



From Organisation to State: Palestine Liberation Organisation and Its Effect on Middle East

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ABSTRACT

Middle East has been the major special area for the three major monotheistic religions for its religiously geopolitical aspect. Apart from this, the emergence of the old prophets at this area and being a cradle for the first civilizations made the place more important. During 20th century this area is like a new homeland for the Jewish people who faced with great oppressions as it was before. The foundation of Israel after the World War II in this area, Arab people especially Palestinians began to feel the heat from it. After this, we will witness many movements that will protect Palestine from Israel. One the most important of these movements is the Al-Fath Organisation. Although its main motto is the independence of Palestine, by getting affected from the scholars who affected the Arab world a lot, they decided to both adapt a new position and got into political fights with other rival organisations. Therefore, their effect on both politics and Middle East increased considerably. Among all the ideologies and the changing conditions of history, Al-Fath tried to express its own ideals.

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Introduction

Palestine in History

Palestine which retrieved its name from a tribe living at the south coastal region, is named as Pleshe and then Palastina in Greek which means the Land of Palestinians in Hebrew. This name was first used by the Greek to indicate the South coastal region and in time it became "Kenan" as in old Hebrew.

Semitic people who emigrated from Arabian peninsula are accepted as the first Palestinian people. This region was thought to be a part of the region which is called as Berr-üş-Şam, Hitta-i Şam or Arz-ı Şam from the first years of Islam until the dissolution period of Ottoman Empire.

Although the political borders of Palestine could not be drawn according to the continues conquests and invasions, there is a common agreement about its borders. Palestine region encompasses the region between Syria and Egypt and Mediterranean Sea and Shariya River. Dead Sea which the Shariya River pours into in among the Eastern borders of Palestine.

Major Reasons Behind The Conflict Between Israel And Palestine

Geographical and Geopolitical Place and importance of Middle East

The people spreaded their culture by building civilisations in the Middle East. The main reason of this spread of cultures throughout the world is the location of Middle East as the joining point of Asia, Europe and Africa. Therefore, first thing that makes Middle East that popular is its geographical location.

Middle East is an important region which combines East and West, Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean and is between the warm seas and Russia. Also Middle East is the point that combine the East and West trade and cultures. It has a very important geopolitical place for it controls the important water sources and land routes. With this aspect, it has been a region which the major powers of the world tried to acquire throughout the history. As the petroleum gained importance during the 20th century, Middle East became more valuable for

strategical transportation. Hence Middle East became the major reason for the wars in the world. This case shows us that till today the conflicts between the major power, international capital, trade rivalry, and market fights were not different from each other and only changing factor is the subjects for UK is replaced by USA in the region.

Middle East which is the at the top of the effective geographical and cultural regions, has been a cradle of civilizations since the invasion of writing as the beginning point of history. This region include places where the first civilizations settled down such as Nile and Mesopotamian river basins. Assyria, Babel, Sumerian, Akkad and other city states were established in this region. Works and variable structures of these civilisations survived until today.

All changes and developments in Middle East which faced with Crusades and Mongolian Invasion turned this region into the most important geographical location in the world. Middle East became a historically and culturally attraction point which power-seeking states would like to possess.

Today Middle East is an important place for three worldwide monotheistic religions Judaism, Christianity and Islam for it is the birth place of them. For Muslims, Jews and Christians, Jerusalem and for Christians Ephesus and for Muslims Makkah and Madinah are pilgrimage places.

The Foundation of Israel

Although the first Zionist movements started in Russia, they were organised by the political founder of Zionism Theodor Herzl. Herzl thought that because it was impossible to remove the Jewish enmity, the best way to solve this problem was to establish a state with their own land. He wrote his ideas in his book the Jewish State. In this book Herzl argues that the Jewish problem was national, they could be strong only by becoming a state and he fully believed that the Jews had the willpower and strength to found a Jewish State.

