



DO PALESTINIANS NEED THEIR OWN STATE?

PERMISSION TO OWN YOUR HOME

Mahmoud Abbas has recently returned to the West Bank from New York after he applied for full state membership of the UN. This request may be to a certain extent nothing more than a gesture as the US has stated they would veto the proposal if it reached the Security Council. The US is a permanent member of the Security Council with the UK, China, France and the Russian Federation and has the power to veto. The purpose of the UN is to ensure fairness, equality, the rule of Law and democracy. As a point, whilst discussing the permanent members, one needs to also consider that the five members are the top five countries in the world when it comes to spending on defence (bear in mind that the best form of defence is offence) and exporting arms to other states. So in one way or another are responsible for the great majority of the killing of humans upon the face of the earth.

Mahmoud Abbas whilst representing the Palestinian people is asking for a state based on the pre-1967 borders – so why approach the UN?

Well, it was in 1947 when the newly formed General Assembly (now the UN) agreed to partition the land into two states one Jewish and the other Arab. The Jews accepted the proposal and were entered into the UN – does it not only seem fair that the people whose land it is are treated equally and given that same judgement – albeit 64 years later and much reduced in size. Furthermore, once recognised as a state it can be involved in international forums like the International Court of Justice and challenge Israel's occupation of its lands. (Time, Vol. 178, No. 13; 2011, pp. 28-31)

Would it be easy for the US to veto the proposal in terms of its image and influence in the Middle East? How would Israel's threat of withholding tax receipts collected for the Palestinians affect its relationship with fellow Middle Eastern States?

This may not be as straightforward as it could have been even as recent as a year ago as the Arab Spring has brought a change in Egypt – a former ally - as well as a number of other local Arab states. Turkey, another ally, has made it quite clear that it will not succumb to threats and actual assaults against its interests in the area. The US has made effort since Obama's arrival to warm relations with the Muslim Middle East and would not want to lose the gains he and his administration have made especially with the change of leadership in those countries

Whatever happens, it is quite clear that here is an opportunity for the UN to stand by their notions of equality, fairness, rule of law and democracy.