



# ORSAM WATER BULLETIN

Weekly Bulletin by ORSAM Water Research Programme

Events-News-Politics-Projects-Environment-ClimateChange-Neighbourhoods-Cooperation-Disputes-Scarcity and more



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20 October – 26 October 2014

- ❖ Iran implementing water, electricity projects in Iraq worth over \$1.3B
- ❖ FAO planning to address water shortage problem in Iran
- ❖ Iraq Water Desalination Works in Basra Go to Veolia, Hitachi
- ❖ UN launches appeal for \$2.2 billion to aid displaced people of Iraq
- ❖ The Last Train
- ❖ Through thick and thin
- ❖ The Battle for Palestine — Part Three
- ❖ Dajani's 'Israel's water war crimes' charges run dry
- ❖ Water Authority investing NIS 385m. in sewage infrastructure, to enable housing construction
- ❖ Palestinian Farmer Spotlights Food Sovereignty
- ❖ Minister promises to rationalize water cos
- ❖ War and Water: Middle East Conflicts in the Watershed
- ❖ Pipeline to Replenish Vanishing Dead Sea A Bridge to Mid-East Security, Peace
- ❖ With Water Scarce In Yarmouk, Civilians Face Starvation, Malnutrition, Disease
- ❖ Why It Is a MUST for Sudan to Join Entebbe Agreement
- ❖ Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan to Select Consultancy Firm
- ❖ Sustaining Africa's Development by Leveraging on Climate Change
- ❖ Zimbabwe Can't Pipe Water so Taxes Private Supplies Instead

- 
- ❖ **CYPRUS: Recycled water a steady source for irrigation**
  - ❖ **State has no power to ban extraction of water: Plea in HC**
  - ❖ **Laos is acting responsibly on Mekong dam Project**



### ❖ Iran implementing water, electricity projects in Iraq worth over \$1.3B

*Iranian companies are implementing 31 water and electricity projects in Iraq, worth over \$1.3 billion, Bahram Nezamolmolki, an Iranian Energy Ministry official, said.*

Nezamolmolki said just two projects, worth \$30 million, are being implemented in Iraq by Iraqi companies, Iran's IRIB reported on October 24.

He said it is expected that more Iranian companies will invest in water and electricity projects in Iraq in the future.

Iranian ambassador to Iraq Hassan Danayeefer said in April that Iran exports 80 percent of its technical and engineering services to Iraq.

He said at the time that Iraqi market is capable to absorb \$500 billion worth of investment in the technical and engineering sector.

The year 2013 registered high levels of commercial exchange between Iraq and Iran, which reached - according to both Iraqi and Iranian officials - more than \$12 billion.

“Iran implementing water, electricity projects in Iraq worth over \$1.3B”,25/10/2014, online at:  
[https://www.zawya.com/story/Iran\\_implementing\\_waterelectricity\\_projects\\_in\\_Iraq\\_worth\\_over\\_USD13b-ZAWYA20141026051022/](https://www.zawya.com/story/Iran_implementing_waterelectricity_projects_in_Iraq_worth_over_USD13b-ZAWYA20141026051022/)

**BACK TO TOP**

### ❖ **FAO planning to address water shortage problem in Iran**

By Fatih Karimov – Trend: The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is considering to develop a comprehensive plan to address the water shortage problem in Iran.

FAO's representative in Iran, Serge Nakouzi, said if Iran acts based on FAO plans, its water resources will be restored in a short period of time, Iran's IRNA news agency reported on October 25.

He added that FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva will travel to Iran in early 2015.

Iranian Energy Minister Hamid Reza Chitchian said that the situation of water resources in Iran has passed beyond the critical condition.

"At present, 96 billion cubic meters of the country's total 120 billion cubic meters of renewable water resources are being consumed annually," he said, adding that if 40-60 percent of renewable water resources are consumed in any country, that country is said to be in a critical condition.

Iran's total annual water consumption is approximately 93 billion cubic meters, out of which about 92 percent is used in agriculture (86 billion cubic meters), 6.6 percent in municipality (6.18 billion cubic meters), and 1.2 percent in industry (1.12 billion cubic meters), according to FAO.

Up to 70 percent of water used in the agriculture sector is being wasted, Iranian officials say.

"FAO planning to address water shortage problem in Iran", 25/10/2014, online at:  
<http://en.trend.az/iran/business/2326198.html>

**BACK TO TOP**

### ❖ Iraq Water Desalination Works in Basra Goto Veolia, Hitachi

An Iraq desalination project to supply 400,000 people in the southern city of Basra with drinking water has been enlarged with added works for [Veolia Environnement \(VIE\)](#), [Hitachi Ltd. \(6501\)](#) and [Egypt](#) engineering firm ArabCo.

The additional order from the Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works to the group is for engineering, procurement and construction of pre-treatment facilities, river intake and water transport works that will total 24 billion yen (\$223 million), Paris-based Veolia said today. Construction is to begin this month with completion expected by April 2017.

The pretreatment works follow an order in January to design and build the desalination plant, operate and maintain it for five years. The reverse-osmosis plant to reduce the salt content in water drawn from a river near the river's mouth will be the largest facility of its kind in [Iraq](#), capable of supplying 199,000 cubic meters of potable water a day.

"This plant, which combines pretreatment, high-level membrane-filtration and desalination, will significantly improve the quality of drinking water provided to the city of Basra and will eliminate spikes in salinity caused by tides and winds," Jean-Michel Herrewyn, Veolia's senior executive vice president for global enterprises, said in a statement.

Veolia, based in Paris, is the largest water utility in Europe. Hitachi's headquarters are in [Tokyo](#). Construction of the facilities includes loan assistance from the Japanese government, the statement said.

"Iraq Water Desalination Works in Basra Goto Veolia, Hitachi", 23/10/2014, online at: <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-10-23/iraq-water-desalination-works-in-basra-goto-veolia-hitachi.html>

BACK TO TOP

❖ **UN launches appeal for \$2.2 billion to aid displaced people of Iraq**

ERBIL, Kurdistan Region - Some \$2.2 billion is needed to address the urgent humanitarian needs of 5.2 million people across Iraq, said the United Nations in an appeal launched on Thursday.

The Kurdistan Region hosts 47 per cent of the 1.8 million people who were internally displaced in Iraq between January and October 5, or 854,280 individuals, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) said on Tuesday.

The inflow of displaced Iraqis, and of refugees from Syria, quickened after the advances of Islamic State militants across northern Iraq in June, but people have been fleeing the jihadis, particularly in Anbar province, since the beginning of the year.

The Kurdish governorate of Dohuk, together with the disputed districts of Al-Shikhan and Akre, host the largest displaced population – nearly 550,000 individuals, the IOM said.

“The needs of the Iraqi people are immense,” Neill Wright, acting humanitarian co-ordinator for Iraq, said in Baghdad on Thursday. “It’s imperative we step up our efforts.”

Only \$600 million had been contributed to the UN’s strategic response plan, including a large donation by Saudi Arabia in July. The remaining \$1.6 billion was needed for the next 15 months but early contributions were essential with the onset of winter, said a press release from the UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Iraq (OCHA).

Throughout Iraq, 1.26 million people needed some kind of assistance to deal with winter, such as warm clothes, shoes, health services and food. An estimated 2.8 million people were in need of food assistance and approximately 800,000 people were in urgent need of emergency shelter assistance, OCHA said.

“Although much has been done, much more is needed in the coming weeks to prevent additional, unnecessary suffering for many Iraqis,” Wright said. “This effort requires all of us – the UN, non-governmental organisations, civil society and the private sector – to work together. All of us have a role to play.”

The strategic plan was produced by more than 45 humanitarian organisations, including UN agencies, and international and national NGOs. It included the provision of shelter and non-food items, protection, health, food, water sanitation and hygiene, education, and logistics until the end of December 2015.

The UN’s total figure of 5.2 million people needing help in Iraq included 1.7 million living in conflict areas under ISIS and outside government control. The extreme violence of the jihadis makes it extremely difficult for outside agencies to help them.

The IOM said Ninewa and Anbar remained the governorates of origin for the largest displaced populations, reported to be 147,875 families or 49 per cent, and 83,979 families or 28 per cent, of the total caseload.



These areas were the most directly affected in the current crisis and have experienced continuous displacement. Other areas in the central and central-north governorates also reported large waves of displacement through 2014.

Recent clashes between armed groups and government forces have caused additional displacement in Anbar governorate, mainly originating from the district of Hit.

Heavy fighting there triggered the displacement of 3,708 families or 19,098 individuals, including 525 families who had been previously displaced to Hit and who suffered a second displacement. Most of the displacement was to other areas of the governorate, while some families fled to Kerbala and Baghdad, the IOM said.

“UN launches appeal for \$2.2 billion to aid displaced people of Iraq”, 23/10/2014, online at:  
<http://rudaw.net/english/middleeast/iraq/231020141>

**BACK TO TOP**

## ❖ The Last Train

WHEN Secretary of State John Kerry began his high-energy effort to forge an Israeli-Palestinian peace, I argued that it was the last train for a two-state solution. If it didn't work, it would mean that the top-down, diplomatically constructed two-state concept was over as a way out of that conflict. For Israelis and Palestinians, the next train would be the one coming at them.

Well, now arriving on Track 1 ...

That train first appeared in the Gaza war and could soon be rounding the bend in the West Bank. Just last week an East Jerusalem Palestinian killed a 3-month-old Israeli baby and wounded seven others when he deliberately rammed his car into a light rail station.

Can a bigger collision be averted? Not by Washington. It can only come from Israelis and Palestinians acting on their own, directly with one another, with real imagination, to convert what is now an “unhealthy interdependency” into a “healthy interdependency.”

“Never happen!” you say. Actually, that model already exists among Israeli, Palestinian and Jordanian environmentalists — I'll tell you about it in a second — and the example they set is the best hope for the future.

Here's why: The Israeli right today, led by Prime Minister Bibi Netanyahu, has some really strong arguments for maintaining the status quo — arguments that in the long run are deadly for Israel as a Jewish democratic state.

“It is the definition of tragedy,” said the Hebrew University philosopher Moshe Halbertal. “You have all these really good arguments for maintaining a status quo that will destroy you.”

What arguments? Israel today is surrounded on four out of five borders — South Lebanon, Gaza, Sinai and Syria — not by states but by militias, dressed as civilians, armed with rockets and nested among civilians. No other country faces such a threat. When Israeli commanders in the Golan Heights look over into Syria today, they see Russian and Iranian military advisers, along with Syrian Army units and Hezbollah militiamen from Lebanon, fighting jihadist Sunni militias — and the jihadists are usually winning. “They're much more motivated,” an Israeli defense official told me.

That is not a scene that inspires risk-taking on the West Bank, right next to Israel's only international airport. The fact that Israel unilaterally withdrew from Gaza in 2005 and Hamas took over there in 2007 and then devoted most of its energies to fighting Israel rather than building Palestine also does not inspire risk-taking to move away from the status quo. Israel offered Hamas a cease-fire eight days into the Gaza war, but Hamas chose to expose its people to vast destruction and killing for 43 more days, hoping to generate global pressure on Israel to make concessions to Hamas. It was sick; it failed; and it's why some Gazans are trying to flee Hamas rule today.

Diplomatically, President Obama on March 17 personally, face-to-face, offered compromise ideas on key sticking points in the Kerry framework to the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, and asked him point blank if he would accept them. Obama is still waiting for an answer.

Netanyahu and Abbas each moved on some issues, but neither could accept the whole Kerry framework. So the status quo prevails. But this is no normal status quo. It gets more toxic by the day. If Israel retains the West Bank and its 2.7 million Palestinians, it will be creating an even bigger multisectarian, multinational state in its belly, with one religion/nationality dominating the other — exactly the kind of state that is blowing up in civil wars everywhere around it.

Also, the longer this status quo goes on, the more the juggernaut of Israel's settlement expansion in the West Bank goes on, fostering more Israeli delegitimization on the world stage. Right after the Gaza war, in which the United States basically defended Israel, Israel announced the seizure of nearly 1,000 more acres of West Bank land for settlements near Bethlehem. "No worries," Israeli officials said, explaining that this is land that Israel would keep in any two-state deal. That would be fine if Israel also delineated the area Palestinians would get — and stopped building settlements there, too. But it won't. That can only lead to trouble.

"Ironically, most Israeli settlement activity over the last year has been in areas that will plausibly be Israel in any peace map," said David Makovsky, a member of the Kerry peace team, who is now back at the Washington Institute. "However, by Israel refusing to declare that it will confine settlement activities only to those areas, others do not make the distinction either. Instead, a perception is created that Israel is not sincere about a two-state solution — sadly fueling a European delegitimization drive. Israel's legitimate security message gets lost because it appears to some that it

is really about ideology.” Adds the former U.S. peace negotiator Dennis Ross: “If you say you’re committed to two states, your settlement policy has to reflect that.”

Alas, though, “rather than trying to think imaginatively about how to solve this problem,” said Halbertal, Israel is doing the opposite — “bringing the regional geopolitical problem into our own backyard and pushing those elements in Palestinian society that prefer nonviolence into a dead end. We are setting ourselves on fire with the best of arguments.”

Is anyone trying to build healthy interdependencies? Last week, I had a visit from EcoPeace Middle East, led by Munqeth Mehyar, a Jordanian architect; Gidon Bromberg, an Israeli environmental lawyer; and Nader al-Khateeb, a Palestinian water expert. Yes, they travel together.

They came to Washington to warn of the water crisis in Gaza. With little electricity to desalinate water or pump in chlorine — and Gazans having vastly overexploited their only aquifer — seawater is now seeping in so badly that freshwater is in short supply. Waste management has also collapsed, so untreated waste is being dumped into the Mediterranean, where it moves north with the current, threatening drinking water produced by Israel’s desalination plant in Ashkelon. It is all one ecosystem. Everyone is connected.

Up north, though, EcoPeace helped to inspire — through education, research and advocacy — Israeli, Palestinian and Jordanian mayors to rehabilitate the Jordan River, which they had all turned into an open sewer. Since 1994, Jordan has stored water in the winter from its Yarmouk River in Israel’s Sea of Galilee, and then Israel gives it back to Jordan in the summer — like a water bank. It shows how “prior enemies can create positive interdependencies once they start trusting each other,” said Bromberg.

And that is the point. The only source of lasting security is not walls, rockets, U.N. votes or European demonstrations. It’s relationships of trust between neighbors that create healthy interdependencies — ecological and political. They are the hardest things to build, but also the hardest things to break once in place.

“The Last Train”, 26/10/2014, Thomas L. Friedman online at:

[http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/26/opinion/sunday/thomas-l-friedman-the-last-train.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/26/opinion/sunday/thomas-l-friedman-the-last-train.html?_r=0)

**BACK TO TOP**

## ❖ Through thick and thin

The Israel-Jordan peace treaty marked its 20th anniversary on Sunday, and the relationship between Jerusalem and Amman has never been as strong or as tense as it is today -- a dichotomy characteristic of the Middle East and the nature of its peace treaties.

The Israel-Jordan peace treaty was signed in different times by different political leaders. Those were the optimistic days of the Oslo Accords, when hopes for a "new Middle East" and Arab-Israeli peace prevailed. At the time, King Hussein promised then-Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin that the peace between the Hashemite Kingdom and Israel would be a true, warm peace -- nothing like the cold, soulless peace between Jerusalem and Cairo.

The peace deal enabled both countries to openly pursue security and intelligence cooperation, which had covertly taken place for decades, even before Israel's inception. This cooperation was anchored in Israeli and Jordanian leaders' belief that the strategic realities they shared mandated such cooperation, be it to counter the actions of Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Haj Amin al-Husseini in the 1940s, Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser in the 1950s and 1960s, or the Palestine Liberation Organization in the 1970s.

In the two decades since the peace treaty was signed, the security cooperation between Israel and Jordan has broadened, while the strategic cooperation stretched to civilian issues, such as water and energy. Israel currently provides much of Jordan's water supply, and in the future Israel will supply Jordan with natural gas.

Jordan has no viable alternative to Israel on those fronts, but its growing security and economic dependency on Israel has done little to curb the anti-Israel sentiments heard across the kingdom.

Within the Arab world, the Jordanian public is perhaps the most boisterous in its hostility toward Israel, and while Amman is often helpless against the expressions of hatred, at times it prefers to carefully fan the flames, as evident from King Abdullah's recent statement about the need to curb "Zionist aggression" in Jerusalem.



The Jordanian regime's hesitance to suppress expressions of hostility toward Israel stems from its own insecurities about its authority over the kingdom: Only one in four residents is a member of the Bedouin, tribal, Transjordanian core upon which Jordan was founded. About 25 percent are Palestinians and the rest -- half of Jordan's residents -- are refugees from Iraq and Syria. Between the Jordanian Palestinians' longing for their brethren on the other side of the Jordan River and the new threat the Islamic State group poses to the region, Amman's rulers feel it is best to let the public blow off some steam.

Israel, for its part, views Jordan as a vital security buffer on its east. The king, his army, and his intelligence services are what stands between Israel and the Islamic State -- they are what is keeping the tranquil reality on the banks of the Jordan River from echoing the tumultuous realities on Israel's borders with the Gaza Strip in the south and Syria in the north.

Both nations need each other and they are likely to deepen their cooperation, but while Jordan's economic dependency on Israel will likely grow, hopes for warmer ties would have to wait. Regardless, in Mideast terms, the Israel-Jordan peace treaty is a resounding success.

“Through thick and thin”, 26/10/2014, online at: [http://www.israelhayom.com/site/newsletter\\_opinion.php?id=10345](http://www.israelhayom.com/site/newsletter_opinion.php?id=10345)

**BACK TO TOP**

### ❖ The Battle for Palestine — Part Three

**Special Report:** For nearly seven decades, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has fed into growing Mideast extremism, now including hyper-violent Islamic fundamentalism. But does this tortured history offer any hope for a peaceful future, asks ex-U.S. diplomat William R. Polk in the last of a three-part series.

By William R. Polk

To address the quest for peace in Palestine, I begin with events at the end of the 1967 war. In that engagement, Israel had occupied the Sinai Peninsula right up to the edge of the Suez Canal. It then seemed likely to me that in defeat the Egyptian government would be prepared to bend on the attitude that President Gamal Abdel Nasser had proclaimed on the eve of the war. He realized that Egypt needed peace and wanted to recover its lost territory. Nasser had been sufficiently shocked by his defeat that he had at least *pro forma* resigned.

In several articles, I had laid out what I thought could be the shape of an agreement. Some of these were read by then-New York Gov. Nelson Rockefeller and Henry Kissinger. Rockefeller was seeking the Republican presidential nomination and told Kissinger that he wanted me to be his Under Secretary of State.

However, when Nixon was nominated, Kissinger left Rockefeller and went to work for Nixon, who won the presidency in November 1968. During the transition period, Kissinger was designated to be director of the National Security Council and, in December 1968, asked me to discuss the possibility of a peace treaty with President Nasser.

At Kissinger's request, I flew to Cairo, spent some hours with Nasser and the head of his national security council, and returned to report that I thought a deal was possible. Kissinger then asked me to return to Cairo "and push as far as you can get toward a peace treaty."

The main issues to be included in such a treaty on the Egyptian side had to be: Egypt (1) adhering to the treaty that would make the Enterprise Passage at the Straits of Tiran legally an international waterway; 2) demilitarizing the Sinai Peninsula once it was returned to Egypt; 3) moving toward free trade with Israel; and (4) recognizing Israel with all deliberate speed.

In our many hours of discussion, Nasser agreed with these points and corrected in red ink the draft I wrote between the times when we were actually meeting. He went further: he cabled Kissinger, who had moved into the White House, asking him to meet me urgently.

### **Kissinger's Rebuff**

When I met with Kissinger and handed over the draft peace treaty, he expressed no interest and would not even read it. I was absolutely astonished. I pointed out that this agreement was what the U.S. government had been seeking for many years and was a unique opportunity to bring peace to the Middle East. Kissinger said he was busy, but that if I left the treaty on his desk, he would read it when he had time. That time never came.

The opportunity to move toward peace was lost. Fighting along the Canal continued. As a result in the following months, at least 30,000 more people were killed.

As I wrote in my second essay in this series, it was Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir who took the next step in the summer of 1970, seeking a ceasefire on the Suez Canal. She asked me to mediate. I did. The ceasefire went into effect shortly before Nasser's death on Sept. 28, 1970.

