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TWO STATES OR ONE?

Reappraising the Israeli-Palestinian Impasse

CARNEGIE
ENDOWMENT FOR
INTERNATIONAL PEACE

RICE UNIVERSITY'S
BAKER INSTITUTE
FOR PUBLIC POLICY

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CONTENTS

FOREWORD

Since the Madrid Peace Conference of 1991 brought Israelis and Palestinians together in direct, face-to-face negotiations for the first time, an international consensus emerged that the eventual solution would involve the creation of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza existing in peace and security with the State of Israel. The actual borders of the two states, the fate of Israeli settlements in the West Bank, how the city of Jerusalem would be shared, and how the refugee issue would be resolved were debated in many different fora. While the two sides came close several times to agreeing on the substance of these parameters, no deal was ever reached.

The goal of a two-state solution is under serious challenge today. The number of settlers in the West Bank and East Jerusalem has exceeded 650,000, putting in major doubt the prospect of a geographically contiguous Palestinian state. U.S. diplomatic efforts under Donald Trump's administration appear to be aimed at redefining key issues such as Jerusalem, refugees, and Gaza in ways that alienate Palestinians as well as European allies. In Israel, the passage of a new nation-state law threatens the treatment of Arab and other citizens of Israel as second class, a move that many believe effectively legislates discrimination. At the same time, divisions between the West Bank and Gaza along with Palestinian factional political disputes have done little to advance the Palestinian national project. As a result, Palestinian leaders are obliged to find solutions to such disputes in order to make progress in their cause. Moreover, there are clear signs of a growing perception among Palestinians and Israelis that a two-state solution that meets the minimum needs of both communities might be impossible to attain.

Twenty-five years of diplomacy—including the Oslo Accords, the Camp David summit and the Clinton Parameters, the Taba Summit, the Arab Peace Initiative, the Middle East Road Map, the Olmert-Abbas talks within the Annapolis process, the Kerry peace efforts, and others—have done little to stop the negatively shifting status quo.

Yet, the Israeli-Palestinian issue is not going away. Rather, demographic trends and settlement construction mean that the two communities are

growing ever closer physically while remaining separated politically, socially, and economically.

This report attempts to look at actualities and trends with a fresh and analytical eye. At first glance, the two halves of this report contain two very different views of a resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: one presents the case for a two-state solution, the other suggests that it is time to look at the idea of a single state with all its variations.

But the two halves do not differ on the facts of the current situation. Nor do they differ much on the trajectory. The same facts can be used to support two different conclusions: Do we need new ideas or new determination and political will behind previous ones?

The two chapters also highlight an important political reality: any solution must adequately address the needs of **both** sides. Imposed solutions will not work. The section authored by the Baker Institute does not deny that a one-state reality is emerging and the two-state solution is in trouble, but it argues that the two-state solution should not be abandoned as it provides the most coherent framework for a democratic Israeli state living in peace and security next to an independent and sovereign Palestinian state. Carnegie's section recognizes that a one-state reality is emerging, whether desirable or not, and calls for scrutinizing solutions that take this reality into account instead of wishing it away.

At a time when ideas to solve the conflict are being speculated about without much context, this report attempts to objectively analyze and present the two major options for a negotiated peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians and to explain the consequences of both for the parties involved and the international community. It is our hope that it will serve as not only a reminder of past efforts but also an incubator for future ones.

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THE TWO-STATE SOLUTION—PAST OR FUTURE TENSE

Edward P. Djerejian

WITH SAMIH AL-ABID, GILEAD SHER, AND KHALIL SHIKAKI

Introduction

For much of the twenty-first century, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has stagnated and diplomatic initiatives have fallen short. Now, seventy years after the conflict began, progress toward a two-state solution has, by most standards, become even more challenging. Realities on the ground are complex, political trends on all sides have weakened peace camps, talks have stalled, and historic paradigms on negotiations and final-status issues are in question.

U.S. President Donald Trump's administration took office in January 2017 promising to shake up established assumptions about how the United States engages the world. Trump and his team have clearly devoted attention to the "ultimate deal" between the Israelis and Palestinians and, as of mid-2018, have been exploring and elaborating their closely held proposal for an agreement.

By most accounts, the next few years will be a critical juncture in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Facts on the ground, demographics, domestic politics, and geopolitical trends all suggest that the continued passage of time is eroding some of the bedrock principles that have defined the contours of the two-state solution for decades. Failure to address the conflict and its core issues, such as land for peace, is not in the U.S., Israeli, Palestinian, or international interest but may, through continued stalemate, force more unstable and challenging realities on all parties.

This chapter seeks to evaluate the "state of the two-state solution" at a time when momentum toward such a solution is highly problematic, and to make the case for the viability of the two-state solution as the best of the existing options to end the conflict. In addition to outlining the importance of the two-state solution as the focal point of any future negotiations and offering a brief outline of what a solution might entail, this chapter advocates for the United States to be an important trusted broker for both sides in final status negotiations. Separate analyses in this chapter on Israeli and Palestinian perceptions of a two-state solution by Gilead Sher, Khalil Shikaki, and Samih al-Abid shed light on the dynamic roles of Israeli and Palestinian public opinion and domestic politics in reaching an agreement.

Remaking the Case for the Two-State Solution

As diplomatic initiatives have failed, and facts on the ground have become more complex, it is understandable to question whether the window on a two-state solution is closing or has, indeed, closed. However, the alternatives to a two-state solution pose serious problems in themselves, be it the continuation of the status quo, a single binational state, a confederation between Israel and Palestine, a confederation or association between Palestine and other Arab states (particularly Jordan and Egypt), or other proposals. Debates over these alternative approaches have yet to adequately define sufficient common ground between the parties as to constitute a serious negotiating framework. In short, these debates over alternatives to the two-state solution are so embryonic as to be currently uninstructive to diplomatic efforts. And the concessions, coordination, and cooperation on policy required between Israelis and Palestinians to achieve any "one-state solution" do not seem politically acceptable to either party. Continuing to seek two sovereign states for two sovereign peoples remains the most viable course and is in the long-term interest of all parties. The mechanisms for negotiating and sustaining a solution might change (and indeed may require new ideas and approaches), as will the breadth of issues to be addressed and agreed upon, but the ultimate solution remains the same.

The case for a two-state solution for two peoples has not radically changed in the many years it has been made, but today the urgency is higher. In Israel, where security is the primary concern, the status quo has its advocates but its continuation has significant trade-offs. Effective control of the West Bank and Gaza remains highly costly in terms of resources, limits strategic and economic opportunities with regional and international actors, erupts in intermittent conflicts, and raises significant issues. Perhaps most importantly, the continuation of the status quo will eventually force into question Israel's identity as a Jewish state and a democracy—the very vision on which the state was founded. The negative response to the "nation-state law" passed in July 2018

would certainly pale in comparison to an international response against an effort to assert Israeli sovereignty over millions of Palestinians. Any number of plausible scenarios in the years ahead may lead to deterioration in the situation and options. A policy of ambiguity brings with it increasing risk, and the establishment of two states makes it possible to pursue a comprehensive and effective regional peace structure, including special security arrangements and measures to effectively address dangerous state and nonstate actors. Recognizing these realities and pursuing peace will require political courage and effective policies in the face of a skeptical public. But the need is great.

The case for a two-state solution for two peoples has not radically changed in the many years it has been made, but today the urgency is higher.

For Palestinians, the years of Israeli occupation have taken a toll and realizing an independent state means that difficult choices must be made. Today, the divide between the West Bank and Gaza, the fractured nature of Palestinian politics, the ineffectiveness in some areas of governance, and the unconstructive rhetoric and intransigence do little to help the Palestinian national project. There is a need for reconciliation among the Palestinian factions along the Quartet Principles, for reform efforts in Palestinian institutions, and a renewal of belief that the Palestinian national project is not dead. The deteriorating situation in Gaza requires immediate action, and the international community is mobilized. Palestinian leaders have an obligation to their people to find solutions, which can be a catalyst for broader progress. On both sides, leadership today and in the future would be served by clarifying visions for peace, being pragmatic, and seeking common ground while being prepared to make the difficult decisions required for the long-term well-being of their people. The critical distinction between equitable political compromise and capitulation should be the guideline.

The Parameters of a Two-State Solution

The parameters of a two-state solution are long-established and need not be reinvented. Importantly, despite the undeniable despondency that surrounds the conflict at present, these parameters continue to have a supportive constituency on both sides, as detailed later in this chapter. The core of a two-state solution would address the following tenets:

- *International framework:* The principles embodied in UN Resolutions 242 and 338 should inform the negotiations. Operative Paragraph One of UN Security Council Resolution 242 "affirms that the fulfillment of Charter principles requires the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, which should include the application of both the following principles:

(i) Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict;

(ii) Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgment of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force."

Resolution 242 also calls for a just settlement of the refugee problem.

- **Territory and settlements:** Negotiations on territory and on the final recognized and secure border between Israel and Palestine will be based on the June 4, 1967 borders. Modifications to the border must be agreed to and be based on equitable and agreed-upon territorial exchange (1:1) in accordance with the vital needs of both sides, including territorial contiguity and demographic considerations. A settlement freeze, either comprehensive or outside the areas to be incorporated within Israel's borders, as mutually agreed by the two parties in any final settlement should be implemented.

- **Refugees:** A comprehensive resolution of the Palestinian refugee problem will be negotiated and agreed upon by the parties. Major regional and international assistance will be required in addressing the issue in order to offer refugees meaningful choices and rehabilitations.

