

# A POST OSLO STRATEGY: PARAMETERS, POLICY IMPLICATIONS, ACTIONS

Report by



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June 2015

It is hoped that the suggested framework for strategic action presented in outline here will encourage participation by as many Palestinians as possible in helping to formulate the next decisive phase of our struggle for national self-determination, independence and achieving our historic rights. It is built on work done by the Palestine Strategy Group, and derived from expert workshops and focus groups since October 2014.

For 21 years the Oslo process has constrained our national liberation strategy. While purporting to be a peace process that would lead to the creation of a Palestinian state as set out in successive UN resolutions (Scenario A), it has in reality been a mask behind which Israeli governments have pushed ahead with the 'Greater Israel' project of deepening effective control over and judaizing most of mandatory Palestine through, among other things, de-arabizing the land, history, archeology etc. (Scenario B). The collapse of the Kerry initiative in April 2014 further exposes the flows in the US sponsored bilateral negotiations and the delusion that it could lead to a just solution. This opens up a wide range of options. This is the stark contradiction that now has to be exposed and acted on. We have to dismantle the component parts of the Oslo system by moving down both tracks simultaneously – working towards Scenario (A) and opposing Scenario (B).

The right of the Palestinian people to self-determination is a right enshrined in international law. By correlation so is the right of the Palestinian people to independence in the State of Palestine. However, it is clear that ending Israel's military occupation of Palestine can only be achieved through a political deal with Israel. Therefore, the objective of any strategy must be to change the existing power dynamics that have made a negotiated settlement that results in an independent Palestinian state impossible. This involves exerting pressure on Israel by using a number of tools. The purpose of exercising this leverage is to make a final status deal the least bad option for Israel.

This report calls for a post-Oslo strategy that adopts dual parallel tracks. The first track continues to work towards achieving liberation and statehood on the 1967 borders. The second simultaneous track is to demand and fulfill Palestinian individual and collective rights in the absence of a state and in accordance with international law. This requires delinking the process of reaching a solution from holding Israel accountable for its illegal policies and practices.

This strategy also requires abandoning the uni-track approach: resistance or political settlement. It must be both within a comprehensive strategic plan. The experience of the last 20 years of peacemaking confirms that searching for a

political solution without resistance is ineffective. By the same token, resistance without a clear and agreed upon political track is pointless.

In other words, we must pursue our active involvement in all international venues, seek bilateral recognition from all without hesitation, to end the occupation and realize statehood, internationalize negotiations with Israel as if there is no accountability, while we simultaneously hold Israel and others, including ourselves, aggressively accountable as if there are no negotiations or international political efforts being undertaken.

## **A ELEMENTS OF THE POST-OSLO STRATEGY**

The first element (Track 1) is to redouble efforts to build international support for our independent, contiguous, and sovereign Palestinian State on the borders of 1967 and the fulfillment of Palestinian historic rights including the right of return. Unlike the ‘Palestinian state’ that several Israeli politicians expressed a willingness to accept which is largely emptied from the central features of a modern nation-state such as sovereignty, the majority of Palestinians view a sovereign and independent Palestinian state on the borders of 1967 as a minimal frame within which they put an end to the Israeli military occupation and colonisation and materialise and enjoy national self-determination, besides realising other individual and collective rights and achieving justice for the refugees. Realising these claims and rights is the glue that binds together our national struggle for self-determination. It is what commands overwhelming international support and it is what Israel seeks to undermine through policies of separation, blockade and fragmentation of the Palestinian geography and demography. The unity of the Palestinian cause must not be jeopardized.

But this can no longer be done via bilateral negotiations with Israel brokered by the United States as under the Oslo process. It can only be done via a new strategy that aims at changing the balance of power, including an internationalized route in which any future negotiations play the role of implementing what has already been internationally endorsed. It is Israel – protected by the United States – that has closed the bilateral negotiation route by continuing to carve up, expropriate, annex and colonize the territory being negotiated over. The UN has explicitly acknowledged that the PLO has developed successfully the capacity to run a democratic and peaceful state, founded on the rule of law and living in peace and security with its neighbors. Palestine largely fulfills the legal and technical criteria for UN membership, including statehood, in as far as the Occupation allows. Only Israel blocks Scenario (A). Here an international conference based on international law and successive UN resolutions is a preferred route (read *The Turning Point*, Third Strategic Document, the Palestine Strategy Group, April 2014, available online).

