

Intifada at the ballot box

Tehran Times Opinion Column

TEHRAN, Jan. 27 (MNA) -- The Hamas victory in Wednesday's Palestinian parliamentary election gave a democratic voice to the Intifada and shocked the world.

Hamas won the election mostly because of the popularity of their resistance against the occupation and the fact they presented an alternative to the long years of corruption and mismanagement by a Palestinian Authority dominated by the Fatah faction, and the ensuing poverty.



The occupiers have been talking of "peace" without really moving in the direction of peace. The Zionists have been negotiating with the Palestinian Authority off and on for years under different names, including the Road Map for the Middle East. Unfortunately, the Palestinians have gained nothing from this process.

Meetings in Madrid, Oslo, Washington, and many other places have produced no concrete results. Therefore, the people of Palestine came to the conclusion that they can only attain their rights through resistance because Israeli officials are

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not sincere. After all, the establishment of the Zionist regime was itself a deceitful act.

"The voters chose to punish the Palestinian Authority as represented by Fatah for its mismanagement during the last decade," said Nashat al-Aqtash from the West Bank's Bir Zeit University. "You must also add to that the fact that there is no political solution on the horizon and the occupation persists."

Israel was forced to withdraw from the Gaza Strip, which is called the world's biggest open-air prison, due to the relentless resistance to the occupation, and not as a goodwill gesture. Israel withdrew from Gaza and is instead reinforcing its grip on the West Bank by ordering the construction of more settlements.

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How can one talk of peace while occupying another people's land? If Israel was sincerely seeking peace, it should have withdrawn from the occupied territories many years ago. Israel is swimming against the current of history. As long as the policy of humiliating the Palestinian nation persists, there will be no peace, since it is naive to expect peace without justice.

Hamas co-founder Mahmoud Zahar said: "We are not playing terrorism or violence. We are under occupation.

"The Israelis are continuing their aggression against our people, killing, detention, demolition and in order to stop these processes, we run effective self defense by all means, including using guns," he told BBC World TV.



Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni has called on the European Union to oppose the creation of a "terrorist government". Livni's statement proves that Israel does not believe in democracy, just as it does not believe in peace.

Livni and her masters in the West preach to others on democracy and acceptance of the will of the people, but when the will of the Palestinian nation blossoms, she

unashamedly allows herself to talk about preventing the formation of a new government based on the people's wishes.

Likewise, U.S. President George W. Bush said Thursday he would not deal with Hamas unless it renounced what he called "terrorism". Bush and his ilk call resistance to occupation terrorism and believe the Palestinians cast a "vote for

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terrorism", a shameful and insulting description of a nation's voice. If Bush administration officials are sincere in their claim that they want to support democracies in the Middle East, why don't they congratulate Hamas on its victory, which was the result of the democracy which loudly and unequivocally cries out that it is tired of occupation, deception, and humiliation.

It suffices to say that a policy of deception and repression cannot continue indefinitely, since nothing can withstand the will of a nation seeking to attain its legitimate rights. Tel Aviv and its masters should respect the voice of the Palestinians and end the occupation of their homeland.

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