

Imbalance in the Turkish - Palestine Relations**Prof. Dr. Ata Atun***, **Dr. Yurdagül Atun**, **Selman Arslanbaş**, **Yrd Doç Dr. Ayman Kole**

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Corresponding authorProf. Dr. Ata Atun***Article History***Received: 01.12.2018**Accepted: 04.12.2018**Published: 30.12.2018*

Abstract: Despite the fact that the Middle East has been exposed to war and invasion for many years due to its wealthy underground resources, namely the exploitation of oil and natural gas, and although continuous political games have been played over the last century in this region, it is still very important because of its geopolitical position. Today, from the pirates to the terrorists, from its leaders to diplomats, from scientists to politicians, the eyes of the imperialist (expansionist) rulers of many countries are still firmly set upon the Middle East. The Middle East does not deserve to experience this unrest and chaos. In fact, the region enjoyed its most peaceful times during the rule of the Ottoman Empire. The region today, known as the “White Middle East”, is composed of the following countries: Palestine, Israel, Syria and Lebanon, and is one of the two troubled areas of the Middle East. In order to analyze and understand the unrest and political chaos in this region for almost a century, it is necessary to recognize Palestine and the Palestinian people and their history. The unfortunate fate of Palestine began at the beginning of World War I when Sharif Hussein Bin Ali was encouraged to gather the Arab tribes in the region and revolt against the Ottoman Empire. On the Palestinian front in October 1917 and on the Iraq side in March 1917, as a result of Ottoman defeats and withdrawals, the British entered Palestine and Jerusalem on 9 December 1917. Hence, Palestine and Jerusalem went under British sovereignty. Indeed, from that point onward, the Palestinian problem, which still continues today, has grown to become a regional heartache. On 2 November 1917, British Empire Foreign Minister Arthur James Balfour sent a letter to Baron Walter Rothschild, one of the Zionist movement leaders of the time, to form one of the most important events in the history of Palestine. The letter in question reveals itself as an official statement confirming that the Jews, who led fragmented lives in various parts of Europe, could establish a state in Palestine. This letter, in the name of the Balfour Declaration, was the cornerstone of the establishment of the State of Israel on the Palestinian territories after World War II. It would be difficult to describe the relationship between Turkey and the Palestinian Administration as one built on mutual respect and affection during the last century. However, regardless of the right-wing, the left-wing, the faithful and the faithless, Turkey and the Turkish people have always responded to the plight of the Palestinian people with endless sympathy and strong emotional support. Unfortunately, the Palestinian Administration has demonstrated an imbalanced and uncaring attitude towards Turkey and Turks in this regard. This article has been prepared to investigate and examine this unbalanced affection and solidarity between the Turkish people and Palestinian administrations, which are religious brothers and have a historical unity of nearly four centuries.

Keywords: Middle East, Turkey, Palestine, Solidarity, Disloyalty.

INTRODUCTION**A Brief History of the Middle East**

A brief regional summary of the last two thousand years indicates that the Middle East and the Eastern Mediterranean, especially the western regions of the Middle East and the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, has always been a place of immense activity and, hence, considered to be the political arena of the world [1].

Indeed, the city of Jerusalem, imbedded within Palestine, has been a boiling pot for centuries; where the Europeans have traveled thousands of miles on foot to reach, where tens of thousands of people have been killed, where various principalities, banners, kingdoms, counties and small states have been established and then vanquished. Therefore, Jerusalem is not only the address of countless rebellions, revolts, and betrayals, but is also the heart of three different religions and the sanctity of the Middle East, long regarded as a holy

place for the believers. It must also be pointed out that this area in connection with the Eastern Mediterranean is known as the White Middle East [2].

The White Middle East, a troubled region with its flammable wick ignited from time to time, has not succeeded in ridding itself of blood and tears created by the insidious plans of greedy sovereignties that have been haunting the region for centuries. Although the Middle East has been subject to invasion for many years and primarily exploited for its underground resources, with unending political games in the name of oil and natural gas, it still maintains a high level of significance and allure because of its geopolitical position. Indeed, it is the location where the interests of thousands of leaders, diplomats, terrorists, scientists and the naïve somehow manage to overlap [3].

The most peaceful times of the region was during the domination of the Ottoman Empire. Although the US and the EU have no terrestrial connection with the Middle East, they have been one of the main sources for the constant uneasiness, conflicts and massacres that have plagued the region in recent times. Hence, the Western forces can be deemed rather unsuccessful in disguising their ambitions to rule the region and control its underground resources[4].

