



# **The Executive Summary of the Palestinian Strategic Report 2005**

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## **Introduction:**

The Palestinian Strategic Report is published annually by Alzaytouna Center of Research and Consultations – Beirut. The Center is an independent research center interested in strategic and futuristic studies generally and the Palestinian matters in particular. It has a committee of consultants comprising prominent researchers and specialists like Professors Anees Sayegh, Bayan Al-Hoot, Abd Al-Wahab Al-Maseeri, Mohammad Isa Salhia, Muneer Shafeek ... and others. Dr. Mohsen Mohammad Saleh (Professor and contributor in Palestinian studies and the general Manager of the Center) together with Dr. Bashir Mousa Nafi authored the Report which dealt with the Palestinian Question during year 2005 by employing the method of observation, induction and analysis. It involves an examination of the internal Palestinian situations, the Palestinian demographic, economic and educational indices, a discussion of the Palestinian Arabic, Islamic and international relations as well as the Israeli situation, the resistance operations and the attempted endeavors for a compromising solution. The Report is scientifically documented and supported with tens of tables, statistical information and illustrating diagrams. It consists of 282 pages.

Eight specialists contributed to putting down the report: Dr. Basheer Nafi, Dr. Mohsen Saleh, Dr. Ahmad Sa'id Noufal, Dr. Amre Saadawi, Dr. Ra'id Ni'airat, Dr. Salman Abu Sitta, Dr. Mohammad Mikdad and Dr. Ibrahim Abu Jabir. Reviewing the report was done by Professor Dr. Anees Sayegh, Professor Abd Al-Wahab Al-Maseeri and Professor Muneer Shafeek.



### **The Palestinian Internal Situation: Change and Search for Unanimity:**

The first Chapter of the Report involves a discussion of the Palestinian internal situation. It reveals that the hallmark of the situation in year 2005 consisted in looking for new choices of national activity and a continual search for unity and Unanimity. Again, year 2005 will be considered to be the year pregnant with unsurmountable challenges to the leadership of Fatah Movement both in internal organization and nationally. It was not the first time that Fatah was confronted by challenges, but past challenges were not of so unbearable gravity and magnitude plus the fact that Fatah then was not so divided as it is today. The discussion uncovers the reality that the crisis of Fatah is partially related to its involvement in Oslo agreement and never being able to achieve concrete interests, besides the damaging impact made by the authority of auto-rulership on the governing Palestinian organization plus the effects on Fatah caused by the death of Yasser Arafat who lead the organization since its inception.

Smoothly the leadership of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and the presidency of the Palestinian National Authority were transferred to Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazin). In the presidential election which took place on 9 January 2006 Abu Mazin won the election in terms of 62% of the votes which did not exceed 65% of those who could rightfully vote. The Palestinian president proclaimed his commitment to a peaceful settlement and proclaimed clearly in a meeting with Sharon in Sharm Al-Aheikh on 9 February a halt of "violence" in a way, attempting to create suitable chances for negotiations with "Israel".

The Cairo declaration which represented the Palestinian political program for 2005 was shared by all the Palestinian organizations in their meeting on 17 March 2006. In the Declaration Abu Mazin achieved his most significant demand, namely, a declaration of a truce until the end of the year. Also, it was agreed to hold Palestinian Legislative Election on time, continuing the process of reform in the apparatuses of the Authority and re-organizing and activating the PLO according to criteria to be approved of by all. What happened then indicated that the national and Islamic forces



decided to facilitate Abu Mazin's mission and give him a new opportunity to realize concrete progress both in internal reform and at the level of the Palestinian National Objectives.

Abu Mazin did not succeed in his endeavor to keep the Israeli side at bay. In fact, the Israelis went on killing, they assassinated 56 Palestinians in 2005. Furthermore, he was unable to get into serious negotiations with the Israelis who claimed what they called "The absence of the Palestinian partner". Again, they started imposing imperatives upon him accusing him of being inert and incapable of controlling the Palestinian street. Consequently, the Israelis insisted on applying their plans of withdrawal from Gaza Strip on their own without any coordination with the Palestinian side.

The process of reforming the Palestinian Authority went slowly. The Europeans, Americans and the Israelis reckoned that the top priority in reform consisted in disarming the resistance, whereas most of the Palestinians anxiously viewed reform to comprise the contagious financial corruption, weakness of jurisdiction and the hegemony of one Palestinian side over most of positions and authorities.