- The second element (Track 2) is to oppose and resist the existing “one state reality” imposed by Israel that deprives Palestinians of basic human, civil and political rights enshrined in international law. We must resist in every detail the tightening web of illegal expropriation and colonization of Palestinian territory, and the discrimination and apartheid practiced against Palestinian people. The emphasis needs to be on linking popular resistance

in the occupied territory and by all Palestinians with a coordinated local, regional and international campaign, that utilizes all kinds of legitimate resistance in coordinated strategy in the West Bank, Gaza and the Diaspora. Track 2 means insisting on full and equal national rights throughout Mandatory Palestine and for all Palestinians which entails dismantling the exclusive colonial system.

The key to this strategy is to end the long held confusion between strategies for national liberation and rights-based strategies. It is not either or. It could and must be both. We are aware of the difficulties of following these two tracks at the same time. It is likely to be misrepresented as a switch from a 'two-state solution' to a 'one-state solution'. It is not. As explained in the conclusion, the alternative is not between a 'two-state solution' and a 'one-state solution', but between self-determination for Palestinians (Scenario A) and the existing one-state reality - Greater Israel (Scenario B) which we aim to block. The post-Oslo two-track strategy is not a threat to future solutions, but on the contrary the only way to save the prospects for such a meaningful resolution.

The two tracks are inseparably intertwined. Scenario (A) will only come about when Israel and the international community understand that the alternative - Scenario (B) - is worse, because it will entail endless conflict, endless instability, increasing costs, and an unpredictable outcome. In addition, since the internationalized route to Palestinian self-determination is now likely to be a long one because Israel will oppose it and the US will veto UNSC resolutions, we can no longer be expected as in the past to hold back indefinitely from opposing Scenario (B) by all means at our disposal. We have been asked to wait long enough. The time for waiting is now over. We must act. The two tracks do not contradict one another. They complement one another.

One concrete proposal for action that follows from this analysis would be to remove the ambiguity under Oslo by persuading the international community to confront Israel with an existential choice. Is its presence in the West Bank including East Jerusalem and effective control of Gaza a military occupation or not? If it is an occupation, as the international community has repeatedly acknowledged, then its - supposedly provisional - custodianship should be brought to a swift end. If, on the other hand, Israel insists on not recognizing its military rule as an occupation, then there is no justification for denying equal rights to everyone who is subject to Israeli control and rule which is the entire area of historic Palestine. This includes the right to vote for whatever government exercises that control. Israel can no longer go on avoiding this choice under the cover of the ambiguities of the Oslo status quo. Independently of any Israeli response, or lack of response, the international community can act according to its own commitments. We can go on aiming to influence this, while reserving our own position (going down both tracks at the same time) and continuing to increase the cost to Israel of Scenario (B).

Our post-Oslo strategy is guided by the following principles:

- The long term goal of our strategy is national independence and national self-determination and achieving individual and collective rights including the right of return to refugees and equality to the 1948 Palestinians .
- It is a national strategy that includes all Palestinians wherever they may live. The aim is to regain the unity of the nation and transform their lives.
- Our strategy does not close down any options or paths that may lead to the strategic goal – it will adapt to a situation where there is a Palestinian state and to a situation where this is not yet possible. It is ‘both and’ not ‘either or’. For 21 years the possibility of there not being a Palestinian state was not part of the national strategy, confining our strategy to act only in the context of an emerging state. In light of the current geo- political reality in Israel, this must end.
- Our strategy is based on the clear understanding that it is only when the power imbalance is redressed that we will achieve our goals. The limits of Israel’s preponderance in military power were demonstrated in the outcome of the third war on Gaza. Our power is the steadfastness of our people, the justice of our cause and resistance in all its forms including the growing global movement for boycott sanctions and divestment. Our strategic aim is to convert legitimacy power into real transformation on the ground.
- The justice of our cause rests on the dramatic contrast between the unethical basis of the Greater Israel project and the ethical basis of our strategy. The Greater Israel strategy is based on claims of rights for Jews that are thereby denied to Palestinians. The Palestinian strategy demands rights for the Palestinian people that are equal and reciprocal with those of any other people. Peoples are equal in dignity and rights.
- A central requirement of our strategy is to inspire and galvanize the mass of the Palestinian people – civil society in its widest sense – and not just elites in both the formulation and implementation of the national liberation strategy.
- It is a central principle of our strategy that the initiative and drive for national liberation and self-determination must come from and be guided by Palestinians. We cannot—and must not—rely on others to do it for us.

