

Israel-palestine: two-state vs one-state solution

[Politics](#), [International Relations](#)



What Does The Future Hold for Israel-Palestine? The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has proven to be one of the most complex and “ intractable” conflicts of modern history - or as some may even add - of all time. And after many decades of failed attempts at peacemaking in this region, there still seems to be no conceivable end to the conflict.

During those same decades, most of the parties involved as well as the international community have embraced the idea of a two-state solution, but the question we pose today asks whether this solution is still a viable option considering the present context, and if not, is it finally time to consider a one-state solution?

This essay will argue that although a two-state solution remains the more desirable and popular option, keeping in-line with both nations’ desire for freedom, civic rights, dignity, statehood and nationhood, it may no longer be a possibility in the near future and as time passes. A one-state solution also has its faults however, as it simply fails to address the issue of inevitable future conflicts and retaliation, which would stem from the most problematic symptom of a bi-national state: the reduction of Palestinian-Israelis to second-class citizens within their own country.

Finally, the essay will attempt to show that regardless of what the more desirable and feasible option may be, the context today points to a de facto one-state reality, which some argue would ultimately need to be embraced as the only option. There is no solution but the two-state solution? Is a one-state solution feasible today? If it is, how optimal of a solution is it for both populations and state-entities?

The answer seems to be negative mainly due to the fact that the Jewish-Israeli populace desires to remain a majority within their own state and similarly because the Jewish-Israeli state depends on a Jewish majority in order to vote-in and implement laws and policies, which are aimed to provide a safe home for the Jewish and not the Arab population as per the Balfour Declaration (1). Uniting all territories under one-same state would shift demographics in such a manner that Jewish-Israelis would become the minority within their own state, and thus they would put in jeopardy the Jewish component of what is now a democratic Jewish state. A one-state solution seems to be a utopian idea when we consider the immense sense of pride and victory the Palestinian and Israeli peoples attach to the concept of having and ruling over their own independent and sovereign state. History has shown time and again that no two entities have ever peacefully agreed and successfully managed to create a multinational state within one-same country, but rather they have favoured separate national states, or a two-state solution.

Also, from a psychoanalytical and social approach, it appears almost completely improbable that two peoples, cultures and religions that have participated in such a long-standing intractable conflict would concede to the creation of only one state, since their motivational and cognitive biases as a result of distinct psychological processes would “render them unable to recognize as advantageous settlement terms” proposed by the other side (2).

This would fully undermine the Palestinians’ fight for liberation and sovereignty and the Israelis’ struggle for existence and independence.

Moreover, under one state, the Palestinians would perhaps suffer a reality of segregation and would shift their fight towards one for achieving their civil rights. This could potentially be achieved as it was done in South-Africa. However, it would ultimately lead towards a Jewish minority within the state and that would directly threaten the existence of a Jewish state.

One could argue that Israelis would never agree to dismantle the Jewish state by contributing to the formation of an Arab majority within their own territory. Also, the realities in South-Africa were quite different from those in Israel-Palestine today. In fact, the struggle was of another nature: the black-Africans and white-Africans both fought for a one-state solution and the domination of that state, whereas the Palestinians and Israelis fight for the creation of their own independent states, therefore a one-state option is neither desired by the Israelis nor the Palestinians (3) (4).

Furthermore, the involvement and conflict-resolution approaches of the international community during the South-African ordeal differed greatly from those of today, since Israel has a more complex relationship with the United-States than South-Africa ever did and an international boycott of Israel would ultimately fail as it would be interpreted as a repetition of the Holocaust, which began with the simple slogan “ Don’t buy from the Jews” and which no one in their right mind desires today! 5) So, is a two-state solution a more viable option? One might think that a two-state option is a very remote possibility seeing the constant hostility from the Palestinian side, the crisis and disconnect between Hamas and the official Palestinian Authority, the fragmentation of the West Bank territory into districts due to

growing Israeli settlements, and an almost inexistent peace process between the two nations in light of a unilateral Israeli approach to conflict resolution.

However, it is also vital to underline that the lack of evidence of a one-state option being the optimal solution to the problem makes the route towards a two-state solution more compelling in comparison. In fact, by opting for a one-state solution and denying the Palestinian people their own independent state where they can freely live with dignity and enjoy full civic rights, Israel and the international community risk causing additional chaos, retaliation and a continuation of the already intractable war between these two nations.

On the other hand, the reality we have today points de facto to the existence of a bi-national state, mainly as a result of Israel's expansionist policies. In fact, living on what was d'antan Philistine are almost eleven million people, almost equally divided, half of whom - the Palestinians - are growing faster in number and will most inevitably become the majority (6). Historic precedents have shown through failed peacemaking processes that this land cannot be successfully partitioned by agreement.

