

English Abstract & Table of contents

2014 War on Gaza

The Implications on the Palestinian Cause

The present book constitutes the product of a symposium held by the MESC, gathering distinguished experts and academics to discuss the Arab-Israeli conflict shifts after the 2014 war on Gaza. It consists of 9 chapters, in addition to an appendix of the statistics of the events' outcomes and another of the chances to rebuild the area.

A number of topics are addressed with regard to the war on Gaza, such as analyzing its reasons and the Israeli motives. There is also an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of each side in military, media and other terms as well as the attempts for hiding such facts. Furthermore, the investigation covers the developments of the war and assesses the performance of relevant parties at all levels. Finally, the outcomes of the war and future possibilities are explored.

Chapter One looks into the Palestinian resistance strengths, weaknesses and challenges. A historical overview is provided of the emergence of the armed resistance and then current challenges, which often relate to regional conditions, external pressures, Israeli practices and consequences of internal division. As for strengths, they are derived from its own performance, crisis management, balanced vision and broad and steadfast public support. Chapter One is concluded with factors which could be utilized to enhance the vigor of the resistance, especially in the field of backing the diplomacy of resistance at the regional and international levels, in addition to developing its media discourse.

Chapters Two and Three hold a contrast of performance between the Palestinian resistance and Israel in military and media fields. Chapter Two traces the development of the progress of the resistance since the launch of the first Qassam rocket in 2001, through the 2008 and 2012 battles until the 2014 war. In spite of its poor potentials, its performance significantly advanced, in contrast with Israel, which could not improve its plans and strategies. Moreover, although the Hebrew State spends a lot on the psychological and morale war, it was beaten in this field by the resistance, which created a balance of terror with much less costs.

As for the shifts in the Palestinian resistant journalistic performance, it is necessary to differentiate between war and resistance media. The former is closely associated with, and speaks on behalf of, the military wings, and becomes active in

the times of war. However, the latter is related to the masses and all forms of resistance, which do not halt at truce times. The accomplishment of the resistant media is a quantum leap in the field of documenting Israeli massacres, launching psychological war and consolidating steadfastness. Most importantly, it is backed by communication channels of new, unconventional media.

At the regional level, pro-resistance media faced unprecedented challenges because of some countries' hostile attitude, especially to Hamas. The resistance media is still confronting the pro-Israeli lobby around the globe, mainly in the West. Unconventional means somewhat enabled the resistance to make a breakthrough at the world level and embarrass extremist pro-Israeli media.

On the other hand, a number of disadvantages are raised in the media of the resistance. They are attributed to the Palestinians' complicated situation under the Israeli occupation, though some of these obstacles may have been overcome. On the Israeli side, the press was consistent with the political and military authorities and their short- and long-term targets. It was based on ideologies and strategic plans, let alone huge financial and technical support.

Chapter Four on the political Arab and regional performance reviews the state of the Arab countries before the aggression on Gaza. The Arab Spring influenced their stance on the Palestinian issue and the relation with Israel, in general, and uncovered the Arab League's failure.

Except for the Qatari and Turkish parts, the regional role declined in favor for more interest in national issues. Thus, according to the book, the Palestinian cause turned from Arab-Israeli to Palestinian-Israeli.

Chapter Five on international political performance focuses on that of the US. It is aimed at comprehending the US crisis management, taking into consideration the superpower's waning vision, strategy, interest and capabilities. Others argue that Washington left the role to its regional allies in a way that secures the desired results and protects its own and their interests in the Middle East.

Obama's policy in the region is said to adopt a general ever-low cost strategy, as could be seen in its attitude to the aggression on Gaza. Some Israeli parties are concerned of the US leniency with regard to 'unilateral' attempts by the Palestinian Authority and sympathy with President Abbas. In addition, Obama's Administration displayed its backing of the Hebrew State's right of 'self-defense' in addition to the financial and military support during the war. Ironically enough, it sympathized with the Palestinian civilians who were subjected to the killing, destruction and displacement. The only loser of this formula was the Palestinian

resistance, especially Hamas.

Chapter Six explores different aspects of the repercussions of the war on the Israeli politics. Among these are the disagreement within the Israeli government on the military developments; the diminishing popularity of Netanyahu and his administration due to their fiasco in managing the battle, in halting the resistance strikes and in taking unified strong actions; some segments of the society's loss of confidence in the entire Israeli politics, pushing them for emigration or thinking about it; Israeli's feeling of international isolation upon their army's crimes against the Palestinians; and consequently resolving the Knesset and calling for early elections in a bid to save what is left in the political collapse.

The book elaborates on the repercussions at the regional and international levels, preceded by a review of the those of previous wars on the Gaza Strip in 2008 and 2012. As for the regional context in the wake of the 2014 events, the Egyptian role was "negative" for the Palestinian resistance, leading to a late balanced formula for a ceasefire. On the other hand, Turkey viewed Cairo's part with doubt, while Iran just spoke of supporting the resistance, especially the Islamic Jihad. Therefore, the resistance had to basically rely on power and launch hard strikes against the occupation to achieve a balanced truce.

With reference to the international impacts, the Israeli behavior angered the US, showing disparities in the approaches of the allies. On the other hand, the EU was more inclined to recognize Hamas as an efficient power which may not be ignored in the most significant Middle East case.

The two final chapters foresee the situation in the aftermath of the war, such as the change in the powers of both sides. It became obvious how important it was to reform the Palestinian internal front, by means of completing the reconciliation; promoting public resistance in the West Bank; re-building Gaza; breaking the Gaza siege; enhancing the resistance front regionally and internationally; and global employment of the Palestinian diplomacy to mobilize as much as possible of support to the Palestinian cause, away from the influence of different regional conflicts.

For interested scholars, the book provides statistics prepared by the MESC on the results of the war according to Israeli sources. It is concluded that there could be manipulation of the Israeli Army losses, due to disparities between various reports. As for the civilian deaths, they were attributed to the failure of the very costly Iron Dome. It could prevent only 16% of the Palestinian missiles, according to Israeli sources.

Finally, the book looks into the chances of re-building Gaza. In the aftermath of the war, the Donors' conference came in light of the reports about the need for \$4 billion as an initial stage. The area is witnessing an unprecedented crisis. The siege and tightened Egyptian measures are among a long list of challenges which face the re-construction schemes. However, it is feared that Israel would use this card to 'institutionalized the siege' and blackmail the Palestinians while looking for means of a new form of war, since the military confrontation has almost proved a failure.

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