- **Jerusalem:** The Jerusalem metropolitan area will host the respective capitals of the two states on the basis of the 1967 borders, while recognizing the principle that Jewish neighborhoods should become part of Israel and Palestinian neighborhoods should become part of Palestine. Full access to holy sites and freedom of worship will be granted to all religions, and the Old City within the walls will come under a special regime.

- **Security:** With the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Palestinian territory, a non-militarized Palestinian state and special security arrangements, including the possibility of deployment of a multinational force in the Jordan Valley, will be agreed upon between the parties, concomitant with the creation of regional security arrangements in line with the obligations referred to in the Israeli-Egyptian and Israeli-Jordanian Treaties of Peace.

- **Resources:** The resolution of the conflict will include an equitable and reasonable allocation of all shared transboundary resources.

- **State-to-state relations:** Relations shall be based on the principle of equal sovereignty of states, creating supportive conditions for good neighborly relations between the two states.

- **Infrastructure and development:** Substantial support for constructing the physical and institutional infrastructure of the State of Palestine should be offered in support of a stable, prosperous, contiguous, secure, and democratic Palestinian state.

- **Regional relations:** Progress in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process will be an integral part in the promotion of a wider, comprehensive peace between Israel and all Arab and Islamic nations, as outlined in the Arab Peace Initiative of 2002.

These general parameters should constitute the core of the peace plan. There are certainly other issues to be considered, negotiated, and addressed—including timelines, specific security arrangements, economic regimes, and investment—but failure to address the core issues will not lead to a sustainable and lasting peace.

ADDRESSING BORDERS AND SETTLEMENTS
Samih al-Abid

Central to a final agreement will be reaching a mutually acceptable permanent territorial division between Israel and Palestine on the basis of the June 4, 1967, lines with agreed land swaps, bringing about the end of occupation. A map defining the territories of Israel and Palestine is a key factor for moving the peace process forward. A potential understanding on the territorial issue would enable Israel to integrate agreed areas of settlements into the recognized sovereign territory of Israel and evacuate or relocate the settler population from the agreed Palestinian territory. Agreed modification of the border between Israel and Palestine could allow approximately 80% of Israeli settlers to stay where they are living today.

Today, the West Bank is fragmented, with a majority of the land under the control of Israel.

On the Palestinian side, the definition of a permanent border is critical to state-building; it creates the certainty necessary to successfully manage refugee resettlement and economic state-building measures and allows the Palestinian government to plan and construct an effective physical infrastructure to build a prosperous Palestinian state.

At the start of negotiations, and as the parties move forward, a settlement freeze would be a critical act of good faith as, time and again, settlements have been one of the greatest barriers to negotiations. Negotiations on territory while Israel continues to expand settlements have only complicated negotiations in the past and will do so in the future. Israeli control of large swaths of the West Bank makes negotiations increasingly complex, and Palestinian governance and day-to-day life difficult.

Today, the West Bank is fragmented, with a majority of the land under the control of Israel. More than 650,000 Israeli settlers live in settlements constituting 2.7% of the area of the West Bank and East Jerusalem.[1] Settlements continue to expand, and construction has escalated dramatically since 2017. When taking into account "areas of jurisdiction" beyond the settlements, the settlement area grows to 9.3% of the area of the West Bank. Moreover, the settlements are connected to each other and Israel through a well-developed road network that covers 2.3% of the area. Additionally, 20% of the West Bank is declared to be a closed military area, and another 20% of the West Bank is declared by Israel to be "State Land." Further, 9.4% of the West Bank today is located between the Annexation Wall and the 1967 border, which effectively isolates it from Palestinian Authority or Israeli governance. In all, around 60% of the West Bank is today under full Israeli control, leaving 2.9 million Palestinians to live in 169 fragmented "islands" in Areas A and B (which constitute 40% of the West Bank).

As negotiations move forward, a settlement freeze will be an important act of good faith from the Israeli government. For Palestinians, a settlement freeze builds trust and confidence, which have been lacking after more than twenty years of talks. It also preserves the possibility of a two-state solution and allows for meaningful improvements on the ground and infrastructure development that will be immediately felt by Palestinians. This will shore up Palestinian support for both the two-state solution and for the current Palestinian leadership. For Israelis, a settlement freeze would allow negotiations to move forward, and alleviate concerns by the international community that Israel intends to annex the West Bank and indefinitely deny Palestinians political rights. A settlement freeze facilitates a realistic adjustment in the expectations of the settler community and establishes certain geopolitical realities between Palestinians and Israelis that support a two-state solution.

Domestic Political Considerations and Public Opinion: Challenges and Opportunities

On both sides of the conflict, Israeli and Palestinian publics have become increasingly disillusioned with the two-state solution. In Israel, security concerns have pushed the body politic considerably to the right. Polling shows that for the majority of Israelis, reaching a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a low priority—the status quo is satisfactory. In the Palestinian territories, many feel that Oslo and the Palestinian national project have failed, and debates over alternatives have begun.

However, while political trends on both sides seem discouraging, public opinion is dynamic, changing according to the political atmosphere. The public has shown that trust can be rebuilt, that leadership matters, and that the belief that peace is possible is critical. In the following sections, Gilead Sher and Khalil Shikaki address the complex public opinion environment in Israel and Palestine as well as its challenges and opportunities.

ISRAELI POLITICAL DYNAMICS
Gilead Sher

Today, the odds of attaining a final agreement to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are long, for several reasons: the gaps in the historical narratives of Israelis and Palestinians are wide, and are growing wider over time; there is mutual distrust between the respective leaderships and societies; the parties are far apart on the permanent status of core, contentious issues; the leaders are reluctant to move ahead and seem unprepared to take the risks involved in advancing peace; and, at present, there is no reliable, mutually trusted broker to facilitate a negotiation process. Additionally, developments in the broader Middle East and across the Arab world in the last decade have further complicated the intertwined nature of the Israeli-

Today, the odds of attaining a final agreement to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are long.

Palestinian conflict, have pushed it down the priority list of the Arab regimes, and have displayed trends that are concerning to decisionmakers in the region and beyond. In addition, within the Israeli and the Palestinian political systems there are domestic inhibitors to the process.

Polling reveals valuable information about Israeli public opinion on the core issues of the conflict—shown to be Jerusalem, settlements, and security—and what may incentivize and make politically feasible a two-state peace agreement. Currently, public opinion trends in Israel are not highly favorable to a two-state solution, although no alternative vision is more favored. The most recent National Security Index, developed by the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS), edifies a few key points on Israeli opinion about the conflict, and how opinion shifts along demographic lines:

- Only 21% of the Jewish Israeli public believes the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the gravest external threat to the State of Israel, and 83% of Jewish Israelis believe that Israel is capable of successfully defending against consecutive major terrorist attacks. These percentages show that the Israeli public is in no hurry to reach a solution with the Palestinians; instead, it believes that the state will succeed in containing the threats and dealing with the challenges of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

- Israeli support for the establishment of a Palestinian state has decreased in the past ten years. In 2008, support stood at 46% and rose to 58% in 2010 following Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's foreign policy speech at Bar Ilan University, in which he explicitly declared his support for a two-state solution. Thereafter, support for the establishment of a Palestinian state gradually decreased to 43% in 2017.[2]

- The index reveals that support for the two-state solution among the Israeli public stood at 55% as of 2017—though, when looking at the past five years, this percentage has fallen from 69% in 2012. A majority of the secular public (72%) supports the two-state solution, though among the religious public the support is very low—only 20%. This solution is controversial among the Israeli public, and different sectors of it believe in alternative solutions.

- The index reveals that 39% of the Jewish Israeli public believe Israel's best option is to strive toward a permanent agreement; 18% believe the best option will be annexation of the settlement blocs in the West Bank to Israel; and 17% believe that the best option will be transitional arrangements for separation from the Palestinians. Another 15% believe that the best option will be to maintain the status quo, and the remaining 11% believe in the annexation of all territories in the West Bank to Israel.

- When presented with various proposals aimed at ending the Israeli-Palestinian conflict—a two-state solution, a confederation, or a single binational and democratic state—46% of the Israeli Jewish public still support the two-state solution, while 33% support a confederation, and the remainder prefer one binational, democratic state. Most supporters of the two-state solution define themselves as politically left and center; 63% of them are secular. Most supporters of a confederation option also self-identify as being on the left, though they are accompanied by right-wing and religious Jews (5% and 10%, respectively). Support for the binational democratic state is low and erratic, and its support is the highest among ultra-Orthodox and "religious" (modern Orthodox) Jews (40% and 31%, respectively).[3]

- However, an overview of the entire political spectrum shows that the two-state solution is the option with the highest support among all groups, including those that define themselves as a "moderate right." Only the groups that define themselves as politically 'right' support the two-state solution and the single-state solution in equal measure (20%). Among supporters of a "one-state solution," the option with the highest support is deportation ("transfer") of Palestinians (29%). Among the Arab citizens of Israel, 88% support the two-state solution, and 12% are in favor of the one-state solution. Not surprisingly, other plans (apartheid, expulsion, and so on) have no support among Arab Israelis.[4]

As the above polling indicates, public opinion on undefined solutions is divided. To identify obstacles facing future negotiations, the National Security Index survey analyzed the key issues for Israeli society, which will almost certainly be central points of negotiation in future talks. To identify these issues and understand the drivers of support, respondents were first offered a two-state, permanent peace agreement. Subsequently, they were offered several incentivizing policies in combination with the initial agreement.[5]

The initial two-state agreement included (a) a demilitarized Palestinian state; (b) an Israeli withdrawal to the Green Line (the 1949 armistice line, more often referred to as the June 4, 1967, borders) with equal territorial exchange; (c) family reunification in Israel of 100,000 Palestinian refugees; (d) West Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and East Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine; (e) the Jewish Quarter and the Western Wall under Israeli sovereignty, and the Muslim and Christian quarters and the Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount under Palestinian sovereignty; and (f) the end of the conflict and claims. This polling offered insight into the current popularity of this outcome and potential opportunities to expand Israeli support for a two-state for two-peoples solution. Some of the key takeaways:

- Only 35% of Israeli Jews supported the terms of this initial agreement and 55% were opposed, compared to 85% of Israeli Arabs who supported it. In total, 43% of Israelis supported the initial agreement. Support for the initial package was higher among the less religious respondents and lower among the more religious. The skepticism among Israeli Jews appears to be closely related to serious doubts about its feasibility, echoing the findings of previous surveys. Prior surveys have shown that trust in the Palestinians—that the Palestinian public wants peace—has been a powerful factor.