The ultimate aim of our post-Oslo two-track strategy is to unleash the full potential for collective action by our people. A far greater range of action is envisaged than has been available before. We can retain the initiative, move simultaneously in different directions, constantly surprise our opponents, and never rest until we have dismantled the web of control, dispossession, discrimination and oppression that has shackled us. This is in every sense a strategy for national *liberation*.

## **B ARENAS FOR ACTION**

Five main arenas for action are identified here. In each case new strategic parameters have policy implications that lead to a range of possible action- points.

## Arena (1) Internal national reconciliation, institutional renewal, and popular resistance

*How can the Palestinian people be unified and collectively inspired to seize the historic opportunity to achieve national liberation?*

Palestinian national unity is a strategic prerequisite. Without sufficient internal unity to formulate a truly national strategy, or to build sufficient legitimate authority to implement it, there can be no coherent or effective national strategy. This is the role of the PLO. It is often said that Israeli strategy is to 'divide and rule'. The policy implication for Palestinian strategy is 'do not be divided and do not be ruled'. Overcoming our main weakness – fragmentation – is very difficult to do under occupation. But the policy imperative is clear. The emphasis is on national will, national unity, and national representation. How can this be achieved?

### *National reconciliation*

The current attempt to forge a unity government must succeed where previous attempts have failed (2005, 2007, 2011). Conditions are more propitious now since, on the one hand both the nationalist and Islamist movements have manifestly failed on their own in the face of Israeli intransigence, while on the other hand given unprecedented international support the potential for a breakthrough if differences are laid aside is now great. Each needs the other and the nation needs both. There must be a genuine partnership in formulating and implementing a common national program.

- Hamas has to reconsider its regional affiliations and become a national movement prepared to embrace pluralism and equality.
- Fatah has to be prepared to share power and shield itself from counterproductive international pressures. All other political factions must assume their full political role and responsibilities or accept exclusion from the national scene, especially if their presence today is insignificant or merely fixed on past historic realities.

A central aim of this national program must be to seek to overcome the *vertical divisions* that separate leaderships from civil society. The breakdown in trust here has been severe. It is essential to repair it. Women, the youth, unions, and all Palestinian stakeholders must be properly consulted and re-energized in this reoriented and recalibrated national effort. Their innovative contributions and active participation should be actively sought. This cannot be just a 'top-down' process.

- Reconciliation between factions and party leaders must be mirrored by deeper societal reconciliation.
- Elections, if properly conducted, are an essential mechanism for recreating political legitimacy despite the danger of polarization that they may bring. Electoral programs must include a choice of strategic futures together with indications of how civil society will be included in developing them, not just a choice between existing power-holders. Parties and candidates must also indicate how they intend to work together to attain superordinate shared national liberation goals and responsibilities if they are to earn votes.

Similarly the aim must be to overcome the *horizontal divisions* that separate us geographically and integrate the efforts of all Palestinians. This again requires imaginative, representative leadership.

- One way to overcome horizontal division is to envisage Palestinians as a single nation, albeit constrained by the Israeli imposed segregations and separations. Each has a distinct role to play in the national liberation effort. A way can then be found to give this national unity political expression via various forms of institutional embodiment and representation as indicated below.

