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## The Gaza Strip and Violence

It is very difficult to concentrate on one direction while preparing this paper and it is almost impossible to take all the effective factors in consideration, while doing so. The question of violence is vague particularly in the Gaza Strip. This part of the world, which has been always subject to invasions, in this short paper I will try to give an overview of this small part of the historical Palestine, from different angles so that one can understand the roots of the problem and the psychology of the people. Then I will translate some paragraphs from different speeches of the first Prime Minister of the Palestinian Authority Mr. M. Abbas, in which he clarify what missing, what need to be done, and the way to do it. In my opinion, it is self explanatory, that if he was band from doing what he promised then he should resign, the question, Who prevented him from achieving his goals? And Why it is related to the violence and terrorism, so it leads to the wider circle of questions of Who, and Why. Some times, it is much better to limit the legitimate questions that one can stay sane and/or safe.

### The Gaza Strip

#### a) Geography

The Gaza Strip is a roughly rectangular coastal area on the eastern Mediterranean, 28 miles long, 4.3 miles wide at its northern end, 7.8 miles wide at its southern end, and 3.4 miles wide at its narrowest point. It encompasses a total area of approximately 140 square miles. Bordered by Israel on the North and east, Egypt on the south and the Mediterranean Sea on the West, the Strip's geographical boundaries have remained virtually unchanged since its creation in 1948 but the Israeli forces had created several settlements on this small part taking more than 1/3 of the land for settlement of Israeli settlers.

#### b) Demography:

The Gaza Strip is one of the most densely populated regions in the world. By 2002, it was home to about 1.250.000 people, the overview-whelming majority of whom (99 percent) are Sunni Muslim Arabs. There is also a tiny minority of Arab Christians, mostly Greek Orthodox. About 70 percent of Gazans-875,000 people – are refugees of the 1948 war and their descendants. Over half of the refugees still live in camps, the reminder reside in local villages and towns. The annual population growth rate in Gaza is 4 percent, one of the highest in the developing world.

#### c) History

In the fifty five years since it became an internationally recognized entity, the Gaza Strip has been called " the forgotten man of the Middle East," " the stepchild

of the West Bank," "the black hole of the Arab World," and " Israel's collective punishment." Since its creation, this tiny, artificial entity has known only one political reality, occupation

The Gaza Strip is the only part of Mandatory Palestine that was never incorporated into a sovereign state, and no Arab nation has ever claimed it as its own. Yet Gaza has remained a critical part of the Palestinian – Israeli conflict. Gaza was where the All-Palestine Government was established in 1948, where the Palestinian uprising (intifada) began in 1987, and where limited self-rule for the occupied territories began in 1994.

Gaza provides a stark clarification of the intentions as well as the consequences of Israeli policy.

In the earliest available reference to Gaza, it is described as a Canaanite city-state dating from 3200B.C. making it one of the oldest cities in the world. Gaza's present debilitation seems antithetic and paradoxical when viewed against its remarkable history of resilience and growth. The city of Gaza experienced a continuous succession of conquerors and occupiers beginning with the Egyptian Pharaohs and ending with the Israeli army. From its ancient beginnings down to the present day, the city of Gaza has been attacked and destroyed, and its population enslaved and expelled, by a succession of invaders- Assyrians, Persians, Romans, Muslims, Ottomans, British, and Israelis, struggling for its control.

### **1. Assyrians**

The Assyrian invasions began in 742 BC with the campaigns of Tiglath-pileser III whose initial target was control of the trade from the Phoenician ports of Byblos, Arvad, Sidon and Tyre, on the Mediterranean. Once Assyrian rule over those cities was established, Philistia became the next target. In 720 BC Sargon suppressed the rebellion in the West then defeated the coalition in central Syria before turning south towards Gaza crushing all of Philistia on the way. Raphiah (Rafah) was taken and then Gaza was doomed. The city offered no resistance.

### **2. Babylonians**

It appears that further battle occurred in Philistia between the Babylonians and the Egyptians. Given the location of Gaza, it is safe to assume that the city became a pawn in the hands of the two great powers. The great Babylonian ruler Nebuchadnezzar II undertook several campaigns in the south between 604 and 586 BC to establish authority. Gaza came under Babylonian control in 601BC, subdued yet again by an army on the move. It is thought that a great battle between the Babylonians and the Egyptians took place on the Gaza plain in that year. Documents of a later period indicate the likelihood that Gaza became, for the Babylonians, a garrison town at that time-as it has for other foreign armies so often in its history.

