Building Peace Between People

The Role of NGOs in Transforming Relations Between Israelis and Palestinians

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Acknowledgements

Introduction

        The conflict between Israelis and Palestinians has captured world attention and eluded a solution for over a century. Various groups in the area have fought to pursue conflicting aspirations and interests. People and governments around the world, concerned with the conflict for ideological, religious or geo-strategic reasons, have devoted countless resources to advancing their own objectives and solutions in the region. Meanwhile, the people living in the small territory between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea have sustained the violence and frustration of perpetual conflict between these various local and foreign interests. Whether they are Israeli Jews experiencing the benefits and challenges of citizenship in a Jewish state along with the threat of terrorism and war, Palestinian Arabs enduring the harsh conditions of refugee camps or military occupation, Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel who are torn between conflicting allegiances, or any of the other ethnic and religious groups which call the same piece of land their home, the people in this small territory can rarely escape the effects of this long-standing conflict.

        The Oslo Peace Accords signed by Israeli and Palestinian leaders in 1993 were greeted with elation by those who saw it as an unexpected and positive breakthrough, and

with great disappointment by others who viewed it as a betrayal to the Arab cause and an opportunity for Israel to extend its absolute control over the region. On either side, the Oslo Accords and the ensuing Peace Process were regarded as an unprecedented step which would transform the relations and conditions in the region. On the ground, many Israelis and Palestinians alike were exhilarated by the possibility that in five years, a final agreement would be signed that would grant Palestinians their long-awaited state and allow Israelis to achieve the normal relations and stability for which they had been longing. Yet soon after the Oslo Accords began to be implemented, the antagonism and mistrust that had dominated their relations returned to the forefront, and after renewed episodes of violence, the negotiations ground to a halt. Although the negotiations have been resumed in an effort to rapidly conclude an agreement, people on both sides are approaching the process with less enthusiasm and more trepidation, even doubting that the current process can ever result in a solution that is acceptable to both sides. As mistrust and antagonism continue to pervade relations and fuel hostility, there appears to be decreasing faith in the ability of political leaders to create a peace that respects the demands of both sides, or that can be genuinely felt by the various people living in the region.

A constant and growing source of action to improve relations between Palestinians and Israeli has been in the field of non-governmental activity. In both Palestinian and Israeli societies, various types of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are working to improve conditions in different fields and at all levels of society. Palestinian society, which has lacked a formal government for many years, is replete with NGOs working in every sphere of life. These organizations are now finding ways to

adapt to rapidly changing political circumstances, most notably the establishment of the

Palestinian National Authority. In Israel, NGOs are a more recent phenomenon, and they

are gradually expanding and achieving legitimacy as government retracts from its all-

encompassing role. Various typologies have been suggested for dividing these NGOs

into different categories[1]. The categories include: advocacy organizations that defend

the rights of certain constituencies by monitoring abuses and transmitting their

recommendations; consciousness-raising organizations that mobilize people at the

grassroots level toward a certain cause and seek to influence government policies;

service-providing organizations, which can include development organizations that work

to build up infrastructure and promote economic development as well as humanitarian

organizations that provide social services to communities in need; research centers,

sometimes independent and sometimes connected to universities, that often transmit their

findings to policy-makers or to the general public; and finally dialogue or conflict

resolution organizations that bring people together within communities or from either

side, to help them achieve greater understanding or resolve disputes.

Some of the organizations in all of these categories are specifically devoted to

improving relations between Palestinians and Israelis. For years, grassroots movements

and advocacy groups have sought to put pressure on political leaders and policy-makers

to address the needs of the people on both sides and work toward a mutually acceptable

solution. Other types of NGOs have sought to work outside of politics and transform

relations on the ground. Recognizing that peaceful relations between Israelis and

Palestinians cannot be achieved until the people on both sides overcome their antagonism

and find ways to work together to solve the major issues of contention that they face in

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[1] See, for example, Anderson (1996, p.344), Hermann (p.60), Dajani (p.75).

their daily lives, these NGOs have been working at all levels of society to transform relationships and build up the means for constructive cooperation. Some organizations are apparently unrelated to building peace, yet they work to promote peaceful relations by bringing together Israelis and Palestinians to cooperate in the field of their primary activity, be it advocacy, consciousness-raising, research or providing essential services. On the other hand, many of the organizations that are devoted to building peaceful relations do not fit neatly into these categories. Certain organizations focus on overcoming the psychological barriers that hinder political progress and prevent peaceful relations. Through dialogues, encounters, workshops and conferences for Israelis and Palestinians, they promote mutual understanding and acceptance of the other side's identity and rights to live in the territory. Others work to alleviate the harsh material conditions that fuel resentment and insecurity and lead to continued violence. Still others facilitate cooperative activities that address the needs on both sides and provide the means for Israelis and Palestinians to resolve the material issues which bind them together and fuel the conflict. While certain organizations specialize in one particular type of activity, the majority of NGOs combine various types of different approaches. The two major approaches described in this study, humanization and the needs approach, are therefore broad categories with some overlap between them, and include a variety of specific approaches that are conducted by various different types of organizations.

This study begins, in Chapter One, with a brief framework for describing the conflict as it has developed since the beginning of Zionist settlement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This description is not intended to be exhaustive, and it leaves out many of the external and internal factors that have

contributed to the development of historical events. Rather, this framework focuses on certain social-psychological ramifications of historical events, of the formation of identities, and of harsh material conditions, in producing the insecurity, resentment and antagonism that have fueled continued hostility and hinder peaceful relations. The second chapter maps out the field of NGOs in Palestinian and Israeli societies in general terms. By describing the relationships of NGOs with various constituencies, governments, donors and other actors, it exposes some of the major dilemmas and challenges which face NGOs as they work toward peace. The subsequent two chapters describe in greater detail the activities of NGOs in building peace, their goals and objectives, as well as the specific challenges they face. Chapter Three describes what I refer to as the humanization approach, which focuses on overcoming psychological barriers and promoting mutual acceptance through dialogues, encounters and other joint activities. Chapter Four details what I refer to as the needs approach, and includes organizations that are working to promote peace by alleviating material hardship, as well as those that are facilitating cooperative projects to address tangible issues and transform relationships.

The information presented here stems from a combination of theoretical research, interviews with people in the field and personal experiences. I relied most heavily on historical and theoretical research for the first chapter, as well as to provide a theoretical foundation for models of conflict-resolution and peace-building as they are being used in the field. The bulk of Chapters Two, Three and Four was generated by interviews conducted with activists working in several Palestinian and Israeli NGOs, along with the informational materials, papers, articles and reports that I gathered from them. Most of

the organizations which were included are involved in bringing together Israelis and

Palestinians in some capacity in order to advance peace on the political or social level[2].

While a few international or foreign NGOs are included, most of the organizations that

are active in this field are local initiatives. (For a list and brief description of the NGOs

that are included in this study, see Appendix 1) I have also drawn extensively from my

personal experience working with Seeds of Peace International Camp and the Israel-

Palestine Center for Research and Information (IPCRI), as well as from informal

conversations with activists and participants in these various activities. While I was not

able to formally interview donors, government ministers or a full spectrum of participants

and non-participants, a more thorough study would include these perspectives as well. In

addition, although some of the organizations I researched conduct joint activities with

Jewish and Palestinian citizens of Israel, as well as with Israeli Jews and Palestinians in

the PNA, I have chosen not to focus on activities between Jewish and Palestinian citizens

of Israel in order to avoid a whole set of complicated issues in addition to what is

presented here, even though the two sets of issues are in many ways intertwined[3]. The

material presented here is also inherently limited by the fact the interviews were

conducted by an American, in English, so that interviewees may not have presented the

entire picture. Yet I feel that as a student without any clear affiliation to any government

or institution, people were most often open and honest with me.

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[2] My primary criteria for selection was involvement in joint Israeli-Palestinian activities, though I focus less on human rights and other advocacy groups working for political change than organizations that are working primarily toward social or grassroots change. The final selection of organizations was based primarily on the practical criteria of which organizations and activists I was able to contact and interview .
[3] For a comprehensive study of Arab-Jewish encounters in Israel, see Abu-Nimer, Mohammed, Dialogue Conflict Resolution and Change. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999.

During the course of my interviews, I consistently encountered certain general questions, which I have tried to expose and address throughout this study. A primary concern was the relationship between political and non-governmental work. Given the inherently political nature of the subject, as well as the political affiliation of many NGOs, even the most apparently neutral and apolitical activities are perceived by both sides to have significant political and ideological ramifications. Activists are therefore forced to deal with questions of how to promote their ideals of peace without alienating people from their activities, and how to foster long-term change without jeopardizing short-term political progress. Since political circumstances constantly affect non-governmental activity in this field, the questions frequently arose of whether grassroots social and psychological change can even make a significant impact on political developments in the short or long term, or whether political progress is a prerequisite for social change. Another set of questions asks whose interests are being promoted by NGOs, whether it is those of the people on the ground, of local or foreign governments and elites, of donors, or of the NGO activists themselves, and how these various interests impact the work of NGOs. A final and overriding question addresses the wider ramifications of NGOs taking on this specific type of work, whether they are the most appropriate and most effective means toward building relations that satisfy and protect the basic interests of both sides, and of the widest segments of the population.

CHAPTER 1

A Struggle For Collective Dignity and Identity

The conflict between Israelis and Palestinians has been the focus of relations between Arabs and Jews throughout the world. Through at least four major wars and hundreds of terrorist attacks, riots and confrontations, not to mention pervasive hostility and tension, it has caused immeasurable suffering to people who have never even set foot in the small territory. Although this conflict has been defined and interpreted in countless different ways, the fear and antagonism it has generated have been central to the lives of most Palestinians and Israelis, and have defined the relationships between them. In order to avert the threat of violence and achieve collective security and access to resources, both sides have taken extraordinary steps with the goal nothing short of full control over state institutions in the same territory. Yet most of these actions only contribute to the fear and insecurity on the other side, thus challenging their attempts to achieve security and further prolonging the conflict. Such pervasive mistrust and insecurity, which have shaped and inflamed the competition over resources and institutions, are rooted in a deeper struggle to achieve and maintain

collective dignity as a people, each at the expense of the other. In competing for power and political control, Palestinians and Israelis have been striving to affirm basic tenets of their respective identities that are threatened by the presence of the other group. Israelis, now in a position of political power, are struggling to maintain that power as a basic affirmation of their collective identity, especially in the face of challenges to its legitimacy by the existence of the Palestinian people on the same soil. The Palestinians, on the other hand, find themselves as second class citizens on their own land, and are striving to achieve a higher status to restore their collective dignity, and to affirm their identity as people with political and civil rights. In defining the relationship between them, this basic struggle has constrained their ability to cooperate, or even to coexist in the same territory.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is often framed as a struggle for land and security. In fighting over the same piece of land, the two sides are competing to establish control and ensure their own access to natural resources such as water, strategic areas and religious sites which are sacred for both peoples. As the Israelis have been more successful and have deprived the Palestinians equal access to many resources, the Palestinians have been fighting for a larger and more equal share. Yet even while Israelis have maintained control over most of these resources, they continue to "show a profound sense of threat." (Rouhana & Fiske 78) Surrounded by an apparently hostile Arab world, which "surpasses Israel in human and material resources," (Rouhana & Bar-Tal 764) Israel has aggressively pursued its geo-political security through the pursuit of military might, which directly or indirectly culminated in four major wars with its Arab neighbors in 1948, 1967, 1973 and 1982 in Lebanon. In relation to the Palestinians, Israel has

maintained tight control through a strict military regime, in order to prevent both a springboard for a potential Arab invasion of Israel, (Slater 412, Shalev 104) and to prevent against terrorist attacks by the Palestinians themselves. These policies, however, have succeed in fueling insecurity on the part of the Palestinians, who are constantly threatened by the possibility of interrogation, harassment, confiscation and even physical harm which is routinely carried out by the Israeli military regime. The presence in their midst of armed Jewish settlers, who have been responsible for a number of terrorist attacks against Palestinians, also presents a threat to their physical security. In response, the Palestinians have carried out violent resistance, which only heightens the Israelis' insecurity. More than simply a competition for resources, the conflict thus fits into the conception of a "security dilemma," in which each group pursues its own security, yet "no group can provide for its own security without threatening the security of others." (Kaufman 122)

While the struggle over resources and the pursuit of physical security are both important aspects of the conflict, both of these explanations fail to account for why the conflict is so central to the lives of Jews and Arabs around the world, who are not affected by violence or lack of resources and who do not even live in the same territory. These explanations also fail to fully explain why both sides have favored violence and hostility as the means to achieve security, despite the increased risks to their own lives. Israelis have overwhelmingly supported the universal conscription of their youth, along with extreme, oppressive actions by their military, despite the supposedly liberal democratic basis of their state. Palestinians, meanwhile, have taken to violent demonstrations and terrorism despite clear risks to their property and physical safety,

with a goal nothing short of the creation of their own state in the same territory. The saliency of the conflict for vast majorities of the population on either side, its historic roots and its perseverance, can be better explained by a deeper insecurity which not only shapes the relations between Israelis and Palestinians, but which has also become central to the way each group understands its collective identity and has defined its search for collective dignity and self-esteem. Understood in these terms, the conflict assumes central importance to the lives of each individual involved, and furthers their need to act on it, whether or not they are directly touched by violence or deprivation.

The conflict between Israelis and Palestinians is rooted in the struggle of the people on each side to define and legitimize their identities and status in society, and to bolster their collective self-esteem through the control of a state in the same territory, each at the expense of the other group. Theories of social psychology define an individual's identity as the "core construct" (Northrup 64) which helps to organize a person's interaction with the world as it "creates and defines the individual's own place in society." (Tajfel 69) Individuals generally maintain multiple identities, which help to shape interactions with different people and in different circumstances. These identities often shift and transform as people develop, mature and encounter new situations. Their understanding of these identities is shaped in part by group characteristics and traditions, historical forces, and deliberate efforts by leaders and governments through education and other means. They are also defined by relationships with other groups. Since, for instance, "the characteristics of one's group as a whole...achieve most of their significance in relation to perceived differences from other groups," (Tajfel 71) the way people define their collective identity is linked to their group's status in society relative to

other groups. Where identities become rigid and fixed, as in societies where fixed traits like ethnicity serve as a central marker of identity, a single identity can come to play a defining role in an individual's conception of her or himself. Such is the case for Israelis and Palestinians, for whom, despite the internal diversity of each group, their central identity as Israeli Jews or Palestinian Arabs has become institutionalized in political and social life, in relation to each other and to the rest of the world. The perceived positive and negative characteristics of those identities, as well as their relative status, can thus bolster or damage the "collective dignity" (Taylor) of the group. In so doing, they also affect the self-esteem of the individuals who identify with that group. In addition, a challenge to the legitimacy of a group's collective identity is taken not only as a "threat to the dignity" (Taylor 207) of a group, but can cause a threat to the self-esteem of the individual members of that group.

One way to ensure collective dignity is through the public affirmation of a group's legitimacy and higher status through political control. Control over the institutions of a state symbolically confirms the legitimacy of a group's collective identity in front of the world thus constituting "a public affirmation of legitimacy where legitimacy is contested." (Horowitz 217) Political power also allows a group to institutionalize a high status for itself in the social hierarchy and bolster its collective dignity in relation to other groups. On a more tangible level, higher status in political institutions also enables a group to ensure access to material resources and to protect group members from threat to their future status or to their physical wellbeing, thereby "confirming status and averting threat." (187) According to Horowitz's conception, groups engaged in ethnic conflict are thus competing for "relative group worth and

relative group legitimacy," or "ethnic entitlement." (186) Having experienced severe threats to their collective dignity, as well as to their existence as a group, both Palestinians and Israelis are struggling to symbolically affirm their collective identities and avert future threats, by fighting for political control in the same territory. As each group has sought to legitimize its claims since the beginning of the conflict, the claims of rights to higher status and political control on that territory have become central aspects of their collective identities. Thus, the struggle to achieve those rights and to symbolically affirm the legitimacy of those identities assumes central importance to every individual who shares those identities. Meanwhile, the frustration of those rights for Palestinians and their position of lower status, as well as both sides' lack of respect for the legitimacy of each other's collective identity and claims to higher status, continue to threaten collective dignity and individual self-esteem for members of both groups, thus generating significant insecurity for everyone involved. In fighting to establish political control and higher status for their own group, Israelis and Palestinians have sought to exclude the other group and challenge the legitimacy of its claims. In doing so, they have fueled insecurity on the other side and intensified their drive for exclusive political control.