Herzl made the First Zionist Congress in Basel on 27 August 1897. More than two hundred representatives attended

this congress. In the congress, the aims of Zionist movement, the means to achieve these goals and an executive council to use the means were determined. This is how the World Zionist Organization was founded. The aim of this organization is to implement the aims and politics of Zionism. The organization first started to support the migrations to Palestine and purchase of land via a bank and a company founded in the region.

In the second Zionist Congress which was in August 1898 in Basel the monetary problems were discussed. In the end, they decided to found a bank to implement economic politics. In time, this bank would found a bank called the Anglo Palestine Company and open many branch shop in many parts of Palestine and help the Jews in selling and purchasing processes. Furthermore, Jewish National Fund was established to collect the donations in the Fifth Zionist Congress.

Herzl thought that they would not be able to be successful without the helps from states like Germany, Ottoman Empire and UK and attempted to get support from those countries. Although the first attempt failed, during 1901 and 1902 Herzl met with Abdulhamit II but could not get support, so he tried to acquire support from the European countries.

Chaim Weizmann went to England in 1904 and met with Arthur Balfour in 1906. In 1907, he reached to the ministries and told about the importance of Zionism, what it means them and how much they need the support of England to achieve their goals. Arthur Balfour was so impressed by this speech that he said that Weizmann turned him into a Zionist.

In 1917, a Zionist leader from Russia called Vladimir Jabotinsky persuaded the Ministry of military of England Lord Derby to form a Zionist army and fight along with England during World War I. then he formed a Jewish Legion in Palestine and came under the command of Allenby as lieutenant.

As the Jewish migrations increased over time, this led the Palestinian and Jewish people to have conflicts with each other and England began to be anxious about the situation. Therefore, England happened to find a solution for these problems starting from 1929 and into 1930. Lord Passfield wrote a report telling that the Jewish migration should be ceased and an administration should be formed to increase the relations between Arabs and Jews. However, due to the rejection of Zionist and the migrations due to Nazi oppression the report could not be applied.

Jewish people did everything they could do to form a state with the politics that they performed during mandate regime, also the public opinion that they acquired through Nazi oppression, increased the number of Zionist supporters. The Palestinian people who realized how weak they were after the World War II, independence struggles with Arab countries which are supported by major powers and Zionist attacks were in a desperate situation in this chaos.

UN founded a Palestine Special Committee after England of which economy was in decline after World War II declared that she would be able to manage the crisis in the region and applied to UN for a solution in February 1947. The committee made some investigations about the region and prepared reports about the foundation of the Israel and the situation of Palestine. The Committee separated into two about the reports which were offering the independence of Palestine. One side was supporting the idea of founding a free state by dividing Palestine between Arabs and Jews under the name of "Majority Plan" and the other side was supporting the idea of founding a federal government under the name of "Minority Plan".

Jews accepted the Majority Plan while the Arabs rejected it for it destroyed the territorial integrity. In November 1947, in

the voting for the final decision in UN, Turkey and other 12 countries gave nay votes.

In December 1947, England separated from the region by abolishing the mandate government on 14 May 1948. Along with this, the Jews declared that they founded the Israel State at the region which would be given to the under the Jews United Nations Division Plan. One day after, Jordan, Syria, Egypt, Iraq and Lebanon declared war on Israel. In 1948, Palestine National Council which would be gathered in Gaza was formed. The Palestine State with the capital of Jerusalem was declared by this council on 1 October 1948.

Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Foundation and Progress of PLO

Palestine Liberation Organisation of which basis were laid in Summit of Arab Union which was held in Cairo in 1964, was founded under the leadership of Arab countries. During the foundation process of PLO, the Arab countries suggested taking Palestinians to their military schools to prepare them to fight. Palestine National Fund was established to provide finance to the organisation. Offices were opened in Arab countries and a Palestine Independence Army was formed based upon Gaza and Sinai.

Palestine Independence Organisation is an organisation founded to establish a free State of Palestine. There are many sub-organisations, resistance movements and political parties under the umbrella of PLO. Al-Fath is the biggest sub-organisation of PLO. The first groups to attend PLO are Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and Maoist Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine and Al-Saiqa which separated later on. Also Palestine Independence Front, Arab Independence Front, Power 17 and Apostle Group are among the organisations and political parties of PLO.