Nasser had been a jealous ruler. Most of the "Free Officers" with whom he had seized power in 1952 had long since retired; some were actually under house arrest; and during his 18 years in power no rivals had come to the fore. The old regime was dead; the only large political party, the Wafd, was just a memory; the Muslim Brotherhood, a phantom; and the always tiny Communist Party, a joke.

### **Sadat's Rise**

At his death, the two strongmen of Nasser's entourage compromised with one another by putting forward for the presidency a colleague whom they thought to be an amiable, unambitious, maladroit figure. Anwar Sadat had been publicly scorned by Nasser and was the butt of many an Egyptian joke. He was famous for affecting a military uniform illuminated with almost as much ribbon and brass as America's later General David Petraeus. One of the leading Egyptian commentators described him to me as "Charlie Chaplin playing James Bond." But it was Sadat who would carry the quest for peace to the next stage.

I first met Sadat when Nasser allowed me (as then a member of the State Department's Policy Planning Council) to go to Yemen during that country's civil war. Sadat was infuriated that Nasser had allowed me to visit Yemen, even allowing me to visit the battle zones, and was astonished when

Nasser's brother-in-law, Field Marshal Abdul-Hakim Amr, unrolled before me the maps of a planned Egyptian sweep of the royalist rebel area.

Sadat was convinced that I must be a spy and later, with the encouragement of Henry Kissinger, made life in Egypt impossible for me. These issues are peripheral to my account here but can be accessed in my book, *Personal History* (Washington: Panda Press, 2003).

After taking power in the wake of Nasser's death, Sadat held a weak hand in the peace process: Egypt had catastrophically lost the 1967 war. The formerly industrialized cities along the Suez Canal were in ruins; the part of the army that was not bogged down in Yemen had been gutted; the economy was prostrate; Egypt's major oil field was being drained by the Israelis; the Suez Canal was closed; and the major source of hard currency, tourism, was dead. Hotels were empty.

Worse, the trend was downward: the "postwar war of attrition" was hurting Egypt badly and preventing reconstruction along the Canal while the already terrifying population/land ratio was daily worsening. In foreign relations, Egypt had few friends. It was deeply divided from both Syria and Jordan. Finally, an Israeli army was just a hundred miles from downtown Cairo.

It would be hard to think of a worse combination, but there was yet another factor that was, perhaps, even more debilitating. It was Egypt's (and the rest of the Arab world's) psychological-ideological turmoil. The Arab quandary is so crucial to the events that follow — right up to today — that I must take a detour to explain it; indeed, without an understanding of it, the events of the next years, and those of today, make little sense.

### **The Intellectual-Psychological Context**

The intellectual-psychological context in which Arabs have operated evolved in five stages: first, centuries-old teachings and more recent organizations to resurrect Islamic "purity;" second, through the early Twentieth Century, partly Christian-led particularistic nationalism (Arabic: *wataniyah*); into, third, secular pan-Arabist (Arabic: *qawmiyah*) and Baathist (Arabic: *Ba'ath*) nationalism; fourth, into "Arab socialism" (Arabic: *ijtima'iyah*); and finally into today's Muslim "militantism" (Arabic: *jihadiyah*).

Toward the end of the Eighteenth Century, Muslims were experiencing the "impact of the West." That is, they were beginning to be challenged *commercially* by the growing European economy, *culturally* by Western-inspired changes in taste and style, and *militarily* by the intrusion of Western soldiers. In response, a number of independent, non-official religious scholars and

missionaries set in motion social and intellectual movements that, with intermissions, remain strong today. Although they differed from one another in their interpretation of their traditional norms, these scholars and missionaries all took positions in what is known today as Fundamentalism (Arabic: *Salafiyah*).

The *Salafis* went back for their inspiration to the dour Eighth-Ninth century scholar Ahmad bin Hanbal of Baghdad who preached a strict interpretation of the Islamic heritage and sought to prevent innovation (Arabic: *bida<sup>c</sup> ah*). His most influential successor was the uncompromising Fourteenth Century jurist Ibn Taimiyah. These were the Muslim thinkers who laid the basis for the thought of the Egyptian theologian of the Muslim Brotherhood and today's Muslim Fundamentalists including Gaza's HAMAS, Sayyid Qutub.

In the view of such men as Hanbal, Taimiyah and Qutub, Islam was a coherent system in which the distinctions Westerners draw between the secular and the religious were themselves travesties. For them Islam was an all-encompassing way of life. Since they believed that it had been laid down by God in the Quran and was elaborated by the actions and saying of His "Messenger" Muhammad, the pattern of life and belief were, by definition, perfect and immutable.

To change or even to allow change was, therefore, a sin against God. Additions which had occurred over the centuries since the Quran was delivered needed to be purged. There was no justification for adaptation to changing circumstances. What God decreed had nothing to do with ephemeral human foibles; it was eternal and immutable.

It is perhaps not irrelevant that the classical Arabic word for "to change" (*ghaiyara*) is not neutral, like the English word, which can be for the better or for the worse. Its basic meaning, applied to milk, meant "to sour" or "go bad," or as more generally applied "to be adulterated" or "become unwholesome."

## Following Islam

Islam, the revivalists pointed out, is exact. It demands affirmation of the unity of God (*tawhid*) and denial of any sharing (*shirk*) of His majesty; men are not to exploit one another so taking interest (*riba*) is forbidden; Muslims are enjoined to help one another so everyone must pay a welfare tax, (*zakat*); all must abide by the law (*shariah*) which derives from the Quran or from the actions and sayings (*hadith*) of the Prophet; as brothers (*Ikhwan*) Muslims are forbidden to kill one another; they should perform the pilgrimage (*hajj*) in which Muslims from all over the world assemble to express their faith, exemplify their unity and draw strength from one another; and Muslims are commanded



to struggle (perform *jihad*) in the cause of God (*fi sabili'llah*) to create the community (*ummah*) He had ordered.

The comparison to Judaic law is striking: in both, there are two laws, the law of the Book (the Quran and Torah) and the interpretation of legal scholars (*muftis* and *Rabbis*); each spelled out in great detail the laws of what one must do and what one must not do (*huddud* and *halakha*) and both assert that they are God-given, everlasting and unalterable.

And Islam was not only clearly set out in the Quran but had evolved over the centuries an impressive body of law — as did Judaism and Christianity — that anchored its beliefs in practice. Thus, just as Christian theologians reached back for precedent to such early Church fathers as Tertullian in the Second-Third centuries, Saint Augustus in the Fourth-Fifth centuries and Saint Dominic in the Twelfth-Thirteenth centuries, so traditionalist Muslims drew on Hanbal and Taimiyah. They did not know the inspirer of the Inquisition, Dominic, but, in his emphasis on original meaning, ritual purity and stern discipline, he was not far from Hanbal or Taimiyah. Dominic agreed with the Muslim *salafis* on an uncompromising rejection of innovation (Arabic: *bida'ah* ; Church Latin: *innovatio*).

Like Judaism, Islam contained vestiges of earlier beliefs and practices. The Old Testament and the Quran both reflected primitive tribal Hebrew and Arab societies, and the codes they set forth were severe. The Old Testament aimed at preserving and enhancing tribal cohesion and power while the Quran sought to destroy the vestiges of pagan belief and practice. Both were authoritarian theocracies.

Over the centuries, Islam outgrew its original isolation and came to deal with or incorporate diverse societies and beliefs. Thus, in practice, it became more ecumenical and put aside or modified some of its original concepts. A major adjustment was tolerating Hindus, who as polytheists were the ultimate enemy of the unitarian Muslims. Despite their beliefs, they were eventually treated as though they were “People of the Bible.”

Among themselves, Muslims fragmented into sects and so violated the injunction of unity of faith, even fighting one another despite their proclaimed brotherhood. And local customs were incorporated into the practice of Islam. These and other modifications were seen by “true believers” as perversions. So, from time to time, some Muslim jurists have sought to “go back” to the original or “pure” message as they believed their ancestors had received it. Similar attempts at “return” were advocated by Protestants in Sixteenth and Seventeenth century Europe, Old Believers in Seventeenth

and Eighteenth century Russia, and Middle Eastern reformers in the Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries.

In America, New England Puritans implemented a draconian, Biblically-based legal code, complete with lashings, burnings and stoning to death for such crimes as adultery, sodomy and blasphemy. Today's militant Muslim Fundamentalists, similarly, have insisted on a literal interpretation of early Islamic practice or even, like the Taliban, implemented pre- or non-Islamic tribal customs (Pashtu: *ravaj*) or, like some African Muslim societies, such non-Islamic practices as infibulation.

### **‘True Believers’**

As we see throughout history and in today's events, “true believers,” each in their own religion, have little tolerance for those who follow other gods or who worship the same gods in different ways or under different names. Until quite recently, Catholics and Protestants hated one another with more fervor than either hated Jews or Muslims. In the Seventeenth century Thirty Years War, they virtually destroyed Europe, killing nearly four in each ten of one another.

Similarly, throughout the history of Islam, Sunnis and Shias have massacred one another. Today's Sunni Muslim “ISIS” regards Shia Muslims just as the Catholic Inquisition regarded Protestants. Among “true believers,” difference is often lethal.

Even worse than difference is “near belief.” Throughout history, heretics have everywhere been considered more dangerous than true outsiders. We perhaps forget that the First Crusade was not against Muslims but against a European Christian heresy, the Cathars. The Inquisition spent most of its energy sniffing out Christian deviation, crypto-Jews and Muslims who only pretended to be Christians.

Today, what so infuriates the Fundamentalist Muslims about the Druze, Alawis, Yazidis and other Shia sects is that they are “almost Muslims.” That is, they are deviants within, but on the fringes of, the Islamic family. So Islamic revivalists struggle, often violently, for unity anchored in religious purity.

With this background, I can now turn to how these fundamental aspects of the Muslim experience were manifested.

### **Arab Search for Guiding Principles**

I begin, as Muslim Middle Easterners did, with the basic concept of *salafiyah*, a difficult concept for outsiders to comprehend. The word itself comes from the Arabic verbal “root,” *salafa*, that can be translated as “to take the lead” but also “to keep pace with” and “to return to origins.” (Arabic delights in such complexities.)

Westerners usually place the emphasis on “return,” that is, on “backwardness.” There is justification for this interpretation, but the implication as shown in the three seemingly contradictory translations I just gave is “return to first principles *in order to advance*.”

If this seems awkward or unlikely, consider the European counterpart of *Salafiyah*. Protestant reformers in Sixteenth and Seventeenth century Europe also thought that going back to origins was necessary in order to advance. That concept sparked the great commercial and intellectual revolution in Holland, Belgium and North Germany that laid the basis for modern Europe.

The *Salifis* were not so interested in commerce as the Lutherans, Calvinists and their various offshoots; their underlying objective was to recapture the power and dignity of the days when Islam was a world leader. They believed that by stripping away the shroud of dark ages and returning to “purity,” that is to the original, God-given practice, they could advance toward a dignified, powerful and religiously-ordained future.

Several of these *Salifis* created vast, enduring and far-flung societies — virtual religious empires — that were the most vigorous and popular movements of their times. And, as I will illustrate, what they thought and did, for better or for worse, remain significant today.

Among their leaders from the Eighteenth Century were the Arabian Ahmad ibn Abdul Wahhab (the founder of Wahhabism); the Algerian/Libyan Muhammad bin Ali as-Sanusi (the founder of the North African Sanusi Brotherhood); the Sudanese Muhammad Ahmad al-Mahdi (the founder of the African Mahadiyah movement); the Iranian Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani (who inspired nationalist movements all over the Ottoman-Turkish, Qajar-Iranian and Mughal-Indian empires); and the Egyptian theologian Muhammad Abduh (whose students taught millions of young Muslims all over Asia and Africa).

Until fairly recently, we in the West have known little of these men and their movements, but they were as influential among their peoples as Luther and Calvin were among Westerners. And, as we shall see, their influence is growing among today’s 1 billion Muslims.

## **The Western Encroachment**

The early Muslim movements did not stop the “impact of the West” nor did they appeal to the Christian and Jewish populations of their areas. The Christians and the Jews eagerly accepted the Western intrusion and generally profited materially, intellectually and politically from it.

However, toward the end of the Nineteenth Century some, mainly Lebanese Christian members of the small educated elite, began to try to find a system of belief that could overcome religious difference. The cause remained essentially the same as earlier *salafiyah*: protection again Western intrusion but they focused more sharply on the political challenge. They thought — or at least hoped — that, if they dropped or at least obscured the criteria of religion and focused on something they all could share, they could gather together and become strong. The philosophical or emotional answer, they thought, was the same one that was then rallying Christians in Italy, Germany and France and the Jewish peoples of central and eastern Europe — nationalism.

As I have written in my second essay, nationalism, as understood by the Arabs, was at first a geographically limited concept. The word adopted to encapsulate “nation” also meant “dwelling” or by extension “village” (Arabic: *watan*). Ironically, it is a reasonable Arabic translation of the word “national home” used by the early Zionists (Hebrew: *heimstaät*).

The Zionists used “national home,” as they said, to avoid frightening the British by admitting that they aimed to create a nation-state in Palestine. That was not the intent of the Arabs. They wanted to frighten the British and French into leaving their lands. For that purpose they had to devise a different concept and use a different word. It took them years to find a stronger rallying point, concept and word.

## Seeking Unity

A different rallying point, concept and word came into use more or less coincident with the rise to power of Gamal Abdel Nasser. The word, taken to mean “pan-Arabism,” was also drawn from classical Arabic. It was *qawmiyah*.

*Qawmiyah* was a curious choice because it is the abstract form of *qawm*, a “clan,” an even smaller group than a village, but it was the group to which each individual owed absolute loyalty. That loyalty was the quality that the greatest of the early Arab historians, Ibn Khaldun, called “social cohesion” (Arabic: *‘assabiyah*). When it existed, societies became powerful; when it faded, they perished. So in that fundamental sense it suggested what the Arabs hoped that nationalism would mean to their society: unity.

Arabs are more devoted to their language than any other people I have ever known so not surprisingly another word came to men's lips in the 1940s. The word was "baath" (Arabic: ba'ath), meaning roughly "awakening," and as it became filled with meanings and associations, it signaled the rise of a new movement, a new answer, to the Arab dilemma.

The Baath movement grew out of a discussion group that was formed in Damascus on the eve of the Second World War by French-educated Syrian intellectuals. Immediately after the war, they formed a small but vigorous political party. Authoritarian — it agreed with Rousseau that men had to be forced to be free — and like some contemporary European ideologies, it was somewhat mystical. But above all, pan-Arab unity (Arabic: *ittihad'ul-Arab*) was its goal.

To move toward this goal, it defined "Arab" culturally rather than religiously. Thus, in the quest for unity, it sought to efface the old distinctions that, it believed, were the principal cause of Arab weakness. Also exciting to the postwar generation of Middle Easterners was that it took up social and economic issues and thought of itself as a Socialist movement.

What it meant by that is somewhat vague — it identified with the then popular movements associated with men like Nehru — and like them was determined to root out both the European colonists and their native heirs. The Baath movement spread to Iraq in the 1960s and was taken up by some of the Palestinian leaders.

Like the other nationalist quests — the particularistic nationalisms of the several states, *wataniyah*, and the pan-Arabism of *qawmiyah* — Baathism sundered on the different problems, cultures and objectives of the Arab states. The reasons were profound but allow me an anecdote illustrating the divisive results of the colonial-imperial heritage:

### **Failure of Nationalism**

In 1952, the Rockefeller Foundation sponsored a meeting of prominent Arab intellectuals from around the Middle East. Few had ever met any of the others. All were Arabic speakers, but much of the discussion had to be held in English or French because the Iraqis and Jordanians were accustomed to English terms; the Syrians and Lebanese were accustomed to a French vocabulary; the Egyptians were divided between French for intellectual matters and English for dealing with the goods and services of the West; and the one Libyan, to Italian.

This is a common experience throughout Asia and Africa. Up to the present, the Indians, Pakistanis and people of most of the former African colonies similarly think in and are more familiar with the



languages of their former European masters than with their own heritage or the language and thought of their neighbors. This heritage of colonialism permeates their cultures, their economies and their politics. So it was with the Arabs. Everyone believed in *ittihad'ul-Arab* but each defined it and sought it in his own “vernacular.” While this may seem recondite, it cuts to the quick of modern politics.

Nationalism under whatever name failed to meet the popular objectives of achieving strength, dignity and unity. Many modern Arab thinkers drew the lesson from their failures that their society had to be revolutionized from the bottom up: peasants and the urban poor had to be educated; standards of living had to be improved; diseases wiped out; industries created; land distributed and a new sense of belonging cultivated. To many this suggested what was understood as socialism (Arabic: *ijtimaiyah*); to some, as very briefly in Iraq around 1960, it required even more radical means like Communism or at least some sort of model inspired by the Soviet system.

Nationalism of various varieties and “Arab socialism” were the prevailing ideas and thrusts of movements of the 1960s. Each had its adherents and its aspirations. Each failed to deliver what the Arabs sought. If one could pick a date for the dividing line, it was the catastrophic defeat of the Arabs in the 1967 war. It is perhaps germane that 1967 marked the 40th year of Moses’ “time in the wilderness” to remake his people. I turn now to look at what was happening apart from the Palestinians in the Arab states.

### **Role of the States**

None of the Arab states was comfortable with the Palestinians. Even when they agreed with the long-term aim of recovering Palestine, they feared that the Palestinians would act precipitously and so get them into conflicts with Israel for which they were unprepared. Consequently, the Palestinian leaders periodically traded the drawing rooms of presidents and kings with prison cells.

The King of Jordan was the most consistently involved in Palestinian affairs. Following the 1949-1950 war, he realized that the Jordanian army would never be able to defeat the Israeli army. His army was a primarily Bedouin force that had been established to keep order among the desert tribes. It lacked the manpower, the weapons and the skills for modern warfare.

Consequently, King Hussein, following in his father’s footsteps, undertook virtually nonstop secret negotiations with Israel to work out one *modus vivendi* after another. Like all Middle Eastern secrets, these covert operations were discussed in every cafe.

King Hussein also suffered from the fact that the relatively secure principality of Transjordan had become the kingdom of Jordan by the incorporation of the Palestinian West Bank. While most land was still Jordanian, most of the population had become Palestinian. The Palestinians were less interested in protecting Jordan and its king than in recovering their homeland.

Thus, Jordan became the first center of the Palestinian militant groups; they, in turn, justified their existence by their conflict with Israel; that in turn made it more necessary for the King to deal with the Israelis. The cycle was vicious and soon led to the attempt by the Palestinians to take over Jordan in 1970. In “Black September” 1970, Hussein released his army against the Palestinian and killed perhaps 10,000 of them before securing agreement with the Palestinian leadership that it and its armed groups would leave Jordan for Lebanon.

In Lebanon, there were already about 300,000 Palestinians. While most of them were congregated in huge camps and did not participate directly in Lebanese politics, they constituted about one in each six inhabitants. With the arrival of the leadership, they gradually became a state within the Lebanese state.

### **A Delicate Balance**

This, in turn, frightened the Lebanese and threatened to upend the delicate balance that the French had established among the Lebanon’s religiously defined ethnic groups. The Lebanese army, itself a reflection of Lebanon’s social mosaic, simply broke up. Each community formed its own militia. The most vigorous was the Maronite population which spawned armed forces known as the *Kataib* (Arabic for “regiments”).

Worried by this development, the president of Lebanon who, by the Constitution was a Maronite Christian, invited a Syrian army peacekeeping force to establish virtual control over the country in 1976. But one section of the *Kataib* led by a disaffected army major broke away and was armed, funded and established a separate military fief on the Israeli frontier, out of reach of the Syrians, by Israel.

The *Kataib* was an authoritarian, ultra-nationalist militant movement modeled on the Falange Fascist movements in 1930s Europe. It viewed the Palestinians as the obstacle to its domination of Lebanon. To overcome them, it had to make common cause with Israel.

The Palestinians precipitated conflict with Israel in a long series of “incidents,” among which was a significant raid on northern Israel in March 1978. A few days later, on March 15, the Israeli army invaded south Lebanon.

The move astonished the Carter administration, then in the midst of the Camp David peace negotiations. Acting with unusual determination, the U.S. took the matter to the UN and secured both a motion demanding Israeli withdrawal and creating “the United Nations International Force in Lebanon.” UNIFIL was to monitor Israeli withdrawal but was given authority only to protect itself and was not even given adequate arms to do that. Israel paid it little attention. Israel did not withdraw and refused to allow UNIFIL into the frontier zone.