No worthwhile progress was made in activating or reconstructing the PLO, the leadership showed insignificant seriousness and Abu Mazin did not invite the heads and the general secretaries of the Palestinian groups to a meeting to follow up the matter in harmony with the Cairo agreement. Indeed, until the end of 2005 the top authority had been behaving on the basis that the PLO was a liability and not a strength available to it. It went on applying a policy of depriving the PLO of its rights, for example, it attached the Palestinian embassies to the Foreign Ministry rather than to the PLO.

The Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip constituted a great victory on the part of the Palestinian Resistance. And anticipations of a domestic war erupting or turning the Strip into a bloody battle field involving Fatah and Hamas proved to be wrong. Despite the occurrence of cases of tension and friction between the two organizations and the existence of agents attempting to introduce the fire of divisionism, there was the ability to control the clashes, habitually and rapidly. The Israeli withdrawal



coordinated with a campaign of Israeli-American and European pressures and aided by some elements in the Palestinian Leadership Departments aimed at disarming the resistance. All those attempts were to no avail, because of the groups determination to maintain their arms.

During the available conditions of non-violence, the Palestinian street was involved in municipality elections and in preparing for the elections of the legislature. The most significant phenomenon was that indications pointed to that Hamas was progressing to equally share public support with Fatah in the municipal elections. Although Fatah generally acquired more municipalities and more number of seats, the indications, on the other hand, asserted Hamas supremacy in cities and large municipalities and that it did obtain great number of votes. The fact that great number of independent candidates joined the elections made it difficult to exactly count the number of seats gained by either Fatah or Hamas.

The foregoing results obtained by Hamas in the municipality elections frightened the Palestinian Leadership and it postpone the date of the legislative elections which was assigned in July 2005, to January 2006 hoping that Fatah could reorganize itself. But the second half of 2005 witnessed critical disputes manifested in the internal elections and accompanied by struggle and unfortunate problems as well as the emergence of two lists for Fatah: The Future list (Dahlan and Barghouti) and Fatah list which was announced to be the official one. The differences were settled and the two lists unified only on 27 December of the same year.

### **The Palestine-Israel Scope: The Beginning of the Journey toward the Green Line**

Strategy-wise, the most significant two phenomena in 2005 were: The retreat of the Israelis toward the Green Line via their withdrawal from Gaza Strip, and the establishment of Kadima Party by Sharon which constituted a dramatic change inside the arena of Israeli political parties.

Israel-wise, year 2005 was "Sharon's year" par excellence, as he was able to put into effect his agenda, and reformulating the Israeli political map. Although his split

away from the Likud and creating Kadima party was not the first of its kind as Ben Gorion and others did do it before, the Sharon split was the first split whereby the new emerging party was able to lead the Israeli political life.

The last years witnessed a reduction in the political differences between the Labor Party and Likud. In the last two years, the former Appeared just a poor copy of the latter and allied with it in government (March 2003 – November 2005). The Labor tried, through electing Amir Perets, to distinguish itself and renovate but the coming in to being of Kadima Party combined with the conversion of a number of Labour leaders (At the top of whom was Shimon Peres) was catastrophic to the party.

By the end of 2005 the population of "Israel" amounted to six million and 988 thousands of which five million and 309 thousand were jews. In the West Bank there were 452 thousand jews living in settlements. In 2005 about 22,818 jews migrated to "Israel". "Israel" achieved economic growth in terms of 5.2% in comparison with 4.4% in 2004 and 1.7% in 2003, whereas it was negative in 2001-2002 due to Intifada. The "Israeli National Income" went up from 116 billion and 879 million dollars in 2004 to 123 billion and 674 million dollars in 2005. The Israeli individual income amounted to 20,000 dollar per annum compared to 1,300 dollars to Palestinian individual in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This means briefly that "Israel" started transcending the economic crisis that Intifada caused.

"Israel" continued its aggressive activities against the Palestinians and their land through all of 2005. The total number of Israeli violations which were committed after the declaration of cease-fire on 8 February 2005-2 January 2006 was 23,427 incidents including 2,366 acts of shooting. 286 Palestinians were killed in 2005 including 68 children, and 1,700 wounded. The resistance groups executed 2,990 operations ended in killing 45 Israelis and wounding 406. Seven of the operations were martyr-wise. By the end of the year the number of the Palestinian prisoners in the jails of the occupation was 9,200. 3,495 Palestinians were arrested during 2005, 1,600 of them were still locked up behind the bars. Thus 2005 wasn't a genuine cease fire year, although it was the year in which the Aqsa Intifada ended, and the Palestinian Question assumed a new stage.



