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Facts & Logic About the Middle East

January 17, 2023



If the U.S. wants a two-state solution, it must help the Palestinians help themselves

Dear Friend of Israel, Friend of FLAME:

You've no doubt noticed: The Biden Administration is obsessed with the so-called two-state solution to the Israel-Palestinian conflict. Yet Team Biden virtually never goes beyond lip service—never addresses the huge obstacles to two states, nor does it take concrete actions that would facilitate Palestinian independence.

Contrary to the Biden Administration's complaints, Israeli "settlements" and visits to the Temple Mount pose no major barriers to peace with the Palestinians-Arabs.

In fact, Palestinians have adamantly opposed the Jewish state for many years before Jews began to resettle in Judea and Samaria (the West Bank). And Israeli visits to its holiest site in Jerusalem surely pose no barrier to a Palestinian state in the West Bank.

Rather, the two greatest obstacles to an Israeli-Palestinian peace are, first, the Palestinian people, who oppose a two-state solution and prefer an ongoing struggle to "free Palestine from the river to the sea." A poll conducted by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PSR) in December 2021 showed only 39% of Palestinians support a two-state solution, while 59% oppose it.

Indeed, the Palestinians have conducted a murderous terrorist war against Israel for more than 50 years and have rejected every serious proposal for peace and a Palestinian state offered by Israel and its ally, the United States.

Thus, the second great stumbling block is the Israeli people, a majority of whom—58%—also oppose a Palestinian state at this time. Their reason: The Palestinians steadfastly refuse to accept the Jewish state of Israel and show no willingness to make peace. According to a poll by the Israel Democracy Institute

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YOU DESERVE TO KNOW THE TRUTH...

Democracy Thrives in Israel

A new report ranks the Jewish state as one of the world's strongest, most equitable democracies—despite baseless falsehoods about its oppression of Palestinians

While countless accuse Israel of oppression, genocide, and rights violations, they offer little convincing evidence. In the contrary, Israel has a superior record of civil liberties, elections, rule of law and equal opportunity at all levels of society making it the world's 24th most successful democracy.

What are the facts?

Israel's 2021 ranking shows consistent improvement in its democratic processes compared with the first such report in 2004, when the Jewish state ranked only 47. In the current report, Israel was ranked for its inclusion of an Arab party in today's ruling government coalition.

No surprise, since Israel's robust democracy has a vibrant electoral tradition, stable governing institutions, high political participation among its citizens, a vigorous, even business political culture, and broad, equal civil liberties for all its citizens.

Unfortunately, even as Israel's democracy improved in the past year, the UN used the opportunity globally to accuse Israel of oppression, genocide, and rights violations. This was the UN's 10th year, counting an unprecedented withdrawal of civil liberties, including a high percentage of state power over large areas of public and personal life.

In contrast to Israel's robust Middle Eastern ranking, the highest ranking of which was Tunisia, reaching only 75th place—and then not as a democracy, but as a "hybrid regime," the territory of Palestine was ranked as an "authoritarian" regime in 198th place.

Like all countries in the index, Israel's performance in the EIU evaluation was based on the health and performance of democratic institutions among its citizens.

While critics often unfairly blame Israel for a lack of democratic freedoms in Judea and Samaria ("The West Bank") and Gaza, they ignore the fact that the Oslo Accords gave governance responsibilities of Palestinians in those territories directly to their respective counterparts—the Palestinian Authority and Hamas.

Unfortunately, neither of these Palestinian governments holds regular elections, supports basic civil liberties, nor freedom of speech, assembly and religion.

Israel is a sovereign, secular, directly representative democracy in the manner and spirit of the United States. It is the only Jewish state in the world, and the only one to have been created by a Jewish people.

Wish you values help guarantee Israel's democracy?

State, too, that while the nation-state law declares Hebrew to be the national language, this is no different than in the United States, in which English is the mother tongue. Nor does Israel's nation-state law establish any official state religion in their very constitutions.

Indeed, Israel can be a great role model for the Jewish people while still cherishing and improving one of the most ethically diverse and least democratic on earth. In fact, some would argue that it is precisely Jewish values of compassion and justice that help Israel help and guarantee Israel's robust democracy.

No matter which accusations against Israel's enemies replace the Jewish state's objective reality as one of the strongest and most successful democracies on earth, providing political freedom and economic opportunities comparable to the majority of the world's nations. Moreover, the suffering and plight of the Palestinians has been a vital Israel and without which the result of authoritarian governance by its corrupt dictatorial regimes and their influence related to media press.

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in 2022, just 32% of Israelis support a two-state solution.

If President Biden and company truly want two states, they must create—and implement—a comprehensive strategy to address Palestinians’ resistance to the goal of Jewish Israel and Arab Palestine, living peacefully side-by-side.

Above all, the U.S. should diplomatically pressure and condition funding to the Palestinians on removing the two key obstacles to this goal: 1) Palestinian rejection of a Jewish state in the region, and 2) the Palestinians’ mission of destroying Israel as their means to freedom.

Palestinian leaders indoctrinate their people to hate Jews and Israel daily—from children’s TV and schoolhouse curricula to pulpit sermons and news programs.

These leaders also incite the Palestinian public to commit acts of terrorism against the Jewish state and its citizens by financially rewarding terrorist murderers.

Above all, the U.S. should stop coddling Palestinian leaders—both in Judea and Samaria and in Gaza. Both dictatorships need to realize it is they who are the agents of peace with Israel and of their own eventual independence. Instead of hectoring Israel with the “two-state” mantra, the U.S. needs to help the Palestinians recognize there will be no Palestinian state without significant cultural, economic and political changes.