In addition, in order to (re)build the national movement from the ground up across both vertical and horizontal divisions:

- We can link existing organizations of all kinds (unions, social support, educational, writers, family, etc.) in a cross-cutting organizational effort that can contribute, not just cultural and economic, but also to political nation-building under the auspices of the PLO.

### *Institutional Rebuilding*

In order to achieve the above it is widely agreed that institutional renewal is essential - although continuing discussion is needed to agree how this should be done.

- The PA cannot over-abruptly end its role without finding alternatives to the Palestinian livelihoods and national requirements. But it must now withdraw gradually in carefully judged stages from residual Oslo shackles in order to play its role in the post-Oslo two-track strategy.
- The PLO must not just be a site for the struggle for domination between Fatah and Hamas. The PLO is the internationally recognized legal 'personality' that represents the whole Palestinian nation. It must fulfill this role whether there is or is not a Palestinian State. So it is a natural focus for institutional renewal that transcends factions in the national interest. Its renewal is the litmus test for the seriousness with which current leaderships take their responsibilities to widen and revive the national movement.



- Steps can be initiated now by the PLO that are intended eventually to lead to a Constituent Assembly to draw up a unifying national charter for liberation that serves as a platform for all Palestinians during the liberation stage and as a base for a constitution once the state is established. A key component of the national charter is the reaffirmation of the identity of the conflict as a national liberation struggle against the Israeli government's relentless attempts to reshape the conflict on religious and theological foundations. Surely, the recent approval of the Israeli cabinet of Israel's Jewish nation-state bill is another alarming development in this context for the bill seeks to further constitutionalize apartheid by adopting exclusive ethno-national Jewish rights and privileges and attempts to jeopardize the rights of the Palestinians in Israel as well as the right of return of Palestinian refugees.
- A revival of national unity demands more than just bargaining over the make-up and distribution of powers in a unity government. In order to prepare the ground and facilitate these complex transformations, as well as help to overcome the vertical and horizontal gaps between leaderships and wider civil society, a national dialogue should be set up including all main stakeholders. This could play a major role in energizing and democratizing the wider national movement. It would help to prevent single factions from claiming to 'speak for the nation' in order to monopolize power.

### *National resistance*

National resistance is not just negative (use of all forms of legitimate resistance including protest against occupation etc). It is also positive (demands for self-determination in all its forms). The purpose of national reconciliation and institutional renewal is to make effective national resistance possible. This can take many forms, but the strategic requirement is to ensure that it is 'smart' resistance. It needs to be clearly explained what the strategic purpose of each action is within the overall strategy – what specific demands are being made and what is being challenged. Initiatives need to be continually evaluated for strategic effect, and taken up, varied, and dropped accordingly. Local resistance needs to be linked to the regional and international arenas.

Israel tries to make invisible their occupation and colonization of our land. Hidden behind this invisibility is a profound discrimination and segregation of our people. The strategic aim of our popular resistance must be to make Israeli actions as visible as possible.

Popular demonstrations against every aspect of Israeli oppression need to be revitalized and nationalized. What are the correct demands in each case? For example, action against segregated buses and roads as an opportunity to bring wider apartheid to international attention. Targeted and coordinated action by and on behalf of the diaspora is crucial (see regional and international arenas).

### **Arena (2)     Eliciting support from the region**



*How can the universal regional sympathy for our cause be harnessed into effective support?*

Overwhelming popular sympathy for the Palestinian cause throughout the region should be a great source of strength for our strategy. The upheavals that continue to convulse the region, however, make this difficult to harness. Over the past four years revolution has been followed by counter-revolution, and then by counter-counter-revolution. The only certainty is uncertainty, complexity and change. These are the new strategic parameters.

In these circumstances the policy implication is to try to avoid entangling alliances with particular factions, which can backfire and bring adverse and often unanticipated reactions from other parts of the system. Instead, we should identify what specific roles relevant to our strategy different countries can play and then work systematically to activate these. The Palestinian cause has universal street support – particularly among young people. A major incentive for regimes in the region, therefore, is that association with the Palestinian cause can help to give them internal legitimacy. It is also possible that, to the extent that national reconciliation is achieved among Palestinians as set out above, this might be a significant model for how political Islam and national politics can coexist in the region generally.