The White Middle East

One of the two troubled areas of the Middle East today is known as the White Middle East which consists of Palestine, Israel, Syria and Lebanon. Although we can count important cities such as Haifa, Damascus, and Beirut, it is by far the city of Jerusalem which stands out as the most significant of the White Middle East cities as it is the point of intersection of Islam, Christianity and Judaism. A closer look at the history of Jerusalem shows that it remained under Ottoman rule for four hundred years between 1517 and 1917. At present, however, only some traces of the Ottomans have survived as within a century the Turkish settlements were forcefully assimilated and their assets destroyed or erased [5].

Therefore, in order to understand the political situation in the White Middle East, a knowledge of the history of Palestine and the Palestinian people is imperative. Not so long ago, the British Empire, regarded as unbeatable, experienced tremendous losses against the Ottoman armies in Çanakkale, 1915, and in Kut'ül Ammare on April 29, 1916. In particular, during the siege of Kut'ül Ammare, the British Empire suffered a great disappointment and shame as the Ottoman 6th Army took prisoner a whole British division, thus destroying their image of invincibility [6].

The Sykes-Picot Agreement

After the defeat of Kut'ül Ammare, the British Empire had to make its first agreement with France and

Russia on 16 May, 1916 in order to avoid clashes with France and Russia in terms of regional interests and to gain the upper hand in the Middle East. Furthermore, this secret agreement foresaw the sharing of Turkey's Middle East as its main content. Known as the "Asia Minor Agreement", Georges Mark Sykes and François Georges-Picot prepared this treaty after many discussions. The agreement was signed by Edward Gray on behalf of the British Empire, and Paul Cambon on behalf of France [7].

The "Asia Minor Agreement", better known as the Sykes-Picot Agreement, contains the following points;

- Russia to control Trabzon, Erzurum, Van, Bitlis and a part of South East Anatolia,
- France to control the Eastern Mediterranean region along with Adana, Antep, Urfa, Diyarbakır, Musul and the Syrian Coast,
- England to control Hayfa ve Akka ports, along with Bagdad, Basra and South Mesopotamia,
- An Arab Federation will be established under the control England and France or a single Arab State will be established in the lands obtained by France and England.
- Alexandria (Iskenderun) is to operate as a free port,
- An international administration will be established in Palestine as it is a sacred place.

In order to secure support from the locals, the British Empire planned a second agreement with the regional Arab tribal leaders in secret. Putting this plan in motion, talks and letters were held and exchanged between the British Governor of Egypt Sir Henry Mac Mahon and the Hejaz Emir Sharif Huseyin bin Ali on the sharing of the Ottoman lands. These clandestine meetings, and the agreement made after, not only changed the course of the war but also played an important role in determining the fate of the region. As a result of these meetings, the British Empire convinced Sharif Hussein to stir up Arab tribes that were loyal to him and rebel against the Ottoman Empire – and in return, the British promised to establish a great independent Arab Kingdom covering the entire Middle East [8].

On 24 October, 1915, the British Governor of Egypt Sir Henry McMahon, on behalf of the British Empire, sent a letter to the Hejaz Emir Sharif Huseyin bin Ali, announcing their readiness to recognize and support the independence of the Arabs by taking into consideration the interests of its ally France in the boundaries proposed by the Sharif of Mecca. Upon receiving this letter, Sharif Huseyin declared himself on the side of the British[8].

The Planned Arab Kingdom to be Established in the Middle East

Once the Hejaz Sharif Huseyin Bin Ali was tricked by the British with promises of being made the king of the so-called Arab Kingdom, Arab tribes attacked the Ottoman forces in synchronized fashion. As a result of defeats and withdrawals of the Ottoman forces on the Iraqi front in March 1917, and Palestine front in October 1917, Palestine and Jerusalem came under British rule on 9 December 1917. Therefore, after the Muslim Arabs were in favor of the British and rebelled against the Ottoman Empire, the Ottomans lost territories starting from the Hejaz to Egypt, Palestine and Syria, by domino effect[9].

In order to prevent the destruction of Jerusalem due to the Ottoman-British war and save the historical sites from severe damages, the Ottoman Governor of Jerusalem İzzet Bey decided to withdraw his army from the Holy City. In his letter dated December 9, 1917, İzzet bey clearly stated that he ordered the withdrawal for the purpose of preventing damages to religious sites and he appointed officials to protect sacred places such as the Kamame and Masjid-i Aksa[10].

