

# What Is the Missing Crucial Component in US Foreign Policy? People.

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*Despite worldwide concern over the worsening humanitarian crisis in Gaza and despite the USA being the only country in the world in a strong enough position to put adequate pressure on Israel to check this, the USA has failed to make any truly significant remedial contribution in this context so far.*

True the USA has made massive financial investment in its military pier project off the coast of Gaza, reported to be the length of five football fields and protected by two warships, as the delivery source for aid material entering Gaza from seaside.

However the same objective of bringing in more relief materials could have been achieved at a much, much lower cost by clearing the land routes in cooperation with Israel. Hence what the pier can ultimately achieve at its best is not something that could not have been achieved at substantially lower costs in other ways; what it does achieve is much higher visibility for the USA as the leading facilitator of aid for the people of Gaza (apart from increasing its naval presence in an area of great strategic and economic importance).

On the whole US diplomatic efforts are more focused on achieving an agreement between Saudi Arabia and Israel to take forward the process of Abraham Accords initiated in 2020. These helped to increase and improve the relationship of Israel with the UAE and Bahrain. This was taken forward later to improve relationship of Israel with Sudan and Morocco, achieved with the help of the USA making some political concessions to these countries.

In the case of achieving a somewhat similar accord between Saudi Arabia and Israel, after all that has happened in Gaza, the USA is expected to include some kind of an assurance for the two-state solution. What kind of statehood for Palestine can be achieved when the

people are being threatened on such a massive scale remains a big question. Even if some kind of an artificial construct can be agreed upon, surely it is likely to fall much below any expectations of genuine statehood.

Why the USA is keen to pursue such an accord is that its policymakers think such a Saudi-Israel deal will make the US position in the Middle East much stronger. This is also supposed to be a big blow to the Chinese diplomacy efforts which have been trying to achieve closer ties between Saudi Arabia and Iran, and thereby strengthening China's own position in the Middle East as well. In addition the USA wishes to check all talk of Saudi Arabia moving away from denominating its oil exports in US dollars, something that had been talked about in recent times and more after the step-up of Chinese diplomacy.

Any accord between Israel and Saudi Arabia is quite likely to also involve the US making increasing security commitments to Saudi Arabia, even at the risk of the USA getting more entangled in any future Middle East hostilities or even wars.

So what is playing out in the Middle East region is big power politics and as often happens, the serious humanitarian concerns have been subordinated to this.

However what US policymakers need to give much more importance to is the impact of their policies on ordinary people.

This is most crucial component missing in US policy. If excessive supply of US bombs and weapons is widely seen to have caused massive destruction in Gaza, then surely this is having very negative impact among the Arab people throughout the Middle East.

If the USA policymakers concentrate merely on clinching deals with various Arab regimes and rulers, also pushing them closer to Israel, then this is bound to increase resentment among Arab people, and sooner or later this will erupt in some form or the other. Hence while ignoring the real feelings of people is wrong in any case, even from the narrow perspective of USA's own long-term interests, this cannot be called wise policy.

Of course the saddest consequence of ignoring people is to be seen in the context of the ever-increasing distress of the people of Gaza, and to a lesser extent also of the people of West Bank as well.

Ignoring people has been no less costly and distressing in the context of the USA's Ukraine policy. The USA has pursued the policy of using Ukraine as a proxy to bleed and harm Russia as much as possible, regardless of its impact on the people of Ukraine. The result is that several hundred thousand people in Ukraine have either lost their life, or else have been disabled, seriously injured or suffered other extreme distress. Several million have been displaced. At the same time several senior persons in US politics have clearly stated that as long as their country is able to harm Russia without having to risk the life of its own soldiers and people, this policy is fine, it is justified. In this thinking, the extreme distress suffered by the people of Ukraine is not considered.

Similarly the extreme distress suffered by the people of Iraq, Libya, Afghanistan, Syria etc. was not considered at the time of the USA and its close allies launching highly aggressive wars against these countries which killed several hundred thousand people and disrupted very seriously the life of millions of others.

Hence clearly the foreign policy of the most powerful country should change in very

significant ways so that reducing the distress of people becomes a very important component of this policy.

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