The year witnessed acceleration in Zionist settlement in the West Bank. So 38,800 donum of land were confiscated. That deed took place in correlation with the construction of the Separation Barrier which assumed security – political - economic and social dimensions. The Barrier was planned to stretch 832 km of which 275 km were executed and 150 km are being progressively constructed. The Barrier will cause direct damage to 680 thousand Palestinians and the district of Al-Quds (Jerusalem) will lose 90% of its land. It is evident that "Israel" will go on unstopped in creating new realities on ground exploiting the current conditions of American support and Arab weakness.

It was supposed that the plan called "The Road Map" should have been achieved with the Palestinians and the Israelis signing a final agreement by the end of 2005. But 2005 ended before the execution of the plan began. In fact, the Israelis were not in a hurry to do that under conditions working for their side and the Palestinian partner was in haste to get to results when he lacks cards of pressure to play in the game. Such a situation permitted the Israelis to impose their demands and to lower the ceiling of Palestinian expectations. Clearly "Israel" succeeded during 2005, in marginalizing the Road Map despite the fact that it included strong partiality toward it. Again, it succeeded in drawing local, regional and international conditions to conform with its special agenda represented in a unilateral withdrawal from Gaza Strip.

The meetings held between Abu Mazin and Sharon on 8 of February and 21 of June did not produce any push as to the process of settlement as well as Abu Mazin's meetings with president Bush, on 26–28 May and 20 October, did not convince the American Administration to exert pressure on "Israel". It became clear that the Israeli argument that there was no Palestinian partner meant the non-existence of a Palestinian side that would approve of the Israeli imperatives and conceptions and not the non-existence of a Palestinian partner who recognized the existence of "Israel", accepted the UN resolutions and "rejected terrorism" (Matters that Hamas is asked to do these days).

Israel worked to utilize its withdrawal from Gaza Strip to obtain the maximum of political and material gains. The gains included a relief from the gigantic heavy



demographic burden of the strip, reduction of financial and security responsibilities, redistribution of the Israeli army in a way that could put an end to the actual friction with the population of the strip which decreased the probability of being exposed to attacks and removing the reason underlying the military operations administered by the resistance in the strip, at least, vis-à-vis the international community. Moreover, "Israel" tried to get away from the project of the Road Map, monopolize power in the West Bank and execute its plans aiming to turn Al-Quds (Jerusalem) into a completely Jewish city. "Israel" also attempted improving its external image by means of appearing like a lover of peace who offered "painful" concessions for its realization.

In the period stretching from the middle of August to the eleventh of September, the Israelis completed their withdrawal from Gaza Strip and every Jewish settler family was compensated an amount of money ranging 250-400 thousand dollars. Israel kept its control over the boundaries of the Strip with cooperation with Egypt until reaching an agreement with the Palestinian Authority on 15 November. Practically, the Strip became a huge jail because "Israel" maintained control at the sea side and in the air as well as supervised its exports and imports and had a say as to the coming in and going out individuals.

The Israeli side changes: the adoption of vast majority of Israelis of the idea of unilateral separation and the withdrawal from Gaza Strip expressed a crisis undergone by the Zionist project and a failure of the strategy of subjection it practiced against the Palestinian People. This crisis is going to escalate if the Palestinian side continues to insist on its rights aided by an activation of Arabic, Islamic and world-wide roles. Yet such an escalation of the Zionist crisis will remain slow and twisted in the short run as long as the Palestinians do not unite on a basis of national program, the Arabic and Islamic weaknesses continue and the Western and American supports for Israel go on non-stop.

### **The Palestinian Question and the Arab World**

The Arabic situation as regards the Palestinian Question was not dissimilar in 2005 to the situation in previous years and the conditions of inability, fragmentation



and imprisonment in local particularity remained prevailing. The Arabic states went on adopting the habitual policies consisting in realizing peaceful settlement with "Israel" according to the Saudi initiative. On the other hand, the Israelis were able to develop their political and economic relations with Egypt and Jordan, they also achieved some penetrational naturalization. Yet, the Arabic public positions are still constituting a strong support to the Palestinian steadfastness. Although there are no big hopes of affecting rapid changes in the Arabic positions in the near future, the condition of public mobility and the enthusiasm to create new political situations that are more transparent and democratic can provide a glimpse of hope which will force the Arabic systems to shoulder their responsibilities toward Palestine in a more active way.