Emboldened by the entry of Israel into Lebanon, the *Kataib* militants began to try to push the Syrians out. The Syrians struck back and, for the first time, an Arab state asked Israel to come to its aid. Israel did, but its limited actions solved nothing and, after a long series of clashes in June 1982, Israel massively invaded Lebanon.

Brushing aside UNIFIL and paying no attention to an almost unprecedented unanimous Security Council resolution demanding withdrawal, it reached the outskirts of Beirut. There it ran into Palestinian forces.

### **Syria’s Worries**

During these events, Syria warily watched. What happened in Lebanon was not only economically crucial to Syria but the Syrians remembered that the French had earlier used Lebanon as a bastion from which to control their country. They believed that Lebanon was rightfully a part of “Greater Syria.” So their intervention, at the request of the Lebanese government, had seemed a historically justified event.

Lebanon was a risky place for Syrian action. While it might act as a buffer to Israel, its increasingly active Palestinian community could turn it into a battleground with Israel.

The Baathist Syrian regime was at least as hostile to the Palestinian “freedom fighters/guerrillas” as the Jordanians and Lebanese. Yasir Arafat had been a guest in a Syrian prison and later the Syrian

leader, Hafez al-Assad, had not only stopped his air force from assisting the PLO when it was being attacked by the Jordanian army in 1970 but in 1976 even assisted the *Kataib* in its vicious attack on a refugee camp that cost thousands of Palestinian lives.

Later, in 1983, the Syrian regime invited to Damascus Arafat's arch enemy, Abu Nidal, the man who had organized the murder of Arafat's "ambassador" to the Israeli peace party, Issam Sartawi. When Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir asked me to negotiate a ceasefire on the Suez Canal in the summer of 1970, the head of the Egyptian national security council told me that President Nasser would need to have the support of at least one of the leaders of the Palestinian combatants. I flew to Jordan and spent some hours with Sartawi. The day after Nasser made his speech that triggered the deal on the ceasefire, Sartawi issued a statement approving it. I recount the episode in my *Personal History* (Washington: Panda Press, 2003).

### Strategic Issues

Beyond personal antipathies — always so evident in Arab affairs — were strategic considerations. The PLO existed to fight Israel and that above all the Syrian regime did not want. Hafez al-Assad feared that a new war might be the end of his regime or even of Syrian independence.

Although its agricultural area on the Golan Heights had been conquered by Israel, the Syrian regime was determined that Golan not be a theater for Palestinian guerrilla warfare and essentially banned the PLO and other Palestinian groups from activity there. Additionally, it tightly controlled its 300,000 to 400,000 Palestinian residents, and where possible it sought a compromise with Israel according to the resolutions of the United Nations. At the same time, the regime turned to Russia for resupply of the equipment that Syria had lost in war and for protection through what became a mutual security treaty.

During these years, Egypt had gone its own way. Following the death of President Nasser, his place was taken by Anwar Sadat. From being the weak, compromise candidate, Sadat was transformed by the structure of the Egyptian state and the nature of the Egyptian tradition into a pharaoh.

When those who had chosen Sadat tried to recoup their power on May 13, 1971, he used the army to squelch them. The price he had to pay for his victory was giving the army the equipment it needed to rebuild after the debacle of 1967.

Sadat wanted peace. But he realized that to have accepted Israeli terms for peace before the army had tried and failed to avenge the 1967 defeat, would probably have caused some “younger Sadat” to overthrow him. Even if that did not happen, the Israeli terms would have turned Egypt into an Israeli economic colony. So he applied to Russia for arms and to the UN for support.

From Russia, Sadat got the arms along with large numbers of “advisers,” technicians and guardians. From the UN, despite American opposition, in July 1973, 13 of the 15 members of the Security Council voted to “deplore” continued Israeli occupation of Egyptian territory; but the United States vetoed the resolution. That was the end of the peace initiative.

Seeing Sadat’s weakness, as General Itzhak Rabin told me, Israel upped the price of peace.

### **Demanding Surrender**

As Rabin admitted, the Arabs could not accept these terms so they must, in effect, surrender and accept what Israel would give. Rabin was right. Sadat could not accept Israeli terms and, on the advice of his general staff, prepared for war.

Reflecting on these points, I was sure (once again) that war would break out in a few months. This time, I thought it likely that in desperation, Egypt would strike. Most of those observers whose opinions I then respected agreed and so did the Russians. Ironically, the more Sadat warned of the danger of war, the less he was believed. But arms were arriving in early 1973 in both Egypt and Syria in increasing quantities and improving quality. Even Yugoslavia began to furnish Egypt with new anti-tank missiles.

By June 1973, we now know, Sadat and Syrian President Hafez al-Assad had agreed on a plan and had picked a date. Subsequently, King Hussein of Jordan joined the group. Oct. 6, 1973, was to be their “D-Day.” As the Jewish Yom Kippur it seemed a favorable moment and as the anniversary of one of the most important events in early Islam, the Battle of Badr, it seemed auspicious. Israel



precipitated the war by shooting down eight Syrian aircraft off the Syrian coast on Sept. 13, but the plan was already in motion.

The Egyptian strategy was to create a war of sufficient magnitude that the world powers would have to intervene in their own interests. It never, for example, included an attack on Israel itself but only on the occupied areas. Indeed, the battle plan was the major cause of their defeat: they stopped their troops only ten miles into Sinai at places they could not defend. The Egyptians, at least, never thought they could defeat Israel.

Egypt lost the 1973 war, but giving the army its chance freed Sadat to try another approach. He offered to go to the UN with all the Arab states' leaders (and some unidentified Palestinians) to negotiate a peace "based on respect for the legitimate rights of all the people in the area," to stop the fighting "provided Israel returned to the June 5, 1967 lines." He got nowhere.

Sadat was desperate. The Egyptian public was increasingly hungry and blamed the government for food shortages, massive unemployment and corruption. So, Sadat set in motion a series of secret meetings with Israeli officials that set the terms for his remarkable diplomatic gesture: Sadat flew to Jerusalem in Nov. 20, 1977, to address the Israeli parliament, the Knesset, and urge the cause of peace. I turn now to what he encountered in Israel and faced in its strategy.

### **Strengthening of Israel**

As we have seen, what became the state of Israel was already a unified, modern society by the middle of the 1930s. All that changed thereafter was a continuing growth of capacity. Population soared at the end of the Second World War and Israel received major infusions in the following years. After 1989, when Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev allowed emigration, about 1.5 million Jews left the Soviet Union and nearly a million of them went to Israel.

According to the Orthodox Rabbinate, about one in four of these people were not "Jewish" but were a mixture of Jews and others, and both biological and historical studies indicate that many were not of Semitic heritage. The medieval empire of the Khazars in Central Asia had sought to establish a distinct position for itself in a neighborhood of Greek Orthodox Christians and Muslim Iranians,

Turks and Arabs by adopting a different religion: the rulers and probably the bulk of the population adopted Judaism.

Even in the modern period, under Soviet rule, there was a Jewish republic in the Soviet system. A sort of Soviet “Israel” was established by Stalin in 1934 to enable Russian Jews to promote their own culture. Known as Yereyskaya, it was in the Far East on the frontier with Manchuria. The capital city was Birobidzhan. At its height, it contained nearly a quarter of a million Jews, but most emigrated so that the population today is almost entirely ethnic Russians and Ukrainians.

A number of other Jewish populations (the Mountain Jews, aka the Juhuro , and the Georgian Jews) existed in Central Asia. The biological relationship of these peoples to Sephardic, Ashkenazi and Oriental Jews is controversial but, apart from physical appearance which varies markedly, differing susceptibility to certain illnesses has been observed.

The latest note is Nicholas Wade’s “Genes suggest...” in *The New York Times*, Oct. 8, 2013. It appears that a significant part of the Russian Jewish population is not of Semitic origin. Inter-marriage with and/or conversion to Judaism by such peoples as the Berbers is documented; less well studied is the origin of African, Indian and Chinese Jews.

But the Israeli “Law of Return” considered the Soviet Jews to be Jews and so rightful immigrants. The one in six Israelis who are culturally Russian has profoundly affected Israeli society and politics, making the Israel of the Twentieth-first Century very different from the Israel of the Twentieth Century.

## **Israel’s Expansion**

By 2014, the Israeli Jewish population reached approximately 6.2 million. Most Jews now live in the area designated by the UN resolutions as Israeli, but about 540,000 live on the West Bank and East Jerusalem which were designated by the UN resolutions and ceasefire agreements as Palestinian. An additional 20,000 live in the disputed Israeli-occupied Golan Heights. About 1.7 million Israelis are Palestinians. (Jordan’s population was then roughly 8 million and Lebanon’s 4.5 million.)

The land of Palestine has always been short of water, and, despite large-scale efforts at water management and massive draw-downs of aquifers — Israelis use at least three times as much water per capita as Jordanians — the Israelis have not been able to “make the desert bloom.” Less than 14 percent of the land is classified as “arable” and less than 4 percent can be permanently cropped. (This compares to Jordan’s 1.97 percent of arable land and slightly less than 1 percent of permanently cropped area. Most of Jordan, like Egypt, is desert.) The demand for more water is a key factor in Israeli policy.

The Israeli population is young with a median age of just under 30; four in each ten Israelis are below the age of 25. These figures give Israel a large military potential. Taking the portion of the population aged 16 to 49 as fit for military service, Israel can draw on 1.8 million males and 1.7 million females. Each year an additional 62,000 males and 59,000 females reach military age.

The Gross domestic product (GDP) of Israel in 2013 was \$274.5 billion (roughly eight times the GDP of Jordan or Lebanon) which made it the world’s 49th richest country.

As these figures indicate, Israel is a rich, technologically advanced country which has captured world markets in advanced military equipment, pharmaceuticals and the more traditional cut diamond trade. It actively encourages (particularly Jewish) tourism both to earn foreign currencies and as an aspect of its security and economic policies.

Israel benefits greatly from foreign investment and even more from the overseas Jewish communities’ donations. These benefits have resulted in recent years in a growth rate of nearly 5 percent per annum. Absent major war, the economic future appears bright. Perhaps the most significant new development has been the discovery of large deposits of natural gas off the Mediterranean coast.

Despite these favorable conditions, about one in each five inhabitants (mainly Oriental Jews and the Israeli Arab citizens) live below the poverty line. In mid-2011, significant protests were mounted about income inequality and inflation. In fact, income inequality and poverty rates are among the highest of OECD countries.

## Israel's Assets

The basic resource of Israel is a highly educated, strongly motivated and cultural unified Jewish majority of its population. As I have mentioned in the previous essay in this series, this enables the government to mobilize military forces in hours that would require weeks or even months in its Arab neighbors. The small size of the country enables it to shift its military force from front to front to achieve “theater dominance.”

Moreover, Israel holds the military “trump card.” From the early 1960s, if not before, Israel was working on the design and production of nuclear weapons at a secret site at Dimona. In a variety of ways, including espionage, it acquired crucial information and materials from France, the U.S. and South Africa. Relations with South Africa, then a repressive, segregated state that viewed its black population much as the Israelis viewed the Palestinians, were close. South Africa also offered help on developing and testing nuclear weapons and even sent troops to help patrol Israel’s West Bank frontier.

*The Guardian* published on May 24, 2010, a crucial document on Top Secret negotiations between then-Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and South Africa Defense Minister P. W. Botha. What they were planning was among other things a violation of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. The document was found in the South African government archives, after the fall of the white supremacist regime by Professor Sasha Polakow-Suransky, who subsequently published it in his *The Unspoken Alliance: Israel’s Secret Alliance with Apartheid South Africa*. Peres denied his participation.

On Sept. 22, 1979, Israel probably conducted at least one atmospheric nuclear test whose characteristic double flash was detected by an American satellite. Israel is thought to have conducted other tests in or off the coast of South Africa.

At least by 2003, Israel had deployed nuclear-tipped American cruise missiles on its submarine fleet. Israel has neither denied nor confirmed its nuclear arsenal, but it is believed to have a large inventory (perhaps 200 or more) of nuclear devices along with chemical and biological weapons. [On American involvement see Amir Oren, “Newly declassified documents...” *Haaretz*, Aug. 30, 2014.]

## Foreign Help

A major additional resource for Israel has been its ability to draw financial, education and commercial preference from governments. American contributions of various kinds to date total well over \$100 billion. Israel has also received preferential treatment on contracts with the U.S. Department of Defense and at least one branch of Israel's government, its intelligence organization, is largely funded by the CIA. To address how these attributes impact upon relations with the surrounding Arab countries and with the Palestinians, I turn to the Israeli national strategy.

As I have laid out in my second essay in this series, the fundamental Zionist strategy to found the state of Israel has been continued by the state of Israel: it was and is to acquire land on which to settle Jewish immigrants. This was embodied on the eve of the 1947-1949 war in what was known as "Plan D." Tactical implementation of the strategy varied according to circumstances over the years, but the central thrust of the policy remained: Israel wanted land without non-Jewish people. To accomplish this goal it was prepared to adopt any tactics regardless of legality or world opinion.

In addition to hundreds of separate actions — attacks on villages, confiscation of land, expulsion of populations and planting of settlements — the strategic guidance of the principal Israeli officials and statesmen can be seen in the following statements.

During the build-up to the 1973 war, when Egypt alienated the Western powers by seeking a military alliance with Russia, Prime Minister Golda Meir set the terms of what Israel would demand in a settlement. Israel would 1) retain that part of Syria it had conquered (the Golan Heights); 2) would keep control over the West Bank and probably force much of the Palestinian population out; 3) would tie the Jordan economy to Israel by allowing Jordan access to its ports at Haifa and Gaza; 4) would keep and perhaps incorporate the Gaza strip; and (5) would retain a sizable area around Sharm ash-Shaikh adjacent to the Straits of Tiran where the war had begun. At that time, Israel appropriated an additional 400 square miles of the occupied West Bank.

## Dayan's Hard Line

General Moshe Dayan, the minister of defense during the 1973 war, later described what might be called by analogy to the Nineteenth Century British policy in Afghanistan as the Israeli "Forward



Policy.” Focusing on the Golan Heights, he told a confidant that the Israelis “would send a tractor to plow some area where it wasn’t possible to do anything, in the demilitarized area, and it knew in advance that the Syrians would start to shoot. If they didn’t shoot, we would tell the tractor [driver] to advance further, until in the end the Syrians would get annoyed and shoot. And then we would use artillery and later the air force also, and that’s how it was.”

Dayan anticipated that after the Israeli army, on his personal order, seized Golan in 1967, the “Israeli farmers would waste no time settling on the fertile land, making it difficult [for the Government] subsequently to withdraw. ... They didn’t even try to hide their greed for that land,” according to Rami Tal who kept the talk secret for 21 years and then published it in the weekend supplement to the newspaper *Yedioth Abronoth*. It was then quoted by Serge Schmemmann as “Firestorm Over the Golan,” *International Herald Tribune*, May 12, 1997.

As I noted above, General Itzhak Rabin, the chief of the Israeli general staff and later ambassador to Washington and still later prime minister, told me, Israel had used its victory in the 1973 war to “up the price” of peace.

It then included face-to-face negotiations to achieve “reconciliation” to the existence of a Jewish independent state; completely open frontiers with free trade and maintenance of Israeli overwhelming military superiority without any interference by UN peacekeeping forces. Rabin admitted that the Arabs could not accept these terms so they would be driven to surrender and accept what Israel would give.

Skiping ahead several years, General Ariel Sharon, then minister of defense, in a speech at Tel Aviv University on Dec. 15, 1981, laid out the adaptation of the basic strategy to the new situation created by the growth of Israeli power and the transfer of the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestine Authority to Lebanon. The strategy was expanded to occupy south Lebanon and completely destroy the PLO.

In fact, although Sharon did not spell this out, the objective was even more inclusive. According to the former deputy mayor of Jerusalem, Meron Benvenisti, “The true objective of the war ... was the destruction of the powerful political and intellectual center of Palestinian nationalism that had

developed over the years in Beirut.” That is, it was to “decapitate” and demoralize the Palestinians. That was the first part of Sharon’s plan. [See "The Turning Point in Israel," *The New York Review of Books*, Oct. 13, 1983. During its withdrawal, the Israeli army packed up and took to Israel the "memory bank" the Palestinians had been assembling as their national archives. See my *The Arab World Today* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 352.]

### Arranging Lebanon

As Sharon laid out, the second part of his plan was to install a Maronite *Kataib* government. This government, owing its position to Israel, would sign a peace treaty. Then, third, Israel would “encourage” the remaining West Bank Palestinians to “transfer” to Jordan. This would have the effect of opening the entire West Bank to Jewish settlement, turning Jordan into “Palestine,” and so ending Palestinian claims on Israel.

Sharon recognized that these moves would convulse Jordan; consequently, Israel would intervene there to install a government that would also sign a peace treaty. Finally, these moves would leave Syria isolated and would force Saudi Arabia to compromise, thus making Israel the predominant Afro-Asian power. [Sharon's talk was published as a Government press bulletin in Jerusalem on Dec. 15, 1981, and was summarized by Robert Neumann in *Foreign Affairs* 62(1983).]

The Israeli invasion of Lebanon on June 6, 1982, six months after Sharon’s speech, set his plan in motion.

Overall, in each of the statements on Israeli strategy, it is clear that the American slogan of trading “land for peace” was never seriously considered; land was always the primary goal of Israeli strategy. Emptying the land of its Palestinian inhabitants was the goal of Plan D in 1948 and remains the underlying Israeli policy today. Everything else was tactics.

I now briefly focus on the experience of the Palestinians during these years.

## FATAH, the PLO and Quest for Statehood

The failure of the Arab states in the 1973 war gave the Palestinians their first clear shot at achieving statehood. Before that time, they had been scattered, isolated and mutually hostile bands operating with little effect on the Israeli borderlands. It was the states, not the Palestinians, that mattered.

As I wrote in my second essay, the national movement was composed of two major organizations. The first was FATAH (Arabic: *Harakat at-Tahrir al-Falastini*). Like a number of Middle Eastern political movements, it grew out of student discussion groups. Its early members were professional men among whom the leader was Yasir Arafat. He was to play the major role in Palestinian affairs for the next 30 years.

Very different in origin and character was the second group, the Palestinian Liberation Organization (Arabic: *Munazzama't-Tahrir al-Falastini*). The PLO had been founded in 1964 by the Arab states and was more or less superimposed on the Palestinians. The stated aim was to engage in armed struggle against Israel while the unspoken purpose was to control the divergent groups of Palestinian militants. Its titular leader, who never really established leadership, was a Palestinian who had joined the diplomatic service of Saudi Arabia.

Also different was the way the two organizations mobilized themselves for the struggle. While the PLO formed a standing military force, the Palestine Liberation Army, FATAH was inspired by and tried to copy what its leaders thought had given the Algerian national movement its power. This turned out to be a misunderstanding and was so important in the development of the Palestinian movement that I must clarify it. As head of the American government task force on Algeria, I had access to everything that the American government could find out about the war; later I researched all available public materials to write the chapter on Algeria in my book *Violent Politics* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007).

The Algerian standing army never engaged the French army; it spent its time in exile in Tunisia. The fighting was done by small fighting groups (Arabic diminutive: *kutaib*) of less than a hundred Algerian men and women scattered throughout Algeria's districts who fought with guerrilla tactics; in the cities the fight was carried on by even smaller cells that used terrorist tactics. Their aim was to

drive the French out of Algeria by making staying there unacceptably expensive both financially and politically for them.

## **Expelled to Tunisia**

None of this worked for the Palestinians. They tried to find their “Tunisia” in both Jordan and Lebanon but were driven out of both, ironically finally to the real Tunisia. Nor could they establish either *Kutaib* or terrorist cells inside Israel; such attacks as they could mount were always from external bases. Finally, whereas the one million or so European settlers in Algeria could go to France or elsewhere, most of the several million Israelis believed that Israel was their final destination.

But, like the Algerians, the Palestinians thought of their organization as a state in the process of being born or, perhaps more accurately at least in their hopes, a state in the process of being recognized. In fact, the PLO was a coalition of eight separate and ideologically heterodox bands that were loosely tied together by a sort of parliament, the Palestine National Council (Arabic: *al-Majlis al-Watani al-Filistini*).

Following the defeat of the Arab states in the 1967 war, the PLO underwent a radical change: building on the organization’s strength as a national movement dedicated to guerrilla warfare, Yasir Arafat’s FATAH gained control of the PLO at the 1969 National Council meeting in Cairo. From that time until his death in 2004, Arafat was the recognized leader.