The Jews of the state of Israel are now in a position of political control, whereby they have the means to institutionalize their preferred status in a Jewish state. Their success, however, is only the culmination of a movement to restore collective dignity after massive suffering and persecution in Europe. The struggle "of the impoverished Jewish masses of Eastern Europe for economic and physical security, or frequently even

sheer survival," (Greenstein 88) culminating in the genocide of the Holocaust, continues to dwell in the Jewish consciousness as the ultimate blow to collective self-esteem. This experience drove the Jews to strive for "a life of dignity, freedom and honest toil," (Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel) "free of contempt and shame." (Shafir 209) Only by controlling their own state, the Zionists reasoned, could the Jews "prevent domination and suppression by others," to use Horowitz's expression, (187) and restore collective dignity through the "public affirmation" (217) of the Jews' preeminent status in their own land. Since the establishment of the Israeli state, the notion of "Israel [as] a collective enterprise of the Jewish people…a guard against persecution and genocide," (Ezrahi 82) has remained central to the collective identity of Israeli Jews. As a result, the "fear of ethnic domination and suppression," (Horowitz 187) has continued to motivate the Israeli Jews' concern for their own security, especially from the threat of domination by surrounding Arab nations. (Rouhana & Bar-Tal 764) The "siege mentality" (764) shaped by experiences of persecution in Europe continues to be a source of Jewish insecurity in Israel, and has driven the pursuit of military might and tight control of the Arab population under Israeli rule, in order to avert any threat of attack. On the other hand, in order to affirm the collective dignity of the Jews and maintain their higher status, Israel has worked to "maintain the Jewish national character of the state." (Ben-Meir 78) This Jewish character continues to define the political and social life of Israel, through such state symbols as the flag (the Jewish Star of David), the national anthem, the official language (Hebrew) and the holidays, laws and other national customs which are explicitly linked to Judaism. In this way, the identity of the Jews as a people worthy of preeminent status in Israel has been publicly affirmed and legitimized by the

symbols of state. Recognized by the rest of the world community, this is a powerful reinforcement to the collective dignity of the Jewish people.

In order to create a set of institutions which would ensure a 'Jewish character' in a territory in which Jews were a small minority, the Israeli state has, for most of its history, maintained an exclusionary posture toward all those who are not included in the Jewish identity. Since the vast majority of the people in the territory envisioned for the Jewish state were not included in the Jewish identity and therefore were not likely to support preeminent status for Jews, the Zionist settlers, followed by the Israeli state, have faced the task of trying to "impose a homogeneous identity on the state and to compel acknowledgement of their preeminence in it." (Horowitz 199) By "drawing a territorial boundary around its conception of 'the people' to include only that people within it," (198) the Jews could make sure that their dominant status in a future state would be recognized and unchallenged. Before the establishment of the state of Israel, when the territory was controlled by the Ottoman Empire, followed by the British Mandate after World War I, the Zionists achieved this through large-scale land purchases, expelling the Palestinian tenants from that land, and by putting pressure on Jewish employers to employ exclusively Jewish labor. In addition, the Zionist organizations developed the Histadrut, an extensive network of Jewish labor unions which was tied to all aspects of the economic and political life of the settlers, and which actively discouraged cooperation between Jewish and Arab workers. (Shalev 100, Shafir 216) Through its all encompassing role as a "state-in-the-making," (Shafir 195) the Histadrut helped to facilitate the development of a highly organized set of institutions which provided for the institutional needs of the settlers and kept them segregated from the rest of Palestinian

society. (Shalev) In this way, the settlers strove to create an area of "Jewish demographic and political predominance," (Greenstein 208) which would be the basis for a Jewish state. Demographic predominance would allow for the creation of a democratic state in which Jews could define the character of the state and their preeminence in it, and ensure access to natural resources, simply through majority control. The flight of large numbers of Palestinians from their homes during the 1948 Arab-Israeli war furthered the goal of Jewish exclusion by firmly establishing a Jewish majority on the territory which Israel controlled. Israel was thus able to establish a state which could be democratic, while maintaining a Jewish character through demographic predominance.

The presence of a significant and growing Arab minority within the territory controlled by Israel has necessitated a shift in policy from physical to political exclusion, accompanied by economic and social segmentation, in order to maintain Jewish predominance. While many of the early Zionist leaders might have preferred a state comprised only of Jews, the significant and growing Palestinian Arab minority who are citizens of Israel[4], in addition to the much larger Palestinian Arab population under military control in the West Bank and Gaza Strip since 1967, have forced the official policies to adjust in order to maintain the Jews' higher political and social status. The Palestinians have been excluded from the political process to varying degrees, and consequently forced to maintain a lower economic and social status in Israeli society. The Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel – those who remained within the borders of the Israeli state in 1948 – are granted only limited rights in the Israeli political system.

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[4] According to the Israeli Bureau of Vital Statistics (www.cbs.gov.il), in 1996, the Israeli population consisted of Jews: 80.5%, Moslems: 14.6%, Christians: 3.2%, Druze: 1.7%, thus non-Jews comprised 19.5% of the Israeli population. In 1997, population growth rates were: Moslems: 3.3%, Druze: 2.4%, Christians: 2.2%, Jews: 1.9%.

Although since 1966 they have been granted "political rights on an individual basis,"
(Shafir & Peled 255) their social rights are severely limited by their exclusion from
military service, which justifies abridgement of social benefits. They are also left out by
the quasi-governmental Jewish agencies that provide essential social services such as
agricultural and industrial development, and assistance to deprived groups. (Rouhana
1997) Moreover, certain Israeli laws, such as the 1985 amendment to the Basic Law
which requires the acknowledgement of "'the existence of Israel as the state of the Jewish
people'" as a prerequisite for political participation, exclude Arab citizens from full
participation in the democratic process unless they formally recognize and support the
preeminence of Jews[5]. (34) The Palestinians who live in the West Bank and Gaza Strip,
meanwhile, (not including those who are now under Palestinian rule as mandated by the
present peace process) have been subject to military rule, which treats them as
"exogenous to the Israeli system." (Kimmerling 270) Being neither citizens nor members
of Israeli society, Palestinians under military rule are subject to special military laws,
distinct from the civil law which is applied to Israeli settlers in neighboring towns within
the same territory. (Shafir & Peled 255) Due to the large size of the Palestinian
population, as well as their higher birth rate as compared to Israeli Jews, (Ben-Meir 76)
granting the Palestinians full citizenship and equal participation in the democratic process
would inevitably undermine the demographic and political dominance which has been
ensured by the Jewish majority. Granting them collective minority rights, meanwhile,

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[5] The traditional exclusion of Palestinian citizens of Israel is beginning to shift as the current government
has sought to grant them greater political and social rights and benefits of which they have traditionally
been deprived. Most notably, in 1999 and 2000 the Israeli High Court banned torture of Palestinian
detainees in Israeli prisons, affirmed Palestinian citizens the equal right to land allocated by the state, and a
portion of land long considered part of a Jewish town was returned to the Palestinian village from which it
was expropriated decades ago. (See, for example, The New York Times, April 7, 2000, p.A1)

would "necessarily precipitate the dissolution of the ethnic-democratic foundation of the state," (78) as a state with a Jewish national character. The Israeli state has therefore maintained a policy of political and social exclusion of the Palestinians in order to maintain guaranteed access to resources and preferential status for Jews, and to ensure the existence of a Jewish state which would affirm Jewish dignity and preeminence, and act as a safe haven for Jews in the face of potential persecution.

The very presence of the Palestinian minority, meanwhile, creates a constant threat to the Jewish character of the state, and, consequently, to fundamental aspects of the Israeli identity which have been so vigorously promoted and maintained. The existence of Israel in its present territory is legitimized through the "natural and historic right" of the Jews to the land, based on historic indigenousness, as well on the moral claim of Jewish settlers to have brought "the blessings of progress to all the country's inhabitants," and a thriving economy to a previously barren land. (Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel) The existence of the Palestinian people on that land and their opposition to Israel undermines both of these claims, and in so doing challenges the legitimacy of Israel as the "'State of the Jewish people,'" (Shafir & Peleg 255) in which Jews deserve preferential status. Since "acknowledgement of preeminence implies destruction of the evidence of diversity," (Horowitz 199) the Israeli state has historically sought to destroy the evidence of diversity which challenges Jewish status, by denying the identity of the Palestinian people. This was accomplished in part through the use of such slogans as "a people without land for a land without people" (popular Zionist slogan) and "there are no Palestinians," (attributed to Golda Meir) and by leaving them out of the historical narrative of the formation of the state. Israeli high school history

textbooks, for example, portray Ottoman Palestine as a barren land and the Palestinians who lived there as "gangs of murderers" with "a slave mentality," while they consistently discount their claims to the land. (Firer & Adwan 52) Israeli narratives and popular interpretations have thus denied the identity of the Palestinians as a distinct people, in order to justify their exclusion from the political process and prevent them from challenging the legitimacy of both the Jewish character of the state and higher status for Jews.

Meanwhile, the Palestinians' "demands for equal, individual and collective rights," (Ben-Meir 78) as a result of this exclusion, along with Israel's often repressive reactions, undermines the legitimacy of the Israeli state as a universalist democracy that "ensure[s] complete equality of social and political rights to all of its inhabitants, irrespective of religion, race or sex." (Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel) The existence of the Palestinian people on Israeli territory thus constitutes a challenge to the two central pillars of the Israeli state: Zionism, which mandates the state's Jewish character, and Democracy. In addition, the tension between the democratic and Zionist ideals, which is highlighted by Israeli policy toward the Palestinians, creates a "conflict of values," (Tajfel 79) which further undermines the legitimacy of the Israeli identity. All of these challenges constitute a major threat to the legitimacy of the Israeli Jews' identity and preferential status on the territory, and consequently to their collective self-esteem, and are therefore a major source of insecurity on the part of Israeli Jews. By suppressing the political rights, status and identity of the Palestinian people, Israeli Jews have thus sought to remove a major threat, not only of physical harm, but more importantly, a threat to their individual and collective dignity and self-esteem.

Since the Palestinians have continued to make their presence known through protests, attacks, and other peaceful and violent manifestations, Israeli Jews' have been forced to find new ways to eliminate the physical and psychological threat and preserve the legitimacy of their own preeminent status in Israel. The continued terrorist attacks and violent demonstrations, especially during the Intifada, have increased the salience of the physical and psychological threat posed by the presence of the Palestinians and other people on that territory. According to Petersen, the fear caused by this increasing threat can serve as an "instrumental emotion," which "filters information, selecting out the evidence of danger," thus "confirming previous beliefs and further heightening fear." This fear eventually brings on a "fight or flight" reaction which motivates people to act violently in order to remove the threat to identity and to physical wellbeing. (Petersen 10) Many Israelis have therefore continued to "justify the use of any and all available power" in order to eradicate the physical and psychological threat posed by the presence of the Palestinians and others on what they conceive of as of Israeli territory. (Ezrahi 198) The support by the Israeli public for the use of excessive force, collective punishment and other repressive means by the Israeli army toward Palestinians, can be seen as attempts to remove the threat to the physical survival and to the Israeli identity, by destroying the claims of the Palestinian people to the territory which Israelis claim as their own. The use of terrorism by certain groups of radical settlers in the West Bank is an extreme manifestation of this trend, which seeks to actually eradicate the Palestinian people by terrorizing them into leaving. Many of these settlers are part of a larger movement which has sought to strengthen the Israeli identity, by striving to "elevate the national narrative to epic new heights," (Ezrahi 198) The proponents of this movement argue for a

maximal conception of Israeli territory that includes the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the

Golan Heights, and even, for a time, the Sinai peninsula. Much of the opposition to the

current peace process on the part of Israelis thus stems from the "fear of losing their

elevated status as a virtuous republican community," (Shafir & Peled 260) Recognizing

the identity of the Palestinian people and their claims to the territory, would call into

question the legitimacy of their own identity and claims to the land.

Since no amount of repression can remove the existence of the Palestinian people,

many Jews have more recently begun to redefine their conception of the borders of Israel.

The Oslo Peace Accords[6], signed in 1993, nominally grant the Palestinians self-rule in

the West Bank and Gaza, in order to separate the Palestinians living in these areas from

Israeli control. By "treating [the Palestinians] as external," (Ezrahi 216) and thus

deciding "to live in and with only a part of the imagined whole," (217) Israeli Jews are in

essence continuing the original policy of exclusion, by separating predominantly

Palestinian areas from the territorial boundaries of Israel. In pursuing this policy of

separation of land and people, Israelis are not only attempting to remove a source of

physical threat. They are also removing the challenge which the Palestinians who live in

those areas present to the legitimacy of the Israeli claims to the land. In redefining the

Israeli identity without a claim to the West Bank and Gaza, Israelis are left with a smaller

portion of the territory. Yet they can more credibly legitimize their higher status within

that smaller territory through demographic predominance. This process has "provoked

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[6] The Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements (see appendix), or the Oslo Accords, is the framework agreement which lays out the process for resolving the major issues of contention. Its provisions were to be fulfilled through interim agreements which would grant the Palestinians self-rule over parts of their territory, leaving major (final status) issues to be resolved through negotiation within a five year time period. While several of these interim accords were implemented, due to breakdowns in the process, the negotiations were extended, and continue as of this writing.

fierce, at times even violent opposition," (224) from those who cling to the maximalist territorial claim, and is not without its contradictions due to the presence of a growing Palestinian minority within the new boundaries. Till, the exclusion of the majority of Palestinians from within the territory which is claimed as integral to the Israeli Jewish identity removes a major challenge to the legitimacy of both the Zionist and Democratic tenets of that identity. Indeed, recent statistics show that the majority of the Israeli population accepts the inevitability of some sort of Palestinian state. (Hermann 124) At the same time, the central importance attributed to security in both elections since the Oslo Accords shows Israelis' continued sense of threat as a motivating factor in their decisions. While the reality of separation in the small territory would inherently be extremely complicated, if not impossible, by somehow separating the Palestinians from Israel, Jews could, theoretically, more comfortably assert the democratic nature of Israel and the preeminent status of the Jews within it. In this way, they could legitimately maintain their collective identity and self-esteem through political control, and preserve their physical security in the face of potential persecution.

The Palestinian people have maintained an identity that is in direct opposition to many aspects of the Israeli identity. The consistent denial of this identity by Israel and by the rest of the world, along with the ramifications of that denial on the material and emotional lives of the Palestinian people, has devastated their collective dignity. In working for political control of their own sovereign state, the Palestinians are striving to elevate their status in order to affirm their identity and restore their dignity. While it has been argued that the Palestinian identity resulted only in reaction to Zionism, there is

evidence that various conceptions of a social identity uniting the residents of the Palestinian territory into a single community had begun to assert itself as part of "a universal process unfolding in the Middle East" during the final decades of the Ottoman Empire. (Khalidi 1997, 20) During this time, as the strength of the Ottoman Empire was being increasingly called into question and nationalist ideology was spreading from Western Europe, various groups from all over the Ottoman lands were forming territorial, ethnic, religious and other identities. These emerging national identities eventually became the basis for the new nation-states created by the post World War I partitions. Though there were several ideologies and identities which claimed the loyalty of the people living in Palestine, including Ottomanism, Pan-Arabism, Pan-Islamism as well as local attachments to village, city, clan or tribe, there was a clear sense of Palestine as distinct territorial unit with "shared language, territory and administrative structures." (Greenstein 82) This sense was based upon various conceptions of Palestine as a sacred entity or holy land, as a distinct administrative unit created by Ottoman reforms, and as a distinct territory coveted by various groups of Europeans, including Zionists, due to its strategic and religious importance. (Khalidi 1997) Although pan-Arab nationalism gained favor in the aftermath of World War I, along with the inclusion of Palestine in an Arab Syrian state, the crushing of an independent Arab Syria by the French in 1920 turned the focus of nationalist sentiment inward toward Palestine itself. (165) The Palestinian identity, thus came to be based largely on the indigenousness of a people in a distinct territory, like many of the other national movements that eventually developed into states throughout the Middle East. This territorial identity was strengthened even further by the advent of Zionism, in the threat it presented of continued domination by a

foreign power. The threat of Zionism helped to unify the people in the specific territory and increase their solidarity against this common threat. (172)

As the Zionists increased their hold on the land, their claims to indigenousness and historic right to the land directly contradicted the Palestinians' belief in their own historic roots and rights to the territory, and thus further strengthened the formation of a cohesive identity to oppose these claims. "The indigenous status [gave] each group a sense of exclusive entitlement" which led to a "a pattern of mutual denial between the two communities." (Rouhana 1995, 764) While many Jews "believed that the Arabs who inhabited the land did not really have the characteristics of a nation and thus did not have legitimate roots in it," (763) the Palestinians saw the growing population of Jewish settlers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as an "illegitimate external element." (Greenstein 209) In contrast with the small minority of Jews who had lived in the area for centuries, these new settlers were seen as immigrants who were "'ignorant of the language, customs, and character of the Arabs'" (209) and who maintained separate institutions which competed economically and politically with those of the Palestinian population. The order of the society as a whole was being threatened by a group of people who were not even a part of that society, yet who were managing to cause major turmoil in the life of the Palestinian community. As a result, "the national community as a whole was beginning to perceive itself as facing an existential threat." (142) In threatening the rights and social and economic status of the Palestinian people, the Zionist settlers were challenging the aspects of their identity which were based on their existing place on the territory and position in society. This process only served to strengthen the Palestinian reaction, and reinforce the claims by the local elites, along with

the rest of the population that, they, rather than the Zionists, deserved preeminence in the territory. Since the earliest days of the Zionist settlement, each group has thus sought to deny the other's identity in order to legitimate its own claims, which would justify exclusive political control.

The formation of the state of Israel in 1948, and especially the Israeli military occupation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967, vindicated the Zionist claims to the land. For the Palestinians, the "fear of domination by ethnic strangers" (Horowitz 188) turned into a reality, as thousands of Palestinians fled their homes and were subjected to foreign rule. The scattering of the Palestinian people to live under Israeli, Jordanian, Egyptian, Syrian and Lebanese rule, often as refugees living in temporary camps, supported Israeli denial of the Palestinian identity by empirically damaging their claims to a distinct identity as a people rooted in a specific territory. Not only were the Palestinians subject to domination in their own territory, but in most places they were poorly treated and prevented from assimilating into the societies around them, thus relegated to becoming second-class citizens with limited rights. (Khalidi 1997, 182) While such segmentation from other Arab societies has only strengthened the identity of the Palestinians as a distinct people worthy of preeminence in their own territory, the denial of this identity by Israel and much of the world has constituted a major blow to their collective dignity. Their low status in almost every society since 1948, particularly in their own territory, has further generated feelings of inferiority and resentment. Since a fundamental prerequisite to achieving "an adequate form of social identity" is the "acceptance [of that identity] by the out-group," (Tajfel 84) the rejection of Palestinian identity has been devastating to the self-esteem of the Palestinian people. One of the

central goals of the Palestinian national movement has therefore been the affirmation by the world community "that there is a Palestinian community and that it has material, spiritual, and historical connection with Palestine are indisputable facts." (Palestinian National Charter, Art. 7) The Palestinian people's need for formal recognition of their collective identity is essential to rebuild their damaged self-esteem as individuals and as a group, and will continue to dominate their personal identities and relations with others until that need is fulfilled.

