ADVANCING TWO-STATE SECURITY

2017

PRAGMATIC PROPOSALS FOR:

- SECURITY
- SEPARATION & CONTIGUITY
- REGIONAL INTEGRATION

Developed and endorsed by over 260 retired Israeli generals and security experts

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### OUR PARTNERS

- Commanders for Israel’s Security
- Economic Cooperation Foundation
Message from IPF

In support of enhancing Israel's security, preserving conditions for two states, and ensuring Israel's Jewish and democratic future.

Dear Friends:

A negotiated two-state solution remains the only feasible way to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in a manner that can provide Israel with a Jewish and democratic future within secure and defensible borders and the Palestinians with a viable, independent, demilitarized state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Today, that two-state goal is under assault by its left-wing and right-wing critics and detractors. Meanwhile, other pressing regional challenges, such as the threat posed by ISIS and the ongoing Syrian civil war, are overshadowing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

When the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is ignored by the United States, others—namely state actors, international bodies, terror organizations—fill the void in ways that undermine American and Israeli interests.

The United States has an essential role to play in encouraging Israelis and Palestinians to reach what President Trump has called the “ultimate deal.” But political realities today strongly indicate that neither side is either capable of or willing to negotiate an historic and lasting agreement. Therefore, a different, pragmatic approach is needed.

Israel Policy Forum (IPF) is proud to partner with Commanders for Israel’s Security (CIS), an unprecedented alliance of over 260 former generals of the IDF and their equivalents from, the Mossad, the Shin Bet, and the Israeli police, to promote the ideas contained herein.

Together, we strongly support Israeli initiatives to create immediate advancements in three critical areas: security, separation and contiguity, and regional integration.

The American Jewish community and concerned U.S. policymakers from across the political spectrum have a crucial role to play in elevating awareness and galvanizing support for pragmatic ideas to enhance Israel’s security and preserve the prospects for a future peace.

We hope that you will utilize this booklet as a resource for education, engagement, and advocacy, in order to promote key American interests: strengthening the U.S.-Israel relationship, enhancing Israel’s security, and advancing a two-state solution.

Sincerely,

Susie Gelman
IPF Board Chair

Charles Bronfman
IPF Advisory Council Chair

David A. Halperin
IPF Executive Director
“Security First” is a blueprint developed by Commanders for Israel’s Security for independent Israeli initiatives to be taken in Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip. The proposals integrate security, civil-economic, and political measures in order to:

- Enhance personal and national security.
- Preserve conditions for a future permanent status agreement (PSA) with the Palestinians.
- Increase prospects for Israel’s integration into regional security-political arrangements with pragmatic Arab states.
- Improve Israel’s international standing and provide effective counter arguments to BDS efforts.

**SECURITY MEASURES**

- Complete construction of the security barrier on the West Bank.
- Implement a strict border control regime along the entire length of the security barrier.
- Continue IDF military control over the West Bank until a permanent status agreement is reached.
- Advance measures to reduce friction between Israelis and Palestinians on the West Bank.
- Bolster measures to end the illegal infiltration into Israel.
- Restore law and order in the Palestinian neighborhoods of East Jerusalem, confiscating illegal weapons and eradicating nests of terror.
POLITICAL MEASURES

A comprehensive Israeli policy declaration to:

Accept, in principle, the Arab Peace Initiative (API), with requisite adjustments to accommodate Israel’s security and demographic needs, as a basis for negotiation.

Reiterate its commitment to resolving the conflict through negotiations towards a permanent status agreement based on the principle of two states for two peoples.

Forego claims to sovereignty over West Bank territories east of the security barrier, but continue to exercise control over them in a custodial capacity until alternative security arrangement are put into place within the framework of a permanent status agreement with the Palestinians.

Acknowledge that the Palestinian neighborhoods and villages of East Jerusalem will be part of a Palestinian state, when established as part of a future agreement.

Freeze the construction of new settlements, the expansion of existing ones, or the development of civilian infrastructures east of the security barrier.

Reiterate its commitment to the strict maintenance of the status quo on the Temple Mount and other holy sites.

Clarify that it considers Gaza and the West Bank as a single polity for the purposes of permanent status agreement.

CIVIL/ECONOMIC MEASURES

The West Bank:
Advance measures designed to improve the welfare of the Palestinians, remove impediments for growth, and strengthen the Palestinian Authority (PA).

