

# **Muwatin 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference**

## **When Will the Smile Return to our World?**

**Held in the virtual space and live streamed via Muwatin's  
Channel on YouTube**

**25-27 September 2020**

Conference held in cooperation with the Heinrich Böll Stiftung  
Palestine & Jordan

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## Concept Note

The outbreak of the Corona virus epidemic at the beginning of the year 2020, the floundering of most countries in confronting it, and the confusion surrounding the necessity of choosing between people's life and health or the health of the economy (and perhaps its life as well) revealed the fragility of the world order. The pandemic unveiled many things, and revealed the sham of the neoliberal promise of empowerment, self-realisation, and release of potentials. It became clear that the promised path to empowerment and self-fulfilment depended upon the enslavement of people with chains of debt, consumption, absence of social security, and the lack of security, in addition to a series of economic and political crises. It revealed that governments are capable of intervening and organizing when they so desire. It also revealed that governments' priorities were to invest in security, as the security apparatuses were more prepared for a crisis than the health systems in most countries and at all levels.

Successive crises since the turn of the century have led to increased polarization in the world, heralding the end of the "global village", taking with it the promise of a peaceful world that moves steadily towards democracy and celebrates human rights. Polarization has taken the form of glaring differences in wealth, wars, conflicts, struggle for domination, contempt for international law, and the growth of right-wing populism with increasing fascist tendencies. Naturally, this was accompanied by the growth of various forms of resistance to these transformations in a variety of ways.

At the level of international relations, inter-state relations became similar to what they used to be in the nineteenth century; neo-colonialism is using old colonial methods to protect itself since it became threatened and contested. The last quarter of a century (after the end of the cold war, the collapse of the socialist camp, and the disappearance of the "communist threat") witnessed US military operations in Afghanistan, Colombia, Haiti, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Pakistan, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Yemen, and Yugoslavia. This is in addition to indirect foreign interventions in countries such as Venezuela, and the United States having more than eight hundred military bases on foreign soil. Regional conflicts and increasing proxy wars indicate escalating rivalries between imperial powers for domination. Russia has worked to expand the scope of its hegemony by declaring a confrontation with the West; by militarily supporting the secession of Ossetia and Abkhazia from Georgia, (re)seizing Crimea, creating a centre of power in eastern Ukraine, and playing a strategic role in Syria and Libya, as well as promoting the escalation of its military power. China, using its "soft power", accompanied by a display of "hard power", has turned into a world power with a stronger position than it had during the Cold War. In 2014, Japan amended its laws to allow the involvement of its military forces in combat outside the country, and this came

after a number of amendments that aimed to return Japan to playing military roles starting in 1991.

The “first world” has been the epicentre of economic crises, the strongest of which was the crisis of 2008. It then became the stage of a health disaster during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. These crises soon led to political reactions that culminated in the emergence of new transformations and movements such as the Indignados movement in Spain (which resulted in the Podemos party), the Yellow Vests movement in France, and the Black Lives Matter movement, which spread from the United States to many other countries. In Europe, the discourse regarding the duality of history (histories of liberation and enslavement), which links the well-being of Europe with the plundering of the Third World, is spreading. It culminated recently into symbolic popular actions involving the destruction of the symbols of slavery and exploitation. This comes after a long period where this discourse was confined to the circles of “critical intellectuals.” On the other hand, populist tendencies have witnessed remarkable growth in the rich countries, joined by some from Eastern Europe. Right wing and racist tendencies have become common in the countries of the first world. The discourse of democracy and human rights does not necessarily prevail any more.

The “second world” undertook the endeavour to end the unipolar state of affairs (which formed the essence of the “global village”). Analysts expect that the new balance of powers will lead to a multipolar world rather than a return to a bipolar world.

The third world is witnessing many transformations, such as the people taking to the streets and demanding the restructuring of their political systems. It is also witnessing a new wave of proxy wars, and escalating regional tensions (Egypt, Ethiopia, the Gulf States, India, Iran, Pakistan, South Africa, Sudan, Turkey, Venezuela, West Africa countries, and others). This coincided with the rise of emerging regional powers such as Iran, Brazil, Turkey, South Africa, and India, which increasingly harbour authoritarian forces with right-wing tendencies, some of which are populist in nature. What is new in the third world scene is that it is now divided between those who are satisfied with the status quo and do not see a basis for effecting change, and those who believe that the time has come to reshape the world based on new foundations.

