

Palestinian Youth's Political Vision towards Ending the Split and Restructuring the Political System

The current stage that our Palestinian people are experiencing requires the cooperation and unity of all national, partisan, and public efforts. Consequently, Palestinian youth from several political affiliations and parties were invited by the Palestinian Association for Empowerment and Local Development – REFORM to gather in a three-day discussion that lasted from the 26th to the 28th of July 2018 in Al Bireh.

The discussion tackled a number of national and political issues to propose solutions that would bring together the Palestinian people through a comprehensive national vision to end the split and enhance the role of youth in political participation. These solutions included re-focusing on all forms of youth national action in accordance with the international and national charters guaranteeing Palestinian national rights and the right to self-determination. Based on the above, the participants came out with the following recommendations:

1. Mobilizing youth efforts towards developing a program to end the Palestinian split and all its negative repercussions that have tarnished the Palestinian society and the rights of its people, as the split has been threatening the Palestinian identity, unity, and the people's right to self-determination. Moreover, the continuity of this current condition might create polarization among society which serves the interest of those projects seeking to demolish the Palestinian cause. Therefore, ending the division should be based on a national plan that ensures the reactivation of Palestinian constitutions, respecting the principle of separation of powers, eradicating the repercussions of the split, and achieving transitional justice and social reconciliation through enhancing the access of the public and the participation of the Palestinian youth.
2. Urging the Palestinian President to issue an immediate presidential decree that states for conducting legislative and presidential elections in recognition of the principle of the circulation of power.
3. Strengthen the responsibility of the government to ensure the access of all that Palestinian citizens to public resources in the West Bank, Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip. In fact, what is provided for Gaza is their absolute right, as it is a deduction from its share in the customs clearance and the taxes that citizens pay, which the government is responsible for collecting and paying back to the Strip. Moreover, it is also necessary to provide resources for the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip, based on the adoption of all the understandings reached during the years of reconciliation, including the agreements of Mecca, Cairo, Sanaa, and Doha, as well as the Prisoners' Document and the National Unity Document as bases for civil society institutions to enhance national action and promote national unity.
4. Reactivate and restructure the PLO by engaging other National and Islamic parties as well as the national labor institutions in accordance with a comprehensive unity agreement that ensures the reconstruction of the PLO on a democratic basis that guarantees the representation of all Palestinian communities in the homeland and diaspora and establishes a unified national and political program that confronts Israeli projects. Foremost of which is the Law of Jewish Nationalism, which poses a serious threat to the legitimate national rights of Palestinians, and legitimizes settlements; seeing that they are placed on Israeli land and part of the Jewish state, which eliminates any prospect for establishing a Palestinian State according to the Palestinian Independence Document and International resolutions, and tarnishes Palestinians' basic rights within the green line.

5. Renewing all official and Palestinian institutions to ensure effective participation of youth and women, and to enact laws that reduce the minimum age for candidacy in elections to enhance youth participation.
6. The youth parties should build anti regionalism and factionalism programs that promote tolerance, ban hatred, support freedom of expression in all its forms, and renounce prosecution, arrest, intimidation and intimidation on the basis of opinion and expression. These parties should also work to protect Palestinians' to civil and political rights and strengthen the role of youth in ensuring these rights, and reinforcing patriotism as a basis for determining citizens' rights and duties toward their homeland, where Palestinian land is for all Palestinians. Moreover, people in the West Bank and Gaza should be empowered to voice out their needs and concerns freely.
7. Reinstate the National and Islamic Committees as a field arms and strengthen the role of civil society institutions, frameworks and grassroots associations, as they are the backbone of the civil society. by enhancing the democratic practices within these institutions and ensuring the holding of free and fair elections periodically.
8. Call upon political parties to enhance their democratic practices by including the circulation of power principle, raising women participation, and establishing new programs.
9. Emphasize the role of the security services within the Palestinian State, which is the preservation of security and protection of the homeland and the imposition of internal procedures that are free from the control of political parties, and able to maintain internal order.
10. Due to its important role in protecting the Palestinian National Project, the Palestinian student movements in Palestinian universities and institutes should be revived by holding a conference consisting of university elected student movements and representatives of student movements; as well as raising Palestinian students' participation on the national level.
11. Enhance the participation of students in Palestinian universities both in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, prevent political arrest and the intervention of security services, and promote democratic practices in universities that prevent its students from having student council election. In addition, pressure should be placed upon the Ministry of Higher Education to consider that holding student council elections in universities is one of the legal conditions for the recognition of the legitimacy of university certificates.
12. Establish a media vision that meets the level of national challenges and ensures that the official media agencies are representing all Palestinians and promoting the collective national identity, as they rely on the Palestinian taxpayer. Moreover, the right to form private and partisan media agencies that support freedom of speech and combat polarization should be maintained.

Based on the mentioned above, we, participants of this workshop, from different national, political, Islamic, independent parties, hereby declare the establishment of a national, unified youth framework in the West Bank, Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip by male and female participants of all political spectrums and parties adopting this declaration and lobbying for its implementation by all parties and Palestinian National Institutions; and we hereby declare our endeavor to transform this declaration into a document adopted by a public conference.