### **3- Persians**

The Babylonians had been coming under increasing pressure from the Persian. A new and powerful state had been created in Persia with a fusion of Medes and Persian. Between 559 and 530 BC, King Cyrus created an empire, which eventually covered most of the modern Middle East. In 539 BC, Cyrus and his army entered Babylon and effectively Gaza had new rulers from afar.

#### **4- The rule of Greece**

In 334 BC Alexander III, of Macedonia, began his conquest of the Persian Empire. In 333 BC, he defeated the Persian King Darius III Codomannus and then began to make his way down the eastern Mediterranean coast towards Egypt. Alexander sent one of his generals to Gaza by sea carrying the siege equipment and surrounded Gaza for two months (August and September 332 BC). The defenders fought fiercely. Eventually the city walls were weakened by mines placed in the sandy soil. Women and children became the prizes of war. Defeat at the hands of Alexander had been total: the city was bereft of all its fighting men, and its women and children were sold into slavery. It seems that Gaza was then repopulated with people brought in from towns and cities round about and established as a military base, as ever, to control the route to Egypt.

#### **5- Moslems:**

The Arabs began attacking Palestine in 634. The Arab conquest of Gaza was swift and peaceful; it was completed in June or July 637. Lack of resistance is one of the features of the Islamic rule. The local population welcomed the change of rulers.

#### **6- The Ottoman Empire**

In 1453 the Ottoman leader, Mohammad II, captured Constantinople and put an end to the Byzantine Empire. From there the Ottomans expanded even further to the west. In 1516, Selim I marched the Ottoman army into Syria, defeating the Mamluks near Aleppo. In a matter of months, his army had marched across Sinai desert to take Gaza, which was regarded as the vital crossroads for Egypt. Once again, Gaza was secure; Selim took the fight to the heart of Egyptian power, capturing Cairo in January 1517.

For Gaza, Ottoman occupation put the seal on what for centuries had been the gradual increase in Turkish influence in Palestine- beginning with the Seljuqs and continuing with the Mamluks. While the Arabs of Gaza continued to be immersed in Arab-Islamic culture, they were to be ruled for the next four centuries by Turkish administrators.

#### **7- The British mandate**

By the end of World War I the British were in control of Palestine and had established a military government. In 1920, the military government was replaced by a civilian administration; in 1922 the League of Nations formally approved the British Mandate. The twenty-five years leading up to the establishment of the Mandate and of a Jewish state in Arab Palestine were a politically volatile and complex period characterized by profound social disunity. The defining political features of the Mandate period were the government's official support for the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine and the rise of Jewish and Arab nationalism that inevitably resulted. Palestine was far from being a binational society at this time, but instead existed as a society of two nationalisms. In 1917, the British government issued the Balfour Declaration, supporting "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people.

In the early 1940s the British faced pressure from a number of directions. For a start, tens of thousands of Jews who had fled from the atrocities being committed by the Nazis in Europe were homeless and wanted to get to Palestine. In August

1947 a United Nations commission recommended the partition of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states, this will make Gaza part of the Jewish state. The Arabs rejected the plan and the Mufti of Jerusalem proclaimed a Jihad or a holy war against settlers in Palestine. In September Britain announced that it would be relinquishing its mandate the following year and in November the United Nations General Assembly endorsed the partition plan. The end of the British mandate came on 14 May 1948, on the same day David Ben Gurion proclaimed the establishment of a Jewish state.

## **8- Egyptian Rule**

While the suffering both of refugees and the local population continued to be the subject of political wrangling, Egypt was establishing administrative control over the Gaza Strip. But before this came about Gaza was the centre of a brief attempt to establish a Palestinian government which mainly relied on the Egyptians for funds and protection. One factor that helped to kill off the new government was the assumption of fighting between Egypt and Israel and the ultimate defeat of the Egyptians. The outcome of the war had a significant effect on the fate of Egypt – and, by extension, on Gaza in the 1950s. This was because of the presence of one army officer, Gamal Abdel Nasser, later to become president of Egypt.

The revolution in Egypt in 1952 which overthrew the monarchy and spelt the beginning of the end of British influence in the country also led to a greater concentration of Egyptian effort in developing the Gaza Strip. For people of Gaza certain aspects of life under Egyptian administration changed for the better when compared with the era under British rule. They started to interest people in education and they opened schools in Gaza. This era had ended by the defeat of the Egyptians in 1967 and Gaza became under the Israeli Occupation.

## **9- The Israeli Occupation**

When full control over the Gaza Strip was finally achieved after the 1967 war, the government embarked on a policy of institutional integration that was designed to insure that the territory would not revert to its pre-1967 status, although its postwar status remained a source of political dispute. Thus, official objectives may not have been directed at making political annexation easier, but they were clearly directed to making territorial separation harder. After 1967, Israeli policy in the Gaza Strip was driven less by what it aimed to do than by what it aimed never to do, return the territory to its former sovereign, let alone to the Palestinians who lived there.

