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The Israeli-Gaza (mis)Adventure: African Response to the Day Before and After October 7.

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The response from Africa to the current humanitarian disaster in Gaza and the West Bank is well-nigh muted. The historical relationship between Apartheid and Zionism has created a discursive platform for African politicians and academics, especially in South Africa (SA) for quite a while. (Cf J. Peteet, “The Work of Comparison: Israel/Palestine and Apartheid”, *Anthropological Quarterly*, Vol 89, No.1, 2016, 247-81) This may well explain why the current Israeli-Gaza onslaught has attracted greater attention in [SA](#). SA’s initiation of a court action with an 84-page application on December 29 at the ICJ in the Hague against the alleged Israeli Genocide in the occupied territory is so far the most eloquent demonstration of support for [the Palestinians](#). However, other African states have maintained undignifying silence, if not covert endorsement of the massive humanitarian and cultural annihilation going on in Gaza and the West Bank. The reason is not far-fetched; most of the African states have strong diplomatic and trade relations with the Zionist state and her principals whose actions they can hardly challenge, even if despicable and uncivil. That is at the political level in Africa. The economic dimension of the age-long crisis which may have been deliberately sidestepped is that Gaza is assumed to have the majority of the region’s gas and oil; will ultimately ensure cheap access to the resources thus guaranteeing stronger economic leverage for Israel in the region.

On the academic front, the option of academic boycott, among others, which should have been effectively used by African academics against Israel could not have been activated for a variety of reasons, not least being the overdependence of African academe on tokenism and poison-laden grants, collaborations, fellowships, and technical support with overwhelming pro-Israeli insignia or input from across the world. (Cf. Report On Academic Boycotts from American Association of University Professors ([AAUP](#)))

The pro-Israel Lobby in the political cosmos of the West has a corresponding global network of power brokers in the economy, media, professions, and academic space. For example, a recent survey indicates that about 50% of academic collaborations with Israel involve South African top-notch universities led by [UCT](#). So, expressions from African academics in some parts of the world condemning the Israeli high-handedness, brute exercise of hegemony and inhuman treatment of the Palestinians and their institutions could not have been more than fake academic “sabre-rattling”. There is a need to articulate a robust program of informed analyses, proposals, and studies that would get to the “roots” of the crises and proffer realistic, workable, and genuine solutions that would guarantee world peace. Africanists do not need to start from scratch; several investigations and studies have indicated what available options are out there. The issue of academic boycotts has been proposed; most of the global South including Africa applied it during Apartheid South Africa. What African researchers and political regulators or legislators of policies need to do is interface with the Palestinian victims of Israeli oppression as represented by their academics, NGOs, community leaders, and independent observers, among others to generate a new discourse and create a favorable public response to the plight of the Palestinians. Academic, cultural, economic, sporting, and other targeted boycotts would be effective if sincerely applied. (See [link](#)). The ultimate agenda of Israel to push the Palestinians to Jordan, Lebanon, and perhaps Egypt/Syria would be the final phase of total occupation. Of course, the idea of a two-state solution has never been genuinely conceived or programmed for implementation right from the outset. So, the forlorn hope of eliminating Hamas would breed more radical opposition to the inhuman occupation and oppression which may ultimately signify the beginning of the end for the Zionist state. Although Israel may win the battle this time around, it cannot win the war; the ultimate loser will be the belligerent fringe led by PM Netanyahu who, according to James Dorsey, is currently “caught between a rock and a hard [place](#)”.

At this crucial time when most of the Universities in the occupied territories, including the two in Gaza have been subjected to unprecedented human and material [losses](#), Africa should not stand aloof, but rather, get her intellectuals and political leaders mobilized to do the needful before we would have a narrative with the opening statement: “Once there was Gaza . . .”.

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