- Among all Israelis, including Arabs, nearly half (48%) believe a two-state solution is still viable, while 42% think settlements have spread too much for it to be viable. Among Israeli Jews specifically, even more think a two-state solution is not viable (46% compared to 42% who think it is). However, support among Israeli Jews for the general idea of a two-state solution stands at 46%, while among Israeli Arabs, support for the two-state solution rises to 83%. Among Israeli Jews who believe that the two-state solution is still viable, 50% support the initial agreement.

- Moreover, support for this agreement is partly dependent on the belief that there is indeed a chance for the establishment of a Palestinian state over the next five years. Regarding this timing, 73% of Israeli Jews do not expect that a Palestinian state will be established in the next five years. However, still fewer people support the other three possible alternatives to a two-state solution: one state with equal rights; one state without rights; or expulsion, relocation, or "transfer" of Palestinians.

- Despite the majority's rejection of the initial agreement, its opposition can be shifted significantly once specifically defined incentivizing policies are added. Most promising, the 44% of Israeli Jews who are opposed would change their minds if the Palestinian government committed to continuing the security cooperation it has in place today, including sharing intelligence with Israeli security forces, preventing attacks, and arresting terror suspects; this would bring total support to a 59% majority.

Such incentives are expanded upon in other polls, which examine issues that would drive support and alleviate concerns and objections to a two-state solution. Recent polls have indicated that the following policy incentives would dramatically increase support for a new proposal among both Israelis and Palestinians:[6]

- Security remains central to Israeli public opinion. Fifty-six percent of Israeli Jews and 55% of Israeli Arabs supported the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and the demilitarization of the Gaza Strip (no heavy weaponry). Relatedly, the creation of a multinational force established and deployed in the Palestinian state to ensure the security and safety of both sides was supported by 48% of Israeli Jews and 69% of Israeli Arabs.

- If the agreement allows Jews to visit the Temple Mount, 47% of Israeli Jews said they would support it. If this group were added to those who already support the agreement, about 61% of Israeli Jews would support it with this item.

- Forty percent of Israeli Jews said they would support the agreement if it defined the Palestinian state as having a democratic political system based on the rule of law, periodic elections, free press, strong parliament, independent judiciary, and equal rights for religious and ethnic minorities, as well as strong anticorruption measures.

- Israelis showed increased support for a plan that included mutual recognition that Palestine and Israel are the homelands of their peoples: 59% of Israeli Jews—including 40% of West Bank settlers—and 85% of Israeli Arabs support mutual recognition.

- An additional incentive that appeals to both sides is putting any future Trump plan within the framework of the Arab Peace Initiative, which would change the minds of 37% of Israelis (55% of Israeli Jews) who now oppose an agreement.

Individual perceptions of societal norms are an important factor among both Israelis and Palestinians. The respondents perceived that broad public support for the two-state package in their communities is low. Among Israeli Jews, 62% believe that most of the public opposes the two-state plan. Although

35% of Israeli Jews support the plan, only 19% believe that most of the public supports it. The percentage of respondents who believe that the Palestinians would support the combined package (29%) is higher than the percentage of those who believe that most Jews support it.

PALESTINIAN POLITICAL DYNAMICS
Khalil Shikaki

In Palestine, the first decade of the twenty-first century showed significant public support for the concept of the two-state solution. However, by the end of that decade, support began to decline, and today, the majority of Palestinians polled reject the two-state solution.[7] Successive failed peace efforts have convinced many Palestinians that Israel is not ready for peace, that Israelis are unwilling to accept a historic compromise, and that Palestinians have no Israeli partner for a two-state solution. Moreover, a perceived state-building failure at home has convinced many Palestinians, particularly youths, that a future Palestinian state will be corrupt and authoritarian. As a result, demand has increased for a one-state solution in which Palestinians and Israeli Jews enjoy equal rights—one person, one vote.

The roots of this trend are important and suggest that public opinion is flexible and related to perceptions of the feasibility of peace. Key reasons for pessimism regarding the two-state solution are the prevailing perception that the two-state solution is no longer practical or viable; the belief that the Israeli Jewish side does not support the two-state solution; and the belief that support for such a solution is not the normative view of Palestinian society.

Indeed, most Palestinians believe that Israelis do not want peace. In December 2017,[8] only 37% of Palestinians believed that a majority of Israeli Jews supported peace; less than two years ago, 43% held this view. Distrust in Israelis as a partner and in the feasibility of a two-state solution is high. An overwhelming majority of Palestinians (89%) indicated in December 2017 that Israel is untrustworthy. Distrust erodes the willingness to take risks and make compromises. In June 2017, almost three-quarters of Palestinians agreed with the statement, "Nothing can be done that's good for both sides; whatever is good for one side is bad for the other side."[9]

Given the huge distrust of Israel and Israelis among Palestinians, one cannot count on public opinion to be a vehicle for positive change. However, while the public is not a force for peace, it is not an impediment to peace. If leaders do reach a peace agreement, polling suggests that the public is likely to support it.

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Still, even if the public can be brought back to supporting negotiations and the concept of the two-state solution, there is a key question that must be addressed before one can declare that solution viable. Since the beginning of the peace process, it has been well known that there are issues—one can call them sacred values or deal breakers—that are essentially not open to negotiation. These issues have essentially revolved around Jerusalem, the refugees' right of return, and some of the attributes of state sovereignty, particularly those dealing with security arrangements. In other words, we need to determine whether, given the conflicting interests of the two sides, it would still be possible to find mutually agreeable solutions to all the major components of the most feasible two-state solution package. Based on public opinion research among Palestinians, particularly during the past three years, findings point to one conclusion: Palestinian public opinion is not an impediment to peace based on the implementation of a two-state solution that addresses these core issues.

It should be clear, however, that while public opinion has at times been a driving force influencing policy changes in the Palestinian Authority and among the different Palestinian factions, it is doubtful that it has the capacity to push a reluctant or weak leader to take the huge risks involved in any permanent agreement with Israel. Given a strong public belief that Israel's long-term aspirations represent an existential threat to Palestinian aspirations for independence in their own state, the public cannot be counted on to pressure its leaders to compromise or even enter negotiations. However, to the extent that the stalemate in the peace process is driven by leaders who believe that their public and constituency do not support the required compromises, a deeper understanding of public attitudes can give them a greater incentive to take risks. Indeed, if such leaders can reach a peace agreement with like-minded counterparts on the other side, they will find that their public will support such an agreement in a referendum.

With the right incentives, Palestinian public opinion can be persuaded to support peacemaking based on the painful compromises involved in a two-state solution.

Two important policy implications arise from these conclusions. First, the Palestinian public has not yet declared the two-state solution dead regardless of the reality on the ground today (that is, settlement expansion and the erosion in Palestinian governance), the intentions and abilities of leaders on both sides, and the normative views of the public and leadership. Second, as far as Palestinian-Israeli peacemaking is concerned, public opinion is not in the driver's seat, and given each side's great distrust of the other, it may never be. Nonetheless, leaders should not rush to the conclusion that their hands are tied and that they have no constituency for peacemaking. To the contrary, with the right incentives, Palestinian public opinion can be persuaded to support peacemaking based on the painful compromises involved in a two-state solution.

As with the Israeli public, Palestinian opposition to a comprehensive two-state solution package can be shifted significantly once specifically defined incentivizing policies are added. For example, support for a comprehensive agreement can be increased to 70% if Israel agrees to release Palestinian prisoners as part of a deal.[10] Access to the Israeli labor market would be almost as effective.[11] Intangible incentives, such as symbolic gestures, can also be very effective. For example, an Israeli acknowledgment of the Palestinian 1948 Nakba, or Catastrophe, or a recognition of the historic and religious roots of Palestinians in historic Palestine would be highly effective. Additionally, an Israeli acknowledgment of responsibility for the creation of the refugee problem and/or an Israeli apology to refugees for the suffering they have had to endure since 1948 can change the attitudes of a large minority of those opposed to compromise.[12]

Not all incentives require one-sided concessions. For example, freedom of movement on both sides, Israel and Palestine, increases Palestinian support for the package to more than 60%.[13] Other effective incentives can be a win-win for both sides. To that end, guarantees from the United States and major Arab countries that the agreement will be implemented or that Palestinian-Israeli peace will be part of a larger regional peace based on the Arab Peace Initiative can be highly effective. Moreover, not all incentives require Israeli concessions. Measures the Palestinian state takes on its own can be effective. For example, granting refugees—who currently reside in refugee camps in the Palestinian territories—homes and land in the future Palestinian state can increase support for the package. Similarly, addressing public concerns that the future Palestinian state will be corrupt and authoritarian by ensuring that the state of Palestine will be democratic can be effective. Moreover, leadership can play a significant role in increasing Palestinian support for compromise: the support of Marwan Barghouti, a Palestinian leader currently serving several life sentences in an Israeli jail, for a comprehensive peace package can ensure majority public support for that package.[14]

There are other steps that Palestinians, Israelis, and the international community can take to slow down the erosion in public support for compromise and the two-state solution:

1. Increase the viability of the two-state solution and reduce the inevitability of a one-state outcome. This can be done by stopping settlement construction and ensuring that Israeli law is not applied in the occupied territories. Settlement expansion confirms in the public's mind the belief that the Israeli military occupation has now been transformed into a one-state reality characterized by a system of apartheid. Such a conclusion only deepens the Palestinians' distrust of Israelis.