As the best informed and most able of the observers of the movement, Eric Rouleau, wrote, by the 1980s, “Fatah, the core and mainstream of the PLO ... represents some 80 percent of the Fedayeen and probably a like percentage of the Palestinian population at large.” [See “The Future of the PLO,” *Foreign Affairs*, Fall, 1983.] Eric Rouleau was born an Egyptian of Jewish background who, as the Middle Eastern correspondent of the French newspaper *Le Monde* won the respect and trust of Arafat (and remarkably of his rivals and enemies) in half a century of reporting. He later became the French ambassador to Tunisia.

From the FATAH/PLO perspective, the Jordanian monarchy was both an antiquarian residue of colonial times and a virtual Israeli puppet. But Jordanian territory offered the potential for Palestinian

survival as a nation and a base for guerrilla operations that might lead to the recovery of at least a part of Palestine.

So, as I have mentioned, the Palestinians in the spring of 1970 steadily encroached upon the prerogatives of the Jordanian state. Someone, thought to have been a Palestinian, tried to assassinate King Hussein; the PLO mounted attacks on government buildings; and more or less officially the PLO demanded that the King dismiss a number of senior officials including his uncle who was head of the army. The King then realized that he would have to destroy the PLO or be destroyed by it. He unleashed his army in September — “Black September” — which, after killing perhaps 10,000 Palestinians, drove the rest out of Jordan.

With Jordan closed to them, the PLO moved to Lebanon where it thrived. The pluralism of Lebanese society made entree for the leadership easy and the existence of numbers of refugee camps in which some 300,000 Palestinians lived gave them a niche. In fact about one in six residents of Lebanon was a Palestinian. But, the Palestinians soon overplayed their hand and built resistance to themselves that would have particularly tragic consequences.

### **Military Changes**

During their time in Lebanon, the Palestinians changed both the structure and tactics of their armed forces. Arafat decided that the PLO armed forces should convert from a guerrilla force to a regular army and that they should stop their attacks across the frontier. The first made them much more vulnerable to the Israeli air force and army and the second did not prevent the Israelis from attacking. Israel invaded in 1982.

Despite, or perhaps because of, the new tactics, the PLO fought a hard fight. It had taken Israel only six days to defeat the Arab armies in 1967 and just three weeks in 1973, but Israel required ten weeks in Lebanon to defeat the PLO.

Beirut proved no easy prize. Besieged, the Palestinians held out for more than two months despite massive Israeli air and artillery bombardments and the cutting off of water and electricity. Both Lebanese and Palestinian casualties were heavy. Finally, under an agreement brokered by the United



States, the leadership and nearly 15,000 Palestinian combatants departed for exile in Tunisia and other Arab states.

What they left behind in Lebanon was a disaster. Once PLO soldiers had departed, the refugees in the camps were defenseless. The U.S. government had guaranteed their safety, but did not lift a finger when, two weeks later on Sept. 16, the Palestinian refugees were butchered by the Maronite *Kataib* under Israeli control and with Israeli assistance.

The *Kataib* massacred well over a thousand civilians, mainly women and children. General Sharon subsequently admitted that in addition to having the camps under the control of his forces, he had arranged that they lighted flares to assist the *Kataib*. So shocked was world opinion that, too late, the U.S. rushed in a Marine detachment which, subsequently frequently clashed with Israeli troops.

In Israel, too, the reaction was one of astonishment and disgust. Some 350,000 Israelis demonstrated in Tel Aviv against the government. A senior government official, the military governor of the West Bank (a former colleague of mine), resigned and 1,000 Israeli army reservists requested not to be assigned to Lebanon.

The massacre and Sharon's role in it were investigated by a justice of the Israeli Supreme Court who recommended that three senior officers, including the chief of staff, be relieved of their command and that Sharon be removed from office. Sharon refused.

### ***Intifadas and the Evolution of the PLO***

Palestinians, by then numbering nearly five million , scattered in camps in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, the West Bank and Gaza, impoverished and dependent upon the UN relief agency, UNRWA, were beginning to realize that they were represented by an always distant, high living and nomadic establishment.

Tales of corruption among the leaders spread, and step by step Yasir Arafat gave up the Palestinian objectives which he had proclaimed and on which he based his legitimacy. Those of us who visited the camps and talked with the “inmates” — they were virtual prisoners — heard everywhere sounds of growing anger. Conferences at which the leaders made speeches seemed to many with whom I

spoke not only irrelevant to their lives but even sick jokes. Arafat had begun to be regarded as an Arab Quisling.

For the meantime, the Israelis pushed ahead with their programs and in a growing variety of ways treated the Palestinians much as Germans had treated the Jews and the Boers had treated the Bantus in South Africa. For years, the Palestinians just ducked. They could do little else, but their very weakness invited further repression.

As Ben Gurion said of them already in 1947, the “only thing left for them to do is to run away.” During my first visit to Palestine in 1946, I spent a weekend with some Jewish friends I had met on the ship going from New York. Among the group were several *sabras*, Jews born in Israel. At one point in our discussion, the issue of the tragedy of the German Jews came up. To my astonishment, the *Sabras* expressed little sympathy. The Holocaust victims, one said, just “marched tamely to their deaths. They should have fought. We would have.”

I think that attitude was transferred to the Palestinians. Having just acquiesced, they invited repression. Many Jews simply despised them for their weakness.

### **Palestinian Badges**

Jewish memories of the European oppression had become distant. During the 1980s, settlers in the new Israeli town of Ariel forced the local Palestinians to wear badges inscribed with the Hebrew words for “Foreign Worker.” When three Jewish reporters came to investigate, Ariel townsmen beat them up. Then, when the Israeli press pointed out how bitterly Jews had resented being forced to wear identifying labels (yellow stars) in Europe, the town changed the wording but kept the badges. [*The New York Times*, June 3, 1989, Alan Cowell, "Documents Given to Arabs."]

For years, Jewish settlers on the West Bank had formed vigilante “intervention forces” that the government armed and authorized to act as auxiliary police. These groups were well known for searching, raiding and intimidating Arab villagers while the more extreme groups acted as terrorists.

On the national level, an American, Rabbi Meir Kahane, was involved in various terrorist attacks. When some of the Jewish terrorists also began to attack Jews, the Israeli police moved against them.

Among both Jews and Arabs, anger was endemic. But, despite all the warning signs, the sudden explosion of Dec. 8, 1987, caught everyone by surprise.

Like many explosions, the revolt was triggered by a relatively small event. An Israeli army truck ran into a civilian car in one of the huge Gaza refugee camps and killed four Palestinians. The story spread throughout the West Bank and Gaza that it was no accident but yet another in the many and increasingly vicious ways the Israelis treated the Palestinians. That is, they saw the event as proof of what they already believed.

So began what has been called “the First *Intifadah*.” Like many Arabic words, *intifadah* is more complex than the usual translation, “uprising,” suggests. It incorporates the notion of violence, a shaking (of the body) and also forcing a person to pay back what is owed, so “retribution” and, in a more primitive sense, to plumb the bottom of a well.

The Palestinians were not being incited by their self-appointed leaders. Professor Don Peretz reported that “army intelligence officers whom I met concluded that the uprising was indeed spontaneous, not caused by outside agitators or programmed by PLO directives from abroad.” (*Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1988)

## Rising Up

The *Intifadah* was a popular uprising: workers, on their own, stopped going to jobs on Israeli farms and workshops, refused to ride in cars with Israeli license plates, wrote graffiti calling for resistance on walls in Jerusalem and wherever they could reach, even barricaded streets and (subconsciously or consciously picking up the David and Goliath theme) began to use slingshots to stone Israeli police and soldiers.

The Israeli government struck back with massive force. Minister of Defense General Yitzhak Rabin sent 80,000 soldiers into the affected areas and authorized them to fire live ammunition into demonstrators. As he told *New York Times* correspondent Anthony Lewis, “‘The first priority is to use force, might, beatings...’ As the policy was explained by an analyst in the *Jerusalem Post*, ‘beating suspected protest leaders ‘is considered more effective than detentions.’ A detainee is

released after 18 days unless there is evidence to hold him and ‘he may then resume stoning soldiers. But if troops break his hand, he won’t be able to throw stones for a month and a half.”

As John Kifner reported in *The New York Times* on Feb. 25, 1988, breaking bones is “a new, officially declared policy of the Israeli army and the police.” David K. Shipler reported in *The New York Times* that the head of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations called the beatings “an offense to the Jewish spirit” that “betrays the Zionist dream.” He cabled the Israeli president, “We plead with you to bring this madness to an end.” (U.S. Jews Torn Over Arab Beatings,” Jan. 26, 1988)

But there was little criticism in the American Jewish community. Some groups reported that contributions had actually increased and “some have called wanting to arrange education and fund-raising parties, asking who from the army can come and speak.” Mr. Rabin denied responsibility but Colonel “Yehuda Meir, who is being court-martialed for reportedly ordering his troops to arrest Arabs and then break their arms and legs,” said that he was acting according to orders from Mr. Rabin who was then Minister of Defense. The Israeli Parliament decided not to investigate. [*New York Times*, "Israel Declines to Study Rabin Tie to Beatings, July 12, 1990]

The Israeli newspaper *Haaretz* reported that “hospital and clinic records showed that 197 people had been treated for fractures because of beatings in [just the first] three days” of implementation of the new policy. Additionally, there were a number of reports of security police beating Palestinian suspects to death.

## **A New Cycle**

And it wasn’t only the regular security police who acted: the army admitted that it allowed teenage Jewish paramilitary trainees to beat Palestinian detainees with clubs, breaking their bones. The young Israeli trainees were developing attitudes and “skills” that would affect the rest of their lives. Since for 16 months during 1988 and 1989 all the schools and colleges were closed, young Palestinian men and women had little to do but nurse grudges and throw stones. The cycle of hatred had moved to the next generation of both Palestinians and Israelis. The breakdown of humanism ultimately had impacts on everyone.

Casualty, wounding and demolition statistics are variously reported, but even the minimal figures are staggering. During those months 25,599 Palestinians were injured and at least 430 were killed, 48 were expelled across frontiers, 176 houses were blown up or bulldozed by the IDF and 6,599 Palestinians were imprisoned.

The activities of the United Nations “Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories” were restricted, but it reported on Oct. 24, 1988, quoting Knesset Member Dedi Zucker as saying in a speech at the Knesset that in the previous ten months, “1,999 Arabs had been injured from beatings with truncheons, causing breaking of bones, 647 were injured from gas and 979 from shooting. During the same period 44 houses were demolished without trial, leaving 600 people homeless.”

Acting on the report, the UN General Assembly passed Resolution 43/21 of Nov. 3, 1988, in which it “*Condemns* Israel’s persistent policies and practices violating the human rights of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem, and, in particular, such acts as the opening of fire by the Israeli army and settlers that result in the killing and wounding of defenceless Palestinian civilians, the beating and breaking of bones, the deportation of Palestinian civilians, the imposition of restrictive economic measures, the demolition of houses, collective punishment and detentions, as well as denial of access to the media [and] ...

“*Demands* that Israel, the occupying Power, abide immediately and scrupulously by the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, and desist forthwith from its policies and practices that are in violation of the provisions of the Convention...”

In the months following the initial outburst, the killings and beatings continued. To what end, one may ask? The consensus of observers including Israeli intelligence services and the chief of the Israeli General Staff was that the Palestinians perceived a mortal challenge of such magnitude that their reaction to it forged it into a nation. Even the normally passive Israeli Arabs joined. The UN investigation noted that “For the first time ... the Arab population of Israel held a strike in sympathy with the population of the territories...”



## ‘Schools of Hatred’

What then happened were developments that were common among other repressed communities. Prison camps became “schools of hatred” in which the politically active communicated their beliefs and experiences to the new arrivals and, like the earlier Jewish terrorist group, the Irgun, and the dissident Russians under Stalin with their *samizdat*, the Palestinians began to circulate among themselves mimeographed newspapers and articles. They were avidly read and also helped to focus public opinion on the *intifadah*. The audience was there.

As Robert Friedman wrote (*New York Review of Books*, March 29, 1990) “Every refugee family I met in the occupied territories had at least one son in prison, in the hospital or dead.” In the 20 years after 1967, 300,000 Arabs had been arrested.

The Israeli chief of staff was reported on June 17, 1989, on Israeli radio saying that the uprising could not be resolved militarily “short of mass deportation, starvation or genocide.”

Meanwhile, living conditions of the Palestinians continued to deteriorate. By 1988, Gaza, which is about twice the size of Washington D.C. but is mainly desert was bulging with 650,000 people. It would soon double. And the Israeli government estimated that over half of the occupied territories had passed into the hands of Israel or Israeli citizens by 1986.

During these years, a sequence of well-publicized meetings took place between the PLO and the Israeli government — in Madrid, Oslo, Camp David, Taba, Annapolis and elsewhere. I will skip over them as they were more public relations affairs than substantive meetings. They also seemed like meaningless events to the Palestinians who again took up their slingshots and rocks in what is known as the Second *Intifadah*.

Like the First *Intifadah*, so the Second *Intifadah* was ignited by what seemed to the Israelis and even to Yasir Arafat and other senior members of the PLO an unimportant event: the outstanding Israeli “hawk,” Ariel Sharon, on Sept. 28, 2000, went to al-Aqsa Mosque (the Haram ash-Sharif) as he said “to show that it was still under Israeli sovereignty.”

Muslim Palestinians saw his act as an attack on their religion, also demonstrating how out of touch the PLO leaders were with the Palestinians. Furious, they threw themselves into the insurrection.

## The Second Uprising

The Second *Intifadah* was even more violent than the first. Thousands of Israeli Jewish citizens attacked the Israeli Arabs and their property while the Israeli army attacked Palestinians. The police used live ammunition and helicopter gunships against stone-throwing youths. Fairly detailed records were compiled by Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, but, despite a UN Security Council order (which, that time, was not vetoed by the United States), the Israeli government tried to block a UN Human Rights Council investigation and refused to cooperate with it.

The UNHRC investigation was under the chairmanship of Justice Richard Goldstone of South Africa. Other members were Christine Chinkin, Professor of International Law at LSE; Hina Jilani, Advocate of the Supreme Court of Pakistan and a member of the International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur in 2004; and Desmond Travers, a former colonel in the Irish Defence Forces and member of the Board of Directors of the Institute for International Criminal Investigations.

The Mission made an “inclusive approach to gathering information” with on-site interviews of scores of officials and ordinary people and by accessing satellite imagery and video and other films. It included extremely detailed accounts of the events and related each to international law, conventions and treaties. The Report was published on Sept. 25, 2009.

The Israelis were furious. Both they and their mainly Jewish supporters in America and Britain put extraordinary pressure on the members of the team to alter their findings.

Goldstone, a notably sober, experienced and fair-minded man, who although himself Jewish, was accused of anti-Semitism. He cracked under the strain. In a letter to the editor of *The Washington Post* on April 1, 2009, he disavowed what he and the other team members had found.

The other members of the team, themselves distinguished investigators, were outraged and reaffirmed their findings. Indeed, since the report was so exhaustive, it is difficult to see how

Goldstone could meaningfully have retracted its findings, which were accepted by the UN General Assembly, the UNHRC, the European Union and the relevant non-governmental organizations.

The Report makes clear that the Israeli intent was not only to kill the Palestinian leadership, an echo of Ariel Sharon's stated policy during the Lebanon campaign, but to make Gaza unlivable by destroying food: "the only purpose [of destroying a mill] was to put an end to the production of flour in the Gaza Strip." (§ 50, 915-927); water (§52,1022); housing: "3,354 houses [were] completely destroyed and 11,112 partially damaged (§53,67); power sources (§65,187) and sewage treatment (§971). The Committee pointed out (§57,67) that these measures particularly harmed children, large numbers of whom were already "stunted" and in poor health from lack of an adequate diet.

Women were "detained in degrading conditions, deprived of food and access to sanitary facilities, and exposed to the elements in January without any shelter." (§57) Women and children as well as men were used as human shields (§58).

"The Palestinian men who were taken to detention facilities in Israel were subjected to degrading conditions of detention, harsh interrogation, beatings and other physical and mental abuse." (§ 59) This treatment was "contrary to fundamental principles of international humanitarian law and human right law. ... Such acts are grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions and constitute a war crime." (§60) "Hospitals and ambulances were targeted by Israeli attacks." (§68) "Some 280 schools and kindergartens were destroyed." (§70)

## **Settler Violence**

The Report found that "Settler violence in the West Bank in the period preceding the Israeli military operations in Gaza ... [is a result of] Israel's decade-long policy of facilitating and encouraging the settling of its citizens inside occupied Palestinian territory, defined as transfer of population and prohibited by international humanitarian law." (§1384)

Casual and unnecessary cruelty was repeatedly evident. One civilian who had been shot in front of his family was "pleading for help from his wife, children and relatives ... [but they] were under a very credible threat of being shot themselves if they came to his help, and [they] were compelled to abandon him on the road to bleed to death." (§742).

“The Mission found in the above incidents that the Israeli armed forces repeatedly opened fire on civilians who were not taking part in the hostilities and who posed no threat to them.” (§ 800)

Overall, the Report pointed out that “Israel’s military operation in Gaza between 27 December 2008 and 18 January 2009 ... fits into a continuum of policies aimed at pursuing Israel’s political objectives. ... Many such policies are based on or result in violations of international human rights and humanitarian law.” (§1877); “the policy of blockade that preceded the operations and that in the Mission’s view amounts to collective punishment intentionally inflicted by the Government of Israel on the people of the Gaza Strip. ...

“These measures were imposed by Israel purportedly to isolate and weaken Hamas after its electoral victory in view of the perceived continuing threat to Israel’s security that it represented. Their effect was compounded by the withholding of financial and other assistance by some donors on similar grounds. Adding hardship to the already difficult situation in the Gaza Strip, the effects of the prolonged blockade did not spare any aspect of the life of Gazans.” (§1878). About 3,000 Palestinians and 1,000 Israelis lost their lives.

These patterns of behavior were not in isolation. Already in 2003, according to UN Relief and Works Agency Commissioner General Peter Hansen in “Hungry in Gaza” (*The Guardian*, March 5, 2003) “Palestinians are suffering in the main from micro-nutrient deficiencies” that cause children to “fail to grow and develop normally; their cognition is damaged, often severely and irreversibly, and their immune systems are compromised.”

He continued, “The stark fact is that almost a quarter of Palestinian children are suffering from acute or chronic malnutrition.” Independent journalist accounts confirmed this: *Haaretz*, Sept. 3, 2006, Gideon Levy, “Gaza’s Darkness.” *The Independent*, Sept. 9, 2006, Patrick Cockburn “Palestinians forced to scavenge for food on rubbish dumps.”

In a Dec. 15, 2007 article in *The Washington Post*, entitled “Sealed off by Israel, Gaza Reduced to Beggary,” Scott Wilson reported that “The Israeli government is increasingly restricting the import into the Gaza Strip of batteries [even for hearing aids for the 20,000 hearing-impaired children], anesthesia drugs, antibiotics, tobacco, coffee, gasoline, diesel fuel...”

In *The Guardian* in a Dec. 21, 2008 article entitled “Israeli blockade ‘forces Palestinians to search rubbish dumps for food,’” Peter Beaumont noted that the UN Relief and Works Agency had compiled figures showing that 51.8 percent of Gaza’s then 1.5 million inhabitants lived below the poverty level.

## **More Talking**

Yet, even during the fighting, conferences and secret meetings continued to be held. Outside the PLO leadership, these seemed just puffery or even efforts to enhance the wealth and power of Arafat and his colleagues. One faction of the “executive committee” of the Parliament, the Palestinian National Council, (PNA) revolted. Its dissident members decided that there was no hope for any kind of compromise with Israel. They charged Arafat and his colleagues with equivocating, delaying and compromising while the Israelis moved ahead, step by step, to implement their long-term strategy.

This judgment was seconded by outside observers. For example, Jackson Diehl, the deputy editorial editor of *The Washington Post*, wrote in *The New York Times* on July 23, 2002, that Prime Minister Ariel Sharon had already made a Palestinian state impossible. Diehl cited the trend: since 2000, Sharon had created 44 new settlements and poured in nearly \$100 million in subsidies for settlers as well as building supporting infrastructure including new roads and walls “that are advertised as security measure but will have the practical effect of roping off new tracts of land for settlement expansions.”