The Balfour Declaration

One of the most important instances of the history of Palestine was the letter sent by British Foreign Minister Arthur James Balfour to Baron Walter Rothschild on November 2, 1917. This correspondence formed the basis for the establishment of a homeland for Jews - who had mostly been living fragmented lives in various parts of Europe - on the Palestinian territories of the British Empire. As a result, this letter became known as the Balfour Declaration and was the cornerstone of the establishment of the State of Israel in the following years[11].

In what came to be known as the Balfour Declaration, the British Minister of Foreign Affairs' official letter to the Zionist leader Rothschild is as follows;

*Dear Lord Rothschild,
I have much pleasure in conveying to you. On behalf of His Majesty's Government, the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted to, and approved by, the Cabinet His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country. I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.*
Yours,
Arthur James Balfour

[11].

After the declaration was published with the initiative of Zionist leaders H. Weizman and N. Skoly; France and Italy announced their support in the beginning of 1918, followed by Thomas Woodrow Wilson, the President of the United States in early October the same year. In particular, the United States saw the presence of a Jewish state in the Middle East as an opportunity to establish a solid ally that would coincide with their short term or long term regional policies.

Therefore, the Balfour Declaration officially initiated the Jewish occupation and ownership of Palestine with the approval of the western states. In turn, after the US, the British Empire, France and Italy approved the establishment of the Jewish state in Palestine, Zionist organizations began to give full support to the Western powers[12].

After the declaration, the British Empire officially opened the Palestinian region under their sovereignty for the settlement of Jewish immigrants. The Jews bought lands from the native Palestinian people legally by paying much more than the real value of the properties.

Thus, they began to settle quickly in the region by establishing villages and confirming their presence by establishing kibbutz.

By this stage, the British Empire grew alarmed and decided to put an end to land selling activities. However, after the end of the First World War, land selling was again permitted in October, 1920[13].

Palestine under the British mandate

In October 1917, the Tsar was overthrown in Russia, and after the communists took over, the government of Lenin rejected the Sykes-Picot agreement and announced this unrevealed agreement to the world. The agreement stated that the Arab kingdom will not be established, but rather small colonial states will be formed under the absolute control of the English and French. It also stated that the British Empire will not be keeping its promise to Sharif Hussein given during the Great War.

Despite all of Sharif Hussein's attempts to oversee the establishment of the Arab Kingdom, which had been promised by the British, he finally understood that he had been severely deceived and died in a disgruntled condition in exile[14].

In Anatolia, the Turkish War of Independence raged on. With the full support of the Western powers, the Greek Army, set foot in İzmir on May 15, 1919, and proceeded to Ankara, on 24 July 1922. Simultaneously, the League of Nations (the United Nations of that

period), without waiting for the outcome of the War of Independence, decided that Palestine should be placed under the mandate of the British Empire [15].

The Announcement of the State of Israel

After the Second World War, the British Empire paved the way for the Jews living in Europe to settle in Palestine. On May 14, 1948, establishment of the State of Israel was declared and accepted with the UN vote. At this point, the British officially withdrew from Palestine and left the land to the State of Israel. The Palestinian people, however, declared the very next day [16] as Nakba [Disaster] Day. It also must be mentioned that every year this day is recalled with curses and ill memories by the Palestinian people [17].

In objection to the proclamation of the State of Israel, under the leadership of Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Lebanon collectively went to war against Israel. Yet, the Arab forces suffered a heavy defeat in the face of Israeli forces who received weapons, troops, funds and logistical support from the Western powers [16].

Therefore, the first Arab-Israeli war that took place in 1948 ended with the victory of Israel due to the unlimited support offered by the Western Powers. In the first six months after the proclamation of the State of Israel, before 1949, the number of Arabs who were removed from the Palestinian territories forcibly or sold their land to the Jews for higher prices and left totalled more than 900,000.

Turkey-Palestine and the Palestinian-Turkish relations

Considering the historical development, it is difficult to say that there has been equal adoration and sympathy in Turkey-Israeli relations. However, it is interesting to note that the Turkish people, regardless of rightwing or leftwing groups, have expressed sympathy for the Palestinian people. Unfortunately, the Palestinian people and the Palestinian Administration have failed to reciprocate such cordial feelings. Instead, they have behaved rather carelessly and demonstrated antipathy where Turkey and Turks are concerned.

