

How can Palestinian Official Media Transform into Public Media?

Position Paper

Written by: Ameera Abo Ayyash

Introduction:

Everyone agrees that the media is the fourth authority in the state due to its great importance and its real role in the renaissance and development of society. The media is capable of exposing the corruption of governments and individuals, as it does not favor the people or the government at the expense of the truth. Therefore, the media serves public opinion and contributes to building of the state. Since the media plays a major role in raising awareness and changing perspectives in any society that suffers from problems, challenges, corruption, and occupation, such as the Palestinian society; then it is necessary for the official media to be competitive, improve its performance, and develop its programs. Therefore, media pluralism must be enhanced and promoted since traditional media has been the reason behind the media sector's failure in the totalitarian states. In Palestine, the official media succeeded numerous times, but also failed in forming a media administration expressing the opinion of 11 million Palestinians. I wrote many studies, researches, and articles that criticized the official media's agenda in regards to power, not to the public's demand. How can this media be transformed into a media that is closer to the public and more expressive of the people's perspectives, not to the authority or the government? In this paper, we will ask numerous questions, such as: How can the Palestinian official media transform from a media tool in the hands of the authority and government to a public media that serves all groups of this society equally, what decrees or laws are required for this transformation, what are the administrative and financial procedures that help in a smooth and transparent transformation from official media to public media, what are the implications that public media may achieve and form in the future, and what is the role of the public media in building a collective national identity for the Palestinians?

In this paper, we will try to identify the relationship of the public media and its role in building the Palestinian national identity by considering the most important challenges it would encounter, if it is formed, especially in the political sphere, as well as the division between the Fatah and Hamas movements and the Palestinian diaspora. Also, it is necessary to monitor the dilemmas of reality in shaping the future of the nature of the work of the public media. What is the reality of Palestine TV and the official media currently?

Literature Review:

What is meant by public media?

In 2005, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) defined public service broadcasting standards. Public service institutions were described as a tool to ensure pluralism and social inclusion and to strengthen civil society, while providing society with basic information that enables individuals to make rational decisions about their reality and future. Traditional literature for public service broadcasts associated with BBC talks about 3 public service jobs, which are: news, education, and entertainment. Based on

these jobs, the main functions of broadcasting the public media service have been established in:

1. **Providing a free and independent channel for the flow of information and news to society:** to notify the public of news updates in internal and external environments, while preserving the community's right to know. This enables citizens to increase their knowledge in public affairs.
 2. **Providing a free forum for public debate:** a platform for public debates and discussions within the criteria of pluralism and diversity of perspectives in order to create a public sphere that promotes citizens' participation politically, economically, and culturally.
 3. **Oversight and public opinion representation:** providing a tool to monitor the performance of public institutions on behalf of the common good.
 4. **Education and entertainment:** contribute to building community sentiment while expressing culture and identity.
- The standards of public information services aim to serve democratic life and inculcate democratic culture among societies and new generations. A review of these criteria is useful for overseeing their development, as they were designed to ensure and preserve democratic life. The most prominent of these standards are:
 1. **Independence**, that is, its distance from interference and political, economic, commercial, and social pressures. It is necessary to provide effective guarantees for this independence through legislation, mechanisms for appointing the leaders of this institution, funding sources, and representing the community in all its political, cultural, and social components.
 2. **Inclusiveness and representation:** that is, this service reaches all components of society regardless of their different affiliations, languages, origins, and places of residence.
 3. **Diversity:** requires public information services to provide diverse media content that includes news, economy, community affairs, sports, entertainment, and other topics that also meet the interests of a distinct audience.
 4. **Uniqueness and innovation** through creativity in shapes, views, tools and applications, and the quality of the technologies used.
 5. **Finance and administrative governance**, that is, reliance on public financing through public treasury funds established by Parliament rather than a government grant. This requires a rational management model based on the existence of independent boards of directors, elected departments, and editorial boards as well as representation of the public. (Al-Tuwaisi, Al-Jazeera Center for Studies, 2017)

Many journalists claim that public media is owned by the people since they fund it through the taxes and fees that they pay to the government. Therefore, this media should lead to the formation of public information services that primarily serve citizens. The public may also monitor the public media since they are the funders. In this way, the concept of public information services must be clarified and applied as a way to build strong media institutions capable of expressing the hopes and pains of the Palestinian people in all its spectrum.