Jerusalem:
Establish an umbrella municipal authority funded by a dedicated budget and an international fund for the Palestinian villages and neighborhoods of East Jerusalem, charged with rehabilitation and development. Strict maintenance of the status quo on the Temple Mount.

Gaza:
Take measures to prevent the collapse of the ceasefire, stave off a humanitarian crisis, and promote reconstruction and economic development. Early steps for development of a seaport, subject to PA control and Israel’s security needs.

Israeli settlers:
Pass an ‘Absorption, Compensation and Voluntary Evacuation Law’ for West Bank settlers east of the security barrier who seek to relocate west of the barrier or within the Green Line (the 1967 line).
AREA A
- Palestinian civil and security administration managed by the Palestinian Authority.
- 1.3 million Palestinian residents.
- Includes major urban city centers like Ramallah, Nablus, Jericho, and Jenin.
- 18% of the territory in the West Bank, 393 sq. mi.

AREA B
- Palestinian responsibility for law and order under overall Israeli security control.
- 700,000 Palestinian residents
- Includes smaller Palestinian towns and villages.
- There are 167 individual ‘islands’ of Area A and B surrounded by Area C.
- 22% of the territory of the West Bank, 480 sq. mi.

AREA C
- Full Israeli civilian and security control
- 300,000 Palestinian residents and 350,000 Israeli settlers.
- Includes all Israeli settlements, their intersecting roads, the Jordan Valley and agricultural areas.
- 60% of the territory of the West Bank, 1,310 sq. mi.
- The area is territorially contiguous and creates the archipelago of Areas A and B.

Legend
- Existing ‘Security Fence’
- The ‘Green Line’
- Jerusalem Municipal Boundary
- Main Road
- Settlement Blocs and Adjacent to the ‘GL’
- Jewish Neighborhoods in ‘East Jerusalem’
- Settlements of the Jordan Valley
- Isolated Settlements
- Main Palestinian Cities

Division of Control in the West Bank
- Area A
- Area B
- Area C

Map 1

Israel Policy Forum
Dear Friends:

Commanders for Israel’s Security (CIS) is comprised of over 260 Israeli generals who, like myself, have fought for Israel on the front lines of war. Today, we are fighting for Israel’s secure future as a Jewish and democratic state.

The risks of annexing areas of the West Bank are serious: the collapse of Israeli-Palestinian security cooperation, the unraveling of the peace treaties and security cooperation with Egypt and Jordan, a renewal of Palestinian violence, and yet another escalation of international efforts to isolate and even delegitimize the State of Israel. Worst of all, by taking actions that would further integrate the Israeli and Palestinian peoples, sooner or later the Palestinian population will become equal in numbers if not surpass the Jewish population, threatening the viability of Israel’s future as a Jewish and democratic state.

We refuse to let this happen without a fight. We need separation, not annexation!

We cannot let the question of whether or not there is a Palestinian partner hijack our future. We must take the initiative.

We need an initiative to enhance our security and protect Israel as a Jewish and democratic state. Ensuring security for Israelis while creating territorial contiguity for Palestinians in order to create de facto a two-state reality on the ground. We need an initiative to reach out to our Arab neighbors and take advantage of the current alignment of shared interests and challenges.

The “Security First” proposals developed by CIS – elements of which are highlighted in this booklet – provide a blueprint for such an initiative, endorsed and promoted by Israel’s foremost military heroes and security experts. For these ideas to be successfully implemented, they must enjoy the support of our most critical ally, the United States.

That is why as CIS takes its message to the Israeli government and the Israeli public, we are honored to have the partnership of our friends at the Israel Policy Forum, which is working to ensure these messages also reach policymakers in Washington and leaders in the American Jewish community.

My colleagues and I are once again fighting for the future of our children and grandchildren in our country. And we are determined to be victorious. I thank you for joining us in the battles ahead.

Sincerely,

Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Amnon Reshef
Founder and Chairman, Commanders for Israel’s Security
Security

Complete the security barrier to maximize Israeli security and preserve conditions for two states. The security barrier, initially erected in 2003 by Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in response to the wave of suicide attacks during the second intifada, has proven to be an effective hindrance to terrorism. However, gaps remain in the barrier that leave Israeli citizens vulnerable to this day.