There are some remarkable aspects regarding the polarization process: First, there are multiple attempts to build alliances and political movements on a non-national, regional, or ideological basis (such as "BRICS"). Second, conflicts within regional alliances are intensifying. Examples include the European Union’s problems and popular scepticism about its usefulness, the Brexit, the division within the Gulf Cooperation Council, the decline of Venezuela’s role within the anti-imperialist trend in South America, and so on. Third, internal polarization processes are becoming increasingly populist

in character. The ruling elite in Israel is no longer satisfied with fearmongering only about the “Arab danger”, but started recently to include the threat of the "left", and boasts of building alliances with the Arab right. Another example is the unprecedented cleavages between American elites. Fourth, there exist multiple new projects to build international political alliances that transcend national loyalty. Anti-neoliberal activists in France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States believe that they should seek alliances with each other and with movements that adopt similar positions in East Asia, Africa, South America, and the Arab world. It is also noteworthy that some representatives of these movements have accomplished impressive achievements in their campaigns. Some examples are: Bernie Sanders, despite his socialist discourse, obtained a high number of votes in the Democratic Party; the success of the radical left-wing Syriza party in the elections in Greece in 2015; the considerable changes in the policy of the British Labour Party under Corbyn; and the ascension of Catherine Jacobs dotter from the Left-Green Party to the position of prime minister in Iceland.

In short, the world is going through a phase of polarisation and alignment, indicating the existence of a conviction across the world that it is about to enter a new era, and everyone will do all they can to position themselves in a way which will maximize their role in shaping the next order. However, the struggle for the future is, in fact, a struggle between the forces of the present. It is a struggle over the ability to harness the tools of the present in the interest of achieving current and contradictory visions of the future. One of the visions for the future is necessarily the preservation and consolidation of the status quo. Those who presently sit at the top of the status quo’s hierarchy, naturally, adopt this vision. On the other hand, there are forces seeking to break out of these crises, realizing the sham of the neoliberal promise, and creating movements that are gaining momentum all over the world.

The results of this battle will determine the future. If the regimes -that can be described as neoliberal securitocracies- are able to suppress change movements and succeed in strengthening the hegemony of their populist right wing, the human condition will worsen, and the world will be on the verge of a third global war or something similar. It is noteworthy that the economic and social crises resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, in a context where the world economy had not yet recovered from the 2008 crisis, can facilitate the likelihood of this possibility, especially in the backdrop of security organs’ expanded role during the pandemic.

The second possibility is that fascist forces resort to transforming their battles with the masses in their countries into wars to protect themselves and restore their systems. They will see warfare as an opportunity to cut unemployment, create the need for reconstruction, and silence the opposition. In this case, the world will return to a context similar to that preceding the two world wars. One option is an equivalent of a military division of the world through

occupations, mandates, and guardianship utilising contemporary tools. The second option is a “soft” division equivalent to neo-colonialism with contemporary tools – a new iteration of the development theory.

The third possibility is that the world finds itself exhausted and decrepit, and is forced to formulate a new world order that does not depend on the imperialist division of the world, but rather on favouring the wellbeing of people, and limiting the power of the present dominant forces.

The probability of the realisation of any of these possibilities depends on many factors, not the least of which is the ability of the forces that are opposed to the status quo to organize politically in an effective and rational manner. This possibility is a likely one, at least in the longer term. In one situation, it might realise in the medium term. In another, it will become a longer-term possibility. In any case, we do not have the pillars of shaping the new future. We cannot even describe its features, but we know that it will be born from the womb of the present. It will be formed from the components that political movements around the world are creating, and its momentum will be a result of their political organisation.

## Conference themes

The 26th Muwatin Annual Conference will discuss these issues on the global and the Arab scales, and present them in three rubrics:

**The first rubric:** Diagnosing the crisis of the current world order and exploring its depth and consequences. It discusses the nature of the neoliberal era, the decline in the position and role of international institutions, wealth polarisation, succession of crises, the growth of populist and fascist trends, and patterns of domination including securitization, digitisation, juridification, bio-politics, knowledge impoverishment, and their effects on the Arab world.