PLO which is formed of three agencies had an executive committee which was accepted as the parliament of Palestinian people. The head of the PLO and the political decisions were taken in Palestine National Council. Palestine Central Council which was taking advisory decision functioned as a bridge between these two organisations. Moreover, Palestine Independence Army functioned as the armed force of PLO.

As a result of Arab-Israel wars, Arab nationality lost its effect and thus the organisation began to gain power independently from Arab countries. In 1967 Arab-Israel War, Israel's invasion of the rest of the Palestinian territories led the Palestine resistance groups to be aware of the identity concept. Therefore the result of this war was a turning point to legalize the actions of PLO. In the first war that the organisation made with Israel PLO left no choice for Israel but to withdraw. This victory was celebrated in the Arab World enthusiastically. The fourth meeting of Palestine National Council was made in 1968. PLO reformed made the commando groups members and formed the commando part of the organisation.

The biggest organisation under PLO is Al-Fath. In the Palestine National Council which was held in Cairo on 3 February 1969, by the attempt of Yahya Hammude who was chosen as the principal of PLO after Ahmad Ash-Shuqairi's resignation in June 1968, the leader of Al-Fath Yaser Arafat became the head of the executive board of PLO. By giving more importance to diplomacy after 1973, PLO could gain the title of government in exile. In 1974, the organisation was accepted as the only representative of Palestinians. Again in the same year, Arafat gained the status of observer in Palestine UN Council with a speech in UN Council. PLO which includes many paramilitary organisations stayed as the leading organisation of Palestinians. During 1967 war, the centre was taken to Jordan.

PLO took its quarter to Lebanon in 1970 and then to Tunisia due to Israel's invasion of Lebanon.

Jordan became the first state that PLO fought in the Arab World. The civil war in 1970 broke out due to the conflicts between Jordan army and Palestine guerrillas. Right after this, with the attack Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine to Amman, PLO overtook the control. A treaty was signed between Jordan and PLO on 23 September 1970. Due to the rejection of the head of the PFLP George Habbash the treaty, the conflicts continued in January 1971. By being supported by USA Jordan King Hussain cause a great loss for the guerrilla power and the war ended in July 1971.

In 1988, Arafat explained in a speech that he condemned terrorism. This explanation was approved by USA but it was not binding for Al-Fath, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Power 17 and Apostle Group. PFLP attacked Israel shores and its relations between USA and PLO became worse.

With the Intifada starting in December 1987, other organisations began to get known and strong like HAMAS and Islamic Jihad. The reason of it is that the leaders of PLO were in Tunisia while Intifada was taking place and therefore could not be effective about it. Another one of the most important events is the renounce of Jordan King Hussain from his sovereign rights. Upon this, Palestine National Council which accepted to obey the article 242 of UN Security Council declared independence on 15 November 1988.

During 90's there were new arrangements about PLO especially Al-Fath in the sense of strengthening the legality and widening the responsibility area. Israel gave the control of some regions from West Sheria and nearly the whole Gaza to Palestine National Authority by 1994 Cairo and September 1995 Oslo II treaties. There were general elections in February 1996. As a result of the elections, legislation council was formed with 88 members and Arafat became the head of Palestine National Authority. The right to give important decisions in the council of ministers with 23 ministers to Arafat and Al-Fath members were given important statuses in the government.

Other Resistance Organisations

Al-Fath (Palestine National Independence Movement)

Al-Fath was established in 1957-1959 by Yaser Arafat and it was the organization phase of independence fight started by Yaser Arafat and his friends Salaf Halef Ebu Iyad and Halil el-Vezir Ebu Jihad. In its first year the organization was following National Freedom Movement in Algeria. It started to fight in 1964 led by Arafat and in 1965 it fulfilled its first attack on Israel. From the beginning of the process of struggle the main goal of Al-Fath had been the foundation of free Palestine State and the collapse of Israel.