Specifically, the U.S. should focus energies and resources on assisting the Palestinians to overcome five fundamental obstacles currently preventing peace with Israel and their own independence.

First, the U.S. must make its funding for Palestinians, currently about \$235 million per year—contingent on a) reforming its notorious educational materials to promote peace and co-existence to children—rather than terrorism and Jew hatred; and b) reforming government media so TV news broadcasts no longer deliver daily diatribes about “filthy Jews” and the Zionist enemy who “stole their land.”

The U.S. must also condition aid on Palestinian leadership ending its unconscionable “pay-for-slay” program—paying lifetime salaries to terrorists who kill innocent Jews. Currently the Palestinians spend some \$300 million annually on this program. Ironically, rather than supporting peace initiatives, U.S. taxpayer dollars currently fund most of the pay-for-slay program costs.

In short, the U.S should reward good behavior and penalize bad behavior. It should stipulate that our financial support depends on the Palestinians ending terrorism and promoting peace. Without such incentives, there is surely no hope for the two-state solution that Biden and other Americans swear they are committed to.

Second, the U.S. must step up its support for the Abraham Accords to promote Arab-Israeli cooperation and commerce. Simultaneously, it should invite the Palestinians to take part in the economic and cultural cooperation thriving around them, while making it clear that progress towards normalization and peace will

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continue with or without them.

Third, the U.S. must harshly condemn Hamas' efforts in the Gaza Strip to lure Israel into wars by periodically launching unprovoked attacks against the Jewish state. Likewise, the U.S. should emphatically lend its support to the international community when Israel fights back.

Fourth, the U.S. needs to help the Palestinians develop economic self-sufficiency. Currently corruption abounds in the Palestinian economy, and about one in four Palestinians has no job. Without Western aid, the economy would collapse. No two-state solution can happen without a self-sustaining Palestinian economy.

The U.S. and EU pour hundreds of millions of dollars into "support" for the Palestinians, but where does this money go? Where are the U.S.- and EU-sponsored training, incubator and economic development programs? The most lucrative opportunity in the self-ruled Palestinian territories should be meaningful employment, not terrorist pay-for-slay.

Fifth and finally, the U.S. should make a concerted effort to strengthen the Palestinian Authority (PA) and help it regain control of all autonomous Palestinian territories, including Gaza. Two states and Palestinian independence will remain a fantasy until the Palestinians achieve some level of political unity and stability—the structure and institutions of a state.

The challenge, of course, is that the Palestinians are fractured into two dictatorships—one ruled by the belligerent terrorist group Hamas, with the PA in charge of a competing government in Judea and Samaria (the West Bank). Unfortunately, the PA is slowly losing control of its territory to various semi-independent Palestinian militias. While there's no denying the messiness of the Palestinian political reality, there's also no denying that a two-state solution remains impossible with rogue armed groups roaming Palestinian streets.

In sum, if the U.S. is serious about two states, it must seek to pacify the Palestinians and help them achieve political and security institutions reliable enough to sustain true independence.

Please make the point when speaking with family, friends, colleagues—or in letters to the editor—that if the U.S. wants to make the two-state solution a cornerstone of its Middle East policy, it must firmly commit to creating conditions within Palestinian society that make independence possible. Until then, the U.S. should wholeheartedly support Israel's efforts to protect its people from terrorism fueled by Palestinian refusal to accept the Jewish state.

I hope you'll also take a minute, while you have this material front and center, to forward this message to friends, visit FLAME's lively Facebook page and review the P.S. immediately below. It describes FLAME's new *hasbarah* campaign—"Democracy Thrives in Israel"—which exposes false claims that Israel deprives Arab Israeli citizens and Palestinian Arabs of their rights.

Best regards,

James Sinkinson, Publisher

Facts and Logic About the Middle East (FLAME)

P.S. Despite Israel's guarantee of civil liberties and equal treatment for all its citizens—including two million Arab Israelis—Israel is still falsely accused of being an apartheid state. Despite Israel and the Palestinians agreeing that the Palestinian Authority will administer its own civil affairs, including elections, Israel is accused of violating human rights because Palestinians can't vote in Israeli elections. I think you'll agree that truth is the only antidote to this lie. FLAME's new hasbarah message—called "[Democracy Thrives in Israel](#)" publicizes a new, independent "Democracy Index" in which Israel is named the world's 23rd most successful democracy—ahead of the United States, Italy, Spain and 139 other nations. This new editorial message also clarifies that Palestinians' repression is due overwhelmingly to their two ruling dictatorships. (Palestinians are ranked #109 in the Democracy Index—as "authoritarian.") I hope you'll review this convincing, fact-based editorial, which FLAME published nationwide in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *New York Post*, *Miami Herald*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Houston Chronicle*, *Los Angeles Times* and *San Jose Mercury News*. This piece will also be sent to all members of Congress, Vice President Harris and President Biden. If you agree that this kind of public relations effort on Israel's behalf is critical, I urge you to support us. Remember: FLAME's powerful ability to influence public opinion—and U.S. support of Israel—comes from individuals like you, one by one. I hope you'll consider giving a [donation](#) now, as you're able—with \$500, \$250, \$100, or even \$18. (Remember, your donation in 2022 to FLAME is tax deductible.) To donate online, just go to [donate now](#). Now, more than ever, we need your support to ensure that the American people, the U.S. Congress and President Biden stay committed to fighting antisemitic, anti-Israel actions by individuals, politicians and commercial companies.

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