**Palestine: The victim of infinite hope**

[**Najm us Saqib**](https://nation.com.pk/Columnist/najm-us-saqib)

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Seated at a roundtable are six well known erudite experts of foreign policy. Their discussion started off just a while ago. A history professor from a reputed university has been included in the discussion probably for better optics.

First: What was new? It was Israel. It was Palestine. Europe and the US sided with Israel. There were muted voices from the Arab World. A weak response from the OIC and virtually no response from the UN Security Council, the international community’s reply to the conflict was tacit. The champions of human rights talked about the right to self-defence of the oppressor. China and Russia watched from afar. Turkey played the lone wolf. Perhaps in the days to come we would hear about the Fifth Genevaor First New York accords. There were protests all over the world. Images of mayhem and bloodshed were widely circulated. Boycotting Israeli products became a popular slogan. Even the stones and rocks thrown at the heavily armed Israeli security forces were the same. The pandemic seemed to be the only difference between the previous showdowns and the present one. Ergo, mimicking the narrative of history, soon life will return to the way it was. Meanwhile, ethnic cleansing, changing demographic structures and the legal status of the Palestinians will continue.

[Malian military arrests interim president, premier: Media](https://nation.com.pk/25-May-2021/malian-military-arrests-interim-president-premier-media)

Second: The OIC was established primarily for the Palestinian cause. I remember OBL once said that 9/11 happened because of Palestine. If a colossal event like 9/11 could not result in deciding on the desired two-state solution, I don’t think the exchange of fireor the subsequent ceasefire will have any effect on the overall Middle Eastern situation. The only winner will be Netanyahu and his Likud party. With merely thirty seats in the national legislature, it is not enough to take independent decisions. Perhaps he would not mind a few more seats in the Knesset. It’s all about realpolitik. By the way, did you see that building that was razed to the ground? Didn’t it remind you of the twin towers? There was a stark similarity, wasn’t it?

Third: President Biden is a staunch supporter of Israel. The question remained however, how would he transform that support into a presidential statement? The strategists in Washington and the Whitehouse must have been facing a real dilemma. Simple press conferences and convoluted responses to sharp questions were unsustainable. As the leader of the free world, Biden made a couple of phone calls to Netanyahu while his country was vetoing the condemnation of Israel at the UN Security Council. The good news is that Trump had faded away from the scene. Otherwise, the number of casualties would have been much more. The ceasefire would only have been possible after Israel’s objectives were met.

[Biden sends top diplomat to Middle East amid Gaza ceasefire](https://nation.com.pk/25-May-2021/biden-sends-top-diplomat-to-middle-east-amid-gaza-ceasefire)

Fourth: That reminds me of the question of recognising Israel. I think Tel Aviv should forget about its recognition by Islamabad for good now.

Fifth: The zone of action was Gaza. Many killed including women and children. The resistance was not enough to deter the enemy. The blue team needed additional actual fighters and not the stone-age human shields. Lip service was followed by another vacuous statement. For God’s sake, we are not debating some Climate Change issue at the United Nations. It was war buddies. There was no time for thinking but instead only for action. Israel’s population is just nine million and if you include the 328 million from the US, even then the Arab world edges past that figure with a population of over 400 million. The bull should have been taken by the horns. It was time to deceive and surprise the enemy. It was time for double jeopardy. Jerusalem is gone. Gaza has been badly hit. You cannot save Masjid-e-Al-Aqsa just by expressing unflinching solidarity with the Palestinians or condemning Israel’s policies. I need a cigarette.

[French media praises Burak Yilmaz for leading Lille to Ligue 1 title](https://nation.com.pk/24-May-2021/french-media-praises-burak-yilmaz-for-leading-lille-to-ligue-1-title)

First: As someone once said, only the dead have seen the end of the war. War is no solution. You need to hit the oppressor so hard that it thinks twice before committing any future act of aggression.

Sixth: The six-day war of 1967 ended in some important territorial changes. There is no chance these rock throwing kids could take back the Sinai Peninsula or the West Bank. The aims behind the recent catastrophic events will soon be known. In all probabilities, the areas having the Palestinians will shrink even further, leaving barely enough space to breathe. KSA was perhaps the only Muslim country that might have taken some initiative to unite Muslims on extending actual support to the Palestinians. The cold shoulder given to MBS by the new Biden administration has made Riyadh think of forming regional alliances and strengthening relations with China and Russia. The ongoing back-channel contacts between Iran and KSA may help in reaching some kind of an understanding between these two important players on the future course of action involving additional supporters for the Palestinian cause. Pakistan had announced its readiness to join hands with the world for ‘any move’ aimed at protecting the legal and human rights of the Palestinians. This was by far the strongest stand taken by Islamabad.

[Pakistan set to introduce home-made 'PakVac' COVID vaccine](https://nation.com.pk/24-May-2021/pakistan-set-to-introduce-home-made-pakvac-covid-vaccine)

Seventh: Did anyone see Mahmoud Abbas on the screen? Why was it always Netanyahu getting the spotlight for all the wrong reasons? And, where was Modi, the leader of the most populous democracy of the world and a friend of the Gulf? Where was the G-77? What were the EU and ASEAN doing? Where was democracy? Where was the Human Rights Commission? The ground realities were being kept in mind, but no one was ready to add a new reality into the existing one. Paradoxes within paradoxes were seen resulting in total confusion. What a sorry state of affairs.

Professor: Agreed, we need a strategy to counter Israel. But I fail to understand why an internationally recognised legal and humanitarian issue is being strategised within the limited scope of the OIC? Just like Kashmir, Palestine also lives in the hearts of the people of Pakistan. You recognise Israel and see what happens. To me, the Palestinian issue is an international, legaland larger humanitarian issue involving serious issues of human rights and history. It must be dealt with accordingly. The New York protest in favour of Palestinians was one of the largest and we saw resident Jews protesting against Israel’s atrocities. Take advantage of the wave of change. Agreed, one cannot change the past, but one can create history, right? I pity those who are convinced that the US would never change its position on Israel. The power of public sentiment is more effective than the WMDs. If only we knew how to channel this force into a lethal political weapon. If only we knew how to formulate a narrative after creating a balance between deep emotional attachments and foreign policy priorities.