

## Viewpoint

# Parameters for a Two-State Solution

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It is now fashionable to bury the idea of a two-state solution, saying it is no longer practical. However, all who are quick to bury the idea are very slow to propose an alternative, possibly because no alternative exists. What follows is an attempt to delineate the parameters needed to end the protracted Israeli-Palestinian conflict. For such a momentous achievement of resolving a deep, entrenched conflict, three things are absolutely essential:

- \* An Israeli leader who is committed to bring peace to his/her people and is willing to pay the necessary price;
- \* A Palestinian leader who is committed to bring peace to his/her people and is willing to pay the necessary price; and
- \* A shared belief by both leaders that the time is ripe for peace. This means both leaders believe that enough blood has been shed, that they need to seize the moment because things might worsen for their people, and that they have the ability to lead their respective people to accept the peace agreement in order to change reality for the better.

At no given time during the past two decades have these three ingredients coexisted. In 1993 and 2000, Prime Ministers Yitzhak Rabin and Ehud Barak were committed to peace and felt that the time was ripe, but it's debatable whether that commitment and feeling were shared by their Palestinian counterpart, Yasser Arafat. The three leaders did not have the full backing of their people and were either unable or unwilling to instill in their people a sense of urgency and yearning for peace, which must come at a high price. The way to escape the current deadlock is to rely on the

Clinton Parameters,<sup>1</sup> the Geneva Accord,<sup>2</sup> the Arab Peace Initiative<sup>3</sup> and the Olmert-Abbas Talks.<sup>4</sup> These documents contain the foundations for resolving all contentious issues.

## Applying the Two-State Solution

To build genuine peace, it's essential to have trust, good will and mutual security. I believe if there is a will, there is a way. Peace is a precious commodity and, therefore, it requires both parties to pay a high price in order to reach a solution that is agreeable to both sides. The peace deal should be equally attractive to Israel and Palestine. It cannot be one-sided, forced or coerced. Of the possible solutions presently on the table, the two-state solution is the most viable. The “settlement blocs” constitute less than 4% of the West Bank. With goodwill, the two-state solution is viable, certainly more viable than the present situation or any other proposed solution.

The Palestinians aspire to an independent state within the 1967 borders, with Arab Jerusalem as its capital, and a substantial return of refugees to Israel. The Israelis wish to retain the Jewish character of Israel as the only Jewish state in the world. Both sides wish to enjoy tranquility and security — countries free of violence and terror. Both parties should explicitly accept United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242,<sup>5</sup> 338<sup>6</sup> and 1397,<sup>7</sup> and begin their full implementation. The endgame will be based on the following parameters:

### *Sovereignty, Relations and Borders*

**Palestinian sovereignty** — The sovereignty of Palestine shall be declared and respected.

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<sup>1</sup> The Clinton Parameters, [http://www.peacelobby.org/clinton\\_parameters.htm](http://www.peacelobby.org/clinton_parameters.htm)

<sup>2</sup> The Geneva Accord, <http://www.geneva-accord.org/mainmenu/english>

<sup>3</sup> The Arab Peace Initiative 2002, <http://www.al-bab.com/arab/docs/league/peace02.htm>

<sup>4</sup> Aluf Benn, “Haaretz exclusive: Olmert’s plan for peace with the Palestinians”, *Haaretz* (December 17, 2009), <http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/news/haaretz-exclusive-olmert-s-plan-for-peace-with-the-palestinians-1.1970>; Ehud Olmert interview to Stephen Sackur, BBC *HARDtalk* (2009), [http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:RhsmGjUhoY8J:www.bbc.co.uk/1/player/episode/b00n4fw3/HARDtalk\\_Ehud\\_Olmert\\_Israeli\\_Prime\\_Minister\\_2006\\_2009/+Ehud+Olmert+talks+to+Stephen+Sackur+about+his+Palestinian+peace+proposals&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=uk](http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:RhsmGjUhoY8J:www.bbc.co.uk/1/player/episode/b00n4fw3/HARDtalk_Ehud_Olmert_Israeli_Prime_Minister_2006_2009/+Ehud+Olmert+talks+to+Stephen+Sackur+about+his+Palestinian+peace+proposals&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=uk)

