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Why Israel supports Kurdistan independence

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Why Israel supports Kurdistan independence – Dimensions of Israel's support for Iraqi Kurdistan independence:

There is wide-range opposition to Iraqi Kurdistan's proposed referendum on independence, scheduled on September 25. While Iraq's central government in Baghdad, Turkey, and Iran reject the referendum in toto, the United Nations, the United States, and a number of major countries, are mostly opposed to the referendum's timing, not to the idea itself.

Amid this local, regional and international opposition, ranging from advice, reservation, up to threats; a significant exception has emerged; i.e. Israel's support for the idea, procedure and timing of the referendum; and most importantly, this support is officially declared, not behind closed doors.

The Israeli support for the referendum came in several forms including: media support, especially in the United States; sending solidarity delegations to Erbil and other cities of the region; and organizing many activities during which the Israeli flag was raised along with the flag of Iraq's Kurdistan region. However, the most prominent attitude was expressed by Yair Golan, the former Deputy Chief of the Israeli Army's General Staff, who called for supporting the secession of the Iraqi Kurdistan region as an Israeli interest, before Netanyahu later confirmed the same meaning.

One does not need much effort to prove that the Israeli attitudes towards the Iraqi Kurdistan independence have nothing to do with defending the Kurds' right to statehood and self-determination. The Palestinians and the peoples of the region are well aware of Israel's lack of interest in peoples' right to independence and self-determination. This fact led Foreign Policy magazine to ridicule the Israeli position in its article on Sept. 13, titled: "Netanyahu Finally Supports a Two-State Solution — In Iraq".

In fact, Israel's interest in the Kurdish movements and its support for them started from mid-twentieth century with Mullah Mustafa Barzani, but this was not something special for the Kurds as much as it stemmed from an Israeli vision on dealing with minorities in the Arab world and the region in general.

The Israeli logic in this attitude is simple but deep: The Zionist entity cannot only rely on military superiority and external support in the long term, especially in a hostile environment that considers Israel strange to it (Middle East region). Therefore, Israel needed to work on two main tracks: the normalization of relations with the existing countries on the one hand, and dividing them into small states on the other. In fact, Tel Aviv wanted to achieve the following main goals:

First: Fragmentation of the region and weakening major and central Arab countries so that the occupying state remains the strongest.

Second: Encouraging minorities to establish small states so that the causes of intra-conflicts in the Arab and Islamic worlds should remain in the long run. Israel also sought activation of zero conflicts on sectarian and national bases to drain all involved parties without reaching a result.

Third: Forging alliances with these minor states, under the pretext of being undesirable minorities in the region, and creating a kind of “siege” on major Arab countries, as happened with Turkey, Iran and Ethiopia in 1958. Perhaps the most important argument that can be presented by the Zionist politicians to the Kurdish leaders today is the similarity between the two cases: that independence is rejected by the surrounding environment, the urgent need for cooperation, and the possibility of success.

This is not a matter of dumping in the theory of conspiracy, but they are theoretical plans supported by reality. Many authors have written about this, including the Israelis themselves such as Oded Yinon who wrote “A Strategy for Israel in the 1980's,” (an Israeli strategic plan to ensure Israeli regional superiority) which was translated into Arabic as “Greater Israel: The Zionist Plan for the Middle East”. David Kama wrote, “The Conflict: Why? And How Long?”. Also, Bernard Lewis wrote his most famous, “Modern Destruction of The Middle East - Secret Behind Today's Wars in 2017”.

In the Arab world, there are innumerable writings about Israel’s support for the Kurdish movements, most notably in Dr. Abdel- Wahab Al-Messiri’s Encyclopedia, and Dr. Ahmed Said Nofal’s book, “The role of Israel in the fragmentation of Arab world.”

In practice, it is no secret that the Israelis played a prominent role in their attempt to prove the charge of Iraq’s possession of weapons of mass destruction as a prelude to its occupation. Also, Israel played a significant role in the secession of South Sudan, -



and later establishing distinguished relations with the new state – and was behind most crises in the region over the last few years.

It is noteworthy that the Israeli plans were not restricted to the Arab countries that used to be called “Confrontation Countries” in the past, including Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, and Jordan. However, they also included countries that were once called, “Arab Moderation Countries” and other Gulf and Arab-African countries.

Israel has unfortunately made very big strides in normalizing its relations in secret and openly with some Arab countries. It has become common to hear that Israel is not the primary enemy of the Arab world, and that some call for cooperation with it (Israel) under the pretext of facing Iran.

It does not appear that Israel has abandoned its strategy (of encouraging independence of minorities in the region), but on the contrary it is moving to advanced stages in achieving it, including Cyprus, the Kurds, the Berbers, and others.

Also, there is an important goal behind Israel’s support for the independence of Iraqi Kurdistan (and later Syrian Kurdistan) in addition to the aforementioned goals, namely, besieging Iran and Turkey, separating them from the Arab world geographically and politically. The Zionist entity also wants to escalate acts of espionage and conspiracy against Turkey and Iran, and to strain internal files in the two countries, especially the Kurdish file.

Besides, there are three significant remarks in this context:

First: Both the right of self-determination and the historical injustice against the Kurds in the region are uncontroversial truths. However, the debate remains on the context, the gains and losses, the beneficiaries and the supporting parties, as well as the surrounding circumstances regarding the establishment of a state for the Kurds. Therefore, I call on our brothers, the Kurds, to think about the matter and take advantage of the lessons of history. In fact, the external support does not help establishment of a state without caring for its internal peace, harmony with its neighborhood, and its stability. I also call on other parties - especially the Arabs - to avoid being driven by context to denying or changing facts.

Second: There is deliberate Israeli exaggeration about the entity’s relations with the Kurds and its support for the project of their independence. The Israelis claim

capabilities they do not have, and show sympathy to the Kurds only to secure development of their bilateral relations in the future.

Third: There is a need to differentiate between rejection of the proposed independence - for what it causes of fragmentation and also for its negative effects on the Kurds and the peoples and countries of the region - and antagonizing the Kurds, losing them, and pushing them to completely ally with Israel. Excessive interest in preventing occurrence of something may lead to actions and attitudes that result in achieving it inadvertently, according to the “self-verification” theory. The Kurds are an authentic people among the region’s peoples and so will remain, despite the relations of some suspicious Kurdish leaders with Israel (such as some leaders of the Arab world). Therefore, if it ends up with establishment of a state for the Kurds, there should be cooperation and solidarity with them, away from antagonism and intra-conflicts, which the establishment of a minor Kurdish state – the greatest Zionist interest – was supposedly rejected for as stated above.