In addition to challenging the core of the Palestinian identity, the actions of the Zionist settlers and of the Israelis in forming and maintaining their state have impinged upon what the Palestinians perceive as their inalienable rights, and disrupted their place in society by turning them into second class citizens. This "challenge to self-esteem [and] to place in [the] territory" (Horowitz 219) has driven the Palestinians to "status discontent [which] appears when the prestige accorded to a group is less than group members believe is merited." (218) While the first disputes between the settlers and the Palestinians were primarily over land, (Shafir 200) according to the Palestinians these disputes involved their fundamental rights to that land, which were being consistently violated by Jewish settlers. The initial conflicts were largely a result of the confusion between "two theories and legal bases of ownership: the absolute right of private ownership on which European capitalism rested," and which Jewish settlers sought to exercise by removing tenant farmers from the land they purchased, and "the more diffuse, but not less extensive, rights of usage in practice in many pre-capitalist societies," which entailed that the peasants had the traditional right to farm the land regardless of ownership. (201) The Jews who expelled Palestinian peasants from land which had been

legally purchased, were therefore seen by the Palestinians as violating their fundamental rights to land use. This infraction was particularly severe, given that for Palestinian peasants, "land was...the source and guarantee of their long-term security, and not merely an economic asset." (Greenstein 142) From the beginning of Zionist settlement, therefore, as the Zionists sought to advance their claims to the land, whether legally or illegally, they disrupted what the Palestinians perceived to their legitimate status in society and violated what they understood to be their basic rights.

The Zionist goal of ensuring the preeminence for Jews in Israel has continued to generate policies which make it constantly clear to the Palestinian people that they are in a lower position in the status hierarchy than Jews, and which further damage the self-esteem of Palestinians and build up their resentment. These policies have taken the form of consistent violations of political, civil and human rights, which compound psychological damage from the feeling of inferiority with material damage from social, political and economic deprivation. The violation of land rights continued to play an important role, with the flight of thousand of refugees from the their land in 1948 and in 1967, much of which may have been forced by the Israeli military for strategic reasons. (Kaufman 146) The loss of land has denied thousands of Palestinian peasants the means to sustain themselves economically, forcing many of them to live in extremely densely populated and poverty-stricken refugee camps[7]. Under the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the Israeli military authorities continue to demolish Palestinian houses and seize Palestinian land for settlement expansion and road construction. These actions

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[7] According to data provided by UNRWA, in 1995, out of a total Palestinian population of 6.6 million, 3,181, 064 were refugees, of whom 991, 577 were living in refugee camps, in either Jordan, the West Bank, Gaza, Syria or Lebanon.   In the West Bank, 131,705 lived in refugee camps out of a total of 1,932,637, and in Gaza, 362,626 lived in camps out of a total of 1,037,067. (http://www.cbs.gov.il)

directly benefit Jewish settlers in the form of larger settlements and roads designated "for

Jewish use only," at the expense of the economic and emotional suffering of Palestinians

from the loss of land and homes. (LAW) Furthermore, while the Palestinians are

deprived of land and limited in the use of water, the Jewish settlers nearby in the West

Bank and Gaza are granted "preferred access to water and land [and] special security

arrangements." (Kimmerling & Migdal 253)

Palestinians have also been denied political rights. While the Arab citizens of

Israel are partially integrated into the democratic process, the Palestinians under Israeli

military rule have, until the Oslo Accords, been denied any form of political

representation or autonomous decision-making, in order to "forestall any Palestinian

nation-building process or the creation of a Palestinian sub-center competing with those

[institutions] of the Israeli control system." (Kimmerling 279) As Israelis authorities

have pursued their security needs through tight control of the Palestinians, the

Palestinians have been forced to endure a strict military regime which restricts political,

economic and social activity. This situation is especially frustrating, since the "openly

split legal system" (Shafir & Peled 255) in the West Bank and Gaza Strip applies Israeli

civil law to Jewish settlers, while neighboring Palestinians in the same territory are

subject to military law. The military regime has even violated Palestinian civil and

human rights through the use of torture and administrative detention, house demolitions,

deprivation of services and excess taxes, for both disciplinary and strategic purposes.

(LAW)

In addition, the Palestinians have been segmented economically, and subordinated

to the interests of the Jewish population. Palestinian workers, both citizens of Israel and

non-citizens living in the West Bank and Gaza, have been relegated to "work for lower wages than Israelis in menial tasks," (Khalidi 500) in order to fill the "least advantageous job slots," (Shalev 116) and to function as a "supply of cheap labor" (Kimmerling & Migdal 251) for Israeli employers. The Palestinian work force has been strictly regulated by Israeli authorities according to the needs of Jewish workers and employers, (Shalev 115) in order to maintain economic preeminence for all Jews. Meanwhile their opportunities for economic development have been restricted to appease Israeli security concerns. Every aspect of Palestinian life has thus been subjected to a lower status, based on the goal of Jewish security and preeminence in the Israeli state. As they undergo physical and material hardships, Palestinians are constantly reminded of their lower status, in their economic, political and social life, with little opportunity to change it.

In treating the Palestinian people as second class citizens in their territory, Israelis have not only denied a central aspect of their identity and threatened their self-esteem, they have also fueled a great deal of violent resentment on the part of the Palestinians. Resentment, according to a conception by Petersen, is "the emotion that stems from the perception that one's group is located in an unjust subordinate position on a status hierarchy." (Petersen 13) As a response to the blow to self-esteem resulting from the perception that one's primary identity group is viewed as inferior to others, "resentment increases the saliency of the desire for self-worth, placing that goal above desires for safety and vengeance." (15) The emotion of resentment then sharpens the cognitive awareness of an unjust hierarchy even further. (15) This heightened awareness increases the readiness to act, often violently, in order to change that situation. In many cases, "aggression" is seen as a highly effective method to "reverse the status relationships

between two groups and thus eliminate the source of resentment." (16) Particularly when the status relationship is so entrenched that there appears to me no alternative way to transform it, "if aggression can establish or reestablish a group's dominant position, then the benefits of such aggression may be higher than the economic and political benefits of cooperation, and aggression thus becomes instrumental." (16) Therefore, much of the violence on the part of Palestinians toward Israelis can be explained by the high level of resentment which induces them to act violently in order to try to change the relationship which has been so damaging to their self-esteem. It is not the resentment itself that causes violent action, rather resentment amplifies the social, political and economic grievances experienced by Palestinian people and motivates them to act against Israelis in order to try to change the situation. Indeed, the wide-spread, structural grievances are continuously highlighted in the lives of most Palestinians by "the day-to-day experiences of 'small' humiliations." (17) These small humiliations are a part of every Palestinian's life, for whom "personal experiences of routine harassment, occasional beatings, arrests without formal charges, and humiliating searches by security forces at roadblocks and checkpoints," (Kimmerling and Migdal 261) are a constant reality to be feared and expected. These experiences, which virtually no Palestinian escapes, serve to "build a reservoir of resentment," (Petersen 17) which encourages Palestinians to act, often violently, in order to eliminate the cause of a hierarchy which they perceive as unjust. The mass uprising of the Intifada, in which large segments of the Palestinian population participated in peaceful and violent activities to protest the Israeli occupation, despite all of the costs presented by the repressive Israeli responses, was motivated by their need to reverse the status relationships between Israelis and Palestinians. Long after the end of

the Intifada, Palestinians continue to take the streets in often violent demonstrations in order to expose their aggression and force the Israelis and the rest of the world to take notice of their frustrations.

Ultimately, in order to end their persecution and subordination and to restore their collective dignity, the Palestinians have sought to create their own sovereign state in which their higher status and group identity can be positively affirmed and maintained. Much like Zionism, the Palestinian national movement has sought to achieve dignity through the control of a state, where the legitimacy of their identity and their preeminent status can be publicly affirmed and institutionalized, and future threats of subordination can be averted. Before the formation of the Israeli state, the Palestinians sought to maintain their status and collective identity through "the refusal of the Palestinian-Arab national movement...to accept any arrangement based on principles other than those of majority rule." (Greenstein 213) By countering the Zionist trend toward exclusion with, using Horowitz's expression, a "lawfully expressed demand, not for separatism, but for political inclusion on equal terms," (Horowitz 201) the Palestinian leadership was seeking to ensure the status of Palestinians through demographic dominance in a democracy.

The formation of the Israeli state, however, disrupted the existing order so completely toward the situation of Jewish dominance, that the only way to improve their status was to assert Palestinian sovereignty in the place of Israeli sovereignty. The history textbooks used by Palestinian students portray Israel as an illegitimate product foreign occupation, while Israelis are described as "the victimizers, the killers, the confiscators, the aggressors, the home demolishers and the occupiers." (Firer & Adwan

96) By denying the legitimacy of the Israeli state, or even of the Israelis' right to exist in the territory, these images have justified violent resistance and terrorism towards Israelis. Prior to the Oslo Accords, the stated goal of the Palestinian national movement was to "exercise self-determination and sovereignty" over all of Palestine through the "elimination" of the Jewish state. (Palestinian National Charter) Only by gaining control over a state in the same territory could the Palestinian people ensure preeminent status, in order to "enjoy in it their collective national and cultural identity...and human dignity," (State of Palestine Declaration of Independence) and to maintain this identity in the face of future threats. Since preeminence in the territory has been such a fundamental aspect to their identity, many Palestinians feel that their identity will continue to be denied, and their self-esteem will remain low, until they have control over a state which publicly and symbolically affirms and legitimizes that identity and its claims to the territory. Much like the Zionists before them, being granted equal status or access to adequate resources in another state, such as Jordan or Egypt, remains inadequate in affirming their identity. Although control over the entire territory of Israel has been accepted as a practical impossibility by the current Palestinian leadership, the acquisition of full political control over a state with a Palestinian character in the territory of Palestine remains the central goal of the national movement. By fighting for control of a state, the Palestinians have sought to not only break out of their second class status and humiliation, but to publicly affirm their identity and restore their collective self-esteem as a Palestinian people.

The struggle for collective dignity and relative status has caused a fundamental insecurity for both Palestinians and Israelis. Both groups have sought to legitimize their

collective identities in opposition to each other, and to affirm and maintain these identities through the control of state institutions. State control would allow them to symbolically affirm their collective identities and claims to the land, and to publicly institutionalize and maintain their preeminent status. Yet in striving to achieve, or maintain this dominant status in the same territory, Israelis and Palestinians have sought to deny each other's claims, thus denying the basic tenets of their identities, and causing fundamental insecurity in the members of both groups. This fundamental insecurity has created a situation, consistent with the "security dilemma," in which each side feels the need to act aggressively in order to eradicate the threat which generates that insecurity. Rather than a purely physical threat, however, the insecurity is motivated by the fundamental challenge to the identity of each group, which constitutes a threat to collective dignity and to individual self-esteem. Since self-esteem and dignity play a crucial role in the way individuals view themselves in society, the struggle to affirm group identity and achieve psychological security assumes a central role to every individual's life. "Group entitlement, conceived as a joint function of comparative worth and legitimacy…explains why the followers follow, accounts for the intensity of group reactions, even to modest stimuli, and clarifies the otherwise mysterious quest for public signs of group status." (Horowitz 226) Jews and Palestinians all over the world who identify with the Israelis and Palestinians in the area therefore feel personally committed to pursuing the struggle, even though they are not personally affected by the violence or difficult conditions. This conception also explains why violence appears to be the only way to affirm a collective identity and ensure preeminent status, by eradicating the threat inherent in the other group's identity, even though violence increases the potential for

physical harm through retaliation by the other side. The protracted nature of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can thus be explained as a struggle of two entire peoples for basic psychological needs. As a result, it will most likely continue until those needs are somehow satisfied on both sides.

The material grievances of the Palestinians and the physical threat felt by Israelis achieve special salience as part of the overall struggle to achieve psychological security through the affirmation of group identity. At the same time, these grievances exacerbate psychological insecurities, by damaging self-esteem through perception of lower status, and by fueling fear and resentment which highlight the need for immediate, and often violent, action. Due to the interconnection of the psychological and material aspects of the struggle, the conflict can not be resolved by addressing material grievances alone. Even if Palestinians did manage to improve their economic and social circumstances, and Israelis managed to somehow eliminate physical threat, both sides will most likely continue to feel threatened until their deeper psychological needs for collective dignity and averting future threat are met. The importance of psychological needs is evidenced in the importance of symbols in the conflict In many cases, the symbolic value of violent episodes become more important than their tangible effects on the lives of the people involved. (Ezrahi 107) Some of the most contentious issues, such as sovereignty over Jerusalem, are indeed "symbolic issues," (Agnew 50) which have less effect on the material lives of people than on their need to symbolically affirm the basis of their identities. At the same time, a purely symbolic solution that does not address the material aspects will perpetuate resentment, fear and hostility. Any resolution of the conflict

should therefore seriously address both psychological needs for security and self-esteem and the material and structural conditions.

The interconnection of the psychological and material aspects of the conflict presents important implications for it potential resolution. On the one hand, the "security dilemma," in which each group acts violently toward the other in order to eliminate the source of threat to physical security, would dictate that the best way to end the violence would be through the complete physical separation of Israeli and Palestinians in order to prevent their violent interaction. (Kaufman) However, simply separating the two peoples would not satisfy both sides' psychological needs for affirmation of their collective identities and rights to exist in the territory. A crucial step for any process of peace is therefore for "each side to acknowledge that the other belongs in the land and has rights there." (Kelman 49) The Oslo Accords did provide a formal recognition by the leaders on both sides of the distinct identity of the other group as a people with a right to exist, through the exchange of letters of recognition between Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin. (see Appendix 3) This has been a significant – though incomplete – step toward mutual recognition of each others' rights to live in the territory. Yet despite this exchange by the leaders, many of the people on both sides continue to deny each others' claims and aspirations, and remain insensitive to each others' grievances. This continued denial and lack of understanding on the popular level has hindered progress toward a political agreement which recognizes the Palestinian right to a state, leaving open the possibility for a regime of continued, though modified, Israeli control. (Said) Moreover, even with an eventual agreement between the political leaders, as the rest of the people continue to

deny each other's identities and fail to appreciate each others' perspectives, they will

continue to live in a state of antagonism and latent hostility, or even violent instability.

If the Oslo Peace Process does eventually lead to the creation of a separate

Palestinian state alongside an Israeli state, it will go a long way in providing the

Palestinians a means to affirm their collective identity. However the nature of the

territory and the inherent interdependence of the Israelis and Palestinians who live in it

renders complete separation between these peoples impractical and largely unfeasible[8].

The main barriers to successful resolution of the current peace process, the so-called

"final status" issues such as the status of Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza,

Palestinian refugees and their right of return, the distribution and management of shared

water resources, and the status of Jerusalem, a city claimed uncompromisingly by both

cities as their political and religious capital, are all issues that address the many points

that would inherently unite the two states. These complex issues will inevitably require

some degree of mutual cooperation and compromise in their resolution. In the long term,

even if a political agreement does address these issues, no matter what those political

arrangements turn out to be, conflicts will inevitably arise as Palestinians and Israelis try

to share the land and its limited resources. Although it may be beneficial for appeasing

insecurity in the short term, separation would not help people to deal with these day-to-

day issues constructively, nor would it address the material conditions which continue to

fuel resentment. In order to resolve both the final-status issues and the long-term issues

of interdependence, people on both sides will need to recognize each others' basic

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[8] In one consequence of increased separation, Israeli employers, fed up with the unreliability of Palestinian labor due to closures and permit requirements by the Israeli military, have sought to replace Palestinian labor with large numbers of (sometimes illegal) foreign workers from African, South East Asia and Eastern Europe, already causing unforeseen social tension within Israel.

psychological and material needs and aspirations, to help generate compromises and cooperative strategies that address these needs and fairly distribute the material resources at stake.

This type of mutually beneficial solution would entail at least an understanding of the basic foundation of the identity of each group and the needs of all involved to achieve some measure of dignity and self-esteem through the recognition and legitimization of each other's identities. Such an understanding would "require profound change of beliefs by leaders and negotiators, as well as the society at large." (Rouhana & Bar-Tal 767) Even within the current Oslo Peace Process, a change in the nature of the relationship, including a minimum of mutual recognition by the Israeli and Palestinian people, is necessary to achieve sufficient public support for the peace process to culminate in a mutually acceptable solution, that satisfies both groups' needs for psychological and physical security. Certain government elites and various other small groups of people on each side have begun to cultivate this type of relationship and have acknowledged each other's identities and fundamental needs. A growing number of non-governmental organizations have sought to widen this transformation to include wider segments of the population. Active on all levels of society, these NGOs are helping Palestinians and Israelis to learn about each others' points of view and underlying needs and aspirations, and fostering mutual acknowledgement of each others' rights and collective identities. At the same time, they are working to alleviate the material conditions which fuel conflict, and to provide the means and facilities for Israelis and Palestinians to resolve the difficult conflicts that will continue to arise as they live on a small territory.

