



THE ARAB MEDIA REACTION TO THE RAID ON THE GAZA FLOTILLA

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In the week since the raid on the Gaza-bound aid flotilla, the Arab media has focused the preponderance of its attention on what it has dubbed the “freedom massacre” or “Israeli piracy.” The incident and its wake have stirred deep passions throughout the Arab world and beyond. Understanding the depth and nuances of the Arab reaction to the raid on the flotilla will be vital to understanding how the Arab world reacts to any subsequent moves towards Israeli-Palestinian or Israeli-Arab reconciliation.

The Israeli raid on the flotilla of six ships carrying aid to the people of Gaza, in which nine passengers died (nine Turkish citizens, one of whom was a dual American citizen), took place on May 31st, only a few days short of the one year anniversary of U.S. President Barack Hussein Obama’s June 4, 2009 speech in Cairo that evoked great hope in him and America across the Arab world—particularly among Arab youth. I witnessed that passion firsthand at an event on the Cairo speech we hosted at the Brookings Doha Center which was attended by scores of young Arabs inspired by President Obama’s words only a few hours before.

While full details from the flotilla incident have yet to emerge, what is clear is that the public sentiment in the Arab world has been transformed. What follows below is a summary of over 30 opinion pieces from mostly major newspapers in across 18 Arab countries. In these opinion pieces we witness a sentiment that is not only enraged against Israel, but also furious with decades of supposed efforts by Arab governments to bring

about a Palestinian state alongside Israel. What also comes across in is a new found frustration in America whose response was viewed in the Arab media as “timid.”

This shift in sentiment is so profound, precisely because the heroes in their eyes were made up of a coalition of citizens from around the world, especially Turkey, Europe, and the United States but also by one account, 11 Arab countries and six other countries with Muslim majorities. One Jordanian newspaper wrote that it was their lack of democracy that made the Arab nations so weak in their support for the Palestinians and that it was precisely the existence of democracy in Turkey that empowered Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan to legitimately speak for the Turkish people’s desires to end Palestinian suffering.

A leading paper in the United Arab Emirates wrote that the attack on the aid flotilla bound for Gaza compared to other government-supported attacks on civilians that changed the political landscape like the 1960 incidents in Sharpeville in South Africa that accelerated the process of international sentiment against apartheid and the Amritsar massacre that changed British influence in India. For example stating “the sheer arrogance of the casual Israeli slaughtering” should act as a global “political trigger” for change.

Indeed, moving forward, we shall see if ordinary Arabs are content with words, or if they increasingly expect action—action not only from their own Arab leaders, but also the international



community, and from President Obama.

Indeed, a year ago this week in Cairo, President Obama pledged that “America will not turn our backs on the legitimate Palestinian aspiration for dignity, opportunity, and a state of their own.” He also continued by saying that, “Palestinians must abandon violence...That is not how moral authority is claimed; that is how it is surrendered. And that “America will align its policies with those who pursue peace.” The question the Arab world is asking is not only if the U.S. leadership will actually push for peace in a tangible way, but if the Arab leadership themselves will take tangible steps to push for peace.

Moving forward, the United States will need to deeply consider the fall-out from this incident in how it seeks to build stronger and more-productive relations with the Arab and Muslim world. Already White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs has had to field passionate questions about how the raid on the Gaza-bound flotilla and the American reaction will affect U.S. relations with the Arabs and Muslims around the world.

Only time will tell if the strong sentiments expressed in the media round up below represents a paradigm shift in the Arab world where nothing short of tangible action—by both the Middle East’s leaders and the international community including the United States—will be expected to advance the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, or if passions will quiet yet again and the region will get on with business as usual.

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What follows are summaries of over 30 op-eds and editorials from newspapers across 18 Arab countries, including links to those articles, from the week following the raid on the Gaza-bound aid flotilla. The purpose of these summaries is to provide insight into the Arab media reaction to the incident.

