates the disintegration of the Israeli apartheid-colonial enterprise, as it stands, considering that the central logic of the state is Israeli colonization and apartheid, evidenced by the Nation State Law.

Prior to the Oslo Accords, the Palestinian struggle was perceived as exactly that – a legitimate national struggle against a colonial power, with an indigenous people fighting for their right to self-determination. However, that has shifted into a discussion about statehood instead of self-determination. Although the two are complementary, they are not synonymous as the former can manifest without the latter. Such discourse about statehood is highly problematic as it erodes the Palestinian people's national rights and reduces the entire struggle into a legitimacy war and attempts at earning statehood, as evident in the PA's celebration of Palestinians 'non-member observer state' admittance in the UN.⁷⁸ While such a Palestinian state seems valid under international law (as valid as a non-contiguous state under foreign domination and subjugation can possibly be), it is a far cry from Resolution 242, premised upon in the Oslo peace process, which is itself dissonant from Resolution 181, which is also a far cry from the right to self-determination granted to the Palestinian people under international law on

78 United Nations General Assembly, A/RES/67/19, 4 December 2012, available at: <https://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/19862D03C564FA2C85257ACB004EE69B> [accessed 23 August 2021].

the whole of Mandatory Palestine. The conception of Palestinian statehood and sovereignty has gradually been shrinking with every new conception, especially following the peace process.

What is increasingly becoming more evident is that the international community's commitment to Resolution 242 (which fails to even meet the minimum rights of the Palestinian people) makes no sense as the changes on the ground have completely undermined the framework set up 28 years ago as a practical possibility. The disconnect between the premises of the peace process and the *de facto* situation on the ground is disguised although it is as clear as ever.

It is thus due time for the Palestinian leadership and the international community alike to renounce the Oslo peace process considering that those who are affected by it and are bound by it, no longer believe in its validity and view its continuity as a scam. Its continuation will not advance human rights or just and durable peace, but it does carry the risk of pushing the Palestinian people's rights even further into the realm of fairytales. Therefore, a new approach must be conceived, one that is based on human rights, just laws and political, social, and economic rights for all. It is necessary to emphasize that such an approach begins by reformulating the international discourse on the Palestinian struggle as a whole, disposing of its current discourse, and instead adopting an understanding and interpretation that Israel's rule in Mandatory Palestine constitutes colonization and apartheid, where the international community's support of the Oslo peace process has acted as a vehicle towards advancing this colonial enterprise.

International Responsibility in Legitimizing Israeli Colonization and Apartheid

The international community's endorsement and perpetuation of the Oslo peace process has objectively enabled Israel to advance its colonization and apartheid in Mandatory Palestine. What the international community has done thus far has been conflict management, as opposed to conflict resolution, which is essential to end Israel's colonialism and apartheid.

Colonialism and apartheid, under which Israel's policies and practices fall, are

strictly prohibited under international law. The prohibition of colonialism is a well-grounded principle of customary law,⁷⁹ derived from the preeminent Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples as it results from the UN General Assembly Resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960.⁸⁰ As such, the prohibition of colonization is binding on all states. Israel further resorts to apartheid tools to advance its colonial project.⁸¹ The crime of apartheid constitutes a crime against humanity under Article 7(1) (j) of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court,⁸² and a peremptory norm of international law.⁸³ As internationally wrongful acts, their commission triggers individual and collective responsibility of states under the Draft Articles on Responsibility of States for Internationally Wrongful Acts.⁸⁴

Third states' responsibility arises when a state aids or assists another state in the commission of an internationally wrongful act, if the complicit state does so with knowledge of the circumstances of the internationally wrongful act and if the act would be wrongful if committed by it.⁸⁵ A number of actions of

79 Customary international law is a source of international law derived from a general practice accepted as law, as found in official accounts of military operations, military manuals, national legislation or jurisprudence – *state practice*, and accepted as law – *opinio juris*. Customary rules of international law are binding on states. See Legal Information Institute, “Customary International Law,” available at: https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/customary_international_law [accessed 23 August 2021].

80 UN General Assembly, Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, 14 December 1960, A/RES/1514(XV), available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/Independence.aspx> [accessed 23 August 2021].

