

Jerusalem summit

**A New Paradigm
for the Israeli-Palestinian
Conflict:
From the Political
to the Humanitarian**

- A Synopsis -

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A. Assessment

1. The conventional-wisdom paradigm for the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has failed woefully, bringing nothing but misery and despair to both sides – but particularly to the Palestinians as individual human beings.
2. This conventional paradigm has attempted to solve the conflict by means of a **Political Approach** involving the establishment of a self-governing Palestinian entity on territories in Judea Samaria and Gaza which have been under Israeli control since 1967 i.e. on the basis of a "Land for Peace" approach.
3. Dispassionate assessment of the history of the conflict and its current development will strongly suggest that persisting with attempts to attain a political solution on the basis the conventional paradigm is at best futile – and at worse harmful. **Accordingly, alternative modes of resolution must be pursued.**

B. Analysis

1. Analysis of their deeds and declarations over the years make it difficult to avoid the conclusion that the Palestinians are in effect both unwilling and incapable of achieving and maintaining statehood.

(a) Palestinian Unwillingness: This is reflected in the fact that the Palestinians have rejected every single viable proposal which would have afforded them a state – from the 1947 partition plan to the 2000 Barak proposals.

(b) Palestinian Incapability: The Palestinian national movement has enjoyed conditions far more favorable than almost any other national independence movement since WW-II – widespread international endorsement of their cause, unmitigated support of a superpower in the decades of the Cold War, highly sympathetic coverage by the major media organizations, and over a decade of Israeli administrations who have acknowledged (and at times even identified with) the Palestinians declared national aspirations. In spite of this, the achievements of Palestinian national movement have been more miserable than almost any other national independence movement – bringing nothing but privation and penury to its people.

2. It is thus far easier to understand Palestinian conduct if one assumes that it is driven less by **lack of Palestinian self-determination** and more by the very **the existence of Jewish self-determination**; less by the aspiration to **establish a Palestinian state** and more by the aspiration to **dismantle a Jewish state**.

3. The latter, and seemingly more plausible, explanation of Palestinian behavior – i.e. rejection of Jewish self determination and the dismantling of the Jewish nation state – reflects an agenda totally unacceptable by any international standards and thus must be branded as **devoid of any legitimacy**.

4. Accordingly if the accepted version of the Palestinian narrative – i.e. a desire for Palestinian self determination and the aspiration for Palestinian statehood – cannot be reconciled with the history of Palestinian behavior, this narrative also must be branded as **devoid of any legitimacy**.

5. This issue of **legitimacy of narrative** is crucial. Indeed the very fuel of the Political Paradigm, involving the establishment of a Palestinian state, is the perception – or rather the misperception - of the presently prevailing Palestinian narrative as legitimate.

C. Conclusion

1. The establishment of a Palestinian State must removed from the international agenda.

2. However, removing the issue of a Palestinian state from the international agenda will not eliminate the humanitarian predicament of Palestinians residing in Israeli-administered areas.

3. This is clearly an issue that must be addressed and resolved. But it must be addressed not in political terms but in humanitarian ones.

4. Thus, to successfully resolve the Palestinian problem, the **Political Paradigm** must be replaced by a **Humanitarian Paradigm**. This, however can only be done if the current Palestinian narrative, which fuels the Political Paradigm, is de-legitimized.

5. Thus, the de-legitimization of the Palestinian narrative becomes a vital prerequisite to any comprehensive resolution of the Palestinian issue.

D. Proposal

1. A comprehensive Humanitarian Approach to the Palestinian issue would entail three major elements:

(a) The dissolution of UNRWA – which will end the discriminatory treatment towards the Palestinians with regard to their status as refugees;

(b) The termination of ethnic discrimination against Palestinians living in the Arab world – which will end the discriminatory treatment towards the Palestinians with regard to their status as residents;

(c) Generous relocation grants to Palestinians living in Israeli administered territories on an **individual basis** and not via any official Palestinian organization.

2. UNRWA is an organization that perpetuates the Palestinian refugee problem. It is an anomalous organization which exists solely to deal with Palestinian refugees, **while all the other refugees on the face of the globe are dealt with by the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR).**

3. The organizations not only deal differently with the refugees under their auspices, they each have different definitions for classifying an individual as a «refugee».

