



# **Strategic Report**

**Palestinian Arabs in the  
State of Israel**

**Future scenarios**



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## Future scenarios

### Palestinian Arabs in the State of Israel

September 2016

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This report was prepared as part of the strategic thinking project in collaboration with the Oxford Research Group and supported by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I'lam - Arab Center for Media Freedom Development and Research has been hosting and implementing the project since 2015 and provides all facilities and assistance necessary for its success.



I'LAM-Arab Center for Media  
Freedom, Development and  
Research (R.A)

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## Executive Summary

This report seeks to contribute to improving conditions for Palestinian Arabs in Israel by thinking strategically about their current situation and future aspirations, a prerequisite for acting towards the realization of their goals. The report proceeds by dismantling the complex system in which this community lives with the intention of predicting possible future scenarios and identifying the measures needed to ensure favorable outcomes and to ward off unwanted ones. The geopolitical context for this endeavor, which is characterized by radical changes at global, regional, national, local, and community levels, demands that the Palestinian Arabs in Israel take charge of determining their community's trajectory, lest a relapse into reactionary tendencies compromise the possibility of a flourishing future. This report emerges from such motivation.

The unequal balance of power between Palestinian Arabs in Israel and the Jewish population, a result of historical domination and political persecution, is the context from whence the "working team" predicts the following four possible future scenarios: Perpetuation of the status quo, resulting in an attempt on the part of Israel to further disconnect their Arab Palestinian citizens from the Palestinian people at large through either encouraging assimilation or escalating the conflict and cracking down on opposition to the state; A breakdown of border stability due to the degeneration of neighboring governments and the rise of militant Islam; The establishment of an independent Palestinian state; The formation of a binational state. These scenarios do not constitute independent historical paths but contain overlapping elements that connect and complement one another. They form the basis for setting short, intermediate, and long-term objectives that foster the desirable elements and result in favorable outcomes while warding off unfavorable developments.

The report concludes with a discussion of the preliminary requirements for effective strategic action and the importance of forming a “strategic forum.” In order to ensure coordination and cooperation amongst a Palestinian Arab community in Israel plagued by segmentation and internal conflict, it must be ensured that democratic mechanisms precondition community building. Only through a commitment to democratic principles and a culture of pluralism can a strategic movement incorporate all forces within the community. Thus the strategic forum is necessary to oversee the strategic planning and action stages in order to form a reasonable collective will that will underlie the movement and safeguard cohesiveness.

Though the specific strategies to be adopted, such as political participation or boycott, will be determined by the strategic forum as circumstances fluctuate, certain considerations are necessary. Because all favorable scenarios involve co-existence with the Jewish community, it follows that partnership will be a key strategy for achieving the desired outcomes. It will likewise be imperative to avoid recourse that diminishes from the moral superiority of the cause. Hence non-violent means must be assumed as well as disengagement from foreign efforts that use violence to combat Israel. These are recommended as vital to the successful advancement of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel. All other matters must be left to the strategic forum.



# Introduction





**The report is an opening to organized and methodological discussions and deliberations at several levels; leaders and elites, and in the social and academic fields. The intent is to discern what aspects of the situation of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel are agreed upon and disputed, and to determine the potential for collective action to achieve what is possible. Therefore, the report is an open experience for the community, and for the additions and attempts that have occurred or may occur.**

This report constitutes a serious approach to the analysis of the situation of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel within the context of the local and regional political, social and economic system. Furthermore, it is a thoughtful attempt to monitor what can develop from scenarios that reflect the Palestinians' aspirations for changing their reality, or other scenarios they are forced to confront or intercept in the context of ensuring and protecting their interests.

The strategic thinking team sees that the report they prepared is an opening to organized and methodological discussions and deliberations at several levels; leaders and elites, and in the social and academic fields. The intent is to discern what is agreed and disputed, and the potential for collective action to achieve what is possible. Therefore, the report is an open experience for the community, and for the additions and attempts that have occurred or may occur. This is based on the premise that doing so is possible in light of the existence of awareness of the need for strategic thinking and action, and the availability of necessary capacities, knowledge and methodologies.

The context of the team's experience is characterized by the following:

A. Lack of strategic thinking experiences among the Palestinian Arabs in Israel, which is a weak point in their lives and in their dealings with the challenges they face. We say this knowing of the accumulation of collective and regional experiences and assiduousness in the life of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel within frameworks and parties (such as the debates that preceded the

outlawed conference of the Arab masses in 1980), as well as individual (academic research) and institutional experiences with participation of Arab specialists (Givat Haviva or Florsheimer Institutes). There is also the experience of preparing future vision documents (four documents issued by Adalah, Mada al-Carmel Center, Mussawa Center and the National Committee for the Heads of the Arab Local Authorities in Israel. For these documents, see below). The team highly values these experiences, though they had limited temporal, political and hypothetical provisions. The majority of what has been achieved by attempts to look to the future were based on the premise of the two-state solution, or were centered on the country's relations with its Arab citizens in isolation of the conflict's resolution. The four documents revolved around the desired and hoped for visions only, without exploring scenarios or developments that are contrary to the interests of the Palestinian Arabs and their political projects. However, we have put these experiences in front of us to benefit from in our quest to develop a strategic report.

B. The team views the report as a systematic effort that is different from what preceded. It does not close the door to other efforts and initiatives that are happening or may happen. Rather, they see the report as an open text that unleashes initiatives and does not conclude them.

C. The strategic thinking process took place amid radical changes at five local, regional and international levels, namely:

**Level One:** The International Climate is depleted on several fronts, in addition to the Middle East. There are economic, technological and political globalization processes, and what they entail of hegemonic projects and the expansion of activity of nihilistic and takfiri movements in Africa and the Middle East and their repercussions in terrorist operations at the international level, and the high tensions in the Arab Gulf and

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neighboring regions. There is also economic recession, particularly in some EU countries, as well as the impact of the economic downturn in the West (the crises of 2008 and 2012) and recently in China. Added to this is the preoccupation of the great powers, led by the United States, with their interests and realignment in light of important variables at all levels. In addition, the United States appears to be less willing to firmly intervene in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and to compel Israel to abide by international law. This is expressed by U.S. policies in the region in recent years.

Despite this, the boycott of Israel has emerged as an option at many levels, especially amongst the populace. Some EU countries have marked incoming goods from Israeli settlements in the Occupied Territories. Conversely, civil society institutions in many European countries have proceeded to declare an economic, cultural or academic boycott of Israel. The Palestinian Boycott Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) Committee has been active in international forums to promote the boycott of Israel, bringing about tangible successes that have caused Israeli leaders to worry. This state of criticism of Israeli policies of repression has produced boycotts that are contenders for expansion as Israel's policies and aggressiveness increase.

**Level Two - The Arab and Islamic Region:** This area stretching from North Africa to the Persian Gulf has been witnessing revolts beginning in 2011 and continuing. Despite the initial expectations from them, some have turned into power struggles or bloody civil wars (such as in Yemen, Syria and Libya). Additionally they have led to the emergence of fundamentalist Islamism in some countries, or even nihilistic interpretations such as ISIS (Daesh) in others. In some, popular revolt developed into democratic changes that are still ongoing (such as in Tunisia). International and regional axes have used this situation to realize their interests and implement their obsessive projects through direct or indirect intervention in the countries undergoing transformation.

This has complicated matters, particularly in Syria and Yemen, and prolonged and escalated the fighting. What is meant here is that the Arab world is suffering from internal conflicts that, in some cases, threaten the state system. These conflicts broadcast a daily scene of internal fighting and consecutive breakdowns, which is a source of interest and concern for the Palestinian Arabs in Israel.

**Level Three - The Demise of the Palestinian Issue:** The obstruction of the prospect of settling the Palestinian issue, and its political project based on the two-state solution and strategy of negotiation, paved the way for a split between Hamas, which control the Gaza Strip, and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), led by Fatah, which oversees the West Bank without actual sovereignty. This situation is poised to deepen in light of the estrangement between Hamas and the PNA and the constant tension between them. So far, attempts at reconciliation, formation of a national unity government and calming internal tensions have failed. Israel has greatly invested in evading its responsibility and justifying the continuation of its aggression. Furthermore, the regional shifts in the neighboring Arab countries, and those in the international climate, have also contributed to the weakening of the Palestinian issue and reducing its status on the world's and the region's agendas. It has been replaced with Arab regional issues, especially the disintegration of some states and communities, international terrorism and the Saudi-Iranian conflict (declared and hidden).

**Level Four - Israel as a State and Society:** Here, we notice a clear inclination of Israeli policy to the right, transforming hate and racist speech into the dominant discourse at the center of the political and legislative process. There is also a growing rejection of the merits of even a marginal settlement with the Palestinian people. In addition, there is an onslaught of Jewish extremist forces on the philosophy of governance and law in Israel, overcoming the liberal democratic forces

and their limitations regarding the Palestinian Arabs in the state, thus moving the state to an ethnocratic one with a religious fundamentalist tendency. This has been reflected in legislation and legal amendments that consign the state, its institutions and resources to the service of the right and its aspirations. We have seen a decline in the "state's space" through programmed political, media and mass campaigns against the restraining organs of the executive power, such as the Supreme Court of Israel, civil society organizations (particularly those dealing with human rights), critical and dissenting academic centers and opposing social figures. Additionally there is the growing legitimacy of hate and racist speech against the Palestinian citizens of Israel and democratic values, and the bolstering of all the right-wing circles that espouse and resort to this speech.

**Level Five - The Palestinian Arab Community in Israel:** We have seen the birth of a new political lineup among the Palestinian Arabs in Israel embodied in the "Joint List" that constitutes a promising organizational development that opens up the local political work to new possibilities. We say this knowing that the formation of the list came under pressure of the adjustment of the Knesset elections law and raising the electoral threshold from 2% to 3.25%, and pressure from relatively large circles within the Palestinian Arab community itself, particularly the youth and academics. Added to this was pressure from some Jews who thought this would help (these elites) to restore rule or form a deterrent in front of a right-wing government. The list was formed against a background of divisive factors and reluctance among Palestinian Arabs to participate in national elections. During this period, quality shifts occurred in the structure of Palestinian society in Israel, its economy and cultural level of its members, and the widening use of communications, social media and technology. Our society also witnessed a widening in the growth of a middle social class and the emergence of endowed

groups as a social force. These groups had remarkable effect in local government tending toward a “political realism,” thus transcending the limitations of identity and its policies, toward practical policies that achieve improvements in the position and living conditions of the group. Meanwhile, on another front, social problems are exacerbated, including violence in various forms, arising from increased competition and rivalry for the material and symbolic resources in a marginalized community that already has few resources. These resources are further limited by exclusionary, institutionalized and systematic discrimination policies. Added to this is the presence of oppression as a factor that causes a defect in the existential balance among groups and individuals, which eventually leads to an escalation in the frequency of the use of violence.

Moreover, the Palestinian Arab society has witnessed unprecedented tension in internal relations. This is due to the tendency of certain circles of political Islam to dominate public space, exercise coercion and suppression of artistic and literary creativity by preventing theatrical or musical performances and/or threatening assault and/or defamation and verbal abuse. The tension has intensified in light of the attempt among the Salafis, who are still on the margins, to import the takfiri nihilistic model to suppress freedoms and impose what they consider Sharia law and its provisions. Amidst this, and in order to reduce the Islamic Movement’s activity in Al-Aqsa Mosque, the Israeli government decided in 2015 to outlaw the northern wing of the Islamic Movement, and ban all associated organizations and frameworks operating in social, health, educational and charity services. This poses a serious violation of the freedom of expression and association and is an opening to the banning of other Palestinian Arab political movements and organizations.

The work team took these variables into consideration while preparing their report, as they carry new challenges for the Palestinian Arabs and hinder the experience of

**When preparing the report the work team also took into consideration the experience and ideas of the movements, frameworks and leaders of the Palestinian Arab community in Israel. Hence, the work team's discussions come within the context of these characteristics, complement and consciously surpass them.**

modernity in their midst. They are also opportunities to reconsider and review some of the assumptions of the formation of consciousness, discourse and practice in the various aspects of life. The team also took into consideration the experience and ideas of the movements, frameworks and actors who led the movement of the Palestinian Arab community in Israel. Hence, the team discussions come within the context of these characteristics, complement and consciously surpass them.

The work team recognizes the importance of the achievements of developing future visions for the Palestinian Arabs in Israel (2006-2007). These endeavors opened new perspectives and tried to make a breakthrough in a strained reality on several levels, particularly with regard to the relationship with the Jewish state and its majority. These future visions had more than one common denominator; Firstly, they were readings following the re-occupation of the West Bank cities and the excessive use of force against Palestinians in the territories occupied in 1967, as well as the authoritarian repression of Palestinian Arabs in October 2000. They dealt with the implications and connotations of both these events. Secondly, they were visionary. They tried to draw the desired future with an emphasis on different aspects: the constitutional and legal, the cultural historical identity, or the issue of the sharing of power, resources and public space.

