

Iran spearheading opposition to Israel's 'forced relocation' of Palestinians

ANALYSIS

The resurgence of the Zionist scheme to forcibly relocate the Palestinian people to neighboring Arab countries, championed by the president of the United States, has ignited a strong wave of opposition and indignation among Muslim nations and advocates for the Palestinian cause. From the very beginning of this renewed proposal, Iran has been a vocal proponent of the urgent need to establish a united front among Islamic countries against the "colonial plot to erase Palestine." This call to solidarity highlights the escalating tensions surrounding the Palestinian issue and reflects a growing determination to resist perceived injustices.



A person looks at tents sheltering displaced Palestinians in a Gaza City schoolyard on February 10, 2025.

● BASHAR TALEB/AFP

Donald Trump, having returned to the White House as the 47th president of the United States after a four-year absence, has made it abundantly clear that anticipating his unconventional developments and unpredictable statements is hardly a challenge. However, reviving the controversial Zionist plan aimed at forcibly relocating the Palestinian people has left the Islamic world and advocates for the Palestinian cause somewhat astounded. Trump has consistently demonstrated his unwavering commitment to implementing this plan, asserting that Palestinians will forfeit their right of return following the reconstruction of Gaza. This bold stance has sparked significant concern and criticism among those who support Palestinian rights.

The colonial plan for the "relocation of the Palestinian people" is not a new issue and has, at times, received support from certain Arab countries. Imam Musa Sadr, the leader of the Shias in Lebanon, was one of the main opponents of the Zionist scheme for the forced relocation of Palestinians, to neighboring countries, as well as the Arab supporters of this initiative who sought to eliminate the dream of return among Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon and integrate them into Lebanese society. Sadr characterized this plan as a conspiracy aimed at destroying the Palestinian nation and ending their resistance.

Iran's Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has repeatedly expressed the Islamic Republic of Iran's clear opposition to this American-Zionist plan.

On June 3, 2010, he stated, "Illegal and oppressive settlement constructions, the demolition of people's homes, and the manipulation of Hebron and Al-Quds with the aim of Judaization are intended to cut off the roots of Islam from the land of Palestine in their misguided belief."

Historical roots

The historical roots of the forced relocation of the Palestinian people trace back to the inception of Zionism, as noted by Theodor Herzl, the founder of this movement:

"When we occupy the land, we shall bring immediate benefits to the state that receives us. We must expropriate gently the private property on the estates assigned to us. We shall try to spirit the penniless population across the border by procuring employment for it in the transit countries, while denying it any employment in our country. The property owners will come over to our side. Both the process of expropriation and the removal of the poor must be carried out discretely and circumspectly..." David Ben-Gurion, the first Prime Minister of Israel, was the architect of a plan known as "Plan D" or "Plan Dalet," a military strategy implemented by the Zionist regime during the Palestinian War of 1948 to prepare for the establishment of a Jewish state. This plan commenced in March 1948 and continued until the end of the war in early 1949, playing a crucial role in the expulsion and flight of Palestinians in 1948, an event famously

referred to as the "Nakba." During this period, over 750,000 Palestinians were displaced from their homeland. The term Nakba, meaning "catastrophe," signifies the permanent displacement of the majority of the Palestinian people. More specifically, the Nakba refers to the mass exodus of Palestinians from the land that was to become Israel, resulting in around 700,000 Palestinians becoming refugees almost overnight.

The continuation of this policy during the 1967 war led to a significant outflow of populations from the West Bank, Al-Quds, and the Gaza Strip. Philippe Lazzarini, the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, referred to the widespread displacement of Palestinians following the attacks on the Gaza Strip during the 15-month conflict as "the largest displacement of Palestinians since 1948." During discussions with his Saudi counterpart, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi characterized the American-Zionist plan to forcibly relocate the people of Gaza and make them refugees in other countries as part of the broader scheme to eliminate Palestine. He stressed the urgent need for the international community to act decisively against this conspiracy.

Araghchi also communicated Iran's opposition to the US president's plan during his meeting with Antonio Guterres, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and Hussein Ibrahim Taha, the Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. He underscored the importance of a coordinated

and unified stance from the Islamic community to thwart this nefarious scheme. The foreign minister stated, "The forced relocation of Palestinians from Gaza is not only a grave crime synonymous with 'genocide,' but it also carries dangerous implications for the stability and security of the region and the world. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation must urgently convene an extraordinary meeting with the foreign ministers of member states to take decisive and effective action to defend the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people."

In his conversation with Guterres, Araghchi pointed to his intensive talks with foreign ministers from Arab and Islamic countries, asserting that the strong condemnation of the plan by Islamic nations reflects widespread concern regarding the ongoing gross violations of Palestinian rights and the continuation of their genocide by other means.

Iran views the US president's plan as aligned with the colonial conspiracy to erase Palestine, with its Foreign Ministry asserting that it contravenes all principles of international law, international resolutions, and, most importantly, humanitarian principles.

The Iranian foreign minister, in his recent meeting with Palestinian resistance officials emphasized the necessity of a cohesive and resolute stance from Islamic countries regarding this dangerous conspiracy.

Ismail Baqaei, the spokesperson for the Foreign Ministry, has consistently voiced the Islamic Republic's opposition to advancing such a plan since it was first proposed. In response to recent statements by US officials regarding the acquisition of Gaza following the suggestion to forcibly relocate the people of Gaza to Egypt and Jordan, Baqaei described such ideas as astonishing and aligned with the Zionist regime's scheme to eliminate Palestine. He called for a strong condemnation of this by the international community and the United Nations.

Pointing to the responsibility of all governments to help realize the right to self-determination for the Palestinian people and to free them from the yoke of occupation and apartheid, he described the recent claim by the US president regarding the intention to acquire the Gaza Strip as an unprecedented affront to the fundamental principles of international law and the UN Charter. He stressed, "Without a doubt, the people who have stood firm against the most severe crimes and aggressions of the occupying regime for the past 76 years and have re-



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fused to leave their ancestral land will not allow the US and the Zionist regime to erase their national and historical identity through other means."

The plan for the cleansing of Gaza and the forced relocation of the Palestinians to neighboring countries is viewed as a continuation of the Zionist regime's targeted scheme to completely eradicate the Palestinian nation and is entirely unacceptable and condemned due to its clear contradiction with the principles and established rules of international law and human rights.

The Foreign Ministry has engaged in extensive consultations with the foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Algeria, Turkey, Pakistan, Malaysia, and Gambia. The proposal put forth by the country, detailed in an official letter from the foreign minister to the head of the OIC, has received significant backing from numerous Islamic nations. As a result of this broad support, an extraordinary meeting is anticipated to take place in the first half of March, marking a pivotal moment for collective diplomatic efforts within the region.

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An English class at a school run by the UNRWA in Amman, Jordan, on February 13, 2024.

● AL JAZEERA