These political implications define action-points for eliciting support from different countries for specific elements of our strategy such as the following:

- Egypt – for example as an avenue to influencing the United States and the Arab world on the one hand and reactivate its historic role and responsibilities towards Palestinian reconciliation and opening up Gaza.
- Saudi Arabia – for example in relations with the region and the international community. Jordan – for example in relation to the Holy Places.
- Qatar – for example by supporting its aspirations for an international role as reconciler, mediator and problem-solver.
- Conduct discussions/negotiations with Egypt and Jordan on common borders independently of Israel and the US. One key function here might be to remove the possibility that is so enticing to the Israeli right that Egypt and Jordan might ‘absorb’ the Palestinian centres of population leaving Greater Israel in control of most of the West Bank.
- Play a proactive role in defending the integrity of the Holy places as part of the struggle to prevent Israeli denial of Palestinian rights in Jerusalem.

### **Arena (3) Eliciting support from the international community**

*How can the overwhelming international legitimacy of our cause be translated into tangible transformation on the ground?*

It is evident from the analysis under ‘elements of national strategy’ above that the wider international arena is likely to be decisive for both tracks of the post-

Oslo strategy. The key requirement here is to be careful in clarifying and dovetailing action down each of the two tracks so that they reinforce and do not obstruct each other. Quite a lot of this is down to timing. Our moves towards reconciliation and unity government allow us to take a leaf out of Israel's book here. Israeli prime ministers frequently argue that concessions must be made to Israel in order to keep coalition governments together. We can now do the same.

#### *Action-points under Scenario (A)*

We should assume that Netanyahu's rift with the Obama administration is temporary. Therefore, it should immediately seize on this rift to get the US to allow a draft resolution to be passed by the Security Council and to work closely with the US and its allies in the remaining year and a half of the Obama administration. The leadership should work closely with the US, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, the EU High Representative, and Russia to get the US to support the resolution. The leadership should seek clarification from Obama on whether the US will continue to oppose Palestine's statehood strategy since the US has been opposing Palestine's accession to treaties and its attempt to join UN agencies.

Given Netanyahu's statement that there will be no Palestinian state so long as he is Prime Minister, the Palestinian leadership should ask European states under what conditions they would recognise a Palestinian state and whether they will adopt the recommendations of the European Parliament which called for 'recognition hand-in-hand with negotiations' in order to help unlock a more meaningful peace process. The aim of Palestinian diplomacy should be to continue to encourage those states in the EU that support Palestine to follow Sweden's and the Vatican's example. Swedish and Holy See arguments justifying their recognition of Palestine should be employed to encourage other states to recognise Palestine.

We need a back-up plan. A Security Council resolution setting out the need for a two-state solution to Palestinian-Israeli conflict and calling for further recognition from states in Western Europe is not enough. The time has come to advocate a more confrontational (but still peaceful) approach. The two-state solution is on its death bed. Employing either a confrontational or cautious approach may not save it; but only a confrontational approach stands some chance of shaking things up sufficiently to turn the dynamics around and inject one last breath into the two-state option.

We need to make greater use of the UN General Assembly by requesting it to ask the Security Council to reconsider Palestine's 2011 application for membership in the United Nations, granting Palestine additional rights in the UN General Assembly and creating a UN "blacklist" of individuals and companies that support the occupation and illegal settlement enterprise. The UN General Assembly should also be requested to pass a resolution insisting that Israel's ends its occupation and take steps to involve the International Court of Justice by seeking an advisory opinion on the consequences of an illegal occupation and sanctions.

In order to make greater use of international courts and tribunals, we need to have a plan for the day after the advisory opinion which must include a coherent and effective media strategy to overcome the failure to take advantage of the advisory opinion issued by the International Court of Justice on 9 July 2004. This requires forging closer working relations with Palestinians in the diaspora especially to assist with media outreach. Whether they are in the English-speaking world or the Arabic, Spanish, and Francophonie countries, diaspora Palestinians can engage more effectively with local communities where audiences are more receptive to accents and faces they are familiar with. In addition, we should engage with diaspora Palestinians and the BDS movement as they can assist with organising public speaking tours, media outreach, and speaking in churches, mosques, synagogues, parliaments, and other public venues.