Al-Fath drove back Israel on 21 March 1968 with Karameh resistance and became popular in the Arab world. Also it increased its actions and effect under the umbrella of PLO. With this victory, Yaser Arafat and Al-Fath became the source of hope for the Palestinian people and gained their respect. Al-Fath fought with communists as an important actor during the civil war in Lebanon and at the Nasserist side it fought with the falangists and nationals. In 1982 when Israel invaded Lebanon, Al-Fath carried its quarter to Tunisia. In 1988, Ebu Jihad one of the founders of Al-Fath was killed by Israeli commandos.

After the Oslo Treaty in 1993 Al-Fath preferred to have more negotiations with Israel. After the death of Yaser Arafat in 2004, Mahmud Abbas became the leader of Al-Fath. In the general elections in February 2006 ended up with unexpected results for Al-Fath. HAMAS got higher voting rate which led to

conflicts about the leading subject of the resistance. While Al-Fath and HAMAS were having conflicts about the potency, there were separations at the authorities in Gaza and West Sheria.

Palestine Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS)

Hamas which occurred out of the chaos environment after the 1948 and 1967 routs was founded by Sheikh Ahmed Yaseen in Gaza and became a military movement later on. On 14 December 1987, Hamas gained popularity during Intifada which was against Zionist intruders by Palestinians and it is accepted as the Palestine settlement of Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. Sheikh Ahmed Yaseen gathered the Islamic group under one roof and planned to start a new resistance movement by arming the people during the first Intifada.

Hamas criticized PLO for not being able to represent the Palestinians and Muslims enough and staying passive. Also it pointed out the necessity of armed struggles and adopted the idea of Motto. Therefore they got into conflict with the more peaceful parts of Muslim Brotherhood.

Israel Security forces had fierce interferences to Hamas during this process. In 1989, Sheikh Ahmad Yaseen and other important people of the organisation were arrested and exposed to oppression, prosecution and exile. In return in 1991, the armed part of the organisation Izzaddin Kassam Brigades began to attack to the Israeli points. Salah Shehada, Imad Akl and Mahmud Al-Mebhuh were the leaders of the brigades in Gaza and Yahya Ayyash was the leader in Western Sheria.

HAMAS increased its effect on the Palestinian Politics by being the first in the general elections of 2006. Hamas which separated from Al-Fath in domestic and external politics and the resistance against Israel faced with an international reaction along with the conflicts that it had with the rival parties. Since 2006, it has been exposed to a great economic and political embargo.

Islamic Jihad

Palestine Islamic Jihad Movement was founded by a group of Palestinian university students studying in Egypt towards the end of 1970's. The founder of the movement was Dr. Fethi Shiqaqi and he was also the first secretary. After Shiqaqi was killed by Mossad the secret agency of Israel at Malta, he was replaced by Dr. Ramadan Abdullah Shallah locating in Syria. The founders of Islamic Jihad Movement are also affected by 1979 Iranian Revolution and Muslim Brotherhood like HAMAS.

The organisation thought that the only way for the salvation of Palestine was armed resistance therefore they are known by their attack to French Embassy in May 1982. Islamic Jihad is accepted as the third biggest resistance force in Palestine after PLO and HAMAS but it is different from them for its ideologies and the actions. The organisation's ideology is affected from many Muslim scholars such as Jamaluddin Afghani and Sayyid Qutb. The organisation is mostly known by its actions and they use suicide bombers and explosives.

In 2000, there was an increase in its action during Aqsa Intifada and it was the second in terms of the number of the actions. These actions showed how important the Palestine issue for the organisation but it also increased the conflicts among the other resistance organisations. After 2007, when the conflicts between HAMAS and Al-Fath were at peak, Islamic Jihad undertook the mediator role. The movement of Islamic Jihad were taken into the list of the terrorist groups by USA and its allies. This attitude of USA coincided with Al-Aqsa Intifada.

Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine

The second biggest organisation under the PLO Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine was established in 1967 by

a Palestinian politician called George Habesh. Mostafa Ali Zibri, Vedi Hadad, Ahmad Al-Yamani, Hussain Hammud and Mohammed Al-Qadi played roles in the foundation of the organisation. The General Secretary of the organization which attended PLO in 1967 was George Habesh until 2000. Abu Ali Mostafa who became the head of the organisation in 2000 was killed by Israeli soldiers during the Aqsa Intifada and Ahmad Saadat overtook the leadership. PFLP killed the Israel Tourism Minister Rehavam Ze'evi by realitating the death of Abu Mostafa. Upon this, Israel kidnapped Ahmad Saadet from the prison and sentenced him with 30 years of imprisonment.

PFLP which is known by its hijacking had division in February 1969 and lost its previous power. After the defeat in Jordan, it attended to PLO. PFLP is the Marxist side of PLO. Also the leadership of the Denial Front belongs to PFLP in PLO.

PFLP increased its attacks to Israel starting from 1972. It was taken out from PLO Council due to its hostile attitude towards the positive relations between Israel and PLO. In 1981, it attended PLO again due to the struggles to unite Palestine. The present ideal conflicts between Al-Fath and PFLP reached its peak with the invasion of Lebanon in 1982. It became the centre of the opposition coalition to Arafat with its opposite ideas during the negotiations with Jordan and there was big support for them in Damascus. In 1999, a new reconciliation was achieved between PFLP and AL-Fath in Cairo. PFLP maintained its military and economy by the supplies made by Syria and Lebanon. The organisation made striking actions during the Aqsa Intifada. They had 3 deputies in the parliament of 132 chairs in the elections in 2006 made after the death of Arafat. Unlike Islamic Jihad it kept neutrality during the conflicts between HAMAS and Al-Fath especially in 2007.

Moreover, it is the third biggest **Palestine Democratic Salvation Front** in PLO. PDSF is an armed organisation of which ideology is Marxism-Leninism. It was founded after the conflicts between Marxists and national in Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine by Nayef Hawatmeh in 1969. The organisation was founded with the name of Popular Democratic Liberation Front of Palestine but it changed in time and became Palestine Democratic Salvation Front in 1975.

The organisation condemn China and Soviet Union which did not approve the right of Palestine to found an independent state until 1974 and it had tensions with Iraqi party BAAS. PLO approved a manifesto under the name of "gradual National Program in 1974. However, PDSF declined this manifesto by leading to found "The Denial Front" against it. The process continued with the actions made by Palestine National Resistance Brigades which is known as the armed wing of PDSF to Israel.

As the other organisations of PLO, PDSF radicalised in time. PDSF who was supporting not to compensate about the status of Jerusalem, the return of the refugees and foundation of the Independent Palestine State persuaded Arafat about the issues and they reached a comprise in Cairo. It couldnot show its military power during Aqsa Intifada which started in 2000 and in the presidential election they could only get 3% of the votes. In the elections in 2006, it could only have 2 chairs in the parliament.

The Ideology Of Plo

The wish to gather all the Arabs under on umbrella of PLO which was under the effect of the president of Egypt Nasir during its first years shows that it had adopted a Pan-Arabist Ideology.

When Israel invaded the rest of the Palestine territories during the Arab-Israel war in 1967, the resistance organizations

of Palestine could develop an identity as the Arab nationalism lost its importance. With the defeat, Soviet Union which was supporting the Arab countries also lost its power at the territory. However, USA became stronger due to its support for Israel. These developments caused the Arab nationalism to lose its importance and the nationalist trends such as Palestine nationalism and Pan-Islamism to increase their influence on the region.

The Palestine people who were directed by PLO were in a very fast social change. The ideas of modernisation and keeping up with the innovations were instilled to the Palestinian youth and democracy, equality of women and men and supporting the national struggle were adopted by Palestine people.

Although it included many other organisations with different ideologies because Al-Fath was the biggest one in it, it was inevitable that the ideology of Al-Fath would affect the main ideology of PLO. Along with this, because it included fractions with different ideologies and the ideological conflicts in it, PLO was seen as a modern and democratic organisation. These fractions were in a way the colors of Palestinian mosaic.

