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IS OCTOBER 7 REALLY ISRAEL'S 9/11?

The Israeli-Palestinian war has been going on for decades. The war was back on the world agenda on October 7, after Hamas attacked Israel. Israel's response to Hamas' actions has been and continues to be very harsh. The Western world, in particular, states that Israel has the right to "self-defense" and that they stand by Israel until the end. But are Israel's attacks on Gaza really a consequence of Hamas' attacks? To answer this question, we need to look at a bit of history. If the displacement of millions of people in Gaza today, the cutting off electricity and water, the bombing of hospitals, schools, ambulances,

refugee camps, homes, the killing of children, women, the elderly, the sick, the murder of people, the building of new Jewish settlements in the West Bank where Palestinians were forced out, the violent prevention of Friday prayers at Al-Aqsa Mosque by soldiers and police, were the result of Hamas' actions, what was the cause of the innocent people killed in 2008, 2014, 2021?

Israel's construction of settlements in violation of the UN Resolutions, its attitude contrary to the Oslo process, its failure to implement the 1948 and 1967

Conventions, in other words, its total disregard for international law, is nothing new. Moreover, the state of Israel violates international law not only because it does not respect UN Resolutions, does not operate the peace process, and does not abide by the 1967 Convention. It also violates international law by committing war crimes, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing and genocide. Indeed, the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide's definition of 'genocide' as "the intent to exterminate all or part of a distinct human community on account of nationality, race, ethnic origin or religion" is an intent held by the State of Israel. Likewise, "killing members of the community", "causing serious physical and mental harm to members of the community", "knowingly subjecting members of the community to conditions of life that would lead, in whole or in part, to their physical destruction", all of which are also in the Convention, have been and are repeatedly practiced by the state of Israel against the Palestinians.

Of course, we know very well that international law can be bent for Palestine, for Bosnia, for East Turkistan, for Somalia, for Iraq, for Afghanistan. The US and the UK send aircraft carriers and countless ammunition to Israel and declare full support from the most authoritative mouths because an organization has launched various attacks on Israel. US President Joe Biden meets with Benjamin Netanyahu and tells him about the tragedy of the Israelis and makes a statement like "it seems that the other team carried out the hospital attack". And where are these "defenders of international law" while Gaza is being destroyed?

One of Joe Biden's remarks was that October 7 was a trauma fifteen times the

size of 9/11. Consciously and unconsciously, the public opinion in many countries, especially in Israel and the US, has adopted the discourse of "Israel's 9/11". Was October 7 really Israel's 9/11? Who benefits from this discourse? What dangers does it carry?

On September 11, 2001, Al-Qaeda hijacked four commercial airliners and attacked the World Trade Center Buildings (Twin Towers) and the Pentagon in the US, killing 3,000 people. In the aftermath of this attack, the US was transformed into a security state and a "war on terror" was declared. This declaration did not only include the United States. The whole world tried to unite for the war against terrorism and one thing led to another. The war on terror, the Bush Doctrine, the war in Afghanistan, the war in Iraq were a succession of disasters. It was as if the US was writing its own international law. Al-Qaeda's attack gave the United States a disproportionate "right of self-defense" everywhere. So much so that Bush invented the so-called "preemptive right of self-defense" as a concept of international law. According to this concept, the US would have the right of self-defense against any state or organization that it thought might attack it, without any evidence. This concept was not recognized in international law, but the US invaded Iraq precisely on this ground. It should come as no surprise that the US has now declared its full support for Israel and paved the way for its presence in the region.

It is also important to explain what this right of self-defense, which has been used by states in various forms to their advantage over the years, actually is. Article 2, paragraph 4 of the UN Charter strictly prohibits states from using violence

or threats of violence. The exceptions are self-defense and the use of force authorized by the UN Security Council. The right of self-defense is a right granted to states under Article 51 of the UN Charter under certain conditions. Accordingly, the right to self-defense can only arise when the state concerned is subjected to an 'attack'. But this is not the only condition. The right to self-defense must also be exercised 'immediately' following the attack. Another condition is that the use of force under the right to self-defense must be 'proportionate' to the initial attack. Finally, this right can be exercised until 'the decision of the UN Security Council'. As can be seen, Israel is exercising its so-called right of self-defense in violation of the principle of proportionality.