81 See BADIL, *Creeping Annexation: A Pillar of the Zionist-Israeli Colonization Process in Palestine*, working paper no. 17, Section II.2 (Bethlehem: BADIL, 2020), available at: <https://www.badil.org/phocadownloadpap/badil-new/publications/research/working-papers/WP25-CreepingAnnexation.pdf>

82 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, 17 July 1998, Article 7(1)(j), available at: <https://www.icc-cpi.int/resource-library/documents/rs-eng.pdf>.

83 Report of the International Law Commission, A/74/10, “Chapter V: Peremptory Norms of General International Law (*jus cogens*),” Conclusion 23, available at: <https://undocs.org/en/A/74/10> [accessed 23 August 2021].

84 “There is an internationally wrongful act of a State when conduct consisting of an action or omission: (a) is attributable to the State under international law; and (b) constitutes a breach of an international obligation of the State.” International Law Commission, Draft Articles on Responsibility of States for Internationally Wrongful Acts, A/56/10, November 2001, Article 2, available at: https://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/commentaries/9_6_2001.pdf

85 *Id.*, Article 16.

the international community provide both diplomatic and financial assistance to Israel, or enhance its impunity or pressure the PA to change the Palestinian curriculum to match the Zionist narrative and peace lies.⁸⁶ Such actions enable Israel to maintain its colonial enterprise.

Further, serious breaches of peremptory norms prompt the liability of third states in two ways: (1) a positive duty to “cooperate to bring to an end through lawful means any breach” and (2) a negative duty not to “recognize as lawful a situation created by a serious breach [...] nor render aid or assistance in maintaining that situation.”⁸⁷ This entails recognizing the apartheid-colonial structure that is being reinforced and furthered by the Oslo peace process and the role that the international community’s continued endorsement of the peace process’ plays in denying the Palestinian people’s human rights.

Recommendations

In view of the above, BADIL calls on the Palestinian youth to create tools and means to liberate themselves from Oslo’s framework and dismantle the colonial-apartheid Israeli regime. Moreover, BADIL calls on the PLO and the international community to:

- Publicly recognize and admit that the Oslo peace process has failed and is no longer viable.
- Consider the youth’s perspective in their adopted approach, particularly their concern for human rights.
- Adopt a human rights-based approach to conflict resolution and placing these concerns at the center of any approach.
- Go beyond conflict management and to adequately address the root causes of the conflict.

86 See BADIL, *Israel’s Apartheid-Colonial Education: Subjugating Palestinian Minds and Rights*, working paper no. 26 (Bethlehem: BADIL, 2020), available at: <https://www.badil.org/phocadownloadpap/badil-new/publications/research/working-papers/WP26-right2education.pdf>

87 International Law Commission, *Draft Articles on Responsibility of States for Internationally Wrongful Acts*, A/56/10, November 2001, Article 41.

Annex: Survey Variations

Table 1: General Information: Participant's Social Background		
Variation	Number	Percentage
Sex		
Male	406	58.4
Female	289	41.6
Age		
18-23 years	195	28.1
24-29 years	224	32.2
30-35 years	276	39.7
The average age of the sample	27.4 years	
Place of Residence		
Jerusalem	37	5.3
West Bank	298	42.9
Gaza Strip	111	16
Palestine '48	95	13.7
Arab State	132	19
Other Foreign State	22	3.2
Displacement/Refugee Status		
Refugee	398	57.3
Internally Displaced Person	103	14.8
Not Previously Displaced	194	27.9
Education Level		
Primary/elementary education	24	3.5
Secondary school (9th grade level)	59	8.5
Diploma	72	10.4
Bachelor degree	395	56.8
Masters or PhD	145	20.9
Employment Status		
Employed	392	56.4
Unemployed	155	22.3
Full-time Student	134	19.3
Full-time Housework	14	2
Employment Sector		
Employed in the Public Sector	106	26.4
Employed in the Private Sector	194	48.4
Employed in the Civil Society Sector	101	25.2