**The second rubric:** The mechanisms of transformation and change in the global system. It discusses political movements and their structures and demands, the prospects of international solidarity, revolutions. It also examines the linkage of anti-colonial causes, with those combating pollution, depletion of nature and global warming, the struggle for freedoms, justice and anti-discrimination, and the prospects of their success, their forms of organization (including digitisation), their political action, epistemic tools, and the place of the Arab world and the role of its peoples in the process of change.

**The third rubric:** The shape of the future in terms of welfare, justice, wealth, work, education, health, and social security, and how the possible transformation will reflect on the Arab world.

## Programme

### First Day - Friday, 25 September 2020

#### 17:00 Opening Remarks

*Address by the President of Birzeit University*  
*Address by the Director of Muwatin Institute for Democracy and Human Rights*  
*Keynote Address by Vijay Prashad: An Agenda for the Global South after COVID-19*

#### 18:00 Session I: Manifestations of the Crisis in the Arab World

Chair:

*Mudar Kassis*

National Sovereignty for Arab Countries: A Utopia?  
The Unconventional Imperialism Requires an  
Unconventional Left

**Héla Yousfi**  
**Dalal El-Bizri**

### Second Day - Saturday, 26 September 2020

#### 11:00 Keynote Address by Rajesh Tandon

Reimagining Futures Where All Lives Matter: Participatory Democracy in Post-pandemic Era

#### 11:45 Session II: The Future of Capitalism

Chair: *Lisa Taraki*

The Crisis of Capitalism under the New World  
Disorder  
Populism and Hannah Arendt

**Mustapha Kamel**  
**Al-Sayyed**  
**Raef Zreik**

#### 13:00 Break

#### 17:00 Session III: The Depth of the Crisis

Chair: *Rana Barakat*

The Repositioning of Political Corruption in the  
Current Global System  
Is International Solidarity Possible across the  
Redeemable-irredeemable Divide?  
Forging an African Governance/Human Rights  
Identity in a Post COVID-19 World Order

**Basem Ezbidi**  
**Reem Bahdi**  
**Kwadwo**  
**Appiagyeyi-Atua**

**Third Day - Sunday, 27 September 2020**

**11:00 Session IV: Current Reality and Requirements for Change** Chair: *Bettina Marx*

Violence, Capitalism, and the Spectre of Fascism **Sami Khatib**  
Civil Resistance and Nonviolence **Haytham Manna**  
Gulf Capitalism and the Changing Global Political Economy **Adam Hanieh**

**13:00 Break**

**17:00 Session V: Features of a Future** Chair: *Jamil Salem*

But When Was Our World Smiling? **Gilbert Achcar**  
The Arab World after the Pandemic **George Giacaman**

**18:15 Keynote Address by Samuel Moyn**

The Fall of Welfare and the Rise of Human Rights

**19:00 Conference Conclusion**

## Abstracts of Presentations

**Héla Yousfi**

### **National Sovereignty for Arab Countries: A Utopia?**

The two main demands of the Arab revolutions chanted from Tunis to Damascus via Bahrain - "The people want the fall of the regime" and "work, freedom, national dignity" – remain, nine years later, unfulfilled. On the ground, people are still struggling to find political, economic and social solutions to these problems, and several endogenous as well as regional explanations have been summoned to explain these difficulties.

The fact that these slogans make the state both the target of challenges and the provider of solutions, as employer and as guarantor of national sovereignty, further complicates the intelligibility of current dynamics.<sup>1</sup>

One can neither deny nor resolve this paradox. Yet, it has unfortunately produced a number of simplistic theses: one interpretation reduces the revolutionary process to issues of political and economic liberalisation, whilst another one focuses on the role of the state in the management of economic and social problems.

But these theses do not withstand a closer observation of the facts and raise two fundamental questions: what does the return of 'national sovereignty' mean for the political agenda of Arab countries? In a region suffering from wars and neo-liberal reforms, can the state (and what kind of state) still be a relevant subject of analysis? Above all: does the state have the political, economic and symbolic resources to respond to the emancipatory claims of the peoples of the region?

**Dalal El-Bizri**

### **The Unconventional Imperialism Requires an Unconventional Left**

The pandemic culminated flaws embedded in the entrepreneurial system that was already suffering from weak traditional values, and declining economic and technological status. The system embarked on an anti-democratic course. Traditional imperialism had weakened with the emergence of new imperialisms involving conflicts.