<sup>5</sup> Resolution 242 of November 22, 1967, <http://unispal.un.org/unispal.nsf/0/7D35E1F729DF491C85256EE700686136>

<sup>6</sup> U.N. Security Council Resolution 338 of October 22, 1973, <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Peace+Process/Guide+to+the+Peace+Process/UN+Security+Council+Resolution+338.htm>

<sup>7</sup> UN Security Council Resolution 1397 (March 12, 2002), <http://www.rewordify.com/index.php?wpage=2001-2009.state.gov/p/nea/rt/11134.htm>

**Mutual recognition** — Israel shall recognize the State of Palestine. Palestine shall recognize the State of Israel. The joint statement should explicitly say that Palestine is the State of the Palestinian people, and that Israel is the State of the Jewish people.

**Mutual diplomatic relations** — Israel and Palestine shall immediately establish full diplomatic relationships with each other, installing ambassadors in their respective capitals.

**Capitals** — Each state shall be free to choose its own capital.

**Borders** — These shall be reasonable and logical for both sides. Resolving the conflict would give Israel greater international legitimacy to fight terrorism and enable it to deal with the more serious emerging threat from Iran.

Israel will withdraw to the Green Line, evacuating settlements and resettling the settlers in other parts of the country. Upon reaching an agreement with the Palestinian Authority, Israel may annex the major settlement blocs — Ma'ale Adumim, Givat Ze'ev, Gush Etzion, Modi'in Illit and Ariel, which account for approximately 70% of the Jewish population in the West Bank and for less than 2% of its size — in a territory exchange equal in size.<sup>8</sup> Border adjustment must be kept to the necessary minimum and must be reciprocal. At the Taba Summit, the Palestinians presented a map in which Israel would annex 3.1% of the West Bank and transfer other territory of the same size to the PA.<sup>9</sup>

**Territorial contiguity** — A corridor shall connect the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to allow safe and free passage. As long as peace is kept the road will be permanently open and under the sole sovereignty of Palestine. No Israeli checkpoints will be there. Palestinians will not be able to enter Israel from this corridor, nor shall Israelis enter Palestine from the corridor. Palestine will ensure that this safe passage isn't abused for violent purposes: Such abuse would undermine peace and trust between the two peoples.

**Separation barrier** — It shall run roughly along the 1967 mutually agreed borders, creating a political reality.

**Security** — Palestine and Israel shall base their security relations on cooperation, mutual trust, good neighborly relations and the protection

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<sup>8</sup> For pertinent maps, see <http://www.geneva-accord.org/mainmenu/static-maps/>. See also West Bank "Settlement Blocs", *Peace Now*, <http://peacenow.org.il/eng/content/west-bank-%E2%80%9Csettlement-blocs%E2%80%9D>

<sup>9</sup> Yossi Beilin, *The Path to Geneva* (NY: RDV Books, 2004), p. 239.

of their joint interests.<sup>10</sup> Both Israel and Palestine will take all necessary measures to ascertain that their citizens can live free of fear for their lives. Security is important for both Israelis and Palestinians as the key for peace. The Palestinian state will be non-militarized. This issue was agreed upon in 1995, as were joint Israeli-Palestinian patrols along the Jordan River, the installation of early warning posts, and the establishment of a permanent international observer force to ensure the implementation of the agreed security arrangements.<sup>11</sup>

**Terrorism and violence** — Both sides shall work together to curb violence: zero tolerance in this sphere. Zealots and terrorists, whether Palestinian or Jewish, will receive grave penalties for any violation of peace and tranquility.

