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Subject: English Essay

Mock Exam

## THE OSTRICH MENTALITY IN THE UMMAH'S RESPONSE TO ISRAEL'S ACTIONS

Outline:

### A: Introduction

Thesis Statement:

The Ostrich mentality exhibited by the Muslim Ummah in response to Israel's actions hinders collective efforts to address the plight of the Palestinians and counter the systemic oppression and injustice effectively.

### B. Factors leading to the Ostrich mentality of the Muslim Ummah

1. Muslim Ummah fails to challenge global powers mainly due to US influence.

Case in study:

The USA's open support for Israel and chances of sanctions on Muslim countries

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tell them away from criticizing Israel's actions openly.

2. Muslim Ummah exhibits diplomatic inconsistency.

Case in study:

Many Muslim countries like the Gulf states and Turkey speak up for the Palestinian cause while normalizing relations with Israel, showing inconsistency in their stance.

3. Muslim Ummah's overreliance on symbolism undermines and decelerates the efforts towards the Palestinian cause.

Case in study:

The OIC holds numerous summits and meetings, stressing on the importance of the Palestinian Holy land without addressing the plight of the downtrodden Palestinians.

4. Muslim countries, especially the Gulf states fail to leverage their economic power.

### Case in study:

The USA, being hungry for oil, comes to the Arab states amid Russia-Ukraine conflict, but Arab states do not benefit from this opportunity to work in favor of the Palestinian cause.

5. The government's actions and public sentiment in Muslim countries are different

### Case in study:

Muslims all over the world hold protests in Palestinian cause but the governments stays silent.

6. Prevalence of sectarian issues hinder unity and collaboration among Muslim Ummah

### Case in study:

The rift between Iran and Saudi Arabia does not let the countries unite and work for the Palestinian cause.

7. Spread of misinformation by media has made the situation worse.

### Case in study:

International media spreads

one-sided narrative that overpowers the true story, while Muslim media fail to reach the coverage level of international media.

8. Selective activism by Arab states fuels this ostrich mentality.

Case in study:

A huge outcry was seen on Sheikh Jarrah evictions and Al-Aqsa raids but sustained efforts to solve the issue were minimal.

9. Complacency of affluent Muslim nations in the Palestinian matter adds fuel to the fire of the ostrich mentality.

Case in study:

Gulf states projects like NEOM and Expo 2020 and Vision 2030 of Saudi Arabia show immense spending but do not contribute towards Palestinian reconstruction, and focus shifts away from addressing the cause on international platforms.

10. Absence of strategic alliances deprives the Muslim Ummah of a solid combat platform

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against the atrocities of Israel, so they become more indifferent, aggravating the ostrich mentality.

Case in study:

OIC could form a strategic alliance with other sympathetic countries but fail to do so, fueling the mentality.

- 11. Absence of youth engagement adds fuel to the fire and makes the situation worse.

Case in study:

Disillusionment of youth from international issues exacerbates the lack of trust, and inaction by governments, bolstering the mentality.

C. Conclusion

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The slogan "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free" is not a nascent one. It rather dates back to the 20th century when Jews settled in the Palestinian lands illegally and got a country of their own as a result of a UN resolution. The Palestinians have been making rigorous efforts to make this slogan a reality; however, their fellow Muslim Brethren fail to contribute to their cause, exhibiting a blatant "Ostrich mentality." This mentality has a lot of reasons behind its advent, such as the US influence in the region and its support for Israel, ignorance of public sentiment by the Muslim governments, display of diplomatic inconsistency, etc. Moreover, the Muslim Ummah overemphasizes symbolic discussion as we see in poems or music, but lack the courage to make tangible efforts in the favor of the Palestinians. Further more, the Gulf states, rich in oil, do not leverage this economic power

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to make the USA submit to their demands. In addition, the sectarian divides in the Muslim Ummah do not let them unite for their down-trodden Muslim brothers and sisters. Plus, it is worth mentioning that Muslim Ummah has no tangible strategic alliance to counter Israeli aggression, and their selective activism has been evident throughout. Moreover, it also needs to be noted that the wealthy Muslim countries are complacent with the status quo and do not prefer working for the Palestinian cause because it is not happening to them. Therefore, it is evident that the ostrich mentality exhibited by the Muslim Ummah in response to Israel's actions hinders collective efforts to address the plight of the Palestinians and counter the system oppression and injustice effectively.