### **However, we have four notes in this regard:**

1. These future visions were content with indicating what is desirable and expected.
2. They sufficed with drawing the expected finish line without stopping at methods of application and their strategies.
3. The documents were developed in a specific political condition in which the two-state solution was preferred, an option which receded thereafter.
4. The authors were content with publishing what was

accomplished, without working to establish or develop the documents with community leaders and decision-makers, to benefit from them and espouse them to guide social and political action.

Nevertheless, we recognize the importance of these documents and the discourse they generated, because:

\* For the first time, they thoughtfully expressed, after a process of extensive and in-depth discussion and deliberation, the aspirations of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel as a national minority entitled to enjoy civil and national rights.

\* These perceptions constitute, at another level, an act carried out by Palestinian Arabs in Israel. This action was self-motivated and executed with the power of the accumulation of skills, experience and capacities of the aspiring groups to cause a breakthrough in reality after October 2000.

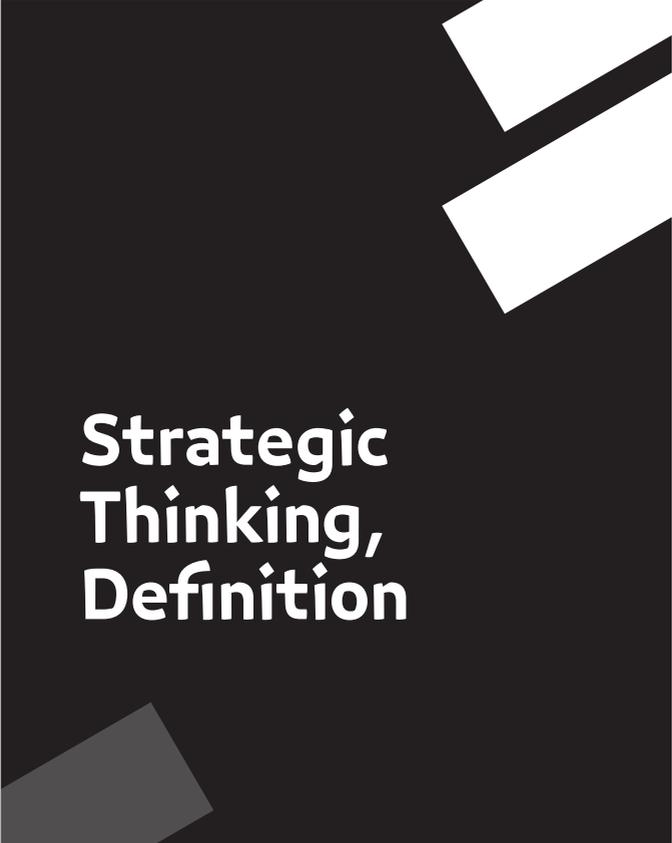
\* They constitute a written rhetorical and textual embodiment of years of renewal and addition brought to the current discourse by civil society organizations and their activists. This is reflected in the language of the documents, its perceptions and theorizations.

Furthermore, the work team built on the qualitative accumulation in the experience of political parties and movements, both in practice and theory, as they tried to lead the community, propose visions and programs to meet the challenges at all levels of life. Notable were those efforts which sought to hold the first Conference of the Arab masses after the first Land Day, the associated production of ideas, theoretical proposals and attempts to foresee what is coming, as well as the theorizations about the state of all its citizens or the "self-reliant society" project.

The report seeks to outline the effects and projections of the regional and local changes on the Palestinian Arabs in Israel, from the incursion of rightist and Jewish nationalistic tendencies in the state system, its

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foundations, policies and legislation; the entrenchment of the division between the Palestinian positions; as well as what has been considered as uprisings of the Arab peoples, which have led to profound changes in Arab societies and states around us, with some being exhausted with civil war and disintegration, as in Syria, Libya and Yemen, and others with the absence of stability, as is the case in Egypt, Tunisia and Bahrain.



**Strategic  
Thinking,  
Definition**

**Strategic thinking, in its essence, is that comprehensive and systematic mental effort aimed at foreseeing the future. It is a form of investigative approach based on the foundations, rules and principles of scientific research.**



Strategic thinking, in its essence, is that comprehensive and systematic mental effort aimed at foreseeing the future. It is a form of investigative approach based on the foundations, rules and principles of scientific research. It employs appropriate research methodology based on accurate expectations and credibility of the forecasts to foresee the future, actively participate in planning and influencing it, and visualize its potential events. Strategic thinking is based on data, indicators, contemplation, quantitative and qualitative analysis, standard conclusions and visualization of repercussions. It involves analysis of the political, intellectual and economic systems to draw possible scenarios. These may be imposed emergency scenarios unpleasant for the thinking group, or desirable scenarios that are planned and implemented.

Strategic thinking is a work mechanism thinkers resort to by which they dismantle the social, political and cultural state and condition, discuss scenarios and review the objectives of each scenario and think about the ways leading to them. This is done by re-reading the reality in its movement and envisioning the site and consequences of the issue of strategic thinking. Reading, in this case, means reviewing the obstacles and facilitators, the strengths and weaknesses, abilities and limitations in every possible scenario, and the intersections between the scenarios, and identifying alternatives.

Strategic thinking is a documented mental effort to infiltrate the coming unknown, and extend the authority of the mind and knowledge on it. It maps the possible, in anticipation of emergencies, in order to avoid surprises, and in an effort to cope with the events and bring them

closer to meeting the goals, objectives and targets, or face them to ward off, intercept or stop risks.

In all cases, the interests and objectives of the thinking group are the standard of measurement and direction of thinking. The intention of strategic thinking is to achieve a kind of professionalism in the thinkers whatever their field of activity—in politics, sociology, economics or otherwise—to guide their steps in their environment and move closer to achieving their goals of varying extents.

Therefore, strategic thinking is not working with speculations or general estimates; it is a sophisticated social science, espoused by developed societies to systematically foresee coming events, explore and envision what is likely to happen, in order to prepare and secure the maximum benefit. At the same time, strategic thinking does not promise absolute or definitive guarantees, not in the formulation of a hopeful future nor in warding off an unacceptable scenario, as it is a relative action that is aware of its limits and possibilities.

### **Strategic Thinking for the Palestinian Arabs in Israel – Achieving Competence**

Strategic thinking is a new experience in the life of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel. It seeks to analyze the system in which they live and envision possible options for changing the reality through studying the obstacles, opportunities and strategies to be preferably used, and identifying the short, intermediate and long-term objectives.

Strategic thinking in our context deliberates these questions: Where are the Palestinian Arabs in Israel going from the place they are in now? What are the wanted scenarios and opportunities that open them, and what are those that pose a danger to them and should be prevented and intercepted? How can a change be made in the reality towards the realization of the desired scenarios or one of them, and what are the strategies necessary to do so? What is the discourse that allows

**Strategic thinking tries to foresee the future, actively participate in planning and influencing it, and visualize its potential events.**

reasonable impact on the course of things, and on the approach to the desired future milestones? How are they affected by political developments in Israel and the region, and what is their role within this complex and interconnected system between the local and regional conditions?

## **Methodology of Strategic Thinking in this Report**

**Strategic thinking is a new experience in the life of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel. It seeks to analyze the system in which they live and envision possible options for changing the reality through studying the obstacles, opportunities and strategies to be preferably used.**

The report's authors are a group of Palestinian Arab activists and academics in Israel, who come from different fields, affiliations and ideological doctrines. They came to their work confident in their ability and the talents available in the community to carry out a process of strategic thinking and reading of reality: a reading that is objective, not calculated; scientific, not ideological; and goes beyond the present to the past and to the future. They voluntarily agreed to collectively engage in a process of strategic thinking to read the conditions of the community to which they belong and which they want to achieve competence; and to explore those options and scenarios that lie before them as a national group within a historic conflict between the Zionist Jewish community in the state in which they live as citizens, and their Palestinian Arab people and the neighboring Arab countries, and within a daily confrontation between them and the State's policies and their creators.

Prior to the preparation of the report, a series of preliminary consultations were conducted with community, political and civic leaders, and specialized research academics to determine the format and organization of the work. These consultations were intended to test the need for the experience of strategic thinking, in connection with the relapse of the negotiating process between the Israelis and Palestinians and Israel's official return to the use of war and violence to manage its conflict with the Palestinians. The Palestinians faced this situation from time to time

with opposing popular uprisings. This led to posing questions about how meaningful and realistic the option of citizenship in Israel is for the Palestinian Arab minority in light of shifts within Israel and in the area of conflict.

At one stage of the process of working on the report, another round of consultations were held with around twenty-five leaders in our Arab community from various political, civil and cultural frameworks and local government in order to direct the work on the report and rectify it.

Work on the report was divided into three phases: In the first phase, discussions took place in a large public body of participants who met several times in the country and abroad, and their summaries and contributions formed a basis to continue the work. In the second phase, work was implemented within a smaller group, called the Drafting Group, who took it upon themselves to transform the General Group's discussions into a strategic report. In the third phase, the report was presented to an expanded group of activists, and a number of leaders of various political orientations, in preparation of placing it at the disposal of the community and general circulation.

The responses to the strategic questions that were mentioned earlier as part of the strategic thinking process were based on scientific curricula from various fields, such as social, political, economic and legal science, as well as from the accumulation of knowledge, experiences and assiduousness of the participants in the large and small working groups, the Palestinian Arabs here and their leaders, and available scientific research. These were analyzed prudently, rationally and impartially to diagnose the situation and its complexities and identify prospects for moving closer to the preset targets, or for intercepting situations that could arise from the status quo.

The purpose of strategic thinking, as dealt with here, is to enable our society, achieve a kind of professionalism, and transition from reaction to action and initiative;

**The purpose of strategic thinking, as dealt with in this report, is to enable Palestinian society in Israel, achieve a kind of professionalism in our aspirational thinking, and transition from a reactionary mentality to action and initiative; To regain command of its fate to the extent possible, and transform into a group with a voice, will and clear aspirations that participates on an equal footing with other groups in settling the historic conflict in historical Palestine; To improve living conditions and opportunities to live in freedom and dignity, and draw a picture of a hopeful future or ward off risks that may result from unexpected developments.**

To regain command of its fate to the extent possible, and transform into a group with a voice, will and clear aspirations that participates on an equal footing with other groups in settling the historic conflict in historical Palestine; To improve living conditions and opportunities to live in freedom and dignity, and draw a picture of a hopeful future or ward off risks that may result from unexpected developments. The report aspires to contribute to this with two complementary actions: Firstly, to dismantle the complex system in which we live with its political, social and economic components in all its departments and levels. Secondly, to present an array of likely, desirable and undesirable, scenarios and to think about how to push the desired or intercept unwanted ones. These two actions require a comprehensive reading of the situation and determination of objectives and strategies, as well as a reading of the maps of friends, allies, enemies and opponents, and the strengths and weaknesses of the system, which will occur later.

Accordingly, the strategic thinking, as intended and attempted by the work team who authored this report, is an introduction and a necessary condition that precedes the act of strategic planning and implementation. This is an act that produces events, formulates programs and develops work strategies to bring us closer to the set goals. These are the gateways to active participation in charting the desired future milestones and reaching them with what is beneficial, enriching and developing. Conversely, these strategies may be tools to intercept emergency or undesirable scenarios and reduce their harm to us. We must, in this context, note the importance of drawing attention to the responsibility of the political and social leaders in reflecting on this strategic report, taking it seriously and using it: not only in order to achieve what is intended from it and thwart what is undesirable, but also to transform this unique experience into a method we can benefit from to face the challenges of the Palestinian community, in the critical reality experienced by the entire Arab region.

We hope that this report will be a good preface to a new stage of collective strategic discussion and thinking at all levels, leading eventually to a resumed comprehensive renaissance in all levels of our lives.

We would like to point out that this experience was mainly funded by the Norwegian government, with the professional, technical help of the Oxford Research Group. The project management, direction and contents were placed in local hands, who persevered to benefit from the experience and place the final product at the disposal of the community.

### **Dismantling of a Complex System**

- We, the Palestinian Arabs in Israel, are a national minority with a homeland, a part of the Arab Palestinian people and Arab and Islamic civilization and culture, with all that means from a historical narrative that at its heart is the confrontation with the Zionist movement, which brought about the Nakba and acquired historic Palestine, the Palestinian homeland, and produced the conflict with the State of Israel that continues to this day.
- The Palestinian Arabs in Israel have their political, cultural and civilizational extension in the Arab and Muslim space surrounding Israel. This sometimes removes the aspect of being a minority, as they are included within the majority in the general Middle Eastern space for their culture, history and affiliations. This is a feeling that becomes one of subjugation given the reality of the situation and their daily subjection to persecution, exclusion and discrimination in Israel.
- Official Israeli and Jewish community treatment of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel fluctuates between regarding them as citizens constituting a minority or a group of minorities, and considering them part of the Arab space and the Palestinian Arab people, with whom the state is linked in a historical and daily struggle. On one hand, they confirm inviting them to

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assimilate into Israeli citizenship, which imposes on them obligations determined by the Jewish majority, while, on the other hand, they exclude them as a group representing the external enemy or identifying with it.

