

Trump, the day after – Open discussion at Passia – 13/12/2017

1. On Trump and his speech, why did he do it?
 - He wants to pride himself, he is a disrupter
 - The US policy on the ground probably won't immediately change (Trump didn't mention East- or West-Jerusalem)
 - US officials need a policy on how to behave, until today it is unclear how the speech is going to influence this; for example, will the Old City be recognized as Israel or not – will Israeli officials accompany US delegations to the 'Western wall'? Until today this never happened and maybe it will stay like this
 - Today it appears that nobody in the US government knows these answers, but it's clear that the entire State Department staff is against Trump's move and is very upset

2. Israel the day after: what is the response over there?
 - All Israeli's, even most of the Israeli left (there are exceptions, like Gideon Levy), are supporting what Trump said, it is 'the right thing to do'
 - Israeli government will impose new laws to suppress Palestinians in Israel and East Jerusalem
 - The rightists are now leaning towards annexation (West Bank)

3. What about the Palestinian holy places?
 - As far as the US is concerned, there is no change in the status quo
 - If Israeli government will impose more regulations on Al Aqsa, it might well be that the US government will be supportive (of a forced sharing of the complex) under 'freedom of religion' pretext
 - Jewish prayer at Al Aqsa might be even more encouraged than it is today

4. What is the Israeli view of the PA/Palestinian leadership today?

- Weak
- Abu Mazen has gotten himself some breathing room now, after Trump's speech, but not for long
- PLO remains without presence on the ground & PA functions are limited, depending on the space, place and time allowed by Israeli military in the OPT
- Both are at a crossroads with not much time...

5. What are the perspectives for the Palestinians?

- There is a generational gap in Palestinian society: the youth is leaning towards a post-national approach, they don't care anymore about 1 state or 2 states, they just want their rights, lives and dignity
- 'What we are witnessing is the death of the belief in the 2 state solution', everybody in here is sick of it while the international community is still considering it the basis of 'peace talks'
- Passia has dedicated 30 years to the 2 state solution, only to wake up to the reality that it is dead... now what?
- One state solution – but what kind of state?? Israel will never accept one democratic state, but two states are impossible...
- Support one state initiatives? The road is going to be painful and long, but this seems to be the only option left
- Interesting read about public opinion considering two states solution (both in Israeli and Palestinian society) by Khalil Shikaki:
<https://www.thecairoreview.com/essays/modi-in-israel/>
- The new road map drafted in Istanbul and supported by EU is towards political/diplomatic arena: international law & UN unimplemented resolution (wake-up call). It is NOT towards: plan, budget and national address to save / preserve E J'lm Land, property, institutions, holy places and civil society
- There are no high expectations for a new chapter on the ground. Palestinians are very angry and appreciate the solidarity of the world but are very much aware that: the day after is that they alone have to continue the struggle / challenging the colonization on daily bases on

- their homeland ('There is no light at the end of the tunnel, in fact there is not even a tunnel')
- Political will to really challenge US or Israel – as said in all speeches? 'Wishful thinking...'
 - The crisis of leadership in Palestinian society – it was always a problem but today more than ever... => What would happen if there would be a rebellion against Abu Mazen? What if he would have to step back? (!) Survey suggests that large percentage of Palestinians want Abu Mazen gone, but then what? Maybe a new Abu Mazen will take his seat...? Mustafa Barghouti is dying to be a leader, but apart from him there seems to be no one
 - PA stole many practices from Israeli military apparatus ('they saw everything in their jails') and are now using these against Palestinian opposition figures, this is very problematic
 - On Palestinian identity in Israel: many people feel Palestinian at heart, but adapt to Israeli society for pragmatic reasons ⇔ if everybody will only think pragmatic, mind his own business... it is finished
 - On BDS (WB/diaspora/Jlem): the diaspora seems to be waking up, they are much more active in BDS campaigns than people inside Palestine. 'I cannot go to Victoria's Secrets, what are you talking about?' Diaspora Palestinians are showing and using symbols everywhere (Dome of the Rock, olive tree, map of Palestine, flag...)
 - On anti-normalization: WB Palestinians often do not understand the reality of East Jerusalem – what is considered normalization in the WB is pragmatism in Jerusalem
 - On accepting Israeli citizenship in E-J'lem: there is a rise in demand but a decrease in admission – so even if Palestinians want the citizenship (which Israel claims is 'their right') it is getting increasingly difficult to obtain it, and to keep it
 - Where are the Christians in Palestine? It seems like they are afraid to show themselves, to publicly show their cross. We are one society we need to have one voice

6. What is the legal status of flying the Palestinian flag in East-Jerusalem?
- During anti-Trump-demo in Salah Ad-Din Street, Israeli forces reacted with violence whenever they saw a protestor carrying a Palestinian flag, it seemed like they were given orders to do so
 - Unclear if the Israeli policy on this issue has changed since Oslo, no one seems to know for sure
 - Good question: what is the legal status of showing any national symbol under Israeli law? Would a German flag be allowed? Then why not a Palestinian?
 - Need to ask lawyers to check this