In Turkey, between 1968 and 1988, Palestine and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was like a paragon for Turkish revolutionary youth. In particular, Deniz Gezmiş, who was the leader of the Turkish revolutionary youth in upcoming years, wrote the following which was published in the *Türk Solu Dergisi* (Turkish Left Magazine) on 19 November, 1968:

“Our age is the age of struggle and death against American Imperialism in Vietnam, Dominican Republic and Mexico. The revolutionary youth is the youth that will stand up against American Imperialism and opportunism. Long live the peoples of the world who

fight for independence, long live a fully independent Turkey.”

With these words, the Turkish Left Movement revealed their feelings about the United States and expressed full support for the Palestinian cause [18].

Voicing outrage against the attacks and genocide of Turkish Cypriots in Cyprus, Deniz Gezmiş protested against the military and logistical support of the Greek Commando division sent to the island from Greece on 15 November, 1967. Under the command of General Grivas, the Greek Cypriot National Guard Army carried out massacres by attacking the Turkish villages of Geçitkale and Boğaziçi.

On November 22, 1967, Deniz Gezmiş rallied the student organizations in Turkey under the heading of “attacks on our brothers in Cyprus” and the USA flag was burned during this rally. For this reason, Gezmiş was arrested, and this indicative of how effective and influential the Western powers were in Turkey and Middle East during that period [19].

The First Contact between the Palestine Liberation Organization and Turkey

In 1969, the first contact was established between Turkey and the Palestine Liberation Organization in the Islamic Countries Summit in 1975, via Faruk Kaddumi, the political bureau chief of PLO at the time. It must be noted that the PLO was considered a terrorist organization by the Western powers. The opening of the PLO representative in Ankara in 1979 took place after the leader of the PLO, Yasser Arafat, arrived in Ankara in January and met with Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit [20].

The beginning of the declaration of the independence of Palestine which began in 1987 and reached its culmination on November 15, 1988 by the declaration of the Independent Palestinian State. Moreover, from the first day, the first Muslim country to recognize the Palestinian state in exile was Turkey [21].

Yasser Arafat’s Statement on Armenians

Yasser Arafat was nicknamed “Abu Ammar” - the father of the People- by the Palestinians and during his term as President of El Fetih said the following;

“We support the just cause of Armenia; Turks committed genocide against Armenians. We will not allow a similar experience of the Armenian massacre to take place in history again. The Armenians did not succeed, but we will not mirror their mistakes [22].”

And with those words, Yasser Arafat left a deep wound in the heart of the Turkish nation.

The Friendship of Yasser Arafat and Makarios III

Yasser Arafat's friendship with the Greek Cypriot leader Makarios, who massacred and imposed genocide on the Turkish Cypriots in Cyprus, and his support for Makarios' fight against the Turkish Cypriots has become almost legendary.

In the 1950s and 1960s, Makarios played the role of a leader to countries that had generally gained new freedoms from the iron curtain and were not linked to the western bloc. By doing so, Makarios gave the impression that he was a leader figure who opposed imperialist countries and this caused Palestinian and Greek Cypriot leaders to form closer relations.

Actually, Yasser Arafat believed Makarios was supporting him, and their friendship improved and strengthened over the years.

In the light of this artificial friendship, Islamic countries including Egypt, preferred to support the Greek Cypriots instead of Turkey and Turkish Cypriots on the Cyprus issue. When clashes broke out between Greeks and Turks in Cyprus in 1964, Egypt sent armored vehicles, arms and ammunition to the Makarios Government for use against the Turkish Cypriots. Arab countries, especially Palestine, and many Muslim countries preferred to support the Christian Orthodox Greeks instead of supporting the Turkish Cypriots who were subjected to genocide.

Yasser Arafat supports terrorists against Turkey

Furthermore, Yasser Arafat also provided aid to separatist, pro-Kurdish, Marxist organizations such as Turkish People's Liberation Army (THKO), TPLP-C TKPML militants to divide Turkey. As a matter of fact, prior to the training of these groups in the Bekaa Valley of Syria, he did not hesitate to allow them early training in Palestine.

In the early stages of their formation, before finding grounds in Iraq, PKK terrorists received their first training in Palestinian camps and then began to carry out their attacks on Turkey via Syria.