Table 2: (Q1) In your opinion, did the Oslo Peace Process fail or succeed?			
		Failed	Succeeded
Sex	Male	91.1	8.9
	Female	94.8	5.2
	Average	92.7	7.3
Place of Residence	Jerusalem	100	0.0
	West Bank	93.6	6.4
	Gaza Strip	82.0	18.0
	Palestine '48	93.7	6.3
	Arab state	95.5	4.5
	Other foreign state	100	0.0
Displacement/ Refugee Status	Refugees	93.0	7.0
	Internally Displaced Person	93.2	6.8
	Not previously displaced	91.8	8.2
Education Level	Elementary School	87.5	12.5
	Secondary School	89.8	10.2
	Diploma	88.9	11.1
	Bachelor degree	92.9	7.1
	Masters or PhD	95.9	4.1
Employment Status	Employed	94.6	5.4
	Unemployed	87.7	12.3
	Full-time student	92.5	7.50
	Full-time housework	92.9	7.1
Employment Sector	Employed in the civil society sector	94.1	5.9
	Employed in the private sector	93.8	6.2
	Employed in the public sector	95.3	4.7
	Average	90.5	9.5

Table 3: (Q2(a)) Please determine the level of significance of each of the following aspects of the peace process' success/accomplishments																			
		Sex			Place of Residence						Education Level			Employment Sector					
		Male	Female	Average	Jerusalem	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Palestine '48	Arab state	Other foreign state	Elementary School	Secondary School	Diploma	Bachelor degree	Masters or PhD	Employed in the public sector	Employed in the private sector	Employed in the civil society sector	Average
Establishment of the Palestinian National Authority	Significant	73.5	40.0	63.3	0.0	55.6	80.0	60.0	33.3	0.0	66.7	50.0	75.0	57.7	83.3	80.0	58.3	60.0	63.0
	Fair	26.5	33.3	28.6	0.0	33.3	20.0	20.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	25.0	34.6	0.0	20.0	25.0	40.0	29.6
	Insignificant	0.0	26.7	8.2	0.0	11.1	0.0	20.0	16.7	0.0	33.3	0.0	0.0	7.7	16.7	0.0	16.7	0.0	7.4
Recognition of a Palestinian state (non-member observer state in the United Nations)	Significant	76.5	26.7	61.2	0.0	50.0	80.0	60.0	33.3	0.0	66.7	33.3	75.0	65.4	50.0	80.0	58.3	40.0	63.0
	Fair	14.7	40.0	22.4	0.0	33.3	10.0	20.0	33.3	0.0	0.0	33.3	12.5	23.1	33.3	20.0	16.7	40.0	22.2
	Insignificant	8.8	33.3	16.3	0.0	16.7	10.0	20.0	33.3	0.0	33.3	33.3	12.5	11.5	16.7	0.0	25.0	20.0	14.8
Security protection for Palestinians in the 1967 occupied Palestinian territory	Significant	8.8	6.7	8.2	0.0	16.7	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	11.5	16.7	20.0	16.7	0.0	3.7
	Fair	26.5	33.3	28.6	0.0	16.7	30.0	40.0	50.0	0.0	33.3	33.3	12.5	34.6	16.7	20.0	8.3	20.0	40.7
	Insignificant	64.7	60.0	63.3	0.0	66.7	65.0	60.0	50.0	0.0	66.7	66.7	87.5	53.8	66.7	60.0	75.0	80.0	55.6
Recovery of the Palestinian economy	Significant	23.5	6.7	18.4	0.0	22.2	20.0	0.0	16.7	0.0	33.3	16.7	0.0	15.4	50.0	40.0	25.0	0.0	14.8
	Fair	50.0	26.7	42.9	0.0	38.9	50.0	40.0	33.3	0.0	0.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	16.7	40.0	25.0	60.0	48.1
	Insignificant	26.5	66.7	38.8	0.0	38.9	30.0	60.0	50.0	0.0	66.7	33.3	50.0	34.6	33.3	20.0	50.0	40.0	37.0
Improved living conditions for Palestinian individuals	Significant	20.6	20.0	20.4	0.0	27.8	20.0	0.0	16.7	0.0	0.0	16.7	0.0	19.2	33.3	40.0	25.0	0.0	18.5
	Fair	50.0	26.7	42.9	0.0	33.3	50.0	40.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	25.0	53.8	33.3	60.0	25.0	60.0	44.4
	Insignificant	29.4	53.3	36.7	0.0	38.9	30.0	60.0	33.3	0.0	100	33.3	50.0	26.9	33.3	0.0	50.0	40.0	37.0
Withdrawal of Israeli occupation forces from city centers and villages	Significant	44.1	13.3	34.7	0.0	33.3	40.0	40.0	16.7	0.0	33.3	0.0	62.5	34.6	33.3	60.0	41.7	40.0	25.9
	Fair	26.5	13.3	22.4	0.0	22.2	20.0	20.0	33.3	0.0	0.0	50.0	12.5	23.1	16.7	40.0	16.7	0.0	25.9
	Insignificant	29.4	73.3	42.9	0.0	44.4	40.0	40.0	50.0	0.0	66.7	50.0	25.0	42.3	50.0	0.0	41.7	60.0	48.1
Liberation of thousands of political prisoners	Significant	20.6	6.7	16.3	0.0	11.1	25.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	16.7	37.5	11.5	16.7	20.0	16.7	0.0	18.5
	Fair	35.3	20.0	30.6	0.0	16.7	40.0	20.0	50.0	0.0	33.3	16.7	12.5	42.3	16.7	80.0	16.7	20.0	29.6
	Insignificant	44.1	73.3	53.1	0.0	72.2	35.0	60.0	50.0	0.0	66.7	66.7	50.0	46.2	66.7	0.0	66.7	80.0	51.9
Providing better prospects for achieving Palestinian national rights (self-determination, independence, and return)	Significant	26.5	20.0	24.5	0.0	22.2	25.0	40.0	16.7	0.0	66.7	0.0	12.5	30.8	16.7	40.0	25.0	20.0	22.2
	Fair	32.4	20.0	28.6	0.0	27.8	30.0	20.0	33.3	0.0	0.0	33.3	62.5	19.2	33.3	0.0	16.7	20.0	40.7
	Insignificant	41.2	60.0	46.9	0.0	50.0	45.0	40.0	50.0	0.0	33.3	66.7	25.0	50.0	50.0	60.0	58.3	60.0	37.0