The official enemies of the current order are the "caretakers" of the traditional left who have inherited its role. Among them are the Islamic fundamentalists, but their leftist burden is not heavy. They were adopted and supported by new and old, global and regional imperialisms.

Leftists fall within this equation in the middle group in favor of the Shiite fundamentalism. They follow its steps regarding the priority of hostility towards traditional imperialism and Zionism, and in the issue of rapprochement with the



new imperialisms. This priority of anti-imperialism forced them to abandon the rest of their leftist concerns (the social and the political).

The remaining leftists, who are also still proud of their leftism, are scattered, distracted, and lost. They are united by only one position: hostility towards the Iran axis. They are neoliberals of varying degrees and fields, they are persistent, and they are, singularly. demanding democracy and the rule of law. They are also preachers preaching seasonally to “revive the leftist project” or “reveille it”.

The question is: how is it possible to combine new and traditional imperialisms, and traditional and new left ... if what is required is the resurrection of "forces opposing the current regime"?

### **Mustapha Kamel Al-Sayyed**

#### **The Crisis of Capitalism under the New World Disorder**

There are three major dimensions of the present crisis of world capitalism, namely the Covid 19 pandemic, recession in world economy and deterioration of environmental conditions. With crises being recurrent under Capitalism, it does not seem that historical experience offers good lessons on how to deal with the current one. The old recipes do not seem to be effective in dealing with its profound causes rooted in declining rate of return to capital, concentration of wealth and growing inequality in its distribution and unprecedented productive capacity met by a shrinking demand. Several alternatives are offered as a way out, ranging from reforms within the present Capitalist system to moving to new types Capitalism such as ethical Capitalism, regulated Capitalism to return to the model of welfare state. Neoliberalism has paved the way to the current crisis but a complete breakdown of the World Capitalist system is unlikely. The fiscal dilemma of the Capitalist State renders many of these alternatives unrealistic. A complete breakdown of Capitalism is unlikely. The most probable scenario is therefore persistence of its crisis. How would the different subsystems of Capitalism, such as the political and the socialization subsystems contribute to the perpetuation of an economic system in crisis?

### **Raef Zreik**

#### **Populism and Hannah Arendt**

Populism is a phenomenon that has occupied political thought in the last decade, and there are many articles trying to understand the emergence of movements and leaders such as Trump, Erdogan, and Netanyahu around the world. There is constant discussion about the crisis that the liberal democratic thought is facing at this stage, in addition to the continuous attempts to understand and diagnose this crisis.

In this paper I will also try to contribute to this discussion through a specific angle in the history of thought based on Hannah Arendt. Arendt had observed and

analysed the emergence of totalitarian regimes in the first part of last century in her book on the foundations of totalitarianism. When we read Arendt's text, we feel that we are in front of a text describing some of the phenomena in which we are now living, in a state of expansion and domination by populist policies and movements.

The paper aims to compare the populist movements now with the totalitarian movements that Arendt describes in the middle of last century to ask if there is anything to be learned from Arendt in this context, and to what extent can populist tendencies turn into totalitarian movements. In addition to that it aims to examine the nature of the crisis in liberal thought in the past century compared with its current crisis.

**Basem Ezbidi**

### **The Repositioning of Political Corruption in the Current Global System**

The paper outlines the general framework for the most important features of the structural political corruption that accompanied the neoliberal transformations in recent decades, with the aim of discussing and analysing its new positioning formulas in the future, especially after the current Corona pandemic. It also looks into the repercussions of this process of localizing political corruption and its effects on humanity, politically and environmentally, especially in terms of the prospects of democracy and the wellbeing of the environment.

**Reem Bahdi**

### **Is International Solidarity Possible across the Redeemable-irredeemable Divide?**

Across time and space, people have been sorted into groups, deemed morally deficient, and their moral insufficiency has been used to explain both their sad predicament and the violence that has been directed at them by the state. In each instance, the deemed morally deficient group has a counterpart, one that faces the same life conditions but whose circumstances are defined as the function of external circumstances rather than inherent trait. Laws were passed to reflect all of this. This mechanism of defining and dividing groups into those who are deficient on the inside (and therefore irredeemable) as against those who live in deficient circumstances (and therefore redeemable) serves a particular political function - divide and conquer. But, we are supposed to be living in a post divide and conquer world. International law, especially international human rights law, promised to speak above, beyond and through the divide and conquer. The UDHR promised that "all people are born and free and equal in dignity and in rights." Dignity, equality and rights grounded and foregrounded the potential for international solidarity. We now know that this utopia cannot be achieved through law. But, can we build the solidarities we need to bend the arch of history

closer to justice through law? Can we use law to build international solidarities given law's role in the process of sorting, disciplining and dispossessing?

