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‘The two-state solution remains the only viable path’

Amr Moussa, former Secretary-General of the Arab League, on the situation in the Middle East, Egypt’s role and the future for Palestine

The war between Israel and Iran was short but intense. What are your thoughts on the subsequent ceasefire? And is it understandable to you that Israel insists on preventing Iran from becoming a nuclear power?

No, it’s not understandable. Israel is already a nuclear power. Why should they lament the prospect of others reaching the same level of capability, especially if it’s peaceful capabilities? That’s difficult to grasp. The logic is inconsistent and, frankly, difficult to appreciate.

Do you think the ceasefire will hold? What are your expectations now?

I hope I’m not indulging in wishful thinking, but I believe the war created a unique moment. Israel’s military operation was ineffective — it failed to defeat Iran, to destroy its nuclear programme, to topple the regime or to intimidate the Iranian people. The only success Israel can claim is the assassination of individual people — not victory in the larger strategic sense.

It was only when the United States stepped in that something tangible happened. That’s why I say the US, not Israel or Iran, was the winner. Iran, for its part, claims that its nuclear progress was not crippled. Maybe delayed, but it remains intact.

What does that mean for Israel?

Israel failed to accomplish what it set out to do. And even the limited success came thanks to US intervention. That raises a new question: If all this was done to stop a potential nuclear Iran, what about Israel’s existing nuclear capability? Why does nobody question that? Why is it acceptable for one state in the region to have nuclear arms?

Let’s talk about Gaza. Just recently, hundreds of civilians were killed

while collecting food. What is your view on the current humanitarian situation there?

It's a crime, plain and simple. You have elderly people, children and entire families going out to find something – anything – to eat, and they are being killed. They weren't attacking anyone. They were looking for food. This is criminal behaviour, and the world should call it out as such.

What are the implications for Egypt, especially if the situation in Gaza were to deteriorate further?

From the beginning, Egypt has been clear: We will not be a party to any plan involving the removal of Palestinians from Gaza or from any occupied Palestinian territories. That's not our role, and we won't accept it. If the argument is that Gaza is overcrowded, why not relocate people to the Negev Desert? That's also an empty area — and it's historically Palestinian land. Why should Egypt's Sinai be the fallback option? We will not support any scheme that empties the land of its people to erase the Palestinian question. And I don't think any country would accept such a thing, except very few and I think you know who they are.

Could this situation eventually endanger the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel?

No. The treaty is in place and won't be affected. But that doesn't mean we condone Israel's policies. We, the Egyptian people, absolutely reject their behaviour in Gaza. Especially the killings of civilians while they're just trying to survive — this is unacceptable and must be condemned.

We're now more than 30 years past the Oslo Accords. Some argue that the prospect of a two-state solution is more distant than ever. Do you agree?

I don't. I refuse to accept the notion that it's impossible. The Palestinian state remains a viable goal, and it must be within the 1967 borders. Illegal actions by Israel should not dictate the final outcome. Only legal frameworks – such as UN resolutions and negotiated agreements – should determine it.

The two-state solution remains the only way to resolve this historic conflict. Israel has evicted Palestinians from their homes and pushed them into tents and now asks, 'Where can they go?' The logic is reversed. The settlers – many of whom arrived recently and live in illegal settlements – are never questioned. Yet Palestinians, who have

lived there for generations, are supposed to just leave?

Some argue that there is a generational divide: older Palestinians still support the two-state solution, whereas younger Palestinians are increasingly rejecting it. What's your take on that?

If the younger generation has another vision, we should be open to it. But in the absence of a clear alternative, the two-state solution remains the only viable path. And it is possible — don't let anyone tell you it isn't. It just requires political will and justice.

Certain parts of the Zionist movement in Israel often try to convince the world that a solution is impossible. I say: the solution is possible. Settlers who've been there a few years cannot be given priority over people who've lived on the land for centuries.

The solution must be a historic compromise — one where both sides make concessions. If the current Israeli government is unwilling to do that, then perhaps a future one will be.

What role do you see for the EU in this context? In recent months, they have seemed sidelined while the US has taken centre stage.

That's true — and there are reasons for it. One major reason is double standards. Western countries have watched silently as Israel pursued a strategy of erasing the Palestinian question. They said nothing. They allowed things to reach a boiling point. And then October 7 happened. It wasn't a surprise. It was the result of long-term denial and silence. Now, the illusion that Israel can permanently suppress the Palestinians is shattered. If that illusion continues, we will see not just an October 7, but an October 8, 9 and so on. We should not allow this to happen again. Violence has to stop, and peace must prevail.

What should Germany do?

Germany is a rich country, a major power and a leader in Europe. We expect it to act accordingly. It must advocate for balance, not one-sided support. A viable Palestinian state – not a symbolic one – is essential. A viable state will be a responsible state. An unviable state will lead to more chaos. We need peace, but peace based on justice. Let's not fool ourselves: If Israel continues to aim for surrender from the other side, it is dreaming. There will be no surrender. The time has come to live a normal life — not one defined by occupation, fear and cycles of violence.

This interview was conducted by Philipp Kauppert.



Amr Moussa

Cairo

Amr Moussa is an Egyptian diplomat and politician. From 2001 to 2011, he was Secretary-General of the Arab League, prior to which he served as Egypt's Minister of Foreign Affairs.

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