The twenty fifth Arabic conference convened in Algeria during 22-23 March 2005 on the basis of Jordan's proposal to amend the Arab peace initiative (The Saudi initiative) which was approved of in Beirut in 2002. But the Arab leaders proclaimed their commitment to the initiative. The Jordanian project was understood to suggest an omission of the reference to the UN resolution 194 concerning the right of return to the Palestinians to their country which was mentioned in the Arabic initiative.

Egypt plays the Arabic principal role in influencing the Palestinian leadership and the Palestinian organizations: It played a great role in lessening the acuteness of the Palestinian conflicts, provided hospitality to the Cairo dialogue in mid-March which lead to the declaration of the truce, welcomed the summit attended by Abbas, Sharon, Mubarak and Abdulla (king of Jordan) in February 2005, contributed to the negotiations which facilitate the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza Strip, returned its ambassador to Israel on 17 March and developed its economic relations with "Israel" via "Queez" agreement (an agreement involving industrial areas) which licensed the entry of the Egyptian textile products into the American markets duty-free provided that the Israeli component in them should not be less than 11.7%, a condition that required Egypt to import, for the first time, 2,500 Tons of cotton from "Israel". Again, Egypt imported from "Israel", in 2005, products worth 93.2 million dollars compared to 29.4 million dollars in the preceding year. Egypt exported to "Israel" in 2005 commodities worth 49.1 million dollars compared to 29 million dollars in 2004.



The Jordanian foreign minister visited "Israel" and met Sharon, and warmth in 2005 began to return to the official Jordanian-Israel relations, the Jordanian ambassador returned to "Israel" after four years of leaving, the Jordanian imports from "Israel" in 2005 were worth 116.2 million dollars compared to 132.9 in the preceding year whereas the Jordanian exports to "Israel" amounted to 60.9 million dollars in 2005 compared to 51.4 million dollars in 2004. Again, during 2005 tentative arrangements were made to transfer Badr forces of the Palestinian Liberation Army (5 thousand elements) from Jordan to the West Bank.

The Syrian situation did not change relative to the preceding years. Syria remained the haven of the Palestinian resistance organizations. It adopted the Saudi initiative and opposed the Oslo pact. But the Syrian relations with the leadership of the PLO and the Palestinian Authority witnessed positive developments particularly by virtue of a visit Mahmoud Abbas paid to Damascus in July 2005. the American pressure was ineffective in producing Syrian concessions vis-à-vis "Israel" specifically after the assassination of the Lebanese prime minister Rafik Al-Hariri.

The Lebanese situation was tangled following the assassination of Rafik Al-Hariri. Some Lebanese leaders tried to exploit resolution 1559 of the Security Council to re-arrange the Palestinian situation in Lebanon and to surrender the militarily equipped Palestinian posts particularly those existing outside the Palestinian residential camps. But the stand of the Hizbollah that adopted and supported the project of resistance and the unyielding insistence of the Palestinian organizations to maintain weapons in the current circumstances lead to the postponement of the project. The Lebanese Minister for Labour decided to lessen pressure on the Palestinians by permitting them to work in a variety of fields. Furthermore, the Lebanese Prime Minister held talks with the Palestinian organization in October 2005 designed to open new relations between the two sides. The outcome of these talks was the formation of a Follow-Up Committee to discuss those matters that concern both.

### **The Palestinian Question and the Islamic World**

The Strategic Report deals with the stand of the organization of the Islamic Conference and the stands of three states: Turkey, Iran and Pakistan. The Report



included a note indicating that the Turkish governing Party of Justice and Development found itself in a critical situation comprising two opposing trends: Its electoral public base powerfully tend to support the Palestinian Question and to express hostility to "Israel" while the leadership of the Party feels the necessity to continue Turkey's relation with "Israel", because of the strong influence of the Turkish military establishment, the Party's desire to maintain distinguished relations with Europe, to appease America added to the fact that the strict secular constitution of the state and the effective informational influence of other currents delay an adoption of Islamic policies that are more open than the current ones.