From the Algerian Press

Words will no longer benefit

This Algerian daily criticized what it called “the heinous crime that Israel has committed”, stating that there is “...no need to mention the numerous times Israel has violated international law. America knows these crimes by heart, as do Russia and China and all of the West and the South”. It pointed out that the latest Israeli assault has similarities to the violations that took place in Europe in the end of the thirties, stating that only when the reality of the Nazi crimes became clear did “...the Russians, Americans and Europeans forgot their differences and fight their mutual enemy that threatened humanity”. “Yesterday the victim was Jewish”, the daily said, “and today it is Arab”. As international organizations such as the UN and the Security Council have lost their credibility because they are biased towards Israel, the daily asserted that their words along with those of the U.S., Israel, and NATO no longer resonate with Arabs and Muslims - as they all present one enemy bloc.

[El Khabar](#), Algeria, Arabic, June 02, 2010

From the Bahraini Press

Turkey rises as Iran falls in the region

This editorial claims that both Turkey and Iran have a rivalry over who gets to control the region and have access to its wealth. Turkey has to “take the helm of the Muslim scene”, and fight for its causes – which has prompted regional powers to try and follow suit; such as Egypt opening Rafah and the Arab league hastily convening. Turkey’s stance is not new and it has gained it a lot of popular support especially when juxtaposed with Iran whose motives are questioned by the Arabs which has led to “popular and official mistrust” of its intentions.

[Al Wasat](#), Bahrain, Arabic, June 03, 2010

From the Egyptian Press

American hands are not innocent

This op-ed predicted that soon the international community will forget or pretend to forget the role of the U.S. – Israel’s strategic ally - that equips it with the latest weapons to be used in violation of international law. Israel would not dare to commit this “freedom massacre”, the op-ed insisted, without “the advance assurance that America will rescue it from international condemnation”.

[AlGomhuria](#), Egypt, Arabic, June 03, 2010

Dividing Lines

This Egyptian daily was not surprised that everyone just watched the Israeli crime against humanity and that all the Security Council could do was hold a special meeting after which it issued a weak statement. It also found it usual for America to again be an obstacle to justice and not issue a single word of condemnation against its “sweetheart Israel”, announcing only regret for the loss of human life and nothing more. The daily claimed that both the words of President Obama and those of the UN Security Council are nothing but simple words to “calm the angry masses”.

[AlGomhuria](#), Egypt, Arabic, June 02, 2010

From the Iraqi Press

Thank you O murderers!

This op-ed sees the Israeli raid as a dirty crime, but emphasizes that it seems to have opened the eyes of many of those who were ignorant about the realities of Israel's policies and their lack of respect for humanity. It also made clear that Israel does not shy from fabricating cheap lies to justify its criminal acts, making obvious the extent of its contempt for international law and the legal commitments that UN resolutions have imposed upon it. This episode, it continued "has also shown the insignificance and weakness of the official Arab position and the Arab inability to deal with political developments", with Turkey as an example of "what it is possible for Arabs to do in the future on both a regional and international level". Despite the fact that certain Arab writers are now reminding people that Turkey is the heir of the Ottoman Empire that occupied Arab land, slaughtered the Armenians and persecuted minorities, this op-ed criticized this approach especially now when Turkey is sending a ship with medicine, food and wheelchairs to the oppressed people of Gaza.

[Al Rafidayn](#), Iraq, Arabic, June 03, 2010

From the Jordanian Press

The Arab's choice... Turkey's choice... Shameful differences

This Jordanian daily stated that it is unlikely that other countries will follow in Kuwait's footsteps and withdraw their support for the Arab peace plan, as "nothing new can be expected from the meeting of Arab foreign ministers who have been complacent with what Washington decides for decades". The only thing that is "new" now, it said, is to bet on Turkey, which is a correct bet but unfortunately based on the old Arab rule of "go ahead and fight with God's blessing while we stand back and observe". The daily lamented the fact that Erdogan dares to antagonize Israel and Arabs do not, attributing the reason for that to democracy in Turkey which "has enabled Erdogan to truthfully and legitimately speak for the Turkish people in such strength and daring lacks in the Arab world". "Erdogan can speak to Israel without having it have the upper hand, it concluded, while we the Arabs have missed the ship of democracy so that our people and our governments are in two different places entirely".

