

# **The Palestinian Strategic Report 2008**



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

# **The Palestinian Strategic Report 2008**

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# The Palestinian Strategic Report 2008

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## List of Abbreviations

AIPAC	The American Israel Public Affairs Committee
ALF	Arab Liberation Front
B'Tselem	The Israeli Information Centre for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories
CBR	Crude Birth Rate
CDR	Crude Death Rate
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
DFLP	Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Fatah	Palestinian National Liberation Movement
Fida	Palestinian Democratic Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNI	Gross National Income
GS	Gaza Strip
Hamas	Islamic Resistance Movement
ICJ	International Court of Justice
ISESCO	The Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
JCSER	Jerusalem Center for Social and Economic Rights
JNF	Jewish National Fund
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OIC	Organization of the Islamic Conference
OPT	Occupied Palestinian Territories
PA	Palestinian Authority
PCAS	Popular Committee Against Siege
PCHR	Palestinian Centre for Human Rights
PECDAR	Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction
PFLP	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PFLP-GC	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine - General Command
PIJ	The Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine

PLC	Palestinian Legislative Council
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organization
PNC	Palestinian National Council
PNS	Palestinian National Security
PPP	Palestinian People's Party
PPSF	Palestinian Popular Struggle Front
PRDP	Palestinian Reform and Development Plan
QIZ Agreement	Qualified Industrial Zone Agreement
Shabak	Israel Security Agency
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
USA	United States of America
USAID	USA Agency for International Development
WAFA	Palestine News & Information Agency
WB	West Bank

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The Missing  
Compass and  
the Partial  
Legitimacies*

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The Economic  
Indicators in the  
WB and GS**

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## Introduction

This is the fourth annual Palestinian Strategic Report, which covers the year 2008 (PSR 2008). And as usual it traces the events' major track, and it combines the latest up to date detailed information, analysis and general vision, and the attempt to foresee the track of events.

We are so pleased with the remarkable success and the great attention that the Report is getting, in particular in the academic circles, and among those interested in and concerned with the Palestinian issue; for it became an important reference in learning institutions, universities, and research centers, and to graduate students, writers, and specialists. Hence, in order to benefit the greatest number of people and to make it available to those who otherwise cannot get it, especially inside Palestine, we resorted to publishing it online on our website, hoping it would contribute to filling an important gap in Palestinian studies and to gratifying the need for serious up to date academic studies in this field.

The year 2008 had started a heated start and it had a fiery end in the Gaza Strip, due to the intensification of the siege and the escalation of the Israeli aggression. The Palestinian schism has continued between Fatah and Hamas, between the governments of Ramallah and Gaza, and between the settlement and resistance tracks. The attempts to put the Palestinian house in order, as well as that of the Fatah movement, have failed. The "Legitimacies" have represented deficient models for each other and for the outside world. Perhaps the performance of the resistance in its repulsion of the aggression against GS in late 2008 has pushed toward more seriousness in the efforts to seek solutions, put the Palestinian house in order, and end the schism. But if the measures of building genuine trust were not adopted, and outside pressure was not transcended, and unless the national priorities and considerations are put forth, these efforts will remain susceptible to frustration and deterioration.

We sadly noticed, throughout our study of the year 2008, the continuous suffering of the Palestinian people under the Israeli occupation and in the Diasporas. We also noticed how Israel takes advantage of the local, regional, and international circumstances to entrench its occupation and go farther in "Judaizing and Israelizing" the Land, man, and the holy sites, and how it tries to invest in the

Palestinian schism to acquire more political benefits, and to tarnish the image of the Palestinian national effort. But at the same time, we took notice of the potential of the Palestinian to be steadfast and to succeed, with his limited resources, in repulsing the Israeli aggression against GS, to thwart its objectives, and to force its withdrawal. We also noticed more work and public events to give support to the Palestinian cause all over the world.

Ten professors and specialized experts participated in writing PSR 2008. The Report discusses in eight chapters the internal Palestinian situation, the Israeli-Palestinian scene, the Arab, Islamic, and international stances on the Palestinian issue. It also discusses the developments of the Land and the holy sites, and of the demographic and economical indicators.

We commend the efforts of our distinguished professors, the report consultants, particularly Dr. Anis al-Sayigh and Mr. Munir Shafiq. Al-Zaytouna Centre also welcomes our dear friend Mr. Ahmad Khaleefa who joined the consultants' team. We also thank our dear colleagues Drs. Basheer Nafi' and Walid Muhammad 'Ali for their remarks and suggestions. There is no doubt that our colleagues, the co-editors, and the staff of the Archive and Information Department at al-Zaytouna had exerted exceptional effort to put out this report in an appropriate form. Hence, this report is the product of a collective integrated effort of this distinguished team.

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The PSR 2008 has lost a great distinguished scholar of Israeli Studies, Dr. 'Abd al-Wahhab al-Misiri, who was a consultant for the Report throughout the last three years, May God shower His mercy on him.

In the end, we thank everyone who supported this report and encouraged its continuation, and everyone who benefited us with his remarks and suggestions. Undoubtedly, we are always open to advice, guidance, or constructive criticism.

**The Editor,  
Dr. Mohsen Saleh**