Table 4: (Q2(b)) Please determine the level of significance of each of the following aspects of the Oslo Accords' failures/shortcomings												
		Place of Residence						Education Level				
		Jerusalem	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Palestine '48	Arab state	Other foreign state	Elementary School	Secondary School	Diploma	Bachelor degree	Masters or PhD
Undermining the Palestinian people's right to self-determination	Significant	58.3	56.3	51.6	71.6	59.7	76.2	47.4	60.4	50.0	55.7	74.4
	Fair	5.6	6.7	16.5	8.0	6.5	0.0	15.8	5.7	12.5	7.8	6.0
Undermining the development of an independent Palestinian economy	Insignificant	36.1	37.0	31.9	20.5	33.9	23.8	36.8	34.0	37.5	36.6	19.5
	Significant	61.1	55.6	47.3	69.3	57.3	81.0	47.4	50.9	50.0	54.3	75.2
Inability of the Palestinian Authority to ensure the Palestinian people's security and safety	Fair	11.1	13.0	20.9	9.1	9.7	4.8	0.0	20.8	12.5	13.0	9.8
	Insignificant	27.8	31.5	31.9	21.6	33.1	14.3	52.6	28.3	37.5	32.7	15.0
Constant land confiscation, property demolitions, and dispossession	Significant	77.8	75.6	64.8	83.0	78.2	90.5	57.9	73.6	65.6	77.0	82.7
	Fair	8.3	15.6	15.4	11.4	8.1	9.5	10.5	15.1	17.2	12.2	12.0
Increased institutionalized and systematic discrimination	Insignificant	13.9	8.9	19.8	5.7	13.7	0.0	31.6	11.3	17.2	10.8	5.3
	Significant	94.4	93.7	87.9	94.3	91.9	100	78.9	92.5	85.9	94.2	94.7
Ongoing expansion of colonies and implantation of colonizers	Fair	5.6	4.4	7.7	4.5	4.8	0.0	21.1	7.5	6.2	4.2	3.0
	Insignificant	0.0	1.9	4.4	1.1	3.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.8	1.7	2.3
Continued denial and negligence of Palestinian refugees' rights	Significant	75.0	77.0	72.5	90.9	83.9	95.2	68.4	83.0	75.0	79.2	85.7
	Fair	19.4	19.3	22.0	6.8	11.3	4.8	26.3	9.4	14.1	18.3	11.3
Bleak prospects for peace between Israel and the Palestinian people	Insignificant	5.6	3.7	5.5	2.3	4.8	0.0	5.3	7.5	10.9	2.5	3.0
	Significant	97.2	94.1	93.4	94.3	91.9	100	89.5	92.5	87.5	95.8	93.2
Continued denial and negligence of Palestinian refugees' rights	Fair	2.8	4.8	4.4	2.3	4.8	0.0	5.3	5.7	9.4	3.0	3.8
	Insignificant	0.0	1.1	2.2	3.4	3.2	0.0	5.3	1.9	3.1	1.1	3.0
Bleak prospects for peace between Israel and the Palestinian people	Significant	91.7	92.6	84.6	94.3	95.2	100	89.5	88.7	89.1	93.4	93.2
	Fair	5.6	5.6	11.0	3.4	2.4	0.0	10.5	9.4	4.7	5.3	3.0
Bleak prospects for peace between Israel and the Palestinian people	Insignificant	2.8	1.9	4.4	2.3	2.4	0.0	0.0	1.9	6.2	1.4	3.8
	Significant	72.2	79.3	75.8	69.3	85.5	85.7	63.2	77.4	75.0	79.8	78.9
Bleak prospects for peace between Israel and the Palestinian people	Fair	19.4	14.4	16.5	26.1	10.5	0.0	15.8	18.9	17.2	15.0	14.3
	Insignificant	8.3	6.3	7.7	4.5	4.0	14.3	21.1	3.8	7.8	5.3	6.8