Not all incentives require Israeli concessions. Measures the Palestinian state takes on its own can be effective.

2. Successful state- and institution-building—most importantly, building a democracy and fighting corruption—is highly effective in reducing defections from a two-state constituency to a one-state path. More and more Palestinians have concluded that the Arab world does not need another corrupt and authoritarian Arab country. Disillusionment with Palestinian governance during the past decade, as well as the split between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, a result of Fatah-Hamas power struggle, has increasingly led Palestinians to view the PA not as a vehicle for statehood that embodies their aspirations for sovereignty and independence, but as a burden on the Palestinian people. Moreover, the failure of the PA leadership to create a democratic political system and to tolerate dissent further inhibits free and honest debate about sensitive subjects, including compromise. In addition, in the absence of elections since 2005–2006, the institutions of the PA and the PA leadership are seen as lacking legitimacy. It is doubtful that such leadership can have the ability to market painful concessions to a skeptical public. Another consideration is that the Palestinian and Israeli publics respond positively to the perceived positive attributes of the other side and responds negatively to perceived negative attributes. Polls among Israelis indicate that expectations regarding democracy in the future Palestinian state is a highly effective Palestinian soft power that helps persuade Israelis to support compromise and the two-state solution.

3. Statements by Israeli leaders and right-wing politicians from the Israeli coalition government on the two-state solution and the legitimate political rights of the Palestinians inflict great damage on the prospects for peace and confirm the worst expectations of Palestinians regarding the threat posed by Israel. Existing public perceptions of the risk are very high, as an over-whelming majority of Palestinians believe that Israel is an existential threat to their survival as a national group. A high threat perception impedes progress toward peace by hardening public attitudes. Israeli policymakers should clarify their country's long-term intentions, adjust policy to match intentions, and improve communication with the Palestinian public.

4. The only interaction most Palestinians have with Israelis is the one imposed at gunpoint by soldiers and armed settlers. The lack of normal personal interaction feeds misperceptions and the desire to portray the other side negatively. Greater normal day-to-day interaction between Palestinians and Israelis can help reduce the current high levels of misperception and collective ignorance of the other side's intentions. Current perceptions contribute to the hardening of attitudes; misperceiving the views of the other side as hardline reduces the motivation to moderate one's views. Misperceiving the views of the Israelis as hardline relieves the Palestinian public of having to press its own leadership for peace and makes it more disposed to blame the other side for the failure to reach a peace agreement.

Looking Ahead and the Role of the United States

In sum, this chapter contends that the two-state solution remains the most viable of the options to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in response to the key national interests of both sides. The parameters outlined at the beginning of the chapter will not surprise those who have devoted years of effort to understanding and advancing a solution to the conflict. But as time has marched on, political and public trends have changed, and an effort to square a just and sustainable agreement with public opinion is critical. As has always been the case, the complexity of the conflict reflects the complexity of the people tied to it—their histories, narratives, interests, and identities. But today this challenge is heightened, and the clock is ticking toward less positive outcomes.

In the search/quest for a two-state solution, the United States remains an important external party that can still have an influential role if it is prepared to be a trusted broker by both sides and is committed to reaching a just outcome. To do so it must proceed in close strategic coordination with regional and international partners. In this role the United States could approach negotiations along the following lines:

- Any successful United States initiative should clearly define a political horizon with general parameters or terms of reference, as suggested in this chapter. After consulting the parties, the United States should announce its parameters for Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. These should be broad enough to allow buy-in from both parties and regional and international stakeholders, while at the same time be sufficiently defined to ensure breakthroughs and avoid a deadlock in negotiations.

- The mechanism for conflict resolution necessitates a dual approach in which areas of sufficient agreement can be negotiated and implemented to facilitate agreement on longer-term issues. This approach includes the principle of "what has been agreed upon shall be implemented" based on understandings between the parties, and with guarantees from the international community, that all measures implemented shall be without prejudice to remaining issues and subject to the agreed-upon parameters or terms of reference and rules of engagement of the negotiating process. The essence of this principle is to transform the economic, social, and security environment on the ground while working concurrently to achieve breakthroughs on permanent status issues.

- To bolster the mechanism for conflict resolution, the United States should conclude parallel U.S.-Israeli and U.S.-Palestinian memoranda of understanding along the successful model of the Letters of Assurance

that the United States issued individually to the negotiating parties at the Madrid Peace Conference in 1991.

• Obtaining regional and international support is essential, with a clear focus on the Arab Peace Initiative as a point of reference to engage the countries of the region.

The continuation of the status quo is the current option in play, but in the short and long terms it is a formula for instability and intermittent conflict for Israelis and Palestinians. While the Palestinian issue may, to some, not be perceived as central as it has been in past decades, it is not going to disappear. In the interests of all the regional and international parties, a negotiated settlement should be a priority.

While the Palestinian issue may, to some, not be perceived as central as it has been in past decades, it is not going to disappear. In the interests of all the regional and international parties, a negotiated settlement should be a priority.

As indicated in this chapter, significant headwinds to reaching an agreement exist and cannot be ignored. Still, diplomacy is about the long game and politics are unpredictable. In any scenario, the principles outlined and the precedents and modalities for negotiations outlined in the coming months will have an important influence in setting the stage for future negotiations. Hopefully, efforts to prepare the ground for a two-state solution will not stop. In this environment, political courage and will, a just approach to the interests of both parties, and flexibility and persistence in the diplomatic sphere will be required in order to, at the very least, preserve the conditions for an eventual two-state comprehensive agreement. The challenge is complex and great, but the stakes are critical for peace and stability in the Middle East.

THE ONCE AND FUTURE ONE-STATE DEBATE

Marwan Muasher and Nathan J. Brown

Seven decades after the British Mandate for Palestine came to an end, only a single state exists in its territory—but nothing has been resolved between the two peoples who live there.

Forty years after Palestinians formally adopted the two-state solution as a goal, the project appears to have run out of steam—not because Israeli or Palestinian societies as a whole have rejected the idea, but because most Israelis and Palestinians no longer believe it is possible. Indeed, although recent polling suggests that both publics are divided on the desirability of a two-state solution, both have become increasingly pessimistic about whether the other side will accept it, even more pessimistic about whether it is feasible, and simply gloomy about whether it will happen any time soon.[15] The current Israeli leadership has been abandoning even rhetorical support for the idea; it is taking practical and legal moves that seem to step away from the idea that the territory encompassed by the mandate contains two national communities. And the Palestinian leadership is split between those who never supported it and those who have lost any idea of how to pursue it. In the region, emerging generations are coming into political maturity with a two-state peace process that is little more than a historical memory. Among Palestinians, the new generation is already shifting focus from Palestinian statehood to rights.[16]

Moreover, U.S. President Donald Trump's administration's Middle East policies have not only ruffled many feathers, particularly on the Palestinian side, but also led many actors to conclude that the United States is steering the

international community away from past two-state efforts. It has recognized Jerusalem as the capital of the Israeli state but not a Palestinian state, bypassed the current Palestinian leadership, and worked to create an economic outlet for Gaza to Egypt that would deepen the strip's division with the West Bank. This diplomacy, whether intended or not, will likely underline the impossibility of a two-state solution and accelerate thinking among Palestinians and Israelis about situations in which a single sovereign entity controls the territory between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea.

Parties on both sides—such as Hamas, and many Israeli nationalist and religious rightist supporters—dream of a single state in which the other side is utterly defeated or dominated. Such options would only perpetuate the conflict and likely increase the cost in human lives. But there are also efforts to think about single-state alternatives that might be more peacefully achieved and less likely to lead to permanent conflict.

A History of False Starts

In 1948, the territory of historic Palestine was divided after a war between Arab states and Israel. Three-quarters of the land became the state of Israel. The West Bank of the Jordan River, including large parts of the city of Jerusalem, remained in Arab hands, governed by Jordan. A narrow coastal strip, centered around the city of Gaza, was governed by Egypt. In 1967, however, after a second war with Arab states, Israel gained control of the West Bank and Gaza territories as well. The idea of settling the conflict with a two-state solution—transforming the West Bank and Gaza into a Palestinian state alongside the state of Israel—gradually gained ground among some of the adversaries, and was officially adopted by the Palestinian National Congress in 1988.

In 1991, the Israeli and Palestinian leaderships began a process of negotiations that produced a set of agreements in 1993 collectively called the Oslo Accords. These agreements allowed the construction of a Palestinian Authority (PA) to govern Palestinians in the territories that Israel had occupied in 1967. Israeli and Palestinian leaderships seemed to be moving toward a two-state solution in practice, even if Israel (and the United States) declined to commit to the creation of a sovereign Palestinian state.

Since 1993, the international community has increasingly embraced the two-state solution, and plans such as former U.S. president George W. Bush's administration's road map and the Arab Peace Initiative, both launched in 2002, have implicitly or explicitly recognized it. Important leaders and even popular majorities in Palestinian and Israel societies came to support the project, although significant minorities on each side objected to it.