CHAPTER 2

The Role of NGOs

The growing field of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) active in resolving conflict and building peace has brought promising developments and innovations in transforming relations between peoples. Being outside of formal government, flexible and informal, NGOs appear to be specially suited to building peace between people in ways that are not, and often cannot, be addressed by governments. At the same time, NGOs are discovering a new set of challenges as they evolve and establish themselves in Palestinian and Israeli societies and around the world. While the concept of an NGOs, and many of the larger international NGOs themselves, emerged primarily from North America and Europe, other societies possess their own characteristic non-governmental entities which can be included in the category of NGO. These charitable societies, religious, social or community-based organizations, and grassroots social or political movements already possess many of the traits of Western NGOs. As the field of NGOs around the world has expanded considerably in the last two decades, the influx of international NGOs into other societies and the increasing amounts of funding from

wealthy governments and foundations abroad have influenced these indigenous NGOs

and helped them to improve their effectiveness. Meanwhile, as they sustain various types

of relationships with different segments of the populations, with governments, local

institutions, and other private and public actors, their characteristics are shaped by to

local traditions and culture.

In Israeli and Palestinian societies, due to the centrality of ideology to the political

and social life of both peoples, NGOs have historically been tied to political factions and

ideological movements. Given the intense political and ideological nature of Israeli-

Palestinian relations, NGOs concerned with peace are especially impacted by the

constantly changing political situation, by their relationships with governments and

donors, and by the ways in which different segments of the society perceive NGOs and

their activities. While NGOs possess distinct advantages for bringing together

Palestinians and Israelis and building peace, and are working to establish themselves and

improve and expand their activities, they are also struggling to navigate complex

relationships with governments and quasi-governments, political parties, international

donors, various segments of the public, and even with each other.

The NGOs that are active in building peace between Israelis and Palestinians vary

widely in their forms, actions, goals and ideologies. Most generally, NGOs can be

defined as "privately organized and privately financed agencies, formed to perform some

philanthropic or other worthwhile task in response to a need that the organizers think is

not adequately addressed by public, governmental, or United Nations efforts." (Anderson

1996, 344) While the widespread notion of NGOs presented in this definition connotes

organizations which focus on tasks that lie outside of the political sphere, many NGOs in

Palestinian and Israeli society are primarily concerned with political issues. The notion of "peace NGOs" in those societies usually brings to mind advocacy or consciousness-raising organizations. These organizations raise public awareness, and lobby governments toward changing their policies to address human rights issues and to negotiate acceptable agreements with Palestinians and other neighboring states to improve relations. In addition to these higher profile organizations, an increasing number of NGOs are working toward peace outside the political sphere, by bringing together Israelis and Palestinians in various capacities or by providing essential services to people in each society. Some focus specifically on promoting mutual understanding and awareness of both sides' suffering, by facilitating humanization activities such as dialogues and encounters. Others work on addressing the tangible needs that fuel the conflict, by working within each community or by facilitating practical cooperation in order to transform relationships. Since transforming the relations and promoting peace is intimately tied to politics, many organizations that combine various types of activities or develop innovative ways to work toward peace.

NGO activity has been expanding, in Israeli and Palestinian societies and around the world, largely as a result of the unique attributes that make them well suited to delivering certain services. "NGOs are valued for their clarity of purpose and the humanitarian basis of their operations; for their encouragement of grassroots participation in economic, social and political life; for their innovation and creativity in solving problems; and for their ability to cross national boundaries with a message of interdependence and humanitarian concern wherever people are in need." (Anderson 1996, 345) The NGOs involved in joint activities with Israelis and Palestinians have

managed to bring people together at various levels of society, and empower them to work for each others' benefit amidst an atmosphere of conflict and antagonism. In helping people cross boundaries to form "hundreds of Israeli-Palestinian dialogue groups of various sizes and orientations" (Hermann 47) starting in the 1980's and continuing, through the years of the Intifada, into the present, they have exposed the plight of the people on either side and helped to foster mutual understanding. By working to legitimize negotiation and mutual acknowledgement of each others' nationhood and right to the territory, they arguably created an atmosphere that enabled the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993, and have helped the process to continue since then. (Hermann 124) The "expertness and flexibility" (Gordenker & Weiss 37) of NGOs in particular fields such as the environment, health care or business relations, have enabled them to address tangible needs on both sides, and facilitate various types of cooperation and build constructive relationships between Israelis and Palestinians. In addition, the "cultural normal operating style of NGOs," (34) has allowed them to adapt to local cultures and traditions and work in ways that are most suited to addressing the needs of the local people. Indeed, the fact that many, if not most NGOs arise locally from people's own initiatives guarantees that they address the needs of the local community, and contribute toward a peace which is acceptable to the wide public on both sides.

Perhaps the most important attribute of NGOs is their ability to address issues in the process of building peace which are not addressed by governments. Many of the more visible and well-known peace NGOs involved in advocacy and consciousness-raising are pushing for political change. Other activists who bring Israelis and Palestinians together in humanization activities, or in addressing more tangible needs,

emphasize that their work lies outside the political sphere. While politicians may (or may not) be working on political agreements to create the basic framework for peaceful relations, NGOs are "filling in the gaps between those agreements and the reality on the ground" by doing the work that governments can not, or do not wish to do. The NGOs involved in breaking down psychological barriers, promoting mutual understanding and transforming relationships between people, are dealing with long-term social and psychological processes, which lie outside of the field of politicians who are absorbed with more immediate political considerations. Moreover, the political process itself is inevitably influenced by foreign and domestic pressure, along with other political factors that are not readily accessible to many of the people who are affected by them. At some point, people on both sides will need to understand and come to terms with the major compromises and transformations, especially after several generations of antagonism and hostility. NGOs working in humanization activities are involving people in the process by increasing their level of understanding of each others' circumstances. As a result, political compromises that are discordant with peoples' expectations can, up to a point, be more easily accepted and are less likely to leave them alienated and disillusioned. (Lederach 1999, 241) Meanwhile, those NGOs involved in addressing more tangible needs are dealing with pressing problems, such as environmental conservation, health care, economic development, and other basic services. Although these services may or may not fall into the sphere of governmental activity, they are often not being addressed due to the due to lack of resources, or absence of cooperation between official and non-official actors on either side. Indeed, the provision of many services cannot wait the time it takes for a political settlement to be reached. In some cases, the joining of various

private and public actors for a cooperative project to address pressing needs can only be facilitated by an NGO which is not subject to as many political constraints or financial costs. All of these activities require the participation of NGOs that have the motivation, flexibility and specific expertise required to deal with those many issues which lie outside of the political sphere.

The ability of NGOs to reach various groups of people and to make progress in improving relations between Israelis and Palestinians is largely determined by their unique historical role in their societies, and how they interact with the various segments of the population. The United States and Europe have relatively long traditions of non-governmental activity, though their activity in all aspects of life has most rapidly proliferated in the last few decades of the twentieth century. In Israel, meanwhile, NGOs are a much more recent phenomenon which tend to be associated in the popular perception with a particular political ideology. Under a state which has been characterized by powerful "centralist and collectivist tendencies" that discouraged non-governmental activity, (Hermann 32) and that has, especially at its origin, provided for most aspects of social and economic life, non-governmental organizations did not widely emerge until the mid 1970's. As the political system became more stable and the society somewhat more affluent, as the sense of immediate external threat declined after the military victory in 1967, and as the competence and authority of political decision makers was increasingly challenged starting after the 1973 October War, "non-profit organizations mushroomed in many spheres of activity." (Hermann 33) Yet most services continued to be provided by governmental or quasi-governmental agencies, and

only in the last few years has the government sought to partly refrain from taking such an active role, leaving open a bigger space for non-governmental work.

One of the best know sectors of non-governmental activity has been political advocacy groups. Since the late 1970's, several NGOs and grassroots movements have sought to promote peace by challenging the official and dominant ideology that elevated the pursuit of military might as the only means to maintain Israeli security and its claims to the land. Through public protests and political activism, these organizations have advanced an alternative ideology which favors compromise and nonviolence as the means to achieve security and stability. (63) Though the more radical groups go so far as to openly challenge the Zionist basis of Israel as a state primarily for Jews, the majority of groups prefer to increase their legitimacy among the population by explicitly affirming their loyalty to the state and its Zionist ideals. Yet due to their alternative ideology, most peace groups have acted as an opposition movement to the political establishment, as well as to the mainstream of the population. Many of the groups that organized dialogue groups and joint activities prior to the Oslo Accords did so largely as a means to protest government policies and present their ideological alternative of cooperation and mutual understanding as a practical and successful endeavor. Since the notion of compromise and cooperation with Arabs has been perceived as an ideological, and thus political, position, any individual or group that advocates such a notion is perceived to be on the Left, if not far Left, of the Israeli political spectrum. The ideological balance has somewhat shifted in recent years as more than half of the Israeli public has come to accept the possibility of a Palestinian state, (124) and since the Likud, the dominant right-wing party, accepted the Oslo Peace Process and the notion of territorial compromise.

Despite these recent changes, however, the ideological division between the Right and the Left is still more or less firmly in place. Those who position themselves on the Right generally "adhere to the zero-sum definition of Israeli-Arab relations" (62) and the aggressive pursuit of security, while those on the Left are "ready to make significant territorial and other concessions in order to achieve peace" (61) while maintaining security as a top priority. Since most right-wing and left-wing Israelis, still elevate Israeli security as a central goal, anyone who appears to prioritize Israeli-Palestinian coexistence or cooperation above security, or who opposes Israeli military practices which are carried out in the name of security, is perceived to be positioned on the Left of the spectrum. Those who question the Zionist basis of the state are on the fare left, or even the margins of what is acceptable. Although many NGOs claim not to advocate a specific ideology or political position, those NGOs that engage in joint activities or advocate compromise and mutual acceptance are widely perceived as left-wing organizations, and are frequently ignored, if not opposed, by at least half of the Israeli population which considers itself right-wing.

In addition to their specific political position, due to the relatively recent emergence of non-governmental activity, as well as the socio-demographic homogeneity of the activists, NGOs have, until recently, been largely perceived to promote the narrow interests of certain political and demographic constituencies. Although NGOs which promoted peaceful relations and cooperation have historically been primarily political advocacy movements, some of which also conducted dialogues and joint activities, many of the newer NGOs that have emerged in the last decade have sought to build peace outside of the political realm by providing services to the community or by bringing

Israelis and Palestinians together for humanization activities and cooperative projects. In order to include the broadest possible range of constituencies from within the population, some of these organizations have sought to rid themselves of any politically or ideologically specific image by attempting to stay neutral with respect to politics. Yet even those organizations, often continue to be perceived as catering to a specific interest within the population. Many of the charitable societies and other organizations that provide social services to the community are actually set up and funded by political parties in order to extend their influence over the population. This situation is changing as the government is becoming less active, and with the influx of immigrants and accompanying social issues, a greater number of NGOs are arising to fill in the gaps. Yet NGOs in general are still perceived in the eyes of much of the public as parochial interest groups which cater to a specific political constituency. (Benvenisti) This narrow image is strengthened by the socio-demographic make-up of the activists who run NGOs, especially those that are working toward peace and conflict resolution. The impression, confirmed by a recent report, that the members of most peace NGOs are of "Ashkenazi/European origin," (Hermann 79) "secular," (68) possess a "higher than average level of education," (82) and include "a disproportional representation …of activists and members born in the United States and other English-speaking countries," (79) gives those organizations an "exclusionist image" to people who do not share these socio-demographic traits. (81) These stereotypes are not entirely true, and many activists make special efforts to include populations that are not represented in their activities. Yet the relatively homogeneous, upper-middle-class, Ashkenazi[9] make-up of many NGOs,

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[9] In Israel, the Jews of European origin, or Ashkenazim, have typically made up the upper middle classes and dominated both politically and economically, while the Jews of Middle Eastern or North African

along with the substantial amount of English which is reportedly spoken at their offices and activities, strengthen the image among the rest of the population that peace NGOs are somehow advancing the interests of the dominant class, or even of North Americans and Europeans. Still, not all segments of the population share this image, and the notion of truly non-governmental activity is gaining increasing legitimacy as more such organizations are established and are effectively providing services. NGOs that are promoting peaceful relations through humanization activities or by working to address the needs of the wider population through cooperation, even without advocating a specific ideological or political program, often do report difficulty in including people who are not already committed to their ideals. Depending on their specific activities (as discussed in the following chapters), these organizations are working hard to find ways to expand their participation and reach wider segments of the population.

In Palestinian society, although NGOs are much more established and accepted, they, too, are associated with specific political interests. Non-governmental activity has been an important feature of social, economic and political life, at least since the time of Jordanian and Egyptian rule over the West Bank and Gaza, at which time Palestinians from the educated political elite established "a variety of professional and charitable institutions to address the needs of certain social constituencies." (Adbul Hadi 1997, 67) Although initially damaged by the 1967 war and military occupation, local NGOs soon proliferated to help people meet the challenges of living under military rule. Most organizations were intended not only to provide people with essential services that would usually be provided by a government, such as health care, education, and other social services, but also to mobilize people to resist the Israeli presence and maintain a

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origin, or Sephardim, more frequently make up the lower and working classes.

collective national identity and consciousness. (Dajani 82) These organizations were instrumental in organizing people for the various protests, boycotts and other activities during the Intifada, and their success in securing funding from various outside sources, providing services and mobilizing people toward collective resistance helped to establish them as an integral feature of the society. (Adbul Hadi 1997, 69) Despite sharing a common goal of collective resistance, most organizations were set up and funded by particular political parties and factions, including Fatah, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), the Palestinian Peoples Party (PPP), and Hamas (originally an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood), and have largely competed with each other to "extend their influence in society by providing services." (69) Other organizations have remained independent of political factions. Many of them, aside from some foreign or international NGOs, advocate a specific ideology in addition to providing services. (Hassassian 28) Whatever their different ideologies, and even among those devoted to mutual recognition and nonviolence, a commitment to resistance to Israeli occupation is shared by most, if not all of them.

An increasing – though still small – number of organizations have advocated mutual recognition and nonviolence as a means toward achieving Palestinian statehood, and are even facilitating joint activities with Israelis. Since many of these organizations, and the messages they promote, are relatively new, they have yet to fully establish themselves among the population. By providing valuable services such as community centers, community service projects, or mediation and conflict resolution, they are gaining increasing support and legitimacy within their communities, and are able to

promote their ideals of cooperation and nonviolence. Yet they must compete with other organizations that are working to extend their influence by providing their own services, and which sometimes advocate militant and violent forms of resistance, as in the case of Hamas. The efforts by peace-oriented organizations to establish legitimacy for themselves and their ideals are made more difficult by the fact that many peace organizations seem to frequently pop up – and disappear just as quickly. Many of these short-lived endeavors appear to be little more than attempts by certain people to benefit from the influx of Israeli and foreign funding, without any serious commitment to goals or actions. In addition, most NGOs, along with the PNA's official ideology, oppose cooperation with Israelis as "normalization of relations prior to solving the outstanding political issues, which is problematic, as the peace process is not fulfilling the aspirations of Palestinians." (Hassassian 28) Not cooperating with Israelis is thus seen as an important form of resistance to Israeli attempts to impose their will, organizations which advocate or facilitate cooperation are often regarded with suspicion for betraying the Palestinian cause, even if they cooperate to protest Israeli policies. As a result, these organizations are only slowly gaining support for themselves and the messages they promote. Even while they provide services and increase their legitimacy, NGOs which promote mutual understanding and nonviolence must constantly rethink how to conduct joint activities and advocate cooperation, without alienating people from participating in their activities.

The relationships between NGOs and governments can cause significant constraints to their work, depending on how much independence and flexibility they are allowed in addressing needs that are not addressed by governments, or in constradicting

government policies. In Palestinian society, the emergence of the Palestinian National

Authority (PNA), a quasi-government which is still being formed and struggling to assert

its control, has had a significant impact on NGO activity. NGOs must contend with tense

relations with the PNA, often affecting their ability to procure funding and conduct their

activities. Since the PNA began to establish itself in certain areas of Gaza and the West

Bank in fulfillment of the Oslo Accords, it has sought to incorporate existing NGOs into

itself as part of the process of establishing a unified government that could provide basic

services and maintain the allegiance of the population. Since the PNA is controlled by

the PLO, itself dominated by the Fatah party, and therefore represents one political

faction among many, NGOs that were not affiliated with the PLO have chosen to assert

their independence from the PNA, sometimes remaining highly critical of its policies.

Since the PNA, still in the process of formation and working with limited resources, has

been unable to provide many basic services, such as healthcare, education, housing,

transportation and employment, it has been forced to rely on these existing NGOs.

(Hassassian 29) In order to maintain control, however, "the PNA, considering itself as

the legitimate authority whose responsibility it is to decide on development goals and

priorities, insists that all funds be channeled through its own agencies, which then

allocate the money to the NGOs." (Abdul Hadi 1997, 70) In addition, much of the

funding that NGOs had been receiving from international organizations and foreign

governments prior to the Oslo Accords has been diverted to the PNA in order to help it

set up its infrastructure and administration. (Dajani 83) Thus, NGOs that are working for

peaceful relations yet which oppose the PNA's official policy against cooperation prior to

a political settlement, which are critical of the Oslo Process – regardless of their attitude

toward cooperation with Israelis – or which are critical of the PNA for any other reason, have significant difficulty maintaining these positions while relying on the PNA for funding and official registration. The tension between the PNA and NGOs can be illustrated by the PNA's attempt to pass a law requiring the registration of NGOs with the PNA, culminating in the establishment of a Palestinian Ministry of NGO Affairs in August, 1999. While the PNA justified these measures in terms of helping them to coordinate and complement each others' work, they were widely opposed by NGO activists for requiring too much control by the PNA and overly restricting their activities.

