

# The Palestinian Strategic Report 2005



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**Dr. Mohsen M. Saleh**

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**Al-Zaytouna Centre For Studies & Consultations**

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**Al-Zaytouna Centre  
For Studies & Consultations**

Beirut - Lebanon

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Editors

**Dr. Mohsen Moh'd Saleh**

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*The views expressed in this book are those of the authors alone. They do not necessarily reflect views of al-Zaytouna Centre for Studies and Consultations.*

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# The Palestinian Strategic Report 2005



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## List of Abbreviations

GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
GS	Gaza Strip
ICBS	Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics
OIC	Organization of the Islamic Conference
PA	Palestinian Authority
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
PECDAR	Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organization
QIZ	Qualified Industrial Zone
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
WB	West Bank



## Foreword

Al-Zaytouna Centre is an independent institution for research and consultation that was founded in Beirut in mid 2004. The Centre is mainly concerned with strategic studies and futuristic scenarios in the Arab and Muslim worlds. It focuses on the Palestinian issue with all its relevant scenarios worldwide, and within the Arab and Muslim world. Furthermore, the Centre is keen to secure the cooperation of scholars, experts and specialists, and to publish serious and specialized scientific researches and studies, that should be based on objective methodology, precise data and thorough analysis. The Centre seeks to maintain transparency, as well as cooperation and integration with related centres and associations, and takes note of all ideologies, new issues, and intellectual/political trends worldwide.

This strategic report is a product of a massive team-work exerted by a group of affiliated researchers and specialists, for whom al-Zaytouna Centre is indebted and grateful. The Centre wishes to extend its thanks to Dr. Basheer Nafi', who devoted much of his time to write and edit this report. Thanks are, also, due to our colleagues Prof. Ahmad Sa'id Nawfal, Dr. 'Amr Sa'dawi, Dr. Ra'id Nu'ayrat, Dr. Salman Abu Sitta, Dr. Muhammad Miqdad and Dr. Ibrahim Abu Jabir, for their scholarly contributions in this respect.

Our special thanks, also, go to the consultative editors: Prof. Anis al-Sayigh, Prof. 'Abd al-Wahhab al-Misiri and Mr. Munir Shafiq, whose guidance and advice provided an invaluable resource for the development of this report. Besides we thank Ahmad Khalifah (Editor of the Arabic quarterly: Journal of Palestine Studies) and Walid Muhammad 'Ali (Director of the Baheth Center for Studies) for their generous contributions and remarks. Finally, we do convey our great appreciation to the staff of al-Zaytouna Centre, especially Wa'il Sa'd, Muhammad Qaddoura, and Ghina Jamal al-Din, for their effort in collecting the required data and setting the format of this work.

We humbly hope that this report will make a serious step towards further scientific works in the field of Palestinian studies.

**General Manager**  
**Dr. Mohsen Moh'd Saleh**





# Introduction

The idea of writing this report came to our attention immediately after the establishment of al-Zaytouna Centre. However, it did not materialize until early autumn 2005. Indeed, the primary objective of this work is to assess the Palestinian situation on a regular basis through a rigorous study of its various aspects, and to highlight the living conditions of the people involved, i.e., the Palestinians.

This annual report is based on observations, investigations, and thorough analysis of the various aspects of the Palestinian issue: internal political affairs, economic development, the educational system, demographic indicators, the Arab-Islamic and international positions and the Israeli attitudes and policies. This is just the beginning of this venture, but we are aware that the framework of this report will have to undergo some amendments, either by way of omissions or additions, in the light of the expected feedback and responses to this very first report, as well as the ongoing developments in Palestine. Now, we are just initiating the project that we expect to progressively develop, thanks to the diligent work and dynamic reactions to the events.

The Palestinian Issue occupies a central position in the Arab and Islamic worlds. Moreover, it is justifiably regarded as the oldest and most complicated issue in the international arena. A great effort and dedication is needed to analyze and read the ongoing developments in the Middle East, like the invasion of Iraq, recent escalations in Lebanese – Syrian relations and the Iranian nuclear crisis, apart from the developments that are taking place in the Palestinian scene itself. It could be safely argued that the Palestinian Issue has been the prime mover of escalations in the Middle East since the rise of the Zionist project and, certainly, the establishment of Israel in 1948.

Due to the Palestinian Issue, new boundaries have been drawn, coups erupted, alliances formed, wars broke out, and some new regimes emerged while others were toppled. Moreover, the Palestinian Issue has affected the process of development in a considerable number of Arab countries, and has its impact on the relations of the Arab-Islamic countries with Western powers, especially the United States of America (USA). More important, is the fact that the Palestinian Issue is a living issue for all Palestinians of whom many have been forced to

leave their homeland and live in the Diaspora. Actually, this is what gives this report tremendous importance.

We at the Centre felt the importance of commissioning this academic exercise to distinguished specialists. Each participant submitted a chapter in his area of expertise. Then, the two editors, with the help of the researchers in the Centre, edited the texts and incorporated what may have been overlooked. Subsequently, these chapters were submitted to further scrutiny by another high caliber specialist in the Palestinian Issue, whose main task was to provide the editors with their comments and feedback. All these factors worked together to lead to the publication of this report. However, due to our shortcomings and appreciation of the heavy responsibility entrusted to us, we admit that there may be some errors, particularly so because of time constrain and our limited experience in this respect. However, we will do our best to avoid any shortcomings in future publications.

It is important to note that this project is essentially a product of team work. Moreover, some chapters have gone through several amendments made by the editors, which also reflects the collective nature of the work.

This report explains, discusses and analyses the events that took place during 2005, and pursues their developments. Being the first attempt in the field, and as is the case with similar scientific ventures, it was necessary for this first report to shed sufficient light on the background of the related issues. Hence, a rather lengthy introduction was provided in the opening part of the report. This may not be necessary in subsequent reports, unless there will be a dire need for it in one way or another.

The goal of this project is not only to pursue the annual developments of the Palestinian Issue, but also to provide the ground for serious academic research, as we are concerned with both the content and the form. Both editors were keen to draw the attention of the participants to the importance of being as objective and meticulous as possible in the choice of their references and resources. Furthermore, they have been advised to pay special care and attention to the verification of events, personalities and dates. As is the case with all scientific ventures, the report is not only concerned with recording events, but also with analyzing and assessing developments, and scrutinizing the texts involved. It also strives to investigate the wider context of the relevant events, developments, and scenarios.

Finally, we hope that this report will, somehow, significantly enrich the intellectual and scientific debate on the issues discussed. Moreover, we look forward to the comments of our readers and the critique of the specialists in the field to improve our future publications.

**The Editors**  
**Beirut – April 2006\***

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\* The English translation was prepared by the end of November 2006.

# The Palestinian Strategic Report 2005



## This Palestinian Annual Strategic Report

explains, discusses and analyses the events that took place during 2005, and pursues their developments. The primary objective of this Report is to assess the Palestinian situation on a regular basis through a rigorous study of its various aspects, i.e., internal political affairs, economic development, the educational system, demographic indicators, the Arab-Islamic and international positions and the Israeli attitudes and policies.

The chapters of this academic exercise were commissioned to distinguished meticulous specialists. These chapters were submitted to further scrutiny by another high caliber specialist in the Palestinian issue. Then, the two editors edited the texts and incorporated what may have been overlooked. Hence, it is important to note that this project is essentially a product of team work.



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