Two gaps in particular – surrounding the Ma’ale Adumim and Gush Etzion blocs – should be closed. The completion of these gaps would accomplish three goals:

- Enhance the security of Israeli citizens living in these communities and throughout Israel.
- Limit the growth of these settlement blocs in ways that risk foreclosing the possibility of a future two-state solution.
- Create a de facto two-state reality on the ground, absent an agreement.

Closing these gaps should be done in a manner that maximizes Israel’s security and the future viability of a negotiated two-state solution.

THE MA’ALE ADUMIM GAP

Ma’ale Adumim is the third largest Israeli settlement in the West Bank with 40,000 residents. Virtually all Israelis believe that Ma’ale Adumim will be annexed to Israel as part of any future agreement with the Palestinians. This consensus view is why efforts to annex Ma’ale Adumim have begun to gain support on the right. There are two dangers with annexing the area:

- Any annexation of the West Bank absent a negotiated agreement could lead to immediate and long-term consequences both in the region and in the international community.
- The area that currently constitutes the Ma’ale Adumim bloc to be annexed incorporates territories that would eliminate the possibility of a contiguous Palestinian state.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Completing the security barrier should include an indefinite Israeli freeze of settlement construction in the West Bank east of the barrier and an Israeli preparedness to acknowledge that territories east of the barrier would constitute a future Palestinian state, pending a negotiated agreement.

- There should be no formal annexation of any territory in the West Bank prior to a negotiated agreement.
- The route of the barrier should not be considered to be a final border, which can only be determined through negotiations.
- While legislation to compensate settlers outside of the completed barrier would be advisable, no settlers should be forcibly removed outside of the context of an agreement.
The current planned route of the barrier surrounding the Ma’ale Adumim bloc includes the settlements of Almon and Kfar Adumim to the north as well as the area known as E-1, which has long been considered a red line for the United States and Europe. The completion of this route of the planned barrier - or the annexation of this area - would:

- Cut off the main Palestinian access road between Ramallah and Bethlehem.
- Threaten any future two-state solution by bisecting the West Bank between the north and the south.

In advance of a permanent status agreement, an interim security barrier surrounding Ma’ale Adumim should instead be erected in a manner that enhances security for Ma’ale Adumim’s residents without hindering Palestinian access to Road 1, the major roadway used by Palestinians to travel to and from Jericho. In addition to amending the route of the barrier, Israel should complete the development of the Hizme-Al Zaim access road connecting Ramallah, East Jerusalem, and Bethlehem, and avoid any further developments in E-1 pending negotiations. By doing so, Israel would improve its security without harming the prospects for two states, while signaling its clear intentions to maintain Ma’ale Adumim in the context of any future agreement.
The lack of a barrier in this area enables thousands of Palestinians to enter Israel illegally every day. Palestinian terrorists have also used this gap to enter Israel and carry out attacks. This is the region where three Israeli teenagers were kidnapped in the Gush Etzion bloc settlement of Alon Shvut in 2014, and where terrorists from Hebron infiltrated Israel on their way to killing 4 Israelis in a shooting spree at a Tel Aviv restaurant in June 2016.

Government plans originally called for surrounding Gush Etzion with a barrier on all sides: north, south, east, and west (solid orange line). Due to pressure from settlers rather than security considerations, however, the barrier was never built along the approved route, with minor exceptions (solid red line) in the Bethlehem – Beit Jala area and west of the village of Surif. The Security First Plan (dotted black line) calls for the security barrier to be built along the route originally approved by the government, with adjustments that would place six Palestinian villages – Walaja, Batir, Husan, Wadi Fuqin, Nahalin, and Jab’ah, along with their lands – outside of Gush Etzion.

Completing the barrier in this manner would increase the level of security for Gush Etzion residents, create territorial contiguity with the Jewish settlements of the bloc and Israel proper to the west, while also creating territorial contiguity between the Palestinian villages and the city of Bethlehem to the east.

In addition, Palestinian and Israeli traffic should be separated on route 60 (solid blue and purple lines) from the point at which it crosses Gush Etzion from north to south, to facilitate continuous, free, and safe movement for Israelis between Jerusalem and Gush Etzion, while avoiding friction with the Palestinians, who would travel directly on the Bethlehem — Hebron road.