For organizations that continue to resist the PNA's attempts at control, there are still significant amounts of available outside funding, from international organizations, foreign governments, as well as Church and other religious groups. Organizations devoted to promoting peaceful relations with Israel are especially favored by many outside donors who are interested in contributing toward peace. Yet independent NGOs must compete not only with the PNA, but also with a large number of NGOs which are affiliated with the PNA, and sometimes even run by PNA leaders, and which benefit from greater connections and easier access to funding and resources. While these latter groups enjoy considerable latitude and flexibility in their activities due to their connections to the political leadership, other independent NGOs are often prohibited by the PNA from joint activities with Israelis and have greater difficulty in gaining access to resources and bureaucratic requirements[10]. These constraints are most often justified by the official policy which opposes normalization of relations before a political settlement, or simply to

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[10] In one small example of such difficulties, when a group of Israeli teenagers who had participated in the Seeds of Peace program sought to organize a trip to Gaza to visit their Palestinian friends (like most Israelis, they had never been to Gaza), despite having obtained the necessary permits, the PNA prohibited

suit the political circumstances. The competitive relationship with the PNA puts many

NGOs devoted to building peace in a rather precarious position. Though many activists

would prefer to oppose the PNA or stay neutral from it in order to maintain their

ideological commitments, it is often in their best interests to cooperate with the PNA in

registration, securing funding, and obtaining permission to conduct their activities. The

PNA and the NGOs are thus in the process of defining and managing their relationship

with each other. As they struggle between relations of control, competition, indifference

or cooperation, they are working to establish a place for themselves in the society, often

at each others' expense.

In Israel, the government is relatively neutral toward the activity of NGOs,

although the success of their work toward peaceful relations is closely tied to the political

situation as well as to government policies. NGOs are typically registered as *Amuta*, or

non-profit, under a late-1970's Israeli law which allows for tax-exempt status and

requires them to be transparent and accountable to the state government and to the public.

(Hermann 34) Under this framework, most NGO activists feel ample flexibility from the

government to conduct their activities and pursue their ideals. At the same time, given

the political nature of their work in bringing together Israelis and Palestinians, even

NGOs that are not primarily involved in political advocacy have found themselves

actively opposing government policy, and they continue to be widely regarded as an

opposition movement to the government. Following the Oslo Accords, many moderate

peace organizations attempted to ally themselves with the Labor government in order to

portray their dialogues and humanizing activities as an integral aspect of the Peace

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the trip at the last minute, ostensibly in response to recent Israeli bombings in Lebanon, and obviously to
the great disappointment of the teenagers.

Process, and to find ways tfor them to work with the government toward a common goal.

However their efforts were rejected by Labor Party leaders, who sought to distance

themselves from these activities in favor of a narrative which elevated the quest for

Israeli security as the driving force toward peace, (Green) and in order to give themselves

full credit for the Peace Process and consolidate their political control. (Hermann 112)

Since the Oslo Accords, both the Likud and Labor governments have stepped up security

measures such as curfews, closures which prevent Palestinians from leaving the West

Bank and Gaza, strict checkpoints, and permit requirements for both Israelis and

Palestinians travelling between Israel and the West Bank and Gaza. On the part of the

Right-wing Likud government, which was in power between 1994 and 1999, these

actions can be interpreted as attempts to reassert control over the Palestinians process and

undermine the peace process. (Lustick 1997) On the part of the Labor party, such actions

have been part of its policy of increasing separation between Israelis and Palestinians[11].

This policy fundamentally conflicts with many NGOs' ideals of cooperation and mutual

understanding by strengthening physical and psychological boundaries. Practically, the

manifestations of this policy have posed significant logistical difficulties for NGOs that

are working to facilitate joint activities. They have even had the effect of reducing

cooperation between Palestinian and Israeli NGOs to significantly less than what it was

before the Oslo Accords. As the political leaders move closer to a political agreement, if

the eventual settlement calls for continued or increasing separation, NGOs that conduct

joint activities might find their efforts toward cooperation even further curtailed.

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[11] Labor prime ministers Yitzhak Rabin and Ehud Barak have interpreted the Oslo Process as a "divorce" between Israelis and Palestinians, calling for increased physical separation through more rigid borders. Barak has even proposed building an electric fence, along with an elevated highway between Gaza and the West Bank, to keep Palestinians out of Israel and make the separation as complete as possible.

Many organizations, especially human rights and other advocacy groups, continue to rally opposition around specific government policies, such as housing demolitions, settlement construction, and other policies which perpetuate hostility. Since the government has taken an active role toward peace through political negotiations, and since even the left-wing political parties refused to accept the peace activists' recommendations, other organizations find it more constructive to concentrate on providing services to their communities. Many of these local and international NGOs continue to protest specific policies, either on an ideological or practical basis, especially if they interfere with their own work. Others choose to remain as neutral as possible so as not to position themselves in government opposition and risk alienating potential participants. Those organizations with the closest relationships and most extensive connections in both governments, and which generally refrain from public opposition, appear to have the greatest success in securing permits and working through other bureaucratic requirements. By gaining access to governmental support channels such organizations also achieve legitimacy among the widest constituencies. Other activists, meanwhile, point out that by working in cooperation with the Israeli government and refusing to take political stances, these organizations are promoting Israeli interests by supporting the policies that violate the basic rights of Palestinians and perpetuate the state of inequality and hostility between the two groups. Some even contend that certain organizations collaborate with Israeli government security services and become isolated from the NGO community. Those activists that enjoy the closest relationships with the political establishment respond that their cooperation provides them with the legitimacy to reach the widest constituencies, procure the greatest amount of funding, and thus

accomplish their goals most effectively, while close connections sometimes allow them to influence policy from the inside. The question thus remains for both Israeli and Palestinian NGOs of how closely to cooperate with or oppose a government that pursues policies and ideologies that may run contrary to the goals of an NGO, while maintaining the flexibility and neutrality that is necessary for many of their activities.

Another major factor in the activity of NGOs is their relationship with donors. While most NGOs are not significantly constrained by their donors, the priorities and preferences of donors can have major impacts on what types of activities are carried out. For most peace and conflict resolution organizations, the vast majority of funds come from outside the region. The most significant donors include North American and European governments and embassies, international organizations like the World Bank, private foundations, Jewish philanthropic organizations and various Church, Synagogue and other religious groups, most of which originate in North American and Europe. Many of these foreign donors, particularly American and European governments, are interested in supporting not only peaceful relations in general, but the Oslo Peace Process more specifically, while strengthening the stability of both the Israeli government and the PNA along with their ability – and motivation – to carry out the Oslo Process. In addition to these general interests, donors may have more specific interests and agendas which can have major impacts on the relatively small Israeli and Palestinian societies, by influencing NGOs, as well as governments, to reshape their priorities according to the availability of funds. Most NGO activists dismiss the influence of donors on their priorities and activities, as they primarily obtain funding based on their own project ideas, and accept funding either when their priorities coincide with those of donors, or when

donors are convinced by their proposals. A few, meanwhile, admit that they conduct

certain activities primarily because the funding is available. Such donor influence can be

beneficial, since it might encourage NGOs to try alternative approaches, or to conduct

cooperative activities at times when hostility is high and local groups might otherwise be

reluctant. Yet donor influence can also have negative consequences when they promote

their ideas at the expense of the needs of the local population.

The major impact of donors' interests may lie, rather than in what they do fund, in

what they do not fund. While funding has poured in for peace building activities since

the Oslo Process, it has not increased nearly as much for more radical Israeli groups that

challenge the Zionist basis of the state or are heavily critical of the Israeli Labor

government, or for certain Palestinian organizations that are openly critical of the PNA ,

or for any group that openly criticizes the Oslo Process. (Dajani 83, Hermann 96) Those

well-funded organizations that do criticize their governments must inevitably do so in a

way which is consistent with the values and ideals of Western donors, or find other

sources of funding. While this donor preference does increase stability and support for

the Oslo Process and for democratic values and human rights, it can marginalize and even

repress important and legitimate criticism of the Oslo Process, of the PNA and of the

Israeli government[12]. Some activists also complain of the frequently shifting "fashions"

among both donors and NGOs, which favor certain activities at certain times. (Abdul

Hadi) While these "fashions" sometimes engender important innovations, as donors

focus on "fashionable" approaches, or ones that conform with their own ideals and

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[12] Many Israeli and Palestinian activists and intellectuals are critical of the Oslo Process for, among other
reasons, promoting apparent separation, while allowing the Israeli government to maintain tight control
over the Palestinian population through cooperation with the PNA, and denying them the right to a fully
sovereign state, or even to their basic political and human rights.

priorities, they may ignore other approaches which are potentially at least as legitimate and beneficial, and which may even be more appropriate to the local cultures and traditions. Activists in smaller NGOs also complain that funding is monopolized by the bigger and more established NGOs with extensive connections and higher profiles, leaving out their valuable approaches. By intentionally or unintentionally leaving out certain criticisms and approaches to building peace, foreign donors are thus imposing their own vision of peace on the region. All of this is not to say that there are not sources of funding outside of foreign governments, or that NGOs cannot be critical and innovative and still receive funding. As smaller and lesser known organizations are able to prove their success and establish themselves in a given community, they are often able to grow and gain greater access to funding. Yet as the field develops and funding increases for NGO activity in promoting peaceful relations, NGOs and donors alike are faced with important dilemmas as to how to pursue specific ideals while remaining sensitive to local needs and conducting activities that are most likely to improve relations in a way that is beneficial to the people involved.

With increased funding and greater competition for that funding, NGOs involved in building peace have undergone a process of professionalization and institutionalization of their activities. Since the Oslo Accords, there has been a general rise in the level of funding (despite fluctuations and decreases at certain times) for organizations that are working to support the Peace Process and improve relations between Palestinians and Israelis. This increase, along with the somewhat more favorable political climate for cooperation, has enabled NGOs to improve their expertise and capabilities in providing their services skillfully and professionally. While there seems to have been a decline in

advocacy and protest activities, there has been an expansion and improvement in the provision of services in humanization and cooperative projects, away from media attention. The hundreds of ad hoc dialogue groups which generated major media attention in the late 1980's have for the most part been replaced by more professional organizations which use highly trained facilitators and developed techniques, in conducting dialogues and encounters for youths and adults throughout society. While these organizations have rendered many of the original grassroots dialogue groups obsolete, they have also improved the efficacy and benefits of these humanization activities. A greater number of organizations have also been devoting their resources to providing much needed and specialized services to their own and each others' communities, and facilitating cooperative activities in specific fields.

As these organizations have become more professional and effective, they have also faced new challenges and dilemmas in their efforts to provide effective services and remain responsive to changing needs and circumstances. As the number of NGOs increases while the available funding often fluctuates due to donor preferences, organizations have been forced to devote more energy to fundraising, often hiring professional fundraisers or making fundraising a central duty of their directors. (Hermann 97) The success of particular NGOs in establishing themselves and expanding their services to the broadest constituencies seems to be directly related to the extent of their connections and fundraising capabilities. Some of the activists in smaller organizations which do not have the connections or capacities for fundraising, or have preferred not to sacrifice their informal, grassroots nature, are sometimes resentful at the situation where building peace has turned into a kind of business. In addition, as NGOs become more

professional and institutionalize themselves with extensive organizational capabilities,

they are developing a stake in promoting their own interests and in perpetuating

themselves as institutions. While such a process may improve the effectiveness of their

activities, it can also become dangerous if procuring funds and growing as an institution

becomes more central than fulfilling the larger goals of improving relations and building

peace. Although this is barely a problem in most of the small and committed NGOs

which have widely predominated the field, the recent emergence of larger, well-funded

organizations does raise some concern. Activists, donors and the wider public also

criticize certain NGOs for being used primarily as a means to achieve personal gain.

Many people perceive that the increase in foreign funding has promoted corruption,

especially in the PNA, as PNA officials and NGO activists are seen with bigger and

bigger houses and fancier cars while the rest of the population experiences little

improvement. While the amount of actual corruption is inherently difficult to evaluate, it

is likely that most corruption occurs mostly at the top of political hierarchies, while the

majority of NGO activists, as well as civil servants, do not have access to significant

sums of money. (Dajani 85) Whether this is in fact true or not, a much more common

problem than outright corruption is that of mismanagement, along with the prevalence of

expensive, and often extraneous, amenities, which waste considerable funding. Much of

the criticism by outsiders and activists alike relates to the expensive trips abroad,

conferences in fancy hotels, and other showy displays which seem irrelevant to the stated

goals of these organizations. These perceptions of corruption and mismanagement often

lead to widespread criticism of NGOs and their work in general. The process of

institutionalization of NGOs, the realities of corruption and mismanagement, as well as

popular perceptions of corruption and mismanagement, have important implications for the ways in which organizations conduct their specific activities of humanization and cooperative projects. (These implications are discussed in the following chapters.) As NGOs expand their services and strive to increase their funding and expertise, they are struggling to find ways to address these difficult issues and effectively improve their work toward constructive and peaceful relations.

Another important factor of the effectiveness of NGOs is their ability to cooperate with each other and support each other toward achieving shared goals. A major obstacle to the success of NGOs around the world has been their failure to share data and information, and to coordinate and complement each others' efforts rather than competing for the same funds and activities. (Chayes & Chayes) In Palestinian society, cooperation between NGOs is often limited by competing political affiliations and competing ideologies, as a result of which many NGOs compete to provide the same services. Among those who are working toward building peaceful relations, there is less such competition. Since most of those organizations are unaffiliated politically, and there are relatively few of them, they tend to cooperate more extensively. On the other hand, the importance of regional identification in Palestinian society often tends toward separation, for traditional and historical reasons as well due to constraints on transportation and communication created by the Israeli military authorities in their efforts to maintain control of the population. Each region, city and even town within the West Bank and Gaza typically maintains its own network of NGOs, in addition to local leadership and rivalries. The West Bank and Gaza have been largely cut off from each other, increasingly so since the policy of separation that has accompanied the Oslo

Process[13]. Thus while the NGOs within regions or localities often cooperate, so long as they are not affiliated with competing political factions, the differing ideologies and strategies developed by NGOs in different regions with varying circumstances often hinder cooperation between them despite similar goals, especially when combined with regional rivalries and competition for limited funding.

For Israeli NGOs, meanwhile, there has historically been an overarching division based on political ideology, especially among advocacy groups. The more radical groups which criticize the Oslo Accords and sometimes openly challenge the Zionist nature of the state, tend to also criticize the more moderate peace groups for supporting the Peace Process and other government policies. Many of the more moderate groups, meanwhile, expend considerable effort in distancing themselves from the radical groups in order to achieve greater legitimacy among the public. (Hermann 100) This major ideological divide hinders the cohesion and cooperation among the peace movement as a whole. Even among organizations with a similar ideology, as well as among more service-oriented groups which refrain from political advocacy or ideological positions, there exist a variety of more subtle ideological differences, as well as strategic disagreements and rivalries, such as those concerning relations with government, political parties and various constituencies. Although most activists are able to get beyond these differences, they do sometimes hinder cooperation between particular NGOs with similar goals.

Despite these constraints, there is a significant amount of cooperation among both Israeli and Palestinian organizations. While the regional and political separation between

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[13] Until the creation of a safe passage route between Gaza and the West Bank in 1999, Palestinians had to obtain permits from the Israeli military to travel into Israel, or to travel between the West Bank and Gaza. Depending on the political and military situation, such permits were extremely difficult to obtain, and often took months, or years without special connections.

Palestinian organizations has been much more difficult to bridge than the subtler ideological and strategic differences of Israeli NGOs which operate on a more national scale, cooperation does seem to be expanding in both societies. Among Palestinian and Israeli activists alike, a growing overlap between the people who are involved in similar organizations and participate in each others' activities, has helped to foster an extensive network of informal contacts and other means of sharing information and coordinating activity. These contacts are proliferating as organizations increasingly train each others' members in such skills as conflict resolution and facilitation, and activists come together to share approaches and information at conferences and workshops. Groups sometimes even join forces for specific activities in order to benefit from each others' particular expertise. In some cases formal coalitions are built around specific issues, especially around human rights or the environment. Most notably, the Israeli Coalition Against Housing Demolition has successfully united several Israeli and international human rights and other advocacy organizations, while Friends of the Earth-Middle East brings together various environmental organizations from around the region. Most activists thus emphasize that their own organizations engage in tremendous exchange and cooperation and that they enjoy positive relationships with most other groups in their field. At the same time, they can invariably point to a few NGOs that prefer to stay more neutral or removed from the others for ideological or strategic reasons, (although the specific organizations they name often varies, and it is almost never their own organization). Many activists are even surprised to hear of similar initiatives and approaches to those they are working on. This apparent failure of these informal contacts in certain cases, has led certain activists to express the need for a more formal framework for exchanging

information and initiating cooperation between NGOs specifically involved in peace and conflict resolution[14].