**Kwadwo Appiagyei-Atua**

### **Forging an African Governance/Human Rights Identity in a Post-COVID-19 World Order**

There is talk of a new world order in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and, therefore, the likelihood of a new period in history where there will be changes in world political thought and the balance of power.

Huntington has already talked of clash of civilizations and identifies an African civilisation but only in the present and also as still coalescing. However, that position is only partly true. Africa had thriving civilizations.

However, what Africa lacks today is a Pan-African civilization and identity rooted in human rights and democracy and derived from its past civilizations and cultures to develop a form of governance that speaks to the needs of its people in contemporary times.

It is feared that the new emerging world order may also pass Africa by and cause it to remain on the fringes of this new order. This concern is anchored in the manner in which governments, backed by security agencies, have performed in a number of African states during the COVID-19 crisis in seeking to balance individual rights and community interests. It is also about how emergency laws have been enacted to deal with emergencies without declaring states of emergency; and the dismal response from the African Union to condemn such practices.

Based on history, the new laws enacted, the new directives given and the new measures imposed, will transcend the emergency and become the “new normal.” This tendency will definitely dilute the quality of democracy and respect for human rights and the rule of law. This phenomenon has the tendency to distract Africa from focusing on taking advantage of placing itself in the new world order and using it to build a sustainable, holistic democratic and development structure for the continent. We now have a new opportunity in the emerging new world order to forge a true lasting cultural identity premised on a home-brewed concept of human rights and democratic governance.

**Sami Khatib**

### **Violence, Capitalism, and the Spectre of Fascism**

In the 1930s, Max Horkheimer, one of the founding figures of Frankfurt School Critical Theory, stated: “Those who do not want to talk critically about capitalism should also keep quiet about fascism.” The “exceptional” violence of fascism

cannot be understood without analysing the “normal” violence of capitalism. According to Marxist theory, violence is an inherent characteristic of capitalist class society. If the basic socio-economic relation is a violent relation, violence is not an exception but shapes, maintains shows how the manifest violence of ‘primitive accumulation’ remains present in the everyday of capitalist production. The same applies to the violence of colonialism and imperialism: it is an integral part of capitalism’s history and on-going functioning. In my paper, I will rely on Frantz Fanon’s gloomy analysis of the reality of colonial violence. Fanon grasps the spectral omnipresence of colonial violence as an asymmetric and dialectical relation without resorting to the fantasy of nonviolence or equivalence of (colonial) violence and (decolonial) counter-violence. As I will argue, Walter Benjamin’s dialectical concept of “mythic violence” proves instructive when read with and against Fanon. In conclusion, I will pose the question how early Frankfurt School’s theory of fascism can help us in understanding today’s situation of neoliberal fascism and autocratic forms of contemporary capitalist domination, and sustains capitalist reality in its systemic or ‘normal’ functioning. On a global scale, the normalized violence of capitalist relations of production points towards capitalism’s repressed origin: Every mundane act of commodity exchange is a congealed remainder of the original violence of the so-called ‘primitive’ or, ‘ursprüngliche’ accumulation through which capitalism was historically implemented.

**Haytham Manna**

### **Civil Resistance and Nonviolence**

During the phases of decline we are witnessing; the global system was characterized by the multiplicity of the patterns of violence practiced against those who were placed in the position of "the enemy". And whether the cluster of "evil" included cultures, religions, or gigantic state entities, resorting to violence, be it military or economic, was the most prominent way to preserve what could be preserved.

Most of the military violence took place by proxy, and the fuel were the "Fighters Without Borders", who imagined that the bombing of an embassy or the kidnapping of a journalist could shake this system. In the meantime, economic violence escalated through the process of "multilateral sanctions" as an official policy of the powerful. In all of the cases we have lived and are witnessing, the "collateral damage", as Madeleine Albright called it, was much greater than the intended results.