Worldwide Experiences of Public Media:

Public Media in Switzerland:

The Swiss Broadcasting Corporation was founded in 1931 as an institution to bring regional radio broadcasters under one roof. It initiated in French-speaking Switzerland and then included media from German and Italian-speaking regions. It offers programming in four different national languages - German, French, Italian, and Romansch.

A comprehensive study was carried out by the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation following a survey of the contents of the top 50 newspapers and radio and television programs, including several regional titles. The study's supervisors analyzed the amount and size of programs and newspapers covering important political issues, where they also examined whether the media had put these events in their context or had merely described what was happening. The study found that the level of press quality in Switzerland generally declined in conjunction with the continuous decrease in the number of workers in editorial rooms. Another reason for the decline in the level of the press quality was due to the voters' rejection of a popular initiative that called for the abolition of mandatory fees for receiving public radio and television broadcasts. Mark Eiseniger of the University of Zurich, one of the researchers who participated in the study, blamed the resources, noting that private media institutions have not yet found a "business model" (or economic equation) that allows for adequate income from the electronic press. Meanwhile, staff in the newsroom and editorial rooms are still receptive to so-called "direct media promotion" as a solution to this dilemma. He said, "The main resource problem has not been solved."

In the final rating, the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation received good results, where it took over the first three rankings thanks to programs that are concerned with covering current events, which are: "Echo der Zeit," "Rendez-vous," and "10vor10."

Andreas Dorich, one of the co-authors of the study, who drew on the expertise of researchers from the universities of Zurich and Friborg, said: "We attribute this good ranking to the intense debate surrounding the "No Billag" Initiative, which calls for the abolition of radio and TV broadcast fees. Overall, this evaluation provides a measurement of the quality of the media coverage by analyzing content through resorting to a representative survey of Switzerland's public. (<https://bit.ly/2poUgGo>)

The function of the public television is based on the paid fees by the Swiss people. The fees for listening to the radio or watching television amount to 451.10 Swiss francs per year per family. In 2015, voters, in a public referendum, were very close to passing an amendment which stipulates that all residents and companies of Switzerland must pay these fees with very few exceptions. Recently, the two chambers of Parliament (the House of Representatives, and the Senate) began discussing the role that public media should play at the national level. (Vore, 2017)

Public Media in Germany:

Freedom of the press and opinion in Germany is distinguished by its high standards, not to mention the guarantee of its protection under the German Constitution. As the fifth article of the Constitution states: "Every person shall have the right freely to express and disseminate his opinions in speech, writing and pictures, and to inform himself without hindrance from generally accessible sources. Freedom of the press and freedom of reporting by means of broadcasts and films shall be guaranteed. There shall be no censorship."

The World Press Freedom Index compiled by Reporters Without Borders ranked Germany 16th out of 180 countries in 2017. Diversity of opinions and information is available. Further, the press is not controlled by the government or political parties, but by media companies from the private sector.

Regarding the official government channels, such as ARD, ZDF, and Radio Germany, they are considered public institutions or bodies that depend on the imposed fees. These channels formed the second foundation for the media world that are based on the principle of comprehensive bilateralism between the private and public sectors, which has remained essentially unchanged since the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949.

The monthly fee for radio and television services in 2015 was 17.50 Euros. Since the 1980's, there has been a large number of private television and radio channels. The most important news programs are: "Tagesschau," "Tagesthemen," "ARD," "Heute," "Heute Journal", "ZDF", and "RTL Aktuell." In Berlin alone, which is one of the best 10 media cities in the world, 900 certified correspondents work in Parliament and there are about 440 foreign correspondents from 60 countries.