Any Israeli initiative to complete the barrier, even with these rerouting proposals, will be met with international opposition. In the context of restored credibility to Israel’s commitment to an eventual two-state solution, the United States should be prepared to encourage and support Israel taking such steps that would improve security for its citizens while create a de facto two-state reality on the ground that could preserve conditions for future peace talks.
Promoting security-driven gradualism and Palestinian rule of law.

The signing of the Oslo II Accord in 1995 led to the establishment of Areas A, B, and C in the West Bank (see Map 1). It does not provide for Palestinian contiguity – and has led to consequences for the Israeli and Palestinian residents.

Separation & Contiguity

The 1995 Oslo II Agreement’s division of the West Bank into Areas A, B, and C, created 169 Palestinian enclaves cumulatively constituting Area A and Area B. Commuting between them often requires crossing Area C, which is under exclusive Israeli control. This proposal aims to cut the number of Area B islands from over 169 to 43. Doing so would enhance Palestinian territorial contiguity in the West Bank and advance key security objectives:

- Improve the Palestinian Authority’s (PA) capacity to provide basic law and order.
- Boost the capacity and effectiveness of the PA security agencies and their ability to maintain a high level of coordination with their Israeli counterparts.
- Reduce friction between Israelis and Palestinians in the West Bank.
- Strengthen the Palestinian economy.
- Establish conditions for a two-state reality that would ensure a secure, Jewish, and democratic Israel.

Creating greater Palestinian territorial contiguity is directly beneficial to Israel’s security, as it will reduce friction between Israeli settlements and Palestinian towns while improving daily security for Israelis traveling on West Bank roads. This proposal is designed to reduce unnecessary confrontation between the two communities and create conditions for two states.

As is presented in Map 4, 239 square miles of territory constituting some 10.5% of the West Bank can be redesignated as Area B from Area C with no adverse security consequences and without removing any settlements.

The redesignation from C to B requires no legislation and can be done via an Israeli cabinet decision. Alternatively, it can be accomplished by transferring to the PA some of the authorities over those specific segments of Area C – especially zoning and planning – that are presently under the authority of the IDF regional commander.

The measures outlined in this initiative are limited and meant to be applied on an interim basis. As such, they require no settlement evacuation or negotiating amendments to existing agreements. Rather than introduce more chaos into a potentially explosive environment, they will create a calmer atmosphere by changing dynamics on the ground.
SECURITY-DRIVEN GRADUALISM

In addressing Israel’s security concerns, the redesignation of territory should be done only after a series of benchmarks have been met:

- Each segment to be transferred must be thoroughly evaluated on the basis of the above Israel’s security considerations.
- Prior to the transfer of additional segments, PA security agencies will have to demonstrate their capacity and will to establish an effective presence in a previously transferred segment;
- Israel would observe overall PA conduct – first and foremost concerning security coordination, but also with regard to incitement – before proceeding with the redesignation of more segments.

Therefore, redesignation is proposed in three stages as follows (Map 5):

1. North of Road 5, for a total of 239 square miles, constituting 6.5% of the West Bank.
2. From Road 1 northward, for an additional 84.5 square miles, or another 2.5% of the West Bank.
3. The remainder, totaling additional 61.5 square miles, or another 1.5% of the West Bank.
Approximately 700,000 Palestinians residents in Area B have no regular law enforcement presence. This creates safe havens for criminals, which have evolved into illicit arms depots and terror cells.

To enhance security for all, PA security forces should be authorized to deploy throughout Area B including the areas transferred under the 10% plan, in a manner that expedites or waives the process by which Palestinian security forces receive permits from Israel.

As acknowledged by the chiefs of Israeli security agencies, the high level of security coordination with PA security agencies is a major contributor to Israel’s security. This measure will ensure that coordination continues by improving the domestic credibility of PA security forces, which suffer from a perception of impotence in the face of Israeli restrictions on their operations. As demonstrated during past periods of constructive, intimate coordination, an effective PA security force also reduces the need for frequent Israeli incursions.

The proposed measure will help dismantle the current safe havens for criminals, which have evolved into illicit arms depots and terror cells. Indeed, there is a clear link between criminal and terror networks, making enforcement of law and order in villages in Area B vital in order to effectively counter terrorism.