- There are very limited non-Zionist currents arising in the Jewish community, which are slated to be the main Jewish partners of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel in their struggles and drive, of their perceptions of the state and their relationship to it.
- Therefore, the status of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel, as the child of historical conditions related to an unending national struggle, with a cultural and historical span beyond the state's borders, is summarized in the following:

A. A conflict that began nationally to intersect with regional and international economic, geopolitical, and religious components. Following the Nakba and the founding of Israel, the conflict became one of citizens' struggle for civil and national equality against oppressive and exclusionary policies. Citizens called for the ending of the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories in 1967 and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. The nature of this conflict in the discourse of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel has been changing in recent years with the continued Israeli rejection of any kind of settlement of the Palestinian issue in two directions: a return to square one of the conflict and the event of the Nakba, its effects and discourse (which is dominant), and an affirmation of full citizenship and the current reality, without abandoning identity and history.

B. The general Arab-Israeli conflict is clearly reflected on them and in official policies toward them.

C. A state of internal conflict between conservative and religious currents; between currents that emphasize the everyday civilian aspects of life and the need to deal openly with the Israeli position, and ones that focus on identity and national belonging and the need to link with

Palestinian and/or Arab decision centers and politics; and between civic and nationalist conceptions of citizenship.

D. The ambiguous relations between the Palestinian Arabs in Israel and Arab communities have, in recent years, witnessed ideological and religious conflicts, divisions and fragmentations and the surplus export of scenes of violence and destruction that are reflected on them in a sectarian line-up, tension, differences and conflict of ideas, forces and doctrines. This necessarily weakens their legitimate struggle against Israeli government policies, and complicates the existential comfortable positioning within the map of complex forces with violent policies or those of moderate forces, the enticements and disharmony of the geopolitical and related socioeconomic axes.

E. Within the diversity in political and intellectual Zionist frameworks and currents, some Jewish and Zionist elite circles in Israel have persisted in inviting Palestinian Arabs in the state to assimilate and accept the option of secession from the Arab and Palestinian cultural and political space. Some currents in these circles went farther when they seized the existing opportunities to exploit Palestinian Arab votes to ensure winning the reins of power and holding off the right-wing and disrupting their project. This happened during the signing of the Oslo Accords period, when they formed a safety net for the government coalition from the outside. However, some Jewish elites remained influential forces, considering them as part of the Arab space and its agents, particularly when the Palestinian political project intensified and relations between it and the Palestinian Arab elites in Israel became closer. Some of the powerful elites today even view them as the "fifth column" and agents of the "enemies" of the state. From this situation, Jewish Zionist racist attitudes evolved that were expressed from time to time with a discourse of transfer, displacement, population exchange, or giving the Palestinian Arabs a choice between the Palestinian state that may be established within a geopolitical settlement and citizenship in Israel.

**The Palestinian Arabs in Israel find themselves in a stage of transformation that requires them to redetermine their historical choices and clearly say where they are headed and what they want or do not want.**

F. Intensification of the racist discourse within the Jewish community, which is hostile to the Palestinian Arabs in Israel and converts them in the political and legislative discourse among extended Israeli circles to the “inherent internal enemy.”

In light of the changes and developments at all levels, the Palestinian Arabs in Israel find themselves in a stage of transformation that requires them to redetermine their historical choices and clearly say where they are headed and what they want or do not want. They can no longer postpone the explicit statement and clarification in this existential level. It is from this realization that this report comes.

### **Weaknesses and Strengths of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel**

There is an unequal balance of power between us as Palestinian Arabs and the state as an expression of the will of the Jewish community and its national sovereignty (a Jewish state). It singularly has the authority, decisions and legislation. It takes the initiative from a superior position to impose facts on the ground in all levels of our lives, and impose its conditions as they may determine, particularly through the Jewish community’s monopoly of power and policy-making (the decision of war and peace), legislation and allocation of public resources, defining public interest and challenging the demographic and geographic character of the state. As for the Palestinian Arabs in Israel, even if they participate in the legislative elections, or in local government, their role is limited to moving within a limited calculated margin, or in some cases, restricted boundaries from a constitutional and political legal point. Despite reality being characterized with fluidity, the balance of power remains disproportionately in favor of the state and the Jewish majority in it.

This is at least a partial explanation of the prevalence

of the victim culture among the Palestinian Arabs in Israel. This culture has been content with a discourse wrought with a vocabulary of grievance, complaint and anger, waging on external forces, and refraining from initiatives and strategies to regain the initiative and from assuming self-responsibility and destiny. There are those who claim that the totality of the political culture of the Arabs in Israel is limited to reaction and to staying in a double shadow of the elites in Israel and of the Palestinian elites or neighboring Arab centers.

The aforementioned situation produces the components of the crisis facing the Palestinian Arabs in Israel. Therefore, the main question in front of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel's strategic forum becomes: How can I correct this imbalance within the existing or anticipated balance of power, and to what extent?

The question does not only lead us to think about possible work strategies, but also to seek to encompass the components of the situation and ways to develop a better reality at all levels. It is a question based on an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses in the case of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel and is summed up in the following:

- Our cause is based on concepts and applications of justice and the struggle to achieve it. It is also based on values enshrined in conventions, treaties and customary international law related to human rights and national, linguistic, cultural and religious minorities and those related to indigenous peoples, such as equal citizenship, justice and equitable distribution of resources, including power. Therefore, we are totally supported by the discourse of just rights that are established and pursued by international forums and organizations and enshrined in the constitutions of nations—in particular, the United States and the European Union, which Israel seeks to imitate and join as an international, political and normative center.

**There are those who claim that the totality of the political culture of the Arabs in Israel is limited to reaction and to staying in a double shadow of the elites in Israel and of the Palestinian elites or neighboring Arab centers.**

**The cause of improving conditions for Palestinian Arabs in Israel is based on concepts and applications of justice and the struggle to achieve it. It is also based on values enshrined in conventions, treaties and customary international law related to human rights and national, linguistic, cultural and religious minorities and those related to indigenous peoples, such as equal citizenship, justice and equitable distribution of resources, including power.**

- The state's policies towards us are based on persecution, discrimination and exclusion on national, ethnic or religious basis. They are applied only by means of oppression and coercion, ignoring democratic principles, notably the principle of equality and fairness. Hence, these policies come under criticism and opposition in the international forums, organizations and bodies concerned with rights and freedoms.
- The outcome of powers between the two former items produces a superiority in our favor at the moral and rights level in our movement opposite the world and democratic forces in the Jewish community itself, which gives us tremendous energy to work and influence. We can turn this moral and rights superiority to political supremacy if we know how to develop work strategies in cooperation with international forums, such as petitions, rallies, advocacy and media campaigns.

However, the situation of the Palestinian Arabs involves structural weaknesses, including:

- An inadequate organizational structure unable to unite the energies, capabilities and words in systematic and well-thought-out in advance struggles. The forces active in the Palestinian Arab community painstakingly coordinate; in most cases, they are dissonant rivals and lack the tradition of joint action and overcoming differences for joint achievement.
- A system of internal relations that is problematic in terms of lack of democratic dialogue patterns and the prevalence of the phenomena of repression and exclusion, particularly against women, limiting their full participation in the political and social process.
- The continuation of the Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Arab conflict, which makes it easier to classify Palestinian Arabs as "enemies" of the state, or to postpone their case under the pretext that the state has larger and more important issues.

As the Palestinian Arabs in Israel live and are active within a complex situation that intersects with the Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Arab conflict, and they are active at times within the Jewish state, as part of this conflict and projections, it is important to be patient in choosing the work strategies that can cause change and achieve aspirations. The Palestinian Arabs in Israel have historically chosen the political action and civil struggles allowed by their constitutional and legal status in Israel, or the balance of power between them and the Jewish community and the state. In the years following the Nakba, they could only stay, be patient and linger as part of a desire to survive and stave off displacement. Over time, the strategies changed in the direction of deepening political action and struggle in order to improve living conditions and gain more rights and freedoms within the political condition. The report estimates the current presence of a larger margin for development of new means of struggle based on transforming the moral, political and rights superiority of our community in Israel into an influential energy. In this regard, we recognize the fact that every change in the status quo toward improving our situation may be understood in the mentality of the dominant Jewish community and elites in Israel as an existential threat to them. This is due to the nature of the existing obsessive system and its meeting with the deep-rooted fear complex or "fear of extinction," caused by the Jewish communities' experience in Europe before the middle of the twentieth century, and its implications on the Palestinian Arabs and its exploitation to achieve political goals.

Since the establishment of the state, Palestinian Arabs in Israel have chosen the strategy of participation in legislative elections since 1949. This formed a kind of guarantee on their part to citizenship and gaining some of their rights in resources and the common good. In terms of the Jewish community, this participation grants the immigrant settler community legitimacy from the indigenous community. This situation continues

**The state of Israel's policies towards its Palestinian citizens are based on persecution, discrimination and exclusion on national, ethnic or religious basis. They are applied only by means of oppression and coercion, ignoring democratic principles, notably the principle of equality and fairness.**

**As the Palestinian Arabs in Israel live and are active within a complex situation that intersects with the Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Arab conflict, and they are active at times within the Jewish state, as part of this conflict and projections, it is important to be patient in choosing the work strategies that can cause change and achieve aspirations.**

to this day with changes in the depth of citizenship or participation in the elections. There are circles who call for the continuation of this strategy, describing it as the best in our situation. The experience of the "Joint List" in the twentieth Knesset elections was formed on this basis. It seems that most of the active elites in the public sphere in the Palestinian Arab community in Israel support this option so far, although they recognize the state's prejudice against the Palestinian community and the continued repression, displacement and impoverishment policies. However, they believe that it is their duty to use every available mechanism for the defense of the legitimate and just rights of the Palestinian community inside Israel. At the same time, opponents question the feasibility of participation in the legislative elections, refuse to deal with the state, describing it as a translation of the occupation of the Palestinian homeland, or because it is continuing the Nakba with other policies, and should not be cooperated with. Jewish elites' policies in recent years have helped and strengthened the development of these trends.

At another connected, but separate level, we refer to a fluctuation in the political culture of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel between the option of the Jewish-Arab Palestinian partnership in the political struggle (represented by the Communist Party, the Democratic Front and other circles) and the separate political action (represented partially by the Abnaa el-Balad (People of the Homeland) movement, the northern wing of the Islamic Movement, and some among the nationalist movement) who do not cooperate with forces in the Jewish community, and rarely involve them in their struggles or frameworks and organizations. This means that the struggles waged by the Palestinian minority take place in two different forms, and each form has its message and purpose. In this context, we refer to the fact that political sectors in the Palestinian community exercised some boycott of Israeli policy and the Jewish community on two levels. In the first level, this boycott was the result of an ideological doctrine requiring an

independent and separate Palestinian movement: on one hand, because there is no legitimacy to the Israeli entity established after the Nakba; and on the other hand, because one faction in the Islamic movement's ideology saw that boycott was a gateway to the project of a "self-reliant society" and the implementation of political Islam's vision in general as related to Israel. There are those who considered the Jewish-Arab partnership model which evolved with time as an unjust model lacking parity between the two partners.

In the second level, the boycott was a strategy to achieve a kind of political influence or an indication of a position, as happened following the October 2000 events, when Palestinians in Israel wanted to punish Ehud Barak, who was the candidate for prime minister. Here the question emerges about the possibility of developing a creative combination of the two strategies, participation and boycott, to achieve the desired change. We may discover that the Jewish-Arab partnership, and not only tactical strategy, is inevitable, because every scenario drawn later includes the co-existence of Jews and Palestinians in the same space. The same is said about the escalating scenarios that require a joint struggle between Palestinian Arabs and Jews who reject repression and confiscation of freedoms and rights. From here, the importance of partnership between the two peoples, in accordance with models and forms that go beyond what we have known to date, has become clear to us. Indeed, the struggles, which call for transforming Israel from a national state to a civil state, require such a partnership, not as a tactic, but as a solution to the conflict too. However, we may discover the strength and effectiveness of boycott as a work strategy in some cases, especially if the right-wing forces in Israel deepen the national screening process within the borders of the state and succeed in excluding the Palestinian Arabs from political participation—particularly as this right believes that the Jewish elites, their contenders, will not be able to return to power, except in partnership with the Palestinian Arabs and their representatives in parliament.

**Every change in the status quo toward improving the situation of the Palestinian community in Israel may be understood in the mentality of the dominant Jewish community and elites in Israel as an existential threat to them.**

**The mere nonparticipation of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel in the legislative elections, for example, is a form of protest that neither Israel nor the international community can let pass unnoticed.**

We can match our desire to correct the imbalance of power between the Palestinian Arabs in Israel and the state, with the desire to obtain regional and international legitimacy. This is a legitimacy linked to the validity given to it by its citizens, particularly the Palestinians. The beginnings of the economic, cultural and academic boycott of Israel, especially in recent years against the backdrop of the military operations against the Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank, the ongoing occupation and the continuing policies of discrimination and exclusion of the Palestinian community in Israel, provides an impetus that could be a model for what could evolve in the context of future struggles. It remains that the mere nonparticipation of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel in the legislative elections, for example, is an event that neither Israel nor the international community can let pass unnoticed. At the same level, we can call for a creative merger between the Jewish-Palestinian partnership in political struggles, the application of strategic options based on the partnership, and individual struggles of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel as part of their linguistic, cultural and nationalistic distinctiveness.

