

The Campaign for One Democratic State of Palestine

By Amal Wahdan, Ramallah



Veteran Palestinian activist Amal Wahdan explains why she backs the One Democratic State for Palestine campaign

Amal (left) with a friend, a few years back

I have lived in colonized Palestine since I was born and I am still active deeply in the national struggle for the liberation of historic Palestine. I was subjected to house arrest, banned from travelling and arrested just before the first Intifada of 1987 started. My husband went through the same oppression throughout his adult life especially in the 1980's. I had the honour to join him in writing the first leaflet of the first Intifada and forming the Unified Leadership of the Intifada. We both went underground for two months when the Zionist forces arrested some of our comrades. I was arrested twice during the Intifada. The second time was with my husband on April 16, 1988 after heavy surveillance from the Zionist secret services. We were arrested with our four "Jewish" comrades; two women and two men who used to help us with media, publications, activities and demonstrations among "Israelis."

During the horrible investigations that we went through the interrogators confessed proudly that the Mossad had assassinated Abu Jihad in Tunisia on April 16th. My husband had a deportation sentence to South Lebanon which was executed on June 29, 1989 after 18 months of "Israeli" High Court sessions and I was deported to Jordan for three years in 1990. I was allowed back to colonized Palestine with my husband and kids after the disgraceful Oslo accords. During our exile we cut all relations with the PLO leadership in objection to the negotiation process which led to the humiliating accords while the Intifada was gaining international momentum!

I have always believed that the Zionist settler colonial apartheid state has a functional role to preserve and secure the interests of the global imperialist hegemony in the region and that will continue to pose both a regional and a global threat. And as the majority of the Palestinian people do, I believe that dismantling the military, security, political, economic and cultural structure of this colonial apartheid state by all forms of resistance is the only solution, not just for the Palestinian people in the Homeland and Diaspora but for the sake of peace and security of the whole region and the world.

The past eight years of terrorist war waged against Syria by the imperialist aggressive camp had targeted Palestinians in Syrian refugee camps, along with their Syrian brothers and sisters, causing a second catastrophe for our people in Syria and forcing tens of thousands of them to flee from their refugee camps and out of Syria. It was obvious that targeting Palestinians and destroying their refugee camps was one of the major goals of that ugly and costly war, to abolish the Right of Return, in addition to generating sectarian division within Syria, so that the U.S. and its NATO allies can easily capture and control its natural gas and oil based on the same old colonial powers tactic of 'Divide and Rule'. We have, as well, to emphasize that one of their major goals was to break the Axis of Resistance from Iran to Syria to Hizbullah to Palestine.

The One Democratic State of Palestine solution was raised years before the unjust UN Partition Resolution 181 in 1947 but was refused by the Zionist terrorist gangs and their imperial sponsors. The Palestinian National Charter of 1968 clarified, in its 6th Article, that the Jewish community living in Palestine before the Zionist invasion are Palestinians as much as Jewish communities in the Arab countries are Arabs (regardless of the devious tactics that the Zionist Movement used to brainwash these communities that they belong to the 'Jewish people' not to the Arab nation; if this didn't work they used terrorist actions to force them immigrate to the 'Jewish State'). It clearly differentiated between the Zionist Movement (which used religious myth as a strategy for their colonial interests in historic Palestine) as part of the Imperialist aggressive camp and Jewish communities anywhere in the world; that is, between Judaism as a spiritual religion and Zionism as colonial terrorist political ideology.

The PLO also called for one secular state in one of its early PNC resolutions. Both the PFLP and DFLP also called for one democratic state in historic Palestine, before they agreed on the transitional solution in 1974, one of the major mistakes by the PNC. Oppressed people cannot deal with the Zionist settler colonial power based on a transitional plan, rather we have to dismantle the whole Zionist colonial structure from its roots.

The terrorist war against Syria, Iraq and the Saudi war on Yemen have played a major role in the global and regional equation of today. The global political system is no longer run by the USA in a unipolar way, but rather is witnessing the emergence of multi-polarity and regional cooperation. This includes security and financial organizations which oppose the old world organizations. In addition, the Axis of Resistance has gained momentum and has imposed a power of deterrence in face of the Zionist entity and its imperialist masters.