Implementation of this proposal must take the needs of both sides into consideration. Therefore, a model of police deployment will be developed for each expanded portion of Area B to account for Israel’s security concerns. These models should involve three categories designed to reduce the risk of tension or incidents between Israeli and Palestinian forces stemming from lack of coordination or misunderstandings:

- Areas where PA police operates with no need for advance coordination.
- Areas where advance notice to Israeli counterparts is required but PA forces deploy at will.
- Areas where no deployment takes place prior to Israeli authorization.
The 4% Plan
Legalizing Palestinian natural growth

Over the past 20 years, natural growth of Palestinian villages in Area B exhausted all available space and expanded into their surroundings, all classified as Area C. Unable to obtain building permits from the Israeli authorities, approximately 11,000 structures are considered illegal and currently under demolition orders.

A rough calculation of the cumulative territory occupied by these structures approximates 4% of the West Bank. Recategorizing these segments of Area C as Area B or transferring housing and zoning authority over them to the PA requires no Israeli legislation. It will in no way negatively impact Israel’s security, as Israel retains overall security control over Area B.

For the Palestinians it will:

• Apply to Palestinians the concept of natural growth that has long justified expansion of Israeli settlements.

• Legalize the homes of some 200,000 Palestinians.

• Signal that Israeli control over Area C should not be considered permanent.

• Strengthen the Palestinian economy.

• Improve the atmosphere in Israeli-Palestinian relations.

IMPLEMENTATION

Three criteria should be met in delineating the segments of territory in Area C to be recognized as B:

1. Distance from Area B: Subject to the two other criteria (below), all houses located within 1,640 feet of the outer boundary of Area B should be included.

2. Distance from Israeli settlements: For security reasons, the extended Area B should not reach any closer than 1,640 feet from the nearest Israeli settlement.

3. Distance from the security barrier: For security reasons, the extended Area B should not reach any closer than 1,640 feet from the security barrier.
Case Study: Dier Ballut

The village of Dier Ballut, which constitutes an island of Area B surrounded by Area C, provides an example of how the 4% plan could be implemented.

OVERVIEW

- Dier Ballut’s natural growth expansion has had no alternative but to slide into surrounding Area C.
- The village’s total territory (all of it Area B) is 40 sq. mi.
- The total population is 4,200.
- The total number of houses are 800.
- There are 120 buildings without permits that are subject to demolition orders.
- Expanding the village by the suggested buffer of 1,640 ft requires expanding Area B by a total of 1 sq. mi. of Area C.
- The entire expansion involves only privately owned land.
120 buildings outside the borders of Area B.
The Regional Opportunity

The threats posed by the Syrian Civil War, ISIS, and Iran’s regional influence have created an unprecedented alignment of interests between Israel and key Arab states. It would be a mistake to assume these mutual interests will remain in place indefinitely.

Already, Egypt and Jordan enjoy high levels of security and intelligence cooperation and coordination with Israel as a result of their respective peace treaties and shared border concerns. Egypt and Jordan have an interest in further deepening their close cooperation with Israel, but each must also respond to public sentiment. So long as the Palestinian issue risks sparking unrest and violence, cooperation with Israel will remain quiet and limited in nature.

Seizing the opportunity posed by Israel-Arab shared interests, and developing the kind of intelligence and security cooperation that could be essential to effectively fight the radical forces of ISIS and to promote regional security and stability, requires responsibly addressing the Israeli-Palestinian issue and preventing it from becoming a new source of regional unrest.

ARAB PEACE INITIATIVE

Israel has never formally responded to the Arab Peace Initiative (API). The API, first introduced in 2002, and reendorsed by the Arab League subsequently, offers Israel normal relations following a comprehensive peace agreement. Today, it deserves a new look by Israel and the United States as a vehicle for Israel-Arab dialogue and Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking. Developments in recent years have revived the API’s relevance:
The Acceptance of Land Swaps
In the Spring of 2013 the Arab League accepted “comparable and mutually agreed minor swaps of the land,” as part of the API. This removes the previously unacceptable demand that Israel return to the 1967 Green Line and signals that the API should not be considered a take-it-or-leave-it proposition.