Consequent on the Turkish considerations, the Turkish officials paid "Israel" and the Palestinian many visits including a visit by the Foreign Minister (Abdullah Gul) in January 2005 and the Prime Minister (Erdogan) in May accompanied by a large number of escorts. That visit was interpreted by some to be made on the basis of the Turkish leadership's understanding that pleasing America was realizable via "Israel". Turkey reduced the tone of its critique of the Israeli practices and tried to look like a mediator. Turkey is counted to be the top commercial partner of "Israel" in the Islamic world. Its imports from "Israel" were in terms of 919 million dollars in 2005 compared to 813.5 million dollars in the preceding year. The Turkish exports to "Israel" were worth 1,221 million dollars in 2005, compared to 1,166.9 million dollars in 2004.

Iran witnessed, in 2005, an increase in the support of the Palestinian Question particularly following the victory of the conservative Ahmadi Najad in the presidential elections. This event enhanced the ideological considerations on the basis of which the Iranian Revolution was established. Iran pays significant attention toward Palestine, it refuses the Oslo Accords and supports the resistance movements, specifically Al-Jihad and Hamas. President Najad called for the writing off "Israel" from the political map and to consider it the historical enemy of the Islamic nation. Furthermore, he pointed to the Jewish exaggerated exploitation of what happened in the Second World War (Holocaust) and demanded that "Israel" be moved to Europe. The Iranians are aware of the Israeli effective role in the American-Western pressure on Iran regarding its nuclear file as well as they are conscious of the dangers which the Zionist project could produce to the Islamic Revolution in Iran.



The publicly official contacts between Pakistan and "Israel" began in 2005. There were indications that showed that the contacts were underway secretly before. The two foreign ministers of Pakistan and "Israel" met in Istanbul on 1 September 2005. The Pakistani officials rationalized their contacts by saying they were not more patriotic than the Palestinians themselves and claimed that establishing diplomatic relations with "Israel" would satisfy America and neutralize "Israel" in regard to the Indian-Pakistani competition. So Mosharraf's government "discovered" that its alliance with the USA in the war against "terrorism" was insufficient and that it should transcend the patriotic "prohibitions like taboos" by acknowledging "Israel" prior to hoping for relations with the USA similar to those already conceded to India or something next to them.

Thus the Islamic states confronted a significant reality: They should strategically consider the Israeli factor in their designs of foreign policies. They have to respond to the question: Are they really committed to the Palestinian Question and consistent with their peoples, or their priority is to present their tactical interests pertaining to the continuity of the system and the ruling party or the immediate political and economic gains even if all these run against the will of the general public currents in their countries.

### **The Palestinian Question and the international Situation**

The world-scope, as far as the Palestinian Question is concerned, was no different in 2005 from the years subsequent to the eruption of Al-AQSA Intifada in 2000 and the events of 11 September 2001. American hegemony, the campaigns called "War against terrorism", the policies of globalization and the endeavors to newly design the map of the region in terms of the American and Israeli interests and criteria, all these matters continued. Sharon and the Israeli succeeded in dragging the international community to get interlocked in the issue of the unilateral separation, the withdrawal from Gaza Strip and the defusing of the project of the Road Map which was adopted by the quartet (The USA, The European Union, Russia and the UN). The USA expressed its support to the unilateralism, emphasized the Jewish nature of the Israeli political entity and with the emergence of a new dimension in its



politics, it adopted "Israel's" control over blocks of settlements in the West Bank which was a violation of the resolution of "The UN".

The United States lost the status of being "The clean neutral mediator" long years ago and it is not expectable that shortly the American politics will change significantly in such a way that it can deal with the Palestinian Question fairly particularly as long as the religious right, the new conservative and the Zionist lobby are still able to play an effective role in the making of the American foreign policy.

Being stuck in the Iraqi marshes, its failure or weakening war against "terrorism" and its deformed external image encouraged many parties to pursue policies that were more independent and less dependent on America. This was apparent in the Russian conduct, as Russia was looking for restoring its prestigious presence in the region. Again, the results of the parliamentary elections in a number of states impacted its political behavior: It was manifested in Spain relatively distancing itself from the American politics and Germany bringing itself closer to America. The British-American alliance affected negatively the voting to the ruling Labour Party in Britain. Besides, the increase in the number of South American states which distanced themselves away from the American policies or adopted hostile positions.