PLO found the greatest support from the Gazans who started the struggle against the Israeli Occupation right after 1967 war and continued through all the periods for example in the 1970s it was the most armed struggle against the Israelis during that period the Israeli government sent the most unmerciful officer in the IDF that was Ariel Sharon who started demolishing the camps of the refugees in the Gaza Strip, he succeeded to reduce the arm struggle but definitely increase the hatred to the Israelis

In the 1980s the civil administration started to replace the military government – according to the Israelis claim, but again it was another failure since it failed to deal with the hopes and wishes of the Palestinian accordingly the Intifada started in 1987 in the beginning it was demonstration and civil disobedience but after three years it became an armed struggle again.

Needles to say that the Intifada started in Gaza and ended in there. By the agreement between Israel and PLO, through which PLO leadership moved into Gaza and Jericho in 1994.

### **10- The Palestinian National Authority**

In August 1993, in a totally unexpected and surprising move, the Israeli government and the PLO announced a resolution to their conflict. An agreement, known as Gaza-Jericho was reached to implement partial autonomy in the Gaza Strip and in the West Bank town of Jericho as a possible first step on the road to peace. The Agreement generated a great deal of excitement, particularly because it had the official support of both sides. Israeli supporters were tantalized by the prospect of a real peace, while their Palestinian counterparts hoped for a sovereign state. Once again, Gaza was first.

The Gaza-Jericho Agreement is not about how Palestinians and Israelis should live separately but about how they should live together, at least during the five years of interim rule called for by the Agreement. Unlike Israel's agreement with the Palestinians calls for a continued "sharing" of the land while Israel maintains ultimate control over it. The question immediately arises: will Palestinian-Israeli coexistence in the future be any different from the past? Will occupation end and its structures be dismantled? Will de-development be arrested under the terms of the proposed peace?

### **Diversity of Authorities**

In the early 1990s, at least seven political factions and sub factions claimed the allegiance of Gaza's highly political population. Almost every Palestinian in the Strip claims membership in one or more of these categories, and this membership manifestly shapes the individual's worldview. These factions are Fateh, the popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), the Palestine Democratic Union (FIDA), the Communists (now known as the People's Party), Hamas (other wise known as the Islamic Resistance Movement) and al-Jihad al – Islami ( the Islamic Jihad). The Primary definitional distinction between these seven factions is their position on the Israeli occupation. The first five espouse a secular democratic ideology, and fall under the umbrella of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). The last two are based on religious belief and remain distinctly outside the structure of the PLO. The division between these two blocs is fraught with tension and conflict and is most clearly expressed in the conflicts between Fateh and Hamas. Of the PLO factions, Fateh, Gaza's largest party, is the more centrist and moderate, and appears to have remained the most popular, despite considerable ebbs and flows.

### **Gaza Versus West Bank**

Most studies on the occupied territories focus on the West Bank because of its greater historical, political, religious, and geographical significance. The smaller, poorer, and far more isolated Gaza Strip is often appended to discussions of the West Bank simply by Israel at the same time. In fact, the differences between the two territories, though commonly overlooked, are significant.

The most obvious distinction is Geographic. Gaza is small, circumscribed, and isolated; the West Bank is fifteen times larger, contiguous with another Arab state, Jordan, and exposed to external influence. Gaza's size and location make it easier to control than the West Bank. Gaza's borders are rarely crossed except by its own laborers, the West Bank's borders are far more open. Prior to the Intifada, the West Bank received thousands of visitors annually, the Gaza Strip no more than 35.

Socially, Gazans are far more traditional than West Bankers, whose continuous exposure to foreign visitors has bestowed a sophistication and worldview not often found in Gaza.

Demographically, the West Bank has about 700,000 more residents than Gaza. However, given Gaza's substantially smaller size, higher fertility and lower mortality rates, lower rates of emigration, and larger refugee population, population density per square mile is at least fifteen times that of the West Bank. The differences between the two territories go beyond geography and demography to the very fabric of social structure and political culture. In the Gaza Strip, the decisive majority are refugees and their descendants. In 1948, 250,000 men, women, and children flooded the Strip. They were completely severed from their previous lives in Palestine and alienated from their unfamiliar and grossly insecure surroundings.