Nonetheless, three decades of diplomacy to secure a two-state solution have failed, leaving behind ever-expanding Israeli settlements, a divided Palestinian polity, and a host of supposedly interim arrangements that have become entrenched and stagnant. Indeed, political realities seem to be eliminating the possibility of Palestinian statehood alongside Israel. Perhaps more critical, the two-state goal now attracts little interest or hope in either Israeli or Palestinian society.

Facing Reality

As the two-state solution has faded, it is all the more necessary to recognize that a single state actually exists in the contested territory right now and controls both its security and much of the economy: the state of Israel. Although this current single-state reality is undeniable, can that necessity be turned into a virtue? That is, can one state be transformed from its position of indefinite and conflict-laden domination into a solution that meets the needs of Israelis and Palestinians?

There are strong reasons to be skeptical. Yet proposals and criticisms of a one-state solution should be discussed openly and fully. Or rather, such discussions—which have been occurring—should be made more visible and receive more attention. International actors have avoided such discussions for understandable reasons. Previously, many of those who said the two-state solution was dead were the same as those who had opposed it in the first place, so taking a one-state solution seriously seemed to be tantamount to embracing them. But rejectionists are no longer the only people interested in alternatives. In private discussions, even senior officials of countries that support two-state diplomacy have inched in the direction of accepting that the peace process is not leading anywhere. Observers familiar with the situation on the ground began speaking of the demise of the two-state solution years ago.

International reluctance to discuss alternatives to the two-state solution is less a refusal to recognize the trends that have undermined it and more a fear of abetting those trends. Open embrace of an alternative approach threatens to legitimate Israeli settlement activity, acquiesce in the Israeli annexation of Jerusalem and perhaps parts of the West Bank, abandon the tremendous international investment in the PA, and encourage rejectionist actors (including Hamas) on the Palestinian side. Those are powerful reasons, but the silence is more damaging than has been realized. The pretense that a two-state solution is viable is masking the very realities that have undermined it. Futile two-state diplomacy saps the energy from any effort to confront those trends, even

as their long-term effects become more pernicious. Settlement expansion has made it difficult to find a way to separate the two societies, and yet simultaneously it fails to provide them with any way to live together.

Indeed, the logic of separation—the guiding principle of the two-state solution—ignores how the two communities are intertwined. Besides the settler population, large numbers of Palestinians live in Israel. The societies, economies, and even basic infrastructure are intermeshed. Even when the Oslo process was working, there was a real tradeoff between prosperity and sovereignty for any Palestinian entity; with the deterioration of the Oslo arrangements, Palestinian leaders have largely abandoned partial economic separation from Israel for now. The Israeli leadership, for that matter, has never pursued any logic of economic separation.[17]

To be sure, groups on both sides of the conflict have always regarded the two-state solution as inappropriate for core national needs or goals. On the Israeli side, much opposition to a Palestinian state stemmed from concern about its implications for Israeli security, but some was ideological as well, resisting the idea that parts of the land of Israel would be excluded from the control of a Jewish state. On the Palestinian side, the opposition stressed the truncated nature of the state was developing for a time. And even when it seemed viable, two-state diplomacy had trouble addressing the Palestinian diaspora and risked leaving many individuals permanently stateless, yet still very much present in the Palestinian national identity. A shift to an integrative approach, or a one-state solution, may bring in those who have worked to undermine past efforts—a step that offers both new opportunities but also real risks. It treats the territory as a unit and attempts to deal with the problem as it originated—namely, in 1948, with the denial of Palestinian nationalist aspirations and the eviction of many Palestinians from their homes, rather than in 1967 when Israel took control of the West Bank and Gaza.

The shift to thinking about a one-state solution, with its many varieties, does not mean that a formula has been found that satisfies both Palestinians and Israelis.

In many ways, the Palestinian discussion on alternatives is more wide ranging than that found in Israel. This is not surprising, since existing arrangements are more tolerable for Israelis than Palestinians. Thus, the Israeli leadership has accepted the status quo and failed to articulate a meaningful alternative to the two-state solution, even as it moves to undermine it. It has not explained how it proposes to keep Israel Jewish and democratic in the absence of a two-state solution—because it is under no pressure to do so.

The shift to thinking about a one-state solution, with its many varieties, does not mean that a formula has been found that satisfies both Palestinians and Israelis. All variations have their real contributions in peace, justice, and security to offer—and equally real threats of undermining all those goals. But they are hard to assess as long as the argument remains largely abstract. One-state

proposals hardly approach the level of detail that developed when the two sides were negotiating borders and security arrangements in Oslo and in other discussions. Realities on the ground will probably push one-state alternatives to take center stage as an acceptable two-state solution appears less viable over time. Proponents will therefore have to develop more detailed ideas.

The novelty of the one-state idea is not the only reason for a lack of detailed thinking. In fact, the proposal is actually an old one, recurring over time in different guises. It appeared as far back as the 1920s, advanced by the Jewish Brit Shalom organization, and was embraced in a different form by the Palestine Liberation Organization (founded in 1965) in the late 1960s and through the 1970s and into the 1980s. Some leading Israeli politicians, like former defense minister Moshe Arens and current Israeli President Reuven Rivlin, have presented ideas that lead in a one-state direction, even as others have shied away from the term or declined to grapple with the details. Arens has spoken of a "no state" solution that would not separate the territory but would effectively continue the status quo.[18] Rivlin goes further to argue for annexation and granting citizenship rights to Palestinians.[19] Both present these arguments within a Zionist framework, but both could evolve in the direction of a binational state, whatever the intentions of the leaders.

Moving beyond a two-state framework is often propounded by people who are politically at odds. But it may be time for them to stop talking past each other. Indeed, these discussions have grown more frequent and more detailed in both Palestinian and Israeli societies. There also have been some discussions between members of the two camps in quieter track 2 efforts.[20] The starting point for such discussions is based on the fact that there is a one-state reality at present but that it offers no solution. Instead, the diplomatic efforts of the 1990s have decayed into social, political, and occasionally violent conflicts, played out at checkpoints, international academic meetings, the Gaza fence, college campuses, social media, and international organizations.

A One-State Solution

To move past slogans, both parts of the phrase "one-state solution" must be taken seriously. A one-state outcome imposed by either side (annexation of the West Bank and Gaza; definitive military defeat of Israel) is no solution. Hamas's traditional formula—an Islamic state in all of Palestine—horrifies rather than attracts Israelis. And even Hamas may be backing away from that plan by leaning toward the idea of a separate Palestinian state even as it insists that it has not accepted Israel. Many on the Israeli right seek to encourage greater domestic and international acceptance of the current one-state reality but in a manner that alienates rather than incorporates most Palestinians. And the continuing one-state reality may be more likely but does not offer much of a solution. Scenarios that offer a two-tiered citizenship approach, where

Palestinians have less than full political rights in what is basically an apartheid system, will not be considered; again, this is not a real solution. So variations of a one-state outcome that accord similar rights to both communities are worth considering.

So what kind of state could present a suitable solution? There are three basic variants.

One-Person, One-Vote Model

For some, the most just outcome would be a single, unified state with equal rights of citizenship for all individuals regardless of race, ethnicity, or religion.[21] Such a state would be based on global values of freedom. The state—whatever it is called—would become "a state of its citizens" rather than of a specific nationality or group. It is a mark of how deeply entrenched other identities are that such a proposal seems radical.

Who could object to such a liberal utopia? The model may address individual rights, but it is based on the denial of collective rights, which both sides hold to tenaciously. It does not allow either community to fulfill its national aspirations and express its identity in an undiluted form, effectively marginalizing the strong sense of nationalism among both communities.

This model also sets off different fears in each camp. Demographic trends suggest that the model would threaten Jewish nationalism, and most Israelis likely would not accept such a call for equality, seeing in it an equivalent to the demise of their current state. Many Palestinians who have struggled for so long to build a national movement and to steer that movement toward realistic options fear that pursuit of a one-state goal would legalize Israeli settlements and weaken the diplomatic gains that the Palestinians have fought for over several decades.

Binational or Federal Model

A second model is for a single state that recognizes both individual and collective rights. It would preserve individual rights for all but also give some firm institutional expression to collective rights for each community. In some forms, this model resembles the previous one. As early as 2001, Lama Abu-Odeh observed that, for many Palestinians, "the two-state solution has already lost a great deal of its historic appeal," and argued for considering the option of "a constitutional-liberal state, with Arabs and Jews as its national citizen" that still treats Palestinian identity as distinct and could be expressed through a federal structure.[22] Two years later, Tony Judt argued that the "true alternative facing the Middle East in coming years will be between an ethnically cleansed Greater Israel and a single, integrated, binational state of Jews and Arabs, Israelis and Palestinians"; while avoiding any description of institutional arrangements, he described that second alternative as "multicultural."[23]

In general, the calls for binationalism come from those who are less enamored of nationalism (even within their own camp) but are willing to make concessions to it, although the concessions are rarely specified beyond the symbolic. In binational schemes, the two groups would share the land and some accoutrements of joint statehood but remain nationally separate. Zionism could be maintained in some form; the country could still be regarded as a national home for the Jewish people, but it would also be a home for the Palestinian nation and could no longer be a solely Jewish state. Palestinians would be able to inscribe their identity within the contours of a unified state, not only at the central level but also through decentralization.

Despite its guarantee of national rights, this model would not only involve Israelis disengaging from many of the instruments of statehood that mainstream Zionist movements have called for since the late mandate era; it also would mean a partial Palestinian disengagement from the demand for a Palestinian state, a movement that is just as old if not older. In this regard, Palestinians have begun that mental shift, but there are few signs that Israelis have done so. Moreover, the relationship between individual and national rights would have to be defined in such a manner that both national leaderships felt they could trust. There are few positive examples to emulate that have been stable over the long run.

