

### III. Interview

*H.E. Ambassador Prof. Dr. Manuel Hassassian*

## Stop Bombing Gaza, Rebuild with the Oasis Plan

March 21—*The following is an edited transcript of an interview with H.E. Ambassador Prof. Dr. Manuel Hassassian, the Palestinian Authority's Ambassador to Denmark, conducted by Tim Rush from the Schiller Institute on March 19, 2025 in Washington, D.C. The video of the interview is available [here](#).*

**Tim Rush:** Hello, this is Tim Rush from the Schiller Institute, in Washington, D.C. on March 19. It is my great honor to have with me His Excellency Ambassador Prof. Dr. Manuel Hassassian, the Palestinian Authority's Ambassador to Denmark, who has been one of the featured speakers today at an Advocacy Summit of the Churches for Middle East Peace. Ambassador, thank you very much for joining me.

**H.E. Ambassador Prof. Dr. Hassassian:** It's my pleasure, sir.

**Rush:** I wanted to ask you what message you brought to the assembly today, and how the recent events—horrific events of the breakdown of the ceasefire and the renewed slaughter in Gaza—how to react to that and how to move forward despite this setback?

**Dr. Hassassian:** We have to understand that the current situation in Gaza is unacceptable, and this naked aggression against our people should stop. I came here with a message for the church leaders to strengthen the words of peace and justice, and to work



Courtesy of the Mission of Palestine in Denmark  
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diligently with the respective governments, to put pressure on Israel to stop this war, and to go back to peace negotiations, to strike out our differences in a peaceful way, rather than through arms and bombs. Violence always breeds violence. For that simple reason, we have reached a resolution that there is no military solution to this conflict. The sooner it ends the quicker the dust should settle down. We should have peace, and allow our lives to go on. In order for people to prosper, we need to promote certain kinds of policies that could be convenient for all

parties, because that's the way you flourish, advance, and overcome political jingoism.

And, of course, since you are interviewing me from the Schiller Institute, I always talk about the [Oasis Plan](#), how it could play a very imperative role in bridging the gaps, politically, by focusing on development. Through development, we can overcome this narrow ideology, and the perceptions that negate each other.

The synthesis movement is that when we approach our conflict not only as a political conflict, or cultural or religious conflict, but if we think as if the glass were half full, we search for common ground. After all, national interests and economic interests bode well in trying to create political stability.

**Rush:** The program that's been advanced from the Arab countries, particularly recently from Egypt, first of all, how do you evaluate that? And second, is there a way to broaden it, so that the broader focus of the Schil-

ler Institute's Oasis Plan could be integrated and brought into a larger context?

**Dr. Hassassian:** Yes. The Palestinian Authority has its own plan for the reconstruction of Gaza, and it agrees well with the Egyptian plan. But we also believe that there should be an international dimension to the progress of development. In order to have that dimension, you need people who are neutral in this conflict, who just come in and shoulder the responsibility of starting the process of reconstruction and development on the economic level, with a purely scientific perspective mentality, as it is laid out in the Oasis Plan.

I think this could be a very plausible plan that could be integrated with the Egyptian and the Palestinian plans, when we talk about the day after in Gaza. Therefore, we could give that international dimension to it, where it becomes more legitimate, more acceptable to the international community, to see the international dimension being infused within this overall comprehensive plan of reconstruction, that could be acceptable to all. I don't think the Americans would object to that, nor the Europeans, because the Oasis Plan has been well-spread all over Europe.

I, myself, have been participating in so many of your conferences and talking about this, whether in Denmark or in Palestine. I've done many interviews, and you [the Schiller Institute] interviewed me from Copenhagen. So yes, I do believe that the international dimension of progress and development through economics is important, and there are testimonies about what the Oasis Plan could achieve.

**Rush:** Well, we thank you very much for that. I should tell you that we have been very active on Capitol Hill discussing the Oasis Plan as the advance—that which creates the community of future benefits that can facilitate the immediate requirements in terms of halting the killing. And, particularly, on the Senate side, we

found very interesting responses, including among Republicans, because back in the 1960s, it was former United States President Eisenhower who adopted a Water for Peace approach with a very detailed program, which got the support of President Johnson. So, it was a bipartisan effort. One week before the Six-Day War in June of 1967, there was a meeting in Washington, D.C., of over 2,600 delegates from 94 countries about a Water for Peace program. [The International Conference for Water for Peace, May 23-31, 1967. The U.S. State Department wrote, “94 countries were represented together with 24 international organizations; 635 official delegates, 61 participants from international organizations, and over 2,000 observers attended.”—ed.] But it got derailed, basically, because of dynamics unleashed by the Six-Day War. So today, we believe that we can pick that up.

**Dr. Hassassian:** It could be doable, *Inshallah* [if God wills].

**Rush:** Exactly. And we very much embrace everything that you're doing. And thank you very much.

**Dr. Hassassian:** If we believe in God's will, and with our resilience, the conflict cannot sustain itself, but peace can become a permanent peace. And permanent peace comes with mutual reciprocity, with mutual respect, with mutual understanding, that peace and security in the Middle East cannot be achieved unless the Palestinians have their own independence. And in order to have that, and in order to promote peace, and the sustainability, and longevity of peace, we need to be partners in economics, in trade relationships, and in developing our natural resources for the benefit of all.

**Rush:** Indeed, *Inshallah*. Thank you very much.

**Dr. Hassassian:** You're welcome, sir. My pleasure.