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**Israel is not prepared for the Trump Plan**

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The preoccupation with the Trump Initiative is shunted aside in the shadow of the cloud of social protest against corruption. All the political bets, assessments, "media balloons" and public opinion maneuvers are many and varied, but these indicate the uncertainty regarding the launch of the initiative, its contents, and most importantly - if it succeeds where others have failed. The history of the negotiations between Israel and the PLO over the last three decades makes these questions irrelevant. Everyone involved knows which package deal can drive negotiations that could result in a permanent settlements, and which proposal can at best maintain the current freeze – and at worst, launch a new round of violence.

Trump's declaration on Jerusalem did not contribute much to Israel's standing and position, but it does hint to the Palestinians that the American president wants to ignore the international consensus and base the negotiations solely on the existing balance of power between them and Israel. This will at once tilt the playing field strongly against the Palestinians.

The history of the conflict shows us, and Trump and his emissaries should see it, that the PLO-led Palestinians adopted only one dramatic turn in their policy in a century of conflict, and that happened in 1988. Since the Balfour Declaration of 1917, the Palestinians have held a discourse of rights based solely on their interpretation. They rejected the legitimacy of the international community's decision to exclude the Land of Israel from the principle of selfdetermination in favor of the establishment of a Jewish state in part of it, since their position was that they had the right to self-determination as the overwhelming majority of the country's population. They went to war after the Partition Plan in November 1947, as Jamal al-Husseini, the Mufti's nephew, explained to the Security Council in April 1948: "A representative of the Jewish Agency told us yesterday that they are not the aggressor, because the Arabs are the ones who started the fighting ... In fact, we do not deny this fact ... We told the world ... that we do not agree that little Palestine will be divided."

Forty years later, following the PLO's dialogue with the Reagan State Department, and in light of the global and regional geo-strategic changes (the beginning of the collapse of the Soviet Union, the first intifada, etc.), the PLO changed its basic policy. The Palestinian rights discourse came to be based on the decisions of the international community, and the PLO accepted UN Resolutions 181, 242 and 338. As Mahmoud Abbas later stated in April 2008, "The opportunity of partition of 1947 was lost, and before that the opportunity of the Peel Commission was lost. We did not want to lose another chance, and therefore we accepted the 1948 and 1967 partition, leaving us with a mere 22% of historic Palestine." In other words, the change in policy reflected the significant but also the only compromise that the Palestinians are prepared for: giving up the dream to have 100% of the homeland Palestine, in exchange for a Palestinian state on 22% of the land.

While the negotiations between Israel and the PLO did not take place under this framework, especially in the Oslo process, the parties were unable to bridge significantly the gaps between them. The Palestinians have clung to the discourse of rights on the basis of international resolutions since, as Hanan Ashrawi explained, international decisions tend to even out the playing field that is usually controlled by Israel as the stronger party.

A breakthrough was finally achieved in the Annapolis process, led by Ehud Olmert and Mahmoud Abbas in 2007- 2008. While the two failed to achieve a final status agreement, the parameters for the four core issues were set for the first time in a manner consistent with the international resolutions and, more importantly, the substantive interests of both sides. In addition, it was reiterated that these issues are divided into two pairs of mutually-dependent issues: borderssecurity, Jerusalem-refugees. In order for Palestine to be demilitarized and lack heavy weapons alongside other security arrangements, as Israel demands, the latter must reiterate its acceptance of the 1967 border as the basis for a future border, with territorial exchange in a 1:1 ratio. Similarly, realizing Israel's demand for the Palestinians to forgo the Right of Return is contingent upon the establishment of a Palestinian capital in East Jerusalem. It is no secret that Netanyahu and his government have long since backed away from these parameters on borders and Jerusalem, and have even intensified Israeli demands on security and refugees.

When they formulate their proposal to President Trump, Kushner and Greenblatt must recognize that Abbas, in the event that he agrees to American mediation once again, cannot deviate from the Annapolis framework. Egyptian President Al-Sisi and Saudi Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman will not be able to get the Palestinians to agree to a proposal that is not parked in the interpretive space of the Arab League initiative. Any attempt to flee from there will encounter the gravitational resistance of the Palestinian national interest and of Arab public opinion.

Abbas is making every effort to ensure that the Arab Quartet will stand by him. Last month he extracted a promise from the Saudi king that the Arab position was based on the League's initiative, which guarantees the two required Palestinian goals: the 1967 lines and a capital in East Jerusalem. The Saudi foreign minister, who was asked to comment on reports that the Arab states are ready to relax the conditions presented in the peace initiative, reiterated: "The Arab conditions are clear: two states are a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital. The Arab countries have always supported the Palestinian brothers."

They must make it clear to Trump that there is no "ultimate deal" that is not based on international resolutions. They are the only possible frame of reference for the parties, since we can not talk about negotiating according to the balance of power between them, and worse still - according to their contradictory national narratives.

At the same time, given a clear commitment to the final status agreement under these parameters, the Saudi and Egyptian pressure on Abbas will aim to demonstrate his readiness for interim stages, which he has so far refused to accept. These will include a series of parallel and coordinated steps by the Arab Quartet, Israel, and the Palestinians. It will also be possible to conduct negotiations on these two pairs, but it is not possible to change these basic give-and-take relations with regard to the permanent status agreement.

A withdrawal from these understandings, due to Israeli or internal American pressure, will throw the Americans' proposal into the trash can of history, and lead Hamas and parts of Fatah to demand that Abbas declare the political process dead and resign his post. This move could set the clock back to before 1988, with the PLO withdrawing its recognition of Israel and returning to armed struggle. Fatah, along with all the Palestinian opposition organizations, including Hamas and Islamic Jihad, signifies the American recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, as well as an American regional arrangement whose main points will not include the minimum required, to be crucial issues, red lines. This change to the rules of the game will drive the Palestinian public to the streets in support of its leadership, even if there is no direct call for such a protest.

Netanyahu, among all his investigations and trips, is not interested in opening this pandora's box ahead of time, and in September he made do with updating cabinet members that Trump is preparing a peace plan and determined to advance.

This "preparation" is far from sufficient for any scenario that will develop, with the exception of postponing the launching of the program to an unknown date and the continuation of the current situation. A fair plan for the sides requires Netanyahu and Israel to prepare a national strategy, regardless of whether they want to accept or reject it. A "proIsraeli" plan would also obligate Israel to prepare for the Palestinian response and the response of the Arab world. It is very possible that at that time, if he could, Netanyahu would prefer to choose an exit from the political process to an election arena in which he or his successor would present themselves as champions of Israel's security.