Undeterred, the PLO leadership continued to agree to accommodations with Israel. The best known of these resulted in the Oslo Accords that led to the formation of a new organization the Palestinians called the Palestinian National Authority (Arabic: *As-Sultah al-Wataniyah al-Filistiniyah*). The Israelis omitted the word “National.” Established on May 4, 1994, it agreed to recognize Israel and to stop resistance in areas under its control.

A subsequent meeting divided “Arab Palestine” into three parts: the PNA/PA was to exercise limited authority in the West Bank and Gaza over what were designated as Zone A (the urban areas) and Zone B (rural areas). Area C, which was to remain under Israeli control, included the growing number of Israeli settlements, the restricted roadways that laced the West Bank and the whole Jordan



valley area. East Jerusalem was excluded from the Accords. The dots of territory put under PNA control have been likened to an archipelago and made a future contiguous “state” impossible.

## **Emergence of Hamas**

A detailed account of the happenings of these years between the First and Second *Intifadahs* in which Palestinian society was convulsed. would add little of lasting import except for one development: the advent of the Gazan offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, HAMAS (Arabic: *Harakat al-Muqawamah al-Islamiyah*), the “Movement of Islamic Resistance.”

Meanwhile secret negotiations between the PLO leadership and the Israelis continued. They were revealed by a “whistleblower” in 2008. Ziyad Clot, a French lawyer of Palestinian origin who was on the staff of the PLO team, concluded that “the ‘peace negotiations’ were a deceptive farce whereby biased terms were unilaterally imposed by Israel and systematically endorsed by the US and EU capitals.

“Far from enabling a negotiated fair end of the conflict, the pursuit of the Oslo process has deepened Israeli segregationist policies and justified the tightening of the security control imposed on the Palestinian population as well as its geographical fragmentation. Far for preserving the land on which to build a State, it has tolerated the intensification of the colonisation of the Palestinian territory. Far from maintaining a national cohesion, the process I participated in, albeit briefly, proved to be instrumental in creating and aggravating divisions amongst Palestinians.

“In its most recent developments, it became a cruel enterprise from which the Palestinians of Gaza have suffered the most. Last but not least, these negotiations excluded for the most part the great majority of the Palestinian people: the 7 million-Palestinian refugees. My experience over those 11 months spent in ... [the PLO headquarters] confirms in fact that the PLO, given its structure, was not in a position to represent all Palestinian rights and interests.”

[Clot published his account in Paris under the title *Il n'y aura pas d'Etat palestinien* or "There will be no Palestinian State" (Paris: Ed. Max Milo, 2010). Other information was published in 2011 by the Israeli magazine 972. *Aljazeera* got access to 1,700 files containing thousands of pages of memos, emails and minutes. Also see *The Guardian*, Jan. 23, 2011, Seumas Milne and Ian Black, "Secret

papers reveal slow death of Middle East peace process." They comment that "The overall impression that emerges from the documents, which stretch from 1999 to 2010, is of the weakness and growing desperation of PA leaders."]

Subsequent events have made clear that many Palestinians agreed with Clot's assessment of the PLO leadership, but if not the PLO, who would lead them?

### **Salafiyah Redux**

Having tried early Islamic fundamentalism, such nationalist movements as *wataniyah*, *qawmiyah* and Baathism and having at least flirted with socialism or *ijtimaiyah*, some Arab thinkers and much of Arabic society has come full circle. Seeing the failures of all the ideologies, many Arabs and particularly the Palestinians began to think that all that was left for them was the Islamic core.

So this must take us, as it took the Palestinians — and increasing numbers of peoples all over the Middle East, Africa and Asia — back to *salafiyah*.

Today, as we are daily informed by the media, many Middle Easterners are picking up the spirit if not exactly the form of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth century *salafi* movements. We think of theirs as a religious movement, and in part it is, but, like various Christian "Born Again," "Tea Party," Evangelist and Creationist movements, it is broader than religion: today's Islamic Fundamentalism is a militant populist movement.

Today, as in the Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries, many Muslims see an appeal to arms as the only means to defend Islam against the impact of the West. We see this in the *Ikhwanu'l-Muslimin* (Egypt and elsewhere), *HAMAS* (Gaza), *Hizbullah* (Lebanon), *ISIS*, *IS* or *ISIL* (Syria and Iraq), *Mujahidin* and *Taliban* (Afghanistan and Pakistan), Islamic Courts Union or *Itihadu'l-Muhakim al-Islamiya*, and *Ash-Shabab* (Somalia), the Moro Front and *Abu Sayyaf* (the Philippines); *al-Qaida* (Yemen) and others throughout Asia and Africa. Most of these groups have either cast off or subordinated "nationalism" in their campaigns.

From today's vantage point, it is arguable that Gamal Abdel Nasser, who more or less embodied the Arab nationalist movement, was already in the 1960s fighting a rearguard action against the Islamic

challenge. While he and his close associates earlier on flirted with the Muslim Brotherhood, he and the Brotherhood came to recognize one another as deadly enemies. It was Nasser who first outlawed the Brotherhood and hanged its leading theologian, Sayyid Qutub.

His successor, Anwar Sadat, briefly flirted with the Brotherhood and tried to use them against his Leftist opponents, but after he signed a peace treaty with Israel, he was assassinated by a member of one of its offshoots, the *Tanzimu' l-jihad* ("Organizing the Struggle"). Sadat's successor, Husni Mubarak, also briefly sought to identify with the Brotherhood but then cracked down on them when their strength was revealed in the elections of 2005. They went on to win the Egyptian presidential elections of 2012 and held power until overthrown in a military *coup d'état* on July 3, 2013.

### Overthrowing Hussein

Meanwhile, in Iraq, Saddam Hussein dominated the completely secular, Baath-inspired government until overthrown by the American invasion. The Bush administration then installed a Shia Muslim regime. That Shia virtual theocracy is now engaged in a deadly struggle with a violent Sunni theocracy. In Syria, the Baath government has been at war since 2011 with a variety of fundamentalist movements. The various Muslim revival or fundamentalist groups regard the nationalists as their worst enemies.

In a recent pamphlet which was probably issued by ISIS, we read: "As for the [the Middle Eastern] nationalists, the Baathists, and the democrats, they have afflicted the Islamic community [Arabic: the *Ummah*] by corrupting religion and by the ghastly destruction of souls. That which Saddam [Hussein], [Hafez al-] Asad, [Husni] Mubarak, [Saudi King] Fahd, the Socialist Party in Yemen, and others did with regards to this destruction of souls alone surpasses those killed in all of the wars of the *ihadis* in this century." [I have dealt with this in "Sayyid Qutub's Fundamentalism and Abu Bakr Naji's *Jihadism*." It is posted on my website [www.williampolk.com](http://www.williampolk.com).]

Almost everywhere the secular nationalists are in retreat and are being challenged or even replaced by *Salafi* organizations. Among the Palestinians, HAMAS is the standard bearer. (As the then-*New York Times* correspondent Chris Hedges wrote, in *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2001,

Palestinian mobs burned shops and hotels selling alcohol — owned by Arafat’s corrupt and despised Palestinian Authority.”

In Gaza, Israel covertly helped HAMAS in order to weaken the PLO while HAMAS accepted support for its own purposes, but their objectives were incompatible. [See *Wall Street Journal*, Jan. 24, 2009, Andrew Higgins, "How Israel Helped to Spawn Hamas."]

### Attacking Gaza

HAMAS was violently opposed to the Oslo Accords which Israel sponsored. As the Israelis began to realize the dangers of the Fundamentalist challenge, they attempted to murder the HAMAS leader, Khalid Mashaal in September 1997. Other “targeted killings” followed and were “avenged” by the August 2001 blowing up of an Israeli restaurant in Jerusalem. Tit for tat, other killings would follow.

But in January 2004, HAMAS leaders, Shaikh Ahmad Yasin and Abdul Aziz ar-Rantisi, offered formulas to end the confrontations and murders. They offered to put aside the refugee “right of return” and to end “resistance” during a 10-year truce in exchange for Israeli recognition of the state of Palestine pre-1967-war boundaries. Israel rejected these offers as a subterfuge, killed both men in 2004 and carried out a number of attacks on Gaza. Then in 2005, it withdrew its troops from Gaza but kept control of the air and sea portals.

HAMAS won the Palestine legislative election on Jan. 25, 2006, and, after a brief rapprochement with FATAH, took over the government of Gaza in the spring of 2007. Almost immediately, Israel, the EU and the U.S. froze all Palestinian accounts (mainly derived from taxes) and cut off all other funding.

Then, Israel prepared to attack Gaza which it did in what is known as “Operation Cast Lead” on Dec. 27, 2008. That campaign was followed in 2012 by “Operation Pillar of Defense” and in 2014 by “Operation Protective Edge.”

These massive attacks pulverized Gaza, killing thousands of people and wounding tens of thousands more. The last campaign, “Operation Protective Edge,” that started on July 7, 2014, is now under investigation by a new UNHRC team. I will await its findings before further comments.

In the meantime, the UN Office of Humanitarian Affairs tells us that Gaza now contains 1.8 million people, over half of whom are children and about half of whose housing was destroyed. Roughly seven in each ten Gazans go to sleep each night hungry. Somewhat over 100,000 were pushed out of their area when Israel closed off a three kilometer wide area along its frontier.

## A Possible Future

Speculation on the future beyond the following few months is more a parlor game than a serious undertaking, but it can contribute the basis for a judgment on what is probable or even possible. Here is how I see the main elements for the foreseeable future:

*First*, Israel is today and will remain far more unified, determined and strong than the Palestinians and all their sometimes allies.

*Second*, what do the two sides want?

Israel has always aimed to establish the Jewish state, the *Judenstaat*, on all of Biblical Palestine. As the early Zionist leaders drew their map, Biblical Palestine included what is today Israel, parts of southern Lebanon and Syria (which it understood were the main sources of the water it realized it would need) and most of the relatively fertile land of what was then Trans Jordan.

The Palestinians took much longer to articulate their objectives. As I have suggested, they had to spend their “time in the wilderness” before they did. Today, their objective is to “return” to the area defined, variously, as the status quo of 1919, 1950 or 1967 and thereupon to establish their state.

I put “return” in quote marks to alert the reader that there is really nothing to which the refugees can return to. Most of those now alive never knew Palestine and those who do remember their childhoods there would no longer be able to find what they remember: villages have been plowed under, neighborhoods rebuilt, picnic sites paved over. In memory, every tree has become a forest, every house a palace, every village a city.

*Third*, what are the chances for either of the two sides to accomplish its objective?

Israel will continue to have overwhelming advantages. The discovery of what appears to be a major gas field off the coast will further enhance Israel's economy, probably making possible conversion of salt water for the irrigation of more land.

Israel will continue to be aided by the foreign Jewish communities and foreign governments, and such aid will become less crucial to Israel as its already strong economy continues to grow. Therefore, it will be less susceptible to foreign pressure or guidance. Israel's army and air force, supported by its own military-industrial complex, will remain overwhelming, but in the new HAMAS and Hezbollah forms of asymmetrical warfare, their ability to "conquer" has diminished. They will continue to win battles but will not be able to establish a lasting "victory." Thus, Israelis must expect a troubled and probably increasingly violent future.

The Palestinians will not be able to force their way back into what is now Israel, but they will endure. As a chief of the Israeli general staff put it, a military victory over them is not possible; the only alternatives are "genocide, expulsion or peace." They now number about five million people of whom roughly half are children. Within a few more years, the population will double again.

Current events suggest that Israeli peace advocates, a tiny minority already, and European and American liberals, eventually, may increase pressure on Israel to allow the Palestinians at least marginally more scope. But this will be insufficient to enable them to accomplish their objective.

### **Is Compromise Possible?**

*Fourth*, is a compromise between what each side wants politically possible? I think the short answer is "yes, but..." The key elements are these:

While Israel has always been determined to expand into all of "Biblical Palestine" and settle it with Jews, it has varied its tactics to work within what was feasible at any given time. I believe that will continue to be its policy. The policy of creating "facts on the ground" through the West Bank settlement policy has not only impacted upon the Palestinians but also narrowed the scope for the Israeli government.



Consequently, while the government might agree to allow some measure of Palestinian autonomy or even independence, the amount politically feasible would be limited. The Palestinian tactics of resistance and terrorism have further limited what any elected Israeli government can afford to do. Thus, any Israeli government would advertise any compromise as, at best, an interim measure. I doubt that any conceivable Israeli government, given Israel's wealth and power, will go further.

The Palestinian leadership in recent years has shown (secretly) a willingness to compromise. That is, in part, the reason for the decline of support among Palestinians for the PLO as an organization and personally for Yasir Arafat and Mahmoud Abbas. There are recent indications that a more respected political movement, known as "The Future" (Arabic: al-Mustaqbal) which is inspired by Marwan Barghouti may make some form of compromise acceptable to the Palestinian public.

Barghouti has been called in the Israeli press the Palestinian Nelson Mandela. Like Mandela he has spent much of his life — 18 years — in prison and a further seven years in exile in Jordan. Barghouti has announced that he has been seeking "peaceful coexistence between the equal and independent countries of Israel and Palestine based on full withdrawal from Palestinian territories occupied in 1967." [*The Washington Post*, Jan. 16, 2002.]

What we do not know are two crucial things: first, would enough Israelis find this attractive to shift the government's position and Israel's long-term strategy. Second, can even a Palestinian Mandela overcome the deep sense of hatred, shame and nostalgia among his people. I think it is likely that the Palestinians would rather suffer more than give up their dream. As some have said, "we can afford to lose more blood. We have more blood. And we are more ready to lose it than the Israelis."

### **The Failed Options**

*Fifth*, discussion for years has focused on the "one state" and "two states" proposed solutions." I find it difficult to believe either will work. Here is why:

In the "one state," the Palestinians would be a subjugated minority with few rights and little security — they will be the "Jews" of an Israeli Germany or an Israeli Imperial Russia, subject to pogroms, cooped up in ghettos, imprisoned or driven into exile. Even those who think of themselves as "Israeli Arabs" will remain, in the eyes of the real Israelis, just Arabs. They, their children and their

grandchildren are likely to be drawn into the struggle and along with the other Palestinians will probably come to be thought of as subversive. If they resist, their resistance will call forth reprisal. Peace or even stability is unlikely in that direction.

In the “two states,” those living in Palestine (the remnants of the West Bank and Gaza) would be condemned to perpetual poverty. They will have almost no usable agricultural land and virtually no water. They would be cut off from markets for what little they could produce. They could have no hope of manufacturing because they would have little access to energy.

Even the limited money they could earn would continue to be closely controlled and often blocked by the Israeli Central Bank as it now is. They will have limited access to health facilities, educational institutions and even contact with one another. Segregated as they are and will be (for security reasons) by restricted zones, walls, roadways and check points, they will be constantly humiliated and infuriated. They too would periodically resist or strike out in fury and so draw upon themselves reprisals. And so too the cycle of violence would continue or even escalate.

*Sixth*, if both of these “solutions” are unlikely, what is likely?

The first is “no state.” This is what the Israelis really want. This would require that the remaining Palestinians leave what is left of the West Bank and Gaza. To go where? To refugee camps or wherever, the Israelis don’t care. A reading of all Israeli actions underlines the Israeli intention to make life as unattractive for the Palestinians as world opinion allows. It has not so far worked. There are more Palestinians in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza today than there were in 1947. But some Israelis see this as an even more urgent reason to press harder.

The second alternative, which of course many Palestinians want, is to recreate Palestine as a full-fledged state. This would require that the Israelis “to go back where they came from.” The Arabs day-dream of their relations with the Israelis in a parallel to the Crusades. The Crusaders stayed a long time but finally left. The more recent parallel is to the “French” (many of whom were not French at all) *pieds noirs* in Algeria. It took a century but they too finally left.

As I have said, while it is likely that some, even many, Israelis will return to Europe or go to America — New York is said to have a larger Jewish or joint Israel-American population than Jerusalem —

the ones who stay behind will be absolutely determined to remain. The Palestinian dream is just that, a dream.

The third alternative is a continuation of events of the last half century — periodic warfare interspersed with rebuilding as the population of the two societies grows. Israel has demonstrated the capacity to inflict massive pain on the Palestinians; sooner or later, the Palestinians will learn how to inflict substantial pain on the Israelis. But my hunch is that few will look ahead to more than just living with the discomfort.

Consequently, I conclude that, barring unforeseen events or the unlikely advent of a new will to peace and a new understanding of what is required to achieve it, the future is likely to be a continuation of the past: periodic warfare, resistance and repression, ceasefires but no peace, lives on both sides of fragile and disputed frontiers full of fear and hatred.

We would be prudent to prepare for more and worse Gazas.

“The Battle for Palestine — Part Three”, 24/10/2014, online at: <http://consortiumnews.com/2014/10/24/the-battle-for-palestine-part-three/>

**BACK TO TOP**

### ❖ Dajani's 'Israel's water war crimes' charges run dry

Muna Dajani's recent piece on the Congress blog **"Israel's water war crimes"** claims that "[f]or the last decade, Israel has been carrying out a systematic and willful campaign to deny Palestinians access to clean water."

Water supply to residents of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip dramatically increased after Israel took control over the disputed territories in 1967. Only four of 700 residential locales distributed water to West Bank residents under Jordanian occupation. By 2004, this number had increased to 643.

If Israel was genuinely perpetrating a "war on water" against residents of the Gaza Strip and West Bank, all it had to do was reduce, not to mention stop supplying water to the territories. Instead, it has provided significantly more than required by the 1995 Israel-Palestinian Agreement ("Oslo II").

That year the Palestinian Authority's water need was 118 MCM. It was agreed that an additional 20 percent annually would be received by the PA. However, by 2007 the extra supply increased to 50 percent. (**"Amira Hass' Water Woes,"** CAMERA, Dec. 12, 2011).

The 1995 agreement put the Palestinian Authority's annual water need at 118 million cubic meters (MCM). It obliges Israel to provide the Palestinian Arabs with 31 MCM. Nevertheless, Israel has provided the PA with 52 MCM, far exceeding its requirement (**"The water issue between Israel and the Palestinians,"** Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mar. 5, 2012).

Following Israel's complete withdrawal from the Gaza Strip in 2005, 25 retaining pools and a sophisticated carrier system were transferred to Gaza authorities. But the Palestinian regime in Gaza failed to manage water supplies properly, leading to ecological damage and endangering public health.

Between 2010 and 2012, the Israeli defense ministry's Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) approved 235 projects to improve the economy of Gaza. These include completed projects to upgrade water and sewage facilities such as Nahal Oz water main with the capacity to transfer up to 5 MCM of water, improving the capacity of Coastal Municipalities Water Utility (CMWU) for monitoring water quality supply in Gaza, pumps for the Water Well project in

Gaza and other initiatives. (**“Projects in Gaza 2010-2012,”** *The State of Israel, Ministry of Defense Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories*).

Unfortunately, while Israel more than fulfilled its “Oslo II” water commitments, residents of the territories breached Palestinian obligations, digging “pirate wells” that endangered West Bank/Israel aquifers and allowing wastewater to flow into streams (**“Is Israel really to blame for Gaza’s water shortages?”** *The Commentator*, Feb. 13, 2014). The PA did little or nothing to correct the problems.

Last year, raw sewage flooded the streets of Gaza. This resulted from the Hamas government’s decision to shut down the city’s only power plant. Without electricity, treatment ceased and sewage overflowed. Hamas, designated a terrorist organization by the U.S. government, refused to import diesel fuel to run the power plant because of a dispute over tax payments with Israel. (**“Raw Sewage and Anger Flood Gaza’s Streets as Electricity Runs Low,”** *The New York Times*, Nov. 20, 2013).

Dajani’s allegations of Israeli “targeting” of Palestinian water infrastructures obscure cause and effect. She seems to be referring to wartime damage in the Gaza Strip that resulted from Israeli retaliation against Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and similar groups that used the area to fire nearly 5,000 mortars and rockets at the Jewish state and to dig infiltration tunnels.

Each one of these launches—including the hundreds that fell short, some killing and wounding Gaza Arabs—and tunnels was a war crime, or meant to facilitate them. So was placing some of the rocket storage and launch sites and tunnel openings among civilian areas that included, among other facilities, **water reservoirs** (*The Times of Israel*, Jan. 23, 2014). Had there been no Palestinian aggression, there would have been no damaged water infrastructure.

Nevertheless, during Operation Protective Edge in July and August, 2014 Mekorot, Israel’s water company, continued supplying the Gaza Strip with water. Additionally, Israel carried out 18 water supply repairs along with 6 sewage repairs, 55 electrical repairs, and 7 communication repairs (**“Humanitarian aid to Gaza continues,”** Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Aug. 27, 2014) during the fighting.