Several factors support and lead to the ostrich mentality of the Muslim Ummah. These factors pave the way for complacency and avoidance, revealing a pattern of

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indifference and ignorance that has existed throughout the Muslim history after the Balfour Declaration.

One of the factors is lack of courage to challenge the global power, that is USA. Due to the US influence in the region and its open support for Israel's actions, Muslim Ummah fails to challenge the current circumstances of oppression and injustice. For instance, former US president Joe Biden as a senator in 1986, said, "If there were no Israel, we had to invent an Israel to protect our interests in the region." This shows the extent of the influence the USA has on the Middle East, through Israel as its proxy in the region. The USA's provision of weapons and funds to Israel to fight the aggrieved Palestinians and deter the Muslim countries exacerbates this problem. Therefore, Muslim countries fail to challenge and combat Israel because of the support of the US, hence failing to challenge the USA.



Another factor fueling this mentality is the diplomatic inconsistency exhibited by the Muslim countries. This thing exacerbates the issue and makes it more difficult to see good signs because the Muslim Ummah's stance on Palestine weakens this way. It also undermines any efforts towards the settlement of Palestinian issue peacefully. To add as an example, we have long seen that the Muslim countries talk loud about the Palestinian issue but also carry out diplomatic relations with Israel. This normalization of relations shrouds their stance on Palestine and gives a sense of neutrality in the case. This also manifests in the double standards shown by the Muslim countries in case of Palestine. Thus, it is evident that this diplomatic inconsistency is aggravating the Palestinian issue and is reflecting a hint of neutrality in Muslim Ummah's stance.

Adding another supporting detail to the issue of the ostrich mentality, we see that

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the Muslim countries rely on symbolism to such an extent that they forget the suffering and plight of the Palestinian people. Muslim countries often talk about the least important things and undermine the foremost matters. Such things might look good in poems and music but they do not help the Palestinians a bit. This is evident in the OIC summits and meetings where they stress on the importance of the Palestinian Holy Land due to the location of Al-Aqsa Mosque, which is sacred to us. However, the people who are being killed and deprived of their homes go completely unnoticed. Hence, it shows that the actual plight of the Palestinian brothers and sisters is shrouded under the tales of the sanctity of the Holy Land.

Furthermore, governments in Muslim countries also get silent about the Palestinian issue. Despite severe public outcry since the 7th day of October last year, the world has witnessed uncountable protests and gatherings, pressurizing

the governments to take substantive action towards the genocide in Gaza. It is noteworthy that the protests were not only seen in Muslim countries but also in non-Muslim countries all over the world. However, the governments are silent because of their ignorance and vested interests. For example, numerous protests in Pakistan, England, the United States of America; most noteworthy being the one in Columbia University have shown the gravity of Israel's genocidal actions in the Gaza Strip. However, the Muslim governments seem to turn a blind eye to these efforts. Therefore, it is obvious that ignorance, indifference and vested interests' pursuits make governments blind and deaf to public sentiment for the Palestine issue and against Israel's actions in Gaza, Lebanon, West Bank and now Syria.

Adding more for support, we see that the sectarian divide among the Muslim Ummah adds lots of obstacles to in the way of Palestinian cause's efforts. This increases

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the differences among the Ummah to such an extent that they cannot see their fellow Muslim brothers and sisters dying at the hands of Israel's brutality. Secondly, this divide causes conflicts among them, further sabotaging the core issue of Palestine. To support this, we see the Shia Iran and Sunni Saudi Arabia conflict. The proxies of both these countries in the Middle East often be at loggerheads with each other and forget about their dying brothers and sisters in Palestine, Lebanon and now Syria, all due to Israel's expansionist motives. Therefore, we see that sectarian rifts between Muslim countries have undermined the suffering of the Palestinians.

In addition, another aspect that sabotages the efforts of Muslim Ummah and fuels their ostrich mentality is the spread of misinformation by international media. This undermines the true story of the atrocities being committed on the Palestinians and this battle of narratives

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is won by the international media. Moreover, this makes the world unable to see the truth as Muslim media fails to keep up with the level at which this game of narratives is being played by international media. To illustrate, we have countless instances of international media outlets such as BBC and CNN, constantly defending ~~the~~ Israel's right of defense, that too against the <sup>unarmed</sup> civilians in West Bank, Gaza and Lebanon. Additionally, international media is not justifying Israel's bombings on Syria and its occupation of Golan Heights after the fall of Damascus and Bashar al Assad's government, saying that Israel is trying to bring 'peace' in the region. Hence it shows that Muslim Ummah fails to counter the narrative of the powerful US-funded western and international media.