This means that the only way to achieve a two-state solution is by military force, which many would agree is not desirable, since it may generate the worst war to date. The greatest fear emanating from the adoption of a one-state solution, and which prompts many to favour the infamous two-state solution, is the creation of an apartheid state and second-class citizens as was the case in South-Africa. However, many fail to remember that only upon agreement to create a democratic bi-national state did South-Africa dissolve its apartheid component (7). This is not to say that an equitably shared i-national state would automatically be created when and if a one-

state solution is put into place, but rather that a peaceful coexistence within a bi-national state is a possibility. In fact, one could defend that any attempt to separate the two entities would be impossible, since any territorial split would create displaced Palestinian and Israeli persons and refugees within both states. A two-state solution almost guarantees that having Palestinians and Israelis live under Israeli and Palestinian sovereignty respectively will additionally fuel discontent, retaliation and violent struggle.

This would undermine any past attempt to reconcile the two parties and achieve peace, and would render any past accords and treaties useless. Furthermore, ruling two separate geographical entities – Gaza and the West Bank – under the same independent Palestinian state is an impractical and inefficient way of organizing institutions and governmental administrations, as it would complicate decision-making and even practical implementation of policies pertaining to resources, energy, security and social issues.

For example, how could a Palestinian state survive without access to resources such as water and electricity, when Israel has almost completely taken control of water access in the West Bank and is the greatest supplier of electricity to the Palestinian territories? Also, how will these two geographically separate, yet politically united entities communicate, ensure safety for their citizens travelling through Israel in-between Gaza and the West Bank, organize transport and delivery of goods, services and energy to each part, and how will they reconcile their economies?

The answers to most of these questions point towards a reality that would be quite impossible to accept and sustain. In addition, it is safe to say that the problem of a two-state solution runs a lot deeper. For example, the PA is <https://assignbuster.com/israel-palestine-two-state-vs-one-state-solution/>

quite weak as it lacks support in Gaza: it is lead by wealthy officials who have no interest in altering the Palestinian reality in the West Bank due to their investments in that region, the economy is unstable in that region, and it depends almost entirely on Israeli and American support and funding.

If it became a sovereign state, Palestine's economy would suffer, as it is greatly linked and depends on both Israel and the international community. From empirical evidence, as is the case with many European countries today and other African and South American countries some years ago, we know that a weak or crumbling economy spells political and social unrest, and therefore a two-state solution would fail to accomplish what a one-state solution may prevent: a failed state and extreme violent uprisings.

Moreover, land disputes are an impediment for a clear-cut two-state solution. For example, ten percent of the West Bank would be annexed by Israel (8) as it forms part of permanent Israeli settlements and land-swaps would occur failing to provide a clear understanding of what would happen to Palestinians living on these " swapped" territories inside of Israel. For these reasons and more, it is quite unimaginable to even speak of a strong, stable and sovereign Palestinian state at the moment.

In sum, neither option seems to be ideal, although on a personal note, I believe that a one-state solution would lead to yet another form of occupation, at least for some years or even generations to come, of lower-class Palestinian-Israelis by Jewish-Israelis as well as to more struggle for land and to more violence, since the Jewish inhabitants of the land evidently enjoy the upper economic and political hand in this conflict. As the South-

African example depicts well, the one-state option would lead to an apartheid state for some time at least.

Israeli-Jews inevitably would continue to hold onto the economic and socio-political power they enjoy today, which means that Palestinian-Israelis would become second-class citizens who will suffer discrimination in all spheres of life and who may even be compelled by law to participate in that which is the top source of their anguish and hate: the Israeli army. Both sides will forcibly persist in trying to augment their numbers in order to form the standing majority and the foreseeable and very unfortunate event that would unfold is another mid-twentieth century-type civil war.

And however complicated a two-state solution may seem, it is an illusion to believe that the Israelis or the Palestinians for that matter would easily give up the idea of having their own independent state. There is no force in this world that could make these two nations give up this aspiration. However, on the other hand, it seems that if the idea of a two-state solution was brought to fruition today it would be a disaster for the Palestinian people, since the content of the solution would inevitably put them at a disadvantage in the context of today.

In the end, as we can deduce from some of the evidence presented in this essay, one is still left with unanswered questions as well as with new questions pertaining respectively to the best possible option for Israel and Palestine as well as other foreseeable solutions that differ from the one and two-state solutions. References and Works Cited Al-Masri, Hani. "The Two-State Solution Is Still an Option." *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture* 14. 2 (2007): 27-30. Print. ? Avnrey, Uri. "One State: <https://assignbuster.com/israel-palestine-two-state-vs-one-state-solution/>

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