The United Nations committee that recommended partition in 1947 included a minority report that suggested a binational, federated state.[24] The idea that this provides a solution is sometimes revived in a manner that seems to fuse one- and two-state solutions. It would transform the dispute between Jews and Palestinians as national entities into a constitutional one about the relative authority of the central government and of the two constituent parts. But it thus carries the risk of simply shifting the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to one occurring within the boundaries of a state without resolving or even managing it. The approach also risks abandoning Jews and Palestinians who live on the wrong side of the settled borders.

One possible alternative is a more complex federal system that has not two units, but many.[25] Israeli and Palestinian societies are not monolithic, and they could each move toward decentralization that would allow for more religious, ethnically homogeneous, or culturally distinct communities to coexist under the aegis of a central government that guaranteed security and basic rights for all. This model has the advantage of allowing the diversity of each side fuller expression. In a sense, Palestinians already have this reality imposed on them by the restrictions on movement among autonomous areas. They are divided among Israel; Jerusalem; Gaza; and Areas A, B, and C in the West Bank. It would be beneficial to have an arrangement that was not based on Israeli imposition but rather

> *[A binational, federated state] carries the risk of simply shifting the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to one occurring within the boundaries of a state without resolving or even managing it.*

one that had a common set of rights and central institutions yet still allowed local autonomy to communities.

Again, however, a workable solution would depend on devising guarantees that require trust from societies where mistrust is profoundly deep. And there are few successful models of sustained federations formed by such devolution—federations are more commonly formed by smaller units coming together than by centralized units being divided. It is difficult to imagine the Israeli security establishment somehow being transformed into a body under the management of a mixed Jewish-Palestinian society or to envision the Israeli Defense Forces folding in Palestinian units on an equal basis.

Shared Sovereignty Model

One of the architects of the Oslo process, Yossi Beilin, acknowledged three years ago: "In hindsight, it is clear that we should have been looking all along at confederation—cohabitation, not divorce."[26] By that, he meant a settlement that left Israel and Palestine intertwined rather than separated, an idea that was mooted early on in informal talks with Palestinians and was then dropped. Thus, the idea was not fully developed.

But more ambitious visions have emerged since. Some of the most imaginative are based on the argument that Westphalian sovereignty is anachronistic and inappropriate, at least as it came to be associated with national states. Based as it is on an assumption of territorial integrity and homogeneity of people, it can be criticized as incongruent with Israel and Palestinian realities. Under such models, the entire land of historic Palestine again becomes one where Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs both claim the whole land as theirs.

The Parallel States Project, led by former ambassador Mathias Mossberg at Lund University, has advanced one such proposal, attracting contributions from a variety of experts, including some Palestinians and Israelis. Advocates of such an approach use terms such as "overlapping," "superimposed," and "interspersed" in addition to "parallel" to describe the arrangements.[27] These explorations look beyond simple, territorial nation-states to those based on a vision of

> two states existing in parallel, with overlapping sovereignty across the entirety of historic Palestine, from the Mediterranean to the Jordan River. The two states would retain their separate identities, national symbols and political structures. But they would be distinguished by their lack of internal borders, allowing free movement and access to land, resources and economic opportunity for the citizens of both states.[28]

What such models boast in imagination, they can lack in practical details—though the Lund project tried to overcome this by providing ideas about how both internal and external security could be arranged through multiple forces. Even then, the approaches do not persuade the critics.[29] When they plunge

into details, these ideas begin to resemble confederal arrangements, or perhaps the more complex federalism described above. But such details generally do not emerge except when Israelis, Palestinians, and critics are directly engaged. When the ideas are ignored or dismissed as utopian, they tend to remain maddeningly vague.

For those who do not subscribe to any of these alternatives, there are, of course, other options. There is, for instance, an indefinite prolongation of the status quo, its evolution into apartheid-like arrangements, or forced expulsions. The West Bank could be delivered back to Jordan and Gaza to Egypt, though it is difficult to imagine either country accepting such a delivery. Regardless, none of these other options is a genuine solution: they simply continue the conflict in a way that is not only unjust but unrealistic and, if pursued over the long term, likely unstable. They should be mentioned, however, to warn about existing trends and what ideas they may offer if more attractive ones are not developed. Most recently, the Syrian conflict has shown that previously unimaginable scenarios can arise with fearsome speed under the stress of brutal realities.

The death of two-state diplomacy has triggered a range of alternatives, none of which is ideal.

The death of two-state diplomacy has triggered a range of alternatives, none of which is ideal. Many have argued that the two-state solution will materialize because all the other options are either impracticable or worse. In that way, perhaps the *only* remaining argument for the two-state solution is that these other solutions are worse. Yet even if this were true, wishing for the best option does not necessarily mean it will happen. Can the alternatives discussed here be made more practicable to answer the critics?

Moving in the Right Direction

As is clear from a review of these options, each one has not only serious gaps but also provokes serious suspicions on one side or the other, and often both. Any solution that impinges either on the Palestinian or Israeli national identities, questions a national claim to absolute sovereignty, or undermines control over parts of the land runs the risk of implacable objection.

All ideas on the table lack critical details. They are better seen as general visions of alternative outcomes than as detailed blueprints. The details emerge not from the dreams of visionaries but from the back-and-forth of debate and the involvement of those on the ground. In short, their vagueness will end only when they are taken seriously by otherwise adversarial actors. That process is only beginning.

But even more than such vagueness and opposition, the various one-state scenarios run aground on the absence of any process that would bring them about. In other words, the most profound problem with each one is not how

it would work, but whether there is any way to bring it about. Two and a half years ago, another effort to understand the implications of despair over the two-state solution concluded starkly: "Given the political realities today, one-state models do not offer a viable approach to the conflict."[30]

But the obstacles might seem less formidable if the exclusion of one-state options from international discussions were relaxed. Indeed, whereas the two-state model has been negotiated in minute details, allowing a clear picture of its features to emerge, no such picture or set of pictures exists for a one-state solution. Even though discussions have taken place in all sorts of public and private forums, most of the debate has occurred within each national camp. No idea has acquired a critical mass among both communities to allow for compromises or detailed articulations of a particular model. Of course, all conceptions are utopian if they are devised only by small groups with agendas are not shared by important actors. As long as these ideas are pursued only by small, like-minded groups, they will not take realistic shape. So now may be the time to start talking.

Some groundwork has already been laid. Perhaps the best-known effort to broaden discussions is that of political theorist Bashir Bashir and his Alternatives to Partition research group, a project with the Bruno Kreisky Forum for International Dialogue where a group of Palestinians and Israelis met for three years to discuss the details of different variations of the one-state solution. It is not simply that such discussions can produce more realistic options; efforts to focus not merely on the end point but also on the process might make those options better.

One clear commonality to all alternatives to the two-state solution is that, in practice, they would be profoundly conditioned by how they arise. The process will deeply shape the practical meaning of each outcome.

International actors should not feel that exploring one-state alternatives is abandoning diplomacy.

Some of the factors pushing the one-state solution to the fore are long term, such as demographic trends and generational shifts, and are thus not amenable to short-term diplomacy or discussion. But others are based much more on the attitudes and understandings of various actors and sectors of Israeli and Palestinian society that may be more malleable. In an atmosphere in which two societies profoundly fear and suspect each other, the same mistrust that undermined the two-state solution has made the one-state alternative difficult to discuss constructively. That is all the more reason to bring such discussions out into the open.

International actors should not feel that exploring one-state alternatives is abandoning diplomacy. Those who are interested in furthering the process of putting such new ideas on the table can encourage discussion in a variety of ways:

- ***Include past spoilers.*** Two-state diplomacy was based largely on deal-ing with what might be called the "peace camp" in the two societies. Yet opponents to the two-state solution had serious traction in both political systems, and as a result they had key roles in vetoing it at key points. This is an opportune time to expand the discussion. There are two reasons to reach out to those who were seen as spoilers in the past. First, treating them as spoilers made them more anxious to deploy their veto, since they had been excluded from serious discussions. Second, some groups—such as Israeli settlers or Hamas supporters—might be more willing to discuss solutions outside a two-state framework.

- ***Maintain Palestinian institutions and society.*** The death of the Oslo process has robbed some key Palestinian institutions, especially those of the PA, of much legitimacy. The current senior Palestinian leadership seems no longer to regard the PA as the kernel of a Palestinian state but instead focuses on the moribund Palestine Liberation Organization. This risks giving the Palestinians a failed state before they have even achieved a state—and this risk is materializing and will undercut moves toward any solution. The international community's aid to the PA will need to match whatever the PA is or might become, which is not a state in the making.

- ***Resist pernicious trends.*** In the absence of two-state diplomacy, actions can be taken to discourage developments that make any solution harder. Obviously, outbreaks of violence fall in that category, but so do illiberal trends on both sides that inhibit political expression. Violence deepens already profound mistrust; illiberal trends prevent the sorts of discus-sions that should be encouraged.

- ***Start with core principles.*** Rather than sketching out a detailed utopian solution immediately, discussions might be encouraged to tackle essential elements of any solution. International actors can insist on universal principles as detailed in the United Nations Charter of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, values that both sides generally embrace (at least in theory) and can help settle international disputes and inform what basic rights must be observed. Various Israeli and Palestinian leaders taking part in these discussions might be encouraged to develop core national goals rather than strict institutional demands.

Overall, the effort should encourage talk: within each society and among various communities in those societies. It is time to break the international taboo on discussing the one-state solution.

