

Editorial

Too many observers who are interested in the Palestinian affairs and too many friends of the Palestine Liberation Organization, did not comprehend the postponement of the 17th session of the Palestinian National Council (PNC). For both observers and friends realize that convening the PNC is a very important step to stop the paralysis of the PLO and to revive the activity and political status of the PLO in the Middle East.

This is quite true but the situation is so complicated that one cannot simplify the question by drawing a simple formula. In order to comprehend the complexities of the situation one should understand the background of the present crisis of the PLO and the democratic option to solve these problems.

Who postponed the PNC session and why?

The Yemeni President Ali Naser Mohammed paid a two days visit to Damascus (Sept. 16-18) to discuss with President Hafiz Assad the crisis of the PLO and the possibility of reconciliation between Fatah Central Committee and both the National Alliance (Saiqa, PFLP General Command, Popular Struggle Front, Fatah Opposition) and Syria. The National Alliance (NA) raised a precondition to participation: Resignation of Yasir Arafat, while the Democratic Alliance (DA) was of the opinion that this issue should be dealt with in the PNC.

President Ali Naser's talks did not produce any concrete results on that level - and he had to confer with the Algerian President Shadli Bin Jedeed on the issue since both were partners in the Aden-Algiers agreement.

The two presidents met in Algiers on September 20th, together with leaders representing Fatah Central Committee, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Palestinian Liberation Front and Palestinian Communist Party, to discuss the results of all efforts to reconcile the PLO Syrian relations. It was agreed upon during the meeting to postpone the PNC to give a chance for further efforts to pave the way for its upcoming session.

The efforts will be put by both Algeria and Democratic Yemen to convince the NA to join the comprehensive national dialogue.

The NA, so far, refuses to attend the PNC and demands Arafat's resignation as a precondition for its participation.

On the other hand the DA which has been playing an important role to unify the PLO and bridge the relations between Syria and the PLO, decided to accept this proposal to postpone the PNC and to allow more time for the efforts of Algeria, Democratic Yemen and Syria to bring the organization together in a comprehensive national dialogue.

The DA follows a policy that aims at unifying the PLO in the following lines:

First: A clear national political line that opposes the Camp David agreements and the Reagan plans in any form or shape. A political line that calls for alliance between the PLO, Syria and the Lebanese nationalist forces.

Second: Organizational reforms within the PLO allowing for the participation of all Palestinian organizations in the PLO institutions, and adherence to the principle of collective leadership and decisions.

Therefore, the DA cannot attend a PNC that does not include all organizations on one hand and antagonistic towards Syria on the other hand. Also, we oppose any calls for attending a PNC «whether it includes all organizations or not» since this will lead to further splits in the PLO.

The Palestinian struggle is in real danger now. The Jordanian regime's resumption of diplomatic relations with Egypt and the official visit of Mubarak to Amman indicate that a new alliance is being formed. The visit also indicates that Egypt, Jordan and the rightist circles in the PLO are carrying on negotiations based on the Reagan proposal. Such a step is a danger and a threat to the PLO and to the Palestinian struggle. The only way to confront such a step is to unite the PLO on the basis of the Algiers-Aden agreement and to reestablish the Syrian-PLO alliance. This is why the PLO is putting all its efforts now to pave the road for achieving the comprehensive national dialogue that will lead to the 17th session of the PNC.

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