Israeli policy in each of the occupied territories has consistently reflected the fundamental differences between them. The Israeli authorities have always viewed the Gaza Strip with far greater suspicion and mistrust than the West Bank. They have considered Gaza to be angry, restless, and malcontent. As a result, they have exercised much tighter control in Gaza than in the West Bank. For example, Israelis have often relied on brute military repression, particularly against Gaza's refugees, whereas in the West Bank, more indirect forms of cooperation (of "notable" with ties to Jordan and urban middle class merchants with economic interests in maintaining the status quo) have been the mainstay, although by no means the only forms, of control.

The differences of control had continued to take place after the Palestinian Authority has been formed in the beginning it was the Gaza Jericho Agreement where the whole Gaza Strip apart from settlements handled over to the Palestinian Authority while only Jericho city of West Bank was under the Palestinian control and the remaining parts of West Bank under the Israeli occupation. So, the Palestinian Authority tried to support the West Bank by all means and keep its eyes on the development and support of the people of the West Bank to make sure that they will accept to become under the Palestinian control when its due, since many voices in the West Bank were calling for returning to Jordan rather than a Palestinian control.

When most of the West Bank became under the Palestinian Authority control, the method of administration which was followed by the Palestinian Authority in West Bank was completely different comparing to the Gaza Strip, simply because the West Bank had an open borders with Israel while Gaza is totally closed. Accordingly, the Palestinian Authority had practiced complete authority on the Gaza Strip in almost all aspects of life, like taxes, customs, permissions, exports, and imports, while it was very limited in the West Bank which means that the

Gazans had to get permits from Palestinians and Israelis. Import licenses must be approved by both authorities and some times double taxation visa vie West Bank. As a clear example, Palestinian Petroleum Authority had imposed restrictions and taxes on the gasoline in the Gaza Strip while it failed to do so in the West Bank so the quality of gasoline in the West Bank was the same as in Israel, the price as well. While in Gaza the quality was lower and the price was higher, since 1995 until May 2003, where the Ministry of Finance had decided to unify the prices and the quality, when it took over the Petroleum Authority.

As its clear from the previous background, the psychology population of the Gaza Strip has been effected by these different causes. I would say that one could suffer close phobia if s/he is living in such a tiny crowded partitioned place. Of course, such a tough life with this long history of occupations would affect the willingness and tendency of the inhabitants towards violence. In 1993, right after the signing of the peace tretee between PLO and Israel, I visited more than twenty five different schools in the whole Gaza Strip seeking an answer for a simple question what does the word "Authority in a country" means? The majority (almost 60%) " said, "the Israelis", 30% said "the enemy" and the remaining 10% said "the leadership". This is why after sending the results of these answers to PLO in Tunisia they decided to violate the agreement signed with Israel to call the Authority the "Palestinian National Authority" rather than the "National Authority".

If you have such a young generation with this vision towards the Authority, you can expect a lot of tension in the relation between the people and the Authority. Simply it is the first time in history that the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip have more than a municipal affairs to run for themselves by themselves.

The current Palestinian leadership are almost totally PLO members which means that they are revolutionists who spent most of their times serving PLO moving from one place to another but they have never learnt how to run a state. This explains why we cant run smoothly our internal affairs.

But one should always remember that there are not so far a rifle (an Israeli rifle) willing to assassinate any success ready to explode any chance of progress to keep always the situation deteriorating to give an excuse that the Palestinians can not run their internal affairs during the interim period, therefore they don't deserve to move to final status and get the statehood.

***So Gaza have been always subjected to VIOLENCE from almost every body all the time, so is it fare to say that violence reaction is expected from Gaza?***

I believe that the first Prime Minister of the Palestinian Authority had diagnosed the problem and tried to look for the treatment. In the next few pages a light will be shed on a very short period of the Palestinian present internal problem and the Palestinian Israeli conflict.

## **The ex-prime minister M. Abbas “Abu Mazen”**

**The first speech before the Palestinian Legislative Council dated April 3<sup>rd</sup> 2003, the Prime Minister said,**

"The occupation with its horrible policy is the root of our continuous suffering in our lives. Our national aim, which we all are committed to, is to get rid of occupation. This requires starting with arranging our internal situations, while committing to the basic law issued by the Legislative Council and approved by President Yaser Arafat, and requires that the Authority promises to apply this law to all the Authority's sectors to prevent any violation of the law or any chaos in the society. Whereas, the way we apply the basic law is the real vision for that we deserve a state and follow the provisions, as our authority shall not ease with any body trying to violate this law.

The Authority realizes that arranging our internal situation can't be fulfilled in the appropriate way without commitment of everyone to the principle of law dominance. Law dominance will not be applicable without having an independent and efficient judiciary, active legal organizations, Ministry of Justice to support the independency of Judiciary and the legal procedures and able to execute the court decisions. The Authority undertakes to work for the President and the Legislative council to reform the High Judicial Council in accordance to the rules of the independent judicial law and to develop the courts' status as well as resolving the chronic faults in it abilities to do its job appropriately. The Authority undertakes also to prepare drafts of laws and necessary regulations for completing the legal structure of the National Authority.