In both cases, the resort to violence by the oppressor and the oppressed, was devastating to the weaker components of society and the vulnerable peoples.

How can nonviolence and civil resistance become the common international method for civil societies to face the lack of self-immunity in the periphery and

the most vulnerable societies, during the slow transformation process in the global order that we are witnessing?

**Adam Hanieh**

### **Gulf Capitalism and the Changing Global Political Economy**

The six states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Oman and Qatar) constitute one of the most important zones of power within the contemporary Middle East. Since the onset of the Arab uprisings in 2010-2011, scholars have begun to focus greater attention on the growing political and military role of the GCC in the region, as well as the specificities of the Gulf's own political economy.

This presentation will locate the GCC within the wider international sphere, focusing in particular on the post-war period, in which oil (and its associated financial surpluses) emerged as central to the balance of global power and the functioning of modern capitalism. It traces how these features have shaped the development of the state in the Gulf, to which is linked a powerful class of Gulf business conglomerates that have come to dominate all moments of accumulation. Given this state-class relation, the presentation examines the significant internationalisation of Gulf capital that has occurred over the last two decades, concomitant with the rolling-out of neoliberalism (in both the Middle East and globally). The presentation will ask what this internationalisation of capital might imply for the Middle East's place in the shifting dynamics of the world economy – focusing in particular on escalating China/US rivalries and an imminent downturn in the global economy.

**Gilbert Achcar**

### **But When Was Our World Smiling?**

The Covid-19 pandemic culminated an era characterized by significant decline in social and political achievements, which peaked in the 1960s. That decade witnessed the rise of national liberation movements and their rootedness. In addition to that, it had witnessed great successes in decolonization, the steadfastness of the Vietnamese people in the face of the American aggression, the "cultural revolution" in China, rays of hope for democratization in the countries dominated by Moscow, and the peak of the welfare states in the west. Generally, during that decade, the world witnessed high rates of economic growth and societal development.

In our Arab region, the sixties marked the deepening of the nationalist movement with Nasserite Egypt at its centre. And despite the second Nakba in 1967, the hope of the people was so strong that the Arab defeat sparked a wave of radicalization that encompassed the entire region, with the Palestinian resistance at the frontlines. On the global scale, the era was culminated by a wave of youth

radicalization that was symbolized by the year 1968 with the movements that it witnessed in various continents. The 1960s world was indeed smiling, its youth were optimistic and looking towards a bright future.

As for the time of Covid-19 that comes after forty years of neoliberalism. These years have witnessed the dismantling of many social achievements acquired in previous decades, the shifting balance of global powers in a way that unleashed the hand of US imperialism, especially in our region, and the marrying of some limited democratic transformations with economic transformations characterized by obscene exploitation and growing inequality with slow growth rates in most countries. This in turn led to a new wave of authoritarian backsliding, with the rise of reactionary groups; from religious fundamentalism to the far-right, all the way to Donald Trump's victory becoming the president of the United States.

Can the new generation regain the ability to smile and hope, under what conditions and how?

**George Giacaman**

### **The Arab World after the Pandemic?**

Expectations abound about the shape of the world after the Corona pandemic, especially that the world will witness a major globalized economic recession that will affect most countries, albeit to different degrees. While some see that the epidemic has broken the spine of economic globalization, others argue that this will generate a global conflict between conservative forces seeking to prevent or contain change, and mass movements that are expected to arise or re-emerge, similar to what happened in the mortgage crisis in 2008, but it will not be limited to The United States and Europe, it will spread to different countries of the world.

The Arab world will not be far from this conflict, which originally began at the end of 2010 with the revolution in Tunisia and then Egypt on January 25, 2011. The Arab world was ready for such an explosion before, as several reports have shown in relation to poverty and unemployment among young people in particular, and the corrupted regimes and political authoritarianism. The Arab world will now witness, due to additional impoverishment and destitution, a return to a third stage of uprisings and revolutions in which the Arab countries that have led the counter-revolution since 2011 will be aligned, and now with the support of Israel in particular and its alliance, because of its awareness of the "danger" that change imposes. On the other side will be the forces that will fight for change. Success in this change will depend on the availability of three basic conditions that will have the final say on the outcome of the conflict.