### *Jerusalem and the Holy Sites*

**Jerusalem** — Palestine shall establish the new capital of Al-Quds. Al-Quds will include East Jerusalem and the adjacent Palestinian land and villages. Abu Dis, Al-Izarieh and Al-Sawahreh will be included in the Palestinian capital. The Israeli capital will include West Jerusalem and the adjacent Israeli settlements. To maintain Palestinian contiguity, Israel may be required to give up some of the settlements around Arab Jerusalem.

The Old City will be granted a special status, open to all faiths under international custodianship. Special arrangements and recognition will honor the importance of the Western Wall and the Jewish Quarter for Jews, and similarly special arrangements and recognition will honor the importance of the Islamic and Christian holy places. Israel and Palestine will cooperate to provide municipality services to Old City populations.

**Haram al-Sharif** — On March 31, 2013, the PA and Jordan signed an agreement entrusting King Abdullah II with the defense of Muslim and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem.<sup>12</sup> While Jordan may be a party to any agreement concerning the site, a broader arrangement is welcomed. As agreed by Mahmoud Abbas and Ehud Olmert, Haram al-Sharif shall be under the control of a five-nation consortium: Palestine, Israel, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the United States. The Jerusalem Islamic Waqf will continue its administration. Jews will enjoy right of access. Excavation for antiquities may be undertaken only with the full agreement of both sides. Similarly,

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<sup>10</sup> *The Geneva Accord*, <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article5019.htm>

<sup>11</sup> Beilin, *The Path to Geneva*, p. 169.

<sup>12</sup> Analysts: Jerusalem deal boosts Jordan in Holy City, *Ma'an News Agency* (April 3, 2013), <http://www.maannews.net/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=581765>

alterations to the historical structures and foundations can be made only upon the consent of both sides.

### *Water and Fishing Rights*

**Water** — Israel and Palestine shall seek a fair solution that won't infringe on the rights of either side and will assure the Palestinian people have the required water supply for sustenance and growth.

**Fishing** — Israel and Palestine shall enjoy fishing rights in their respective territorial waters.

### *Educational Reforms*

**Education** — Israel and Palestine shall institute a shared curriculum on good neighborly relations, understanding of cultures and religions, and respect for others. This education program will commence at kindergarten and continue through primary and secondary schools. In every age group, vital concepts for understanding one another will be studied. This program is critical for establishing peaceful relationships and trust between the two peoples.

**Languages** — Starting in primary school, Arabic will be a mandatory language for pupils to study in Jewish schools. Similarly, Hebrew will be a mandatory language for pupils to study in Palestinian schools. Language is the most important bridge between different cultures and nations. Israelis will master Arabic to the same extent that they presently master English. Palestinians will master Hebrew as their second language.

**Incitement** — Both sides shall improve the atmosphere by fighting bigotry, racism, incitement and hate on both sides of the fence. This includes a close study of the education curricula in both the PA and Israel. Both sides need to overhaul their textbooks to remove incitement, racism, bigotry and hate against one another. The curricula should reflect a language of peace, tolerance and liberty. Both sides should utilize the media to promote peaceful messages of reconciliation and mutual recognition.

### *Prisoner Release and the Right of Return*

**Prisoners** — Israel shall release a number of agreed-upon prisoners as an act of goodwill, part of the trust-building process. With time, as trust grows between the two sides, all security prisoners will return home.

**Refugees and their right of return** — This is a major concern for both Palestine and Israel. For Palestinians, this issue is about their history, justice and fairness. For Israelis, this is a debated issue, where many Israelis are unwilling to claim responsibility for the Palestinian tragedy. Most Israelis object to the right of return because this could mean the end of Zionism. The original refugee population of an estimated 700,000-750,000 has grown to 4,966,664 refugees registered with UNRWA at the end of November 2010. About 40% of the refugees live in Jordan, where they comprise about a third of the population; another 41% are in the West Bank and Gaza, 10% are in Syria, and 9% are in Lebanon. In the West Bank, refugees constitute about one-third of the population, while in Gaza they comprise over 80% of the population.<sup>13</sup>

Israel and the PA have argued endlessly about this issue as a matter of principle without surveying how many of the refugees and their families actually intend to return to Israel if this option were to be available to them. What needs to be done is twofold:

First, Israel needs to recognize it shares responsibility with the Palestinians to solve the problem. Israel needs to honestly confront history, refute myths and acknowledge the role it played in the creation of the refugee problem.