In the following table, we provide some of the weaknesses and strengths of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel, highlighting the most prominent. We realize that it is a dialectical issue, as a strength can be seen as a weakness, or may shift with time, or the occurrence of a change, into a weakness.

<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Strengths</b>
Geographical distribution makes it difficult to transform into a bloc (Places of residence in the periphery)	There are about 1.3 million Palestinians in Israel (about 5 million in the area between the sea and the river) practicing politics as part of the people

Weaknesses	Strengths
Jewish acquisition and domination of the space through exclusionary repressive policies	Just cause: the realization of equality, justice, resistance of discrimination, racism and exclusion
Weak economic structure. Economy related to the Jewish city, high rates of poverty and rampant violence	Abundance of historical, geographical and cultural depth represented in the Arab and Islamic areas
Weak Arab centers in terms of urban cultural and service infrastructure. The absence of Arab city and town	Extensive experience and expertise of living with the Jewish community and the state. Bilingual community with widespread knowledge of the other community
Social, patriarchate, sectarian or family composition. Fragmentation and sharp divisions between elites	Historical acceptance of partnership with the Jews in historic Palestine
Weakness in the status of women and prevalence of religious and social conservative attitudes, which reduces the chances of their participation in the social process	Political vitality represented in the multiplicity of political trends and movements
Weak and low-ceiling educational system, dependent, does not qualify the student for life and its challenges	Willingness and flexibility in dealing with several solutions and adjustments
Decline in the status of the collective frameworks and bodies in the last two decades, for example, The High Follow-Up Committee for Arab Citizens	Existence of a sophisticated network of active civil society organizations, expansion of the middle class and the rich and their possibilities of mobility

**In order to most effectively resist the status quo we can call for a creative merger between the Jewish-Palestinian partnership in political struggles, the application of strategic options based on the partnership, and individual struggles of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel as part of their linguistic, cultural and nationalistic distinctiveness.**

<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Strengths</b>
Undemocratic political culture, lacking coordination, cooperation and suffering from regional and factional fragmentation	Young community. Majority under 40
Dominant political culture suffers from a split in awareness and morality that internalizes the oppression	Struggles to date are distinguished as nonviolent and peaceful
Widening gap between the leaders and elites on the one hand, and the masses on the other	Ability to grant or withdraw legitimacy from the Israeli democracy
Regional variables reflect on us with further fragmentation and internal tensions	Existence of support for our cause in international charters and conventions relating to the rights of minorities and indigenous groups
Permeating political culture that suffers from a guilt complex, reaction and lack of initiative. Always looking for external guardianship for shelter	Beginnings of connections with regional and international bodies including UN bodies
Absence of self-responsibility and accountability, a tendency to attribute causes of our catastrophies and problems to third parties, exempting ourselves from accountability for what we have done or not done	Beginnings of radical critique with the third generation of the Nakba and vertical and horizontal self-accountability
Disintegration of Palestinian society in general, geographically, ideologically and class; diaspora and homeland; camps, rural areas and cities; inside and outside; Jerusalem, Gaza Strip and West Bank	Semi-demographic parity between the Jewish and Palestinian societies in the historic borders of Palestine increases the strength of the Palestinian demand regardless

## Self-building in Preparation for the Strategic

Strategic thinking makes it imperative to deal with weaknesses and avoid them through the development of plans to face and overcome them, or by engaging the strengths to enable the community and increase their capacity to overcome the weakness. One cannot, for example, succumb to a political culture dedicated to division and rivalry, or to the absence of some kind of collective will and active awareness. Therefore, there is a particular importance in studying means of working on self-building as an entry point for any type of strategic action, albeit within the limits of collective strategic thinking (see above). Consequently, strategic action requires dealing with the two sides of the equation that control our strategic situation in conjunction and in parallel, not sequentially.

How do we overcome the weaknesses, and how do we confirm the strengths and reinforce them? The beginning of the answer is to rebuild what is inclusive and common, organizationally and intellectually, as well as a type of collective will that takes responsibility to continue to work on the strengths and weaknesses in a manner that serves specific strategic objectives. The team comfortably notes the re-election of the chair of the follow-up committee in a democratic, agreed-upon process, where the results were accepted by all the partners, and they began working accordingly. This allows for building on it to achieve similar organizational steps.

We affirm that the internal building process should fall within a broader process to construct a “strategic forum”, the body that oversees the process of strategic thinking and planning.

**The work team comfortably notes as an example of successful self-building the re-election of the chair of the follow-up committee in a democratic, agreed-upon process, where the results were accepted by all the partners, and they began working accordingly. Such an accomplishment can be built upon to achieve similar organizational steps.**





**Possible  
scenarios facing  
the Palestinian  
Arabs in Israel**



## **Introduction**

The scenarios presented here are what could evolve on the ground in the foreseeable future, regardless of whether they are desirable or not. Rejection or acceptance are not important in the case of thinking strategically, as at the heart of this approach is to think of what is possible and what is needed, coupled with what is emerging and unacceptable. Hence, this report envisages an array of possible scenarios as part of reading the reality of the impetus that moves it and the implications of the political conditions in the region and the world on it. In order to complete the strategic thinking, we must discuss what scenarios could happen and how to intercept them.

In this report, there are four main possible scenarios that fall within a historic path based on reconciliation, or a path of escalation based on Israeli insistence to uphold the status quo or develop it toward the acquisition of all of historic Palestine and impose its hegemony on all the geography between the sea and the river. We offer these scenarios according to four detailed themes intending to extrapolate the consequences of each scenario, albeit briefly. We will examine the elements of each scenario, what it could mean for the Palestinian Arabs in Israel, the power alignments around it and the risks or benefits for them.

## **Brief History as a Basis for the Scenarios**

The circulating solutions of the Israeli-Palestinian Arab conflict were established on ideas of land,

sovereignty and population (geography, demography and democracy). The solution provided for by the 1947 partition plan was based on the separation between the two peoples in two states, one for the Jews and the other for the Palestinian Arabs, provided that cooperation and integration will develop between them in the future. The decision came at a stage in history where the commonly held concept of the principle of the right to self-determination was through separation between nationalist groups in autonomous regions. This decision and what it left behind has remained a heavy legacy that feeds the conflict between the two peoples: between parts of the Jewish people, represented by the Zionist movement and later official Israel, which acquired historic Palestine, including areas designated to the Palestinian Arab state according to the partition plan (Nazareth area, for example); and the people of the land who rejected the partition plan and tried to prevent its application on the ground as a blatant derogation of their natural and historical right to existence in historic Palestine. The Israeli side exploited the partition resolution, which was only partially applied, to confirm the legitimacy of Israel as a state and the sovereignty of the Jews in historic Palestine, particularly in light of the Palestinian Arab side's rejection of the resolution—supported by the Arab world. The Palestinian rejection of the partition resolution remained until the end of the 1980s, when the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) formally accepted, through the declaration of the State (1988), the principle of sharing the land between the two peoples as an opening to resolving the conflict. This was a historic turning point in the journey of the Palestinian national project after the PLO left Beirut in 1982 and their leadership settled in Algeria and Tunisia. This juncture, which was boosted by the first Intifada, with its popular civilian character, paved the way for the Madrid Conference (1990) and later the Oslo Accords (1993). The initiation of a negotiation process that continued after the second Intifada has faltered in recent years, because of political shifts in Israel that led to the dominance of the theory that believes in

the possibility of generally managing the conflict with the Palestinians, without resolving it. Most of the Palestinian people have deemed this not to meet the minimum requirements of historical justice and thus see it as a basic reason for failing. This shift was preceded with the Camp David Accords with Egypt, which led to peace between Israel and Egypt, followed by the signing of the peace agreement between Israel and the Kingdom of Jordan; both recognize the legitimacy of Israel's right to exist, which practically means accepting the partition resolution retroactively.

The means of conflict resolution and settlement negotiations so far have failed to accomplish the division project and the establishment of two states and sovereignties, the Jewish Israeli and the Palestinian Arab, in historic Palestine, unless we consider the Palestinian Authority areas a "State," and its authority there a kind of sovereignty. This, alone, requires thinking strategically outside the framework of the idea of the solution or the existing two-state solution and its products of political structures and thinking patterns. Hence, the historical process leading to the present, produces, according to the work team's research and discussions, the following scenarios.

## **Scenarios in the Absence of Reconciliation**

**Introduction:** Relations between the Israeli people in historic Palestine and the Palestinian people in general, are relations of conflict, limited or comprehensive wars, periods of calm and others with escalation. It is an extended case generated by the case of permanent Israeli rejection of the establishment of an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel—a state whose establishment was provided for by the partition resolution of historic Palestine, and which was accepted by the PLO as a historic settlement in the Palestinian National Council meeting in Algiers in 1988. Failure to enforce the right to self-determination for the Palestinian people in an independent state is a

source of enduring conflict. This conflict has increased in violence by the continued Israeli occupation and policies that seek to acquire more land between the river and the sea, under the Jewish settlement project in historic Palestine and the practices of the Zionist project and its applications. There is no doubt that during the next period, this climate of conflict will leave its impact on the state's relations with the Palestinians within it. Furthermore, their dealings with the state and with the questions of identity and citizenship will continue to be affected by the general climate of conflict.

The Palestinian Arabs in Israel can be a determining factor in the conflict, not just an issue in it. They can do this through activating some kind of effective will, and espousing the choice of calming the conflict or taking a role in its settlement, proceeding from their growing weight in the political map. Our hypothesis is that the greater their weight, their potential impact on the direction things go and their ability to cope with developments toward achieving their interests or guaranteeing them increases. Or they could share their own initiatives in an active and influential role with conscious determination. This is related to the level of their awareness of themselves and their role. They could stay within the idea of being reserve votes or acting as an assisting electoral force to help the Israeli elites restore power; or work as a secondary contractor to the National Authority or to Palestinian elites managing the conflict. This means continuing to implement a role with limited impact: being affected, and not making an effect. However, moving to take an initiative role outside what we have mentioned from limitations will give them a special weight in the conflict in terms of settling it or forming a serious folio in it.

### **Scenario of the Permanence of the Status Quo**

**Elements of the scenario.** In the final outcome, this scenario can move in two inverse directions. The state

**The Palestinian Arabs in Israel can be a determining factor in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, not just an issue in it. They can do this through activating some kind of effective will, and espousing the choice of calming the conflict or taking a role in its settlement, proceeding from their growing weight in the political map.**

**The current political situation in Israel reinforces the belief that relations between Israel and its Palestinian citizens is cascading toward a state of escalation, particularly since large political forces in Israel, including the far-right, conservative and centrist circles in the political map espouse an anti-Palestinian Arab language that inclines to strip them of their political legitimacy.**

and the Jewish community have deliberately improved the situation of the Palestinians in Israel, as part of the belief that it is possible to manage the conflict and separate the Palestinians in Israel from the general Palestinian cause. There are strong indications in official Israeli policies of the existence of such an approach that does not hesitate to intervene with the intent to improve the standard of living and infrastructure and to increase the involvement of Palestinians in the general economic process in terms of their contribution in prospective development. This is what happened recently, as the government approved a five-year development plan of Arab towns and villages until 2020. In recent years, government and civil intervention programs were adopted, particularly in the Arab community, that push in this direction of improving the Palestinian Arabs' situation in various respects. To be objective, we must point out the existence of a strong tendency among the Palestinian Arabs to be interested in this approach and to urge cooperation with it and benefit from it.

In spite of this, the scenario of the permanence of the status quo may evolve in a different direction: the continuation of the conflict and the failure of the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel; as well as the consolidation of the Israeli settlement enterprise, coupled with permanent military activity to suppress opposition to the occupation. All this may extend inside Israel, mainly to include the Palestinians as candidates for carrying out solidarity or protest activities. We have seen through experience that situations of escalation between the occupation and the Palestinians under occupation produces a state of escalation inside Israel—a case in which the Palestinian Arabs inside Israel become victims of a process of systematic repression and incitement campaigns, generally led by politicians from various Israeli parties and movements. The current situation reinforces the belief that we are cascading toward a state of escalation, particularly since large political forces in Israel, including the far-right, conservative and centrist circles in the political map

espouse an anti-Palestinian Arab language that inclines to strip them of their political legitimacy. These are the same circles that work on the erosion of the democratic components of power, and implement systematic campaigns against democratic values and the social and political forces that defend them.

**What this means for the Palestinian Arabs.** As part of the process of improving the situation of the Palestinians, the State and the Jewish community wager on connecting the Palestinians with the Israeli center and drawing them to it. Palestinian Arab circles fear that this would come at the expense of their identity and historical ties to the Palestinian center, which would prevent their response to this development. The improvement approach includes civic affirmation, opportunities and possibilities that can be provided by the Israeli center. Such a development could lead to a breakthrough in the relations between the State and the Palestinians in it, particularly as it is a process that will expand the size of the middle class and improve the positions of those belonging to it, as well as deepen the network of mutual interests between these groups, the state and the Jewish community. This process of improvement may evolve and take into account national identity and belonging and give them their scope, within a sophisticated cultural autonomy where Palestinian Arabs will feel they were able to reconcile their citizenship and identity.