[Ad Dustoor](#), Jordan, Arabic, June 03, 2010

The Ottoman Erdogan

This op-ed passionately invoked the Turkish Ottoman past, asking "who can deny the true feeling of looking back at our ancestors and see how Erdogan, not out of political claims nor of Machiavellian desire to stay in power, but in true feeling of the Islamic ancestry of his Ottoman forefathers who have carried the Islamic caliphate for centuries, has slapped the Arab stance from the first drop of blood shed in the new war on Gaza?" The op-ed stated that Arabs should be ashamed to clap for others who carry their causes and banners for them, ending with the author thanking God that he is born in a time where Erdogan "the Ottoman" is leader.

[Ad Dustoor](#), Jordan, Arabic, June 03, 2010

The evolution of the Turkish-Israeli conflict

This Jordanian daily stated that this is not the first attempt to break the Gaza blockade but it surely is the biggest yet, insisting that Israel knew the political dimensions of attacking a flotilla with a Turkish flag and massive media attention at the helm. Ever since Turkey has knocked on the doors of the Eastern Mediterranean, which is an area of vital importance to Israel, the daily said, , "the rivalry over influence between both of these players took effect especially when it came to the weakness of the Arab position".

The conflict between Turkey and Israel is a candidate for escalation on many fronts, it continued, as Israel is antagonized and going through a crisis that inches ever more so towards the right, and Turkey has been able to open some holes in the Arab wall and entered the scene on the Iranian crisis with surprising success. “This might mean we are soon to witness a Turkish era right after the Iranian era”, the daily concluded, asking when the Arabs will stop making their interests the battleground for others and regain control over the causes.

[Al Rai](#), Jordan, Arabic, June 03, 2010

Another Israeli crime

This daily expected that Israel would try to halt the Freedom Flotilla from reaching its destination in Gaza, but that it still could not believe the nature of the massacre that ensued. In a “flagrant act of high sea piracy”, the daily accused Israel of attacking peace activists on the Turkish ship, Mavi Marmara, and again committing a crime under international law, backed by the U.S. and escaping punishment which it referred to as “tacit immunity”. The daily did not see the condemnations from around the world as seriously threatening Israel’s relations or “privileged position” with the important world powers.

[Jordan Times](#), Jordan, English, 02 June 2010

From the Kuwaiti Press

Raid puts Obama in diplomatic hot seat

This op-ed stated that the Israeli raid confronts President Obama “with another major test by the Israeli leadership” and hampers his relations in the Middle East while also putting U.S.-Turkey relations on “shaky ground” especially after being “at pains” to keep good relations with the only Muslim member NATO member which the U.S. sees as a “democratic buffer” with Iran. The Israeli attack, the op-ed concluded, confronts President Obama with tough decisions which could prove to be detrimental to relations with both Israel and Iran if he “does not hit his diplomatic stride”.

[Kuwait Times](#), Kuwait, English, 02 June 2010

From the Lebanese Press

Israel is becoming the new Jewish ghetto

In analyzing the assault on three levels, this op-ed asserts that the most important lens in analyzing the situation is the political. It asserted that the Israeli raid on the aid flotilla has affected Israel’s standing among the world greatly, leaving it more isolated and criticized than ever, and turning it into a modern day Jewish ghetto. It also stated that Israel may have transformed the idea of Zionism into a “media-based justification for siege, assault, piracy, and murder”; making it a well oiled propaganda machine that in the past has withstood criticism and condemnation, but now may be starting to squeak. “Israel wants the world to get tangled up in an endless debate about a few knives and clubs”, the op-ed said, while “the world wants Israel to come to grips with the more fundamental issue of whether a Jewish state respects the laws and norms that govern all humankind – or behaves only according to an increasingly hysterical, violent and often murderous sense of its own perpetual victimhood”.

[The Daily Star](#), (Lebanon, English, June 02, 2010)

Israel and the Anatolian Front

This op-ed claimed that Israel’s brutal attack on the Turkish vessel was a planned and deliberate decision aimed to weaken Turkey’s new pro-Arab role in the region especially after its successful role in reaching a nuclear agreement with Iran, The pro-Israeli reaction by the Obama administration that failed to call for an International inquiry and hold the Israeli perpetrators accountable, the op-ed continued, “is a clear

indication that the United States is very annoyed by Turkey's active role in the region." The op-ed believed that Israel's aggression was backed if not at least "greeted" by the United States in order to prevent further Turkish political involvement in the region and that the Turkish leadership will now understand its limits. It concluded that the Israeli attack on the Turkish vessels also sends a message to Iran, Syria, and Lebanon, that Israel is ready for war especially after its latest maneuvers on the Anatolian front.

