**[Gaza’s fate](https://www.dawn.com/news/1832151/gazas-fate)**

[Mahir Ali](https://www.dawn.com/authors/322/mahir-ali) Published May 8, 2024

WAKING up yesterday to the news that Hamas had accepted a ceasefire proposal came as a pleasant surprise, but it did not last long. It was accompanied by reports of Israel’s long-threatened infiltration into Rafah, a day after it had urged 100,000 ‘civilians’ to evacuate a city in Gaza that has become a refuge for almost 1.5 million Palestinians.

The sector subsequently began to be pounded — presumably with ammunition supplied by the US and UK — under the apparent assumption that any Hamas operatives in the area would not have left among the tens of thousands who evacuated on foot, by vehicles or on donkey carts.

Almost every international ally of the Zionist regime has seemingly tried to talk it out of invading Rafah, yet their weapons keep flowing to Israel. Global history is peppered with instances of hypocrisy, but seldom have they been as egregious or stark as in 2024. In the past, sufficiently serious cautions from Washington have often produced the desired effect by at least temporarily reducing Israeli excesses. Benjamin Netanyahu, however, falls in a different category. Any semblance of a pause in hostilities, let alone a sustainable ceasefire, would spell his doom.

The revived demonstrations in Israeli cities are by no means dedicated to securing a ceasefire, although some of the protesters support that goal. Their demands on Gaza are somewhat more oblique, but invariably entail the return of the surviving hostages — which would inevitably involve at least a temporary cessation of hostilities. But any kind of peace, however fragile, does not suit Netanyahu. Apart from the indictments for corruption, he presides over a regime that ignored — possibly deliberately — the clear warning signs of a Hamas assault against kibbutzim on the periphery of Gaza, populated to a considerable extent by Jews who do not buy into the narrative of exclusively Jewish nationhood.

Peace of any kind does not suit Netanyahu.

Netanyahu and his more vicious allies are almost as contemptuous of conciliatory Jews, Israeli or otherwise, as they are of Palestinians. In their blighted vision, the Jewish students participating in protests in the US, UK or Australia are far more problematic than the goyim who can more easily be dismissed as antisemitic.

The anti-genocide protests have been spreading beyond the US to Europe and even Australia, with the encampments routinely derided by antagonistic politicians pointing out that Jewish students feel intimidated — albeit presumably not as much as children, women and men in Gaza, where the death toll since Oct 7 is approaching 35,000.

Later this week, the UN General Assembly (UNGA) is expected to vote on whether to admit Palestine as a full member, yet a probable vote overwhelmingly in favour of the proposition won’t cut ice with the Security Council, where the US veto will prevail, as it has so many times whenever a challenge to Zionism has been considered.

Almost 50 years ago, in November 1974, Yasser Arafat addressed the UNGA, having arrived with his holster and an olive branch, famously declaring: “Today I have come bearing an olive branch and a freedom fighter’s gun. Do not let the olive branch fall from my hand”. In his landmark speech, Arafat decried Zionist acts of “barbarism” and the “temerity” of the “Zionists and colonialists … to describe the just struggle of our people as terror”.

A couple of decades before the post-Oslo Palestinian Authority he initially presided over became a handmaiden of the Zionist occupation, Arafat pointed out to the UN that “when it became obvious that the Palestinians would not recuperate one inch of Palestine through exclusively political means, our people had no choice but to resort to armed struggle”.

He made no mention of a two-state so­­lution, which is currently the favoured option among many of those who have contributed over the decades towards diminishing the possibility of such an outcome. Arafat held out a long-term hope for “one democratic state where Christian, Jew and Muslim live in justice, equality and fraternity”.

That remains a dead man’s dream. Neither a one-state nor a two-state outcome is on the cards, and that would not change with Netanyahu’s replacement by a superficially less obnoxious figurehead.

The drift towards Palestinian genocide dates back at least to 1947-48, and the resistance to it has been equally evident since then. The olive branch that Arafat brought to the UN didn’t fall. It was effectively wrested from his hand. All too many olive trees have been chopped down since then, particularly after the Oslo ‘process’, when the trend towards illegal settlements was ramped up, backed by successive US governments.

Replacing the Netanyahu regime with an equally absurd alternative would only mean that, a further 50 years hence, future generations will still be marvelling at the impotence of their ancestors.

[*mahir.dawn@gmail.com*](https://mahir.dawn@gmail.com)

*Published in Dawn, May 8th, 2024*