The Authority shall concentrate on security. We can define security as the security of the Palestinian citizen in his country which means the security of Palestine through the feeling that there is no threaten on human's life, freedom, and properties. Therefore, the Authority shall concentrate more on developing the structure of the security departments and apparatuses according to the laws and regulations issued for this aim and will focus on the professional leaders and whoever joins the security sectors. The Authority will insist on following the laws and will prevent severely the interference of the security Apparatus in the citizens lives and works except for what determined by the law. The Authority will try to continue what the others began especially the arrangements related to the authorities and responsibilities of the security sectors which gave the Minister of Interior Affairs great authority in the Security field and enabled him to develop the performance.

The Authority realizes that the citizen's feeling of security and safety is one of the most important principles for the national struggle and for the development in the life of the individual and the society. Accordingly, one of our most essential targets will be to stop the chaos of guns dealing which directly threatens the security of the citizens. There will be only the legal police which will be used only to keep safety, general order and to apply the law. The only decision maker will be the legal one, as this land and people have only one authority and one law where the democratic national decision is applied on all.

Therefore, we will never, under any condition, let anyone violate the citizen's right to express or choose or practice any political trend according to the law, and we will never allow any violation of any of the human rights which were warranted by the basic law and the International regulations.

The Authority realizes the damage in our administrative structure and knows the necessity to amend it. Accordingly, it shall keep executing and improving the remedy plan, in particular the remedy plan which was approved by the Legislative Council, through a joint committee between the council and the Authority, in cooperation with all the institutions of the community. The authority will establish a Ministers' Council Institution and apply modern techniques and values to develop all the institutions of the Executive Authority to serve the citizens. The most important step in regard to remedy is to work in accordance to the financial and the administrative parts of the civil serving law and make the employees whose number exceeds 120,000 feel secured in regard to their present, future and their retirement payment according to a thorough retirement system which shall be applied within few months.

The authority will not allow any kind of chaos, waste or duplication in our Administrative Structure. Therefore, it will work on reforming the Ministries, the Institutions and the governmental departments and merging or canceling any of it to be able to execute their duties to serve the community and the individuals perfectly, within the modern and comprehensive administrative law which the government will try to achieve to organize all the duties of the Executive Authority"

**In his last speech before the Legislative Council dated September 4<sup>th</sup> 2003 the Prime Minister said,**

"As for the Administrative remedy, the Authority has formed, in its first meeting, the remedy committee to enact and develop remedy programs in all fields of governmental work and follow up executing it. In this regard, the committee has suggested organizing the General Management and the Civil service through the subjection of all the institutions and Governmental entities to impeachment before the Legislative Council by a Minister in the Authority. Therefore, the Authority has started to join some of the institutions to the specialized Ministries such as the Tobacco Corporation, the Petrol Corporation, the High Funding and Investment Committee to the Ministry of Finance while joining the Ports Authority and the Aviation Authority to the Ministry of transportation and merging the Industrial regions corporation with the National Economy Ministry. The process of joining and canceling and amending the institutions is still going.

The remedy Committee has finished preparing a draft project of the elections law, which has been sent to your council to be studied and to start preparing for this process seriously. The remedy committee is trying now to develop the interior draft law of the nongovernmental organizations.

The Planning Ministry has been instructed to prepare the aims, the targets, the program, forms and the legal basics of the Ministries' work, where a study, development and reforming of five main ministries has been started by within a

primary program, these ministries are the planning, the education, the labor, the local government and the social affairs. These frameworks have been established and shall be executed.

As we promised in our trustee speech before you, as a proof of the enforcement of partnership between all, the formal and the informal, Palestinian Society's forces, a Remedy National Committee has been formed. It includes, in addition to the members of the Ministry Remedy committee, representatives of your council and the private sector and the civil community.

In addition, it took many steps towards the improvement of the Ministry of Justice work and determines the separating points between it and the Judiciary, with its new formation, to guarantee the independency of the Judiciary and to enforce the rule of law in the community. The security courts have been canceled and its cases have been transferred to ordinary courts.