Much more difficult than cooperation among Israeli or Palestinian NGOs has been cooperation between them. Some of the work of bringing together Palestinians and Israelis for joint activities is facilitated by a very small number of organizations that are administered jointly by Israelis and Palestinians, like IPCRI, Friends of the Earth-Middle East or PRIME, which benefit from connections and resources in both societies.   Most activities that bring Israelis and Palestinians together are facilitated either by Israeli or Palestinian organizations, often in cooperation with each other. Although many organizations seek to ensure equal decision-making and protect the interests of both sides through joint administrations, others are forced by salient disagreements or by logistical or legal restrictions to maintain separate Israeli and Palestinian organizations which come together on specific projects. Many activists prefer to maintain a separate identity from their counterpart organizations in order to avoid the negative stigmas associated with working too closely with people from the other side and appeal to the wider community. (Hermann 89) Others, especially Palestinians, are concerned they might be influenced or dominated by members of the other side in the context of a joint administration, or unable to fully pursue their own goals and ideologies. Many joint activities are actually initiated by Israeli organizations, that develop a proposal, obtain funding, and find a counterpart Palestinian organization in order to implement their own project which advances their own ideals, without adequate regard for the ideals of the Palestinians involved. Many Palestinians oppose working with Israelis at all before an acceptable political agreement

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[14] During a conference organized by PRIME, in June, 1999, for NGOs involved in peace building, activists expressed the hope that the PRIME or some other organization might serve as such a framework. (Maoz

is signed, as a form of resistance to such Israeli attempts to impose their own interests. Due to these political and ideological differences, along with the widespread antagonism, many activists, especially Israelis, report difficulty in establishing initial contacts with people from the other side for joint activities. (Maoz 65) Indeed, the group of people on both sides who do participate in most joint activities remains limited and activists are struggling to find ways to legitimize their activities and expand participation. Even when they do manage to find partners from the other side, activists and participants must address the tense relations that arise from conflicting motivations or expectations for their work, and which are often exacerbated by the political situation. Even if an agreement is eventually signed between the political leaders, the ability of Palestinians and Israelis to cooperate might be even further constrained, by greater measures of separation between Israelis and Palestinians, or if the settlement is far beyond the expectations and demands of Palestinians, and they continue to resist normal relations with Israelis as a means of protest. Still as NGOs become more experienced in conducting joint activities, they are finding ways to adapt to the needs of both sides and the changing circumstances and expand the benefits of their joint activities for both sides. By conducting successful activities, they are legitimizing their activities and build a solid foundation for peaceful relations between peoples.

As a relatively recent and evolving field, NGOs involved in building peace between Israelis and Palestinians face a great deal of challenges. Their relationships with various segments of society, with political factions and governments, with donors and with each other, often constrain their flexibility and effectiveness as well as their ability to reach various segments of the population. At the same time, as these organizations

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develop new approaches and ways to promote peaceful relations, they are redefining their role in society and increasing their legitimacy and effectiveness. Though NGOs have largely been tied to politics and ideology, they are increasingly moving to separate themselves from political matters, though the inherent political nature of Israeli-Palestinian relations forces them to deal with political constraints and implications of their work. The challenges and dilemmas are rarely clear-cut, and their responses depend largely on the nature of their work and their specific objectives. Some organizations concentrate on overcoming psychological barriers and building mutual understanding and acknowledgement of the other side's needs and aspirations. Others address material conditions and promote cooperative relationships in order to build a framework for resolving contentious issues. The ways in which they are conducting these activities and meeting the many challenges that are involved is the subject of the next two chapters.

CHAPTER 3

The Humanization Approach

In order to create the basis for a lasting peace between conflicting groups, a growing number of non-governmental and grassroots organizations in the Middle East and in other areas of conflict have devoted themselves to working at various levels of society to overcome the psychological and material barriers which hinder peaceful relations. As world attention has focused on devastating conflicts in the Balkans, Central Africa, the Middle East and areas where entire populations are pitted against each other in bloody struggles, foreign and international NGOs have joined or spurred local organizations to find ways of addressing the sources of intractability in these conflicts. While some of this work has been incorporated into the work of traditional humanitarian and development organizations, a growing number of organizations are concerned primarily with addressing the human and psychological dimensions of these conflicts. Israelis and Palestinians in the Middle East and abroad have been engaged in grassroots dialogues and joint activities to overcome the psychological barriers since well before the Oslo Peace Process. At that time, these activities were looked upon with suspicion, and

many were actually illegal under an Israeli law which prohibited political meetings between Israelis and Palestinians. Participants were therefore primarily concerned with influencing public opinion in their societies and pushing their political leadership toward negotiation, by showing that it was possible to reach a common understanding as a basis for a mutually beneficial agreement between the two peoples.

Since the beginning of the Oslo Peace Process, these activities have proliferated into an entire field. Aided by the influx of foreign funds, support from international organizations, and by the more favorable political climate, new organizations have emerged, while older ones, including organizations that were primarily involved in Jewish-Arab relations for Israeli citizens, have established themselves and expanded their activities. These organizations have had to face, on the one hand, the challenge of pushing the often slow and sporadic political negotiations toward a stable solution which would fulfill the basic needs of both sides, despite reluctance to compromise on the popular and political levels. At the same time, many of these organizations have sought to look toward the future and create the basis for peaceful relations, so that Palestinians and Israelis might somehow coexist in a small territory, without the fear and hatred that has been so central to their lives. One way that organizations are addressing these two challenges is by bringing Israelis and Palestinians together in dialogues, encounters, workshops and joint activities to overcome the major psychological barriers between them. By breaking down negative stereotypes and promoting social and political understanding between members of the two groups, these activities can foster participants' sense of the other group's humanity and defuse much of the hostility and mistrust between them. Though such activities are referred to here as "humanization"

activities, they consist of much more than humanization, in that they deal with the most contentious issues to foster complex understanding of the conflict and of both sides' perspectives. In this way, organizations engaged in these activities are working to advance the resolution of the major issues in a mutually satisfactory way, by seeking to influence the public toward acknowledging the other sides' basic needs, and building support for the difficult political compromises which are required to address those needs. Many organizations are also looking beyond what is possible to achieve through current political negotiation, in working to transform the relationship between Israelis and Palestinians and build the foundation for peaceful and normal relations between people.

While the organizations engaged in humanization activities differ in the extent of their commitment to each of the two goals of political change and long-term reconciliation, a primary objective that most of their activities share is to give Israelis and Palestinians the opportunity to break down stereotypes and misperceptions in a safe environment. Such a process of de-demonization can reduce some of the major sources of mistrust and hostility which fuel violence and hinder progress in both the political and social processes of building peace. According to the "contact hypothesis theory," bringing together people under the right conditions can "provide the opportunity for clarifying erroneous perceptions and for relearning by supplying new information." (Ben-Ari & Amir 255) Fueled by psychological insecurity and resentment, as well as by years of violence and open conflict, both sides have developed extremely negative stereotypes of one another as inherently violent, cruel, aggressive, racist, and inevitably out to harm the members of the other side[15]. These negative perceptions, which tend to be widely supported in schools, the media and among people's family and community members, not

only discourage support for a political agreements, or for constructive relationships, but they also justify acts of violence and hostility. Since for most Palestinians and Israelis, contact is limited to unequal and tense interactions between Israeli employers and Palestinian employees, or between Palestinians and Israeli soldiers or settlers, the little interaction that does take place only strengthens negative stereotypes and perpetuates a cycle of fear, hatred and sometimes violence. The activists who organize encounters and joint activities expect that under the right conditions, Israelis and Palestinians can meet each other as human beings who contradict their negative misconceptions, thereby undermining mistrust and hostility toward the group as a whole.

Several organizations therefore target children or adolescents, who have not fully developed the negative images of the other side, and who can be highly influenced by an experience of positive interaction with children from the other side. Such experiences at formative stages in children's lives can lead them to question dominant stereotypes and antagonism as they grow older, learn more about the conflict and interact with members of the other group. Play for Peace, for example, an international organization with a recently established chapter in the Middle East, gives young Israeli and Palestinian children the opportunity to play cooperative games in a supportive environment. Through carefully designed activities, playing together allows them to form positive impressions of each other and encourage them, along with their families and communities, to overcome antagonism and seek constructive interaction as they grow older. As stereotypes and mutual suspicion are broken down, it is hoped that these Israelis and Palestinians will be less likely to treat each other with the disrespect and

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[15] For an description of the nature and dynamics of the stereotypes on each side, see Bar-Tal (1988).

violence which fuels continued hostility, and more likely to cooperate toward settling their disputes and solving shared problems.

Under the wrong conditions, however, and by failing to directly address the contentious issues which divide them, encounters between members of conflicting groups can actually strengthen hostility and hinder cooperation. According to a study by Amir, (1969) a successful encounter requires conditions of equal status between participants, common super-ordinate goals for cooperation, intimate contact rather than casual contact, and institutional support. These conditions may be relatively easy to create for young children who have not developed strong prejudices and are easily encouraged to play together in the right setting. They are much more difficult to achieve among Israelis and Palestinians who have developed intense mistrust and hostility toward each other. Meeting under conditions of unequal status, such as an encounter with uneven numbers of participants on each side, conducted in Hebrew, or funded and run by Israelis, might strengthen Palestinian resentment toward being treated as second class by Israelis. In encounters which lack intimate relationships and specific common objectives, Israelis and Palestinians often retain their adversarial positions and continue to view each other as part of a malicious group, rather than as diverse individuals. Even when the appropriate conditions are achieved through careful preparations, so that stereotypes are dispelled and participants realize that not all members of the other group are malicious and dangerous, the failure of the pure contact model to address the major issues of "interethnic conflict and asymmetric power relations," (Abu-Nimer 9) often leaves the participants frustrated and even more suspicious of each other. If the participants do not deal with the deeper issues, they will not only fail to understand each others' perspectives. They might even

regard the other side even more suspiciously for concealing their malicious intents, and question their motivations for participating in an encounter. If they do confront each other with their grievances, as they most often do, participants are likely to become insecure and defensive and strengthen barriers between them. When an encounter does not carefully address the sources of the conflict, or does so in a superficial or antagonistic manner, deeper insecurities stemming from individuals' definition of their collective identity and exclusive claims to the land are unresolved. Frustration is often amplified when participants' expectations for tangible progress are not met, and they go home to experience the harmful conditions of violence, lower status and humiliation.

Given the stereotypes, mistrust, widespread separation and social, economic and political inequality which persist between Israelis and Palestinians, many humanization activities have criticized for failing to address these potential pitfalls. Activists in the field consistently criticize what has been called the "tourist approach" (Derman-Sparks 402) to humanization, characterized by random, short and ad hoc meetings which lack properly trained facilitators or appropriate attention to the conditions for constructive contact. Critics point, for example, to certain activities sponsored by the European "People-to-People" initiatives, which consist of high-profile, one-time or short-term meetings for political figures, often including trips abroad and other expensive benefits. Requiring little long-term commitment from participants, inadequate attention to the conditions of contact or to the substantive issues of the conflict, such activities appear to be largely for show, demonstrating to the world that there is peace between people, with little real impact on the participants or on the overall situation. The fact that many of these activities are aimed at wealthy political figures at great expense also lends support to

charges that they are promoting mismanagement and corruption by NGO activists and government ministers, while leaving out the rest of the population.

In order to avoid potential pitfalls of the pure contact model and to ensure a positive impact on the participants, many organizations have developed carefully structured approaches that are designed to address the most salient material and psychological issues, for people at all levels of society. In order to ensure conditions of symmetry and equal status, intimate and constructive interactions and sensitive handling of the most contentious issues, several organizations have developed structured programs that integrate practical lessons from experience with theoretical models of problem-solving and conflict resolution. These programs range from short two to three-day encounters, sometimes in a step-by-step format, to lengthier encounters and workshops, to long-term dialogues that can last months or years. To ensure the greatest impact, these activities demand preparation and commitment on the part of the participants. Most organizations also require extensive training and professionalism on the part of the facilitators and organizers, including awareness of the "philosophical and theoretical details of their models," (Abu-Nimer 49) critical reflection on and clarification of their own goals and assumptions, experience going through and evaluating the encounter themselves, as well as extensive commitment and investment in the work. Before even beginning an activity, the facilitators and organizers pay careful attention to ensuring conditions of equal status. Most programs require equal participation of Israelis and Palestinians in the planning and running of an activity, the use of joint teams of Palestinian and Israeli, or neutral facilitators, the location of activities in both Israeli and Palestinian communities or in neutral locations, the use of either English or another

neutral language, or translators for both languages, as well as strict attention to any other factors which might cause the members of either group to feel unequal or uncomfortable. Seeds of Peace summer camp, for instance, in which Israeli and Arab teenagers live together for a period of three weeks, takes extreme care in ensuring that participants feel equal in every aspect of camp life, by conducting it in the United States, enforcing English as the only spoken language, employing neutral and experienced staff, and uniformly enforcing rules of camp that ensure at least superficial equality, like everyone wearing the same T-shirt. Given the high degree of insecurity and mistrust that each side feels toward the other side, the presence of trained and experienced facilitators, along with scrupulous attention to ensuring conditions of equal status throughout an encounter are basic prerequisites to activities which constructively address the most difficult psychological and material issues of the conflict.

In order to ensure preparation and commitment on the part of participants, most organizations require uni-national meetings before and during the course of an encounter. These meetings can prevent overly high expectations, as well as frustration when these expectations are not fulfilled by giving the participants a sense of the structure of the meetings and of the difficult issues to be confronted. (Abu-Nimer 156) Preliminary meetings can also be used to provide the participants with information about the issues, albeit one-sided, to prepare for a discussion in which both sides are adequately and equally well-informed. More significantly, preparing the participants with a deeper knowledge of the issues and allowing them to discuss their own interests before and during the encounter, allows them to strengthen their own positions and increase their solidarity as a group. A group of well-informed participants with a cohesive group

identity are less likely to feel threatened during an encounter when the members of the other group challenge their positions and deny the legitimacy of their collective identity. Eventually, they are better equipped to explore the basis of their own collective identity in relation to the conflict. Uni-national meetings also help to alleviate fears by the participants that the purpose of an encounter is for the other group to 'convert' or assimilate them. A sense of solidarity with other members of their own group often helps them to deal with difficult emotions as they expose their deepest fears and frustrations. Even short encounter programs, such as those run by the School for Peace at Neve Shalom/Wahat al Salam, make sure to reserve time before, during and after the encounter for the participants to get together with the members of their own group. During this time, participants have the opportunity to prepare themselves as individuals and as a group, to reflect on the process as it is taking place in a more comfortable setting than during the encounter, and to make sense of the experience and apply it to their lives after the encounter has taken place.

When the participants are prepared for an encounter, they come together with the people from the other side to explore each other's points of view and work toward a deeper understanding of the conflict. In order to build a basic level of trust and comfort for the most difficult discussions, the participants begin by overcoming major stereotypes, mistrust and fear. The contact hypothesis model for breaking down basic stereotypes and misperceptions is therefore most appropriate at the initial stages of a humanization activity. Most encounters and dialogues begin with some sort of personal introduction or ice-breaker which helps the participants to feel more comfortable with each other as they realize that their worse stereotypes are unfounded. Once the initial

fear has been dispelled, a cooperative activity can bind them together in working toward a common goal, and build a working trust between them. At Seeds of Peace, for instance, campers engage in team sports and trust games which force the teenagers to work together and trust each other at a basic level. Organizations with a focus on activism, such as the Rapprochement Dialogue Centers, the Jerusalem Link for women and Netivot Shalom often break down barriers and build trust between participants by hosting each other for visits and conducting joint political activism toward a common goals. Such joint activities are often the most effective way of establishing a solid working relationship for the members of a dialogue group.

Exploring each others' cultures is another effective way of exposing the humanity of the members of the other group and establishing common ground in cultural similarities and diversity. The Traditional Creativity in the Schools project is built around cultural exploration, through which Israeli and Palestinian children first separately explore their identities through their cultural heritage, before coming together to discover the beauty and diversity of each others' folklore and traditions. During these encounters, they must work together to re-create and share the traditional games, foods and other elements which have helped to shape their cultures and identities. Other programs have used dialogues about each others' religions as a basis for establishing a relationship of trust and common ground. (Mollov) Learning about the other group's culture also helps people to avoid misinterpretations of each others' behavior during encounters, dialogues, and even political negotiations. IPCRI's encounters between high school students combine these approaches in a three step process, in which participants begin with personal level activities to break the ice and dispel stereotypes, then move on to cultural

activities in which they learn about each others' culture and way of life, then finally move on to political activities. Once negative stereotypes have been overcome and a basic level of trust has been established between the members, they are better equipped to confront the most contentious issues which divide them.

At the heart of an encounter or dialogue, participants deal with the most salient issues of contention which drive frustration and hostility toward each other. While many dialogue and encounter groups may simply launch into a discussion in order to bring out and explore various positions on these issues, a much deeper mutual understanding can arise out of an exploration of the underlying psychological and material sources of these positions. The process of exposing the underlying needs and aspirations which drive each side's positions and grievances has a great deal in common with problem-solving approaches to conflict resolution, such as those developed by such practitioners as Burton (1990), Kelman (1998) and Rothman (1992). These scholars have emphasized the importance of understanding the "non-material human needs" such as security and identity, "the denial of which is the source of deep-rooted conflict." (Burton 61) Although certain programs are derived from pragmatic considerations and others make more explicit use of these models, the most effective programs share the goal of exposing the issues which underlie the conflict and shape peoples' positions. In order to understand the positions of each side, participants must get beyond accusations and confrontations by being "introspective about their deep hopes, fears, experiences, and perceptions." (Rothman 59) Participants engage in role plays, share personal stories and are encouraged to reflect upon the underlying causes of their fear and resentment. These activities encourage participants to appreciate the human source of their adversaries'

anxiety and frustration, as well as the motivation for their hostility and mistrust. As personal stories and experiences are revealed, Israelis and Palestinians can learn the basis of each others' fear, resentment and aspirations to affirm their identities in the context of a state on the same territory. Neither side is expected, or even encouraged, to drop its basic demands or agree with the other side's positions. Rather a deep understanding of both sides' aspirations for physical and psychological security and collective dignity can lay the basis for not only a mutual acknowledgement of each other's existence as a people, but a further recognition of both sides' consequent rights to pursue their political and human rights as a people on a territory they both consider to be their home.