[As-Safir](#), Lebanon, Arabic, June 02, 2010

Turkey Steps in, Egypt Steps Out

This op-ed began by stating that Israel adores blood and can't live without spilling it, but has been paying a heavy price for all the blood spilled since the 2006 war with Hizbullah. The indiscriminate use of force during the war on Gaza led to the Goldstone report while the Dubai assassination embarrassed Israel in the face of its allies, the op-ed continued, stating that Israel will also pay a heavy price after the its bloody assault on the freedom flotilla and asking how will Israel convince the Norwegians, Irish, and French that it opened fire on their parliamentarians in self-defense? The op-ed also claimed that Israel wanted to punish the "terrorist" Erdogan for saving Iran from international sanctions and for his active support for the Palestinian cause and Gaza. The op-ed also drew attention to an important statement made by the Egyptian intelligence chief during his recent visit to Tel Aviv, where it claimed he asked Israeli officials to prevent vessels from reaching Gaza in order to lessen the pressure on Egypt which is also imposing a siege on Gaza.

[An Nahar](#), Lebanon, Arabic, June 02, 2010

From the Libyan Press

Arab Leaders: We'll meet again for the next banquet of blood

This Libyan daily criticizes the response of Arab leaders to the Israeli raid on the "Freedom Flotilla" and calls for a more weighty response: "It took the Arab foreign ministers a five-hour meeting to decide on a course of action and after these difficult throes they only decided on sending a statement to the Security Council." Arab leaders should send twenty convoys to break the blockade of Gaza or at least agree to boycott Israel economically. The editorial also laments that it took the UN Security Council thirteen hours to agree on a statement of condemnation and call for an investigation, that – due to American pressure – did not even define the method to carry out this investigation.

[Al Jamahiriya](#), Libya, Arabic, June 02, 2010

How America can become loved

This op-ed noted that Washington yet again has been given a golden opportunity to repair its broken relations with the Arab street where it is sorely in need of better relations and has itself expressed the wish to establish new and better ties. But, the op-ed says, "the problem [that] this street [has with America] is the unjustified and irrational American alignment with the Israelis and their mafia-like policies." The act of piracy that the Israelis carried out in international waters is an opportunity to change the special relationship between Washington and Tel Aviv, it continued, as what Israel did to the aid workers and peace activists should push America to liberate its political conscience. Perhaps, the op-ed concluded, America will realize its need for the Arab world and perhaps realize that Israel is a political burden for the administration, an economic one for the taxpayers and a moral one for all Americans; for if it does not come to this realization, it will not win over the Arab street, the global street, and its own soul.

[Al Jamahiriya](#), Libya, Arabic, June 01, 2010

From from the Moroccan Press

Turkish blood... Revived a nation, so they bloodied its shadow and ignited its fuel

This editorial heralded the rise of a new nation which it called “the Muslim nation” after both Hizbullah’s and Hamas’ blood “mingled” with Turkish blood spilled by Israeli hands in the land of Palestine. The editorial also said there is no need to shout and protest anymore, as great powers have to realize that their best interests come in either “punishing Israel or at least supporting the resistance against it.” The editorial called for both the resistance to continue its work and for “noble people” everywhere, such as Erdogan, to continue sending ships to help the people in Gaza break the siege.

[Al Marrakeshiya](#), Morocco, Arabic, June 02, 2010

From the Omani Press

From Abd Al Nasser to Erdogan

This op-ed began by stating that “Turkish flags and pictures of Erdogan are raised high in the Arab world”, comparing Erdogan’s entry to the hearts of the Arab masses by adopting the Palestinian cause to that of Gamal Abd El Nasser and Hassan Nassrallah. Erdogan carefully examined how Hassan Nassrallah gained his enormous popularity in the Arab world, the op-ed said, and came to understand that Turkey is not wanted in the West so he decided to turn to the East where Turkey had a historical role of leadership. The author concluded that the painful killing of the Turkish activities by Israel, gave Erdogan the key to the prolonged Middle Eastern conflict and that Israel today is living an existential threat with another foe in addition to Iran, Hezbollah and Hamas.