4. This difference in definition has far-ranging consequences. For in contrast to the UNHCR definition, which results in a decline in the number of refugees over time, the UNRWA definition leads to an inflation of the number.

5. In fact, if the UNHCR's otherwise universal definition were applied to the Palestinian case, the number of refugees would decline from 4-5 million to 200-300,000 i.e. by over 90%!!

6. It thus appears that UNWRA is **perpetuating** the very problem it was designed to **eliminate**.

7. Accordingly, the dissolution of UNRWA is an essential prerequisite for any comprehensive, durable settlement of the Palestinian issue.

8. With the dissolution of UNWRA, the remaining – and drastically reduced – number of Palestinian refugees, should be placed under the auspices of UNHCR – in accordance with the accepted practice for all other refugee groups on the face of the globe.

9. Those Palestinians no longer classed as refugees under the new arrangements, must be offered all the privileges afforded all other peoples resident in their current countries of domicile in the Arab world – including the right to acquire citizenship.

10. In order to do this, a vigorous diplomatic and media campaign must be mounted to induce Arab governments to end their harsh discriminatory behavior towards the millions of Palestinians domiciled in their countries and absorb them into their societies as fully fledged citizens. After all, even the Palestinians assert (in the opening paragraph of their National Covenant) that they are “part of the Arab Nation”.

11. As for the Palestinians resident in Israeli administered territory, there is only one reasonable and feasible alternative that will:

- (a) extricate them from their dire humanitarian plight;
- (b) free them from the yoke of generations of misrule by their leadership;
- (c) ensure the survival of Israel as the nation-state of the Jews.

12. This is a **generous relocation and resettlement package** to allow them to build a new life for themselves and their families in countries preferably, but not necessarily exclusively, with similar religious and socio-cultural conditions.

13. In order to minimize the ability of organized Palestinian interest groups to impede the success of such a effort, the offer of financial inducement to emigrate must be **"atomized"** – i.e. made to **individual Palestinian breadwinners on a one-to one personal level and not on a communal level via some formal Palestinian entity.**

14. A survey conducted among the Palestinians in Nov. 2004 indicates that only about 15% of the Palestinian population resident in Israeli administered areas would reject such an offer outright. By contrast, over 70% would accept some form of material compensation as an inducement to emigrate permanently from the areas currently under Israeli administration (See <http://www.jerusalemsummit.org/eng/news.php?news=102>)

15. The economic cost of such a policy of generously financed humanitarian relocation and resettlement would be eminently affordable and would compare favorably with almost all other settlement proposals on the table today. **Indeed, its total cost would be around 50% of the present total US outlay on the War in Iraq!!**

16. Indeed, given Israel's present level of GDP, it is an initiative that it could well undertake on its own over the next decade to a decade and a half. It should be realized that this is the period that has elapsed since the initiation of the Oslo process – which has brought nothing but failure and tragedy at the cost of billions of dollars and thousands of lives.

17. Of course, if the US, the EU and other developed nations were to contribute to this effort, it could be implemented in a far shorter space of time and with almost no burden on the world economy.

18. Quite the opposite, the Palestinians arriving in their new countries of domicile will not be impoverished refugees but reasonably affluent émigrés. The funds that they would be bringing with them would provide a considerable boost for the economies of these nations – most of which would be developing countries with a pressing need for such a substantial influx of funds.

E. Summary

The proposed initiative constitutes a "win-win" proposal which will:

Alleviate, and even eliminate, the humanitarian plight of individual Palestinians

Ensure the continued security and survival of Israel as the Nation-State of the Jewish people

Provide a significant boost to the economies of the developing world

Transform poverty stricken refugees into affluent émigrés

F. Responses to FAQs

- **How much would it cost?**
- **How feasible is large scale Palestinian emigration?**
- **Who would accept them?**
- **What about those who remain?**
- **Isn't the proposal an odious/fascist/racist plot for ethnic cleansing?**
- **More on the question of ethnic cleansing**
- **What if the same kind of offer would be made to Induce Jewish emigration?**
- **How can we help/what can we do to promote this plan?**

How much would it cost?