This, of course, doesn't mean that the USA is completely defeated; on the contrary it is still capable of destabilizing other countries with new scenarios of regime change. This can be seen in its aggressive actions against Venezuela and Iran. The U.S. led sanctions against Russia, withdrawal from the missile treaty and the commercial war against China are yet more scenarios which destabilise the global military, economic and financial system.

Colonized Palestine is part of this whole dramatic change and we have to take advantage of this development. The 'One Democratic State of Palestine' is an initiative that opposes the two state solution, the Oslo Accords and calls on Palestinians to continue their liberation movement until they dismantle this Zionist settler colonial apartheid entity by resistance, guarantee the right of return for refugees to their villages and cities and reparation for the losses they have endured in exile, bringing the Zionist criminals to the ICC, allowing members of the 'Jewish' communities who want to live in historic Palestine as citizens on

equal foot with the indigenous people of the country without discrimination of any kind, under the rule of law, equality before the law and the constitution.

We realize that this is a long struggle process which should be based on Palestinian unity, mobilizing the people of the refugee camps all over, coordinating and learning from the Axis of Resistance, as our partners in this struggle, defeating the Zionist terrorists at home and abroad and uniting all international supporters around our national agenda.

We must learn from other people's experience in fighting the settler colonizers without kneeling to any of their devious attempts of negotiations or their Arab contractors and collaborators. For example, the Algerian people's resistance against the French settler colonials which lasted 130 years finally succeeded with the Evian Treaty, after defeating the French colonisers. The treaty did not call for the French settlers to leave but the majority left because they couldn't accept living in the same country on an equal footing with the indigenous people of Algeria.

Finally, to accomplish this goal of ODSP we have a plan of action that works with each and every Palestinian and supporter. We are happy to coordinate with all of you; those who signed the above statement and those who are going to sign it.

For those who are interested in reading our full political analysis document about the One Democratic State of Palestine in English, Arabic or Spanish please contact me.

In Solidarity from colonized Palestine,

Amal Wahdan

Sign on letter here:

<https://freepalestinemovement.org/2019/02/20/call-for-a-palestine-liberation-movement-and-one-democratic-state-of-palestine/>

Call for A Palestine Liberation Movement and One Democratic State of Palestine

We say YES to the just national struggle for our rights, which unifies the living energies of our people. We are inspired by our glorious history, our great leaders and their decisive battles, our martyrs, our prisoners, our restless youth and those in refugee camps, waiting on the realization of their inalienable right of return. **We say NO** to begging at the doors of the occupiers in pursuit of crumbs. This has led Palestinians and will lead them to more division and bloody infighting

Palestine was colonized for strategic, imperial reasons: it is at the junction of three continents, with key transport links and easy access for the hegemonic powers on their way to the oil wealth of the Arab nations. But the colonists could not evacuate the Palestinian people, who have lived here for more than 6,000 years.

After a century of dealing with the European colonial states and American imperialism, our Arab nation has been betrayed, and is still being betrayed, by the terror of these countries.

The illusion that Zionists want peace must be confronted. When will we wake up? We cannot speak of a national state for the Palestinians if we do not liberate

ourselves from our petty differences while under siege and occupation. We have to recognize reality: that we continue in a period of national liberation, not in a period of state building.

For this reason we believe in the need to withdraw completely from farcical negotiations with the colonial entity. These only cover up and legalize the occupation. They suggest fair solutions which don't exist, deepening Palestinian conflicts and leading to bloody infighting.

The national liberation stage must precede the construction of the national state. Recognizing this provides a compass to guide us in our national priorities and relations with others. This means no more agreements with the occupiers. They will not commit to agreements, and experience shows they are part of a great deception, falsely called a 'peace process'.

This 'Peace Process' became a façade for the colonial entity to proceed with a so-called 'political solution'. Really, they needed Palestinian participation to pave the way for the oppressive Arab regimes to end the boycott and 'normalize' relationships with the entity.