Yet the general direction of the big states and those that possess global political and economic weight went on practicing pragmatic policies in harmony with the special interests of each. The Europeans tried to play a bigger role in the project of settlement, treated Hamas in a more open way, provided a large economic support to the Palestinian Authority and they were as a third party supervising the passages at the borders of Gaza Strip. But the Israelis insisted on restricting the European role and succeeded in "dwarfing" or weakening the impact of London conference on the Palestinian Question. It appears that political, economic and security consideration plus the increase in commercial exchange between China and India on the one hand and "Israel" on the other might affect the ability of these two large countries to exercise a larger positive role in their traditional support to the Palestinians.

Effecting genuine breakthroughs in the international situations is not easy to do in the short run. It requires a unified effective Palestinian position and a radical change



in the way both the Arabic and Islamic worlds deal with the Palestinian Question. On the other hand, the snobbish policies and the narrowly biased calculations on the part of the Americans and the Israelis may drag them to reap more disappointment and dissatisfaction on the part of the world, and these two phenomena may be translated, in the future, into the world becoming closer to the Palestinian and Arab rights.

### **The Palestinian Demographic Indices**

Year 2005 ended, but more than half of the Palestinian people are still suffering from being refugees and living compulsorily outside Palestine, besides, more than one million and 600 thousand are living homelessly within the geographical framework of Palestine which classify the question of the Palestinian refugees to be the oldest and hugest question in the world.

By the end of 2005, the number of the Palestinians in the world was estimated to be about 10 million and 100 thousand: 4.9 million are in historical Palestine of which 2.4 million in the West Bank, 1.4 million in Gaza Strip and 1.1 million reside in "Israel". The largest number of Palestinians in the diaspora is found in Jordan where 3 million live. The Palestinian people is counted as one of the peoples that have high fertility: The total average fertility is 4.6 per woman, the general birth average is 37.3 per one thousand. As to the expected age, the numbers are: 71.7 years for the male, 73.4 years for the female. Those numbers were registered in 2005.

The Palestinian high birth ratio compared with the Israeli low birth ratio represents some hope to the Palestinian and a source of worry to the Israelis. It is not unintelligible to see the number of the Palestinians in historical Palestinian exceeding the number of the Jews in the few years to come (2010-2012). But one can not rely on mere demographic increases when finalizing the struggle and the restoration of legitimate rights to the Palestinian People is the issue.

### **The Economic Situation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip**

The fundamental reality that should not be missed is that the Palestinian economy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is under occupation. It is more akin to a group of



prisoners administering one aspect of their economic life within a huge prison called the West Bank and the Strip. And the Israeli "warden" controls the boundaries, the passages and the movement of goods and persons. He can kill people, destroy and confiscate property, fix fences, cut the land down into pieces, prohibit export and import besides, he can unfairly ration the resources of water, electricity, transport and energy. Thus, it wasn't unexpected that year 2005 would be another year under occupation which did not reflect potentialities and capacities of the Palestinian People, rather it reflected the extraordinary conditions of a people experiencing the bitterness of injustice and oppression. Although the Palestinian economy is poor as far as material resources are concerned, it is rich in human resources needed in the business of economic development. Yet, these human resources, though efficient do suffer from unemployment whether real or disguised plus the fact that they are not utilized properly and in the best efficient way.

The Israeli policies and procedures, more than any other factor, did destroy the Palestinian economy in programmed and designed ways in order to "satellite" the Palestinian economy to the Israeli economy and become completely dependent. The Israelis succeeded: Two thirds of the Palestinian imports come from "Israel" and nine tenths of the Palestinian exports go to the Israeli market and Israeli institutions. Furthermore, "Israel" controls the Palestinian revenues that come from the customs and taxes worth 60 million dollars per month and it use them as a political pressure via holding or giving them at will.

The Palestinian economy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is run under an oppressive, hegemonic, hostile occupation aiming to expel the Palestinian out of his land, humiliate him and bring a Jewish settler in his place. So any substantial remedies to the Palestinian economy demands a plan that concentrate on removing the occupation and not just an attempt to reduce its effects.

Economic data show that the Palestinian economy achieved, in 2005, a growth in terms of 9%, yet it was 29% less than the case in 1999. And according to the computations of the World Bank, the economy needs to have the total local product grow by 10% annually for a period of four years, 2005-2008, in order to catch up with the situation in 1999. In 2005 the income of the individual from the total local





product was 1,268 American dollars compared to 1,218 dollars in 2004. Still, the income of the individual in 2005 was less by 30% than what it was in 1999.