As for the escalation path, the repression could extend inside Israel to suppress the protest and solidarity activities and events with the Palestinian people. This occurred in the last two aggressions on Gaza, when, with an iron fist, the state suppressed Palestinian and joint Palestinian-Jewish solidarity and protest activities; and it is continuing now with the current tension embodied in events initiated by Palestinian individuals. This was accompanied by an escalation of hate speech and incitement against the Palestinians inside Israel and the prevalence of a hostile atmosphere that evolved,

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in many places, into daily violence against them. This trend was confirmed in the unjust legislations against the Palestinian Arabs that diminish their rights as a group and as individuals, versus granting more privileges and resources for the Jewish citizens as individuals and as a group. This trend is strongly advocated among the influential forces in Israel after the recent elections (February 2015). These groups are working hard to affirm the Jewish identity of the State and moving forward toward a clash with everything that is not Jewish, including democratic freedoms. Relations may slip into open clashes in all the possibilities, such as reimposing military rule, resorting to emergency regulations, or to the transfer of Palestinians. A declared system of apartheid may develop from this situation. This would require managing the country in its entirety—from the river to the sea—on the basis of apartheid laws, spatial segregation and development of a legal and constitutional structure that favors the Jewish people in Israel over the Palestinian Arabs in an absolute manner in everything, and the imposition of a religious Jewish sovereignty that does not hesitate to take any step against the Palestinian Arabs on the way to its goals.

**Power Alignment.** The Palestinian Arabs in Israel will find themselves facing two concurrent tracks. They will find themselves in alliances and partnerships with forces in the Jewish community interested in the civic path and its promotion, and with economic and political groups concerned with economic growth through greater involvement of Palestinians in the production process of the state's resources. They will find themselves in an understanding with international forums, particularly in North America, Europe and the OECD, which stipulated Israel's membership with improvement of the living conditions of the Palestinians in Israel and their integration in the economic process and equality. They will find natural allies in Israeli society: human rights and civic organizations and the democratic left, which has been advocating for the Palestinian Arabs in Israel and their historic demands and issues. As for

the other vulnerable groups in the Jewish community that sometimes support the Palestinian Arab society in Israel, they may be busy competing for the designation of “victim” and government subsidies. Therefore, we find that they are against the improvement path, and actively participate in inciting against the Arabs rather than advocating for them.

At the same time, in case the improvement path and connecting the Palestinian Arabs to the Israeli center fails, the Palestinian Arabs will find themselves facing an unprecedented wave of escalation, in which the government and its leadership, as well as political and media institutions will be involved. These bodies will exploit the improvement process to justify repression or the campaign against the Arabs on the grounds that they rejected it. Here, as well, partnerships may arise with democratic forces, albeit by virtue of our experience, we expect them to be smaller and have less momentum than in the improvement path.

In both cases, the Palestinian Arabs in Israel will find help in international forums, particularly Europe and the OECD countries. In the event the improvement path is fostered, it would be natural for the European Union and OECD countries to also support this process. Furthermore, the development of the Joint List as a firm collective framework, and the restructuring of the position and role of the Follow-Up Committee as a reference, will be considered as a development of some kind of collective will, which will have a role in the building and establishment of such partnerships. In the case of retreat into the path of repression, these forums will stand, albeit morally, against the wave of repressive and exclusionary legislation.

**Possibilities and Risks.** In the event the path of improvement and expansion of the middle class among the Palestinian Arabs are strengthened, their struggles may tend to focus more on civic citizenship and political action, taking advantage of partnerships and alliances,

**The fluidity and fragmentation caused by the shifts in the Arab world and the region affect the State of Israel too, in such a way that political Islam, in its military form, imposes a challenge to it on the northern, eastern and southern borders. Additionally, the disintegration of some neighboring countries that have common borders with Israel is accelerated, and the reverberations of the decrepitude and collapse arrive at the borders, which would be an impending danger to Israel.**

and improving the work vis-à-vis the international forums. This is a direction that may increase the political weight of the Palestinian Arabs versus the Israeli establishment and the Jewish community, and their overall influence in the conflict. In case this process regresses, the whole situation could amount to the loss of all the gains and achievements, especially if the Israeli establishment and the Jewish majority decide to stranglehold the Palestinian Arabs through legislation that deprives them of their rights and brings the state into a situation of open apartheid. In case the two paths are synchronized—improvement on the civil level and constrictions on the national identity level—they will have to make up their minds and choose their steps carefully.

## **Second Scenario – Security Chaos at the Borders**

**Elements of the scenario.** The fluidity and fragmentation caused by the shifts in the Arab world and the region affect the State of Israel too, in such a way that political Islam, in its military form, imposes a challenge to it on the northern, eastern and southern borders. Additionally, the disintegration of some neighboring countries that have common borders with Israel is accelerated, and the reverberations of the decrepitude and collapse arrive at the borders, which would be an impending danger to Israel. The countries neighboring Israel have become weak and their governments have declined. They have become vulnerable to the militant forces that claim Islam, but act with a takfiri jihadist ideology. In such a situation, Israel's borders will not remain safe. The Arab armies, which oversee the borders' security, will be preoccupied with other tasks, such as defending the power centers and institutions, and will leave their positions on the borders, or may completely break down and change their structure and doctrine. Military formations of so-called "takfiri Islam" may exploit this situation in order to impose a military confrontation with Israel. We

estimate that Israel, in such a case, would not tolerate the development of such a threat to its security and existence, and is likely to respond sharply and with all its strength. In such a situation, the confrontation could lengthen and evolve into a long war. Such a political security situation could postpone the issue of relations between the Palestinian minority and the state until further notice, and even the overall Palestinian issue, through incorporating it into what might happen. The state's dealing with the entire Palestinian people will become part of the state's handling of this kind of "imminent danger." This is something that will happen if Islamic forces in the Palestinian community between the sea and the river see themselves as part of the Islamist forces and their efforts in fighting Israel.

**What this means for the Palestinian Arabs.** In such a situation, we expect that the Palestinian Arabs in Israel would become divided into limited circles that support the state's war efforts against militant Islam and its organizations on its borders, particularly as it carries an unlimited fundamentalist and violent nature. This support could be translated into cooperation at all levels with the state's war effort, to the point that more Palestinian Arabs join the ranks of the army. In this case, the attribute of being an "army of occupation" would be removed and its efforts will gain a relative legitimacy with the recruits and the circles that support them, who will be moved by fear of Daesh and fundamentalist violence in the neighboring countries. Such a development would completely alter the course of relations between them and the state, and require a change in the discourse and vocabulary to redefine these relationships.

We do not rule out that other circles among the Palestinian Arabs, some publicly and some more silently, will be in favor of the political and militant Islam's fight against Israel. Some of these forces may find themselves natural candidates to engage in such a religious conflict in a framework of theories of conflict of existence with the Jews in Palestine as Hezbollah says, or the project of

a Caliphate. What is meant is that, in such a scenario, the rift and division within the Palestinian Arab community in Israel will increase. The Israeli establishment will resort to dealing harshly with those who are “enemies” and offer “incentives and privileges” to those who take a stand of support and engage in its military or political efforts against the movements of extremist political Islam, particularly in the military aspect on its borders. Rather, we have seen that the government in Israel does not wait for this to happen to take repressive measures. As we pointed out earlier, Israel resorted to outlawing the northern wing of the Islamic Movement.

**Power Alignment.** The ideological relationship between the forces of political Islam inside the Arab community in Israel, with political Islam in all its fundamentalist forms, may sometimes entice the Palestinian Arabs to get involved in the war effort against the State of Israel. This would completely complicate matters. Accordingly, the state and the Jewish community as a whole will demand that the least the Palestinian Arabs in Israel can do is totally refrain from providing any political or other assistance to the military forces of political Islam on the borders of Israel. It will even issue invitations and demands for them to politically, militarily and morally engage in the effort to defend the state and its war against these forces. The state will resort to repressing every tendency to Islamic fundamentalism and every expression of support for it (even if this expression is verbal). This means that the Palestinian Arabs will find themselves facing an unprecedented interest in them from the Jewish community and the state. They may be offered a historic deal to somehow settle the relations between them. At the same time, they may be subjected to a comprehensive campaign of suppression of all who dare to show solidarity or empathize with these forces or provide aid to them. The moderate Arab forums and the world will be divided between trying to support the Palestinian Arabs in general, and pressuring the state so as not to increase its repression. Attention will be directed to the Palestinian Arabs who are aligned alongside the

State or are neutral, and the unconditional support of the State of Israel in its defense of its borders against the jihadists. It is likely that the West would deem this to be the first line of confrontation with nihilistic Islam in defense of Europe and the West. In these cases, it is usual that the official legitimate state will win the support of the other nations.

**Possibilities and Risks.** One of the risks in such a situation is that, according to the map of the conflict, the disintegration of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel may worsen. They will be transformed into rival, colliding groups in terms of beliefs, historical destiny and options, the beginnings of which we have started to see in recent years. Whenever the conflict flares in such a situation on the borders, the debate within the Palestinian Arab community intensifies about which option should be adopted, and thus the likelihood of internal division increases. The society will be torn apart between enlisting in the war and the political effort of the state which defends its borders and its citizens (including the Arabs), and the forces pushing for a confrontation with Israel within a comprehensive religious Islamic and Jewish one.

Palestinian Arabs, more than any time before, will face a rigorous questioning by the Jewish community and the state: "either with us or against us!", a condition in which going into details, small distinctions and differences is negated in determining the public policy toward the Palestinian Arabs. In such a situation, we expect that the possibility of taking a neutral stance may be impossible. Thus, escalation will be existential for Israel, and will force it to adopt radical solutions, particularly since wide circles have developed religious or national fundamentalist tendencies. They also produce violent rhetoric whenever an escalation of the conflict occurs, such as implementing transfer and deportation of groups of Palestinian Arabs outside its borders.

## Options within the Historic Reconciliation

**The two ideas of conflict and settlement on the basis of the partition of historic Palestine and the separation of the two peoples has determined our political culture for many decades.**

**Introduction.** The two ideas of conflict and settlement on the basis of the partition of historic Palestine and the separation of the two peoples has determined our political culture for many decades. We have lived the last decades with these ideas and their various applications. The two-state solution, in some form, is still the prevalent solution in the international community and among wide circles of Israeli and Palestinian peoples. Although there are arguments and facts that state this is impossible in the current situation, and that the best option is a shared sovereignty between Jews and Palestinians, not just sharing the land in the area between the sea and the river. It seems that the EU and the US administration are so far wagering on the two-state solution and are trying to resume peace negotiations based on its assumptions. However, we believe that the Jewish and Palestinian issues have become intertwined to the point that separation between them or their future is impossible. This is a very serious and challenging issue for the familiar political culture in the Palestinian and Jewish communities, and in the area of conflict and reconciliation efforts. This situation may generate a need to leave the idea of settlement through geographical division to other settlements in the framework of a historic reconciliation that expands the array of possible options and solutions. There is no consensus on this option among the Palestinian Arabs in Israel, even though their political rhetoric and performance declaims one of the scenarios derived from reconciliation or flows in its direction. All the future scenarios documentation pointed to this trend albeit with some variation.

In the discussion of scenarios within the reconciliation option, and at this point specifically, it is important to stress that they share a basic component, which is the transition from a conflict situation to one of settlement in various forms. Some form of settlement may develop—two states, for example—into a new form, which is, one state; or into a third form, which is a confederation

between the two countries. The scenarios in this path commonly share that relations between the two peoples in the space between the sea and the river may improve and move towards a clear breakthrough. We refer here to the effective role that the Palestinian Arabs in Israel could have, on condition that they see themselves as a group able to act, influence and engage in political action independently and responsibly as an active group. Rather, they should have their own audible voice as a group, not only in the Israeli arena, but also in the arena of conflict and at the regional level. We say this, as we have begun to sense, that in recent years, there is a growing international and Israeli interest in the status of the Palestinian Arab minority in Israel and the role it could play in the future. This is paralleled in reality with the absence of such a self-perception of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel. That is precisely what we draw attention to in this report. Reaching an historic reconciliation agreement between the two peoples through negotiation, along the lines of what took place in South Africa, allows for extensive possibilities for arrangements and procedures that build on coexistence and relations between the two peoples.

