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## **Declaring war on the West Bank will only sink Israel deeper**

Israel's aggressive expansion into the West Bank, echoing the devastation in Gaza, reveals a broader strategy to crush the Palestinian resistance, exert further control, and reshape the region — yet all it does is hasten the collapse of the Oslo framework and the collaborative Palestinian Authority.

The current Israeli invasion of the already occupied [West Bank](#) has exposed the stark reality of Israel and its decades-long occupation of Palestine: the extent of extremism within its government, the repetitive and ineffective tactics of its army, the diminishing “authority” of Mahmoud Abbas, the obsolescence of the Oslo Accords, the increased pressure on the Jordanian monarchy, and the undeniable complicity of the US in these daily atrocities.

This major offensive in the West Bank — the occupation state's [largest since the Second Intifada](#), carries profound implications. As the Israeli government continues its 11th month of war against the Gaza Strip, it has expanded its genocidal campaign to another part of historic Palestine, signaling a new phase of conflict akin to a "Gaza 2.0."

### **Gaza 2.0**

By attacking the West Bank, Israel has made clear that its actions against Gaza were not solely a reaction to last year's Hamas-led resistance operation, Al-Aqsa Flood, but are part of a broader strategy to "Judaize" all of Palestine, as Palestinian resistance groups have continuously [asserted](#) since the latest war erupted.

During the latest session of the Israeli government's weekly meeting, Israeli Minister of Environmental Protection Idit Silman placed the cities of Jenin and Nablus in the same category as the Gaza-Egypt border and reiterated Israel's right to all of Palestine, stating:

**In the Philadelphi Corridor, in Jenin and Nablus, we must attack in order to inherit the land. This is the term that must be used (inheritance), not the term 'occupation' of the land.**

The same day, Minister of Settlements and National Missions Orit Strook called on Israel's Military Secretary and security cabinet to “declare a state of war in the West Bank.”

Indeed, the factors driving the current explosion in the West Bank mirror those that ignited Gaza. Since the war on Gaza began, Israel has intensified its brutal tactics in the West Bank: over 650 Palestinians have been killed, including over 150 children.

The occupation forces have conducted more than 10,300 operations, accompanied by an increase in settlement activity and the distribution of tens of thousands of weapons to settler gangs, further escalating attacks on indigenous Palestinian communities.

Even Ronen Bar, the head of Israel's own security agency, the Shin Bet, has [warned](#) of the rise in "Jewish terrorism," cautioning that such extremism could further damage Tel Aviv's international standing and regional alliances.

Despite these warnings, the occupation state has learned little from its short past. Israel's ongoing campaign in the West Bank continues to employ [familiar but futile tactics](#) — [assassinations](#) (most recently and notably, Tulkarem's [Abu Shujaa](#)), destruction (especially in Jenin and Tulkarem), imprisonment, intimidation, land confiscation, and the demolition of homes and infrastructure — all in a futile attempt to uproot Palestinian resistance, which has been developing its capabilities despite harsh, repressive conditions.

The current aggression, driven by the ultra-nationalist factions within the Israeli government, is a calculated move to exert control over the West Bank, similar to its brutal tactics in Gaza.

**“We must deal with the threat just as we deal with the terrorist infrastructure in Gaza, including the temporary evacuation of Palestinian residents and whatever steps are required. This is a war for everything and we must win it,” Foreign Minister Israel Katz.**

At least for the short-term, Israel has been emboldened by favorable conditions: widespread support among the Israeli public for aggressive actions, the need for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government to claim an internal "victory," and a sense of impunity bolstered by the lack of effective US or Arab deterrence.

## **Opening the floodgates of resistance**

Israel's largest West Bank raid since 2002 reveals that the occupation state's strategy is not just a reaction to isolated events but a broader campaign to dismantle Palestinian society and resistance and deny Palestinians their future aspirations.

The invasion is not merely a continuation of the response to the Al-Aqsa Flood; rather, it is part of a larger effort to target Palestinians wherever they are and break their morale. The tactics employed in Gaza — destruction, devastation, and death — are being replicated, albeit to a lesser degree, in the West Bank, despite the [lack of success in Gaza](#) and the growing resistance it has ignited.

The West Bank has witnessed not only a rise in conventional resistance operations (coordinated by Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad), such as shootings, stabbings, ambushes, and ramming attacks, but also the return of [martyrdom operations](#) and [car bombs](#) and the emergence of the use of [RPG shells](#) for the first time.