The strategy of the Actions of PLO

The Palestine Liberation Organisation is an umbrella structure which coordinates the resistance groups in Palestine, trade unions, the professional STKs and all the formal or informal organisations in Palestine. During the rest of the 50 years PLO founded a embassy network all around the world and declared that it was the only representative of this network. The head of PLO Yaser Arafat went back to Western Sheria and Gaza from his exile in Tunisia by signing the Oslo Treaty in 1993. Afterwards, the unity of PLO was not achieved again. Some groups separated from PLO, some fought with it and some went back to it.

Because PLO was founded by Ahmad Shaqiri during the Arab peak in Cairo, for a very long time it was thought to be under the control of Egypt. However, after the defeat in 1967 Arab-Israel war, the dynamics of PLO changed totally. When Shaqiri rejected the commando attacks to Israel by groups like Al-Fath, he was forced to resign and he departed from his job. Instead of Shaqiri Yahya Hamuda ruled until 1968 and after the short-term leadership of Hammuda, Yaser Arafat was chosen to become the leader during the 5. Meeting of Palestine National Congress. With the lidership of Arafat PLO made Jordan their base and made attacks to Israel by passing through Gaza.

During the 1960's and 1970's many organisation tried to attract public attention on the Palestine issue by doing actions independently from PLO. Especially, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine led by George Habash began to hijack frequently and this led King Hussain of Jordan to feel restless. It is because king Hussain thought that the hijacking events were weakening his authority and Jordan was recognized as a terror-supporting country in Western countries. While King Hussain had these thoughts Palestine Popular Salvation Front hijacked 4 planes in the same day and had to land at Amman. King Hussain who is annoyed from this situation, ordered the army to conduct an operation to Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. After the ten days of clash, the camps in Jordan were evacuated and after this event PLO chose Lebanon as its base and settled there.

PLO which continued its attack to Israel from this base chose armed action as the main strategy. However, as PLO settled at Lebanon, it began to evolve from an armed organisation to a social organisation. PLO founded Red Crescent Organisation to function in the health section and many social organisation and charity foundations. Apart from this, they

acquired both economic and political support from the Arab countries during the Arab League Peak in October 1974 in the Rabat of Morocco. Moreover the most important thing is that 20 Arab leader accepted PLO as the only owner and representative of Palestine. One month after this peak, the leader of PLO Yasser Arafat was taken to legal platform by his speech in the General Secretariat of UN in New York. Arafat, emphasized his peaceful intention by these words which he repeated three times:

Today, I came here with an olive branch and the gun in the hands of the freedom fighter. Do not let the olive branch fall of my hands. Do not let the olive branch fall of my hands. Do not let the olive branch fall of my hands.

After this historical speech of Arafat, during the voting at UN, PLO was approved to become an observer with 105 aye vote against 4 nay vote. With the political actions of Arafat, PLO became a legal organization. Another fruit of this determination was its acceptance as the 21. member of the Arab League. After this process, the main strategy of PLO became the use of politics rather than military but the approach of PLO was not approved by some other groups and they continued on attacking Israel.

As a result, PLO was founded as an armed organisation and tried to make the Palestine issue known by the armed actions. Especially, PLO chose the political way after it was taken out from Jordan. After the speech of Arafat in UN, PLO was legally accepted. PLO which made use of this acceptance well began to explain itself both in the Middle East and West. When compared with IRA in Ireland and ETA in Spain, it can be understood that they were following the same path. First armed actions and then actions were conducted on the legal basis.

Plo-Hamas-Israel Relations In Terms Of Middle East

When it is considered Al-Fath is the biggest and the most effective organisation in PLO, it is possible to evaluate the relations between Al-Fath and HAMAS in the frame of Al-Fath and HAMAS. From the day when HAMAS was founded onwards, it did not get under the umbrella of PLO despite all the efforts of PLO. As a reason for this, they always gave the reasons that Al-Fath was the main actor in PLO, away from representing Palestinians and Muslims and passive against Israel. Also the different ideologies of Al-Fath and HAMAS is effective in this conflict. While Fath is a nationalist movement, Hamas is the result of the combination of Islamism and nationalism.