It is difficult to arrive at a precise estimate for the total cost of such a scheme for the relocation and rehabilitation of the Palestinian population west of the Jordan River – since this would clearly depend on the finally determined level of compensation and the actual size of the population. There is a fierce debate regarding the true figures for Palestinian population in Judea, Samaria and Gaza - with a discrepancy of well over a million between competing estimates. New and reliable sources seem to indicate that the Palestinian population is considerably lower than the usually accepted figures.

(See The Million Person Gap: The Arab Population in the West Bank and Gaza – <http://www.biu.ac.il/Besa/MSPS65.pdf> and also see <http://www.pademographics.com>)

Assuming compensation of between US\$ 100,000 – 200,000 per family the total cost would be between US \$ 60 billion and US \$ 160 billion. This is of course is a fraction of the US\$ 350 billion that the US has already incurred in the War on Iraq. Moreover, given the fact that Israel's GNP is about US\$ 100 billion, if it were to allocate 5-7% of this GNP per annum over a decade to a decade and a half, it could bear much of the economic burden by itself. If the international community were to help shoulder the task, the entire enterprise could be completed far more rapidly, at a cost which would

be virtually imperceptible, amounting to a mere fraction of a percentage point of the GNP of the OECD nations.

Finally it should be recognized that cost incurred by "Disengagement" from Gaza, together with a cost of the planned "Convergence" from the West Bank (Judea and Samaria) is estimated at tens of billions of dollars. The same is true for the evacuation of the Golan. Thus, the cost of Israeli withdrawal, and uprooting Jewish settlements established decades ago, is of the same order of magnitude as of the proposed Humanitarian-Regional Solution for the resettlement of the Palestinians – this without taking into account the cost of financing UNRWA (See <http://www.jerusalemsummit.org/eng/fullft.php?topic=0&speaker=138&summit=31>) in it's present form and the enormous international aid that would be required to maintain a faltering and failing Palestinian State.

Surely it would be far wiser to spend the money on inducing voluntary Palestinian migration rather than imposing coercive Jewish deportation.

How feasible is large scale Palestinian emigration?

No one knows precisely how many Palestinians can be induced to emigrate without putting the matter to a practical test. However, the only available evidence strongly suggests that extensive emigration is indeed eminently feasible. A poll commissioned in December 2004 by the Jerusalem Summit and conducted via a reputable Israeli research institute, in collaboration with the well-known Palestinian center*, showed that over 40% had actively considered emigration while up to 50% did not discount such a possibility – even without being offered any material inducement. The figure rose to over 70% (!) when the question of material compensation was introduced to encourage such emigration.

(See <http://www.jerusalemsummit.org/eng/news.php?news=102>)

These findings received strong – and independent corroboration – in a recent poll conducted by Bir Zeit Universtiy, which also showed that close to half the Palestinian youth would emigrate if given the chance. In the words of the poll: "44% of young Palestinians are willing to [e]migrate if given the opportunity".

(See <http://home.birzeit.edu/dsp/opinionpolls/poll28/highlights.html>)

Likewise an article which appeared in October this year in the Christian Science Monitor also reports wide-scale Palestinian willingness to emigrate – again even in the absence of the systematic financial inducements specified in our proposal.

(See <http://www.csmonitor.com/2006/1024/p04s01-wome.html>)

These findings are of course far more powerful and persuasive evidence than the vague and unsubstantiated protestations of those opposing the proposal that "the Palestinians will never forsake their land". The factual findings seem to indicate otherwise.

* Maagar Mohot Interdisciplinary Research and Consulting Institute Ltd, under the supervision of Prof. Yitzhak Katz, Prof. Baruch Mevorach - Scientific Director, and Amir Horkin, Research Manager – in collaboration with The Palestinian Center For Public Opinion under the management of Dr. Nabil Kokli)

Who would accept them?

The Palestinian recipients of relocation grants would not be arriving as communities of **impoverished refugees** but as individual immigrants of relative affluence who traditionally have brought great benefit to the host countries that accepted them. Moreover, the volume of money the Palestinian newcomers would bring with them would constitute a very significant influx of funds into the economies of these host countries. Indeed, for every hundred Palestinian families received, the host country could count on the influx of around ten to twenty million dollars directly into the private sector. Absorbing 2500 new Palestinian family units could mean the injection of quarter of a billion to half a billion dollars, into the local economy of countries direly in need of such funds.