Table 5: (Q3) According to you, how have the following features changed over the past 3 years?

		Education Level				
		Elementary School	Secondary School	Diploma	Bachelor degree	Masters or PhD
Normalization of relations between Israel and neighboring Arab states	Increasing	79.2	89.8	90.3	95.2	95.9
	Stable	12.5	5.1	1.4	2.0	0.0
	Decreasing	0.0	5.1	4.2	1.8	2.8
	Unsure	8.3	0.0	4.2	1.0	1.4
International diplomatic support to Israel	Increasing	66.7	83.1	73.6	75.4	71.7
	Stable	8.3	10.2	11.1	14.9	17.2
	Decreasing	12.5	1.7	6.9	7.3	6.2
	Unsure	12.5	5.1	8.3	2.3	4.8
Participation in Palestinian resistance	Increasing	16.7	20.3	18.1	14.2	11.7
	Stable	33.3	23.7	27.8	21.5	15.2
	Decreasing	45.8	44.1	47.2	58.7	69.7
	Unsure	4.2	11.9	6.9	5.6	3.4
Israel's impunity as an occupying power	Increasing	66.7	64.4	58.3	71.9	69.0
	Stable	16.7	20.3	22.2	21.3	25.5
	Decreasing	4.2	6.8	8.3	4.1	4.1
	Unsure	12.5	8.5	11.1	2.8	1.4
Israel's stability and development	Increasing	62.5	76.3	72.2	80.8	82.1
	Stable	16.7	13.6	13.9	11.1	13.1
	Decreasing	16.7	8.5	9.7	7.1	3.4
	Unsure	4.2	1.7	4.2	1.0	1.4
The Palestinian people's stability and development	Increasing	25.0	10.2	4.2	6.3	5.5
	Stable	20.8	8.5	19.4	17.0	11.7
	Decreasing	50.0	81.4	72.2	76.2	81.4
	Unsure	4.2	0.0	4.2	0.5	1.4
Presence of the Zionist-Israeli narrative in the international arena	Increasing	58.3	49.2	54.2	60.5	57.9
	Stable	8.3	18.6	29.2	22.8	27.6
	Decreasing	12.5	15.3	6.9	12.4	7.6
	Unsure	20.8	16.9	9.7	4.3	6.9
The Palestinian international solidarity movement's influence on states' positions	Increasing	16.7	11.9	11.1	15.7	14.5
	Stable	12.5	32.2	37.5	39.7	37.9
	Decreasing	50.0	40.7	38.9	35.7	38.6
	Unsure	20.8	15.3	12.5	8.9	9.0
International support for the Palestinian people's inalienable rights (self-determination and right of return)	Increasing	12.5	11.9	6.9	8.6	7.6
	Stable	29.2	18.6	27.8	31.6	31.0
	Decreasing	45.8	59.3	58.3	55.7	57.2
	Unsure	12.5	10.2	6.9	4.1	4.1
Palestinian people's unity	Increasing	25.0	8.5	11.1	8.4	8.3
	Stable	25.0	30.5	29.2	23.0	22.8
	Decreasing	45.8	57.6	55.6	66.6	65.5
	Unsure	4.2	3.4	4.2	2.0	3.4
Presence of the Palestinian case in the international arena	Increasing	25.0	11.9	16.7	8.6	10.3
	Stable	16.7	16.9	31.9	31.1	19.3
	Decreasing	50.0	57.6	48.6	57.7	66.2
	Unsure	8.3	13.6	2.8	2.5	4.1
Prospects of establishing an independent and sovereign Palestinian state	Increasing	16.7	3.4	4.2	5.8	4.1
	Stable	20.8	15.3	23.6	15.4	7.6
	Decreasing	45.8	72.9	63.9	73.2	83.4
	Unsure	16.7	8.5	8.3	5.6	4.8