Adding more to the issue, we see that selective activism prevails in case of the Palestinian issue. Muslim countries, particularly Arab states, and other parts of the world ~~shows~~

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give attention to certain but not all issues faced by the Palestinians. This selective activism gives a sense of ignorance and reluctance to address the issue fully. To add as an instance, huge global outcry was seen at the time of Sheikh Jarrah evictions and Al-Aqsa raids.

However, the outcry stayed limited to loud voices and keyboard bombarding. The actual, fruitful and sustainable efforts to resolve the issue in its true form were little to none.

Therefore, it is evident that raising voices on issues and not working for them in true letter and spirit has given fuel to the already raging fire of the ostrich mentality in Muslim Ummah.

A noteworthy but distressing aspect is the fact that the Gulf states are complacent with the status quo and are focusing on spending money on new projects. However, they contribute little to none when it comes to addressing Palestinian issue on international platforms or spending on Palestine or Lebanon's reconstruction.

This reflects their double standards and lack of empathy for their Muslim Brethren who are being killed ruthlessly. The projects in Gulf states such as project NEOM, Vision 2030 of Saudi Arabia, and Expo 2020 display extravagance and reckless spending of money. However, the priorities are straight and they do not include Palestinian and Lebanese reconstruction and addressing the matter in the United Nations Security Council with great effort and ambition to resolve the decades long issue. Hence, it is evident that ruthless spending on extravagant and ostentatious projects shows the complacency of rich Arab states in Palestine's case as they are content with the status quo.

Additionally, lack of strategic alliances that would work for the Palestinian cause makes this problem even worse. This makes them more indifferent because of the fact that if an alliance does not exist till now, it would not make a difference from this

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point onwards. Consequently, they become more ignorant because of lack of a cohesive structure to counter Israel's actions. Adding to this as an example, we see that in all these years of blatant Israeli aggression and expansionism in the Middle East, the OIC could form strategic alliances with sympathetic non-Muslim countries but it failed. This alliance with international organizations and countries could amplify the Palestinian cause but this option remains untapped. Therefore, it can be clearly seen that lack of strategic alliance is also an effect of ostrich mentality and also fuels it more.

Youth cannot be skipped here. Absence of youth engagement from international political affairs makes the ostrich mentality stronger. This is because youth are an important part of society and they have to run the future affairs. Old people already have lived their lives so they are nonchalant and aloof from world affairs. Now when youth gets dissociated



from ineffective leadership due to inaction and lack of trust, the ostrich mentality gets more empowered. To add as an illustration, according to a survey by Arab Barometer, youth have started to not trust in traditional institutions and governments, reflecting frustration. This in turn relieves the pressure off the governments to take action against Israeli aggression.

Hence, it is evident that ostrich mentality gets stronger and more powerful when youth get disillusioned from such matters of consequence.

In a nutshell, the ostrich mentality of Muslim Ummah in the face of Israel's actions in the Middle East reflects a pattern of avoidance and indifference, which undermines the efforts being done in order to address the immense suffering of the Palestinian people along with the Lebanese people and make efforts to fight and end the oppression in an effective manner. A lot of factors lead to this kind of mentality and also fuel it side by side. These factors

become both the cause and effect of the empowerment of the ostrich mentality in the Muslims. The inability of the Muslim Ummah to engage youth in the process, the disillusionment of youth from international organizations and the governments, and the state of being content with the status quo fuels the fire of such mentality. Additionally, the sectarian rifts among the Muslim countries sets obstacles in the way of unification for the cause, hence creating a deadlock in the way of a peaceful solution. Furthermore, the game of narratives is stronger than we think. International and western media triumphs over the Muslim media that tells the true story, hence justifying Israel's blatant hostilities. Plus, lack of strategic platforms gives more power to the mentality by not making any forums to solve the problem, and selective activism snatches the last straw from the dying man. However, this issue can be resolved peacefully if the Arab world leverages its powers and bring the parties to the table on the Arab Muslim terms. By using economic and media power, we can create a peaceful homeland for the Palestinians.