The Syrian Conflict
The API as issued in 2002 calls on Israel to withdraw “from all the territories occupied since 1967, including the Syrian Golan Heights to the lines of June 4, 1967 as well as the remaining occupied Lebanese territories in the south of Lebanon.” The Syrian conflict has created a mutual interest in Israel’s maintaining its long-term presence on the Golan Heights. By responding to the API in this current environment, Israel will find an Arab League that is not encumbered by the views of Syria or its Hezbollah partners and potentially prepared to further amend the API accordingly.

Refugees
Some Israelis have criticized the API’s insistence on “a just solution to the Palestinian refugee problem to be agreed upon in accordance with U.N. General Assembly Resolution 194” interpreting the reference to UNGA 194 as a call for the full return of Palestinian refugees to Israel, upending Israel’s future as both a Jewish and democratic state. In recent years, representatives of the Saudi royal family and other Arab actors have underscored that the phrase “agreed upon” signals a recognition that any resolution to the issue of refugees requires both Israeli and Palestinian consent, acknowledging that a full-scale return of Palestinian refugees and their descendants is not in the cards.

The API as an Action Plan, not a Trophy
Today, an agreement based on a land for peace formula with the Palestinians alone will not provide Israel with the security guarantees or regional integration that are necessary to forge a lasting, sustainable peace. Against the backdrop of regional unrest, and a weakened Palestinian leadership with an uncertain future, an effort to regionalize the Israeli-Palestinian peace process would be especially opportune.

Israel - with the encouragement and support of the United States - should welcome the API as a basis for discussion, with the aim of transforming it from a trophy to be received after an Israeli-Palestinian agreement into an action plan that advances two parallel tracks: Israeli-Arab relations alongside advancements toward Israeli-Palestinian peace. The United States and Israel should aim to work with key Arab states to provide a number of critical contributions to reinvigorate a regional process:

A political ‘umbrella’ to the Palestinian side.
By serving as a chaperone for the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), Arab states can somewhat redress the imbalance between the government of Israel and the less potent PLO. Furthermore, at a time when the future of the Palestinian Authority leadership is uncertain, engaging regional actors now could be especially critical in ensuring a of support for continuity when future Palestinian leaders emerge.

Tangible Progress
Israel and the Arab states could together create a coordinated ‘zipper’ of pre-agreed mutual confidence-building measures to begin to demonstrate tangible progress and genuine intentions.

Check Spoilers
Coordinated efforts will be essential to counter Hamas, Hezbollah, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and the newer hostile players in proximity to the Israeli-Palestinian theatre such as ISIS and their affiliates.

Palestinian State Building
The Arab states can serve to revive the stalled efforts to bolster Palestinian institutions in preparation for eventual statehood, as well as encourage private initiatives to contribute financially and otherwise.

Business Opportunities
Arab states could begin opening investment and other business opportunities for Palestinian and Israeli entrepreneurs.

Contribute to Regional Security
Alongside progress toward the creation of a two-state reality on the path toward an eventual two-state agreement, Israel and the Arab states should engage in a process to create a regional security framework, designed to improve security and intelligence cooperation in order to promote security and stability throughout the region.
Safeguarding the Future of Two States
The best path forward is to do everything possible to preserve the conditions for two states while improving Israel’s security.

By Michael J. Koplow
There are two dynamics that are presently framing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and any attempts to address its resolution.

The first is that the two-state solution – Israel and Palestine living side by side – is the only path that establishes Israel in perpetuity as a secure Jewish and democratic state while fulfilling legitimate Palestinian national aspirations for a state of their own. Every other idea that has been floated is either fantastical, a recipe for civil war and ethnic strife, unworkable to the point of absurdity, or forces Israel to sacrifice its democratic history and ideals.

The second is that a return to bilateral Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, despite being the only way to achieve a permanent status agreement that establishes two states for two peoples, would be fruitless in the current political environment. Neither the Israeli government nor the Palestinian Authority has the requisite trust of the other side that would allow talks to succeed, and both Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Abbas are unlikely to be the leaders that oversee a successful permanent resolution to the conflict. Talking for talking’s sake is not cost-free; previous rounds of unsuccessful negotiations have not only been followed by violence after the talks collapsed, but failed peace talks have also only hardened both sides into intransigent positions on the menu of final status issues. While the Netanyahu government – to its credit – agreed to accept the framework laid out by Secretary Kerry in 2014, the current Israeli coalition and the pressure it brings to bear on Netanyahu from his right flank makes a repeat of this unlikely. On the Palestinian side, Abbas has still not responded to the Kerry framework and seems set on a strategy of internationalizing the conflict and appealing to multilateral organizations rather than talking with an Israeli government that he does not view as a serious interlocutor.