## Participants

<b>Abdullatif Abu Hijleh</b>	President of Birzeit University, and Professor of Inorganic Chemistry.
<b>Kwadwo Appiagyei-Atua</b>	Senior lecturer, School of Law, University of Ghana, Legon, Accra, Ghana. Member of the Ghana Bar Association.
<b>Gilbert Achcar</b>	Professor of development studies and international relations at SOAS, University of London. He is the author of many books, including <i>The Arabs and the Holocaust: the Arab-Israeli War of Narratives</i> (2010), <i>The people Want: A Radical Exploration of the Arab Uprising</i> (2013) and <i>Morbid Symptoms: Relapse in the Arab Uprising</i> (2016)
<b>Mustapha Kamel Al-Sayed</b>	Professor of Political Science at Cairo University, , published works in Arabic, English, and French on issues of Political Economy of Development, Political Theory, and political change in Arab countries, taught at the American University in Cairo, Harvard ( 1998) Colgate University (2005), spent time as a scholar at the University of California in Los Angeles (1990) and Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (Summer 2002).
<b>Reem Bahdi</b>	Associate Professor of Law at the University of Windsor, Faculty of Law. Her research and teaching focuses on access to justice, human dignity, and social context and national security.
<b>Rana Barakat</b>	Faculty member at the Department of History and Archaeology at Birzeit University. She teaches in the MA programmes in History, Contemporary Arab studies, Democracy and Human Rights, and the PhD Programme in Social Sciences.
<b>Dalal El-Bizri</b>	Writer and Journalist. Consultant for ESCWA and member of the committees of the Arab Journalism Award and the Al-Owais Award for Humanities. Was previously a researcher and faculty member of the Institute of Social Sciences at the Lebanese University.
<b>Basem Ezbidi</b>	Faculty member at the Department of Political Science and the MA Programme in Democracy and Human Rights at Birzeit University

<b>George Giacaman</b>	Faculty member of the Department of Philosophy and Cultural Studies, the MA Programme in Democracy and Human Rights, and the MA Programme in Contemporary Arab Studies. Served as dean of the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Graduate Studies at Birzeit University. He served as the general director of the Palestinian Institute for the Study of Democracy – Muwatin.
<b>Adam Hanieh</b>	Faculty member in the development studies at SOAS, University of London. Taught at Zayed University in the United Arab Emirates. His research interests include the political economy of the Middle East, labour migration, the formation of classes and state in the Gulf Counties and Palestine.
<b>Joyce Kashou</b>	Programmes' Officer at Muwatin Institute for Democracy and Human Rights - Birzeit University.
<b>Mudar Kassis</b>	Director of Muwatin Institute for Democracy and Human Rights, faculty member of the Department of Philosophy and Cultural Studies, director of the MA Programme in Democracy and Human Rights, and co-director of the Windsor Birzeit Dignity Initiative at Birzeit University.
<b>Sami Khatib</b>	Cultural theorist and philosopher. He taught at Freie Universität Berlin, Jan van Eyck Academie Maastricht, American University of Beirut and Akademie der bildenden Künste Vienna. Currently, he is a postdoctoral researcher at Leuphana University of Lüneburg. He is author of the book “Teleologie ohne Endzweck: Walter Benjamins Ent-stellung des Messianischen” (2013).
<b>Haytham Manna</b>	President of the Scandinavian Institute for Human Rights (Geneva). Studied medicine, social sciences, and international law. Has more than fifty publications in various languages. Held several positions in international human rights organizations, and is the founder of the QMH Movement for the values of non-violence, citizenship, and fundamental rights.
<b>Bettina Marx</b>	Director of the Heinrich Boell Foundation office in Ramallah since September 2015, she is a journalist with extensive experience working in the Middle East.



<b>Samuel Moyn</b>	Professor of law and history at Yale University, which he joined in July 2017. Previously, he was a professor of history at Columbia University for thirteen years and a professor of history and of law at Harvard University. His research interests are in modern European intellectual history, with special interests in France and Germany, political and legal thought, historical and critical theory. He is an editor for the journal “Humanity”.
<b>Vijay Prashad</b>	Indian historian and journalist. He is the executive-director of Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research (with offices in India, South Africa, Brazil, and Argentina). He serves as Chief Editor of LeftWord Books, and commentator for Globetrotte.
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