Consider the following example, which if not entirely realistic, is instructive in illustrating the principle involved. Suppose Indonesia – the world's most populous Moslem country – were to open its gates to the Palestinians and all the Palestinians in areas across the Green Line were indeed to emigrate to that country. The significance of this would be an increase of **a little over 1% (!)** of the Indonesian population (estimated at almost 250 million) but an influx of **over US \$ 100 billion (!!!)** into the Indonesian economy whose total GNP (2005) is less than US \$ 300 billion. Moreover, each Palestinian breadwinner would arrive with a sum worth over a century (!!!) of GNP per capita in his pocket - which would mean that he would in no way be an impoverished refugee and a burden on the local society or economy. Quite the opposite. He would be a rather well-to-do individual, capable of making a positive contribution to both the economy and society.

It is of course unrealistic to believe that all the Palestinians would head for a single destination. However if Palestinian emigration was distributed over

several countries, they could be absorbed, resettled and rehabilitated with very little difficulty by a number of host nations with compatible domestic socio-cultural and religious environments – with the financial benefits accruing to these host nations being proportional to number of Palestinian immigrants they accept.

What about those who remain?

This is of course a serious question and a detailed response would depend on, among other things, the size of the residual Palestinian population who refuse any material compensation as an inducement to emigrate. The acuteness of the problem would definitely be a function of its scale. Clearly the smaller this residual population, the less pressing and less serious the need will be deal with it. For example it seems plausible that if, say, only a hundred thousand Palestinians remain, consideration may well be given to the possibility of offering them Israeli citizenship – subject to stringent security vetting and sworn acceptance of Jewish sovereignty as the sole legitimate source of authority in the land – without endangering the Jewish character of Israel.

If by contrast well over million remain, granting such citizenship is liable to jeopardize the Jewish character of the state. Accordingly other arrangements must be devised. In such a circumstance, the remaining Palestinians would be deemed (accurately) resident aliens with wide ranging economic, religious and cultural liberties but with yet to be determined political affiliation.

Continued right of residency would contingent upon acceptance of Jewish sovereignty. [Any manifestation of insurrection would result in the offender being declared a "persona non grata" – as would be the case in any self-respecting democracy if an alien resident were to rebel against the prevailing source of sovereignty - and in his being deported from the country along with those dependant on him for their livelihood.] One option may be to confer upon them special UN status together with UN documents to facilitate travel. Another would be to canvass third party states to offer them non-resident citizenship in return for financial benefits to theses states.

In any event it is totally unreasonable to insist that Israel either jeopardize its Jewish character (the very *raison d'être* for its establishment) by conferring full citizenship on a large populace of hostile aliens, or jeopardize its national security (indeed survival) by relinquishing territory comprising vital strategic

assets – to accommodate highly questionable demands of those hostile aliens.

No other nation on the face of the earth would acquiesce to such demands; no other nation would be expected to acquiesce to them.

Isn't the proposal an odious/fascist/racist plot for ethnic cleansing?

This is a most puzzling accusation leveled by some respondents at the proposal. For it is indeed difficult to fathom what aspect of the plan could conceivably be considered "odious", "fascist" or "racist"?

- The proposal prescribes reassigning the treatment of the Palestinian refugees to an organization with proven record of success (U.N. High Commission for Refugees – UNHCR) from one with a proven record of failure (UNRWA) . Should this be considered "odious", "fascist" or "racist"? If so, why so??
- The proposal prescribes putting the Palestinian refugees on a par with all the other refugees on the face of the globe. Should this be considered "odious", "fascist" or "racist"? If so, why so??
- The proposal prescribes demanding the elimination of ethnic discrimination against Palestinians across the Arab world. Should this be considered "odious", "fascist" or "racist"? If so, why so??
- The proposal prescribes allowing individual Palestinians to decide, on their own, for themselves, to extricate themselves and their families from penury and privation. Should this be considered "odious", "fascist" or "racist"? If so, why so??

Indeed in light of the proven political incompetence of the Palestinians and their manifest lack of authentic political will to exercise self-determination, one finds it strange that those who purport to be sympathetic to the Palestinians would persist in inflicting on them the hardship and suffering that their spurious demands for statehood have wrought upon them.