Reconciliation between peoples following years of conflict has rules or conditions. It is possible if the two conflicting peoples each acknowledge responsibility for their part in the conflict: an unequal share in our context. An Israeli-Palestinian reconciliation, for example, mandates that both parties to the reconciliation provide a benefits package and procedures on the ground. Israel, for example, would get rid of the colonial tendencies in its existence, such as recognition of responsibility for the Nakba and its aftermath of historical injustice against the Palestinian people: in particular, for the establishment of Israel on the ruins of their homeland and culture, the occupation of their land in Gaza and the West Bank, the acquisition and exploitation of the natural resources, and the damages and human, material and moral losses. They will have to agree to consider the refugee issue and ways to solve it. This will

**The two-state solution, in some form, is still the prevalent solution in the international community and among wide circles of Israeli and Palestinian peoples, although there are arguments and facts that state this is impossible in the current situation, and that the best option is a shared sovereignty between Jews and Palestinians, not just sharing the land in the area between the sea and the river.**

be followed by a Palestinian pardon and forgiveness. Then come the procedures that seek to arrange this reconciliation and translate it into final arrangements on the ground. In this case, these procedures are supposed to extend to all the files, including Jerusalem and the refugees, as well as agree on arrangements of a joint or separate sovereignty and the establishment of inquiry commissions of milestone events in order to arrive at the truth. This will be followed by forgiveness and what reconciliation means in terms of declaring the end of the conflict.

Reconciliation, if it takes place, may lead to the production of new political structures allowed by the reconciliation and the terms it provides for. Such a scenario improves the living conditions and status of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel, and puts them on an equal footing with their own people and the Jewish people.

Here we refer to the possibility that reconciliation is gradual, beginning with a crucial step from which things evolve towards broader reconciliation. The establishment of a Palestinian state, as shown in the following scenario, might be a good start to the process of reconciliation or to halt the conflict and prevent its expansion or deepening as a prelude to a later reconciliation. The establishment of an independent Palestinian state within international accords or agreements between the parties will constitute the gateway to a broader reconciliation. This means that if reconciliation comes first, it could lead to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, and the establishment of such a state in a settlement or agreement may lead to a reconciliation later.

### **Third Scenario – The Independent Palestinian State**

**Elements of the Scenario.** The establishment of an independent Palestinian state is endorsed by the vast majority of states who voted in the United Nations General Assembly in December 2012 (only 9 countries

voted against the resolution), and most of them support the principle of legitimacy of a Palestinian state based on the 1967 borders. This scenario is still the subject of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and the focus of Israeli and Palestinian political discourse on settlement and resolution of the conflict. This seems to be a product of the power of acceleration, a legacy of the partition resolution of 1947, which divided historic Palestine between the Jewish and Palestinian peoples. In this regard, we take into account that more circles in Israel and Palestine have become skeptical—in light of the acceleration and expansion of the settlement enterprise—of the probability of this scenario or its feasibility for the Palestinians and the nature of the geographical area that will be their portion within this framework. This state may have the capacities and essentials to the point of enjoying full sovereignty within its borders, including security, borders, economy and currency affairs, or it could be a state with less competency with some matters connected to the state of Israel (such as security and its devices, the economy and the applicable currency). This means that a Palestinian state with full national sovereignty could be established, or a state with incomplete sovereignty in some respects.

**What this means for the Palestinian Arabs.** In such a situation, two totally contradictory developments may arise in the state's relations with the Palestinian Arabs in Israel. In the first direction, a breakthrough in the relationship may occur and things may settle to the point of full normalization founded on a shared life based on justice and equality in all aspects of life, through the equal involvement of Palestinian Arabs in government and distribution of the common good. The premise here is that the state will refrain from classifying the Palestinians as enemies or security threats and what that entails, but will consider them as full citizens and as a legitimate national minority that enjoys all its collective rights. In this context, we do not lose sight of the possibility of development of some kind of cultural or linguistic autonomy for the

Palestinian Arabs within agreements between them and the state. In the second opposite direction, the Israeli Jewish community may tend to “compensate” for a strategic geographical “concession” in the space with economic and demographic pressure on the Palestinian Arabs in Israel. This will be through confirmation of the Jewishness of the state and resettlement of the settlers in the Palestinian residential areas at the expense of the Palestinians’ development opportunities and expansion of their hometowns. Jewish Israeli leaders have already issued statements and proposals in this direction.

**Power Alignment.** The existence of a solution after all these decades of conflict will make many people ignore the details, become content with the solution and settlement, and defend it no matter what the consequences are. Elites in Israel, the Palestinian side and the Arab world would defend the solving of this historical complexity. This means dismissing what might happen in Israel or pushing the Palestinian Arabs into the corner, under the pretext that they need to adapt to this solution and not escalate it whatever their share or the implications of the solution on them. In addition, the world will find itself, after many years, free from engaging in a complicated issue, because it needs to rest from this issue and will withdraw its attention from it. This means that the Palestinian Arabs will not be on the agenda of any of the powers, except in cases of unprecedented escalation. Conceivably, their allies within Israeli society itself may want to integrate them into public life and the economy as part of the Israeli landscape and as an important factor in establishing stability after the two-state solution.

**Possibilities and Risks.** In such a case, the pressure from the Jewish majority on the Palestinian Arabs in Israel could lead to an escalation inside Israel. An escalation may bring to mind the idea of population exchange or imposing a forced annexation of Palestinian Arab residents in Israel to the neighboring Palestinian state with border adjustments from one side. Another

possibility would be the start of a new phase, where the state asks its Palestinian citizens to choose between giving up their collective and civil rights and moving to the Palestinian state. If the state goes in this direction, this would reopen the conflict with the Palestinian people, as a Palestinian state next to Israel will probably not stand by idly in such a heightened scenario. Conversely, the Palestinian Arabs in Israel could benefit from the settlement and détente. They can, through pressure within the Jewish community, become involved again from a respected position, in the Israeli experience, based on new foundations of citizenship. Calming the atmosphere and defusing the national conflict within Israel could open the conflict on the civil level, which would be easier to settle between the state and the Palestinian Arabs within it.

#### **Fourth Scenario – The Binational State**

**Elements of the scenario.** An agreement of co-existence within one bi-national state from the sea to the river based on arrangements agreed upon between the two peoples, including the Palestinians in Israel too. This comes through new legislative and institutional arrangements that ensure equal participation in sovereignty, management, policy and decision-making positions for the Palestinians. Palestinian Arabs within this scenario become part of the political system within specific arrangements provided for constitutionally. They enjoy the common good and opportunities in all areas of life, and are able to fulfill themselves as a national group and as individuals, thus achieving the right to self-determination, within an agreed political constitutional framework with the Jewish people and their leaders. This will be in accordance with a consensual democratic framework, under an agreed representative system for the two peoples. This is supposed to also be reflected in the symbols of the state, particularly the flag, the national anthem and logo.

**What this means for the Palestinian Arabs.** Such a development would regulate the relationship of the Palestinian Arabs with the state and its new system, and in which their status and rights are preserved. Such a situation is a radical change to the state of imbalance, because it recognizes the impossibility of the current division based on separation between the two peoples. This would be the beginning of a phase of coexistence in accordance with the idea of partnership, not only in the space, but also in power, resources and sovereignty. It is a translation of the transition from the principle of only sharing the land to the principle of sharing sovereignty as well, and from the principle of separation between two peoples to new ways of co-existence between them. Consequently, a review of the controversial stories, feuding identities and war of words and actions that have been ongoing for decades becomes necessary. Under such a scenario, the Palestinian Arabs in Israel would be part of their people between the sea and the river and have their fate intertwined with theirs again.

**Power Alignment.** Such a solution would have the support of the various forces involved in the conflict, Arab or international. It would not be opposed, except by parts of the right-wing and most of those with ultra-Zionist tendencies. They may be involved in sabotaging such a development, and may benefit from similarities abroad.

**Possibilities and Risks.** The risks here are minimal compared to the vast potential that such a development could open at all levels, including at the level of the status of the Palestinian Arabs, their rights and the political and economic opportunities that will open up for them. The new situation would summon elements that urge the Palestinian Arabs to modify their political positioning and behavior with what serves their interests or as required by developments; but it could put them in a sharp confrontation with the Zionist right-wing trends, which are opposed to this scenario.

## Fluidity and Intersection of the Scenarios

All the scenarios do not exist on their own. They cannot strictly take shape as we have drawn or set out as potential possibilities. There are many factors that intersect and overlap in and outside the scenarios themselves that can strongly influence them. The map of regional powers and fate of the current conflicts within the Arab countries would inevitably have an impact. In addition, the nature of the forces that will win in the conflicts, or gain control of the regimes, and the countries that will be formed as a result of the current civil wars and conflicts will also have an effect.

At an earlier stage of the history of the conflict between the Zionist movement and the Palestinian people, all the Palestinians waited, including subsequently the Palestinian Arabs in Israel, for “Arab deliverance”. They waited for the Arab solution to the status of the Zionist project’s applications in historic Palestine up to the Nakba and its aftermath, a solution that would come from the people and the Arab states combined or from one of them. At that time, our people believed, because of their deep sense of defeat and helplessness, that the solution may come from the Arab world, and they just have to wait, particularly since the Arab states were at the height of their prime and independence. This trend was fueled by radical changes witnessed by the Arab world at the time in regime changes and the emergence of nationalism and its discourse, a condition that ended with the ‘Naksa’ (setback) in 1967 and the emergence of the Arab state of weakness and inability to triumph over Israel. The Palestinian national project with its strategies and programs evolved from this situation, until the Algiers Declaration and the abandonment of some of the basic principles of the Palestinian National Charter and the final acceptance of sharing the land within the framework of a settlement with Israel. Currently, there is a repeated case of waiting by some parts in our community, who are wagering on political Islam, with its various branches,

**The four future scenarios for the Palestinian Arabs in Israel do not exist on their own. They cannot strictly take shape as we have drawn or set out as potential possibilities. There are many factors that intersect and overlap in and outside the scenarios themselves that can strongly influence them.**

**Situations may arise in the event of tremendous improvements towards co-existence in which the constituent Palestinian society groups leave the collective umbrella of the Palestinian identity in the area of historic Palestine and go with their own options.**

which is experiencing what are considered to be its gains within the transformations taking place now. We are in a similar situation, in terms of a general feeling of limited prospects on the Palestinian and local level, and the emergence of an Islamic expansion, with its two factions: the political and nihilistic fundamentalism. Therefore, we expect the emergence of trends that espouse the possibility of political Islam triumphing in the whole region, including historic Palestine. There are even those among us who are expecting this victory and assert for themselves and the community that such a victory is closer than we imagine. There is no doubt that the victory of political or militaristic Islam in the Arab region or in part of it will leave its impact on the scenarios we have mentioned in terms of the complexity of their occurrence or their acceleration. The victory of political Islam in the neighboring countries could push toward an open confrontation with Israel, and to an existential war and not one of borders, in which Palestinian Arabs in Israel will be forced to decide on the existential level, whether they are with the state or against it, thereby eliminating the possibility of neutrality.

Such a development in its limited form means that Israel, the state, and the Jewish community will postpone the Palestinian issue and the relationship with the Palestinian Arabs in Israel, to face the new threat. However, if we witness an unlimited development in this direction, right up to a full-scale war, the consequences of this war will consume the Palestinian issue completely, and with it the issue of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel. Hence, they are either with the state in its war effort, or against it. In the second circumstance, the state will step up its repression campaigns leading to the option of deportation as part of the opportunity that a comprehensive war will open. This means that the Palestinian Arabs in Israel may pay the price of such a war more than others.

In such a situation, Israel (state and society) will find itself in partnerships and alliances with Arab powers who oppose jihadist or political Islam, in the context of

ensuring their interests or part thereof. This will have implications on the position of part of the Palestinian Arab citizens, who may take a supportive stance of these alliances, compared to others who may object. Israel may become a part of the powers and alliances opposing jihadist Islam, and participate in the multilateral effort against it. We say this, pointing to the possibility of the sectarian conflict between Sunni and Shiite Islam, albeit with different labels, and its entry into the conflicts and moving wars in the region to contribute to the impact on the scenarios we set. There are several sites in the region that are witnessing the beginnings of such a conflict, as is happening in Iraq, Syria and Yemen, for example, or Shi'ite unrest in Saudi Arabia and Bahrain.

In such cases, the nature of the conflict and its vocabulary changes, in addition to the map of alliances and animosities. These are radical transformations of the process that change each of the scenarios discussed above, and change the nature of the role that the Palestinian Arabs in Israel can play, if they still have a role.

**Intersections.** Whatever the possible scenario is—and one scenario might arise from another—they have one thing in common. All these options, whether they have the blessing of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel or not, whether they are implemented with their involvement or without them, require some kind of willingness to deal with them. It would be useful to define a position and some kind of collective will in dealing with the mentioned scenarios, and the changes arising therefrom.

We must take into consideration—in the event that the trends of co-existence, equality and integration develop between the two peoples in the framework of the major scenarios, whether in one state or in a historic reconciliation—that there is no longer a need for a collective existence in the sense assumed by the contrary scenarios: Israel is transformed into a declared apartheid state, or subjects the Palestinian Arabs in Israel to state

**Another form of the internal alignment of our society may arise from communication and cohesion with the other parts of our people, in contrast to the possible development arising from improved co-existence within Israel.**

**According to the major scenarios a need is generated for the Palestinian community to organize the collective will, bodies and representation. This is reflected differently when they head to unification, as the conditions of talking about the "Palestinians in Israel" are negated, and they become about the Palestinian people vis-à-vis the Jewish people in historic Palestine.**

violence. Situations may arise in which the constituent Palestinian society groups leave the collective umbrella of the Palestinian identity in the area of historic Palestine and go with their own options. This means that there will be no need for a resolution or will from the rest of the constituent groups of the Palestinian people. This situation may arise in light of our community structure and its social and religious composition. In the current reality, there is relative segmentation that would be the foundations for such an internal evolution.

