



*A Review for the Palestinian Human Development Report 09/10*

# Investing in Human Security for a Future Palestinian State: In Larger Freedom and Participatory State Building

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# Presentation Content

- Introduction to the Report.
- The Context: Elusive Sustainable Development, Territorial Fragmentation and Political Polarization.
- Human Security in the oPt: ‘In Larger Freedom’ Dimensions.
- Investing in Human Security in the oPt: Towards Cohesion and Participatory State Building.
- Conclusions and Reflections.

# Introduction to the Report

- Failure in state building ‘venture’ since 17 years, despite of the \$14 billion investment/aid.
- Crisis in human dignity and human security in the oPt.
- Continuous de-development, however the same ‘conventional wisdom’ is still followed and recommended.
- A Palestinian independent State in 2011!
- Shift toward alternative development and conflicts resolution paradigms: Human Security First; Participatory State building Approach; the usage of the indigenous mechanisms; the revival of the First *Intifada*/Uprising resistance modes.

# The Context: Elusive Sustainable Development, Territorial Fragmentation and Political Polarization

- Progress in human development under prolonged occupation, is extremely difficult.
- No progress can be reported regarding sustainable human and economic development in the oPt.
- Palestinians are not in a poverty of insufficiency but a poverty of disempowerment.
- Administrative measures and physical impositions lead to the creation of Bantustans in WBGS.
- The intra-Palestinian conflict and political polarization may lead to a status of social fragmentation.

# Human Security in the oPt: ‘In Larger Freedom’ Dimensions

- Human security is concerned with freedom & dignity, and involves empowerment & protection as two mutually reinforcing strategies.
- Prioritize freedom from fear, freedom from want, and freedom to live in dignity.
- The freedom to live in dignity in the oPt is ‘palpably absent’: psychological heath and environmental insecurities.
- High levels of economic insecurity and limited economic policy space available to the PNA.
- High levels of personal, community & political insecurities: Palestinians are unable to enjoy the right to self-determination.

# ...How to Alleviate Human Insecurity?

- Building a self-sustaining economy; working on consensus regarding liberation strategies and galvanizing a popular movement to promote and protect civil and political rights.
- Two civil campaigns can be employed: The first for civil and political rights in a non-violent resistance format, and the second for the right to self-determination.
- Political national reconciliation and end the occupation!

# Investing in Human Security in the oPt: Towards Cohesion and Participatory State Building

- Assuming a prolonged transmission to sovereignty and self-determination, a *pragmatic approach* is proposed to promote development and human security.
- However, such pragmatic approach is not ‘new’, may sustain the occupation and the status quo: To what extent, is the human security paradigm possible under occupation?
- It represents a shift from state-centric strategy for development and state-building toward a civil society-centric strategy: The Fayyaddism approach and the 13<sup>th</sup> government plan is ‘ignored’.
- Shift toward *radical/idealistic proposals* is urgently needed.

# Investing in Human Security in the oPt: Towards Cohesion and Participatory State Building....Contd

- Within current political polarization, investing in social cohesion as one aspect of human security in the oPt, is urgently needed.
- This investment will apply an indigenous conflict resolution model, known as *Sulha*, which is traditionally used to mediate disputes between individuals and families.
- This *National Sulha* promote social healing, discourage revenge attacks, establish culture of reconciliation and peace, and revitalize traditional community reconciliation processes.
- Donors should urgently endorse the Do No Harm principles and redouble their investment in Palestinian civil society.

# Investing in Human Security in the oPt: Towards Cohesion and Participatory State Building....Contd

- Will this tribal-centered mechanism be the magical solution? And How good is the revival of informal mechanisms of dispute resolution, instead of promoting rule of law?
- Such *National Sulha* is necessary, but not sufficient, to create a culture of reconciliation, forgiveness and peace.
- More questions are raised: Who will sponsor this *National Sulha*? How its neutrality can be guaranteed? What does donors 'supportive role' mean? What about the power asymmetric? Who will force donors to apply the do no harm principles?

# **Investing in Human Security in the oPt: Towards Cohesion and Participatory State Building....Contd**

- Investment in another indigenous practice, called *Sumud*. *Sumud* defined as ‘the motivation to persist through steadfastness and a sense of connection with the land in order to achieve self-reliance and navigate a life under occupation’.
- However, this investment requires certain level of volunteerism: The spirit of volunteerism is in crisis in the oPt.
- Indeed, It is the duty of the civil society and not the Palestinian Authority to revive the principles of *Sumud*.

# **Investing in Human Security in the oPt: Towards Cohesion and Participatory State Building....Contd**

- What to do when the existing Authorities are weak and ‘illegitimate’? ...Invest in a participatory state-building strategy.
- This strategy lead by the civil society, can be complemented with an independent national Commission for Representative Governance to ensure the transparency of the Palestinian State.
- This participatory state building strategy has four main priorities: Territorial contiguity; economic integration; social cohesion; sovereignty and political reconciliation.

# **Investing in Human Security in the oPt: Towards Cohesion and Participatory State Building....Contd**

- However, participatory state building strategy requires the development and strengthening of the appropriate governance and delivery mechanisms that are linked to, and coherent with, oPt-wide administrative structures.
- In parallel to the participatory state building strategy, the creation of a taskforce to establish a comprehensive Palestinian Emergency and Disaster Response Strategy is necessary if the human security agenda is to be made operational.

# Conclusions and Reflections

- This shift toward human security and participatory state building approaches, is recommended to be pursued after the failure of the traditional approaches to promote sustainable development.
- The civil society through campaigning and mobilizing has now the opportunity to lead, and compensate the weak role of the PA.
- However, the only way to guarantee a sustainable development and human security, is by ending the illegal Israeli occupation.
- The unanswered question remains: When the ‘peace’ discourse will shift from ‘Israel-Security First’ and ‘West Bank First’ toward ‘Palestinian Human Security First’?



# Investing in Human Security for a Future Palestinian State...

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