The leadership should explain to political parties, the popular resistance committees, and other such groups, and the public at large the importance of the international strategy.

#### *Action-points under Scenario (B)*

- Given its relatively new observer state status, Palestine has already acceded to a number of treaties in April 2014, including the 1907 Hague Regulations, the Geneva Conventions and Protocols, the Human Rights Covenants, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and the Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid.
- Palestine can also apply for membership of other UN Agencies and join the ICC. There is no reason why this need initially be a threatening move nor should it be necessarily linked to any political moves at the UNSC or UNGA level, although Israel and the US Congress will see it as such and no doubt impose economic and other penalties. If it comes to action via the ICC Palestinian leaders would have to be prepared to be brought before the court in the same way as Israelis. The procedures would be likely to be lengthy, including perhaps waiting until Israeli internal legal processes have run their course. Israel is not a party to the Rome Statute and would be under no obligation to co-operate.

Beside these actions in international law, a whole range of other elements will need to be orchestrated into the international campaign against the Greater Israel project such as the following.

- Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) is an effective tool to put pressure on Israel's occupation and a mobilizing method for international solidarity. The BDS movement has been expanding since its foundation by a coalition of Palestinian civil actors. It has become a global movement reaching greater international political, civil and private constituencies.

The BDS needs to be adopted and led/supported by the PLO as a national strategy.

- The idea of UN protection has been revived in the wake of the third military aggression on Gaza. In Kosovo, an international protectorate resulted in the EU giving Serbia 90 days for direct negotiations to produce an agreement followed by swift recognition for Kosovo by most EU states. This should have happened in 1998 in the case of Palestine when the Oslo interim phase ended with no agreement.

A good example of how internal resistance by Palestinians can link with international pressure is the October 2014 EU 'red lines' ultimatum to Israel about specific building proposals in the occupied territory. This needs to be multiplied across the spectrum.

#### **Arena (4) Influencing the public debate in Israel and the cost-benefit calculations of the Israeli leadership**

*How can Israel be confronted by the reality of the existential choice between ending its occupation, colonization and control of Palestine and accepting equal rights for all Palestinians, or international isolation?*

In the end, as the possessor, it is Israel that has to come to understand – or be made to understand - that in cost-benefit terms persistence with Greater Israel policies under scenario (B) is self-defeating, and will lead to mounting confrontations, financial burdens, security risks, and international isolation. On the other hand, fair resolution of the conflict – in whichever form – will bring lasting security, international endorsement, and big financial and other benefits.

The policy implication here is that stripping away the 'peace process' system is the only way to confront Israel with this stark alternative. Up to now, there has been no strategic debate in Israel because the illusion of the no-risk Oslo process has always seemed better than the risks of Scenario (A) while at the same time removing most of the risks associated with open acknowledgement of Scenario (B) (this is the ambiguity that the suggested proposal for action on p2 seeks to remove).

The 17 March 2015 elections in Israel and the formation of a narrow-majority extreme right wing government headed by Netanyahu confirm that the majority of the Israeli society are indifferent and comfortable with the status quo. Moreover, public statements that came out of Netanyahu before and after the elections as well as the continuation of colonial and segregation practices, indicate that new government will further block the possibility of a negotiated final political settlement.

#### *Israeli opposition*

Today's Israel has no effective and wide-based opposition that can offer a political alternative. There are 59 seats among parties in the current Knesset that are not part of the government, distributed among the Zionist Union, Yesh Atid, Yisrael Beiteinu, Meretz and the Arab Joint List. . Given the huge ideological a

political difference between these parties, the possibility of a cooperation to form a united opposition is near impossible.