[Al Watan](#), Oman, Arabic, June 03, 2010

From the Palestinian Press

Four major messages behind the Israeli raid

This daily asserted that Israeli commandos, the most highly trained in the world, could have easily contained the situation aboard the flotilla without shedding blood. The attack was designed to send a message to multiple actors. The first was Turkey, telling it to stay out of their backyard even at the expense of military exercises and economic cooperation. The second message, the daily claimed, was to the United States whose recent hints at withdrawing international cover for Israeli practices was noticed and thus the flotilla attack was issued as a challenge to “dare and issue any condemnation in the United Nations Security Council”. The third message went to the international community, including “J Street”, Harvard academics, and South African Jews that “this is [Israel’s] answer to your words and rules”. Finally, the daily concluded, the fourth and most dangerous message was an assertion that the planners of the flotilla attack were not the right wing extremists within Israel but the Labor and Likud parties, which means “that all of Israel, and not just the religious and nationalist hawks, have decided to go on this insane maritime venture”.

[Al Quds](#), Palestine, Arabic, June 03, 2010

Some underlying elements in the American/Israeli relationship

This op-ed stated that Israel has been “a key ally whose security is part of American security”, but that American officials and others are now asking if this support should be absolute. Should the U.S. try to “save Israel from itself” even when American interests are hurt by these Israeli policies often attributed to the extremist Israeli right?, the op-ed asked, noting that for the first time that there is a conversation in the U.S. questioning “whether Israeli and U.S. interests are compatible , especially when the former seems

to care less about involving the U.S. in new wars and conflicts as it stood behind President Bush in his invasion of Iraq and is now lobbying the Obama Administration to take on Iran". Many pro-Israeli Americans and many Israelis, according to the op-ed, feel that the Netanyahu government is losing Washington's trust as well as Israel's future security which stems from the fact that Israel can no longer depend on its status as an indispensable ally. "The U.S. is slowly beginning to realize that restructuring the world order stems from its ability to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict, or even the Iranian nuclear issue", the op-ed continued, both of which involve Israeli policies that make Washington hesitant. President Obama knows this, it concluded, and he is careful about letting Israel drag the U.S. to an Iranian standoff that would force the U.S. to go back to supplying Israel with arms and support and deal a deadly blow to [Obama's] aspirations in the Middle East.

[Al Quds](#), Palestine, Arabic, June 03, 2010

Israeli Piracy: the target, atmosphere, rationale, evidence, and retort

This op-ed asserted that the political goal of the Israeli raid was to stop any regional or international solidarity from gaining further support. Israeli leaders, it said, know that the Palestinian cause is an international one, and thus carried out the attack only because they knew they had the American veto in their pocket as well as Arab complacency. Israel would have thought twice before attacking the flotilla, the op-ed continued, had the proper Palestinian, Arab, and international atmosphere not been suitable for such a maneuver. "Only this Israeli obsession with being above the law could have driven it to spill foreign, non-Arab blood in international waters", said the op-ed, insisting that this operation presents proof that no main Israeli party is a partner to peace, and that only a unified Palestinian stance and a cancelation of all normalized relations between Israel and the Arab states can be an effective tool in lifting the siege.

[Al Ayyam](#), Palestine, Arabic, June 03, 2010

What we offer is talk... and what Israel offers is action

This daily lamented that fact that all Arabs seem to do is condemn Israel for its racism and piracy, when the fact remains that Israel is still probably the only country in the Middle East where prime ministers and governing parties are chosen in free and fair elections in a region whose republics have no clue about what that means. Previously, the op-ed claimed, Arabs used to condemn their monarchies for their lack of democracy and now the monarchies "put our republics to shame". Israel is the only country where a prime minister can be investigated for bribery, whose health systems are among the best in the world, while the actions of Arab leaders go unpunished and institutions are dismal in comparison, the daily said. If Jewish money holds the decision-making power in the U.S., the daily asked, then "what is the use of Arab money if we cannot create a strong lobby ourselves within great powers to influence decisions?" "We cannot engage in a military war with Israel, the op-ed concluded, which is why our war should be that of education, business, and achievement."