The intense difficulty of such a process cannot be underscored. Participants often struggle with feelings of guilt, collective responsibility for the other side's suffering, as well as frustration at the other side's lack of full sympathy for their own positions. Certain Israeli participants, for example, who feel guilty for the actions of their governments often become defensive and antagonistic when Palestinians openly blame them for their suffering. Meanwhile, the Palestinians' frustration with their inability to improve their situations can be exposed and amplified. Uni-national activities before, during, and after the encounter help the participants to deal with these painful emotions and maintain their sense of collective dignity and individual self-confidence that are necessary to assert their basic needs. Yet despite the structured programs of certain encounters, these activities rarely proceed smoothly. An observer coming in at different points during a workshop may be surprised to discover the participants drawing close through mutual understanding at certain times, and engaged in tense and antagonistic debates at other times, "like the playing of an accordion: squeezing together and then

pulling apart." (Volkan 1999, 348) Facilitators must therefore be flexible enough with their models to blend different elements at once, and help the participants address the powerful emotions that arise. While in some cases much progress can be achieved in a short encounter, in other cases participants leave more frustrated than when they arrived, though hopefully with a somewhat different perspective. For dialogues, it often takes months and even years for participants to begin to understand and trust each other. In many cases, it takes a crisis or harmful incident to expose real suffering and promote the empathy which permits greater understanding. At Seeds of Peace, for instance, the teenagers often do not come to appreciate each others' perspectives until news of a terrorist attack or bombing in the region forces them to reach out to one another. At the highest level, discovering their common humanity and the needs and fears they hold in common through personal stories and experiences can result in a deep sense of empathy and common purpose which motivate participants to actively seek ways to alleviate each other's suffering and to end the conflict in a mutually beneficial way. Even the shorter programs which do not reach this stage allow their participants to achieve a deeper understanding of each side's positions on the conflict and how their own actions and the policies of their governments impact the people on the other side of the conflict. Given the vast disparities between Palestinians' and Israelis' understanding of not only the causes of the conflict, but also the expected outcome of political negotiations, of peace in general and even of the encounters themselves, a basic common understanding is no small task. The deeper the mutual understanding of common needs, meanwhile, the stronger are the potential benefits to the individual participants and to their societies.

At the very least, the process of promoting basic understanding among Palestinians and Israelis of each others' humanity and basic needs, and of the way in which each side impacts the other, can prevent the hostile acts and hateful speech which strengthen insecurity and hinder peaceful relations at the political and social levels. As participants in dialogues and encounters come to appreciate each others' humanity and the negative impacts of the conflict, they are less likely to commit and support violent or hostile actions that perpetuate insecurity and resentment. For instance, as Israeli participants discover the way in which the actions of their soldiers and settlers fuel resentment on the part of Palestinians for being treated as second class citizens, they may re-evaluate their own behavior as soldiers, as well as their support for the more detrimental military policies which are justified in the interest of Israeli security, such as closures, curfews, house demolition and land confiscation. Similarly, Palestinian participants might reconsider their support for violent attacks by militant groups, or for the confrontational speeches which strengthen Israeli feelings of insecurity. Each of these violent acts has the potential to reverse and progress toward peace by strengthening negative stereotypes and vindicating the voices on each side that argue that peace is impossible with an adversary who is inherently aggressive.[16] Preventing incitement toward violence is therefore the primary goal of an anti-incitement project conducted by the Catholic Relief Services. This project brings together prominent local religious leaders to develop a greater understanding of each other's perspectives and to find ways of using their leadership to prevent the violent acts and hostile attitudes which hinder progress toward peace. Though not aimed at generating greater understanding among

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[16] Certain right-wing Israeli groups have sought to expose inciteful speech and actions by Palestinians in order to portray then as untrustworthy, and to undermine the peace process. (See Lustick, 1997)

members of the larger societies, it is designed to have maximum impact in reducing incitement by working with the leadership. Yet on a more general level, any project that brings together Israelis and Palestinians to achieve a deeper understanding of each others' positions can reduce support for violent and hateful words and actions, at least among the participants of that project.

Many organizations that bring together Palestinians and Israelis to promote greater understanding of each others' positions and underlying needs are working directly at generating political change. Much of the literature on conflict resolution has focused on problem-solving at the official or semi-official level in order to push official negotiators and political leaders toward a political settlement which meets basic needs on both sides. Policy organizations such as IPCRI bring together Israeli and Palestinian intellectuals and political leaders to explore each others' interests and positions, in order to generate mutually acceptable policy proposals and potential solutions to the most contentious issues. By including influential members of government as well as intellectuals and other experts, and by working their government connections, they attempt to feed their recommendations to the relevant policy makers in order to influence official policy and negotiations. The many such initiatives that took place before the Oslo Accords helped to legitimize negotiation and mutual acknowledgement among political leaders, and allowed those politicians to "test the waters" and find out whether negotiating was a feasible option. Since then, NGOs continue to facilitate workshops to generate mutually acceptable proposals on specific issues. Though many of these proposals undoubtedly make it to the higher levels of policy-makers, it is often difficult to ascertain whether their proposals have any concrete impact.

Rather than working at the semi-official and official levels, other organizations are working to build a base of popular support for policies and agreements that are acceptable to both sides. By raising public awareness of the other side's points of view, they are seeking to widen the scope of public debate on the major issues of contention, such that the members of each society are better equipped to consider the needs of the other side as well as their own interests. In addition to meeting and learning about each others' points of view, participants in dialogue groups have felt compelled to share their insights and raise public awareness of the complexity of the issues, by publishing articles, open letters, advertisements, and other public statements, as well as organizing visits to each others' communities, bringing speakers from the other side, and holding public forums which foster greater understanding among the larger public of the difficult conditions on either side of the conflict. Certain organizations also help to organize joint political activism, such as demonstrations, rebuilding demolished Palestinian houses and other events, through which they seek to publicize the detrimental effects of Israeli policy and put pressure on their leaders to change those policies. These activities are often a natural extension of humanization activities in that they are aimed at sharing the insights gained within these activities with the wider public and increasing support for a mutually beneficial solution. Informed of both side's perspectives and the way each side's policies affect the other side, the publics on both sides are more likely to support policies and solutions that take both sides' needs into account. A better informed public can influence policy and advance progress toward a mutually acceptable political settlement through public opinion polls and election results. These activities are therefore especially necessary in Israel, which maintains most of the leverage in the negotiations and where

the institutions of representations and public influence on policy-making are more developed. Through humanization activities and political activism, many organizations are thus working to build "a critical mass of people in each body politic who recognized the other group as persons with valid human needs and desires to fulfill their own legitimate aspirations." (Saunders 1996, 423) While there is no conclusive evidence that, for example, dialogues influenced the signing of the Oslo Accords, it is quite likely that they did contribute by breaking taboos and increasing public legitimacy for negotiating with the Palestinians, and by showing that mutual acceptance and common ground was possible.

Even though politicians may not be directly affected by grassroots change in the short term, as they do move ahead in official negotiations and are inevitably forced to make difficult compromises, publics on both sides that are more aware of each others' needs will be more likely to accept these compromises as necessary to achieve a peace that both sides can respect. Since the signing of the Oslo Accords, communication between Israelis and Palestinians has become much easier, yet they continue to be extremely divided on most issues, including the nature and scope of each others' rights on the land. Indeed, both sides continue to perceive the official negotiations as a competition to for each side to ensure maximum gains from the other side at least cost to itself, thereby ignoring the most basic needs of the other side and jeopardizing the stability of any settlement if peoples' expectations are not met. By deepening the publics' awareness and understanding of each others' basic positions and needs, and of the way that the policies and negotiating positions they support impact each other, organizations engaged in humanization activities are preparing them to accept the

compromises that will be required if a mutually acceptable agreement is negotiated and imposed upon them. While the political decisions ultimately rest in the hands of political leaders, when these leaders finally do make a credible commitment for peace, whether it is a result of international or domestic pressure or individual vision, a greater number of people on both sides will be ready to translate an agreement into a mutually beneficial relationship and a peace between people.

Another primary objective of humanization activities is to lay the foundation for a long-term change in the relationship between Palestinians and Israelis. While certain organizations are working to influence the political process at the official or grassroots level, many activists recognize that a more fundamental transformation in mutual suspicion and adversarial attitudes is not likely to occur in the short-term, and they are therefore looking toward future generations as the most likely agents of real change. Many organizations, such as the Neve Shalom/Wahat al Salam, IPCRI, Seeds of Peace and Play for Peace, therefore focus on bringing together Palestinian and Israeli members of the younger generation. In focusing on children and adolescents, it is not only easier to break down stereotypes and misperceptions. By encouraging young people to accept each others' basic rights as people in the territory, humanization activities are helping them to overcome the fear and hostility that has been a central feature of the lives of Palestinians and Israelis, and to lay the foundation for a more cooperative relationships in the future. Even if the current generation is unable to reach the necessary compromises, a relationship based upon mutual acceptance and understanding may eventually allow the next generation to progress toward a political solution that is genuinely acceptable to both sides. Given the antagonism and suspicion of the current generation, it might even be

impossible to foresee a mutually acceptable solution before the advent of a generation which has been marked by the experience of humanization activities and the need for mutual acceptance, rather than by violence and war. As people come to accept each others' basic rights and work together for their mutual interest in a secure existence, the process of humanization may eventually lead to "changes in the core sense of self" (Northrup 77) which could be the basis for a more inclusive and accepting sense of identity. As peoples' understanding of their collective identities shift through changing historical circumstances, NGOs can play a long-term role in shaping an identity that is less tied to conflict and exclusion, and can serve as the basis for cooperation and coexistence. It may be the case that a mutually acceptable political agreement which provides psychological security and collective dignity is a prerequisite for such a transformation. However since such the process of reconciliation and transformation from the legacy of conflict will inevitably take years, waiting for a satisfactory political solution would needlessly retard the process, and people will most likely retain their adversarial attitudes even when an agreement is reached. Furthermore, even in the absence of an acceptable agreement, a relationship based on mutual acceptance and understanding can encourage young leaders and activists to work together to solve the many issues of contention which will remain as two peoples attempt to share a small territory with limited resources. Many activists engaged in humanization activities therefore stress that rather than working to influence formal political agreements, they are working to create a genuine peace between people, characterized by normal relations without the fear that is the basis of so much hostility. As more and more young people are given the opportunity to meet each other in encounters and understand each others' points

of view as a basis for mutual acceptance, the likelihood will increase that this new generation of Palestinians and Israelis can find common ground to transform their relationship and lay the basis for a lasting peace between people.

In addition to giving young Palestinians and Israelis the opportunity to meet each other to develop a greater understanding of each others' perspectives and needs, certain organizations are teaching values of respect, tolerance and pluralism, as well as skills of dispute resolution, as a basis for a more cooperative relationship in the future. While bringing adolescents together for encounters can constitute a significant step in breaking down stereotypes and understanding one another, many of the stereotypes are supported in Palestinian and Israeli educational curriculums. In addition to portraying the members of the other group as aggressive, terrorists or occupiers, civics and history textbooks fail to depict the suffering of the other group, and continue to deny their identity as a group and their claims to the territory[17]. (Firer & Adwan) Certain organizations have therefore sought to change the national curriculums, by exposing harmful material and proposing more inclusive versions, and by implementing programs to teach values and skills that are more conducive to mutual acceptance and cooperation. In striving to "educate new generations of the community to respect even so-called 'enemy' ones," (Smith 80) these organizations stress the importance of institutionalizing humanization activities into the curriculum of young people. As part of its Pathways Into Reconciliation (PIR) project, IPCRI, for example, is working to integrate its peace education curriculum into the

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[17] The materials have begun to change, especially in Israel where the Labor-controlled education ministry has sought to reduce stereotypes and include Palestinian material, such as the poems of a Palestinian nationalist poet, Mahmoud Darwish, though with great controversy and resistance. The PNA has begun to replace Jordanian and Egyptian textbooks with their own newly written materials, though their primary focus has been to shape a nationalistic identity rather than promote cooperation. For a study of civic and history textbooks, see Firer and Adwan (1999).

learning of Palestinian and Israeli high school students. In addition to including encounter workshops, the program is designed to train teachers as the agents of change in teaching values of tolerance, pluralism and respect, as well as skills to defuse, manage and solve conflicts. The curriculum also emphasizes critical thinking, "so that each individual is able to identify 'unfair' and 'untrue images (stereotypes), comments and behaviors directed at oneself and others." (Derman-Sparks 400) In this way, it seeks to provide legitimacy for a diversity of identities and self-conceptions on both sides of the conflict. The Traditional Creativity in the Schools project also works within the schools to teach children the values of pluralism and respect for differences by encouraging them to explore their own diverse cultures, and creating the conditions for normal interactions between children from different cultures. By integrating these lessons into the curriculum for young people and combining them with opportunities to spend time with people from the other side, these organizations are preparing the next generation of Israelis and Palestinians to live in a peaceful and respectful relationship with each other, and in a general attitude of respect and tolerance for the peoples and cultures around them.

The focus on teaching values and skills, however, has led to some skepticism that NGOs are promoting values and behaviors that are imported from North American and Europe, and are inappropriate for the local societies. Since people in both societies already regard NGOs active in peace suspiciously due to their homogeneous demographic make-up and reliance on foreign funds, (see chapter 2) the values of pluralism, democracy and human rights are sometimes seen as foreign and alien to the local cultures. The notion of reconciliation itself is sometimes criticized as a Western

concept that is inappropriate in societies where people pursue their interests as defined by their cultures and religion. Indeed, the idea that Israelis and Palestinians must change their attitudes and perceptions to accept peaceful relations invites the suspicion that humanization activities are part of an effort by Western governments to impose a settlement in the interest of stability, at the expense of the local peoples' interests and needs. Despite the presence of a few foreign or international organizations, however, most of the NGOs engaged in humanization activities are actually indigenous, and arose out of needs felt by local activists. The goal of most humanization activities is less to promote specific values than it is to help people on both sides to understand each others' needs and interests as they themselves define them, and to help them in finding solutions that meets those needs. While many activists who are originally from abroad do bring values and concepts from other societies into their work and sometimes seek to promote them, they almost always work with people who are native to the region, and are forced to adapt their values to the local cultures. Netivot Shalom, for instance, which does include activists from North America, promotes a version of peaceful relations based on its interpretation of Jewish teachings, thus appealing to values that are indigenous to certain segments of Israeli society. The Palestinian center of Interns for Peace, established by local activists in Gaza, claims to teach values of democracy by encouraging wealthy members of the population to share their meals with poorer people during Muslim holidays. Interpreted by local activists, the value of "democracy" which they teach is more influenced by local culture than by foreign values. While most NGOs thus include a majority of native activists, even foreign NGOs are especially well-suited to remain sensitive to local values and cultures, since they maintain extensive local

contacts and are often not bound by official ideologies and affiliations which would limit their flexibility in adapting to the needs and sensibilities of local leaders and community members. At the same time, much of the resistance to humanization activities arises from people who cling to an exclusive sense of identity and uphold violence as the only way to achieve their interests. As both local and foreign activists successfully conduct their activities and gain access to various segments of the population, they therefore hope to eventually increase the legitimacy of their ideals for mutual acceptance and tolerance, to serve as the basis for a more inclusive identity and constructive relationships.

Since activists do sometimes attempt to promote unpopular ideals, a major question arises about whether humanization activities actually have an impact on peoples' attitudes and perceptions, and whether those changes have a wider significance in terms of resolving the overall conflict. There is widespread skepticism among activists and observers alike as to whether these activities make any real impact on Palestinian or Israeli societies, or whether they are merely "preaching to the converted," and influencing only those who are already committed to the ideals and attitudes they are trying to promote. Many of the activist themselves express frustration in their attempts to include people who are not already a part of the small minority of people on both sides committed to working for a mutually acceptable settlement. Including different segments of society is especially difficult for Israeli advocacy groups, who are most often perceived as part of the left-wing "peace camp" and regarded with suspicion by people who do not associate themselves with the left. In Palestinian society, people who meet and work with Israelis are regarded with suspicion for violating the widespread position which opposes normalization of relations prior to a political settlement. Indeed, it is

unlikely in any long-term conflict situation that people will easily abandon the attitudes which are deeply ingrained in the collective consciousness to meet with the enemy, or that a few organizations are capable of quickly transforming these attitudes on a wide scale.

