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FLAME **HOTLINE**

July 16, 2024



After two West Bank Palestinians tried to ram their car into Israeli soldiers and were neutralized, local militants protested by burning tires. Palestinians commit more than 5,000 violent acts annually in the disputed territories as part of their long war to defeat Israel.

How phony declarations of a Palestinian state prevent Palestinian liberation

Dear Friend of Israel, Friend of FLAME:

Norway, Spain and Ireland have recently recognized the "state" of Palestine. France's new leftist government is threatening to do the same.

Tragically, such virtue signaling does <u>nothing</u> to help the Palestinian people. It does <u>nothing</u> to advance Palestinian independence. In fact, the biggest obstacle to a Palestinian state is the Palestinians themselves.

But rather than address the fundamental obstacles blocking Palestinian progress, members of the "international community" find it more gratifying to blame Israel. Ironically, Israel and the international community itself have made many serious offers of statehood to the Palestinians, all of which they have summarily rejected.

Instead of accepting peace with Israel and a state of their own, the Palestinians—both those under the Palestinian Authority in Judea and Samaria (aka, the West Bank) and those under Hamas in Gaza—have chosen to maintain a <u>constant war of aggression</u> against Israel, with the hope of ultimately defeating it.

Nowhere is this clearer than in Judea and Samaria, where the Palestinians annually commit some <u>5,000</u> <u>attacks</u> on innocent Jews. What's more, the Palestinians, supported by European Union member states, have also mounted massive illegal building projects in Israeli-controlled territories, blatantly violating the Oslo Accords. Both actions block the path to reconciliation and increased Palestinian independence.

Nonetheless, ironically, the media, the U.S. State Department and the UN harp constantly on Israel's

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communities in Judea and Samaria as primary obstacles to peace—though they are <u>perfectly legal</u> under international law. They also cite violence by Israeli "settlers," though such incidents are infrequent and cause little harm compared to Palestinian terrorism against Jews.

Such complaints about Israel serve only to distract from the far greater obstacles to Palestinian liberation, let alone a Palestinian state. Most importantly they encourage Palestinians to believe Israel is blocking their independence, when in fact it is their <u>obsession</u> with destroying the Jewish state.

If members of the international community want to help Palestinians achieve self-determination, they will focus on advancing practical issues of statehood, such as forming a stable, democratic government, maintaining rule of law, developing a self-sufficient economy and abandoning their strategy of terrorist attacks on Jews.

While 145 UN members currently recognize a Palestinian state, this doesn't make it so. Most critically, "Palestine" lacks a functioning government. The PA is ruled by a dictator, now in the 19th year of his four-year term, whom 80% of Palestinians want to resign. The PA lost control of Gaza to Hamas in 2007, and to this day has been steadily losing control of its territory in Judea and Samaria.

The Palestinians also lack a self-sustaining economy—they are now completely dependent on foreign aid. One in three Palestinians has no job, with at least the same number living in poverty. The most lucrative occupation in Palestinian-controlled territory is <u>pay-for-slay terrorism</u>—murdering Jews in return for generous monthly stipends from the PA.

Israel, the U.S. and the UN have made many offers of peace and statehood—in 1947, 1967, 2000 and 2008. The Palestinians <u>rejected</u> all of them. Why? Because, as they've made clear, they <u>don't want their own country</u> alongside Israel. They want a country in place of Israel. They want the end of the Jewish state, to which Israel obviously will not agree.

The "international community" falsely blames Israeli "settlements" and "settlers" for preventing peace. Last February, President Biden issued an executive order imposing sanctions on several individual Israelis and Israeli organizations, alleging "high levels of extremist settler violence." Last week, the G7 released a statement saying, "The government of Israel's settlement program is inconsistent with international law and counterproductive to the cause of peace." None of this is true. Israel's communities in Judea and Samaria are 100% legal, nor do their residents inhibit peace.

In international law, an occupation exists when one country illegally controls the territory of another. Judea and Samaria were never legally controlled by another country—certainly not by the Palestinians—thus there is <u>no occupation</u>. Remember, too: This territory is the ancestral homeland of the Jewish people. You cannot "occupy" your own indigenous homeland.

Furthermore, violence by Israeli residents in the territory has <u>decreased</u> by nearly 50%. Between October 7, 2022 and February 24, 2023, authorities recorded 489 incidents of nationalist crime committed by Jews in Judea and Samaria. But in the same period a year later, authorities registered only 256 such incidents.

In contrast, as David Weinberg notes in *Israel Hayom*, "harassment and vandalism by some angry settlers <u>pales in comparison</u> to more than 5,000 Palestinian bomb, car-ramming, knifing, and shooting attacks a year aimed at killing Israeli civilians in Judea and Samaria."

While slamming Israel for "occupying" Judea and Samaria, the international community ignores the Palestinians' illegal efforts to take over the territory. The Palestinians are illegally building in Area C of Judea and Samaria, which is fully-controlled by Israel per the Oslo Accords. There are now 90,000 illegally-built Palestinian homes in Area C.

This illegal construction is designed to change the map of Area C, putting Palestinians in areas that formerly had <u>no Arab presence</u>, physically dividing Israeli communities, and encroaching on access routes. While ostensibly an attempt to prevent partition of Judea and Samaria as part of a prospective two-state solution—in essence, the Palestinians are "colonizing" land they have never owned.

UN members that truly want to help the Palestinians achieve self-determination, should take the **following steps:** First, <u>do not reward</u> the Palestinians for atrocities against Israel by recognizing a Palestinian state that lacks the infrastructure or cultural will to exist.

Second, make funding to the Palestinians <u>conditional on reform</u>: Reform of their governmental institutions to weed out corruption and authoritarianism. Reform to their education system and media to eliminate antisemitism and support for terrorism. Reform to security services so they can gain back control of their own territory.

Third, support efforts to create a self-sustaining Palestinian economy, in which gainful employment and adding social value is rewarded, rather than terrorist pay-for-slay "resistance."

Please make the point when speaking with family, friends, colleagues—or in letters to the editor—that it is the Palestinians themselves, not Israel, who are impeding their self-determination. Their top goal should be <u>building viable state institutions</u>, not conquering the most successful state in the region.

If you agree we need to spread this truth, please use your email browser to forward this Hotline issue to

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fellow lovers of Israel—and encourage them to join us by subscribing to the Hotline at no charge.

Best regards,

James Sinkinson, President

Facts and Logic About the Middle East (FLAME)

P.S. The riots, vandalism and illegal trespassing on American college campuses have sharpened the knives of the Israel haters. It's become clear that the "pro-Palestinian" protesters are purely anti-Israel and support the genocide of Jews "between the river and the sea." Scandalously, we've also seen hard evidence that university administrators are willing to ignore or openly support the antisemitic hate speech and harassment of Jewish students—though they would never permit such behavior against other minorities. I hope you'll agree that we supporters of Jewish students and hate-free campuses need to speak out. FLAME's new hasbarah—explanatory message—"Stop Terrorism on Campus"—calls for four actions to eliminate campus outlaws and to restore rights to all students. Please review this convincing, fact-based editorial, which FLAME recently published in the Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, New York Post, Chicago Tribune, Tampa Bay Times, Denver Post and 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 with a donation.

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