PALESTINE IS NOT A FOREIGN POLICY FILE

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18/07/2026

Introduction

Nine months after resolution 2803 established the current framework in Gaza, the situation has settled into something that deserves a name. The killing has slowed. The framework holds on paper. And Palestine has been quietly reclassified in the chanceries of the Muslim world from an obligation into a file, something managed by foreign ministries, discussed at summits, and assigned a budget line. This article argues that this reclassification is the deeper injury. The Sharī'ah does not recognise a category in which the suffering of Muslims in one territory becomes the diplomatic business of another territory's government. That category was invented, and the Ummah has been taught to accept it.

The Situation as It Stands

The current framework was endorsed in November 2025. Resolution 2803 endorsed a comprehensive plan that established the ceasefire, secured the release of hostages, and placed a transitional governance administration chaired by the American president over the enclave, alongside an international force to monitor the arrangement. Muslims should read that sentence slowly. The governing arrangement over Gaza is chaired by Washington and monitored by an international force, and the Muslim states have raised no structural objection to it.

The humanitarian record under this framework is a matter of documented fact. Six months in, the plan had largely stalled on its promises beyond the initial pause in fighting and the surge in aid. **More than seven hundred Palestinians have been killed since October 2025. Seventy seven percent of the population still faces acute food insecurity. More than eighteen thousand patients, including eleven thousand cancer patients, require urgent treatment they cannot obtain, and since Rafah reopened in February fewer than four hundred have been permitted to leave.** A majority of Gaza's children receive no education at all, with restrictions extending even to the import of notebooks and pencils. Israeli operations have continued, concentrated around the buffer zone, with several of the deadliest incidents occurring at locations sheltering civilians.

Fifty seven Muslim states exist. None of them has treated this as an obligation upon itself.

Why the Fiqh Does Not Permit This Framing

The classical jurists treated Muslim land as one legal body

Ibn Taymiyyah stated the principle without qualification. He said, in al-Fatāwā al-Kubrā:

> "*If the enemy enters a Muslim land, there is no doubt that it is obligatory for the closest and then the next closest to repel him, because the Muslim lands are like one land.*"[1]

Set aside for a moment the operative ruling he derives, which concerns armed defence, attend instead to the legal reasoning underneath it. He treats the lands of the Muslims as a single body, so that an injury at one point creates an obligation at every other point, ordered by proximity. There is no jurisdictional line in his reasoning. There is no category of "*another country's internal matter.*" The concept simply does not appear, because the jurists were not working with a map that contained it.

Ibn Qudāmah, writing in al-Mughnī, structured the obligation the same way, holding that when an enemy enters a land, the obligation falls upon its people directly and immediately.[2] It is worth remembering that Ibn Qudāmah was born in Jammāʿīl, a village near Jerusalem, and lived through the Crusader occupation of the very territory under discussion. He was not theorising at a distance.

The obligation to spend on captives has no border in it

Here the classical position is at its most concrete, and it bears directly on what Muslims outside Palestine are obliged to do with their wealth. Al-Qurṭubī recorded in his tafsīr:

> "*Our scholars said: ransoming the captives is obligatory even if not a single dirham remains.*" He continued that the obligation is discharged from the treasury, and where the treasury cannot meet it, "*it is an obligation upon the entirety of the Muslims, and whoever among them fulfils it, the obligation falls from the rest.*"[3]

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[1] Ibn Taymiyyah, al-Fatāwā al-Kubrā 4/608. http://qitaal.50megs.com/newfolder/16.html

[2] Ibn Qudāmah, al-Mughnī 8/354. http://qitaal.50megs.com/newfolder/16.html

[3] Al-Qurṭubī, al-Jāmiʿ li-Aḥkām al-Qurʾān 2/26. https://midad.com/article/199255

Ibn Taymiyyah put it in similar terms:

> *"Freeing the captives is among the greatest of obligations, and expending wealth, endowed or otherwise, upon it is among the greatest acts of drawing near to Allah."*[4]

The obligation does not stop at the edge of a territory. It escalates outward until it reaches every Muslim who has wealth, and it exhausts the treasury before it is satisfied. Now compare that to a Muslim state that calculates its contribution to Gaza against its trade relationships, its security arrangements, and its standing with Washington. The gap between the two is not a difference of degree. They are operating on entirely different legal principles.