Many of the problems Dajani alludes to derive from Palestinian practices that waste a great deal of water. These include not building sewage treatment plants, not fixing leaky municipal water pipes, not developing and conserving underground water resources, failing to irrigate land with treated sewage effluents or adopting water-saving practices such as those used by Israel, including agricultural drip-irrigation and large-scale desalinization (**“What Other Nations Can Learn From Israel’s Solutions to the Scarce Water Challenge,”** *Wharton University of Pennsylvania*, Oct. 10, 2012).

In addition to using false claims to invert reality, Dajani also invoked discredited sources. These include the Russell Tribunal, which dishonestly uses “a legal façade to create an image of neutrality and credibility” according to the *NGO Monitor* watchdog (**“Russell Tribunal on Palestine is as dead wrong as Russell was in 1938,”** *The Hill*, Oct. 5, 2014).

Likewise, Dajani cites the U.N’s 2009 Goldstone report, on the December 2008-January 2009 Israel-Hamas war to bolster her allegations. That report was so flawed that commission head, Richard Goldstone, the South African judge for whom it was named, disavowed its primary accusations. He wrote that Israel did not intentionally target Palestinian civilians. (**“Reconsidering the Goldstone Report on Israel and war crimes,”** *The Washington Post*, Apr. 1, 2011).

Israel’s “water war crimes” are figments of Dajani’s hostility.

“Dajani’s ‘Israel’s water war crimes’ charges run dry”, 23/10/2014, online at: <http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/foreign-policy/221441-dajanis-israels-water-war-crimes-charges-run-dry>



## ❖ Water Authority investing NIS 385m. in sewage infrastructure, to enable housing construction

The Water Authority will be investing NIS 385 million to upgrade sewage treatment facilities and transmission systems, enabling the construction of tens of thousands of homes around the country, the authority announced on Sunday.

The new infrastructure will particularly serve housing units in the periphery.

In addition to providing treatment directly for these homes, the facilities will curb serious environmental hazards, including the sewage flowing into Israel from Palestinian villages in the West Bank, according to the authority.

“Recent decisions to invest NIS 385m. in the establishment and upgrading of major wastewater treatment plants will advance the water sector to an even higher level, provide the country’s farmers with millions of cubic meters of effluent at a superior level, and satisfy conditions for the construction of tens of thousands of new homes, particularly in the periphery,” said Water Authority Commissioner Alexander Kushnir.

Among the projects is an upgrade of the Darom Hasharon East facility at a total cost of NIS 127.5m., of which the government is to cover NIS 50m. The focus at this site is on eradicating environmentally hazardous discharges into the Yarkon River, as well as providing wastewater treatment solutions for the entire region, the authority said.

Completion of the project, in about 2017, will allow for an increase in housing, particularly in the non-Jewish sector, including in Taiba, Jaljulya and Kafr Bara.

Another upgrade will be made at the Ayalon wastewater treatment facility that will facilitate the construction of about 15,000 housing units in Lod, Ramle, Be’er Ya’acov, Modi’in-Maccabim- Reut and Shoham, the authority said. Expected to be completed in 2016, the project will cost NIS 62m., of which the government is to fund about NIS 58m.

The Shoket facility will be expanded due to landslides and contamination from Palestinian wastewater flowing from the Hebron area and polluting the Beersheba and Besor rivers. The expansion, according to the Water Authority, will provide for regional development of local Beduin villages as well as IDF bases in the area. Treatment capacity at the Shoket site will more than double, from 12,000 cubic meters per day to 30,000 cu.m. per day.

The project will cost approximately NIS 87m. – all of which will be covered by government funding – with expected completion in 2017, the authority said.

A facility upgrade and expansion will take place at the Iron wastewater treatment site near Pardes Hanna and benefit both Pardes Hanna and communities in the area. The plant will receive advanced membrane technologies for handling sludge.

While a full expansion of the facility would require NIS 80m., thus far NIS 50m. has been budgeted. This, too, will be fully paid for by the government.

The upgrade will allow for the treatment of about 28,000 cu.m per day and should be complete by 2016, the authority said.

A final project involves the Kolhei Hasharon wastewater treatment plant, which will enable the contribution of more than 6 million cubic meters annually of tertiary- level treated effluent to the national water sector. This project will cost NIS 30m. – half of which will be funded by the government – and is expected to conclude by 2017, the Water Authority said.

“Water Authority investing NIS 385m. in sewage infrastructure, to enable housing construction”, 20/10/2014, online at: <http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Water-Authority-investing-NIS-385m-in-sewage-infrastructure-to-enable-housing-construction-379306>

**BACK TO TOP**

[WWW.ORSAM.ORG.TR](http://WWW.ORSAM.ORG.TR)

## ❖ Palestinian Farmer Spotlights Food Sovereignty

Ali Abd ElRahman has been in the United States for only a few days, but it's the longest he's ever lived without having to go through a military checkpoint.

ElRahman lives in Jerusalem, and as a Palestinian, his actions, resource use, transportation, and work are under Israeli government control. He doesn't even have a legal passport; the Israeli government issues Jerusalem Palestinians travel documents that require a lot of explanation when he attempts to cross international borders.

Most poignant for him, however, is the fight for a right that most Americans take for granted: land sovereignty for the farmers in his homeland, who are attempting to continue their heritage as stewards of the land despite egregious obstacles. From their water use to transportation throughout the territories, Palestinian farmers are subject to the authority of the Israeli occupying military.

"The Israeli occupation controls every small detail of Palestinian life," he explains. "The water, the electricity, the food, the movement, anything you can imagine."

Even Palestinian roads have been limited to Israeli settler use only, inhibiting connectivity and transportation. "Thousands of Palestinian farmers cannot reach their farms freely; they need special permission, and only during certain hours," ElRahman says.

Out of this need for farmer support and solidarity, the Union of Agricultural Work Committees, an organization dedicated to assisting Palestinian farmers in the fight for sovereignty over their trade and their land, was born in 1986. ElRahman, the organization's board chairman, visited the United States for the first time this year to receive a Food Sovereignty award from the U.S. Food Sovereignty Alliance on October 15 in Des Moines, Iowa.

"Our group has done work with Palestinian farmers before, and we were really impressed by their projects, by the union promoting cooperation, and their whole idea of food sovereignty," explains John Peck of Family Farm Defenders, who sat on the board for the U.S. Food Sovereignty Alliance's award recipient selection.

“Food control is a universal desire of farmers,” he adds. “The one thing that’s so different about situation of ElRahman’s organization is they don’t have control over their land or water, and the fact that they’re doing this is a real success story.”

The group offers farmers access to education, training on best practices and techniques, support, and solidarity in the face of daily challenges to their livelihood.

“We are working for several farmers, mostly small-scale farmers, and we believe in food sovereignty for Palestine,” ElRahman explains. “For us agriculture is not only how much share we have in the gross national product; it is not just the thousands working in agricultural sectors; it is not only income. For us agriculture is a style of life, our heritage, our connection of people to their land.”

ElRahman, who comes from a farming family, firmly believes that for the 25 percent of Palestinians living under the poverty line, food sovereignty for farmers is the key to ending hunger.

“Poverty without controlling your food means true suffering: both poverty and hunger. If you can control at least your food, you can survive,” he says. “For us food sovereignty is a tool of struggle against the occupation.”

Olives for olive oil are Palestine’s primary crop, with figs, cheese, and grapes following closely. “We try to develop the quality of the olive oil by giving farmers instruction on how to pick the fruit, how to press it, and how to have good storage to have good quality of olive oil,” ElRahman says.

Facing a water shortage and control over only 20 percent of their water supply, olive growers must also deal with frequent sabotage by Israeli settlers, ElRahman explains.

“The settlers cut down the trees during the night,” he says. “These are 500 or 1,000-year-old trees. It’s part of human heritage.” He adds that settlers have also burned olive trees to the ground before farmers can harvest the fruit.

Additionally, because Palestinian products are forbidden from entering Israel and Israeli eggs are two or three times the price of Palestinian eggs, settlers are buying cheaper eggs from Palestinian farmers and selling them for profit in Israel, ElRahman says. In response, there are recent efforts by Palestinian farmers to establish cooperative markets where farmers can sell their wares directly.

For the last eight years, ElRahman's group has also run a seed bank that identifies, stores, and preserves disease-resistant and weather-hardy local strains of seeds for Palestinian farmers to use.

"Farmers usually produce their own seeds every year, keeping back the seeds after experiments to see what seeds are the best. We have labs that examine these seeds and keep some frozen for researchers for up to five years," ElRahman explains. "We loan the farmers seeds, and the next season the farmers give back what they took and maybe donate even more. So the project is improving and developing every year."

This level of genetic selection allows farmers to compete and respond to environmental changes associated with climate change within a framework that supports their ethics, cultural values, and independence.

ElRahman believes the United States has the potential to take a leadership role in food sovereignty issues worldwide.

"I believe it's possible," ElRahman says. "I believe the U.S. is not its government. It's people, NGOs, businessmen, churches, charitable societies—not only wars."

"Palestinian Farmer Spotlights Food Sovereignty", 23/10/2014, online at:

<http://www.progressive.org/news/2014/10/187896/palestinian-farmer-spotlights-food-sovereignty>

**BACK TO TOP**

❖ **Minister promises to rationalize water cos**

Minister of National Infrastructures, Energy, and Water Resources Silvan Shalom is mulling a single nationwide water corporation.

Minister of National Infrastructures, Energy, and Water Resources Silvan Shalom today told a forum of senior local authorities officials that he would take steps to reduce the number of water corporations in Israel in order to facilitate lower water prices. "There is no doubt that the water corporations have grown beyond all proportion," he said, adding, "Eliminating the corporations or their powers should be considered. There can't be a need for 55 municipal corporations that formerly operated under the auspices of the municipal authority, and did it with a third of the manpower they have today."

Shalom continued, "The ordinary person is helpless against the corporations. When I was **Israel Electric Corporation** (IEC) (TASE:**ELEC.B22**) chairman, I established its 103 call service, and we'll do the same now for water."

Shalom also said that his ministry was formulating a plan for lowering the price of water for consumers, and noted that if responsibility for water is returned to the local authorities, prices will fall, albeit by a small amount, saying, "One of the things under consideration in this area is the establishment of one large water corporation - a nationwide water company that will manage all the corporations." He added that the committee for streamlining the water sector, the founding of which he had advanced in order to cut water rates for the public, would issue its recommendations soon. "The main reasons for the high price of water are the cost of desalination and the fact that the government decided that the state budget would no longer subsidize the water industry," he explained.

Shalom also commented on the cost of living, saying that a significant cut in electricity rates was expected at the beginning of 2015, after water rates were lowered by 5% over the past year.

"Lowering the rates is expected to lead to additional price cuts in other parts of the economy, whether



you're talking about children's snacks, cottage cheese, or any other item whose production requires inputs of electricity and water. When these items are cheaper, the rest will be, too," Shalom said.

“Minister promises to rationalize water cos”, 21/10/2014, online at: <http://www.globes.co.il/en/article-minister-promises-to-rationalize-water-cos-1000979747>

**BACK TO TOP**

## ❖ War and Water: Middle East Conflicts in the Watershed

Our time is fraught with war and water. The headlines confirm that, for what seems like forever, there has been conflict in the Middle East where sectarian rivalries, religious conflicts, the pursuit of oil, and the geo-political collision between economic aspirations and impassioned ideologies continue unabated. Many thousands have died as combatants or collateral damage in an endless time and place of conflict.

The most recent manifestation is the so-called Islamic State, or ISIL, a particularly feral group of Muslim militants with the intent to reestablish the historical caliphate that once extended from the Mediterranean Sea to the Persian Gulf. Suddenly everything reverts to air strikes, international outrage, and the possible return of "boots on the ground."

I have been looking at the maps indicating where ISIL forces seem to have taken control and wondering at their length and direction that extends from the northern border between Turkey and Syria southeasterly almost to the limits of Baghdad. The obvious explanation is that the extent of their success mimics the main highway then runs from Aleppo through Raqua, Qaim, Haditha, and Falluja to the capital city. A larger segment of controlled territory is enclosed to the east by a similar route that connects Mosul south to Tikrit, Samarra, and Baghdad where the situation deteriorates into the ambiguity of warfare and shifting political ambitions.

But if you look closely at your atlas map of Syria and Iraq, you discover an underlying revelation: Those cities are placed and those highways run exactly along the course of several major rivers -- the Euphrates, Tigris, and their tributaries -- that originate in the mountains of eastern Turkey, bifurcate the empty desert, and descend past Baghdad where they empty at Basra into what ultimately becomes the Arabian Sea. In the vast, dry, unpopulated expanse of the region, this war is being fought down a watershed.

My map is also marked by numerous three-dot symbols that are used by cartographers to designate significant historical cultural resources, locating places called Zenobia, Dura Europus, Nimrud, and Nineveh, names that speak to the earliest human settlements in what the history books call "the cradle of civilization."

Those rivers nurtured our beginnings, before Islam and Christianity, before conquest from elsewhere by imperialists following the trade routes to resources and connections beyond. There are other such symbols on my map: miniature drilling rigs signifying the major oil fields that fuel this war and all others, cultural icons of our modern time.

The irony here is that after all the tumult and shouting, after all the air strikes and beheadings, all the assertions of conflicting systems of law, all the moral justifications, the only thing that matters is the water: to drink, to secure hygiene and health, to irrigate crops, and to sustain the communities regardless of sect or religious belief, to allow the descendants of those who lived in these places centuries before to continue and thrive.

The location of these cities and the caravan or highway routes between them are all testimony to the fact that for all time water has enabled the true security of the region. Take away the slogans and guns, let the people live there, and the water will sustain them.

I speak often of the healing and unifying nature of water. Below Baghdad, along this same river watershed, lies an enormous lake and swamp system into which all these waters flow, an area that has been home to so-called "marsh Arabs" who had thrived there for a very long time in what were very fertile conditions. In the 1990s, as a strategic part of an earlier iteration of this present war, the area was drained by canals and dikes to isolate and destroy the residents by removing their shelter and livelihood. It became a desert like elsewhere, devoid of plant life and birds, of shelter and safety, until through the efforts of a small activist group the dykes were broken, the waters returned, the marshes filled, and life began there anew. It is a cautionary tale of how we might, through the free and unencumbered flow of water, build a home without terror and its collateral damage.

“War and Water: Middle East Conflicts in the Watershed”, 21/10/2014, online at: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/peter-neill/war-and-water-middle-east\\_b\\_6021620.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/peter-neill/war-and-water-middle-east_b_6021620.html)

**BACK TO TOP**

### ❖ Pipeline to Replenish Vanishing Dead Sea A Bridge to Mid-East Security, Peace

*Experts' address universal concerns identified by former world leaders: World water crisis, sectarianism, energy, denuclearization of Korea "Atmospheric rivers" rising, drive growing flood hazards*

Newport, Wales - A massive 180 km pipeline-canal mega-project to bring water from the Red Sea could prevent the Dead Sea from disappearing while improving the region's environmental, energy and peace prospects, according to a book of insights into major global topics launched today by an association of 40 former government leaders and heads of state and UN University's Institute for Water, Environment and Health.

Commissioned from leading experts on issues of universal concern, the authors include former Jordanian Prime Minister Abdel Salam Majali and Moneef R. Zou'bi, respectively the President and Director General of the Islamic World Academy of Sciences, who say the innovative Red-Dead Canal offers the potential to secure human well-being while promoting regional stability.

For years, Israel, Syria and Jordan have diverted more than 90 percent of the southward flow of the River Jordan to agricultural and industrial purposes, choking the Dead Sea, the lowest point on earth, causing "severe negative consequences on the ecosystem, industry, and wildlife in the area," says Dr. Zou'bi. "Due to gradual water loss, the sea has split into two separate lakes and its coastline has receded significantly. The River Jordan is a shadow of its former glorious self."

The Red-Dead Canal, as envisioned by Jordan, is a 180-kilometre, partially covered pipeline across Wadi Araba - a dry plateau stretching from the Gulf of Aqaba in the south to the Dead Sea in the north. It would carry around 1.5 billion cubic meters of water per year, pumped first to an altitude of 150 metres above sea level before flowing down a 580-metre decline.

Not only would the three-party project (Jordan-Israel-the Palestinians) restore most of the Dead Sea water level over time, it would generate hydroelectricity to power large desalination plants, relieving chronic freshwater shortages and helping to meet energy needs.

Says Dr. Majali, Prime Minister of Jordan from 1993 to 1995 and 1997-98: "As a decision-maker, I think that this project is innovative, forward looking and a potential peace asset that can contribute to regional interdependence and security."

In addition to Dr. Majali, the former leaders of Canada, Colombia, Cyprus, New Zealand and Singapore are contributors to the wide-ranging book launched in the UK by the InterAction Council (IAC), a 32-year-old association created to pool the expertise of former world leaders and to speak out on issues of vital importance to the world community and current leaders alike.

Published by UN University's Canadian-based Institute for Water, Environment and Health, and co-edited by UNU-INWEH Director Zafar Adeel and IAC Secretary-General Thomas S. Axworthy, the new book offers authoritative views on interlinked topics ranging from the Middle East and denuclearization of Korea to the water crisis and the future of energy.

Says the Rt. Hon. Jean Chrétien, former Prime Minister Of Canada and IAC's co-chair: "The InterAction Council selects issues and develops proposals for action within these areas and communicates these proposals directly to government leaders, other national decision-makers, heads of international organizations and influential individuals around the world."

"This latest publication makes an important and timely contribution to public dialogue and understanding of two of the world's most pressing issue areas - peace and the environment."

Says Dr. Adeel: "We have a new appreciation of the deep interconnections between water, energy and peace - particularly in the Middle East region in the context of recent developments. This tight nexus of global interests has driven the creation of this book and UNU-INWEH, the United Nations' think tank on water, is continuing its engagement with the IAC in exploring these critical issues."

In a major contribution to the book, "Tolerance: An Under-Appreciated Virtue in our Sectarian Age," co-editor Dr. Axworthy, Distinguished Senior Fellow at Canada's Munk School of Global Affairs, cites the history of sectarianism in Europe to suggest ways to promote tolerance today. The fires of European sectarianism, he says, only began to subside when 16th-Century thinkers won the war of ideas through the promotion of tolerance.

Ahmad Moussalli, Professor of Political Science and Islamic Studies, American University of Beirut, meanwhile, assesses the interests of Russia, the United States, France, Israel, Iran, and the Gulf States in the Syrian crisis, with conditions in the Middle East favouring "extremism and rise of conflicts."

#### Atmospheric rivers driving new hazards

Among other contributors, Robert Sandford, the IAC's Senior Water Advisor, describes the consequence of increasingly saturated "atmospheric rivers ... corridors of intense winds and moist air" 400 to 500 kilometres across, and thousands of kilometres long that "can carry the equivalent of about ten times the average daily discharge of the Mississippi River."

"Perhaps the best-known atmospheric river in North America is what we call the Pineapple Express (which) begins as a narrow stream of hurricane strength wind. As it crosses the warm Pacific, that atmospheric river fills with water vapour. We now surmise that some 42 atmospheric rivers deluged California between 1997 and 2006."

As global temperatures and evaporation rise, sending more moisture into the air, these heavily-laden atmospheric rivers are producing "flooding of the magnitude we saw in Australia and Pakistan in 2010, and possibly in parts of the Central Great Plains region of North America in 2011. Research is now being conducted to determine if an atmospheric river played a role in initiating the largest single natural disaster in the history of the Canadian province of Alberta in June, 2013."

In his paper, "Come Hell and High Water: Hydro-Climatic Change and its Consequences," Dr. Sandford predicts a rise in world temperatures of between 2°C and 6°C would result in further amplification of the hydrological cycle by 15 to 40 percent or more.

"This game change is not going to go away," he says. "Researchers are concerned that the kinds of storms we will have in the future may be fundamentally different in character than what we are used to experiencing. At a recent international conference in Canada, it was demonstrated that many of our recent floods were similar in a number of ways. Each involved rotating low pressure systems that remained in the same place for an unusual period of time bringing continuous precipitation up from the south, resulting in long duration, heavy rainfall events that covered very large areas."



"While exhibiting all these characteristics, another major flood in Colorado in 2013 was different, in that it occurred in September. Researchers are also examining other anomalies. The behaviour of the storms suggests that its precipitation may have been generated by processes of raindrop formation more typical of the tropical region where the storms originated, than local temperate conditions. The Colorado State climatologist Nolan Doeskan, noted that the storms 'shattered all records for the most water vapour in the atmosphere.'"