Table 6: (Q4) How would you evaluate each of the following parties' roles in the following areas of the peace process?					
Actor	United States	Arab League	European Union	Quartet on the Middle East (UN, USA, EU and Russia)	United Nations
Upholding the Palestinian people's legitimate rights					
Very Effective	2.6	1.4	2.3	2.3	0.9
Effective	12.5	6.5	21.2	16.1	3.9
Ineffective	50.5	48.3	50.5	33.8	29.4
Very Ineffective	32.7	39.9	21.7	44.5	63.7
Unsure	1.7	3.9	4.3	3.3	2.2
Respecting the concluded agreements between the concerned parties (Palestine and Israel)					
Very Effective	1.2	0.9	1.3	2.7	1.7
Effective	7.6	6.9	15.8	11.2	5.5
Ineffective	43.0	47.5	51.2	34.5	28.5
Very Ineffective	42.3	39.0	25.3	47.1	60.3
Unsure	5.9	5.8	6.3	4.5	4.0
Enforcing accountability measures and holding parties responsible for violating Palestinians' human rights					
Very Effective	0.9	1.2	0.9	1.2	0.9
Effective	4.6	2.4	10.1	6.9	1.7
Ineffective	35.4	37.7	46.0	32.5	23.6
Very Ineffective	55.1	54.0	37.1	54.8	70.6
Unsure	4.0	4.7	5.9	4.6	3.2

Table 7: (Q5) Which one of the following do you believe is the most appropriate general political framework for resolving the conflict?											
	Displacement/ Refugee Status			Education Level					Employment Sector		
	Refugee	Internally Displaced Person	Not previously displaced	Primary education	Secondary school	Diploma	Bachelor degree	Masters or PhD	Employed in the public sector	Employed in the private sector	Employed in the civil society Sector
One State	43.7	46.6	57.2	45.8	35.6	40.3	48.6	55.2	42.5	51.5	60.4
Two States	26.4	29.1	23.2	33.3	32.2	30.6	26.1	19.3	31.1	24.7	10.9
Others (Specify)	29.9	24.3	19.6	20.8	32.2	29.2	25.3	25.5	26.4	23.7	28.7

