

## Is Mahmoud Abbas Israel's lawyer?

By [Khalid Amayreh](#)

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Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas has vehemently rejected Hamas demands that only Palestinian and Egyptian authorities be allowed to run the Rafah border crossing.

“We will not accept any new conditions; they (Hamas) have to go back to the old border-crossing agreement. We are more interested in the Palestinian people's interests than Hamas is. If Hamas is really for them as well, let them comply with this agreement.”

Well, does Abbas really know what he is talking about? Indeed, as the Arab proverb goes, if he knows, it is a real calamity, and if he doesn't, it is even a greater calamity.”

I am saying this because the old agreement governing operations at the Rafah Border-Crossing enables Israel, the country that has been trying to decimate 1.5 million Gazans by way of starving them, to have the final say as to when the border terminal may be opened and when it will be closed.

We all remember how thousands of Palestinians, including students, patients, pilgrims and other travelers, were left stranded on the Egyptian side of the border for weeks and months because an Israeli officer on the Israeli side of the border decided to keep these helpless victims hostage to his whims and cannibalistic instincts.

In fact, this wicked sadism, which Mr. Abbas is defending doggedly now, was responsible for the death of dozens of Palestinians who were left stranded in the desert, as if they were animals, not human beings. Go back to relevant reports describing the plight of stranded Gazans and you will understand what I am talking about.

How did Israel manage to keep the border-crossing closed most of the days of the year? Well, it was very simple. According to the “wonderful” agreement Abbas is now demanding that Hamas accept unconditionally, the Rafah border terminal can't be operational unless in the presence of EU monitors. But the monitors themselves, who hail from several EU countries and some of them may well be working for the Israeli Intelligence, are based in the small Israeli kibbutz of Kerem Shalom, a few miles away from the border terminal. And according to the infamous agreement, they can't have a free access to the border terminal unless they receive beforehand a daily permit from the Israeli army.

For its part, the Israeli army, acting on instructions from the government, would simply and routinely declare the only road from Kerem Shalom to the Rafah border terminal a closed military zone in order to keep the border-crossing closed. Of course, the army would concoct

“security reasons” to justify the virtually perpetual closure, but everyone, including the Israelis themselves, know quite well that genuine security considerations have very little to do with the Israeli measures and that the real motive is to punish and torment the Palestinians.

As mentioned, this flagrant abuse of authority was not done one day or two days or even ten days per month. This was the norm, the modus operandi, and the border crossing was kept closed 26 or even 29 days per month, causing tremendous suffering to the Palestinians.

It was a deliberate and calculated process intended to torment, savage, brutalize and humiliate the people of Gaza, and it was all done under the rubric of an “international agreement.”

The EU leadership and member-states knew well what was going on at Kerem Shalom. But they were too morally dishonest and too subservient to Israel and the United States to show any meaningful objection to Israel’s systematic persecution of a helpless people whose men, women and children are clinging to life just as many of the Jewish inmates at Ghetto Warsaw did nearly 67 years ago.

So, I would like to ask Abbas and his aides and hangers-on who talk too much and make so much noise, claiming to serve the vital interests of the Palestinian people:

How do you think that re-allowing Israel to control the Rafah border-crossing would serve the interests of the Palestinian people? Are you drunk? Are you stupid? Are blind? Are you ignorant?

Besides, why do you think that Israel should be involved in running the Rafah border-crossing in the first place? Isn’t the border crossing an exclusively Egyptian-Palestinian crossing? Didn’t Israel declare that it ended its occupation of the Gaza Strip? Has not the Zionist regime been saying ad nauseam that it is no longer responsible for Gaza? If so, why do you insist that the slave master remain the ultimate decision-maker, the ultimate boss? This is sickening, to say the least and it shows a kind of umbilical subservience on your part to the nefarious occupiers.

I realize that there are problems between Fatah and Hamas. However, betraying the Palestinian people and undermining their vital interests for the purpose of weakening Hamas and appeasing Israel and pleasing Washington borders on treason, pure and simple.

What else can be said of and about clinging to an unconscionable agreement that allows the evil occupiers to imprison, torment and humiliate us with impunity...because the “agreement” says so.

Well, the agreement may go to hell along with those who signed it.

In short, Hamas is right a hundred per cent. The Rafah border crossing must be jointly run exclusively by the Palestinian and Egyptian authorities. And the Ramallah regime may, if it wants, take part in managing the border terminal, as part of an overall reconciliation process between Gaza and Ramallah.

However, bringing Israel into the picture is unacceptable. The people of Gaza have suffered more than enough at the hands of Israel. Their murderer and tormentor must never be

allowed to be jailer as well.

Is Abbas going to understand this? I doubt it.

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