"From this we might surmise that the floods of 2013 offer us a glimpse into the wild weather we might expect in a warmer world."

Says Dr. Sanford: "The loss of ice and snow in the Arctic will not only impact northern nations, cultures, and development subject to the immediate effects of this loss, but will also impact human well-being and prosperity further south in ways that will likely impact national water security, and will almost certainly affect agricultural productivity, human health, and economic sustainability at mid-latitudes."

"Pipeline to Replenish Vanishing Dead Sea A Bridge to Mid-East Security, Peace", 20/10/2014, online at:  
<http://www.exchangemagazine.com/morningpost/2014/week42/Monday/14102007.htm>

**BACK TO TOP**

### ❖ With Water Scarce In Yarmouk, Civilians Face Starvation, Malnutrition, Disease

Thousands of Palestinian refugees are trapped inside Yarmouk refugee camp, facing starvation, malnutrition, disease and now face a threat of lack of water supply.

Syria's Yarmouk refugee camp, on the outskirts of Damascus, has been under siege by Syrian government forces since December 2012. Thousands of Palestinian refugees are trapped inside the camp, facing starvation, malnutrition, disease and now face a threat of lack of water supply.

Yarmouk has been without a steady water supply since early September 2014, forcing its 18,000 civilians to rely on untreated groundwater and a single well. These sources of water are failing to meet minimum water and sanitation needs. As a result, Yarmouk's civilians are now at the risk of acute dehydration and waterborne diseases.

Distribution of aid in Yarmouk has often been interrupted or proved impossible because of exchanges of hostilities between rebel groups and government forces.

At best, U.N. aid workers get access to the camp three times a week, says Chris Gunness, a spokesman for The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA).

Gunness spoke to Syria Deeply about the need for increased and sustained access to Yarmouk's civilians amid deteriorating conditions on the ground.

Syria Deeply: What are the current conditions in the camp? How many people are living there?

Gunness: We estimate that there are 18,000 people there, which when you consider that the population was 160,000 before the fighting, is very telling. People are coping very badly because the public infrastructure has been appallingly degraded. There had already been wide destruction to the camp. Every day the siege continues, the situation gets worse. The fact that we have such little access in humanitarian terms is a continuing concern.

There is endemic malnutrition and people are dying, but what kills them is impossible for us to say. You can certainly say that insufficient intake of all the things that make up a normal diet is

undoubtedly contributing very significantly to the decline in public health and could have very easily contributed to the deaths of residents in the camp.

Syria Deeply: We've heard that some residents are without access to clean water. How are they coping?

Gunness: Since September, there has been a real problem with water in Yarmouk because there is at least one very badly broken pipe. I'm not sure if it was broken during fighting or has been so badly degraded because the siege has been going on so long.

There has been essentially no water since early September. Residents of Yarmouk rely on ground water and a single well. We are following up with people and the relevant authorities, but our understanding is that the area that needs repair is in an insecure part of the capital, so it will be very hard and a concerted fiscal effort to get the pipe mended.

Food insecurity is there and now there is water insecurity.

Syria Deeply: What is the status of public health and medical services? Are people at high risk of disease?

Gunness: There are reports of an increase in diarrhea, a classic sign of waterborne diseases and decreasing standards of public health. It's unimaginably grim.

People are at high risk because the quality of water has decreased remarkably since September. There is no access to main water; tap water isn't even flowing. There is one well in the camp and groundwater. We, wherever we send distribution teams, do our best to send in mobile clinics, but it's not a substitute for a fully functioning hospital. It's appalling. We rely on political parties for access and three days a week is not enough. We need to get more in. It's as simple as that.

Syria Deeply: Have UNRWA or other aid agencies been able to deliver aid to Yarmouk? Has aid access improved since U.N. Resolution 2165 passed in the Security Council?

It's become a little bit more regular in the sense that we can say that we can just about get in three times a week. The resolution doesn't say, can UNRWA please have access three times a week. The resolution is very clear – unimpeded access.

The demands of the resolution and the obligations of the parties of that resolution are not being met. The access we are getting is not good enough and people are suffering appallingly because of it.

Syria Deeply: How will the cuts at the World Food Programme and donor shortfalls in general impact the people in Yarmouk?

Gunness: With all the attention on Gaza, (5.4 billion pledge in aid) we are looking increasingly in Syria at the prospect of having to cut our appallingly inadequate services already. I'm not announcing cuts, all I'm saying is that it's looking increasingly possible that we will have to look at it because donor funds are not unlimited and there is so much competition for funds. If it's not Gaza, it's Ebola etc.

Syria Deeply: How have hostilities on the ground between rebel groups and the government forces impacted civilians living in Yarmouk?

Gunness: Sometimes there are clashes so we can't even get very limited access. We are getting access to distribute humanitarian assistance to the camp only three times a week. Sometimes it depends on politics and sometimes it depends on the security conditions on the ground.

Syria Deeply: What is the biggest challenge holding you back?

Gunness: Access to people and the siege. If the siege was lifted, we could have proper access for our doctors and social workers to go in, to get a better handle on what's happening about the suffering. It's not just health, it's education – schools have been so badly damaged.

“With Water Scarce In Yarmouk, Civilians Face Starvation, Malnutrition, Disease” , Syria Deeply, 21/10/2014, online at: <http://mideastenvironment.apps01.yorku.ca/2014/10/with-water-scarce-in-yarmouk-civilians-face-starvation-malnutrition-disease-syria-deeply/>

**BACK TO TOP**

### ❖ Why It Is a MUST for Sudan to Join Entebbe Agreement

The Sudanese Minister of Water Resources and Electricity, Mutaz Mussa, said in a statement carried by local and regional media on 9 October 2014 that the Sudan would not sign Entebbe Agreement in its present form unless an agreement is reached on the pending issues. The Minister said the Sudan's constant position is continued cooperation around the Nile Basin issues, stressing the importance of this cooperation irrespective of the framework agreement which the Sudan considers a means for cooperation, rather than an end.

There are numerous reasons for which the Sudan has to join Entebbe Agreement, and as soon as possible. Even the reasons, the importance of cooperation, which the Minister emphasized, are among those which make it imperative for the Sudan to join the Agreement because the latter is squarely based on cooperation.

We are going, in this article, to explain the history and content of Entebbe Agreement, the aspects of disagreement on it and its present status. And we will explain in detail the reasons which we believe make it exigent on the Sudan to enroll into the Agreement.

Entebbe Agreement is the diminutive name of the Nile Basin Framework Agreement. It was named after the Ugandan city which hosted its signing ceremony in May 2010 by six countries, not including the Sudan. It is the legitimate child of the Nile Basin Initiative of which the Sudan was, and is still a member, in spite of the confusion that accompanied what some people named as Sudan's withdrawal from, or suspension of its membership in it.

The Nile Basin Initiative idea surfaced in 1997 and took its formal shape on 22 February 1999 in Dar es-Salaam, the Republic of Tanzania, after the Water ministers of the Nile Basin countries initialed the minutes of the meeting which founded the Nile Basin Initiative. Those ministers agreed that the aim of the Initiative was to achieve sustainable economic and social development through equitable benefits from the common Nile water. The World Bank and a number of donors played a facilitating role in the birth of the Initiative. The Initiative succeeded in several aspects, including establishment of a secretariat in Entebbe, Uganda, an office for the eastern Nile in Addis Ababa, and an office for the Equatorial lakes Nile in Kigali, Rwanda, in addition financing a number of joint projects from the donors fund which was established for the purpose. Work on the Nile Basin Framework Agreement

(ENTEBBE Agreement) began 15 years ago but confronted an impasse due to basic disagreements on some of its articles. It consists of 44 articles distributed over the preamble and six chapters in addition to a supplement on resolving disputes.

The Agreement is based on a group of principles on the use, development and protection of the Basin, including the principle of exchanged cooperation that observes equality of sovereignty and good-will and also the principles of sustainable development. It is also based on the principle of equitable and reasonable use, like the provision of the UN Agreement on the International Water-courses, the right of each member state of the Nile Basin to the use of the Nile water within its territories without inflicting any harm on the other member states. The Agreement establishes an inclusive commission of all member states for administration of the Basin, exchange of information and discussion of the joint projects. The Agreement obligates the member states to resolve their disputes peacefully, detailing the procedures and bodies of the solutions.

The Sudan and Egypt rejected the Agreement for three reasons which we will discuss hereunder. Most member states of the Nile Basin signed the Agreement. It was signed by Ethiopia, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda and Kenya in May 2010, followed by Burundi in February 2011. In order to come into force, the Agreement requires approval by six member states and this was the number of the signatories at that moment.

Ethiopia ratified the Agreement in June 2013 and the Tanzanian Council of Ministers ratified it on 6 October 2014, paving the way for endorsement of the Agreement next month, as was stated by the Tanzanian Minister of Water Resources. For its part, South Sudan has declared its support to Entebbe Agreement and its intention of enlisting to it but this was impeded by the current armed conflict. South Sudan chairs the Ministerial Council of the Nile Basin for this year and is due to assume the post of executive secretary of the Initiative in 2016, placing the Nile Basin issues among the government's concerns in the coming months. Therefore, bringing Entebbe Agreement into force becomes only a matter of time, and for this reason, the Sudan must think twice and consider its own interests, just as it has done with regards to the dispute over the Ethiopian Renaissance Dam.

The three points of disagreement on Entebbe Agreement can be summed up as follows:



First: The water security: Article 14 deals with the water security which, according to the Agreement, includes the right of each Nile Basin member state to the water for health, agriculture and environment purposes. This article was the main reason for the collapse of the negotiations as Egypt and Sudan insist that their existing uses and rights referred to in the Nile Water Agreement of 1959 which divides the Nile water between them (55.5 billion cubic meters for Egypt and 18.5 billion cubic meters for the Sudan) is not subject to negotiation and is a red line that cannot be crossed and constitutes the water security for them and that those uses and rights should be included in the Entebbe Agreement. The other member states reject this and insist that they have rights in the Nile water in accordance with the equitable and reasonable benefits theory and that Egypt and Sudan have to recognize those rights and negotiate on them.

Second: The advance notification: Egypt and the Sudan demanded inclusion of detailed provisions in the Agreement on the advance notification to all member states on projects any member state plans to establish on the River Nile. The other member states reject this matter, fearing that the notification might be interpreted as granting Egypt and the Sudan the right to imposing a veto. Those member states argued that Egypt and the Sudan did not notify the other states on any one of their projects on the River Nile.

Third: The method of amendment of the Agreement: Egypt and Sudan demanded that any amendment should be made by consensus or majority, provided that the majority must include Egypt and the Sudan. The other member states opine that an amendment could be made by an ordinary majority, irrespective of whether or not including Egypt and the Sudan, and that no state must possess the right to veto. Those disagreements were so grave that they caused an impasse in the negotiations.

Therefore, we believe that rejection by the Sudan of the Entebbe Agreement is not based on objective reasons and we believe that the Sudan must join the Entebbe Agreement for the following reasons:

First: Barricading behind the rights contained in the Nile Water Agreement of 1959 is unlawful and illogical because this agreement is a bilateral one between Egypt and the Sudan and imposes no obligation to the other member states of the Nile Basin; those states rejected this agreement in writing

since its signing. They even defied it by building projects on the River Nile without notifying or consulting Egypt and the Sudan. While Egypt insists on its uses which exceeded 60 billion cubic meters, the Sudan speaks on the rights which are 18.5 billion cubic meters, according to the 1959 Nile Water Agreement. The reason that makes the Sudan speak about the rights rather than the uses is that its uses have not exceeded an annual 12 billion cubic meters since 1959, as was indicated by former Sudanese Irrigation and Water Resources Minister Kamal Ali himself (see Al-Sahafa newspaper, edition number 6487, dated Wednesday 10 August 2011, page 3). This means that the Sudan has failed to use about 360 billion cubic meters of its rights from the Nile water since the signing of the Nile Water Agreement in 1959.

The source countries are therefore not related to or obliged by the rights of the Sudan to the Nile water resulting from the 1959 Nile Water Agreement because it is bilateral and not obligatory to the other countries and therefore those rights cannot in any way be protected by the Sudan's refusal to sign Entebbe Agreement.

Second: The other Nile Basin member states also have rights to the Nile water according to the international law, equity, fairness and logic. Both Egypt and the Sudan acknowledged those rights in the 1959 agreement but placed procedural obstacles which contradict the international law on water and the sovereignty principle of the nations. That agreement (as we have in articles on secrets and mysteries of the negotiations of the Nile Basin Agreement of 1959) stated that any state which wants any amount of the Nile water must forward an application to Egypt and the Sudan which will whether to accept or reject the application. In the case of acceptance, the two countries would fix the amount to be granted to the applicant state and the two countries, through the Egyptian-Sudanese joint permanent technical commission, will monitor any excess of the fixed amount granted to the state.

The countries of the source (especially Ethiopia which contributes 86% of the Nile water) frequently cite this provision as an example of the kind of cooperation which Egypt and the Sudan talk about. The source countries ridiculed this provision a lot and were closely heeded and got a lot of sympathy by numerous nations in the international conferences.

Joining the Entebbe Agreement by the Sudan will change this erroneous kind of elimination and will constitute unconditional recognition and acceptance of the rights of the other states which is a basic

principle in the international law and the Sudan will gain the trust, respect and cooperation by the countries of the Nile source.

Third: Most of Ethiopia's needs from the Nile water are limited to generation of electricity which does not consume water because after generation of the electricity, the water returns to the river and continues flowing to the Sudan and Egypt. Moreover, there are numerous benefits to the Sudan from the Ethiopian dams because they block the flow of silt which makes the Sudanese dams lose half of their storage capacity, check the destructive annual floods and regulate the flow of the Blue Nile and River Atbara throughout the year. In a simple measure of cooperation, agreement can be reached on the length of duration required for filling the lakes behind the dams Ethiopia plans to build as the longer the duration, the less negative effects on the Sudan and Egypt. It is to be mentioned here that the rate of evaporation in Ethiopia is low due the mild temperatures and the depth of the lakes, compared to the high rate of evaporation in the High Dam where it is 10 billion cubic meters a year and more than 7 billion cubic meters in the lakes of the Sudanese dams.

Therefore, the dams in Ethiopia will have remarkably positive effects on the Sudan and do not offer any pretext for objection to Entebbe Agreement. Moreover, joining the Entebbe Agreement offers the Sudan an opportunity of getting advance knowledge of the planned Ethiopian projects to discuss their negative impacts and work together for minimizing the effects.

Fourth: The marshes in South Sudan pose a great barrier to the flow of the White Nile water and they regulate and limit the quantities of the water which flows north to the Sudan and Egypt. Several studies have shown that the countries of the Equatorial lakes use 10 billion cubic meters of the White Nile water (which is a high figure that those countries cannot use over long decades) and its effect on Egypt and the Sudan will not exceed one billion cubic meters because of the marshes which block and determine the quantity of water flowing through them to the Sudan and Egypt.

This means that the use of water by the Equatorial Nile countries will not be at the expense of the Sudan and even if the water needs of the countries of source get higher, a solution can be reached through negotiation and cooperation rather than boycotting negotiations and cooperation. This situation therefore supports a decision to join the Entebbe Agreement.

Fifth: The other states of the Nile will establish their projects on the River Nile, whether on consent or dissent of the Sudan and Egypt. Ethiopia has built a number of dams over the last 40 years without notification or consultation of Egypt or Sudan. It has built Tekazy Dam on River Atbara. It is a big dam about 190 meters high with a storage capacity of more than 4 billion cubic meters and generates more than 300 megawatts of electricity. It has also finished building Tana Pelisse Dam which generates about 500 megawatts.

This was preceded by Pese Abai and Fincha dams and the great Renaissance Dam, which generates more than 6,000 megawatts, is close to completion.

Tanzania has finished the first phase of Sheen Banga potable water project which is fed from Lake Victoria, northwest of Tanzania, and commenced building the second phase of the project. Uganda continues building its dams on the White Nile. It has inaugurated Buga Ghali Dam in the first week of October 2012 and started construction of Karoma last year (2013) and then Esimba Dam this year (2014).

Most of those projects were implemented without consultation of Egypt and the Sudan and some of them even without their knowledge. It is wise and logical that the Sudan joins Entebbe Agreement so that it can sit down with those countries under the umbrella of the joint commission for discussion of those projects and for the likelihood of cooperation with, rather than boycotting them, burying heads in the sand and repeating monotonous statements on cooperation which are lacking in content and credibility.

Sixth: There is a deep-rooted bitter grievance among the nations of the Nile source caused by the arrogant and eliminating policies of Egypt and the Sudan in connection with the Nile water and asking those nations to submit to them applications for using the river water. There is also a tremendous sympathy with the source nations due to the policies and positions of Egypt and the Sudan around the Nile water, especially with what has transpired by WikiLeaks about Egyptian plans, in cooperation with the Sudan, during the reign of President Hosni Mubarak, for striking the Ethiopian dams from a position close to Kosti, in spite of a denial of those plans.

Joining Entebbe Agreement will remove part of this grievance and sympathy and will offer a proof of good-will on the part of the Sudan besides providing a possibility of a sincere cooperation (rather than hollow cooperation slogans) with the other Nile Basin nations.

Seventh: Observers expect that South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo would join Entebbe Agreement in view of the historic, geographic, ethnic and cultural relations that bind them with the other states of the Nile source. This will result in a coalition of eight nations opposed to the Egyptian-Sudanese coalition which was established by the 1959 Nile Water Agreement. The Sudan will then be confronted with a state of isolation that was feared by some members of the Sudanese delegation.

In order to reaffirm the sincere cooperation slogan, it is for the interest of the Sudan to join Entebbe Agreement.

Eighth: Cooperation is the mainstay of the International Water Law. The UN Convention on Water-courses mentioned the word “cooperation” and its derivatives 15 times and, according to this UN convention and also to Entebbe Agreement, cooperation is based on the principle of equitable and reasonable benefits which, as underlined by the International Court of Justice, over-rules all other principles. The Sudan agreed in 1999 that this principle would be the foundation of the Nile Basin Initiative. The UN Convention came into force in August 2013, which means that it is only a matter of time for Entebbe Agreement to come into.

Association by the Sudan to Entebbe Agreement, which is in concert with the UN Convention, will imply acceptance by the Sudan of the principles of the International Water Law which was agreed upon and accepted worldwide. It should be indicated at this point that the Sudan voted in the UN General Assembly on 21 May 1997 for the UN Convention which the Sudan commended, but has not yet signed or joined that Convention for reasons that cannot be missed by the sagacity of the reader.

### Ethiopian Millennium Dam

Discussion on the Renaissance Dam began in the Sudan in April 2011 in a big row and in absence or pretending to forget knowledge about where the real interests of the Sudan lie. When the mist dispersed, great benefits the Sudan would get from the Dam became apparent. There were recent reports that the Sudan began to import electricity from Ethiopia, something which practically

manifests the benefits of the Ethiopian dams to the Sudan. It is to be reminded that the Sudan deficit from electric power is at present 40% of its demand; while Merowe Dam has failed to fulfill a promise of yielding 1250 megawatts for several reasons which there is no room to discuss here. The Sudan cannot build the projected Kajbar or any other dam due to strong and this time organized objections, and due to absence of the required funds, bearing in mind the huge foreign debts on the Sudan. The Sudan has therefore become aware that the Ethiopian electricity, which costs one-quarter of the Sudanese electricity, provides a solution to its growing power problems. It must also be reminded that the electric connection between the two countries was completed in December 2013 financed by the donors' fund of the Nile Basin Initiative which is run by the World Bank.

In the wake of the Sudan's support to construction of the Renaissance Dam, the benefits that can be collected from a sincere cooperation have become apparent. The same benefits can be gained from Entebbe Agreement, which is founded on cooperation, opening up new and wider horizons for cooperation with the other Nile Basin states. If it joins the Agreement, the Sudan, which encompasses the largest part of the Nile Basin, will be regarded as a serious state for cooperation on common basins. The country will also occupy an influential position in the Nile Basin Commission which will be the spearhead for cooperation, exchange of information and conflict resolution. Joining the Entebbe Agreement will show that the Sudan possesses a political will-power for taking decisions that serve its own interests, just as it has done with regard to the Renaissance Dam.

