

Violation of the Human Rights in Palestine and the Role of Big Powers and International Community

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Abstract

The main theme of the research article is to discuss the problem of the violation of human rights in Palestine. The study also focuses on the role of international community regarding the issue in the historical perspectives. The study analyses the role of internal and external forces equally functioning against the Palestinians to live their lives peacefully. The Approach is descriptive and analytical. The researcher uses primary sources as well as secondary sources. The study concludes that human rights violation is continuously going on by Israel towards Palestine, particularly big powers and the international community consciously and unconsciously did not play effective role to stop this violation. In the end references and bibliography is enumerated.

Key words: Continuous Violation of Human rights in Palestine. Partition of Palestine, Western Involvement, Oslo Accord.

Introduction

On November 29, 1947—a date memorable in Jewish history—the the General assembly voted to recommend the partition of Palestine, with an economic union as proposed by the majority report. The Arab state was to include the central and eastern part of Palestine, from the valley of sdraelon down to Beersheba, western Galilee, and a strip of land along the Mediterranean coast from Gaza southward and along the Egyptian order to the Red Sea. Jaffa would constitute an enclave in the Jewish state, which was to extend over eastern Galilee and the valley Esdraelon, a coastal area from Haifa to south of Jaffa, and a major part of the Nageb. Jerusalem and Bethlehem with the adjoining territory were to stay outside of both states and be subject an administration responsible to the Trusteeship Council. The Assembly also took note of Britain's decision to terminate the mandate by August 1, 1948; provided for the establishment of the two states within two months after British withdrawal; established a five nation UN Palestine Commission to implement the resolution; and called upon the security Council to assist in its implementation of thee plan, instructing it to interpret as a threat to peace any attempt to change the plan by force. 1. (Lenzowski.1980, Pp.404-405.)

The Israel-Palestine conflict or Arab-Israeli conflict, or whatever name it goes by, is perhaps one of the more sensitive issues that is discussed. Western involvement in the Middle East formed a backdrop to the situation between Palestine and Israel. The history of the Middle East region in the past too or so years has been violent. Due to the importance of the region primarily due to the natural resources, geographical interests have seen immense power- play at work affecting local populations.

Violation of Human Rights against Palestinians

Violence between Israel and the Palestinians escalated during the 1980s. In response to the demands of the ultra-nationalist and religious parties, Israel increased the number and size of

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settlement in the West bank and Gaza Strip. By 1988 more than half the west Bank and a third of Gaa Strip had been transferred to Jewish control. Almost 100.000 Jews now lived in about fifteen metropolitan satellites around Talaviv, Jerusalem. Israeli Arabs were alienated, and West Bank and Gaza Palestinians disillusioned.

A whole generation of Palestinians (of whom 70 percent were under 25 years of age had grown up under Israeli occupation. Their political future was uncertain, their civil rights limited and they lived in poverty-especially those in the refugee camps. In the West Bank 10 per cent of the residents lived in camps while the percentage in the camps in the Gaza Strips was around 25 per cent. Conditions in these camps were appealing between 100.000 and 120.000 West bank and Gaza Palestinians daily crossed into Israel to work in low paid, unskilled jobs. Israel closed West bank universities, imposed curfews and deported those they believed responsible for the unrest. Palestinians realized that the Arab states could or would not help them, the PLO was ineffectual and they would have to rely on their own efforts if they were to 'shake off' Israeli rule.

Frustration and anger continued as the situation deteriorated. Within a short time rock-throwing, masked young Palestinians were confronting Israeli troops throughout the territories. These roits, known as intifada. Within the first year of the intifada more than 150 Palestinians were killed and around 11500 were wounded. Educational institutions were closed. Curfews imposed, hundered arrested and houses demolished.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was conciliatory towards the Palestinians .Secret meetings were held in Oslo, Norway between Israeli and PLO officials. On 13 September, PLO and Israel signed a Declaration of Pimples in Washington DC. The declaration included mutual recognition phased redeployment of Israeli troops and terms whereby a Palestinian Council would govern in the West Bank and Gaza for five years while a permanent peace treaty and final status of the territories could be worked out.

The Knesset and the Palestine National council ratified the Israel-PLO accord. The territories needed a solid financial footing if Palestinian self-government, and thus the accord, was to succeed. The United States convened a conference of donor nations, and by early October, more than forty countries pledged to contribute \$2 billion over five years.

Palestinian Israeli negotiators continued to meet to try to hammer out the details of implementing the September 1993 accord. On 24 September 1995, on the eve of the Jewish new year, an overall agreement was finally reached at tab (a Red Sea resort).It was signed in Washington on 28 September, in a ceremony attended by Arafat, Rabin, Peres, Mubarak and Hussein.

The Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, known variously as the Interim agreement, Oslo 11 or the Taba Accord, was the second phase of the process that had begun with the establishment o the Palestinian Authority in Gaza and Jericho in May 1994, and it set the stage for the final status talks to begin by May 1996.

The Oslo Accord, whereby Israel recognized the PLO and gave them limited autonomy in return for peace and end Palestinian claims on Israeli territory, has been largely criticized as a one-sided accord that benefits only Israel, not the Palestinian people. A former Israeli military general, Ariel Sharon, (accompanied by 1000 soldiers) visited a holy Muslim and proclaimed it as eternal Israeli territory. Sharon had been accused of massacres in his military days and is well known to all. He is very right wing and against the peace process. This infuriated Palestinians, and led to a series of protests and violence. Hamas Rights groups have likewise criticized the Israeli forces. (Oslo Dead? January 16, 2003.)

International Law gives equal fundamental rights to the individuals without discrimination of cast and creed. International Law also requires population's welfare. By this standard, Israel violates its obligations. But after the occupation of Palestine, Israel have been taking more

boldly inhuman actions against Palestine. According to Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations General assembly in 1948, “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood (article 1 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. (UDHR)

According to the report of International, progress Organization (IPO), “the atrocities committed by Israeli soldiers particularly in Jenn, Nablus and Ram Allah are beyond description. The Declaration of the IPO stated that these war crimes and crimes against humanity could not be dealt with fairly in the judicial system of the occupying power. Those responsible should be brought before an impartial international tribunal to be created by the General Assembly of the United Nations (as long as the International Criminal Court is not yet available to deal with these crimes).

The methods applied by the Israeli army, among them:

- Indiscriminate killing of civilians;
- Burying people alive in their homes;
- Executions of Palestinian prisoners;
- Killing civilians who were close to windows or left the house to bring people to hospitals or to look for food or to extinguish fires, etc;
- Deliberate attacks on ambulance cars;
- Prevention of medical aid to the wounded so that they are bleeding to death;
- Prevention of emergency medical aid to sick people in the sealed –off areas, which has led to the death of many civilians.
- Preventing any kind of emergency humanitarian assistance; inhuman treatment and/or torture of prisoners;
- Disrespect for and attacks on holy sites such as the Church of Nativity in Bethlehem;
- Deliberate destruction of the civilian infrastructure (including water and sewage system);
- Wanton destruction of civilian houses; systematic destruction of the infrastructure of the Palestinian National authority; etc.etc.;
- All these acts have to be investigated by an independent international commission of inquiry.⁴

The military conflict between Hamas and fateh took place between June7 and 15, 2007 in the Gaza Strip. Human Rights watch accused both sides with violations of international humanitarian law, in some cases emanating to war crimes. The accusations include the targeting and killing of civilians, public executions of political opponents and captives, throwing prisoners of high in rise apartment buildings, fighting in hospitals, and shooting from a jeep, marked with “TV” insignias. The International Committee of the RED Cross has denounced attacks in and around two hospitals in the northern part of Gaza.

During the fighting several incidents of looting took place. A crowd took furniture, wall tiles and personal belongings from the villa of the late Palestinian leader Yaser Arafat; the home of former Fateh strongman. An AFP correspondent witnessed dozens of Palestinians taking every thing they could carry from Dahlan’s Villa. Muhammad Duhlan was also strong person of fateh.

The Israeli offensive on Hamas in the Gaza Strip on 27 December 2008 ended on January 17, 2009 when both Hamas and Israel announced separate ceasefires, which have turned out to be quite fragile. The three-week offensive claimed some 1,300 Palestinian lives, 400 of which were children. Another 5,000 were injured including some 1,800 children and 800

women. Thirteen Israelis were also killed. How did this crisis come about and what were some of the issues raised?

Richard Falk submitted his report about the human rights violations against Palestinian in occupied Palestine on behalf of UN Human Rights Council. The report is covering the period of June-December 2009, about the Israeli violation of human rights law and International Law during the course of its occupation of the Palestinian territories. The major findings of the report are as under:

Urgent emphasis was placed on the continuing humanitarian violations resulting from the Israeli blockade of Gaza, which continued deprivation of civilian population from basic necessities and insufficient quantities and the flow of goods and materials in such a way as to destroy Gaza economy, causing massive poverty. This blockade, established in June 2007, is prohibited by Article 33 of the occupation is 'creeping annexation.' That is De-Facto annexation, despite the de-jure persistence.

Other serious issues like death and injuries of the Palestinians and vandalizing of mosques were also addressed in the report.⁵ (Richard Falk, Interview)

Israeli practices against Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Report covers the period from December 1 2010 until November 15 2011.