In regard to the internal security, the Ministry of interior tried hard to achieve what we were undertook to do before your council regarding our responsibility for the security of the country and the citizens and for developing the structure of the security institutions and systems and care for the professionalism of the leaders and those who join through preparing and executing a plan, to be applied on both the security and Administrative levels to achieve security and order in the Palestinian Community. One of the accomplishments which the Authority has achieved in this field is:

- Merging the activities of the institutions which are part of the Ministry of interior according to the approved specializations to guarantee the execution of the plan far away from the Administrative complexity and presenting all necessary requirements to improve the ministry's performance.
- Transferring all the financial proportions as salaries, budgets, and direct expenditures of the employees in the Ministry of civilians and military to the financial department of the Ministry, which undertakes distributing it on the departments of the Ministry and send it to the Ministry of finance according to the prevailing system. The same applies for the purchases, equipping and any other needs.
- To organize the internal security departments' work, the structure of the forces of interference and keeping order, police of governorates, investigations, and drugs managements, was reformed and each specialization was determined. In this regard, the legislation department in the Ministry of Justice is discussing a new law for the police including forming the high council of the Police as a step to present it to your council. Moreover, a project was presented to include the employees in the Ministry into the insurance and pension funds in the Ministry of Finance.
- As reparing the damage caused by the occupation, in the abilities of the Ministry of interior, we are still working on restructuring police departments and the internal security which was demolished by the Israeli attacks in addition to outfitting the criminal laboratory and establishing and outfitting the criminal archives and linking the ministry with the central computer and building central operations departments in Gaza and Ramallah.
- To apply law and order, an extensive security exists all around the 24 hours in addition to organizing continuous campaigns for the traffic police and treating

the breaches and the assaults, arresting the criminals wanted by the public prosecution or courts and executing courts decisions. New departments were established to stop any breaches from any authorized who may exploit his authority to assault the citizens' rights.

As you know, our efforts to achieve safety and security to the Palestinian citizen face many obstacles especially in the northern governorates of the Palestinian Territories where the Israeli occupation still puts obstacles. But we will continue working doing our best in these governorates till the lapse of occupation

Regarding the financial amendments, the authority took many procedures aiming for decreasing the financial load on the citizens. Therefore, the fees imposed on public vehicles were decreased, following the recommendations of the Legislative Council in which it approves the budget of this year. The emergency discounts which were taken from the salaries of all the civil and military employees and which some of it go back to 1996, were canceled. The authority realizes the essential rule which these discounts used to play in the social cooperation in these difficult situations which the Palestinian people live in. This central decision which the Palestinian employees in the public sector have been waiting for a very long time was achieved after being supplied by the resources which enabled us to continue dealing with the emergency requirements. In the same way, and to meet the needs of the employees of the public sector, the authority took many steps towards preparing to execute the financial part of the civil service law, which will be applied as from the payment of the salaries of this month.

To apply the civil service law, the Authority took a decision which will make it possible to execute the retirement of the employee who is over 60 years. The Authority decided to pay a monthly payment equals the maximum rate of the retirement salary determined by the retirement law including the employees who became 60 while they don't have a retirement salary, according to the applicable law. This was as a step to fill the legal gap which results from this group of people, till the issuance of a new retirement law that guarantees their needs and keeps their rights in the years previous to their work for the Palestinian National Authority. This decision was applied in May once it was approved. We have presented to your council a detailed memorandum as a response to the discussion held regarding this subject hoping that this memorandum answers all your questions and queries in this regard, including what related to the possibility to exclusion and how to be executed in the obliging situations.

As for the salaries of the military, we were able to, in addition to stopping the discounts; raise these salaries by 8% as we realize their role and the necessity to improve their living level. We were also able to apply the direct payment system through banks for 23,000 employees of this sector, as an execution of the General Budget law of this year. We hope to continue working in this field by applying this new system on all the employees of the military service.

The Authority has applied the financial part of "the Independency of Judiciary law" which implies the improvement of the judges status in this vital sector. This proves the Authority's care for this sector which has a central role in establishing the new country and its institutions as well as assuring the dominance of law.

## **The financial cases:**

we tried to take some financial decisions some of which was executed and some were not, some passed softly and some others faced many obstacles. Once we declared that the retirement law has to be applied, we faced many rejections. " Has the liberation period come to an end, The United States of America wants to get rid of the Organization". In spite of the fact that all the countries all over the world have a retirement law. The decision might be incomplete or needs some amendment, but there is no need for insults. " The United States of America, wants to get rid of strugglers" all the countries all over the world have a retirement law, till when shall the grandfather and the son and the grandson be employed in the same ministry in the same time while we still have 18,000 graduates, everything stays as it is because we don't want to be betrayals and get rid of the strugglers. The issue was presented to the Executive Committee, I don't know what the Executive Committee has to do with this issue, but the high leadership said, "This decision has to be stopped". By the way, not only the Executive Committee rejected the decision, but also there is what called the Palestinian United Leadership, honestly, I don't reject the naming but I reject the application, this is not a Palestinian United Leadership and I don't want to mention any names of who attendants or represent or sit on the table to decide the Palestinian's destiny.

