

The Palestinian Strategic Report 2007



Edited By
Dr. Mohsen M. Saleh



Al-Zaytouna Centre For Studies & Consultations

The Palestinian Strategic Report 2007



**Al-Zaytouna Centre
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The Palestinian Strategic Report 2007

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List of Abbreviations

AKP	Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi)
ARIJ	Applied Research Institute of Jerusalem
B'Tselem	Israeli Information Centre for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories
CBR	Crude Birth Rate
CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
CDR	Crude Death Rate
CMR	Crude Marriage Rate
CPI	Consumer Price Index
DFLP	Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine
EU	European Union
Fida	Palestinian Democratic Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNI	Gross National Income
GS	Gaza Strip
Hamas	Islamic Resistance Movement
IAA	Israel Antiquities Authority
IAI	Israel Aerospace Industries
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICJ	International Court of Justice
IDB	Islamic Development Bank
INSS	Institute for National Security Studies
ISESCO	Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDA	National Democratic Alliance
NSC	National Security Council
OCHA	The 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
PCAW	Popular Campaign Against the Wall
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
PDP	People's Democratic Party
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
Shabak	Israel Security Agency
TOBB	Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
UK	United Kingdom
UNHCR	The 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
WAFA	Palestinian News Agency
WB	West Bank

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Chapter Seven:
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Introduction

The Palestinians have faced in 2007 one of the most difficult challenges in their modern history. On the one hand, it was a year where hopes were high for a national consensus when the Mecca Agreement was ratified and Palestinians sought to form a national unity government. On the other hand, frustrations prevailed due to the state of lawlessness, the implementation of the Dayton plans, the suffocating siege, and the Palestinian political and geographic schism after Hamas took control of Gaza. The ramifications were clear proof of the importance of settling the differences, respecting pluralism and having a peaceful transfer of power, without any foreign interference. Thus, the need became urgent for a binding “National Charter” and the activation of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, in order to form an effective representative entity gathering the whole Palestinian people and factions, within a national program that defines the guiding principles, unchanging demands and the priorities.

This is the third annual *Palestinian Strategic Report* covering the year 2007 (PSR 2007). It traces the major track of events, combines the latest detailed information, analysis and general vision, and attempts to foresee the track of coming events.

The sensitive issues of schism, fragmentation and polarization in the Palestinian arena provided us with various narrations of events and their subsequent interpretations. This made the task of researchers and authors more difficult, compelling them to discuss the issues with strict neutrality, and to deal with the largest available documented information within the basics of scientific research and objectivity.

In eight chapters, this Report monitors and analyzes the internal Palestinian situation, the Israeli–Palestinian scene, the Arab, Islamic and international stances on the Palestinian issue. It also discusses the issues that concern the Land and the holy sites, and the demographic and economic indicators. Eleven experts and researchers of the Palestinian issue participated in writing this Report. We commend the efforts of our distinguished professors, the Report consultants, and our colleagues, the co-editors, and the staff of the Archive and Information Department at al-Zaytouna. Undoubtedly, PSR 2007 is the product of a collective

integrated effort of this distinguished team. Since the chapters of the Report were revised, edited and modified, and since the Report is considered a collective work gathered in one book, we didn't put the names of the writers at the beginning of every chapter. Hence we preferred to introduce them and describe their contributions in the first pages of the book.

We faced some of the expected difficulties in researches and genuine studies, such as the difference in statistics and information among the Palestinian, Israeli and international references. We were keen on solving this problem to the best of our ability by making comparisons, verifications and the required scientific critique.

In the end, we must thank all our colleagues who supported this Report, encouraged us to go on and benefited us with their comments and remarks. We thank God for the wide success of our last two annual Reports that became references to researchers, university students and everyone interested in the Palestinian issue.

We are always open to advice, guidance or critique.

**The Editor,
Dr. Mohsen Saleh**

This Report

Al-Zaytouna Centre is glad to present to its reader The Palestinian Strategic Report 2007, the third in an annual series. The Report aims at monitoring the Palestinian issue through an informative and analytical approach. The Report covers the Palestinian internal political situation, issues concerning the Land and the holy sites, the economy, the Palestinian demographic indicators, the Israeli scene and the Israeli-Palestinian relations. It focuses on the Arab, Islamic, and international stances towards the Palestinian issue.

This Report is distinguished for its updated information till the end of 2007 and for its outstanding team of academics and experts.

Despite the unfortunate state of schism that characterized the Palestinian arena, and despite the hot and sensitive issues discussed, the Report did its best to be professional, scientific and objective. Thus, this Report is a distinguished addition to the Palestinian studies.

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