#### *Strategic allies*

Despite the reorientation in Israeli politics in recent years and the current preponderance of the political right, particularly in the security field, there is scope for building alliances, not only with the dwindling numbers in the original peace camp, but with new players, particularly the younger generation and those who take an active part in resisting Israel's occupation together with Palestinians. The success of the 1948 Palestinians to form a joint list and win third place in the Knesset is a major historic development that could be a major contribution the two-track strategy this paper proposes.

#### *Influencing the public debate*

The absence of strategic debate in Israel is largely the result of the fact that the continuation of the 'Oslo' 'comfort zone' has been taken for granted. Removing that option exposes the existential choice now facing Israel. The aim of our strategy is to make that choice as stark as possible and a major issue in public debate in Israel.

#### *Changing the cost-benefit calculations of Israeli decision-makers*

For the same reason, the aim of our strategy in relation to Israeli decision-makers is to remove the no-risk Oslo option so as to force a strategic choice between relative risks under Scenario (A) and relative risks under Scenario (B).

The aim then is to reduce the perceived risks of the former and increase the perceived costs of the latter.

### **Arena (5) Communications**

*How can our superior ethical and legal case be made manifest? How can we win the war of words?*

The fifth arena permeates all the others. The new strategic parameter is that in the cyber-age winning the war of words can be as important as winning the war of weapons – sometimes more so (it is possible to win a war and lose the peace). As noted under strategic principles at the beginning of this paper, the ethical superiority and manifest justice of our cause in comparison with the Israeli attempt to claim rights that are thereby denied to Palestinians is a major strength of our strategy. This is an arena where Palestinians have made big gains over the past years. In November 2012 UNGA 67/19 overwhelmingly accorded Palestine non-member observer status with 138 votes for, 9 against, 41 abstentions, and 5 absentees. At the time of writing, 137 out of 193 UN member states have recognized Palestine.

The policy implication is for Palestinian strategy to invest heavily in continuing and strengthening expertise and capacity in this arena. Use of the resources of Palestinian embassies and missions abroad now need to focus on public diplomacy (see regional and international arenas). An army of Palestinian

spokespersons is urgently needed to win the war of words, together with significant investment in social media of all kinds (cyber-warriors).

## CONCLUSION

The suggestions for action set out here are not systematic or exhaustive. They are offered as stimuli for participation by as wide a range of fellow Palestinians as possible. The effectiveness of our post-Oslo national liberation strategy will depend on the originality, energy, intelligence, discipline and determination with which all Palestinians help to shape and implement the national effort – and on the readiness of a rejuvenated leadership to work together in order to inspire and coordinate this.

Earlier in this paper it is suggested that the ‘two-state solution’/‘one-state solution’ alternative does not correspond with reality. The immediate alternative is between Palestinian self-determination as embodied in full independence or apartheid as manifested in the Greater Israel project.. Alternatives to partition (as we know it) that do not necessarily encompass a Palestinian state lie over the horizon. These include malign possibilities, as well as benign forms of possible future federation, or bi-national, consociational and other types of political arrangement between the two sides. It is helpful that these are discussed in terms of possible future scenarios. But the passage from the current one-state de facto reality to any of these outcomes in the absence of a sovereign Palestinian state that fully embodies the Palestinian right to national self-determination is likely to be turbulent. In the meantime, what is strategically damaging about the ‘two-state/one-state solution’ language is that it draws attention away from the existing one state reality. Opponents of Palestinian statehood can then attack the former (the idea of a ‘one-state solution’) and thereby ignore the latter. That is why we would do well to nuance it in our strategic lexicon.

For 21 years, the Oslo process has furthered the Greater Israel project. Now that the Oslo process has come to an end, our strategy must be to continue the struggle for national self-determination through our own state albeit via the international rather than the purely bilateral route. But now, being gradually freed from the shackles of Oslo, we must also at the same time challenge the Greater Israel project in its entirety. We must expose and resist Israeli policies of expropriation, colonization, annexation, separation and apartheid. We must act across the board with a full range of integrated strategic actions that unite our people and link local to international campaigns. Our aim is to transform the lives of all Palestinians so that our national rights – equal to and consonant with the rights of other nations – are fully protected and realized. These have always been the rights on which the entire Palestinian struggle has been founded.