But beyond all this, was October 7 really Israel's 9/11? Several elements need to be addressed here. The first one is the organizations. Are al-Qaeda and Hamas really the same kind of organization? Al-Qaeda is a non-organic terrorist organization that does not have the power of public opinion behind it. Hamas, on the other hand, is an elected organization in Gaza with a political wing. In this respect, it can be said to be organic. The second element that needs to be addressed is the motive for the attack. Al-Qaeda launched an attack against US hegemony, and the US has never attacked Al-Qaeda or its territory (which does not exist). Hamas, on the other hand, is the political representative of Gaza, which has been under Israeli blockade for years. It is not correct to read the Hamas attacks as attacks that came out of nowhere, without any justification. Another factor is the form of the attacks. Al-Qaeda did not attack the United States en masse on September 11. Its militants hijacked four commercial airplanes and

tried to hit the Twin Towers, the Pentagon and White House or Capitol Hill with airplanes, and they succeeded in the first two. Hamas, on the other hand, has been in conflict with Israel for years. Sometimes it escalates, sometimes it subsides, but always it continues. The Hamas attacks of October 7 are one of the phases of this escalation. In fact, it is only one phase of the Israeli-Palestinian war, in which the sides know each other and are trying to defeat each other. So it's a very different situation from al-Qaeda's attack on the United States by a nineteen of its militants out of the blue, when there was no war going on.

On the other hand, are there similarities between these two attacks? Unfortunately, the results are similar and they are becoming more and more similar. Just like the unlimited right of self-defense that the US and the Western states granted to the US at the time, Israel today grants this right to itself and the Western states grant it to Israel. As a result, in Palestine, and especially in Gaza, there are scenes of brutality unseen even during the Iraq war. In addition to bombing Gaza, Israel is bombing Syria and Lebanon, threatening Egypt and Jordan. It maintains a cautious confrontation with Iran and Hezbollah. Of course, it is doing all this with the endless support of the US, Britain, Germany, France and the entire West.

It would not be correct to conclude that Hamas' attacks have presented Israel with a unique opportunity. Indeed, Israel has never needed a justification in any of its wars with Palestine throughout history. Today, Hamas' attacks have only been a historical marker.

It is precisely because of these consequences that this “Israel’s 9/11” narrative, which has been bought by Israel and especially by the US, is so prominent. Although the US was criticized for what it did in Iraq afterwards, it was never judged, it can still market Iraq movies like about Vietnam in Hollywood today, and at the end of the day, it did what it wanted for that date. The US did not want the ‘rest’ of the world to say that the US was right. It only did what it wanted to do. Just like today and throughout history, Israel ignores the “you are breaking international law” decisions and does what it wants to do.

If we do not want to see what the US did after 9/11 on the world stage once again, this time with Israel (and the US) as the subject, we should not accept this discourse. Another discourse that is being quietly circulated and accepted by the public is the “Israel-Hamas war”.

Under international law, war can only be waged between two states. For there to be a war, there must be two entities with legitimate territories, governments and states. Israel cannot say that Hamas is its opponent when it launches all-out attacks on Palestinian territories. Hamas is not a state. Hamas’s attacks should only be retaliated against Hamas militants. As President of Türkiye Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said, Israel has an obligation to act like a state even in the face of an organization. A structure that acts like an organization against an organization cannot expect to be treated as a state. To say that Israel is exercising its right of self-defense against Hamas, while at the same time taking over Palestinian territory, is to ignore the Palestinian state, to distort international law and to mislead the world public opinion. This war is the Israeli-Palestinian

war. This war, which has been going on since 1948, has entered a new phase of escalation with the attacks of Hamas. Today, Israel is in a state of total war against the Palestinian state and people, as they have stated in their own political statements. The state of Israel is openly committing crimes against humanity against the entire Palestinian people.



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