IS A ONE-STATE SOLUTION INEVITABLE?
THE PALESTINIAN DEBATE
Tariq Dana

Palestinians are now coming to terms with what farsighted critiques of the Oslo Accords warned about a quarter-century ago. The basic prerequisites for a Palestinian state are virtually nonexistent. The Palestinian political system is deeply divided and lacks meaningful autonomy, its territorial and societal bases are severely fragmented, and its economy remains structurally dependent on Israel and on international aid. Palestinians also have come to see that the United States and Israel have abandoned a two-state option in favor of full Israeli domination. Although the European Union, Arab states, and other international actors continue to support the two-state formula, Palestinians nonetheless see that no effective steps have been taken in that direction.

Quest for Justice

In recent years, a growing number of intellectuals, academics, and political activists have envisioned and articulated alternatives to the two-state solution, overwhelmingly favoring an inclusive single polity. Historical and current debates have always contemplated elements of potential single polity—whether in the form of a democratic state, binationalism, consociationalism, federalism, and multicultural democracy, to name a few options—encompassing the land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. Yet the recent resurgence of the one-state debate stems from a more realistic understanding of the absence of a two-state trajectory. For its proponents, the one-state vision appears to present a viable solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, offering an ethical and just framework for reimagining the state on the basis of equal citizenship and democratic representation.

The recent resurgence of the one-state debate stems from a more realistic understanding of the absence of a two-state trajectory.

Current Palestinian debates have raised three fundamental and complementary arguments to support a one-state alternative. First, the one-state solution offers a means of revising the outcomes of the Palestinian Nakba of 1948 in order to repair past and present injustices, including the right of return for Palestinian refugees. Second, the reality on the ground is a de facto single state that relies on colonial expansion and institutional discrimination to privilege one national group over the other. Finally, despite Israel's policy of segregation, the Israeli and Palestinian populations are inextricably intertwined, with ever-increasing territorial and economic intermingling—albeit on an extensively asymmetric ground.[31] This unequal interaction must be fixed to accommodate the basic requirement of a state for all of its citizens.

Growing Social Support

Segments of the younger generation in the West Bank and Gaza have gradually accepted the one-state idea, but the concept has not yet matured among the Palestinian population at large. This trend began to be felt after the collapse of the Camp David negotiations in July 2000 and the subsequent eruption of the second Palestinian intifada in late September, and its increase correlates with the declining prospects for the two-state solution. Support for a one-state solution stood at 20% in 2001, increased to 24% in 2010, and reached an historic high in 2017, with about one-third of Palestinians favoring the one-state solution.[32] Such a trend may be the result of frustration with the status quo, which could increase in the years to come.

Equally important, the one-state solution is noticeably popular among Palestinians inside Israel and in the diaspora. Over half of the Palestinians in Israel, for instance, support the one-state solution.[33] This is understandable given that this constituency has been engaged in a protracted mission for civil and political rights within Israel, and the concepts of equality and citizenship are keywords in the work of Arab political parties and civil society organizations. Diasporic Palestinians, including prominent intellectuals and activists in the West, also have been campaigning for the one-state program. The revival of the one-state idea among these communities is arguably attributed to the writings of the intellectual Edward Said, whose 1999 *New York Times* article "The One-State Solution" inaugurated the debate and influenced nascent groups such as the One-State Group and the One-State Initiative.[34]

Seeking Political Traction

Yet even as these ideas provoke extensive discussions among Palestinian intellectuals, and increasingly among the public at large, they are not linked to a powerful organization or movement. In other words, they are the subject of daily discussion and growing support, but are not yet married to any specific project or program and have not found traction in daily politics.

The ideas are not new. Indeed, the original objective of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was the goal of one state for all of its citizens, as stipulated by the revised Palestinian National Charter of 1968.[35] Early PLO documents such as "Towards a Democratic State in Palestine for Moslems, Christians and Jews" envisaged a democratic and nonsectarian state that would integrate Jewish and Arab populations as equal citizens.[36] The document also affirmed the centrality of renouncing Zionism as prerequisite for a genuine reconciliation between Arab and Jewish populations.

The one-state objective, however, was short-lived, as it was replaced in 1974 by the 10 Point Program that ultimately led to the two-state solution and the Oslo process. The PLO and the Palestinian Authority (PA) uncritically walled themselves up in the narrow circle of the two-state solution, which limited

their ability to adopt an outside-the-box approach. Even though the two-state solution seems to be decaying on the ground, the Palestinian leadership continues to appear unable and unwilling to explore alternatives and to embark on a new national strategy that bypasses the narrow space offered by the Oslo framework. Although a number of PA officials have in recent months hinted at equal rights within a single state from the river to the sea, this perspective stems less from a strategic leadership reorientation and more from fear over the U.S. and Israeli move to end the international consensus of the two-state formula.

Thus, the more meaningful debate is taking place in Palestinian society rather than among the formal leadership. Indeed, in the public eye, PA legitimacy has been eroded; increasingly, it is being regarded with disdain. At best, the PA will continue to preserve the status quo of its own stability regardless of the changing dynamics on the ground, relying mainly on internal suppression and co-optation of political dissension. At worst, if the PA continues its coercive monopoly over the domestic political field, it will likely obstruct nascent movements seeking alternatives, including a potential struggle for the one-state option.

Similar judgments can be levied on the Hamas government in Gaza, with its focus on sustaining its rule of the devastated strip. Hamas was late in embracing the two-state formula following the declaration of its new political manifesto in 2017, and it tends to advance a self-serving agenda, touting its moderation and pragmatism in an effort to gain recognition by the international community. Nevertheless, Hamas failed to show that it comprehended the complex reality of the Palestinian situation, or had a strategy for dealing with it.

Other groups have struggled with the concept as well. The Palestinian left has been unable to overcome its long-standing crisis. It has been persistently visionless and powerless, even though one might expect that progressive forces would have embraced the one-state idea and elaborated a suitable approach to it. Likewise, some sections of Israeli society support the one-state idea, but they are socially excluded and ideologically rebuffed. They are mainly affiliated with the non-Zionist or anti-Zionist movements such as Boycott From Within and Zochrot, and believe that a just and peaceful solution can occur only through "a process of 'de-Zionization' and decolonization."[37] The current reality is that a few progressive groups of intellectuals, activists, and civil society movements are the nucleus for future joint struggles for a democratic single state.

Where To?

Mere perceptions and desires will hardly influence future political directions without vision, mobilization, and strategization. The one-state reality seems to be building a foundation for itself without any leadership or vision promoting it. If the one-state solution is coming, what kind of state will it produce?

There is no logical reason to believe that a democratic state is on its way, certainly not in the foreseeable future. The de facto one state could be officially declared if Israel partly or fully annexed the occupied West Bank. Factors at play today favor the Israeli right-wing approach that rejects Palestinian sovereignty and secures full Israeli control from the river to the sea; such factors include the excessive power asymmetry between the Palestinians and the Israelis, the United States' blind support for Israel, the worrying rapprochement between Israel and major Arab states, the incompetence of the Palestinian leadership and body politic, and the chaotic regional and international climate. Such a scenario could be pushed forward by the U.S.-led plan, which remains unclear, but leaks suggest that it would relieve Israel of the Palestinian "demographic burden" through a quasiconfederal arrangement with Jordan.[38] Assuming that this scenario comes to pass, then Palestinian rejectionism would substantially remake the national fabric, in conjunction with strategic reorientation away from the fictitious two-state option. The only option left is shared sovereignty, with equal rights and a binational polity.

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The one-state solution will not be impossible in the long term. Considering the intractable nature of the century-old conflict, then the one-state objective should be regarded as a prolonged struggle, subject to various complications and difficulties. There are two scenarios under which an official Palestinian leadership might formally adopt a one-state option as its goal:

1. The first and less likely scenario is that the shock of President Donald Trump's purported "deal of the century,"[39] or the Israelis' unilateral move to annex large parts of the West Bank, may stimulate the Palestinian leaders and political parties to put their differences aside and adopt a new strategic position. In this case, a single state would be a probable choice, given that PA and PLO officials have voiced support for it on multiple occasions. This option requires the Palestinians to create counternarratives on the ground, dismantling the PA while preserving the existing national institutions, terminating the Oslo commitments, ending security coordination, and reviving the PLO as the supreme authority. The PA would be transformed into a different national entity with different political discourse, focusing on mobilizing constituents and reaching out to the international community to garner support for the one-state project. However, if the PA and political parties' reaction are driven primarily by a desire to ensure the survival of the elite and the stability of their institutions under these conditions, then this shift likely will be the beginning of the end of a long chapter of stagnant Palestinian politics.

2. The second and more likely scenario is the inevitability of new forces and leadership to emerge in the coming years. This scenario will depend on

the rise of younger generations whose daily experience under apartheid will equip them with a new consciousness and worldview. The more they are exposed to discrimination and repression, the more they will engage in alternative struggle, no matter how much economic stimulus is deployed to pacify them. Whereas a recent poll found that the majority of young Palestinians believe that their country is heading in the wrong direction and that their trust in leadership and political parties is fading, two-thirds of them are confident in their abilities as future leaders.[40] They will likely embrace and assimilate the South African anti-apartheid experience of civil disobedience and the boycott, divestment, and sanctions tactics at the international level. The generation to come will struggle for equality and political rights and representation because this will be the only game in town.

Even if such a formal step is not taken any time soon, the one-state solution is likely to look more realistic than ever before in the eyes of increasing numbers of Palestinians.