Before this decision, we issued a decision regarding the discounts which have been taken from the employees' salaries and may be 15%. I, personally, don't know where these discounts go, anyway, the most important is that this act used to harm the employees who exceed 15,000 and we had the possibility to stop these discounts. But some people disagreed saying, " you are harming the Intifada" what is the relationship between the Intifada and these discounts? Why are we always looking for a national reason to stop any procedure and stop any decision? Despite all of that, the decision has passed as well as the monopoly... The Petrol, the Companies, the Cigarettes and etc, why do these monopolies exist? For whose benefit? When it were canceled I think people felt much relieved especially for the Petrol field which was cheated by an official decision.. this resulted in a great difference between the income of may and July, this means a difference between the last month for this institution and the first month in which the Ministry of finance started working in this institution. The difference reached US \$ 6,000,000 per month this means US \$ 72,000,000 per year was robbed.

The civil employees used to receive their salaries from banks and the Ministry of Finances suggested that all the employees, civilians and military, receive their salaries from banks, they attacked us severely saying," how can we reveal our military employees names to the banks" the fact is that all military employees names were sent to the Israeli occupation by an official order they were delivered by Mr. Saeb Eriqat.. when we came to the Palestinian Territories, the Israeli Occupation insisted to know who enters to the lands, either civilian or militaries, the guns and the bullets were registered.. All of that was registered for the Israelis and the Americans.. Now, when we ask to put the salaries in the banks they say," this is not allowed, because this is not a national behavior" the Ministry of Interior accepted that the police and the security protection as well as to the investigations to receive their employees' salaries through the bank while all the other security

departments receive their salaries in sacks, why? All what we want is to organize all of this and that every one receives his salary respectively from the bank and to have cheques and a bank account to enable him to deal with the bank in case if he needs loans or any thing else. Why in sacks? Someone said to me, "the American Marines receive their salaries in sacks". Unfortunately, this is a ridiculous reason and a cover to the robbery; this issue has not been solved till now, why? This resulted the reaction of the beneficiaries.. Two demonstrations were held against the Ministry of Finance; it was damaged and rubbed in Gaza. I don't want to say, where these people came from or who motivated them or why they have behaved so? If they did not like the decision, armed people try to prevent its execution. Mr. Salam Fayad was very sad when he was attacked because they said two words, he said, " I don't mind if they say anything, but they don't have the right to say a traitor or a spy, I can bare it and accept it if they said anything else, but I am not a spy or a traitor"

The basic law:

I do not want to explain the basic law to you, as you issued this law and I am totally committed to it, I want the council to solve any problem we may have. I have said this many times, I want you to tell me where are we? What do we have and what do we have to do? What is our responsibility and what is not? We want to know.. However, everyday, I receive a decision from Abu Ammar, I do not know, the Embassies are none of our business, then what is the Minister of Foreign Affairs job? We don't know, we are not responsible for the Governors, and then what does the Ministry of Interior do? The airport is not ours, and then who owns it? The Liberation Organization... The port, PECDAR and the Employees Department are all owned by the Palestinian Liberation Organization, this means that any Minister has no Authority on any employee.

### **The Security Apparatus:**

Many people say that I want to control the security Apparatus. This is not true, it never happened. I do not want to control them. This has a long story. The basic law states that the Interior Security apparatuses should be controlled by the Ministers' Council or the Minister of Interior, I think this is clear.

While the road map states, "all the Security Apparatus should be controlled by the Prime Minister. But I did not ask even for the unification of the Apparatuses but I when I was asked I said that all the efforts of the Security Apparatuses will be unified not all the apparatuses should be unified, so, all what we asked for is coordination between the security apparatuses. When the Americans say we need Unification of the Security apparatuses we refused.

Hereby, I would like to say, I am the one who agreed on the Road Map, not my government. It was accepted in 20 December 2002, where Mr. Saeb Orieqat was the first to state, on behalf of the Palestinian National Authority and the last Ministry , accepting the road map as it is which asks for the unification of the security apparatuses, we have passed over this obstacle too as will not face these problems again. We don't want to start a local war and we are not able to unify

the security apparatuses because Mr. Abu Ammar controls most of the security apparatuses and refuses any kind of coordination between them.

Afterwards, the meeting of the Palestinian leadership was held, I started to feel that there is conspiracy against me then we moved to the central committee meeting where I heard many accusations one of which is "how did the government accept leaving Abu Ammar surrounded?" this was after two months of our government while he has been surrounded for two years before, we asked every where international side, organization, place, person and leader for help. I felt that the side which I am committed to and which authorized me are against me."