After all isn't giving the notion of "state" absolute dominance over individual liberties the very essence of fascism? So wouldn't the real fascists be those who insist that Palestinian statehood must have precedence over free choice of Palestinian individuals, whatever the human cost at the personal level??

More on the question of ethnic cleansing

Should the millions of Arabs/Moslems who decided to migrate to Western countries to improve their lives be deemed "ethnically cleansed"? Surely not.

So why should Palestinians who make the same decision to improve their living standards and that of their families – something hitherto denied them by the adoption of erroneous assumptions regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict – be considered "ethnically cleansed" – and not "economically upgraded"?

Moreover, if ethnic separation leads to stability which ethnic mingling undermines, would this still be considered "immoral"???

If multi-ethnic realities generate bloodshed and enmity – why is this more moral than mono-ethnic realities that generate calm and stability???

By the way, isn't the policy of Israeli withdrawal driven precisely by the principle of ethnic separation? But as opposed to this proposal, withdrawal will involve Israel relinquishing strategic assets vital for its security and leave individual Palestinians victims of the corrupt kleptocracy of the Fatah or the tyrannical theocracy of the Hamas. How moral is that???

Finally, it should be recalled that although opponents endeavor to taint it as being fascist or racist, the concept of ethnic separation and resettlement as vehicle for inducing stability has impeccable humanitarian credentials, as can be gauged from the following citation from President Herbert Hoover, whose efforts to relieve famine and human misery in World War I earned him the title of the "The Great Humanitarian":

"Consideration should be given even to the heroic remedy of transfer of populations... the hardship of moving is great, but it is less than the constant suffering of minorities and the constant recurrence of war."

President Herbert Hoover, in The Problems of Lasting Peace, pp.235-36

What if the same kind of offer would be made to Induce Jewish emigration?

The answer to this question has two complementary parts:

1. The offer is not on the table for Jews in Israel and certainly would not be put there by an Israeli government. The measure is proffered as a means to:

(a) Relieve genuine Palestinian humanitarian misery not Jewish disgruntlement.

(b) Ensure – not undermine – the survival of Israel as the Nation-State of the Jews.

2. Of course, it would be impossible to prevent Arab elements from offering Jews financial inducement to emigrate from Israel, but in this regard it should be recalled that:

(a) For the overwhelming majority of Israelis, the standard of living is far higher than that of the Palestinians. Israel is classified as an advanced industrial nation with a GNP per capita 15-20 times higher than that in the Palestinian administered territories – and many independent Arab countries.

(b) Accordingly, it would be commensurately more difficult to tempt them to leave. The kind sums offered would have to be considerably higher to create a comparable economic incentive (decades of GNP per capita of relevant host countries) and would run into millions rather than hundreds of thousands per family.

(c) In this regard it should be pointed out that recent polls indicate that between 80-90% of the Jewish population in Israel are satisfied with their life – thus the prospect of financial incentives of to induce large scale emigration seems remote.

How can we help/what can we do to promote this plan?

Many respondents wanted to know how they could help promote the proposed **Humanitarian Approach** to the Israel-Palestinian Conflict. The best way to contribute in this respect is to assist in disseminating it to as wide an audience as possible. This could be done in one or more of the following ways:

1. Send it to recipients on any mailing lists you have access to.
2. Send it to local media with whom you have contacts.
3. Send it to academics, Mid-East experts with whom you are acquainted
4. Send it to your politicians - both at the local and national level.
5. Print and distribute the PDF version available (in Hebrew and English) via the websites.
6. Make a U.S. tax deductible donation to help us promote the idea of **Humanitarian Approach**.

Please, send checks to:

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Again, the proposal can be accessed via:

http://www.jerusalemsummit.org/eng/hs_short_eng.htm – in English

http://www.jerusalemsummit.org/eng/hs_short.htm – In Hebrew

Remember, it is essential to put the proposed plan on the public agenda – and to keep it there. For it is only by generating active ongoing debate on the proposal and its merits relative to other (failed) alternatives that it will penetrate public awareness and thus acquire legitimacy as a feasible policy option.

In this regard we also strongly urge you to familiarize yourself with solid, well argued responses to rebut criticism from those who oppose the proposal, as well as with reliable and informative answers to questions that interested and potentially sympathetic parties may raise. In the following sections we provide some such responses/answers to queries which were raised by various respondents to our proposal.

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