Given these two variables, the best path forward is to do everything possible to preserve the conditions for a two-state solution in the absence of a permanent status agreement while safeguarding and improving Israel’s security. Initiatives that accomplish these twin goals address Israeli existential fears that a Palestinian state will mean permanent insecurity for Israel, and address Palestinian existential fears that Israel’s continuing presence in the West Bank has already destroyed any possibility of a future Palestinian state. Only if Israel’s security is assured and Palestinians believe that there remains a viable political horizon will an environment conducive to negotiations ever reemerge.

The proposals contained in this briefing book accomplish these core objectives. They all simultaneously improve Israel’s security while establishing a two-state reality that is equitable to both sides and lays the groundwork for the future resolution of the core permanent status issues. Completing the security barrier will close the literal gap that allows Palestinians to cross illegally into Israel and help the security services and police combat terrorism, while at the same time establishing that Israel does not intend to remain sovereign over territory earmarked for a future Palestine. Rezoning parts of Area C that contain no Israeli structures or citizens into Area B to accommodate for Palestinian natural growth and improve territorial contiguity will bolster the Palestinian economy and reduce legitimate Palestinian grievances about unnecessary Israeli regulations while assisting the PA security forces in basic anti-terrorism and crime fighting tasks. Engaging in a regional dialogue with neighboring Arab countries in parallel to taking real measures on the Palestinian front allows Israel to contribute to and benefit from joint regional security and economic opportunities while ensuring that a powerful incentive exists to work toward establishing a Palestinian
state. The initiatives discussed herein are not a replacement for permanent status negotiations or an alternative to a two-state solution; they represent the best policies that can be adopted in the immediate term to safeguard the two-state solution and make a resumption of meaningful negotiations possible.

While Israel takes these steps, the Palestinians must take their own steps outside of the traditional peace process to accomplish the same objectives of creating a de-facto two-state situation while reassuring understandably skittish Israelis on security. The most important measure for the Palestinian Authority to undertake is continuing the security coordination with Israel that has, more than any factor, successfully combated the spread of organized terror attacks in Israeli cities. While continuing security cooperation is necessary, it is not sufficient. The PA must also reinstitute the program of state institution building that was initiated under the prime ministership of Salam Fayyad and lay the foundation for a functioning, accountable, and transparent state. Israel must assist in this effort – and improving Palestinian contiguity in the West Bank is an important step – but the burden for the heavy lifting in this regard will be on the PA government as it demonstrates basic competence in administrative functions rather than only in security functions.

The initiatives laid out here are not without challenges or controversy. They will be opposed by Palestinians as unilateral steps that impose facts on the ground outside of Israel’s obligations under the Oslo Accords and the Quartet Roadmap. They will be opposed by the Israeli right, who want to deepen Israel’s hold on the entire West Bank rather than ease it, and by the Israeli left, who view the continued presence of Israeli settlements and the IDF in the West Bank as the primary obstacle to resolving the conflict. Yet they are the best and most realistic set of proposals for the current political environment that advance the end goal of two states for two peoples while preserving the framework of a future negotiated permanent status agreement. Absent such measures, the dream of a secure Jewish and democratic Israel living alongside a peaceful and demilitarized Palestine will continue to fade until it is nothing more than a fleeting memory.
Key Talking Points

An Israeli initiative is needed, supported by the United States

• Current political realities strongly indicate that a resumption of negotiations aimed at a permanent status agreement would not be advisable.

• However, in the absence of any diplomatic initiative, others will fill the void, whether international actors or terror organizations.

• Therefore, Israel should be encouraged to take an initiative, with support from the United States, to enhance its security and preserve the opportunity to negotiate a two-state agreement in the future, when political conditions are conducive.

Advance Separation, Not Annexation

• Israel and the major settlement blocs should be separated from Palestinian populations and territories in the West Bank that must constitute the basis for a future Palestinian state.