HAMAS and Fath have different approaches about how the Palestine issue would be resolved, the features of the independent state to be found. Al-Fath movement which was founded towards the end of 1950's and effective for the fight of Palestine had a more positive approach after 1990 and tried to establish a state to be accepted internationally. HAMAS which was founded during the first Intifada had an aggressive approach for the fight against Israel.

There were important developments in the struggles between Al-Fath and HAMAS from the end of 1980's. While Al-Fath accepted the Oslo Manifesto in 1993, HAMAS declined. During the second Intifada, HAMAS was very effective against Israel. Al-Fath became weaker due to the wearing politics of Israel and lost power against HAMAS in domestic politics. However, presidency status belongs to the Al-Fath members. And this caused duality in the government. HAMAS legalized this duality by invading Gaza in 2007. The developments after 2007 deepened the division. After HAMAS captured Gaza the ideological division between the groups were replaced by serious separations. These separations got even down to the family level.

On the other hand, Israel caused the radicalism to spread on the Palestine territories. Even it was not successful in the long run, Israel supported Islamism, Hamas and many other organisations to weaken the nationalist movement. At first, Israel did not take Islamism into consideration, but later on it began to see it as a balancing power against nationalism. According to Israel, to separate PLO it was important to support Islamic groups during their foundation and development process. Israel thought that as the Islamic groups increased, the number of the Marxists, other seculars and the effect of the Christian Arabs on the Palestinian resistance.

The balancing politics of Israel between Islamists and Marxists showed itself by the attacks on Gaza in 2009. With Gaza operation Israel planned to weaken Hamas and strengthened PLO. Because if HAMAS weakens militarily, this would lead PLO to go back to Gaza border and is Hamas which against Abbas who was supporting the dual government is denying Israel get stronger, the Israel-Palestine issue would get tangled.

During the Gaza operation the international community could not reach a common and logical decision about the oppressed civilians. Due to this, the good intentions of West began to be questioned. UN lost part of its legitimacy. The decision of UN of ceasing the fight was not obeyed and moreover, when the General Secretary of UN was in Israel, the UN building in Gaza was attacked. No sanction was implied on Israel which weakened the influence of UN.

Developments After The Arab Spring

The success that HAMAS achieved in the elections in 2006 also shows its superiority over Al-Fath recently. This situation existed before the elections and continued even after them. In fact, the relations between HAMAS and Al-Fath nearly stopped in 2009. HAMAS the rising party of the recent years reached such a point that overshadowed Al-Fath. When it was that strong, it began to stay close with Hezbollah, Iran and Syria. However when the Arab Spring spread to Syria, HAMAS began to stay away from Iran and tried even to halt the relations. In this case again it tried to have close relations with Muslim Brothers. However, the position of Muslim Brothers in Egypt caused HAMAS to take new actions.

While all these were taking place, the riots during the Arab Spring made all the Arab government think and HAMAS n Al-Fath began to have the same fears with them. The first action of Al-Fath came out in this occasion for HAMAS was ready to make a treaty due to the fear of uprisings. When the Palestinians in Gaza and West Sheria gathered for the political reforms to be made, these two organisations became ready to make agreement.

These fears began to have their results in May 2011. From 3 May onwards the groups under the title of Palestine Salvation Organisation and HAMAS made a new agreement after the negotiations in Cairo. According to the agreement, a National Reconciliation Government would be founded and one year later the elections would be done comprehensively. Again according to the agreement the ministers would be appointed according to the consensus and this government would lead the elections of presidency and Palestine National Council. Apart from this, they reached an agreement in some issues like security.

Palestine president Mahmud Abbas and the HAMAS leader Halid Mashal got together to start the new agreement on 24 November 2011. They agreed on having a result out of the agreement and cooperate. As the compensation both sides decided to release the political prisoners.