Israeli leaders and ultra-nationalist factions have long advocated for inflicting severe pain on Palestinians, and Netanyahu now sees an opportunity to achieve this through a new wave of violence in key West Bank cities like Jenin, Tulkarem, Tubas, Nablus, Ramallah, and most recently, Hebron.

Jenin, in particular, the focal point of the 2002 battle (and the more recent 'Battle of the Fury of Jenin' in July 2023), is seen as a persistent threat to the occupation entity, namely due to the camp's residents showing [strong social cohesion](#), which "Unlike many other cities and villages in the West Bank, the camp is not characterized by political divisions."

### **Abbas' 'Authority' hangs by a thread**

However, Netanyahu may not have fully considered the [risks](#). The situation in 2024 is not the same as in 2002; Israel is already engaged in multiple conflicts on different fronts as it [climbs the escalation ladder](#). If the West Bank is subjected to a "Gaza 2.0" scenario — with systematic destruction, coordinated attacks, and massive displacement — the fragile Palestinian Authority (PA) under Abbas could collapse, burying the Oslo Accords indefinitely and further eroding any prospects for the so-called two-state solution.

Abbas is facing unprecedented challenges. He is besieged by anger from Palestinians in the West Bank, who are frustrated by the ongoing suffering of their brethren in Gaza, by the financial stranglehold imposed by Israel, and by the relentless expansion of settlements. Criticism of Abbas has reached a crescendo across the West Bank, highlighting the disillusionment with the PA's inability to protect Palestinian rights or halt

repeated Israeli incursions, as well as its unwavering security coordination with the Israeli occupation.

The collapse of the Oslo Accords would have far-reaching consequences. The international community's investment in the PA as an alternative to armed struggle would be rendered useless. It would be increasingly difficult to convince any Palestinian or Arab that peace is possible with the current Israeli leadership, which is marked by its ultra-nationalist and militaristic stance.

### **The war beyond the West Bank**

The crisis is not limited to the Palestinian territories. In [Jordan](#), King Abdullah II faces growing challenges as the Israeli invasion of the West Bank threatens to destabilize his kingdom. Amman, much Ramallah, is caught in a web of conflicting pressures — unable to sever ties with Israel or fully align with Palestinian resistance, and now potentially facing a refugee crisis if Palestinians are displaced en masse from the West Bank.

It is easy to envision the Jordanian king becoming ensnared in a wave of public outrage if this scenario unfolds. This is not mere speculation. Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz, for instance, has underscored the strategic significance of Israel's actions in the West Bank by [claiming](#) that Iran is attempting to establish a "terrorist front" there, similar to those in Gaza and Lebanon. Arming the West Bank resistance is a long-standing ambition of the Islamic Republic, which has [reportedly](#) been conducting a covert smuggling operation over the past two years.

Other Arab nations that have signed peace treaties or normalized ties with Israel – i.e., Egypt, UAE, Morocco, Bahrain – can find themselves in a similar position as Amman if the Israeli onslaught in the West Bank continues, as Tel Aviv's actions are a direct affront to the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative, ratified by the Arab League as recently as 2017. This initiative, which Saudi Arabia has placed at the heart of a long-sought Israel normalization deal, calls for a full withdrawal of the Israeli army from the occupied territories (including the West Bank, Gaza, the Golan Heights, and Lebanon), a "just settlement" of the Palestinian refugee crisis based on UN Resolution 194, and the establishment of a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital. Instead, the number of Jewish settlers in the West Bank has skyrocketed from roughly 70,000 in the year 2002 to 800,000 in 2024, leaving no room for the 'Palestinian state' that normalizing Arab countries claim they are working towards.

What Netanyahu is doing now serves as nothing more than a catalyst for Israel's inevitable end, and this is demonstrated by his true desire to bury the idea of a promised Palestinian state, as is shown through Israel's actions in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

As Israel pushes forward with its aggressive agenda, the US's stance has also come into sharper focus. With significant military deployments in the region and continued support for Israeli actions, Washington's tacit approval – [whoever ends up in the White House](#), provides Netanyahu with the latitude to escalate the conflict further, potentially at the expense of regional stability.

Netanyahu's pursuit of power through forceful means risks provoking a regional earthquake akin to the aftermath of the 1948 Nakba, potentially destabilizing US-backed autocrats and igniting new waves of resistance not just in the West Bank but across West Asia. The ongoing violence in the West Bank is not just another episode of this battle; it is a dangerous escalation that could reshape the geopolitical order of the region.

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