Among the diversity in the media world, there are also 300 daily newspapers, the majority of which are local newspapers, in addition to 20 weekly magazines, and about 1,600 consumer and general magazines. Germany is the fifth largest newspaper market in the world, after China, India, Japan, and the United States. Every day they are published, 16.1 million copies are sold. On the other hand, 5 million magazine copies are sold weekly.

There are prominent newspapers that are distributed nationwide, such as "Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung," "Süddeutsche Zeitung," "Handelsblatt," "Taz," "Die Zeit," and "Die Welt." These all are distinguished by research, scrutiny, analysis, study backgrounds, as well as provide comprehensive comments. Additionally, "Spiegel," "Spiegel Online," and "Bild" are among the most referenced and quoted media outlets.

At the same time, the media sector is currently in a period of fundamental structural change. For 15 years, the daily newspapers have suffered a 1.5 to 2% decline in the number of paid printed copies, where the number of young readers, editions, and advertising revenue decreased. Until today, more than 100 daily newspapers are charging a fee for reading electronic versions of newspapers online, as a response to reading for free. The world of publishing is continuously developing, as nearly 800,000 copies of electronic newspapers are sold daily via digital methods and digital subscriptions are constantly increasing.

The entry of digital technology into the media world, the spread of the Internet and the continuous increase in mobile devices have all fundamentally changed the way media is used. 62.4 million Germans over the age of 14 (89.9%) are now online. More than 50 million people

use the Internet every day. Each user spends an average of 165 minutes a day on the Internet, while the average of the whole population spends 149 minutes online. More than half of them browse online through their mobiles. The digital revolution has generated a new concept for the public, social media and blogging world. Nowadays, individuals participate in voicing their opinions and beliefs and engage in open dialogues with members of local and international societies. In the midst of this, waiting remains the only way, to see if the interactive sites of the Internet will be the basis for future digital journalism. Within the framework of the efforts exerted to confront false news and information, journalists are taking their responsibility seriously. (Facts about Germany)

Public Media in Tunisia:

The post-Arab Spring period witnessed a qualitative shift in systematizing the media's role in many Arab countries, especially Tunisia, which witnessed fundamental political transformations. As a result, there was a change in the concept of national media and news rules were established to regulate the media. This change was accompanied by a qualitative shift in the relationship of the media with the executive agencies in the country. The new stage in the relationship with the media and the authority became clear. Further, the media started to play a central role in influencing society, where public opinions were freely expressed through campaigns without any formal or informal control. This contribution is based on a firm conviction that the national media (even in the time of the Internet revolution) is the safety valve that serves the citizens in terms of communication, whether the communication is between the authority and society or between the components of society with one another.

The primary role of the media, especially the national media, is to transmit local and national news in a comprehensive and professional manner and provide an area for dialogue between members of society, including politicians, intellectuals, and the general public. The media is also an important source of knowledge that educates and informs individuals on various cultural, intellectual, religious, and social issues. Despite the development of parallel media outlets and social networks for television that are within the reach of the citizen, such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, attention is still focused on the primary role that the national media can play, including radio, television and written press, in Tunisia.

In Tunisia, the debate over defining the role of the national network of TV and radio channels was, and remains, a constant discussion in scientific seminars, parliamentary debates, radio and television programs, and on the pages of newspapers, as well as the continuous discussion of this topic on online networks in the virtual world. After the revolution in Tunisia, the media sector witnessed a great development, as the number of TV channels were limited to four or five channels controlled by either the public or private authority. However, the situation changed and the country witnessed a significant increase in channels during 2013. After two years of the revolution, the number of television channels reached 15, which were operated freely and guaranteed by the new constitution. Likewise, the Tunisian radio stations were all governmental, but they also increased to 11 public and 4 private government radio stations, in addition to about 12 private radio stations in late 2013. For its part, the press sector was rich before the revolution, as there were dozens of newspapers, but freedom of

expression was restricted. After the revolution, the country acquired more than 45 newspapers with different orientations and publishing methods.

Tunisia's ranking in the Press Freedom Index positively fell from 164 (out of 178) in 2010, before the revolution, to 133 (out of 180), after the revolution in 2014. Even with this good decline, the situation remains unstable. For example, during the newscast on Watania 1 on 7/12/2020, the first twenty minutes were devoted to strikes and demonstrations organized by the Tunisian General Labour Union, which is the largest trade union in Tunisia.