PEACE IN FUTURE TIMES: A GUIDE FOR THE PERPLEXED
Dahlia Scheindlin

Since taking office for the second time in 2009, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has made numerous contradictory statements regarding the two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. His actual policies, however, have been more decisive: Negotiations under Netanyahu's leadership have been barren. One of his coalition partners, the Jewish Home party, categorically rejects two states and supports a partial annexation of the West Bank. Netanyahu's own Likud party has taken a major internal decision to support future annexation—and under his near-decade of leadership, Israel has been deepening its physical, de facto annexation of the land day by day.[41] But what are Israelis saying, or not saying, about the current status of the conflict?

Who Leads on Two States?

In Israel in general, the question of peace with Palestinians is hardly on the agenda. Survey research about national priorities shows that "resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict" comes in third or fourth on a ranked list, always falling behind the economy and security.[42] By contrast, in the late 1990s, peace regularly claimed one of the top two positions. For Israelis, security is not the flip side of peace, but a completely distinct concept. Among the self-identified Israeli left (about 20% of Israeli society), resolving the conflict takes first or

second place. The self-defined right-wing (about 45% of all Israelis) chooses security over all other issues by a clear margin. Many Israelis remember the problem only when there is violence.

Even when the Israeli public does stop to consider peace, support for the two-state framework has been eroding since around 2010, when it reached a high point of 71%. By December 2017, just 46% of Israeli Jews supported the general idea, the same portion of Palestinians who supported it—both sides saw the exact same decline in June 2018, and support from both now stands at 43%.[43] When the higher levels of Arab Israeli support for a two-state solution are included, total Israeli support in the December poll just crossed to a majority of 52%. The decline is not exactly ideological; it is driven largely by the sense that the solution is no longer feasible. In December 2017, more Israeli Jews believed that the two-state solution is no longer viable than those who think it is, by a small margin of 46% to 42%, respectively. Perceptions of nonviability are highly correlated with opposition to a two-state outcome, and similarly, perceptions of viability are correlated with high support.

Israeli public . . . support for the two-state framework has been eroding since around 2010, when it reached a high point of 71%.

Although the two-state solution has dominated policy circles for roughly twenty-five years, it is worth recalling that for the Israeli Jewish public, the window of support for it was much shorter. From 1993, Israeli Jewish support (the only tracking data available) for a Palestinian state climbed steadily from just over one-quarter to reach a majority toward the end of the decade. Israeli majority support remained mostly stable during the 2000s, but has declined since then.[44]

Some prominent Israelis have used their platforms to urge progress on a two-state final status agreement, but they have limited influence. Tzipi Livni, of the opposition Zionist Union party and now the leader of the opposition in Israel, advocates reaching a final status accord to preserve Israel's Jewish and democratic character, and to prevent the slide into one state and global isolation. Former prime minister Ehud Barak has warned of future apartheid if Israel moves toward a single state; likewise, Israeli President Reuven Rivlin has said that Israel might be perceived as an apartheid regime if it expands its sovereignty in the West Bank without full rights for Palestinians.[45] But most of these figures hail from the opposition or are outside the government, rather than the leadership—which may be the cause or the effect; either way, their warnings have not generated momentum. Further, their message is diluted by contradictions within the camp that Israelis view as left-wing. Former Labor party chairman Isaac Herzog, until recently the head of the opposition, barely put peace on the agenda. His successor as Labor leader, Avi Gabbay, has made statements that appear to compete with right-wing positions, when he is not simply keeping quiet on the topic.[46]

Though it was once taboo to use the term "apartheid" in Israel with relation to the conflict, recent warnings of apartheid and one-state outcomes have not galvanized Israel either in support of change or in anger against those who use the word. Why do citizens who take pride in being a democracy appear unfazed? Given that senior figures such as Barak and Rivlin spoke of apartheid years after former U.S. president Jimmy Carter and many Palestinians have used it, perhaps the Israeli public hears the charge as crying wolf.

There is another possible reason for such disregard. Warnings of imminent apartheid may have lost their force as a looming specter. Today, there is just one sovereign state between the river and the sea, with two types of subjects: Israeli citizens living under an elected government and civil law; and Palestinian non-citizens subject to the ultimate sovereignty of the Israeli army. Gaza is a state-less territory ruled internally by Hamas, surrounded by Israel's vise-like grip with Egypt's help. Settlements have eroded both the quantity and contiguity of land for a Palestinian state, leaving concentrated Palestinian population centers surrounded by areas of Israeli control.

It is possible that "apartheid" no longer scandalizes Israelis, not because they believe that it will never happen but for the opposite reason: because it is similar in essence to the present. A 2017 survey conducted by the Israeli human rights organization Btselem, its results corroborated in a second independent survey, showed that approximately half of Israeli Jews said that they would support total annexation of the West Bank while giving Palestinians residency but not citizenship and maintaining infrastructure to ensure separation. Israelis may not see the status quo as ideal, but electoral results show that for the most part they accept it.

The Alternatives

The near-emergency situation in Gaza and the slow implosion of the West Bank make the correct diagnosis and possible remedies even more urgent. Israel too will continue to witness democratic erosion and further cycles of violence if the conflict is not resolved.

With the two-state solution increasingly unattainable, Marwan Muasher and Nathan Brown have reviewed three modes of governance that acknowledge both the physical and political impossibility of full separation. The options for more integrated political frameworks range from a simple single democratic state to a two-state confederation. All of these options have drawbacks, but the authors' uniform critique of each needs elaboration. No plan is perfect, but not all flaws are created equal.

Are any of these options viable from the Israeli perspective? Israeli soci-ety does not offer much of a map for assessment. In the abovementioned December 2017 survey, only about one-third of Israelis—and Palestinians, for that matter—backed a single democratic state. Support for a two-state confed-eration has risen somewhat among Israeli Jews over the past two years, to about

one-third, along with higher support from Arab Israelis, who support all peace plans at a high rate. (Thirty percent of Palestinians backed a confederation in the August 2018 survey.) But this approach is hardly known in the general discourse, and other solutions such as federation or a canton-based structure have not even been publicly tested in surveys.

Meanwhile, right-wing policymakers in Israel are reticent about comprehensive plans other than piecemeal annexation ideas. The center-left clings to the two-state solution, while some defectors, such as a prominent member of the Labor Party, have moved to the right with annexation ideas.[47] In this environment, the policy community can make a real contribution not only by elaborating options for governance but by proposing how to assess them in light of the political realities and the priorities of both sides.

There is little chance of Israeli-Palestinian peace any time soon. The longer there is no resolution, the worse conditions become for reaching any resolution.

Three main principles for assessing solutions should be considered. First, the alternatives must find the right measure of separation and integration. Although Israelis and Palestinians are geographically and economically entwined, they have separate national identity needs. Does a proposal offer the right balance that will satisfy the needs of both groups? Second, alternatives need to be assessed not only through the overall constitutional model but also by examining the hard consequences, such as economic and labor opportunity, levels of violence, movement restrictions, access to holy places, and other basic needs of daily life. Third, to reach any political resolution, the parties must gain sufficient support from internal constituencies of each side, as per the two-level game.[48] The authors wisely recommend including spoilers in the process. To do this, solutions should offer some measure of accommodation to spoilers but avoid alienating the other side; this approach may help generate cracks in the opposition rather than drive all the rejectionist camps together.

Until Then…

There is little chance of Israeli-Palestinian peace any time soon.[49] The longer there is no resolution, the worse the conditions become for reaching any resolution. In this environment, it is essential to identify conditions that will contribute to the success of any future agreement (as per the understanding of an "agreement" stipulated by Muasher and Brown). Ideally, these conditions would be accepted by the Israeli right and left, by both Israelis and Palestinians. In addition to the long-term benefit for future agreements, advancing such conditions can also generate immediate improvements and a sense of hope—which are no less important for peacemaking, and are sorely lacking in the current environment.

The following is a proposal for action items that can contribute to both the present and the future, and are realistic within the current political situation in Israel and Palestine.

- *Advance economic equality.* In practice, this means boosting the Palestinian economy by allowing greater mobility of people and goods and encouraging investment. There is no political downside to this effort; even Benjamin Netanyahu has advocated "economic peace."[50]

- *Reduce violence, avoid escalation.* Contrary to some beliefs, wars do not lead to conciliation. In recent decades, conflict has driven both sides to more hardline attitudes. Lengthier periods of calm can create better conditions for future negotiations and can build faith in the possibility of a peaceful future, though there is also a reasonable danger of complacency too.

- *Create or strengthen cooperation for shared resources* (water, waste, environment). Water and electricity crises in Gaza directly affect Israel's resources—just one example of the immediate need for solutions. The entire region shares an ecosystem and environment. Civil society organizations have already built an infrastructure of cooperative planning and management; expanding these mechanisms will create proto-structures for sustainable resource-sharing under any future agreement.[51]

- *Freeze settlement maps.* The fate of existing settlements may differ within each solution. But for Israel, the expansion will help to entrench the prospects of an unequal, single-state project, generate security tensions, drain financial and military resources, and serve as incubators for nationalist-religious messianic fantasies. Needless to say, they also drive Palestinians to rejectionism, further feeding Israel's stereotypes of Palestinians as closed-minded and unwilling to consider solutions Israel deems reasonable.

- *Advance Palestinian democracy.* Democracy is no guarantee of political stability, but it does channel grievances into a political process rather than violence. It can improve Palestinians' daily reality, while possibly giving Palestinian leaders greater credibility with their Israeli interlocutors. Resurrecting civil rights, representative and accountable government, and independent institutions will contribute to good neighborly relations in any future framework.

These proposals begin to forge a critical path toward peace. Eventually, leaders might realize that they have no excuse not to follow it.

NOTES

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ABOUT

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