

Has the U.S. Strategy Shifted? From the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict to Deepening Arab-Arab Tensions

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This is an AI-generated English translation. The original text is in Arabic.

Since the outbreak of the recent war on Gaza, and following the last ceasefire that emerged from Trump's proposal, statements from military and political leaders in Israel have repeatedly claimed that Hamas has been defeated. The spokesperson for the Israeli army, Brigadier General Ivi Dvirin, confirmed that the movement has lost its combat capability, while the Hebrew media, particularly field reports from military correspondents, painted a different picture. These reports have stated since the beginning of the withdrawal that the city of Gaza has not been defeated, and that central Gaza has not fallen; rather, every withdrawal of the Israeli army from a position has been followed by a swift return of the movement's elements. Some expressed their dissatisfaction with images showing soldiers withdrawing, asserting that what is happening is more of a repositioning than a victory.

This contradiction between military rhetoric and the ground reality has revealed, and continues to reveal, Israel's predicament, as it has been unable to eliminate the movement despite its massive firepower. Due to this predicament, American mediation intervened to provide each side with something it could market internally and externally.

American Mediation and the Fabrication of a False Victory

What occurred in Sharm El-Sheikh was not merely negotiations over a prisoner exchange or a ceasefire, but an American attempt to reshape the political scene in Gaza and rearrange the cards, giving Netanyahu a chance to prepare for internal elections. Some Israeli analysts described what Washington did as brilliant, as it produced a formula that allows everyone to claim they have achieved gains, even if no complete victory was realized for any side.

Israel obtained the continuation of its control over about half of the Gaza Strip through this plan, in addition to a security strip that distances Hamas fighters from the border, which allows Netanyahu's government to claim it was not forced into a complete withdrawal. Meanwhile, the movement secured a ceasefire and international guarantees that make the resumption of war difficult, along with the return of aid for reconstruction and unprecedented political recognition of its ability to endure and maneuver. Thus, each side can return to its audience claiming it has achieved gains.

However, this scene conceals a broader American goal: to redirect the conflict from being an Israeli-Palestinian confrontation to an internal Arab-Arab or Palestinian-Palestinian confrontation.

The Arabs at the Heart of the American Plan

According to Channel 12, the preparations by Egypt to hold an expanded conference for Palestinian factions to discuss the future of the Gaza Strip show that the Arabs are not merely mediators in this agreement, but direct partners in shaping the "next day" for Gaza. Israeli reports conveyed statements from Egyptian Foreign Minister Abdel Aati indicating that the movement must lay down its arms. These reports also mentioned the readiness of some Arab countries to participate in an alternative governing force, with the Palestinian

Authority as its political facade, while the Arabs, Turkey, and some other countries bear the executive burden.

This formula means that Israel may take a step back, but it will not leave the stage empty; rather, it will hand it over to Arab regimes to manage Gaza, confront the movement, and bear the responsibility for security and reconstruction. In this way, Tel Aviv frees itself from direct exhaustion, while the Arabs find themselves at the heart of a complex battle.

From Palestinian-Israeli to Arab-Arab

The essence of the transformation that Washington seeks through Trump's initiative is to turn that confrontation with Israel into an internal confrontation where Arab states, along with Turkey, play the required role in ending the movement's presence. The confrontation that Israel has failed to resolve militarily is being recycled to become an Arab-Arab confrontation. If Hamas refuses to relinquish its arms or submit to a new authority imposed from outside, it will find itself in direct confrontation with Arab forces. At that point, the conflict will not be viewed as a national liberation struggle against occupation, but will be presented as an internal power struggle, or a conflict between "Palestinian legitimacy" supported by Arabs and an "armed movement" rejecting settlement, similar to the conflicts occurring in Arab countries since the Arab Spring against Islamists.

In this way, the American vision is realized that Israel should rest while Hamas is politically and security-wise besieged, with the Arabs taking on the task of confrontation on behalf of the occupation. It is a formula that superficially carries the features of stability, but in reality, it is a reproduction of the usual Arab role with new tools.

A Transformation in New Garb

From day one, and since Egypt announced normalization with Israel after the October War, Arab participation in the Palestinian file has ceased to be merely mediation or diplomatic support for Palestine; rather, all decisions made since that date, and perhaps even before, have led to reducing the State of Palestine to the smallest possible area while weakening it and the resistance movements within it, according to analysts. The current ongoing movements indicate that

some Arab and Islamic regimes - in brackets - are preparing to engage in managing and regulating Gaza, a role that Israel has failed to resolve militarily.

These steps will be marketed under titles such as "stability" and "reconstruction," but their essence may lead to further weakening of the Palestinian resistance project and a reconfiguration of the scene that ensures Israel's security.

The Hebrew Media Reveals the Backgrounds

What is being said is not just an Arab conclusion; it is confirmed by the Israeli press, where analysts in Haaretz and Yedioth Ahronoth indicated that the American plan aims to form an alternative force to manage Gaza with Arab participation, as part of a redistribution of roles in the conflict in a way that serves Israel and relieves it from direct exhaustion.

The Unknown Future

Thus, the battle may shift from a confrontation with the occupation to an internal Arab-Palestinian dispute. Israel extricates itself from the heart of the confrontation and redraws its external media image, which has deteriorated since the war began, while Hamas is politically and security-wise besieged, and the Arabs are drawn into a new conflict that serves the Israeli media narrative in stating that resistance is a form of terrorism and that it fights even against the regional governments that have brought it initiatives and ceasefires it never dreamed of.Â

The initiative may be presented as a step towards stability in the region, but in practice, it opens the door to a different crisis that redefines the nature of the conflict in the region.