As for the activities that highlighted the economic mobility at the local and international levels, such as the Davos World Economic Forum held for the first time in Tunisia, they were hastily covered and lacked analysis and detailed information that should accompany news reports. Instead of focusing on the current news, the newscast repeated information about the previous strikes of the Tunisian General Labour Union that took place in different Tunisian cities. The media has so far managed to contain the central slogans of the revolution in Tunisia by distracting the public's attention from fighting the corrupt. (Khashana, 2018)

Public Media in Algeria:

After Algeria declared independence from France on July 5, 1962, the state took the necessary measures to transform French radio and television to Algerian radio and television. In August, it was officially announced that the Algerian radio and television, which aimed to transform the technical landscape of telecommunications in Algeria, was widely announced. Algerian radio and television have entered full-time broadcasting in the world of communications through continuous equipment and participation in advanced experiences such as newscasts and more. Additionally, Algeria radio and television use the satellite of the African region and exchanges information and programs between Arab and European countries by training new generations of trained technicians on new technologies.

After the restructuring of Algerian radio and television, and in accordance with Decree No. 86-147 of July 1, 1986, work in the institution was divided into four main institutions, namely: 1. The National Television Corporation, 2. The National Radio Corporation, 3. The National Radio and TV Broadcasting Corporation, and 4. The National Audiovisual Production Corporation. The National Television Corporation has become concerned with information, education, and entertainment by publishing all reports and programs related to national life, at the regional, local, and international levels.

The institution has witnessed several important developments since its establishment. However, the most prominent of them was on April 24, 1991, according to Law 91/100, through which the National Television Corporation was transformed into a public institution of a commercial nature managed by a board of directors and subject to the specifications of rules that limit its duties. Therefore, the institution has become concerned with transparency and respect of the directives from the Ministry of Information and the data from the Ministry of Culture and Communication. Furthermore, the institution provides programs that are related to national matters such as news and education.

In 1992, the first newscasts were launched in the Tamazight language, beginning with the Chaoui and Kabyle dialects. In 1994, the Public Television Corporation established the second

Algerian TV channel, known as Algerian TV. The name was then changed to Canal Algérie. Even though it is an Algerian channel, it broadcasts its channels in the French language and believes that it is a cultural link with the Algerian community residing inside and outside the country, specifically in Europe. It also seeks to attract the foreign public concerned with the development of the situation in Algeria, especially in the political and economic fields. In 2001, the Public Television Corporation established the third Algerian channel, which primarily aims primarily to portray the true picture of Algeria in the Arab world. The third television channel is broadcasted by satellites, which allows the establishment of a permanent relationship between the Algerian community abroad, especially in the Arab world and the mother country. Then, in 2009, the institution established the fourth and fifth channels, which are the Amazigh channel, that is devoted to the Algerian Amazigh, and the Qur'an channel, that is dedicated to everything related to the Qur'an and knowledge of Islam. (Wikipedia - the free encyclopedia, 2019).

If we look at examples of many countries that have experienced the transition to public media, we can conclude that public media arose as a result of a democratic society that respects individuals and their right freedom of opinion and expression. Public media needs to develop in a society that allows its existence and gives the private space for its creation and promotion. On the contrary, public media cannot originate in a society that is based on authoritarianism or dictatorship, which is noticeably present in Arab countries. But in the second half of the last twentieth century, public broadcasting services have emerged to become one of the features of democratically transformed societies. During the period of democratization in South Africa, the presence of the public broadcasting services was a strong indicator of the safety and recovery of the democratic transformation.

Information:

It is necessary to get acquainted with the definitions of some concepts. First, the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation, known as "PBC," is a Palestinian media organization established by Resolution No. (4566) issued on 7/6/1993 by the late President Yasser Arafat. The legitimacy of the Palestinian right to own two radio and television broadcasting stations is also mentioned in one of the provisions of the Oslo Agreement. The official website of the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation indicates that "the Corporation relies on the implementation of its public services on democracy, intellectual openness, pluralism, and the depth of the heritage and civilization of the authentic Palestinian people."