[Al Rai](#), Palestine, Arabic, June 03, 2010

From the Qatari Press

Gaza corners Israel

This op-ed asserted that the Israeli raid "highlights the failure of the Israeli policy of blockading the Gaza Strip, exposing the unwillingness of Israel to make peace with the Palestinians", which led to a number of talk shows and news programs posing tough questions to Israel. However, the Western media had paid little attention to the freedom flotilla "until the Israeli raid on Monday morning that could not be overlooked". The op-ed went on to say that the flotilla episode has shown that Israel's allies are losing patience with

Israeli stupidity and insanity, and that the clear Western criticism of Israel and the call to lift the blockade on Gaza poses an important question to Arab countries of whether they will capitalize on Israel's isolation to readjust their path and stop the farce of useless negotiations and lay the foundations of a peace course that recognizes rights and reclaims and achieves justice or fairness.

[Al Arab](#), Qatar, Arabic, June 03, 2010

From the Saudi Arabian Press

Savage Action

This editorial criticized the U.S. reaction to the Israeli raid, calling it "lame and timid, almost nonchalant." While France and Russia, offered strong condemnation of Israel for its latest offence, the author was not surprised by the meek U.S. reaction, claiming that the U.S. would come to the rescue of Israel and wield its veto power if a resolution is prepared to end the blockade. It is time for the world to stand up to Israel, he continued, which "has shown its true colors [and] its murderous intentions".

[Arab News](#), Saudi Arabia, English, June 03, 2010

Don't save Israel this time

This Saudi daily compares the coverage of the flotilla raid in Arab and Western media and criticizes Arab coverage for being too emotional, preferring the Western visual media's coverage of the crime[...] "Our media wants to spread the spirit of provocation instead of presenting information." it said, "...it wants to increase escalation instead of helping us understand the consequences of what happened and how this battle with Israel should be dealt with so that Israel does not escape the consequences". Most Western media outlets committed themselves to just providing information and images, the op-ed continued, without expressing emotion. What will remain in the minds of Western viewers from this neutral coverage, it concluded, is that Israel committed a crime that breached all international conventions.

[Asharq Alawsat](#), Saudi Arabia, Arabic, June 02, 2010

Why did Israel commit this crime?

This Saudi daily criticizes both the Freedom Flotilla movement and Israel for being extremists and not truly wanting peace. The activists knew very well the reaction of Israel, it claimed, and knew that "the flotilla's actions would not break the blockade and they know that if they really want it, breaking the siege would be easy by firstly releasing the captive Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit whose detainment is not worth all the daily suffering of over a million Palestinians." Israel would not have lost anything except symbolically by letting the flotilla through, it claimed, and furthermore Israel had many other options and could have simply blocked the way with its naval ships etc.. Despite the numerous options, the daily claimed that the Israeli leadership chose to carry out an armed attack and it is evident that the instructions were to kill a number of defenseless passengers.

[Asharq Alawsat](#), Saudi Arabia, Arabic, June 02, 2010

Is it a coincidence?

This op-ed from a Saudi daily questions what Israel really wants, and asks if it is a coincidence that every time effort is exerted to kick-start the peace process, Israel comes out with a significant operation that rouses public opinion and which causes the parties who are exerting this effort to respond . Examples of this, it said, are the invasion of Gaza, which had tragic political and humanitarian consequences, and the announcement of settlement expansion in eastern Jerusalem during U.S. Vice President Biden's visit, which embarrassed the vice president and caused a diplomatic row with Washington. Israel is arrogant and lacks historical understanding, the op-ed claimed, citing its attacks in Lebanon and Gaza that show that

while strength of force can achieve military victory, this does not result in political gains, and can on the contrary have long-term adverse effects by fueling a climate of hostility that makes it almost impossible to resolve the conflict.

[Asharq Alawsat](#), Saudi Arabia, Arabic, June 02, 2010

Why shocked with the Israeli piracy?