Table 8: (Q6) Please evaluate each of the following characteristics' importance for the state you desire to live in.												
		Sex			Employment Sector			Education Level				
		Male	Female	Average	Employed in the public sector	Employed in the private sector	Employed in the civil society Sector	Primary education	Secondary school	Diploma	Bachelor degree	Masters or PHD
Democratic: necessitates political pluralism, periodic elections, and peaceful transition of power.	Extremely Important	71.2	63.7	68.1	79.2	69.6	65.3	54.2	54.2	61.1	69.9	74.5
	Important	20.7	26.0	22.9	13.2	24.2	27.7	20.8	30.5	25.0	21.8	22.1
	unimportant	4.2	6.9	5.3	2.8	3.6	5.0	20.8	8.5	6.9	4.6	2.8
	Extremely unimportant	3.9	3.5	3.7	4.7	2.6	2.0	4.2	6.8	6.9	3.8	0.7
Secular: entails the separation of religion and politics without prejudice or discrimination against any religion.	Extremely Important	41.4	49.8	44.9	45.3	45.9	59.4	33.3	40.7	45.8	40.0	61.4
	Important	22.7	24.9	23.6	22.6	23.7	26.7	25.0	33.9	23.6	23.0	20.7
	unimportant	15.0	14.5	14.8	12.3	16.5	7.9	16.7	6.8	18.1	17.2	9.7
	Extremely unimportant	20.9	10.7	16.7	19.8	13.9	5.9	25.0	18.6	12.5	19.7	8.3
Civil: citizenship is primarily based on respecting and ensuring the enjoyment of human rights without any discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, or gender.	Extremely Important	64.8	74.0	68.6	67.9	67.5	72.3	41.7	79.7	65.3	66.3	76.6
	Important	24.6	20.8	23.0	20.8	23.2	23.8	37.5	11.9	23.6	25.8	17.2
	unimportant	6.9	2.8	5.2	6.6	6.2	3.0	16.7	3.4	6.9	4.8	4.1
	Extremely unimportant	3.7	2.4	3.2	4.7	3.1	1.0	4.2	5.1	4.2	3.0	2.1
Religious: religious laws form the foundation for governance and legislations.	Extremely Important	27.6	18.7	23.9	24.5	19.1	7.9	25.0	30.5	26.4	26.8	11.7
	Important	28.8	28.4	28.6	30.2	28.4	25.7	50.0	30.5	36.1	28.9	20.0
	unimportant	23.2	24.9	23.9	19.8	27.3	28.7	4.2	25.4	23.6	24.6	24.8
	Extremely unimportant	20.4	28.0	23.6	25.5	25.3	37.6	20.8	13.6	13.9	19.7	43.4
Socialist: a system based on general state ownership of the tools and means of production (land, factories, etc.) and respective distribution.	Extremely Important	23.6	15.2	20.1	22.6	19.1	24.8	20.8	25.4	19.4	18.2	23.4
	Important	31.0	34.6	32.5	26.4	26.3	37.6	33.3	35.6	30.6	34.2	27.6
	unimportant	27.3	35.3	30.6	32.1	35.6	25.7	33.3	27.1	31.9	30.4	31.7
	Extremely unimportant	18.0	14.9	16.7	18.9	19.1	11.9	12.5	11.9	18.1	17.2	17.2
Liberal capitalism: a free-market system is applied in economic affairs.	Extremely Important	10.6	8.0	9.5	8.5	10.8	6.9	16.7	16.9	8.3	9.4	6.2
	Important	28.6	36.7	31.9	28.3	33.0	15.8	45.8	32.2	36.1	33.9	22.1
	unimportant	34.5	37.0	35.5	41.5	34.5	44.6	29.2	25.4	38.9	34.4	42.1
	Extremely unimportant	26.4	18.3	23.0	21.7	21.6	32.7	8.3	25.4	16.7	22.3	29.7
Social welfare state: state guarantees minimum rights for standards of living, housing, health, education, and work.	Extremely Important	61.8	68.9	64.7	59.4	64.4	74.3	54.2	61.0	62.5	64.1	71.0
	Important	28.3	25.3	27.1	25.5	27.8	18.8	25.0	35.6	26.4	27.6	22.8
	unimportant	5.7	2.8	4.5	8.5	5.7	4.0	8.3	1.7	4.2	5.1	3.4
	Extremely unimportant	4.2	3.1	3.7	6.6	2.1	3.0	12.5	1.7	6.9	3.3	2.8



Based on the responses in this survey, respondents are aware of both the Palestinian cause's decline at the national, regional, and international levels as well as the strategic gains that Israel has acquired as a result of the peace process. The research sample has thus demonstrated a belief that the Oslo peace process has not only failed to achieve its allegedly declared goals, but has also served the Zionist-Israeli colonial enterprise's advancement in Mandatory Palestine.



ISBN 978-9950-339-57-6



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