The Palestinian Broadcasting Corporations' Objectives:

1. Highlight the cultural and civilized milestones of the Palestinian people, contribute to their development, and disseminate the milestones amongst the world's cultures and civilizations.
2. Unify the creative Palestinian experiences which were produced by their reality in a way that suits their nationalism and seek the help of all our people's creative abilities.
3. Document and consolidate the relations of our Palestinian people at all levels and dimensions between their various segments, on the one hand, and with the Arab world, on the other, in various countries and regions.

4. Preserve the development of the homeland and Palestinian citizens economically, socially, culturally, sustain the exchange with its counterparts in a way that serves the continuous growth of these aspects, and stabilize their positions among the people and countries of the world.
5. Address Palestinian public opinion of those in the homeland and abroad.
6. Inform citizens about the judicial, legislative, social, and political directives and decisions of the Palestinian National Authority to advance their active and participatory role in the process of building a state and society that are based on democracy, pluralism, and constructive openness.
7. Adhere to the consistent traditions of our people through our rights to freedom of opinion and expression, publication, and broadcasting while urging and guaranteeing the Palestinian citizen his/her natural right to exercise these rights. These were endorsed by Arab and international charters that were approved by the official constitution of our people in the PLO.
8. Focus on human interests, such as the principles of religions, democracy, human rights, citizen protection, and natural human rights.
9. Protecting the distinction of the Palestinian national personality through social and cultural programs by preventing the occurrence of damages affecting the various groups of society. (Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation, 2015)

There was also a decision issued in the year 2010 by the President which stated that Palestine TV is a public institution. However, the keen observer of channel's programs is able to clearly indicate that this media institution does not initially serve the Palestinian public in all its spectrum; yet, it has an instrument in the hands of the Palestinian government, the authority, and the Fatah movement, as Fatah is represented by the government. Also stated in Article No. (3) of Decree No. (2) of 2010 regarding the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation, the Corporation seeks to achieve the following:

1. Providing radio and television services with the required efficiency and ensuring that it is directed to the service of the homeland, citizen, and public interest within the framework of the inherent values and traditions of the Palestinian people.
2. Supporting national unity and social peace, preserving the individual's dignity and freedoms, and working to spread the national democratic culture.
3. Raise the citizens' awareness about Palestinian and Arab history and heritage.
4. Educating citizens, developing their ideas, providing beneficial entertainment for them through various TV broadcasting means.
5. Presenting citizens' demands and problems and supporting their right to express opinion, participation, and knowledge. (Palestinian Legal and Judicial System, 2010)

Official Palestinian Media in Palestine:

The Palestinian official media attempts to entirely cover the Palestinian reality, putting the issues of the people under a microscope and drawing attention to them; but, it has not yet been able to formulate a strong and targeted media discourse or draw the attention of the Palestinian public to it from its various locations in the world. We can say that the official media in Palestine is unable to shed light on Palestinians and their true aspirations, and the information they are searching for throughout their presence in the

world. This is what is noticed when looking at the issues that are discussed through the official media. They are highlighted on the TV or radio and the official website of the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation which publishes news and programs that are prepared and broadcasted. For example, after taking a look at the channel, Palestine TV, and following up on the most important news that is published, we realized that it did not adequately reflect numerous Palestinian issues. The official media is a tool in the hands of the government and authority to spread the government's perspectives rather than the Palestinians' perspectives, especially on Palestine TV. The programs of this channel are not inclusive of all the categories and spectra of the Palestinian people.

It is no secret to all of us that the many issues related to the Palestinian people make the subject of the comprehensiveness of news and programs related to all people a little difficult. However, the special situation of the Palestinian people and its presence under the Israeli occupation necessitates the official media to work to make it an important and real Palestinian platform.