The events went so fast and it became so clear that keeping Mr. Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) as the Prime Minister of the Palestinian Government controlled became impossible as this government became a target of accused by many people either from the Israeli government, managed by Arael Sharoon, or from leaders in the Palestinian Leadership who preferred their personal benefit for the national benefit and started to motivate against the Palestinian Government in an incredible way. Accordingly

**The Prime Minister presented the following resignation letter to the President Yaser Arafat. On September 6<sup>th</sup> 2003**

Mr. Abu Ammar,

Greetings,

Due to the difficult if not the impossible circumstances, which the government is passing through, where the Israeli Government put a wall preventing any progress in the Peace process and practiced the worst and the most horrible deeds to our people their land and rights and escaped from executing their obligations in addition to the absence of the International insistence on executing the road map.

On the other hand, this government was exposed to the worst kinds of incitation and distortion as well as putting obstacles in its way before even it starts in order to stop it and make it unable to execute its mission which was created by the Organization.

I have tried my best and more to achieve political and internal goals, some of which I have mentioned in my report to the Legislative Council, but it seems that the issue is not what to achieve, it is a premeditation to make this government fail by all legal and illegal means, including killing, insulting, mistrust, to contempt our reputation and manners.

Mr. Abu Ammar,

Only you have the decision to dismiss and get rid of the government anytime, and you could have done that, but it became obvious that there is a willing to keep it to insult it and accuse it without taking into consideration the benefit of the people, the land and the case.

The worst was the misleading way which many people tried to twist facts. Even if their behavior became more insulting, I will never let them prevent me from saying the truth.

As long as you are convinced that I betrayed my people and that I was not able to take the responsibility, I am giving it back to you.

Whereas the chain has been completed and we are obliged to choose our only choice, I am presenting to you the resignation of our government and my own resignation as the Prime Minister, as from today.

### **Conclusion:**

That was a translation of some parts of the first Prime Minister, of the Palestinian Authority, speeches. As one can notice, in the first speech he promised to do several issues (normally these are missing things that the Prime Minister promised to do his best to fulfill) in order to change the day to day life and introduce some future vision to the life of the people. It was obvious that Mr. Abbas was talking about very primary basic issues nothing complicated.

He promised to solve some of the problems of the paralyzed Judiciary. Everywhere in the world, as they say, "Justice is Blind" but in our part of the world, " Justice is Paralyzed".

Mr. Abbas tried to solve issues related to security, he failed.

Mr. Abbas tried to solve financial issues making our public life more transparent and less corrupted, he failed.

I believe that Mr. Abbas had failed because of two types of pressures, two types of obstacles, one from inside , and the other from the Israeli Government. I am quite confident that the current Israeli Government headed by Prime Minister Arael Sharon had no interest at all to see a successful Palestinian Government because at that time and merely at that time the Israeli Government should deliver the dues of all the previous signed treaties and be subject to the international norms. So it is much easier for Israel headed by Prime Minister Arael Sharon to create the problems and cultivate the road of the Palestinian with several land mines, accordingly all the world will put the blame on the failure Palestinian Government

This is why after more than 52 days of truce Israel assassinated one of the activist of the Islamic resistance knowing that by assassinating him they will assassinate the truce and Abu Mazen's Government by one bullet.

In Palestine it is very difficult for any one to speak or write about efforts to fight terrorist, which terrorist should we fight? Is it the Israeli terrorist against the Palestinians or the Palestinian terrorist against the Israelis? What are the

differences between somebody who assassinates people while dining in a restaurant in Tel Aviv (Palestinian terrorist) and somebody assassinate families while sleeping in Gaza (Israeli Official terrorist).

It is always difficult to write about something that you never experienced, but it is also very difficult to write about something you are suffering each and every moment.

Unfortunately, the whole world is going mad, explosions here and there, terrorist activities everywhere, and very dull, stupid leaderships everywhere.

Either a president can't see far than his nose, or a Prime Minister gazing at the sky claiming that he is looking forward. Once again I find myself ought to compare the old say "justice is blind" with the new say " governments are blind".

Among those dark, rainy, windy nights, I can find a group of people with a candle; ( the Geneva Peace Initiative) can the candle survive such whether?

We are very tired should we start again to fight for this new peace initiative or should we give up and close our eyes and become like our governments, Blind.

Are there any differences between Madrid , Oslo, Paris, Washington, Camp David, Sharm Al Sheikh, Taba, and Geneva ???!!!

Geographically Yes

Politically I am not sure although I hope

Should we wait and see

I believe that we should work and see

We need the sincere efforts of the friends all over the world.

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