Palestine: the Middle Eastern Equation with Many Unknowns

In the middle of February 2019, one of the main Israeli newspapers Haaretz published an article, which reported that, according to official Israeli statistics, 6.7 million Jews and 6.7 million Arabs lived in Israeli territories (including the occupied Palestinian lands) at the beginning of 2019.

In the eyes of the opposition forces in Israel, these numbers yet again highlight the intensity of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and underscore the need to resolve this issue as quickly as possible using a two-State solution, described in numerous UN documents. It is worth noting at this point that the nation state of Israel itself was born of the decision made by the United Nations Organization, which over the past 70 years has adopted more than 3,000 resolutions on creating two states, an Arab one and a Jewish one in the former Palestinian territory.

Leftist forces in Israel have consistently supported the idea of demography being a key factor, which should compel the Israeli government to find such means of resolving the conflict that will be acceptable to the Palestinian population. Otherwise Israel will embark on a path towards establishing a system of apartheid to control those who live in the Israeli-occupied territories in Palestine.

Another common argument is that birth rates among Palestinians are higher than those in Israel, hence it will become difficult to maintain a Jewish majority in the state in the future.

The situation in Israel ahead of its upcoming legislative elections is far from simple. For instance, Benjamin Netanyahu was even forced to reschedule his visit to Moscow since his political opponents were making serious efforts to ally together in order to weaken his position. But, at the very beginning of the year it seemed that
Netanyahu's victory was assured.

Accordingly, there has been a lot of talk about the so-called deal of the century, meant to resolve the Middle East situation, that the U.S. President Donald Trump promised to publicize in the next few months.

Based on the already available leaks, Palestinians have already, by and large, rejected this plan, as it does not include any mention of East Jerusalem being the capital of the potential Palestinian state, and it almost completely ignores the refugee problem. According to Palestinian sources, Americans would only like to discuss the issue of approximately 40,000 refugees, who have survived the war in 1948, and do not plan on taking into account the fact that the overall number of refugees has increased to 5 million over these years.

It is common knowledge that Donald Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, and the transfer of the American Embassy to this city have caused outrage in the Muslim world.

In light of these developments, on 14 February 2019, the newspaper The Jerusalem Post reported that the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Old City of Jerusalem were "too symbolic, holy and sacred for Muslims to allow their leaders to agree to allow Israel to receive legitimization for their control."

The world today is becoming more and more interdependent and is widely recognized as multi-focal. Although the United States has a prominent place in the international community, it cannot enforce many of its decisions. Paradoxically, Washington's allies, even if often not very consistently, yet more and more actively, are attempting to defend their own interests and follow their own policies.

The stance taken by a number of nations towards the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) is noteworthy in this regard. When Americans refused to make a contribution to support the work of this organization, some Asian and European nations compensated for the lacking funds on request from Palestinians.

However, the USA is still striving to marginalize the Palestinian issue to the sidelines of history, by announcing that the key problem facing the Middle East is the fight against Iran. But, the fact that an attempt to unite Israel and several other Arab nations into an alliance against Tehran at the Middle East conference in Warsaw failed makes it reminiscent of an endeavor to portray wishful thinking as reality as, according to our literary giant, "You cannot hitch a trembling doe and horse up to a single carriage".

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