For these reasons, we believe that the Sudan must join Entebbe Agreement as soon as possible and in its present form as, through sincere cooperation and diligent action, the Nile Basin nations will embark on a new chapter aimed at emancipating their peoples from poverty, hunger, thirst and backwardness which engulf most of the territories of those nations which widen day-by-day.

“Why It Is a MUST for Sudan to Join Entebbe Agreement”, 27/10/2014, online at:  
<http://news.sudanvisiondaily.com/details.html?rsnpid=241811>

**BACK TO TOP**



### ❖ Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan to Select Consultancy Firm

ADDIS ABABA – Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia have agreed to choose an international firm that will study the hydrological and socio-environmental impacts of Ethiopia's massive hydro power plant project being built on the Nile river.

Following the ongoing tripartite meeting in Cairo, the three countries have nominated seven international consultancy firms from Germany, Australia, France, Switzerland and the Netherlands.

The seven firms are reportedly due in Cairo to meet the three countries' representatives.

The tripartite technical committee is scheduled to hold its next round of talks in the Sudanese capital, Khartoum on 4 December while selecting a firm will take place on 16 December in Addis Ababa.

The 4.3 billion dollar power plant has become a source of dispute between Ethiopia and Egypt as the latter fears that the massive dam with 74 billion cubic metre reservoir will reduce its water levels.

Cairo says Nile river is the only water source for its over 90 million people and insists its historic water agreement, which give it enough water resources, are maintained.

However, other upper riparian countries led by Ethiopia, which is the source of 85% of the water resource are joined to reverse the colonial era treaty, demanding a fair and equitable share.

The neutral international consultancy firm to be hired is believed to narrow existing differences between the three countries by professionally helping over the studies to be executed by the 12 tripartite experts Committee withdrawn four from each country.

By doing so the firm is expected to avoid any further dispute and would build trust and confidence among the three countries.

Addis Ababa says the hydro power plant project being built in Nile River near Sudanese border has no significant impact on lower riparian countries of Sudan and Egypt. Ethiopian officials say the dam project should not be a source confrontation rather be a means of development cooperation and economic partnership.

Despite what the outcome of the tripartite talks turns out to be, Ethiopia insists nothing would stop the country from pushing forward the construction of the dam.

Last month, the three water Ministers of Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan who met in Addis Ababa for talks over the dam visited the controversial power plant project.

Upon completion, the dam, which would be Africa's largest, will have capacity of generating 6,000 megawatts of electricity, making the country a major regional power hub and further enabling it to sell electricity to more countries including to Egypt.

Ethiopia currently exports hydro power processed electricity to Sudan, Kenya and Djibouti.

"Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan to Select Consultancy Firm", 26/10/2014, online at: 26/10/2014, online at:  
<http://news.sudanvisiondaily.com/details.html?rsnpid=241820>

**BACK TO TOP**

❖ **Sustaining Africa's Development by Leveraging on Climate Change**

**MARRAKECH, Oct 23 2014 (IPS)** - By leveraging knowledge about climate change, through adopting improved agriculture technologies and using water and energy more effectively, Africa can accelerate its march towards sustainable development.

Policy and development practitioners say Africa is at a development cross roads and argue that the continent — increasingly an attractive destination for economic and agriculture investment — should use the window of opportunity presented by a low carbon economy to implement new knowledge and information to transform the challenges posed by climate change into opportunities for social development.

“Climate change is not just a challenge for Africa but also an opportunity to trigger innovation and the adoption of better technologies that save on water and energy,” Fatima Denton, director of the special initiatives division at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), told IPS.

“At the core of the climate change debate is human security and we can achieve sustainability by using climate data and information services and feeding that knowledge into critical sectors and influence policy making.”

Africa, while enjoying a mining-driven economic boom, should look at revitalising the agriculture sector to drive economic development and growth under the framework of the new sustainable development goals, she said.

Denton said that for too long the climate change narrative in Africa has been about agriculture as a vulnerable sector. But this sector, she said, can be a game changer for the African continent through sustainable agriculture. In Africa, agriculture employs more than 70 percent of population and remains a major contributor to the GDP of many countries.

Climate-smart agriculture is being touted as one of the mechanisms for climate-proofing Africa's agriculture. CGIAR— a global consortium of 15 agricultural research centres — has dedicated approximately half its one-billion-dollar annual budget towards researching how to support smallholder farmers in sub-Saharan Africa through climate-smart agriculture.

When announcing the research funding in September, Frank Rijsberman, chief executive officer of CGIAR, said there can be no sustainable development or halting of the effects of climate change without paying attention to billions of farmers who feed the world and manage its natural resources.

Although Africa has vast land, energy, water and people, it was not able to feed itself despite having the capacity to.

The inability of Africa's agriculture to match the needs of a growing population has left around 300 million people frequently hungry, forcing the continent to spend billions of dollars importing food annually.

Climate change is expected to disrupt current agricultural production systems, the environment, and the biodiversity in Africa unless there is a major cut in global greenhouse gas emissions.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) Fifth Assessment Report has warned that surpassing a 2<sup>0</sup>C temperature rise could worsen the existing food deficit challenge of the continent and thereby hinder most African countries from attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MGDs) of reducing extreme poverty and ending hunger by 2015.

Economic and population growth in Africa have fuelled agricultural imports faster than exports of agriculture products from Africa, says the 2013 Africa Wide Annual Trends and Outlook Report (ATOR) published by the African Union Commission.

The report shows that the agriculture deficit in Africa rose from less than one billion dollars to nearly 40 billion in the last five years, highlighting the need for major agriculture transformation to increase production.

Francis Johnson, a senior research fellow with the Swedish-based Stockholm Environment Institute, told IPS that renewable energy like wind, solar and hydro-power, are vital components in Africa's sustainable development toolkit given its unmet energy demands and dependence on fossil fuels.

He added that developing countries should embrace clean energy as they cannot afford to follow the dirty emissions path of developed countries.

"In Africa competition is more about water than about land. And right decisions must be made. And when it comes to bio energy, it is the issue of choosing the right crops to cope with climate change," Johnson said.

According to research by the Ethiopia-based Africa Climate Policy Centre, the cost of adaptation and putting Africa on a carbon-growth path is 31 billion dollars a year and could add 40 percent to the cost of meeting the MGDs.

Adaptation costs could in time be met from Africa's own resources, argues Abdalla Hamdok, the deputy executive secretary of the ECA. He said that Africa could do this by saving money lost to illicit financial flows estimated to be more than 50 billion dollars a year.

"Sustaining Africa's Development by Leveraging on Climate Change", 23/10/2014, online at: [http://www.ipsnews.net/2014/10/sustaining-africas-development-by-leveraging-on-climate-change/?utm\\_source=Circle+of+Blue+WaterNews+%26+Alerts&utm\\_campaign=b1350f15ec-RSS\\_EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_c1265b6ed7-b1350f15ec-250657169](http://www.ipsnews.net/2014/10/sustaining-africas-development-by-leveraging-on-climate-change/?utm_source=Circle+of+Blue+WaterNews+%26+Alerts&utm_campaign=b1350f15ec-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c1265b6ed7-b1350f15ec-250657169)

**BACK TO TOP**

## ❖ Zimbabwe Can't Pipe Water so Taxes Private Supplies Instead

**Zimbabwe**'s government hasn't been able to supply piped water to much of the southern African nation's capital, Harare, for most of the past decade. Now it's taxing private suppliers as it struggles to pay state workers.

The levy on water pumped from boreholes and supplied by tankers to private houses, imposed on Oct. 1, is one of a host of taxes that the government has put in place, ranging from duties on cellphone airtime to increased import duties on cars and motor fuel, to shore up sagging revenue amid slowing economic growth.

“Welcome to Harare where we pay a tax rate for water the city is supposed to supply, but doesn't, and must pay for our own boreholes or deliveries and be taxed on those instead,” Domore Sebakwe, a resident of the affluent Mount Pleasant suburb, said by phone last week from Harare, a city of 2.1 million people.

In addition to an inadequate water and power supplies, most roads are riddled with potholes, and few streetlights work. That's a legacy of the almost decade-long recession that began in 2000, triggered by a botched land reform program that slashed exports of crops such as tobacco, and has reduced the size of the economy by half, according to government estimates. The state is struggling to pay salaries that consume 76 percent of the budget.

“We have to increase revenue collection,” Finance Minister Patrick Chinamasa said by phone yesterday. “You already know that the government wage bill is consuming 70 percent to 80 percent of revenue. We acknowledge that's not sustainable.”

A levy of \$3 has been imposed for every 1,000 liters (264 gallons) of water pumped through boreholes in the capital. The cost of a delivery of 5,000 liters to a house by tanker has risen to \$60 from \$45.



## Dry Pipes

“I haven’t had water from the city for eight years. Their pipes are dry, yet for eight years I’ve paid my rates and in that time I sunk a borehole, bought a storage tank and re-plumbed my house at huge cost, and now I’m being taxed on something the city is supposed to supply,” Sebakwe said.

The charge makes the liquid **7.5 times more expensive than water** supplied by the city council, according to **Kubatana**, a coalition of non-governmental organizations based in Harare. The **Zimbabwe National Water Authority** justified the charges and a ban on deliveries of water to Harare residents from boreholes within the city on a depletion of ground water supplies.

“Excessive abstraction of ground water leads to the lowering of the water table,” the regulator said on its **website**.

## Import Duties

In addition to the water charge, a 25-percent import duty has been imposed on all mobile phones and 5-percent tax on airtime and. Import duties on motor vehicles rose to more than 60 percent, while a tax on motor fuel was increased by 5 cents a liter.

The Zimbabwe National Roads Administration this year doubled tolls paid by drivers of cars to use inter-city highways to \$2, simultaneously introducing a \$10 “road access fee” on travelers entering the country. Trucks are charged \$10 at each toll gate.

Economic growth is slowing after President Robert Mugabe, 90, won his fifth term last year, ending a power-sharing government formed after disputed elections five years before. During the coalition, the economy emerged from recession.

Now factories are shutting down and consumer spending has slumped. The IMF estimates the economy **expanded** about 3 percent in 2013 compared with 10.5 percent a year earlier.

“It’s just an attempt to get any money they can because revenue isn’t meeting more than very basic needs,” said John Robertson, an independent economist in Harare. “Government is desperate for money.”

‘Zimbabwe Can’t Pipe Water so Taxes Private Supplies Instead’ 22/10/2014, online at: [http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-10-21/zimbabwe-fails-to-pipe-water-so-taxes-private-deliveries-instead.html?utm\\_source=Circle+of+Blue+Water+News+%26+Alerts&utm\\_campaign=9ad1b276ee-RSS\\_EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_c1265b6ed79ad1b276ee-250657169](http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-10-21/zimbabwe-fails-to-pipe-water-so-taxes-private-deliveries-instead.html?utm_source=Circle+of+Blue+Water+News+%26+Alerts&utm_campaign=9ad1b276ee-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c1265b6ed79ad1b276ee-250657169)

**BACK TO TOP**

### ❖ **CYPRUS: Recycled water a steady source for irrigation**

Recycled water produced by sewerage units constitutes a steady source for irrigation purposes and is expected to cover approximately 30% of Cyprus` irrigation needs, senior official of the Water Development Department Andreas Manoli has told CNA.

In statements to Cyprus News Agency Manoli spoke of the excellent quality of recycled water in Cyprus, as it is produced after having undergone tertiary treatment and is suitable for use in all crops apart from leafy green vegetables consumed raw, such as lettuce and cabbage.

“Our obligations under European directive 91/271/EEC are to construct sewerage projects in all communities with a population of over 2,000 residents”, he said.

This obligation will have a total cost of 1.7 billion euro, he noted, adding that another 500 million needs to be spent in order for the projects under way to be completed until 2027.

“From the projects which have already been completed and the ones to be completed in future we produce water which has undergone tertiary treatment, which is of an excellent quality for irrigation purposes”, he said.

Asked for what crops recycled water can be used, he said that “it can be used for the irrigation of all crops apart from leafy green vegetables which are eaten raw such as lettuce and cabbage.

Manoli also explained that the EU has not as yet issued specific standards on the quality of recycled water. Most European countries, he said, “produce water which has undergone secondary treatment, which is of a lower quality than our own which has undergone tertiary treatment”.

Replying to a question over quantities used he said that in Cyprus 80% of recycled water produced is used for irrigation purposes, adding that with time its production and therefore its use will increase. Also, he said, the necessary projects in order for the water to be distributed to farmers will be

completed.

According to Manoli, “starting from 2015 production is projected to be 31 million cubic metres of water while 20 million cubic metres will be used”, adding that this corresponds to approximately 10% – 15% of total irrigation demand in Cyprus

This, he noted, “will increase on a yearly basis and in 2023 production is expected to reach 47 million cubic meters which will be used in full”. This quantity, he added, will correspond to approximately 30% of irrigation needs.

Replying to a question he said that recycled water is also channeled to aquifers. This way, he added, it undergoes even further treatment and is then once more used for irrigation.

At the same time, he pointed out, “in cases where an aquifer’s levels are low and it risks to become salinised, recycled water is added to the aquifer boosting its levels and pushing sea water back”. As a result, he added, the high quality of the aquifer’s water is restored.

Recycled water is indeed of excellent quality, he stressed.

Manoli also noted that recycled water quantities produced “are much more steady than those which come from rainfall, because they exclusively depend on the water’s consumption”.

Despite consumption decreasing somewhat in times of crisis recycled water is still “a very steady source of water compared to any other”, he said.

He also said that a bicommunal sewerage plant constructed in the Turkish occupied village of Mia Milia is also expected to distribute to the areas controlled by the Republic of Cyprus 7 million cubic meters per year.

Before this water can be distributed, however, there are some studies and projects that need to be completed.

Asked whether a timetable has been set, he replied that distribution is expected to start if all goes well by 2017, adding that there are some other plans but they are not final.

“CYPRUS: Recycled water a steady source for irrigation”, 19/10/2014, online at: [http://www.financialmirror.com/news-details.php?nid=33347&utm\\_source=Circle+of+Blue+WaterNews+%26+Alerts&utm\\_campaign=9ad1b276ee-RSS\\_EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_c1265b6ed7-9ad1b276ee-250657169](http://www.financialmirror.com/news-details.php?nid=33347&utm_source=Circle+of+Blue+WaterNews+%26+Alerts&utm_campaign=9ad1b276ee-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c1265b6ed7-9ad1b276ee-250657169)

**BACK TO TOP**

❖ **State has no power to ban extraction of water: Plea in HC**

CHENNAI : Legality of a recent government order banning water extraction by packaged drinking water units from 139 "over-exploited" blocks and 33 "critical" blocks in the state has been challenged by the units in the Madras high court.

Justice V Ramasubramanian, before whom the petition of Tamil Nadu Packaged Drinking Water Manufacturers' Association, came up for admission on October 20, asked additional government pleader P Sanjay Gandhi to take notice on behalf of the government and furnish response within two weeks.

In its petition, the association said the Tamil Nadu Ground Water (development and management) Act, 2003 remained unnotified even after receiving the governor's assent. In 2013, the state government promulgated an ordinance, only to repeal it later. "Therefore, as on date, there is no source of authority or power for the Tamil Nadu government to regulate water within its territory," they said, adding that a central legislation alone is holding fort at present.

Under the circumstances, the state government issued an order on July 23, prohibiting water extraction in 139 "over-exploited" blocks and 33 "critical" blocks. As per a March 2012 order, Tamil Nadu has a total of 386 blocks.

Questioning the order, the water units said it had no statutory backing and lacked jurisdiction, as it could not go beyond the central legislation in force. "The state has no jurisdiction to issue the government order without constituting a state-legal ground water authority," the petition said, adding that NOC had become a requirement for the first time, that too when the state has no regulatory powers in the absence of a legislation.

The units cited the example of water being used for agricultural purposes, and said they too should be exempted from the ambit of the order, as they served drinking water to people. Moreover, no block or



area in a state could be permanently over-exploited or critical, because recharge rate of groundwater has been quite good in Tamil Nadu, thanks to measures such as mandatory water harvesting.

“State has no power to ban extraction of water: Plea in HC”, 24/10/2014, online at:

[http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/City/Chennai/State-has-no-power-to-ban-extraction-of-water-Plea-in-HC/articleshow/44921324.cms?utm\\_source=Circle+of+Blue+WaterNews+%26+Alerts&utm\\_campaign=d6a8fa5ca9-RSS\\_EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_c1265b6ed7-d6a8fa5ca9-250657169](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/City/Chennai/State-has-no-power-to-ban-extraction-of-water-Plea-in-HC/articleshow/44921324.cms?utm_source=Circle+of+Blue+WaterNews+%26+Alerts&utm_campaign=d6a8fa5ca9-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c1265b6ed7-d6a8fa5ca9-250657169)

**BACK TO TOP**

### ❖ Laos is acting responsibly on Mekong dam Project

*Environmental activists are once again lashing out at the Lao government and the intergovernmental Mekong River Commission (MRC) in the hope that hydropower projects on the Mekong will be delayed or cancelled.*

In a September 10 letter to the leaders of Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam, activists complained that Laos was acting irresponsibly and that the MRC's procedures for assessing potential impacts of hydropower development on the Mekong were inadequate.

Earlier this year, many of the same activists lambasted the Laos government for submitting a proposal for the 260-megawatt Don Sahong Hydropower Project to MRC members under the Notification process rather than Prior Consultation procedures under the 1995 Mekong Agreement. Then, in July, in response to member-country concerns, the Laos government agreed to open the Don Sahong project to the more formal Prior Consultation process.

Now, the activists are attacking the MRC and the Prior Consultation process itself. They say the procedures aren't good enough and the time allotted isn't long enough. They are demanding more studies and empowerment of carefully chosen "local communities" where anti-dam voices express fear of development.

We wholeheartedly believe that consultation with member countries and development partners can identify further options to improve the design of the Don Sahong dam. This was the case with the first project Laos submitted under the Notification, Prior Consultation and Agreement (PNPCA) process - the Xayaburi Hydropower Dam in northern Laos.

Activists blithely dismiss the prior consultation process for Xayaburi as a failure, in part because the MRC's technical review found that the run-of-river scheme would not have any significant impact on the Mekong's flow and water quality.

We see the Xayaburi PC as an unqualified success. The process prompted a more careful assessment of possible impacts, a review of measures to avoid, mitigate and minimise these impacts, and ultimately the redesign of the project. In the end, changes to the initial project design addressed potential impacts on the sediment flux, fisheries potential, fish migration and passage and navigation.

It seems that what the activists really want is for the MRC to prevent Laos from building dams on the Mekong. Unfortunately this is not something the MRC can do. The Procedures for Notification Prior Consultation and Agreement set forth in the 1995 Agreement are not a mechanism for approving or rejecting any particular project. The MRC is not a building permits office.

Laos and the developer of the Don Sahong project have had the ecology of the Khone Falls area under study by experts for the past eight years. A dozen technical and engineering studies, environmental and social impact studies and fisheries studies are posted on the Don Sahong website [www.dshpp.com](http://www.dshpp.com). These studies suggest there will be no significant impacts to the Mekong's water flow or quality.

The developers have already begun to address the single-most important environmental issue: dry-season fish migration. With local residents and authorities, they are improving the braids of the Mekong that surround the project site. They have begun to educate local communities about fisheries conservation and new economic opportunities in fish farming. There is every reason to believe there will be more fish in the region in the future, not less.

Laos remains strongly committed to its obligations under the Mekong Agreement during the stipulated six-month PC process. However, during this period, work on roads and a bridge leading to the Don Sahong dam site will continue, as preparatory infrastructure is not a use of Mekong water and not under the purview of the 1995 Agreement.

And while NGOs clamour for a transboundary assessment, the Lao government has already asked the MRC secretariat to set up a joint monitoring team to assess the progress of the Don Sahong project. This goes beyond the scope of prior consultation to ensure continued cross-border cooperation.

Environmental activists are grouching about the MRC consultation process because they are not interested in furthering technical exchange that could identify, minimise and mitigate potential environmental impacts. They are simply out to stop development of hydropower on the Mekong.

By now, they should realise that the Lao government will not be deterred from its commitment to

develop clean, renewable hydropower, a source of national pride for the Lao people and a sustainable, reliable source of electricity for the region.

Viraphonh Viravong is Laos' vice minister of Energy and Mines.

“Laos is acting responsibly on Mekong dam Project”, 24/10/2014, online at:

<http://www.nationmultimedia.com/opinion/Laos-is-acting-responsibly-on-Mekong-dam-project-30246103.html>

**BACK TO TOP**