The Turkish members of extreme left-wing during 1967-1968 organizations went to Palestine to support the Palestinian Arabs in their struggle and underwent armed combat training.

Therefore, the training camps in Palestine provided shelter to the extreme leftist revolutionaries from Turkey, and by doing so managed to solve their subsistence problem by earning a living in these camps. Upon their return, these said revolutionaries initiated numerous terrorist acts in Turkey.

In the early 1980s, the Palestinian organization called "Navaf Havetma guerrillas" established a joint

camp with the PKK in Syria's Bekaa valley and trained together.

It is known that members of the ASALA terrorist organization received training from time to time in this camp as well. After the Palestinians were forced to leave Syria, the camp was under the rule of the PKK terrorist organization and the PKK terrorists received rural guerrilla training until it was closed down in 1992[23].

The Current Politics of Palestine

After the death of Palestinian president Yasser Arafat on January 9, 2005, Mahmoud Abbas became the candidate from Al Fatah and was elected the second president of the Palestinian State. Around this time, Mahmoud Abbas explained that if Hamas did not accept the administration of Gaza, the Palestinian government would not be responsible for the situation in Gaza.

Here are some of comments circulating of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas on social media -
"*The Turkish military is an occupier in Cyprus*",
"*We would be pleased to see the freedom of Diyarbakır*",
"*I want to see a 'Great Armenia.' I believe that Armenia will achieve victory at the end of this war and occupy Azerbaijan entirely.*"

These announcements serve to reveal different perspectives concerning Palestine and Turkey relations.

The Recognition of Palestine as a State

In the United Nations General Assembly vote held on 29 November 2012, Palestine was granted the non-member observer status. The outcome showed that 138 UN of countries recognized Palestine as a state.

On 17 December 2014, the European Parliament engaged in a non-binding vote for the recognition of Palestine as a state. The results showed 88 negative votes, and 498 affirmative votes accepting the recognition [18].

The strongest support towards Palestine becoming a state was given by Turkey. Again, the most significant and loudest response on an international political scale regarding Israeli attacks in Palestine came from Turkey and Turkish people. Unfortunately, Palestine failed to demonstrate an attitude that could be deemed favorable towards Turkey's interests and therefore did not meet the expectations of Turkey and the Turkish people. In retrospect, Palestinian government officials demonstrated contemptible behavior as far as Turkey was concerned by repeatedly supporting countries or groups hostile to Turkey.

Relations between the Palestinian State and the Greek Cypriot Administration

The Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas paid an official visit to Cyprus on July 9, 2009 as the guest of the Greek Cypriot Administration Leader Dimitris Christofias. During a joint statement with Christofias, Abbas said the following –

Mahmoud Abbas

“Cyprus shares the same problem with Palestine, Turkey is to Cyprus what Israel is for Palestine. As two countries we unite in a common struggle to end the occupation of Cyprus from Turkey”; [23].

Demetris Christofias

“The Greeks of Cyprus thanks Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas for voicing and supporting us against Turkey at the Islamic Conference Organization.”

After this statement by Dimitris Christofias, Mahmoud Abbas thanked Dimitris Christofias for his support for an independent Palestinian state whose capital would be East Jerusalem in the framework of a two-state solution [24].

Moreover, Mahmoud Abbas not only had a meeting with the President of the Greek Cypriot Administration, Christofias, but also met with the Greek Cypriot Parliament Chairperson Marios Garoyan and the Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Church Chrysostomos. At these meetings, Abbas reaffirmed that he was ready to give support to the Greek Cypriots regarding the Cyprus problem on grounds that they shared a similar struggle with the Palestinians[24].

Furthermore, the Greek Cypriot press published this meeting with the headline *“Mahmoud Abbas supports the Greek Cypriot Administration*

against Turkey’s occupation of Cyprus, as do we against Israel’s occupation of Palestine.”

After Mahmoud Abbas declared his support of the Greek view on the Cyprus issue, the Greek Cypriot Administration decided to open a representative office in Palestine [24].

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas is well informed about the facts of the Cyprus issue, in particular, the genocide against Turkish Cypriots in the years 1963-1974. Despite being a leader of a Muslim state, and receiving unconditional support from Turkey to the Palestinian cause, Abbas clearly sided with the Greek Cypriot leadership, further backing the violent Christian massacres of Muslim Turkish Cypriots. Thus, Turkey and Palestine relations can be deemed a one-sided or distorted friendship brought to a level of declination by the current Palestinian President.