This Saudi op-ed blames the West for rewarding Israel for its crimes. The world is in shock over the piracy operation carried out by Israeli forces on the Marmara ship, it claimed, which was heading to Gaza with humanitarian aid. But this has been the Israeli approach for decades, it added, and despite its shock the world does nothing. Instead of being held accountable, it continued, Israel is invited to join organizations such as the OECD and congratulated for being modern and democratic. It is absolutely clear that Israel is the one refusing real peace negotiations. The op-ed also added that Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas is fully aware that Israel does not want peace but continues to negotiate to show the world that the problem is not with the Palestinians.

[Al Hayat](#), Saudi Arabia, Arabic, June 02, 2010

From the Sudanese Press

The Freedom flotilla and the liberation of Palestine

This op-ed lamented the Arab response to the attack on the flotilla, calling it “cowardly” and insufficient despite the opening of Rafah by the Egyptians, Amr Moussa’s statement that Israel does not understand the language of peace, “only force”, and Kuwait’s withdrawal of its support to the Arab peace plan. The op-ed called for an immediate cessation of negotiations and a united Arab stand that is the only method of breaking the siege on Gaza.

[Akhbar Baladna](#), Al Sudan, Arabic, June 05, 2010

From the Syrian Press

The Arab Position – An ugly picture

This op-ed claimed that no one in the world was able to justify the Israeli act, including its friends, believing that such attitudes are an attempt to escape from making a clear condemnation and also to escape from supporting the Israeli crime that would not have been committed without an American political cover. The criminals, according to the op-ed, seem to be in conflict with international laws and norms and will not hesitate to commit further crimes until state officials turn from reacting with mere statements to reacting with binding decisions under Chapter VII.

[Tishreen](#), Syria, Arabic, June 03, 2010

Idiots’ Illusions

This daily drew attention to what it saw as the hidden lines between Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s angry speech as a message to Israel about what Turkey represents and informing it that it is not alone in the region. “America has emptied the UN of its content”, the daily continued, and thus “action is no longer expected from the UN” so much so that expecting a bold and fair attitude from NATO is more realistic than expecting it from the United Nations.

[AlThawra](#) Syria, Arabic, June 02, 2010

From the Tunisian Press

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[Akhbar Baladna](#), Al Sudan, Arabic, June 05, 2010

From the Press of the United Arab Emirates

World must act against Israel

This feature by a Gulf News columnist compared the attack on the Mavi Marmara to the 1960 attacks in Sharpeville in South Africa where “police opened fire on black protesters, killing 69 people. The brutality of the event created a storm of international protest, which eventually led to apartheid South Africa being isolated by the international community, giving vital support to those calling for a democratic South Africa.” The daily stated that “the sheer arrogance of the casual Israeli slaughtering” should act as a global “political trigger” for change, and examined the legal context of that attack which it said could lead to Turkey declaring war on Israel (unlikely according to the columnist) or to “invoke NATO's Article Five, as President Bush did after the 9/11 attacks, which defines an attack on one as being an attack on all.”

[Gulf News](#), United Arab Emirates, English, June 03, 2010

Spin doctors cannot hide Israel’s actions

An editorial in this UAE daily called Benjamin Netanyahu’s spokesman, Mark Regev, “a liar for hire” when he attempted to minimize the backlash from the flotilla raid and pointed out the importance of controlling the media narrative, which the Israelis did by establishing a media blackout as soon as the ship was seized by the Israeli commandos and keeping pertinent information from the international media. The editorial also pointed to the international community’s uproar about the Israeli led investigation stating that “we are all entitled to our own opinions, but Mr. Regev and the Israeli government are not entitled to their own facts”- calling for the truth to come out. The editorial also stated that the selective video clips released by Israel do not “reveal anyone using anything that is not found on other ships” and they have failed to produce evidence supporting their claim that people on board were terrorists.

[The National](#), United Arab Emirates, English, June 02, 2010

From the Yemeni Press

Hand the Flag over to Turkey

“How is it possible that the Turks and not the Arabs have the courage to confront Israel?”, this daily asked, marveling at how the Turks are the first ones to sacrifice their lives in order to break the siege on Gaza. The author of the piece wrote that Israel proved again its readiness to burn the whole universe without any justifications in order to reach its objective and does not expect any serious or legal repercussions on Israel. The author also concluded by describing the Arab position as shameful, as if the Arab countries were not part of this world.

[Al Thawra](#), Yemen, Arabic, June 01, 2010