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Deal of the Century is set to fail

The deal does not have political or legal framework

The architects of the plan have close links to the Zionist movement

The plan fails to acknowledge Israeli occupation and is designed for further loss of land and rights for the Palestinians

Palestinians will not accept the bribe in exchange for their rights and land

The international community must reject the Trumps administrations plan

Arab Organization for human rights in the UK (AOHR UK) held a seminar on the 3rd of July in central London, titled “President Trump’s “Deal of the Century” and United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabian endorsement”, which brought together leading experts, activists and International human rights lawyers. All panelists in attendance have extensive experience in the political and economic difficulties affecting the Palestinian cause and the surrounding geo-political situation. The seminar detailed the economic and political aspects of US President, Donald Trumps proposed “Deal of the Century” seeking to evaluate how the deal will affect future peace and development in the region, with specific attention to how the deal renders the rights of Palestinians invisible and removes their agency in participating in any meaningful plan for peace and development. Furthermore the seminar paid special attention to the involvement of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, through their financial investments into the economic plan.

The seminar began with introductory notes from the Chair, Rhys Davies, a prominent figure who specialises in international and human rights law at Temple



Garden Chambers and The Hague. Mr Davies started the evening's discussion by drawing attention to the recent remarks made by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, quoting their remarks, Mr Davies stated,

“Without the framework of international law, any peace plan, including the forthcoming proposal from the United States, will crash upon the shoals of political realism.” The reality is, therefore, that the proposed economic plan is inconclusive and lacking in weight without a political and legal underpinning to guarantee the rights, and obligations of both sides. Any ultimate political settlement must respect human rights, territorial rights and, importantly, the right to self-determination. Economic growth and stability is of course a laudable aim, but without a legal and political framework, much remains unclear.”

Furthermore, in his opening remarks, Mr Davies went on to detail how international human rights lawyers are closely watching the next phase of Mr Trump's peace plan very carefully. Highlighting how the “peace to prosperity” part of the plan focuses on economic development, but ignores the obvious political situation of Israeli occupation, and the fact that Palestinians have no right to self-determination, which is essential for any chance of lasting peace in the region. Mr Davies stated that this was a case of “putting the cart before the horse”.

The focus on attracting financial investment to a politically unstable region is not an inviting proposal for investors. The fact that there has been no attempt at developing a political framework that seeks a consensus on a decade's long conflict means that governments and investors are going to be unlikely to hurry to pledge investments with such uncertainty of stability. Mr Davies concluded that,

“The \$50 billion promised is therefore, as yet, wholly unsupported by a political framework. Without detail of the political, and coextensive legal framework, many will be nervously wondering what the trade-off will be for the promised aid and investment.”



The next speaker to contribute to the evening's discussions was Bill Law, a Sony award-winning former BBC journalist specializing in the Gulf region. Mr. Law drew much needed attention to the significance of Jared Kushner's assignment to the Middle East brief, detailing his close persona and financial involvement in the Zionist movement. Mr Law highlighted that the Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, is a close family friend of Kushner, and that Kushner has many links, both personal and financial to the West Bank settler movement. Mr. Law went on to express,

“The “deal” was never intended to work. Rather, its modus operandi is to force Palestinians into a corner from which there is no escape, and where the only answer to is “no”. In the eyes of Kushner, Netanyahu, et al, the path to peace lies through the annexation of what is left of most of the West Bank, including its most valuable agricultural asset, the Jordan Valley. I call it the steal of the century.”

The last person to speak at the seminar was Jenny Lynn a founder member and Chair of Halifax Friends of Palestine, and a member of the national Executive of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign. Jenny focused on how civil society in the West, in their support of Palestinians, needs to apply international pressure in their rejection of the deal, in support of Palestinians quest for freedom. Jenny went on to say that the UK government has a specific duty to fully reject the deal, in defense of the will of Palestinians to control their future development. Highlighting that,

“No way are we going to stand by and let the Palestinian people be sold down the river by Trump and his associates. The UK government must reject his deal and end its complicity with the Israeli government. If global solidarity helped end apartheid in South Africa, it can play its part now in winning public opinion around the world to the justice of the Palestinian cause.”

In conclusion, given the information highlighted by the speakers in this seminar, the AOHR UK calls on the international community to act now and to reject the deal of the century. Civil society must pressure the UK government to reject this deal, and to stop its continued political and financial support of Israel in light of its



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occupation of Palestinian land and its vast violations of international law. We call on the international community to reconsider its relationship with states, particularly the USA, UAE and KSA, that has served to hinder, and not enhance, progress for human rights in the Middle East and in the world.

The deal set out by the Trump administration, and front run by Kushner, is a product of the Zionist movement and seeks to remove the remaining land and rights from the Palestinian people, at the profit of the USA, the Gulf States and Israel, with no regard for future peace. This is evident in the fact that the plan does not yet detail any legal or political frameworks for peace. In the words of Bill Law, Kushner and Trump's Middle East policy is better described as the "Steal of the Century"

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