Another form of the internal alignment of our society may arise from communication and cohesion with the other parts of our people. Within the major scenarios, whether they are heading towards reconciliation and co-existence, or towards escalation of the conflict, a need is generated to organize the collective will, bodies and representation. This is reflected differently when they head to unification, as the conditions of talking about the "Palestinians in Israel" are negated, and they become about the Palestinian people vis-à-vis the Jewish people in historic Palestine. This scenario is justified in the overall accounting of demography and geography. It even enters, since the partition resolution in 1947, in the strategic calculations of the Jewish and Palestinian peoples and in the international system dealing with the historic conflict over Palestine and in it.

This means that, within the larger scenarios, we have to take into account the demographic issue, which will witness a qualitative change. Therefore, it is important to introduce it within the strategic calculations as a discerning community that seeks to study the future for the purpose of participating according to its capabilities in identifying the future and making history, side by side with other forces that share the spatial and temporal space.

The common denominator itself brings us back to a point we mentioned previously, which is a new self-building of the Palestinian Arab minority in Israel. This is so they

can be able to study the possible receptors and be ready to take an active and influential role in what could arise and evolve from scenarios that could vary between short and long-term. We propose this strategic report as an opening for this.

**A complementary scenario... an opposing scenario.**

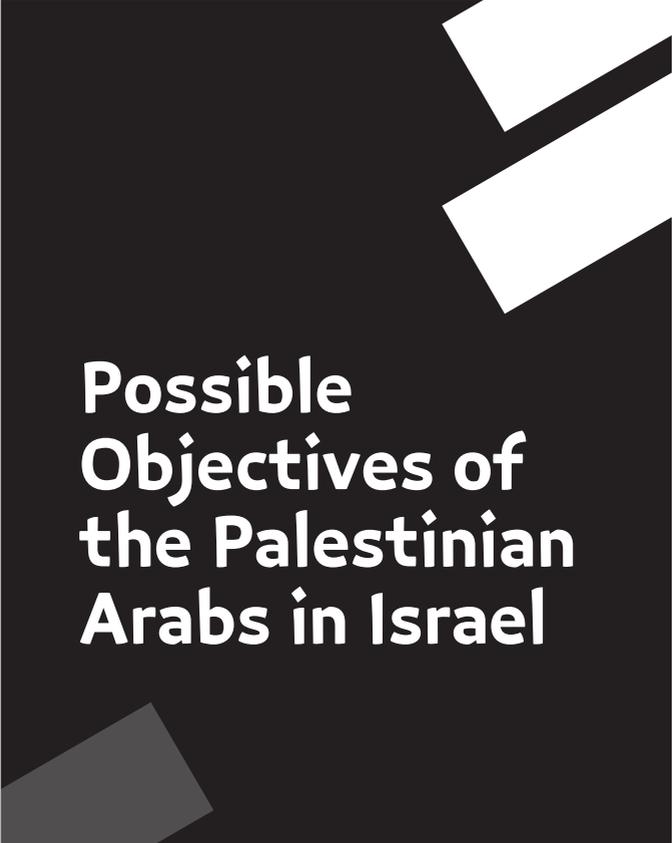
The scenarios are connected to each other or complement each other. It is important to see and be aware of this, so that the options in front of us do not remain along the lines of "either ... or ...." We have to see the commonalities between all the options derived from reconciliation or those that flow in that direction. We have to see the consequences of the absence of reconciliation, such as escalation, for example, in all of them. Hence the need arises for opposing initiatives that support what is desirable, and hinders the unwanted. In the case of escalation, the Palestinian Arabs in Israel could propose the autonomy option, or a more sophisticated rule, in order to intercept the escalation or face the violence that may be imposed by the state.

In this case, we cannot close the door in the face of objections or initiatives dictated by developments, particularly those undesirable, so long as the scenarios drawn here remain as theoretical foundations and possibilities between which, and within whose boundaries, we can move with agility in the hope of acquiring what is possible and beneficial for us as a community. (See matrix)

The opposing scenarios also assume choosing appropriate strategies. For example, refusing escalation and proposing autonomy as an alternative requires working with non-violent means, and so on. We note that the Future Vision document (National Committee) and the democratic constitution developed by Adalah propose autonomy and participation in governance within the scenario of a two-state solution.

**Given the possibility of Palestinian unification then, within the larger scenarios, we have to take into account the demographic issue, which will witness a qualitative change. Therefore, it is important to introduce it within the strategic calculations as a discerning community that seeks to study the future for the purpose of participating according to its capabilities in identifying the future and making history, side by side with other forces that share the spatial and temporal space.**





**Possible  
Objectives of  
the Palestinian  
Arabs in Israel**





## Introduction

Strategic thinking does not stop at drawing scenarios or reviewing them with their possibilities and impediments. It goes beyond the review and analysis process to try to set objectives to work on these scenarios to apply and advance them towards realization, or to intercept and prevent their happening or deter their expected harm. Accordingly, setting objectives for this or that direction is a part of this process, which is the beginning of the practical part of strategic thinking. Defining the objectives is an introduction to reconciling the capacities in order to achieve them. It is starting to draw action plans to place before the strategic authority, the agency responsible for implementation or those that assume responsibility for achieving the objectives.

Usually, the objectives are extended on a time axis. Some require work on them immediately and are short-term, while some can be left for long or intermediate terms. We have tried in the following to map them.

It is natural that we go from defining the scenarios to three parallel, accumulated and combined processes, namely:

**Firstly**, we derive the strategic objectives from the possible scenarios. They have four paths mentioned above that include—in our estimation—sub-scenarios we should pay attention to.

**Secondly**, we classify these objectives between short, intermediate and long-term.

**Thirdly**, we see the intersections of time between these objectives; some correspond or have hierarchical relationships between them as will be explained later.

## Short-term Objectives (5 – 10 years)

The team meetings and discussions with the social and political leaders whose opinions were surveyed, led to a recommendation to abandon the major scenarios after their diagnosis, and to immediately start working on the internal structure of the Palestinian Arab community in Israel in light of its affliction from fragmentation, disintegration and the absence of any collective will or unified general opinion, with no significant change in their status and development prospects. All of this occurs in light of persisting government and state policies with regard to our society, with its system of repression and reward. On the one hand, there is a series of legislation against our society based on national background, while on the other hand there are intervention projects and plans, financial remittances for urban development and the development of economic facilities, particularly in the infrastructure and operation sectors.

### **Objectives:**

- a. Develop a founding and regulating text for the Palestinian Arab minority in Israel. This text would attend to the reformulation of unanimous constants in an open and receptive manner, defining its contents, including the nature of internal relations by consolidating the concepts of pluralism, values of democracy, dialogue and equality for all.
- b. Based on item (a), develop a reasonable range of collective will through building collective bodies. Here, there should be a study of the feasibility of two options: 1. Develop what exists of these bodies (the Follow-Up Committee and the National Committee of Heads of Arab Local Authorities); 2. Establish new bodies beyond the existing structure in labels, nature of representation and rules of procedure and functions. There is also the possibility of merging the two by developing the existing bodies and building new ones as needed.
- c. Based on items (a) and (b) in parallel, develop a collective will represented in the bodies, decisions and

**A part of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel insists on a Palestinian state with doctrines and practices of a religious community whose authority is the Sharia and religious rule, in the way of political Islam as embodied in a preaching political movement—the Islamic Movement, with its two influential wings. There is additionally an Islamic discourse coming from the Arab neighbors, where political Islam has become the main player at this stage.**

concept based on the development of an agreed vision in order to have the consensus of the active forces.

### **Intermediate-term Objectives (10 – 20 years)**

At this level, we can discern those objectives that can be reached within 10 – 20 years. The discussions of the work team ascertained that these are objectives at two levels: the internal and the relationship with the state.

#### **At the internal level:**

Realization of a kind of collective will within the framework of a culture of pluralism and its mechanisms, through the development of founding texts, and representative frameworks and building new frameworks when deemed necessary.

#### **In the relationship with the State level:**

Realization of more citizenship rights, notably equality in the field of economy and development, local governance and acquiring resources, as well as expansion of living space by changing construction and planning policies.

In summation, we can consider that the primary objective in the intermediate-term is to achieve constitutional, legal and practical equality at the level of individuals and the community. Therefore, it is essential to link the struggle for rights in this section with the struggle of other groups in the state for impartiality. Furthermore, we need to connect with the struggle of other forces in Israeli society, and thus it becomes necessary in this section to adopt a strategic partnership with the Jewish community.

Here, the purpose is to affirm the Palestinian Arabs' desire to full, uncompromised citizenship in the State of Israel, within the framework of an agreement with the state and through the struggle against exclusionary and marginalizing policies.

### **Objectives:**

a. Ensuring individual rights, equality of opportunities and possibilities for the members of the Palestinian Arab minority in Israel as individuals.

b. Attaining recognition as a national group who have collective rights, as enshrined in international conventions relating to the rights of national and indigenous minorities. We assume that ensuring the collective rights of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel would enhance the chances of individuals' enjoyment of their rights.

c. A redistribution of resources, through dealing with the concept of historical justice and correcting the injustice afflicted on the Palestinians in Israel by the conflict.

### **Long-term Objectives (20 – 40 years)**

**These are related to the major scenarios, such as:**

1. Realization of the historic reconciliation between the two peoples in historic Palestine, within a broader reconciliation between the Jewish community and the peoples and nations of the region, or with the Palestinians without the others.

2. Procedural establishment, in terms of the process of formation of a joint life according to an agreed formula.

Here it is difficult to show agreement or consensus among the Palestinians in Israel, particularly with regard to the varying active ideologies and beliefs. There are Palestinian Arabs in Israel who dream of an Islamic state, where there is no separation between religion and the state, within a Caliphate or similar form. Another part sees the need for a secular state: a state in which the citizens and communities live with complete separation between religion (any religion) and state. In this regard, one state means a state of a nation of all citizens, regardless of their religious or national affiliation. There are those who want an open society in the world and globalization that ensures full equality between the sexes, and guarantees the rights of its members within

**There are those that envision a Palestinian state who want an open society in the world and globalization that ensures full equality between the sexes, and guarantees the rights of its members within their individual choices (a civil social system without any form of religious, ideological or social coercion from any party whatsoever).**

**Cultural pluralism is essential for the internal structure of a successful Palestinian state. This is founded on the right and legitimacy of all the forces to exist and act in accordance with the requirements of the democratic system, particularly the mechanisms to manage differences and disagreement through dialogue and discussion.**

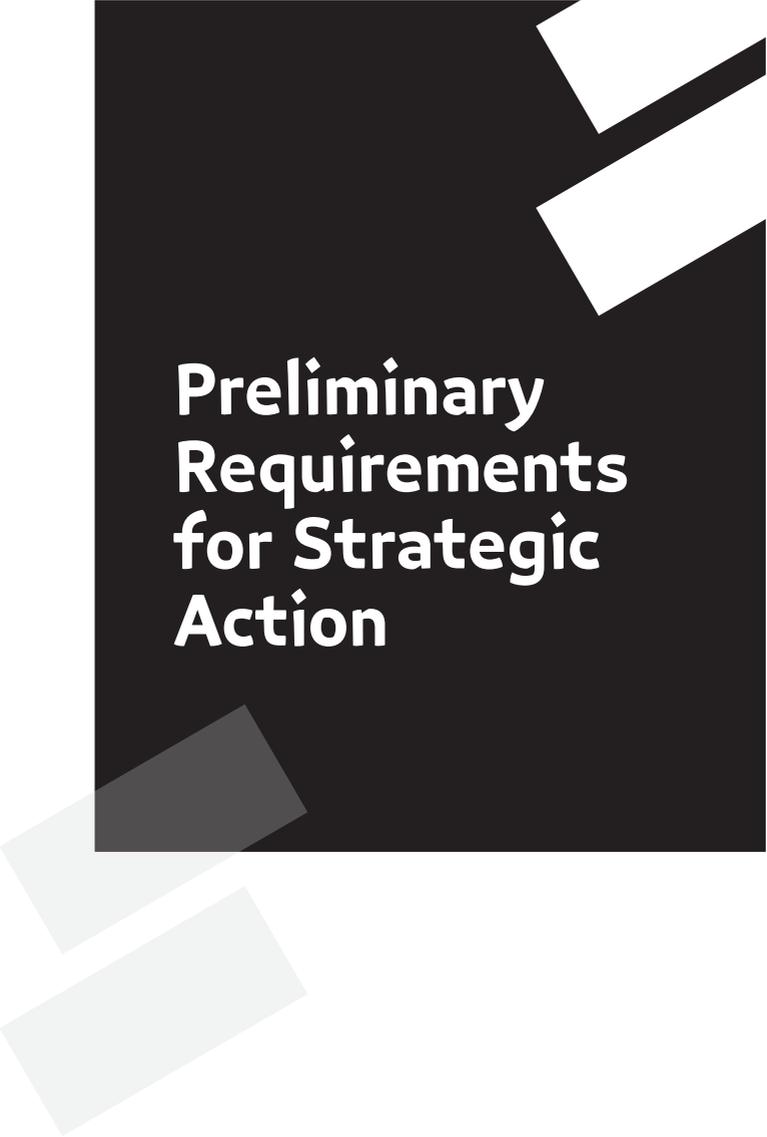
their individual choices (a civil social system without any form of religious, ideological or social coercion from any party whatsoever). In contrast, another part insists on doctrines and practices of a religious community whose authority is the Sharia and religious rule, in the way of political Islam as embodied in a preaching political movement—the Islamic Movement, with its two influential wings. There is additionally an Islamic discourse coming from the Arab neighbors, where political Islam has become the main player at this stage.