Actually the Palestinians monthly revenues in 2005 were about 95 million dollars. During the first nine months of 2005, the monthly deficit in the budget of the Palestinian Authority was 57 million and 100 thousand dollars. It reached 514 million by the end of September 2005 and it swelled at the end of the year to reach 800 million dollars. The salaries of the employees, in 2005, amounted to 82.5% of the total revenue of the Palestinian Authority (78 million and 300 thousand dollars out of 94 million and 900 thousand dollars monthly) in case "Israel" gives what it collects from the customs and the taxes pertaining to the Palestinians. If "Israel" does not give the collected money (the monthly average was 60 million dollars), the total revenue of the Palestinian Authority (including foreign aids) cannot cover more than 45.5% of the total number of the salaries of the employees. The Palestinian Authority received a direct financial support to its budget in terms of 363 million dollars in 2005 compared to 353 million dollars in 2004. The Arab states contributed 205 million dollars of that support in 2005. Other financial support (About 738 million dollars) most of which comes from Europe and America goes to execute specified projects of developments.

The rate of unemployment which was 10% before the beginning of Al-Aqsa Intifada rose to 27% during the first quarter of 2005 (According to the estimates of the World Bank) which meant there were about 208 thousand unemployed. The Ministry of Labour estimates the ratio to be about 40%. Moreover, statistical calculations indicate that the ratio of the poor, in 2005, reached 43%, 15% of them suffer from extreme poverty. And 62.6% of the total number of Palestinian families lost more than half of their income during Intifada.

The plans of the Palestinian Authority assigned to building and development and the plans of the World Bank compete. Many of the plans were in response to the instructions and conditions made by the contributors. They relied on unreal assumptions divorced from the current political and economic reality.



What made things worse was the existence of wide administrative and financial corruption in the apparatuses of the Authority which resulted in spending huge amounts of money (From the little available) improperly.

### **Education in the West Bank and Gaza Strip**

Occupation constituted a structural obstacle to the educational process, hence, education remained an objective of the destructive occupational policy. But the Palestinian people distinguishably has an immense desire for education and regard education a strategic asset in the battle of self-identification and the project of liberation.

In the beginning of 2004/5, more than one million Palestinian students went to schools. The number of schools amounted to 2,190 in 2004/5. The pre-schools for children numbered 947 teaching 75,324 children. In the next year the number of schools became 2,276. The following table constitutes a statistical illustration:

Year	Government Schools	UNRWA Schools	Private Schools	Total
2004/5	1,659	273	258	2,190
2005/6	1,725	279	272	2,276

The number of students, which was 1,050,327 students in 2004/5, increased to become 1,078,488 in the next year. It is found that the ratios of the numbers of boys and girls were close, so were their schools as the following table shows:

Gender	Number of Schools		Number of Students		Number of Teachers		Number of Branches	
	2004/5	2005/6	2004/5	2005/6	2004/5	2005/6	2004/5	2005/6
Males	752	802	528,221	536,752	24,383	22,700	12,053	12,610
Females	749	786	522,106	541,736	22,034	25,974	12,171	12,736
Mixed	689	688	-	-	-	-	5,620	5,655
Totals	2,190	2,276	1,050,327	1,078,488	46,417	48,674	29,844	31,001



There are eleven Palestinian universities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (8 in the West Bank and 3 in Gaza Strip), thirteen university colleges which can endow B.A. and 19 colleges where students can obtain diploma. In 2004/5 the number of students enrolled for B.A. were 75,486 of which 35,777 were males and 39,709 females and the number of students enrolled in post-graduate studies was 3,943.

Always and immensely Palestinian education suffers from the Israeli oppressive procedures and when the schools and universities are shut down and the terrifying repercussions caused by building the separation Barrier. During Al-Aqsa Intifada, the number of students shot down was 579 school students and 199 university students. The number of imprisoned students was 720 and the number of those students who were wounded was 3,491. Since the beginning of 2002/3 until year 2005, 498 schools were shut down and education became chaotic, because of the Israeli curfew, besiege in the cities and villages, the temporary closing of 1,289 schools and the bombing of 297 schools with rockets or the military tanks guns since the eruption of Intifada.

### **Conclusion:**

This executive summary presents a generally brief picture about the Palestinian situations for year 2005. We stop at this point to give the interested reader the opportunity to return to the original text which is full of a multitude of analyses, information, details and statistical data.