On March 2010, the Human Rights Council opened its general debate on the human Rights situation in Palestine and other Occupied Arab territories after hearing High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay present the report of the Secretary General of the United Nations and the report of the High Commissioner for human Rights on the topic.

Ms. Pillay said the human Rights challenges in the occupied Palestinian territory were intrinsically linked to the continuing expansion of Israeli settlements, including violence by Israeli settlers against Palestinians. The high commissioner urged the Government of Israel to bring its policies and practices in the occupied Palestinian territory in line with its international humanitarian law obligations as the occupying power. (Kawther Slam, 2012).⁶

The Role of Big Powers

From the historic British dominance in the Middle East, and the more recent US influence and control over the region, the Anglo-American goal is simply to be able to dominate the Middle East due to the vast oil reserves and the West's economic dependence upon it. Prior to the discovery of oil, one of the main reasons for involvement in the Middle East had been religious (Christianity, Judaism and Islam all have roots in the Middle East) and on the natural arable land. During the Cold War, the Soviet excuse may have been used on numerous occasions to justify involvement there, but in modern times, it has always been for oil. Hence, the support for the Jewish people and the state of Israel has been due to the interests of oil and to ensure an ally is there in the region. It is also no surprise that some other nations in the Middle East are amongst the largest recipients of US military aid, like Turkey and Egypt. What makes this a particularly sensitive issue oftentimes, is due to the horrendous suffering the Jewish people suffered in Christian Europe during World War I, to the extent that (in the United States, anyway), any criticism of Israeli policies towards the Palestinian people and other Arabs, lends well to an automatic, unfavorable label of anti-Semitic. In the United States as well, the Jewish well established and has influence over many aspects of US foreign policy in the Middle East. In fact, some commentators suggest that US Zionism is more extreme than seen in Israel itself.⁷ (Article no. 112. globalissues)

As a result, for centuries, the western population has been acclimatized to a propaganda and vilification of the Arab and other people of the Middle East, and of Islam in general. This was especially so during the European colonial times, as so vividly examined by Edward Said, in his well-respected book, *Orientalism*. Both before and after the Ottoman Empire,

geopolitically speaking, this negative stereotyping has served to provide justifications for involvement and to ensure “stability” for the powers that wanted to be involved in the region. The cultural stereotyping and Arab or Islamic group as the bad guys were common place. Even in the 1990s, those ideas continued, where the bad guy is often a despotic Arab from one of the “roué states” and as a result of the terrorist attacks against the US in September 11, 2001 and the resulting “war on terror”, such imagery is likely to continue. Over such a long time then, such boundaries of discourse about the Middle East have already been framed. To over step those boundaries is to be labeled anti-Semitic, neo-Nazi, anti-West or some other equally negative label. For most journalists in the mainstream then, self-censorship is often the course, sometimes unknowingly. To maintain superiority, control and influence over the region, the West has placed corrupt Arab leaders into positions of power and supported the overthrow of those that are not seen as favorable.⁸

Can a Bi-national state be the Solution for the Middle East Conflict?

Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group PHRMG has submitted the report on 2009 with regard to the Israeli war in Gaza. Media once again focused on the discussion concerning one multicultural binominal state in Israel/Palestine as a solution to the never-ending conflict in the Middle East.

A small Palestinians state in the West Bank and Gaza would sideline the concerns of three important Palestinian constituencies;

- 2 million Palestinian who is citizens of Israel would remain as an embattled minority within an Israeli state ideologically committed to Jewish immigration
- 270.000 Palestinians of Jerusalem might also still be surrounded and vulnerable
- Five% million Palestinians would have their long-perused right to return laid down forever after 61 years. ⁹

Today a bi-national solution enjoys the support of about a quarter of the Palestinian electorate, according to polls conducted by the Jerusalem media and Communication center. A multi-option poll by near East Consulting (NEC) in November 2007 still found the bi-national state to be less in favour than either “two states for two people” or “a Palestinian state on all historic Palestine”, where in February 2007 NEC found that around 70% of Palestinian respondents supported the idea when given a straight choice of either supporting or opposing a one-state solution in historic Palestine with equal rights and responsibilities for Muslims, Christians and Jews.¹⁰

Conclusion

According to the above discussion, it is concluded that Palestinians are suffering more. Their fundamental rights are violated all the time. The Big powers have their own interests. The violent situation is in their favor so, consciously they are not doing any effort to settle down the dispute between Israel and Palestine. It is recommended that Israeli forces should stop the continuous humiliation against Palestinian. The International community especially developing countries can play their active role in this regard. The United Nations should take measures against Israel to pressurize itself to stop the violations of Human rights against Palestinians. It should impose sanctions on Israel. The International community and International media should raise the issue. The big powers should play important role as mediator. Dialogue series should be started between Palestine and Israel. The Pacific means to settle down the dispute is the only solution.

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