These differences may pose a weakness, because they reflect the absence of agreement and ability for joint action within the framework of a common form. This weakness becomes fatal if the powers in the Palestinian Arab society are influenced by the changes in the Arab world. Where there is emergence of a violent and ideological political Islam, in a manner that exceeds the local community, its interests and visions, toward a totalitarian ideology that is centralized elsewhere and from which it draws its thought and practice, such as the Muslim Brotherhood movement in the vicinity, the Islamic caliphate according to Daesh, or the Islamic Emirates in accordance with the Al-Nusra Front in Syria. This risk can be avoided by deepening the culture of pluralism. Cultural pluralism is essential for the internal structure. This is founded on the right and legitimacy of all the forces to exist and act in accordance with the requirements of the democratic system, particularly the mechanisms to manage differences and disagreement through dialogue and discussion. This pluralism is also needed, to address the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and develop solutions that take into account the rights and interests of the other and the different, and does not build on concepts of oppression and subjugation. This advanced political culture would be our moral response and strength that we enjoy in the face of all the challenges. Whatever the differences, the report work team sees the possibility of preventing their transformation into obstacles inhibiting an agreement on the general issues and common objectives in the intermediate or short-term. They know

that this possibility is conceivable and is happening now, as differences in perceptions or the major narratives of the forces that make up the Palestinian Arab community in Israel, prevent serious or effective cooperation or partnerships in the initial matters such as the success of a joint activity of struggle.

**This pluralism is also needed, to address the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and develop solutions that take into account the rights and interests of the other and the different, and does not build on concepts of oppression and subjugation.**





**Preliminary  
Requirements  
for Strategic  
Action**

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In the shift from identifying strategic options and objectives to determining the kind of policies and strategic means, we have to successfully pass the test of practical transition from the question “what should be done?” to the question “how can it be done better?” This is a question that should be answered every time through the collective bodies or strategic forum that we recommend building. We presume that implementing a collective strategic action would require complying with a series of integrated strategies that, together, seek to achieve the objectives at their various levels. The strategies are those mechanisms that allow the Palestinian Arabs in Israel to effectively utilize their resources to achieve the set objectives. Here, we propose that the strategies be used after study and testing without any randomness or improvisation, while maintaining a flexibility that allows replacement of the strategies that have been proven inadequate, with those that are proven to be effective, as long as we maintain integration between what is being adopted.

### **Formation of a “Strategic Forum”**

The report assumes that strategic planning, which should follow strategic thinking, and achieving any of the strategic objectives, no matter how simple, should be completely contingent on achieving a kind of “strategic forum.” We dealt with this issue in the objectives section under “reasonable collective will.” This means that all the differences in views and beliefs should not preclude the Palestinian Arabs in Israel from coordination, cooperation and realizing action and struggle partnerships on the points agreed upon. This is an essential preconceived strategic requirement,

without which there cannot be a national strategy. We do not assume the existence of a detailed consensus on every detail, nor merging the trends in one body, but rather that the Palestinian Arabs in Israel can achieve an agreement on the mechanisms of managing differences, making decisions and implementing them. This means attaining a sufficient level of strategic coordination to carry out a coordinated strategic action. This is conditional on the adoption of democratic mechanisms in building the internal relations between the Palestinian Arabs in Israel. Here, democracy ceases being a mechanism, an idea or system, and becomes a condition for acquiring the ability to act strategically. This is what we detailed how to achieve in the short-term objectives section.

### **Common Needs**

There is another condition for the strategic act to occur, that is no less important. This is to identify the interests and needs that are intended to be worked on and for. The report work team sees that it is important for this to happen, by rebuilding a map of the needs and interests through a dialogue of all the active forces with the people in their towns, institutions and frameworks. This condition prevents the distancing of the public or overlooking their real needs and interests. The way to do this could be by espousing proven scientific mechanisms led by professionals, such as opinion polls, conferences, focus groups, field surveys and research. We have to pay attention to the fact that there are different sectors with different interests, which calls for the strategic action to find the right intersection points between them.

### **Priorities**

There is another preliminary action that is related to what was mentioned in item 2. This is to define the priorities based on the identified map of needs. This is an important measure for the investment of capacities and resources to advance the public's most important

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issues. It is a necessary condition in order to prevent squandering of the struggle resources. Furthermore, it is an important strategic action in view of the huge waste of strategic resources in the conflicts inside Israel, or the struggles on minor or unimportant issues of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel. As the resources and capabilities are limited, therefore we should be careful how we exploit and take advantage of them.

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**Crucial  
Points for  
the Strategic  
Forum**



## Social Structure

**The work team finds a particular importance in understanding the obstacles present in the social structure of Palestinian society in Israel that prevent moving to a strategic political act. The first of these obstacles is the patriarchal social structure, and its propensity in recent decades to a new conservative tendency educed from the local and incoming ideas of “political Islam,” particularly with regard to women, their social status and gender in general.**

The work team finds a particular importance in understanding the obstacles present in the social structure of our society that prevent moving to a strategic political act. The first of these obstacles is the patriarchal social structure, and its propensity in recent decades to a new conservative tendency educed from the local and incoming ideas of “political Islam,” particularly with regard to women, their social status and gender in general. The promising beginnings of the emancipation of women, prevalence of gender discourse, empowerment of women and ensuring their participation in the social process of every possible issue, which we witnessed in the 1980s, for example, has receded into a social and religious discourse that reserves specific social functions for women. This is particularly seen in the popular struggles, where the Islamic forces insist on the separation of women and men, claiming the provisions of Sharia law and its requirements. The enhancement of such a trend poses a serious impediment to the possibility of benefiting from the experience of collective strategic action.

In the same context, we note with concern the intensification of the tribal and familial structures, as well as sectarian patterns in the discourse, politicians’ work and social relations. This weakens the collective structure of the society and the formation of some kind of collective will. In particular, the enmity happening between the sections in our society produces tensions, altercations and violence that all confirm

the disintegration, thus extending an uncomfortable atmosphere for cooperation and coordination, or any influential strategic action.

The same can be said about the existing classification of class and territory in our society, and the resulting feelings of injustice, arrogance or alienation between parts of the society and its components. These feelings, in turn, hinder joint action and the inclusive thought of society's dimensions.

### **The Common/ Separate Struggle**

The "strategic forum" will have to resolve this matter. Our recommendation, based on our discussions and experience in the field, is that the two forms of Jewish-Arab partnership and separate action, are two forms worth adopting. The question is the feasibility of this or that in this or that issue. In light of what we have found, the future clearly indicates that co-existence will be part of most of the scenarios and within each settlement. Therefore, we must seriously consider the option of adopting partnership as a key strategy to confirm the possibility of co-existence, joint action, production and future. This is the responsibility of Arabs and Jews alike, and as a matter of taking responsibility for the desired future, the system of privileges available to the Jewish community is dismantled. This makes the concept of partnership a different concept to the one we are used to so far. It goes without saying that our interests and objectives as a group, match and converge with the interests, ideas and beliefs of sectors in the Jewish community.

Considering the facts and developments, from limited political prospects based on the separation between the two peoples, and the impossibility of separation, except through transfer: we assume that the Jews and Arabs will live in the same space before and after any settlement, because political fluidity in the region has reached unprecedented bloody limits. Since we reject

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the principle of uprooting or ethnic cleansing of any party, the Jewish-Arab partnership may not remain a mechanism for change, but the desired objective of change. This is what may be assumed in going into the conflict with an openness to the Jewish question and the right of the Jewish community and its vision, with the same standards we use to look at ourselves and our rights. Rather, the change may be latent in a revolution seeking to devote the principles of co-existence and equal openhandedness as an objective for us, which we transform into practice in a context of strategic thinking and action.

### **Media, Marketing and Mobilization**

The question that should be posed by our society here is: How do we transform the superiority of our just cause as a persecuted society, subjected to oppression, discrimination, exclusion and historical injustice, into a force that influences a change in reality and the achievement of our strategic objectives? This question brings us to the content of our narrative and political project and how to present, market, or express them. We have to manage these questions and answer them in close connection with profit and loss accounting in the war of narratives! The concept of the war of narratives – the war of words or propaganda – acquires a particular importance for two reasons: Firstly, we live in an era of media that is based on images, representations and scoops. Secondly, the Palestinian Arabs in Israel are owners of a just cause versus the supremacy of power enjoyed by the Jewish majority, who singularly have the authority and power, tools and state capacities.

The issue, in another aspect of it, requires dealing with details and particles concerning the relationship with the media and how we manage it, as well as the identity of the body responsible for building an integrated media plan. This leaves this and other issues to detailed options determined by the strategic forum after its formation. We assume that the media campaign's target groups

may change as needed, as it may be the Palestinian Arab community itself, the Jewish community and the decision-makers in the state, international forums or a particular country, or the Arab world in general or a particular country, or all these parties combined. Here, a need arises for the development of skills to work not only in the Israeli arena, but also opposite the international and regional forums, as part of the quest to influence, and as part of the current intersection between politics and interests.

### **Integrating the Various Strategies**

The work team sees the need for openness to creative integration between several options and strategies. We have already referred to the discussions in the Palestinian community on the feasibility of participating in or boycotting the parliamentary elections, and feasibility of participating in or boycotting the legislative authority. This is a strategic axis that should be decided on and not neglected or left to time, or to the principle that what was is what will be. There may be a need for a comprehensive review of the matter, whether to replace participation with boycott, or rebuild participation, so as to ensure greater efficiency and influence (as in the case of the establishment of the Joint List). This would be done in the spirit of what the strategic forum specifies as interim or long-term objectives. Here, boycott would not just be a conscientious position, or an outflanking of the participating parties in the parliamentary elections, but rather a legitimate and worthy idea to consider as a strategic choice for the Palestinian Arabs in Israel, not just secondary speculations proposed on the eve of every election.

### **The Nature of the Struggle**

It may be necessary, with the passage of time, to discuss the nature of the struggle at two levels.

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**The struggle for improving the lives of Palestinian Arabs in Israel within the context of achieving equal citizenship requires taking strategic responsibility that exceeds the rivalry with the authority or the Jewish majority, to an influential pragmatic position. We assume that our presence within a state of conflict that escalates from time to time, compels us to assert our peaceful struggle, which is aimed at developing our status and our lives within, and not outside, the political condition.**

used to, such as a press release, demonstration, sit-in, and strike, to other types that the human experience and literature dealing with struggles and social and political change abound with.

**Secondly**, at the level of the nature of this struggle and the tendency to develop forms of non-violent resistance as a final strategic choice, which is necessitated by the conditions of the situation. The struggle within the citizenship option requires taking strategic responsibility that exceeds the rivalry with the authority or the Jewish majority, to an influential pragmatic position. We assume that our presence within a state of conflict that escalates from time to time, compels us to assert our peaceful struggle, which is aimed at developing our status and our lives within, and not outside, the political condition.

### **Disengagement with Foreign Violence and Tyranny Projects**

One of the characteristics of Palestinian Arab politics in Israel is that it associated, from time to time, with an Arab or foreign ideological trusteeship, or sought the shelter in an external project, such as Arabism, the Baath socialist camp or political Islam. In some forms, the ties were linked to a dictator or a tyranny project and security systems. We recognize the importance of communicating with the Arab and Islamic world, and with what is happening and developing in them of outstanding democratic and liberal ideas and examples. This is a human and cultural link preserved by international covenants. However, the team sees the great damage in the link with totalitarian projects that refuse Jews and Israel out of principle and deal with them with counter-racism. The team believes in the need to refrain from linking our struggles here within a deliberate and calculated framework, and the violence against Israel as a state or against citizens outside its borders, regardless of the causes. There is a need to disengage from such violence and consider

the damage it does to our just cause and struggles. The team believes in the importance of political, intellectual and moral engagement with the Jewish question in every future strategic thinking or planning, while paying attention to not fall into the trap of Zionist hegemony or to tolerate the pretentious racial thought dominant in Israel today. The matter is left to the strategic forum that we recommend be formed to decide on such issues, within integrated theses and efforts that stem from the will of the Palestinian Arabs and their aspirations.

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