During the UN General Assembly in New York, 2016, Greek Foreign Minister Nikos Kocias, Foreign Minister of Southern Cyprus Yoannis Katsulidis and Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad Al-Maliki vowed to cooperate on politics, tourism, counter-terrorism and similar issues in a common statement. After discussing other topics, the Cyprus problem was addressed as.

“The solution of the Cyprus problem must be a solution that respects the independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty of Cyprus and does not involve military interventions.”

Although the Palestinian Embassy [26] in Baku, Azerbaijan, claimed the Palestine State did not publish a stamp commemorating the 100th anniversary of the so-called Armenian Genocide on April 26, 2015; the Armenian News Agency circulated the news on social media and included the following photograph;



The so-called Armenian Genocide stamp, allegedly published in Palestine

The Palestine State and Armenia Relations

The relations of the Palestinian State with Armenia are at the level of relations with the Greek Cypriot Administration. On 18 January 2016, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas attended the Armenian Christmas Party in the Armenian Church in Bethlehem. In his speech, after the ceremony, Abbas mentioned that the situation of the Palestinian people resembled the happenings that generated the so-called Armenian genocide [25]. Furthermore, Abbas did not hesitate to invite Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan to Palestine, even though Sargsyan was in charge of the massacre in the village of Khojaly in the Karabakh region of Azerbaijan [25].

According to the Jamanak newspaper published in Armenia, in an interview with Manuel Asassian, London's Palestinian ambassador of Armenian origin, said during an interview;

"Mahmoud Abbas gave him a special task to improve relations between Palestine and Armenia"

However, such diplomatic steps are yet to be taken by the Palestinian State to Yerevan. The following statements have been published by the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' social networking sites;

"I want to see a "Great Armenia." I believe that Armenia will achieve victory at the end of this war and occupy Azerbaijan entirely."

These comments have not been denied or refuted to this day.

CONCLUSION

Although the Greek Cypriot Administration has a representative in Ramallah, the Palestinian State does not approve of the opening of a TRNC representative in Ramallah;

Turkey officially recognized the Palestinian State from the very first day of its declaration. However, Palestine has shown no intention of recognizing the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in the last 30 years.

The ambassadors who have embassies in the south of Cyprus freely enter the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) to hold meetings with the President, Parliament Speaker, Prime Minister, Ministers and other politicians. Yet, the Palestinian State ambassador has not passed into TRNC; has not held any meetings with Turkish Cypriot politicians nor has engaged with Palestinian students studying in TRNC.

The former Foreign Minister of Palestine, Nabeel Shaath, visited the Greek Cypriot

Administration on 9 May 2016, to attend meetings with the Greek Cypriot President Nikos Anastasiadis, Foreign Minister Yoannis Kasulidis, Parliament Speaker Yannakis Omiru, Archbishop II. Chrysostomos and some political party leaders; sadly, Shaath did not meet with any Turkish Cypriot officials;

During a meeting with former Foreign Minister of Palestine, Nabeel Shaath and AKEL Secretary-General Andros Kyprianou said;

"Ever since Archbishop Makarios, Yasser Arafat and the Naser Administration, the three leaders of the region have cooperated to 'end injustice, colonization and occupation in Cyprus."

After Kyprianou continued with the following;

"Palestine has taken a stance in favor of Cyprus's territorial integrity, unity and independence. Similarly, Cyprus and Palestine are under the occupation of foreign powers";

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, during his Armenian Christmas speech in the Armenian Church of Bethlehem on January 18, 2016, stated that the situation of the Palestinian people resembles the happenings that generated the so-called Armenian genocide;

In 2016, during the UN General Assembly meeting in New York, Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad Al-Maliki made a statement supporting Greek and Greek Cypriot perspectives on the Cyprus issue;

The views, political assessment and approach of the Palestinian State and their current officials are against the regional interests of Turkey and TRNC.

The fact that the members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation congregated in Istanbul and revealed that they recognize Palestine as a state and East Jerusalem as the capital of the State of Palestine, the same Arab countries did not recognize TRNC and Lefkoşa as its capital, thus, highlighting the weakness and disunity of the Arab countries.

In order to understand the developments in the Eastern Mediterranean in the region known as the White Middle East from the last century onward, it is necessary to know these developments very well in order to make a realistic evaluation.

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