Transfer of Official Palestinian Media to Public Media:

In an interview with the media trainer at the Media Development Center at Birzeit University, Professor Imad Al-Asfar commented that the official media in the Arab world in general is still substandard and unable to keep pace with modern developments. He emphasized that the way the Palestinian official media deals with information and news is the reason for the spread of false and misleading news which enabled Palestinian citizens to seek Facebook news and social networking sites that usually do not investigate accuracy before or after its publication. This results from the absence of information and delay in official and governmental bodies' response to the rumors. Further, Professor Al-Asfar added: "We urgently need public media in the Palestinian society. Since the most important characteristic of the public media is that it is funded directly by the people such as, taxes on electricity or water bills, then it will solemnly focus and express the concerns and problems of the people rather than the problems and messages of the government and authority." He also commented on the decrees and procedures required for this transformation by stating: "Initially, the public media must be subject to an elected parliament and not to the head of authority, head of government, or the Ministry of Media. This will then allow the public media to be independent administratively and financially which will result in the freedom of choosing journalists, broadcasters, and the topics that will be discussed.

Al-Asfar affirmed that public television does not have the right to make advertisements for companies, so that it can criticize them with transparency and without oversight if they are wrong. He also added that the public media should provide a platform for receiving complaints from citizens, whether these complaints were against others or themselves. Further, he suggested that there be arbitrators of these complaints who work to resolve them quickly as well as written policies that lay down specific procedures for the employees who work in this field. Further, he also implied that there should be a glossary of terms and a guidebook that defines terms and nomenclatures. For example: what will we say when describing the separation walls? The Apartheid Wall or something else? What will we call the settlements? What will we call martyrdom operations? All

these terms should be clear to the public body so that they could be used conclusively in the public media.

With these characteristics, we can have a public media that is preoccupied with the public concern and not afraid of the government. This will encourage Palestinian citizens to always turn to the public media, will allow the citizens to be more confident in the authority and government, and will reduce the rumors. Additionally, it will reduce the large and apparent abuse of power, which is caused by the proliferation of rumors and lack of clarification from the authority. It will also promote Palestine's status, as a state, and give the world the impression that the State of Palestine deserves to be recognized.

As for the readiness of the Palestinian people to step into the existence of a public TV for all its components, he states: "Readiness can be achieved and all the things that we think are difficult are possible and may be easy if we start. In all the previous stages that we started with for the transformation the media, we noticed a positive response and interaction of citizens. Let us simply start with an editorial policy and method for receiving complaints. Step by step, we can reach a public media that is open and credible, truly reflects the Palestinian people, and acquires the citizens' trust. He also stressed that all of these steps could be achieved in the future by working to adopt specific laws for the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation. This would convert it to an independent public media through which we can express our perspectives freely.

As for Mr. Saeed Abu Mualla, a lecturer in media at the Arab American University, he stated that: "The reality of Palestine TV and the official media system can be considered as an evolution in form and technology, in terms of the technological transformations and developments this system has reached, and a regression in the levels of discourse, treatment, and content, when continuing that old approach. Television is the mouthpiece of the Palestinian National Authority or the ruling and controlling political system. In other words, we cannot consider that the official media represents, for example, the Fatah movement, which is considered one of the largest Palestinian factions. There is a retreat in the mass space represented by the official media discourse. The implications of this ruling are discerned, for example, from Palestine TV's treatment of the teachers' strike issue, the Cybercrime Law, and social security."

Regarding how to transfer the media from official media, controlled by the authority and government, to public media, Abu Mualla said: "It is not possible for official media to transform into public media without understanding the large sector that includes distinguished media professionals, technological capabilities and technologies, and the meaning of public media. For example, there are those who now believe that the official media is a public media that represents the Palestinian people. Since the media is actually official and not public, this indicates that there is a flaw in the understanding of the concept. Secondly, the transformation from official media to public media cannot occur without the Palestinian National Authority's realization that it can gain the confidence of 80% of the Palestinian people and increase their interest in the political system. This interest is linked to the concern of the Palestinian society and cause, which is supposed to be a consensus for all components of the Palestinian political scene and the general Palestinian society." When asked about the process of persuading the authorities who are

responsible for the Palestinian media to abandon official media and resort to public media, he stated: "I think this is an issue that needs to be understood in terms of all the developments we are experiencing, such as realizing that the official media in its class form ended. We notice that there are still individuals who believe in the official media and want to continue on the same path. However, we need diverse mentalities who believe in different options."