As Arab markets were closed to the Zionist entity by a blockade, it was necessary to find ways to open them through '*normalization*'. But Palestinian resistance had generated popular sympathy in the Arab and Islamic world, and formed a major obstacle to this '*normalization*'. Zionist leader Shimon Peres admitted:

"The main goal of the Oslo conventions was not Palestinians, but rather normalization with the Arab world and opening its markets."

Yet national liberation requires confronting, not submitting to, foreign hegemony. We say that the leadership of our national movement has ignored this, and has instead engaged in binding relations with the occupying entity and its patrons.

The history of the colonial entity in Palestine is nothing more than a history of the destruction of the Palestinian people and their civilization. Two thirds of our people have been displaced and more than 90% of our land has been stolen. Our land, water and houses are stolen and demolished every day, while apartheid walls are built and the racist nation-state law is being enforced by Israeli legislators. There is also a permanent aggression against the peoples of the region, to subjugate them through Salafist terrorism and economic siege.

The USA supports the Zionist entity with money, weapons, missiles and aircraft, while protecting it from punishment at the UN, recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, abolishing its financial support for the United Nations Refugees and Work Agency (UNRWA) and halting its financial aid to the Palestinian Authority. How can the USA or its regional puppets ever be 'honest brokers' for the people of Palestine?

The invaders falsely used divine religion in attempts to destroy the indigenous people and their cultures. They said this was an 'empty land', available for another people with no land, but with the 'divine promise' of a religious homeland. Yet hiding settler colonization behind the banner of Judaism wrongly places responsibility on religion for the crimes of the colonizers.

We have no problem with 'Jewish' people in Palestine. That problem emerged in capitalist Europe, not in our countries. We are not the ones to create a solution to Europe's 'Jewish problem'. Rather, we have to deal with colonization and foreign hegemony in our region.

The colonial entity and its imperial patrons have brought the people of Palestine to a historic juncture. We, the residents of historic Palestine, must dismantle the terms of our collective extermination so as to set up relations which reject racial segregation and mutual negation. We must dismantle the closed structure and replace it with an open, non-imperial and humane system. This can only be achieved by establishing One Democratic State of Palestine for its indigenous people, the refugees who we were forced out of the country and its current citizens. This is the key to a 'fair and permanent solution of conflict' in the region, and to a 'just solution' for the Palestinian cause. Failing this, war and mutual destruction will continue.

Yet the old Palestinian leadership has presided over regression. They make agreements for the benefit of the colonial entity and its patrons. They abandon 1948 Palestine and the refugees. They collaborate with our enemies while delivering no tangible benefit for our people.

For these reasons we say that this leadership has become a real obstacle to any future development or advancement for our people. This leadership has lost its qualifications to lead national action. It looks to its own benefit and is too weak to learn the lessons of the anti-colonial movements of the peoples of Asia, Africa and the Americas. It does not see the advances elsewhere in challenging US hegemony. It does not even see the resistance in the Arab and Muslim World, when they manage to foil US and Zionist projects.

Our movement must be an organic part of the Arab Liberation Movement, putting an end to foreign hegemony, achieving national unity and liberating Palestine from the current apartheid system. Yet this great humanitarian goal directly clashes with the interests of the dominant triad – the forces of global hegemony, settler apartheid and the comprador Arab regimes.

We warn all against chasing the myth of '*two contiguous states*' in Palestine. This is a major deception, to portray ethnic enclaves within Palestine as an expression of the right to popular self-determination. The goal must be to replace apartheid with equal citizenship and this can only be achieved by establishing One Democratic State in historic Palestine for all, including its indigenous people, the refugees who we were forced out of the country and its current citizens, including those who were drawn into the country as settlers through the Zionist project.

Palestinian parties negotiating for unity and reform should focus on restoring liberation to the core of the Palestinian National Charter. The Arab homeland will never be liberated and unified by subordination to the USA! It will only be liberated by confronting and ending colonial and imperial dominance.

We say YES to national unity in the framework of our Palestinian Liberation Movement, freed from deceptive agreements which only serve the hegemonic powers and comprador regimes.

LONG LIVE PALESTINE, liberated from racial colonization and built on the foundations of equality for all its citizens, rejecting segregation and discrimination by religion, culture or ethnicity; friends with its regional neighbours and with all progressive forces of the world!