

## Über die Zwei-Staaten-Lösung hinausgehen, einen föderierten Staat schaffen

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*In dem Meinungsbeitrag vertritt der Autor, der vor kurzem die Nachfolge von Gershon Baskin als israelischer Geschäftsführer des „Israel Palestine Center for Research and Information“ in Jerusalem angetreten hat, die Auffassung, dass sich durch die israelische Politik die Zwei-Staaten-Lösung erledigt hat. Die Versprechungen der Osloer Vereinbarungen von 1993 und 1995 seien unerfüllt geblieben, und die Strategie und die Handlungen der israelischen Regierung sprächen lauter als die Reden Benjamin Netanjahus. Daraus folge, dass laut, aktiv und hartnäckig gegen den Status quo angegangen werden müsse. „Als Menschen können wir keine Situation akzeptieren, bei der zwei Millionen Palästinensern ständig menschliche und politische Rechte durch ein Militärregime verweigert werden können.“ Deshalb müsse über eine föderative oder konföderative Lösung für das Land Israel/Palästina nachgedacht mit zwei politischen Einheiten („zwei Staaten“) innerhalb eines einzigen geographischen Raums nachgedacht werden. Dazu gehöre von israelischer Seite als erster Schritt der Verzicht auf die Exklusivität über das Land. Juden könnten nicht den Zugang zum Patriarchengrab in Hebron und zu anderen Orten in Judäa und Samaria aufgeben, Palästinenser könnten nicht den Zugang zu den heiligen Stätten in Nazareth und in Jerusalem aufgeben, abgesehen vom Meer. Im Rahmen eines föderativen oder konföderativen Arrangements wäre allen Bürgern der Zugang zum gesamten geographischen Raum gewährleistet.*

For years now, the Israeli government has been involved in duplicity: it says it is preparing to turn over Area C to the Palestinians, as mandated by the 1993 Oslo Accords. On the other hand, Israelis making plans to expand settlements in that same area. Though a growing number of Israelis have clung to the Oslo Accords because of its promise of a sustainable Jewish demographic majority, it has

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become clear that Israeli government have not shared the same concern.

Though difficult, depressing and for some even tragic, the Oslo promise has been a failure. It is time to start seriously considering alternative strategies for reaching a just solution to the Jewish-Arab/Israeli-Palestinian conflict. There is an urgent need for deep introspection, because in clinging to the separation paradigm of Oslo we are also maintaining the false perception of a peace process. But since that process has been failing continuously for 21 years, at this point, it mainly ensures that the occupation will not end.

The Israeli government's strategy and actions on the ground speak louder than any of Prime Minister Netanyahu's speeches. The international community needs to come to terms with a reality of a permanent occupation regime which the Israeli government is willing to maintain indefinitely. With one path towards a peaceful resolution to this situation now all but closed, we must make room for a new one.

Those of us who believe in and care about the possibility of a just resolution of the conflict must do several things: First, we must express vocal, active and unrelenting objection to the *status quo*. As human beings we cannot accept a situation whereby more than two million Palestinians are permanently denied human and political rights through a military regime. Every one of our actions, activities, energies and funds must be examined through the filter of whether or not it contributes to the end of the *status quo*. If it does not, then such actions are acquiescing to the Israeli occupation, should be labeled as normalization and condemned as such.

Second, we need to start a deep examination of the federal or confederate solution for Eretz Israel/Falastin (I use this spelling, as a Palestinian term, in Arabic – as equivalent to "Eretz Israel" in Hebrew). By this I mean a solution that includes **two political**

**entities (two states)**, a Jewish one and a Palestinian one, **within a single geographical space**.

For true supporters and lovers of Israel, who support the right of Jews to live safely in Eretz Israel/Falastin, but who are concerned about being labeled anti-Semites, I suggest the following twofold message: the first part calls for an immediate end to the *status quo*/occupation; the second part involves the inalienable commitment to a safe, secure, vibrant and eternal existence of Jews in the region. The “only” thing that Israel is going to have to forgo is its exclusivity over the land. Once it does this it will have the strong commitment and backing of the international community to its safety. And Israel will not have to rely only on the international community for its safety. It is not farfetched to assume that if the Palestinians are made **a just and fair** offer of a federal or confederate arrangement with Israel, they would agree to Israel maintaining responsibility for external security, say for the coming century. I have even heard Palestinians saying that they would welcome the Israeli army defending their external borders as well.

With the end to the solution based on two **separate** states, all immediate efforts, energies and funding must be directed towards determining the best way to have two states in one geographical space. Either a federal or a confederate arrangement needs to be devised. This is no easy matter. The Israel Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita is 10 times higher than the Palestinian GDP. The two entities will have to put aside 100 years of hostilities, address the problems of resources and their division and agree on the question of Palestinian and Jewish immigration, as well as Jerusalem and other issues. However, there is also a deep mutual acquaintance of the two people and an extremely important bridging role for the Palestinian Arab Israelis.

The bottom line is that both people are too attached to the parts of the land they would have to concede in the solution based on two

**separate** states. Jews cannot give up access to the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron and other places in Judea and Samaria; Palestinians cannot give up access to the holy places in Nazareth and Jerusalem, let alone the sea. Failing to account for this is, in my opinion, the one of the main flaws of the Oslo Accords. The problem can be remedied by a federal or confederate arrangement, which would allow access of each citizen to the entire geographical space. Though anything but simple, a federal or confederate solution can transcend major problems.

In the business world, failed strategies are replaced. Two decades of a failed peace process are more than enough reason for Israelis and Palestinians to replace the solution of two separate states. The new strategy is one that enables us to share Eretz Israel/Palestine for the benefit of us all. There is so much to gain.

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