• Any annexation of West Bank territory would risk undermining the two-state vision, threaten the peace treaties with Jordan and Egypt, increase the likelihood of international isolation of Israel, endanger the continued viability of the Palestinian Authority and its security cooperation with Israel, risk Israel being faced with the incorporation of 2.3 million Palestinians into its jurisdiction, and threaten to spark a resumption of Palestinian violence.

• Annexation efforts should be vociferously opposed by the United States and all pro-Israel advocates. Separation should be encouraged.

Promote ‘Security First’

• IPF supports the proposals of Commanders for Israel’s Security, an unprecedented alliance of over 260 top retired security chiefs who call for security, civil-economic, and political measures to enhance Israel’s ability to provide security for its citizens in the near term and preserve the opportunity to reach a negotiated two-state solution with the Palestinian in the future.

Complete the Security Barrier

• Two major gaps in Israel’s security barrier - surrounding the Ma’ale Adumim and Gush Etzion blocs - should be completed in a manner that maximizes Israel’s ability to provide security, and ensures both Jewish and Palestinian territorial contiguity, creating a de facto two-state reality on the ground.
Separation & Contiguity

- Israel should freeze settlement activity east of the security barrier and beyond the built-up area of the major settlement blocs.

- By transferring 10.5% of Area C to Area B, Israel can establish Palestinian territorial contiguity and enhance prospects for law and order and economic development in the West Bank.

- By transferring 4% of Area C to Area B – or transferring responsibility for planning and zoning in this area to the Palestinian Authority – Israel can remove the threat posed to 11,000 unauthorized Palestinian homes currently slated for demolition.

Promote Regional Integration

- Threats posed by ISIS and Iranian regional influence have aligned Israel’s interests with moderate Arab states as never before.

- The United States cannot afford to enable the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to become yet another source of unrest in the region, especially as the U.S. works to mobilize Arab allies in the fight against ISIS.

- In order to maximize the window of opportunity provided by these shared interests, Israel should accept the Arab Peace Initiative, with appropriate reservations, as a basis for future negotiations on two tracks: Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Arab.

Hold Palestinians Accountable

- U.S. policymakers should press the Palestinians to 1) take advantage of the aforementioned proposed Israeli measures, expanding law and order and economic projects as territorial contiguity is advanced, 2) maintain security cooperation with Israel, 3) end incitement, and 4) engage in robust efforts to build Palestinian institutions and good governance.

For more resources visit: www.twostatessecurity.org
About Us

Israel Policy Forum (IPF) develops and promotes resources, commentary, and analysis from leading experts in Washington and in Israel through private and public briefings and online media platforms. IPF’s influential network of leaders provides validating support for U.S. diplomatic efforts that seek to responsibly advance the goal of two states, ensure Israel’s security, and strengthen U.S.-Israel relations.

Our mission is to shape the discourse and mobilize support among American Jewish leaders and U.S. policymakers for the realization of a viable two-state solution. We envision a Jewish, democratic, secure Israel.

Commanders for Israel’s Security (CIS) is a non-partisan movement. Its members are retired IDF generals and their equivalents in Israel’s security services in the Mossad, Shin Bet, and Israeli Police. Its members seek to promote no personal ambition. They are motivated solely by concern for the future of Israel.

The CIS took a decision to promote a security-political initiative that will extricate Israel from the current impasse as an interim step toward implementing its vision. The movement’s vision is centered around the need to reach a permanent agreement with the Palestinians; to normalize relations and enter into security arrangements with pragmatic Arab states; and thus to secure Israel within recognized boundaries while ensuring its identity as the democratic state of the Jewish People.

Web: en.cis.org.il

The Economic Cooperation Foundation (ECF) is an Israeli policy planning think tank dedicated to achieving an Israeli-Palestinian two-state solution; to promote peace, security, and prosperity for Israel and its Arab neighbors, and to promote Middle East regional stability. ECF operates on three levels of policy planning:

Working for comprehensive Israeli-Arab peace; Preventing escalation of violence and creating conditions for sustainable stability; Working in support of Palestinian state-building.

Ever since it launched and managed the Oslo negotiations, ECF has been involved with Israeli-Palestinian and regional peace efforts. It has been called upon by all Israeli governments – left, right, and center; and has worked closely with all relevant players from the region and beyond, including the Palestinian Authority, Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, as well as the US, Europe, and...
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