

China Succeeds in the Middle East While the US Fails

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Global Research, July 28, 2024

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Once again, China steps on to the global diplomatic stage, in the absence of US involvement, and brokered a ground-breaking agreement between rival factions in Palestine. Following the March 2023 reconciliation between Middle East powerhouse Saudi Arabia and Iran signed in China, now we have the "[Beijing Declaration](#)" between Hamas and Fatah signed on July 23.

The agreement calls for a national unity government to govern Gaza jointly after the end of the current conflict which began on October 7, 2023 after Hamas attacked Israel, which resulted in the deaths of 1,197 people. Hamas seized 251 hostages, 116 of who are still in Gaza, including 44 the Israeli military says are dead.

US President Joe Biden promised he could deliver a ceasefire agreement on July 11 at the NATO summit, but soon found Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had reneged on his acceptance of the Biden proposal for peace.

Israel's revenge attack on Gaza has killed more than 39,000 people, the majority of who are women and children, and the relentless Israeli attacks has plunged Gaza into a severe humanitarian crisis. The UN and other humanitarian groups have labeled the Israeli war on Gaza as genocide.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, hosted a three-day meeting attended by senior Hamas official Musa Abu Marzuk, Fatah envoy Mahmud al-Aloul, along with emissaries from 12 other Palestinian groups and envoys from Egypt, Algeria and Russia.

"The core achievement is to make it clear that the Palestine Liberation Organization is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people," said [Wang Yi during the closing ceremony](#).

"China sincerely hopes that the Palestinian factions will achieve Palestinian independence at an early date on the basis of internal reconciliation, and is willing to strengthen communication and coordination with relevant parties to jointly work to implement the Beijing Declaration reached today," said Wang Yi.

"Reconciliation is an internal matter for the Palestinian factions, but at the same time, it cannot be achieved without the support of the international community," Wang Yi said. China has proved to be the only world power that can engineer a rapprochement between the Palestinian rivals.

Wang Yi also called for a "comprehensive, lasting and sustainable ceasefire", as well as

efforts to promote Palestinian self-governance and full recognition of a Palestinian state at the UN.

China is playing the role of a neutral actor on the Israel-Palestinian conflict while maintaining good ties with Israel, and also advocating for a two-state solution.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed to continue the war on Gaza until it destroys Hamas. The US and Israel view Hamas as a terrorist organization, and will not sanction any post-war plan for Gaza which includes Hamas.

Hamas and Fatah have been bitter rivals since Hamas fighters ejected Fatah from the Gaza Strip after Hamas's resounding victory in a 2006 election.

Fatah controls the Palestinian Authority, which has partial administrative control in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

Fatah was formed from the PLO which was founded by Yasser Arafat. In the 1993 Oslo Agreement, the PLO laid down their arms, while Hamas has remained an armed resistance group. The Geneva Convention guarantees the legal right of armed resistance to occupation.

Hamas has recently indicated a willingness to disarm if a Palestinian state were established.

Hamas and Islamic Jihad are not members of the PLO, the Palestinians' highest decision-making body, but they demand that any unity deal includes holding an election for the PLO parliament to secure their inclusion.

Prior to October 7, the Israeli military had conducted almost daily attacks in the Occupied West Bank, and after the war on Gaza began the attacks, killings and arrests have mounted. This has led to armed resistance groups in Jenin and Tul Karim.

“Instead of rejecting terrorism, (Fatah leader) Mahmoud Abbas embraces the murderers and rapists of Hamas, revealing his true face. In reality, this won't happen because Hamas' rule will be crushed, and Abbas will be watching Gaza from afar. Israel's security will remain solely in Israel's hands,” Israeli [Foreign Minister Israel Katz](#) said on X.

The unity government agreement in Beijing is one step closer to the final solution of the two-state solution. [Sultan Barakat](#), noted authority on the Israel-Palestinian conflict, has said US action is needed immediately as “Gaza is decimated and millions of Palestinians there desperately try to hold on to life without shelter, food, water or adequate medical care, the Israeli cabinet continues to “legalise” settlement outposts in the West Bank – deepening challenges for a viable two-state solution.”

Israel's Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich on June 27 threatened European countries,

“For every country that unilaterally recognizes a Palestinian state, we will establish a settlement.”

Smotrich is a settler and promotes Israel's long-term strategy of annexing the Palestinian territory under its occupation.

Palestine was recognized as a sovereign state by 143 of the 193 United Nations members and it is the recognition by European states that most threatens Israel's colonial settlement project. Israel's far right religious parties make it impossible for the Palestinians to pursue independence.

Ireland, Norway, Spain and Slovenia have recognized Palestinian statehood based on the 1967 borders following the horrific humanitarian situation in Gaza under siege and unrelenting attacks without a place of refuge. European states recognizing Palestine include Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Sweden, and the total number of UN member states to 147.

In typical blind subjugation to AIPAC, the US vetoed a widely backed UN Security Council resolution that would have paved the way for full UN membership for Palestine on April 17.

Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar said "the only credible path for Israel, Palestine, and their peoples" while referring to the two-state solution.

Northern Ireland and South Africa were conflicts which were resolved by compromise and dialogue.

The British Labour Party has pledged to recognize a Palestinian State "as a contribution to a renewed peace process which results in a two-state solution".

The International Court of Justice ruled last week that Israel's continued presence in the Occupied West Bank is unlawful and should come to an end "as rapidly as possible".

Settler violence against Palestinians in the Occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem since October 7 has surged, and serves to prove that continued colonization is incompatible with the creation of a Palestinian state and sustainable peace. France, the UK, the US and later Germany and Poland have applied sanctions against Israeli settlers responsible for such violence.

[The China-brokered Saudi-Iran deal](#) signed on March 10, 2023 started a wave of reconciliation across the Middle East.

Wang Yi pledged to "continue to support countries in the Middle East in exploring a development path that suits their own national conditions, strengthening communication and dialogue, adhering to unity and self-improvement, and realising good-neighbourliness and friendship".

Officials in Tehran and Riyadh have said the two countries' deteriorating relations with the United States was one of the main reasons for their shift in policy.

Saudi Arabia had lost confidence in any US commitment to shared regional security concerns and wanted to bolster ties with China, which has good relations with Iran.

Full-fledged diplomatic ties were restored, and without any US or European role in what experts call the new "[post-American Gulf era.](#)"

The Saudi-Iran relationship has been strengthened during the Israeli war on Gaza, as both sides reaffirm their shared support of the Palestinian people, and call for the end of the war and long-term peace.

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This article was originally published on [Mideast Discourse](#).

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