



50 years of Israeli Occupation.. 50 years of steadfastness

The Palestinian people mark June 5th this year, with grief pain and sorrow, 50th anniversary of the Israeli occupation of the Gaza Strip and West Bank including Jerusalem. It is the second stage of the prolonged Zionist's colonial and settlement project at the expense of the Palestinian people and their national rights after the 1948 exodus "Nakba".

In spite of the occupation's numerous plans, projects and measures for the Palestinian territories occupied in 1967; which over the past years aimed at changing the status quo through land confiscation, settlement expansion, imposition control over resources, imposition of restrictions over freedom of movement and of policy of fragmentation and division, our people still adhere to their national constants which include the right to return, self-determination and the establishment of an independent Palestinian State.

The successive Israeli occupation governments have used the Oslo Accords and the course of negotiations as a cover to impose facts on the ground by intensifying settlements building and entrenching the policy of isolation and Bantustans. Thereby, they undermined the chances of establishing an independent State of Palestine or implementing the so-called "two-state solution" by exploiting the state of internal division erupted in 2007 and isolating Gaza from the West Bank, tightening the blockade and continuing aggression against the Gaza Strip as well as the strangling the West Bank through settlement building, imposing control over the areas behind the separation wall and the area of the Jordan Valley, Judaization of Jerusalem, and entrenching the status quo. This reflects the ambitions of the occupation and blocks any prospects for a serious political process that would lead Palestinians to achieve freedom and independence.

This situation affirms the need to reinforce the achievements through investing the International Court of Justice of decision in 2004 on the Apartheid Wall, activate the issue of the Israeli occupation crimes in the International Criminal Court and complete the membership of the State of Palestine in the international forums, not to mention the need to support the boycott movement and disinvestment, impose sanctions on the Occupation State, mobilize a wide campaign of popular and international solidarity, and strengthen the steadfastness of the Palestinian people. These bases constitute essential means to reach the Palestinian people's goal to achieve national freedom and independence instead of betting on resuming negotiations that lack clear terms of reference and lack the conditions of halting Israeli settlements and releasing Palestinian Political Prisoners.

It is time for our people including the national and social figures and human rights activists to take a moment of serious pause to review the achievements of the past 50 years, in order to draw lessons and work to stop the deterioration as well as to strive to stimulate the components of the national identity that are unprecedentedly exposed to the risks of fragmentation and threat.

An eloquent response to the 50th anniversary of Israel's brutal occupation lies in ending the division, achieving national unity, and achieving agreement on national, social and human rights platform and on the basis of partnership rather than domination and exclusion.

The Palestinian NGO's Network, hence, emphasizes the following:

- The Palestinian people will continue in their struggle to earn their human rights in ending Israeli occupation and establishing a Palestinian State and their capital Jerusalem. Palestinians uphold the right of return, self-determination and the right to be free from occupation by ending occupation.
- The Palestinian people will continue in their pursue to achieve the political, legal and geographical unity to enhance their steadfastness.
- The International Community must carry its legal and moral responsibilities to hold the Israeli occupation accountable for violations of international law and international conventions.

- It is important to find a just solution to the Palestinian issue and to guarantee the rights of the Palestinian people to promote the international security, peace and stability on the basis of international legitimacy resolutions.
- The continuation of the Israeli occupation's aggression, blockade, isolation and the collective punishment of 2 million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and depriving them of their most basic rights, destroy the elements of the Palestinian life at all levels.
- The United Nations as a neutral body should not bow to pressure from the Israeli occupation to change its principles, and should not ignore the Israeli occupation's continued and cumulative violations of International law.

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