Second, Palestine needs to identify the population, establish the numbers and, after mapping the refugee population, conduct a survey among them that would include the following options:

- \* Return to Israel;
- \* Return to the West Bank;
- \* Return to the Gaza Strip;
- \* Emigrate to third countries that would commit to absorbing a certain quota (appeal will be made to countries that receive immigration on a regular basis to participate in this settlement effort); or
- \* Remain where they are.

The 1948 Palestinian refugees will be able to settle in Palestine. The rest of the world will set immigration quotas for absorbing Palestinians who apply for settlement in their designated country of choice. Unification of families will be allowed in Israel on a limited annual quota scale, but massive refugee return to Israel will not be allowed. This dream should be abandoned.

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<sup>13</sup> Alan Dowty, *Israel/Palestine* (Cambridge: Polity, 2012): 243.

## *Economics and Commerce*

**Economic agreements** — Israel and Palestine shall consider opportunities for mutual economic cooperation, aiming to capitalize on the potential of both, to optimize resources and coordinate efforts. Israel will help Palestine develop an independent economy and will open doors for Palestine in the Western world and elsewhere. Palestine will pave the way for Israel's integration into the Middle East as an equal member in the community of neighboring countries. Palestine will help Israel develop economic, industrial, tourist and other relationships with Arab and Muslim countries.

**International commerce** — Israel and Palestine shall conduct international commerce as they see fit. To develop trust between the two parties, a level of transparency about logs of commerce will be agreed upon and memorandums of understanding will be signed.

**Tourism** — Israel and Palestine shall coordinate efforts to promote tourism in the region, by collaboration with neighboring countries to facilitate cultural and religious experiences that are unique to this region.

**Communication and media** — Mutual channels of communication shall be opened on television, radio and the Internet. These media channels will transmit their broadcast in two or three languages: Arabic, Hebrew and possibly also English. Communication and language are important for the development of good neighborly relations.

**Termination of the conflict** — An official statement shall be issued declaring the end of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict following the signing of a comprehensive agreement covering all issues and concerns.

## *International Relations*

**Four-party permanent team** — Egypt, Israel, Jordan and Palestine shall maintain a permanent organization that will meet periodically to discuss concerns and resolve problems amicably. This forum will discuss issues such as the Gaza ports, economic development, water, tourism, security along the Jordan River, security concerns in Sinai, counter-terrorism and counter-radicalism.

**International arbitration** — Difficult issues that aren't resolved by direct negotiations shall be delegated to a special arbitration committee. This special committee will have an equal number of Israeli and Palestinian delegates plus an uneven number of international experts. Only experts

approved by both parties will be invited to serve on the arbitration committee. The committee will include lawyers, economists, human rights experts and experts on the Middle East. Their resolutions would be final, without being subject to appeal. Both Israel and Palestine will commit to accept the decision of the arbitration committee. One model to follow might be the arbitration committee formed to resolve the Taba dispute between Israel and Egypt.

## Conclusion

To resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, we need courageous leaders on both sides who will seize the opportunities presented to them and make the most for their peoples. Both Israel and Palestine need peace. Both peoples, like all people, would like to lead their lives in peace and security. Normal lives are lives free of occupation and threats of terror and violence. Both the Israeli and Palestinian people legitimately demand that their respective government bring about such a reality. Peace and security are *sine qua non* to development, prosperity and long-term survival in a region that is riddled with bloody conflicts and gory, divisive politics.