The nation state framework produces this outcome by design

When Egypt weighs Gaza against Camp David, when Turkey weighs it against NATO obligations, when Saudi Arabia weighs it against Washington, each is behaving exactly as a nation state is built to behave. A nation state exists to serve the interests of its citizens as defined by its borders. It has no legal instrument through which to act as the Ummah, because it does not represent the Ummah and never claimed to.

This is why the language of "solidarity" has replaced the language of obligation. Solidarity is what one state offers another. Obligation is what one part of a single body owes to the rest of it. The Ummah has been moved from the second category into the first, and most Muslims have absorbed the shift without noticing it happened.

Unity Is Fard

Allah says:

> **وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا**
>
> *"And hold firmly to the rope of Allah, all together, and do not be divided.*[5]

The command is to hold together as one, and the prohibition attached to it is division. Fifty seven governments each calculating Palestine against their own national interest is the precise condition this āyah forbids. The rope is one rope. It was never fifty seven ropes coordinated through summits.

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[4] Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā 28/635.
https://www.ikhwanonline.com/article/246691
[5] Āl ʿImrān, 3:103

The Prophet ﷺ said:

> **مَثَلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي تَوَادِّهِمْ وَتَرَاحُمِهِمْ وَتَعَاطُفِهِمْ مَثَلُ الْجَسَدِ إِذَا اشْتَكَى مِنْهُ عُضْوٌ تَدَاعَى لَهُ سَائِرُ الْجَسَدِ بِالسَّهَرِ وَالْحُمَّى**
>
> *"The likeness of the believers in their mutual love, mercy, and compassion is that of a single body. When one limb of it suffers, the whole body responds to it with sleeplessness and fever."*[6]

This hadīth is the same principle Ibn Taymiyyah applied legally, expressed here in terms of the body. A body that feels nothing when one of its limbs is injured is a body with a severed nerve. The Ummah today watches a limb under siege and continues sleeping. That is a medical description of what has happened to us, and the treatment is structural rather than emotional. Feeling more will not reconnect the nerve. What reconnects it is a single authority that carries the obligations of the whole body, holds the treasury the jurists were describing, and answers for the Ummah as one.

And the Prophet ﷺ said:

> **الْمُسْلِمُ أَخُو الْمُسْلِمِ لَا يَظْلِمُهُ وَلَا يُسْلِمُهُ**
>
> *"The Muslim is the brother of the Muslim. He does not wrong him, and he does not abandon him."*[7]

The word here, *lā yuslimuh*, means to hand over, to leave to his fate, to abandon to an enemy. Every Muslim government that has processed Palestine as a diplomatic file rather than an obligation has done exactly what this hadīth prohibits, and has done so with the vocabulary of statecraft rather than the vocabulary of betrayal.

A hundred years ago, an injury to a Muslim in Jerusalem was an injury to the body that stretched from Bosnia to Bengal, and the jurists wrote their rulings on that assumption because it was simply true. Today that same injury is an item on an agenda, raised at a summit, noted in a communiqué, and filed. We did not lose Palestine in 1948, and we did not lose it in 1967. We lost it the day we accepted that it belonged to somebody else's government. The seventy seven percent in Gaza who cannot eat are not waiting for our sympathy, because sympathy has been arriving for decades and it has fed nobody. They are waiting for an Ummah that still remembers it as one body. U**ntil that body wakes, every statement we issue is a letter written to ourselves, and every tear we shed is water poured on sand.**

Wa'Allāhu Aʿlam (And Allah Knows Best)

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[6] Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 2586
[7] Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 2442

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