Abu Mualla also added that: "There was a decree issued by the President in 2010 that remained ink on paper. An advisory board was also formed; however, they did not acquire an effective role. The decree that President Mahmoud Abbas issued was an indication of awareness of the importance of the matter and I think that we should hold onto this decree in order to build on it, as it includes many important details." As for the administrative and financial procedures that help in a smooth and transparent transformation to public media, he emphasized that: "The public media requires new structures that take into account social components, impose a higher media council, and enforces an advisory board of directors who monitor and correct performances and make recommendations to solve issues. He said that "the official media, as a whole, has a central vision. There is significance for the cultural and artistic contents and the contents that bring Palestinians together in light of the state's division and fragmentation." He noted that: "The solutions approached by the official media may enhance a negative approach in seeing the general picture of Palestine as being held hostage to the vision of the political system governed by the Oslo Accord. For example, when we decided to pay attention to 1948 lands, it resulted in the promotion of separation." He stressed that: "The public media, under occupation and division, has a large and important role, as it expresses all the social Palestinian components and promotes national awareness in light of the occupation.

Today there is a blockage in the settlement project and there is not any prospect for a political solution, Palestinians need to choose a path that guarantees his/her fulfillment of his/her dreams. This can only be achieved through national public media. Official media, by virtue of its structure, who works with it, and how its role deepens the division, does not represent the Palestinian people. The Fatah media is a party to the conflict, as is the case with the Hamas media, which is something we condemn; but the official Palestinian media is funded by taxpayers and all Palestinian social groups and it must be expressed by them rather than a political faction." He added that: "There are shifts in the roles of the media as a whole, as the revolutionary tactical media has been replaced by media with new professional concepts. I believe that the most important role that the public media can play is working to build a collective national identity in light of the fragmentation of the concepts of identity after Oslo. In light of the continuance of the Palestinian diaspora, only the media is able to achieve this by presenting all the Palestinian identities and various components of the Palestinian society including, the West Bank, Gaza Strip, 1948 Lands, diaspora, and abandoned lands."

The Palestinian media, despite its recent developments, is still in its early stages of improvement. It requires many changes in order for it to become a media that truly expresses all categories of the Palestinian people, as a whole, and reflects their hopes and thoughts. When we search for a neutral media outlet that has a targeted media discourse,

we do not find any. The Palestinian people are in dire need of a neutral and unified Palestinian media that talks about all Palestinians everywhere in the world because of the media war that the Israeli occupation is leading against the Palestinians. The division of the Palestinian people is a vital reason of the teared and dispersed Palestinian media body. There is lack of unification between the political parties, as each party is affiliated with institutions that are in accordance with their authority. Media institutions are essentially governed by the Palestine Liberation Organization. These facts empower us to search for the most suitable and appropriate way to deal with the Palestinian people and cause. The public media is the source of a true Palestinian media, which will be the platform for Palestinians to express themselves regardless of their locations. It will also unify the global discourse of the Palestinian people and restore confidence in the Palestinian media once again.

Recommendations:

- Examine the Presidential Decree issued in 2010 to transfer the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation from an official body to a public body and enforce this transformation.
- Form a parliament that will be responsible for the public media in Palestine composed of journalists and media professionals.
- Organize trainings, workshops, and media campaigns that introduce the people to public media, its importance to the Palestinian people as a whole, and how it can serve the Palestinian cause.
- Study Arab media experiences that managed to establish a good model for public media and a study of how this experience can be used and applied to Palestinian society.
- Raise awareness about the importance of public media and its presence in the Palestinian society, how it can lead towards liberalization and independent media by teaching it in universities, conducting media campaigns, and encouraging private scientific research in the field of public media.
- Search for a legal body to intensify public media in all media institutions.
- Discuss the concept of public media more seriously among media institutions.

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