By the way, the positive relations of the dual government made Israel uneasy. First, it tried to declared its annoyance about

the negotiations between the two sides and began to take different actions afterwards. Israel had based its politics on the dual government and supportin Al-Fath against HAMAS. Moreover, while emphasizing their annoyance about the agreement, he indicated that they accepted HAMAS as a terrorist group but they were not thinking the same things for Al-Fath. On the other hand, while the relations between the two group were getting positive, it began to negotiate with HAMAS. In October 2011, when HAMAS released an Israeli soldier, Israel released 1027 Palestinian in return. This was seen as a political success of HAMAS and Mahmud Abbas was just watching the events.

The main emphize of the Israeli attacks on Gaza concentrated on the fact that the region was ruled by a de facto terrorist organisation. All the attacks and ceasefires made by Israel were pointing out HAMAS while taking Al-Fath backwards. However, the previous exchange of captives may seem like political success for HAMAS but can be a political warning made for Al-Fath by Israel.

However, Mahmud Abbas who was in a state of solution seeking against the attacks of Israel suggested mediation to Turkey. Along with this the broadcasts supporting HAMAS were made by the Al-Fath members in Western Sheria. Moreover, as in the media, Mahmud Abbas called Recep Tayyip Erdogan to give his thanks for the support. Along with this he denied the claim tha the Arab countries were supporting Israel against the attacks and claimed that they were united.

All these events show that Al-Fath became closer to HAMAS after the Arab Spring. It can be said that the positon could not be spoiled by Israel in spite all it efforts. It is important to emphasize that the Arab Spring led both HAMAS and Al-Fath to have new positions. Their main fear is the possibility of an uprising of their own community against themselves as it happened in other Arab countries.

However, Al-Fath has also the fear that HAMAS is going to affect PLO. Moreover, HAMAS has more democratical approaches than radical as they were in the past. But because this as and reactionary situation rather than proactive, they can change over time and it can lose its position.

The elections which were to be done in May 2012 have postponed all the time as it can be understood from above and the negotiations in Cairo. Both groups accused each other of the delay. “ Al-Fath put forward the idea that the three responsible of the movement wanted to visit the Gaza border while HAMAS claimed that Al- Fath was more willing to reconcile with Israel rather than HAMAS. However, in April 2014, they agreed on that the elections would be held. This situation was not approved by USA and Israel. As a result on 2 June 2014 an accord government was founded. Turkey explained that it was supporting such a unity and was very happy about t. It wished Palestine to have an independent and peaceful country.

Conclusion

It would not be wrong to say that one of the biggest problems of the Islamic world on a wider basis and especially Arab world in a narrower basis is the division within itself. This situation occurred in the Al-Fath as well. The nationalism which entered Islamic world in 19th century and made itself popular affected the Arabs as well. Apart from this, as an opposition for this, Islamism gained importance in the Islamic World. It is possible to see its effects on Arab world and Palestine when the close their close relations with Egypt as the cradle of the Islamic world. After the foundation of Israel, Palestine which stands in the middle of a very important region with many different culture and people tried to find an exit way by keeping all it

differences within itself. At this point it, the affects of the different cultures and ideas of other cultures can be seen on the Palestinians. Also it can be said that Al-Fath showed an identity which showed oncologic nature of the region. Al-Fath was divided many times within itself and also there were many rivals to it. On one hand it was trying to keep its secular identity and on the other hand it was having political struggles against other Islamic groups. In such a situation, they both could not be active within themselves and were used as a balancing power by the effective countries in the region.

As a result, it can be said that, their own separation, the existence of the rival groups and the oppurtunity to have power balance politics for others decreased the effectiveness of Al-Fath considerably. Moreover, it can be said that they used up their own energy rather than using it for the case of Palestine. After this point, they fell behind the effects that they aimed to have. However, the developments after the Arab Spring led Al-Fath to have new positions. Especially who were afraid of their people’s attitudes gathered to find a solution. To achieve this, they got into contact with both Turkey and Egypt. Especially during the Israeli attacks on Gaza and exchange of captives, it had an opposite position showing that it would not side with Israel as it did in past. On the other hand, it stayed passive against the strengthening process of HAMAS and they were in a dilemma about the elections. However, the developments, kept them together. Nevertheless, it needs to be underlined that the HAMAS overshadows the politics of Al-Fath.

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