Recognizing the inherent difficulty in affecting politics or changing people's attitudes on a large scale, certain activists aim instead at promoting change on the individual level for those who are willing to participate. Many encounters are conducted on the premise that "removing misunderstandings and misconceptions will improve individual relationships, but it does not directly aim at achieving social and political changes." (Abu-Nimer 25) Rather than professing to have a major impact on the political process, certain organizations like Neve Shalom/Wahat al Salam or the Jerusalem Link are providing certain Israelis and Palestinians, who are unsatisfied with the current status of their relations, who want to learn more about the people on the other side, or who want to do something to contribute toward peace, with the opportunity to get together with people from the other side in a carefully structured encounter or dialogue. Individuals' reasons for participating in these activities vary widely, ranging from attempts by Israelis to ease feelings of guilt for the actions of their government toward Palestinians, to a desire by certain individuals to convince the members of the other side that their point of view is correct, to simple curiosity about the lifestyles of people in the other group. Once they have made the initial effort to participate, these programs are effective in helping the participants to gain a wider perspective on the conflict, to understand the needs and aspirations of the other people on the other side, and find out what needs to be done in order to eventually resolve the conflict. The encounters often exceed their expectations

and challenge their existing attitudes toward the other side and toward the conflict in general. For many people, these activities can be viewed as a sort of therapy, a forum for Palestinians and Israelis to deal with the anger, frustration or guilt which they feel as a result of the conflict and to express these emotions to the other side, in order to begin a process of healing and reconciliation. In allowing growing numbers of people to have an experience with the members of the other group, deal with the sources of their hostility and learn about each others' points of view and common humanity, these organizations are slowly creating the basis for a long-term transformation in the relationship between the two societies. Although these individual transformations cannot address the material grievances of the Palestinians and the security needs of the Israelis, they do provide individuals with the impetus for seeking cooperative relationships and ending the hostility between them. The more organizations establish the legitimacy of learning about the other side's points of view and establishing cooperative relationships, the more such relationships can become, if not a basic feature of the societies, at least one that is accepted and even encouraged.

Other organizations try to expand their participation by working through established channels such as public education systems, to reach people who would not participate voluntarily. Having gained official support by the Israeli government and the PNA, Seeds of Peace, for example, recruits participants through each society's education ministry, thus securing the participation of students from a wide spectrum of the population. Other programs which have sought to implement humanization programs within the public school curriculum, either by adding extra-curricular programs or changing the curriculum itself, have had more limited success. In Israel, while these

activities are gaining increasing legitimacy as the Ministry of Education has sought to improve relations between Jewish and Palestinian citizens of Israel, most efforts to bring together Israelis and Palestinians are met with mild support, at best. Those that have succeeded have done so only through the perseverance of particular organizations and activists, or the sympathy of school administrators. For the most part, they have been unable to secure public funding, or desired changes in the curriculum. Even attempts by the Education Ministry itself to replace the exclusivity and mistrust that has traditionally been taught as a central tenet of national identity with more inclusive values of tolerance and pluralism, have been met with active resistance on the part of various segments of the population. The Palestinian Ministry of Education, for its part, has rejected most efforts to include humanization activities in public schools, so that humanization activities take place only in Palestinian private schools. As they write new textbooks and shape a new curriculum which is primarily concerned with defining a particular version of their national identity, it is unclear to what extent they have considered the lobbying efforts by many NGOs to shape a more inclusive identity. Still, as these organizations conduct successful humanization activities, they are gaining increasing legitimacy among Israelis and Palestinians, as well as their political leaders. Most organizations are slowly expanding their activities to increasing numbers of schools and students, while working to gain greater access and support from Israeli and Palestinian education ministries. By aiming at education ministries and other official channels, they are working to prepare a significant portion of the next generation to recognize each others' basic needs and transform relations.

Whether they are aiming at voluntary participants or including larger segments of the younger population, activists still face the challenge of how to sustain the changes achieved during humanization activities, in the face of media, education and the bulk of society which continue to support attitudes of conflict, exclusivity and mistrust. One of the major challenges for any sort of problem-solving or humanization workshop has been the "re-entry problem" of applying insights achieved in the safe, neutral environment of the workshop to the outside world. (Kelman 1972, 195) This problem is especially acute for encounters which are held in a neutral setting away from participants' communities. While a neutral location or environment helps participants to feel more equal and comfortable in exposing their underlying needs and exploring the most difficult issues, learning achieved in such an environment risks being forgotten or repressed as participants return to their homes. There, family, friends and teachers remain suspicious of their activities and of the insights they have learned, and often work hard to bring them back to the more prevalent attitude. Many participants of Seeds of Peace, for example, go through an intensely difficult time open their return home due to pressure to repress what they have learned and experienced in order to be accepted by their friends and families.

One way to help participants sustain changes in attitude and perception is to provide follow-up activities after the program. Seeds of Peace maintains a comprehensive network through e-mail and printed newsletters for the participants to keep in touch and support each other after their return. Their center in Jerusalem serves as a base through which to organize winter workshops, meetings, presentations in each others' schools, and even visits to each others' homes and communities across borders. These activities

provide them with support in maintaining their new insights sharing them with their schools and communities, while enabling them to continue learning about each others' lives and strengthen the bonds between them. Most encounter programs also include some type of follow-up activity within their own schools and communities, and if possible, with the entire group at a later time. These activities help the participants sustain the changes which they have made in their attitudes or perceptions despite constant opposition from the media and communities around them, and to apply their insights to the rest of their lives.

Another important way to help sustain individual change achieved during an encounter or joint activity is to involve the larger community, either by engaging family and community members, or by enlisting institutional support to provide legitimacy for the activities. Especially when working with children or youth, one of the most effective means to ensure that learning during humanization activities is not contradicted when the participants return home is to include their peers, their parents, their teachers and other role models in the activity. Encounters that work through the schools, for instance, are not only able to reach people who may not otherwise participate, they also ensure that the entire class, the teachers and the principals are exposed to the same learning process. The Traditional Creativity in the Schools project even includes the families of the children in the program, by inviting them to share their culture and traditions with Israeli and Palestinians children during the encounters. In addition to helping parents, grandparents and teachers break down stereotypes and increase support for the youths' changes in attitude, their participation also builds long-lasting connections between the wider communities. As Palestinian and Israeli schools are paired to bring together several

classes over an extended period of time, the principals, teachers and parents come to develop working, and sometimes even personal relationships, which can serve as the basis for a new understandings of each other and of their situations. The further these connections are formed up institutional hierarchies, from teachers, to school administrators, to local governments, eventually to the ministries of education and the national governments, the stronger the foundation for cooperative relationships between the members of the two societies. The presence of such institutional relationships can provide the "institutional support" which "greatly increases…the effectiveness of interracial contact." (Amir 1969, 174) At the technical level, larger institutions provide logistical support, which is often essential to secure such details as transportation and permits for Palestinians coming to Israel. The involvement and support of a family, school, community or government also provides legitimacy to these activities, and hence an important measure of psychological support to individuals who are going through difficult processes of transformation. Endorsement by official leaders also helps to encourage wider participation by individuals who might not associate with the "peace camp" and might be otherwise suspicious of joint activities. This support given to Seeds of Peace from political leaders and education ministries has been essential in reaching wide segments of the population and bolstering legitimacy for the program. While some organizations prefer to stay away from political connections in order to maintain their flexibility and ideological commitments, support from local communities and national institutions does provide an organization with the legitimacy to expand its base of participants and help them to sustain changes in perception and attitudes.

A major criticism to the humanization approach remains, however, that even if these activities do change people's attitudes and prepare them for peaceful relationships in the future, no real progress in the conflict can occur until each side's basic demands for physical security and fulfillment of its national aspirations are fulfilled through a political settlement. Until the political leadership agrees on a solution that is acceptable to both sides, Palestinians and Israelis will continue to fear each other, and to fuel each others' mutual insecurity with hostility and violence, thereby rendering any progress achieved by humanization activities relatively meaningless. In the meantime, humanization activities are sometimes seen as serving Israeli interests, by allowing them to point to such activities to show they are working toward peace, while continuing harsh policies toward Palestinians and delaying the process of relinquishing their control over people and territory. Humanization activities are thus seen as substitutes for action for Israelis, for whom "it assuages the conscience of the members of the oppressor group to the point where they feel they do not have to do anything else," as well as a mechanisms of control for Palestinians, for whom "it becomes a safety valve for venting frustrations." (Kuttab 89) Many Palestinians therefore oppose these activities and prefer to struggle for political change before concentrating on transforming their relations. Those organizations that, in an effort to appeal to wider audience, do not take a clear political stand against Israeli policies are criticized by both Palestinians and more radical Israelis for supporting the Israeli government and their policies of domination of the Palestinians. Such critics would argue that before bringing people together to build relationships, satisfying the basic needs that are being frustrated for psychological and material security

must be a first step, and that any effort to improve relations will either come naturally, or must be pursued only after those needs have been fulfilled.

In order to address these concerns, many humanization activities are explicitly linked to achieving the political, economic and social changes which are badly needed in order to ensure the dignity of both Israelis and Palestinians. In many cases, humanization activities are aimed primarily at long-term reconciliation rather than political change, on the premise that to wait for a political settlement would delay a long-term social process. In the short term they also help reduce the antagonism that is hindering political progress. Yet these organizations still address contentious political issues and seek to ensure that both sides' needs and interests are adequately and equally exposed and asserted within the context of a workshop. By trying to include large segments of the population, ensure symmetry between the participants, as well as extensive preparation, commitment and follow-up for all involved, they also make sure that the activities have a lasting impact on the participants and are not simply for show. Still, many organizations try to ensure that their activities will make a concrete difference in leading to political, economic and social change. One way they do this is to focus humanization efforts on the leaders, or future leaders, of both societies, to encourage those in power to move more quickly toward fulfilling both sides' needs. Many of the activities conducted by IPCRI, PASSIA, Seeds of Peace and the Peres Center's Young Leaders Network are thus focused on the "'influential' and 'preinfluential' actors," (Rothman 31) such as lower level government officials, intellectuals, media editors, community leaders and teachers, as well as students, aspiring leaders or youth with leadership capabilities. Such people are most likely to translate what they learn in humanization activities into specific policies with

tangible benefits, or into leading their communities toward reducing hostility and supporting mutually beneficial policies, both in the present and in the future. These leaders also help create networks, or "unofficial linkages between communities" without which "stereotypes persist, and the more radical groups that strive to disrupt a peace process can attract more support because of fears in their own community that go unaddressed." (Babbit & D'Estrée 525) These networks help members of the two sides to work together to more effectively address salient needs on both sides, thus encouraging the formation of cooperative relationships. Organizations that focus on these types of participants often cannot take political stands, since they might risk alienating the people who have the most influence from even participating in their activities. By fostering, at the very least working relationships, and at most empathy between leaders and future leaders, these organizations are seeking to ensure that there are people in both societies who not only understand each other and support the fulfillment of each others' basic needs, but who are actively working toward the political, economic and social change that is necessary to fulfill these needs on both sides.

Other organizations, which work at a more grassroots level, attempt to link their dialogues, encounters and other humanization activities to political activism. Before the Oslo Accords and subsequent negotiations, dialogue itself was a means of political activism which was intended to defy the status quo and show politicians that negotiation was a realistic option. Unsatisfied with simply learning about each other's points of view, many dialogues continue to publicize their insights and policy proposals, and to take any action which they believe will raise awareness and influence their governments to change their policies and approaches. As the negotiations have failed to produce what

many activists perceive to be acceptable agreements, organizations involved in humanization activities continue to cooperate with other activist organizations, in producing public statements and organizing conferences, demonstrations, rebuilding of demolished Palestinian houses, and other acts of civil disobedience and political activism. Even while they conduct humanization activities, these organizations have remained critical of both the Israeli government and the PNA, and as combined groups of local Palestinians and Israeli, they can be perceived as one of the most legitimate and effective forms of opposition. Although they do jeopardize their access to certain sources of funding and alienate many potential participants, their commitment to acting as an opposition force and working for policy change that will respect both sides' needs outweighs these considerations. Even for organizations that may require neutrality or government support in order to conduct their activities, by remaining self-critical, flexible and adaptable, organizations can avoid acting merely as a safety-valve or mechanism of control. In responding to the changing needs of both sides, certain organizations, such as the Rapprochement Dialogue Center, have even shifted some of their focus to working in communities to respond to more concrete needs. Such organizations are constantly working to remain sensitive and responsive to the needs of both societies for political change as well as for social, economic and psychological progress, especially as those needs change in a shifting political and social climate.

By bringing together Palestinians and Israelis in dialogues, encounter workshops and other joint activities, organizations engaged in humanization activities are helping them to break down stereotypes, overcome sources of hostility and violence, and achieve greater awareness of each others' points of view. At a more profound level, these

activities help their participants to come to a mutual acceptance of each others' basic

rights and overcome the major psychological barriers to a peaceful coexistence. In many

cases, they promote empathy for each others' suffering, which drives them to work

actively toward improving each others' situations. These activities are not designed to

resolve the major material issues of the conflict, since a such resolution requires political

change. Rather, they provide the means and the forums for individuals at all levels of

society to meet and learn about each other's points of view in a constructive way.

Greater awareness and understanding can encourage people to take action in whatever

way they can, to try to influence political policies and work to end each others' suffering,

while building a basis of support for political compromises. By developing thought-out

techniques and remaining sensitive to the needs of their participants, many organizations

are striving to ensure that their work is constructive, and that it makes a positive

difference in people's lives. Recognizing the difficulty of influencing political or social

change in the short-term, many organizations are aiming their activities at young people,

in order to eventually translate a political agreement to a peace between the societies, and

to enable people to work through the issues which will inevitably arise as they attempt to

share a small territory. While it is perhaps impossible to answer the question of whether

attitude change must precede political change or vice-versa, or whether grassroots

activism has any real impact on political developments, by working from the "top-down"

"middle-out" and "bottom-up", non-governmental organizations are ensuring that every

effort is made to advance the political process and work toward a peaceful relationship

between peoples. At the same time, as people become fed up with the lack of political

progress and the persistence of difficult material conditions, they are increasingly shifting

their efforts to making a tangible impacts on peoples' lives, in a way that is beneficial to both sides and helps move along the process of building peace. The growing activity toward this end is the subject of the next chapter. .

CHAPTER 4

The Needs Approach

Much NGO activity in building peace between Israelis and Palestinians has focused on addressing the material conditions of the people on both sides. Since well before the Oslo Peace Accords were signed in 1993, local NGOs have been providing services to respond to material needs in social, economic, environmental and other realms that have not fallen into the scope of any government. More recently, and especially since the Oslo Accords, the work of addressing material needs has been linked by various types of organizations to the process of building peace between the two societies. In part, this trend has been the result of a significant global expansion in the activity of NGOs working to help relieve people around the world of the harsh conditions caused by conflict, warfare and natural disasters, and to promote long-term socio-economic development as the basis for social stability and human fulfillment. Activists in these humanitarian and development NGOs have become increasingly aware of the potential negative consequences of their work in exacerbating conflicts, by strengthening divisions between groups in efforts to empower the oppressed or disadvantaged, or by providing

resources to armies, warlords, and other groups who are invested in maintaining conflict. Relief and development NGOs around the world have therefore sought to mould their practices toward fostering greater cooperation and peace between people engaged in conflicts. These organizations have been joined by certain dialogue groups and other organizations involved in humanization activities, that have partly shifted their efforts to addressing needs in their communities. Having developed a greater understanding of each others' basic needs and aspirations, and fed up with the slow pace of political progress despite their own efforts at humanization and political activism, activists in these organizations have sought to use their flexible and informal nature to provide services to each others' communities that continue to be neglected by policy-makers. In the process, they are furthering their goals of mutual understanding and trust, while striving to alleviate the harsh conditions that fuel hostility and hinder successful negotiation. Finally, a new type of organization has emerged that is specifically concerned with promoting and facilitating joint activities between Israelis, Palestinians and other people in the region, in order to address needs that can best be fulfilled through cooperation, and to institutionalize cooperation at various levels of society as the basis for peaceful relations.

Since the Oslo Peace Accords, the more peaceful political climate, along with the influx of foreign funding and interest in promoting peace and stability in the region, have encouraged the growth and formation of indigenous and international organizations that are seeking to address unfulfilled needs while promoting cooperation. By consciously linking their work to peace and cooperation, these organizations are filling in the gaps left by government policies and addressing material conditions that fuel continued hostility.

In doing so, they are generating support for political and social peace among the people who are affected by this work. Through cooperative activities and joint ventures, these organizations are working to build a foundation of practical and mutually beneficial relationships as the basis for a lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians.

Organizations which are active in addressing peoples' material needs are promoting peaceful relations between Israelis and Palestinians by working to alleviate the harsh material conditions which have been largely caused by the conflict and which help to perpetuate it. While humanization activities are important in breaking down psychological barriers and raising public awareness of both sides' needs and interests, many activists engaged in these activities have become frustrated from the lack of tangible results of their work. As the people who participate in dialogues and encounters become increasingly aware of each others' unfulfilled needs that fuel psychological barriers of resentment, fear and hostility, many of them want to take action toward addressing those needs, especially given the lack of political progress in achieving mutually acceptable political solutions. The mutual understanding and empathy which are a goal of many humanization activities are indeed intended to encourage participants to take action to alleviate each others' suffering and resolve the conflict. According to Saunders (1996) for example, the process of resolving conflict between conflicting groups of people should progress, in both the official and unofficial spheres, from defining the problem, to exploring the major issues, to eventually designing ways to achieve mutually beneficial solutions and taking action to implement those solutions. Many dialogue groups therefore complement their efforts to promote greater understanding by producing public statements of mutually acceptable political positions,

and engaging in activism to influence policy-makers and negotiators to end such harsh policies as house demolition, land confiscation and other forms of collective punishment which fuel resentment and mistrust. Having discovered the significance of human suffering in fueling the conflict and hindering a political solution, others focus on issues that are not being, and often cannot be, addressed by the political leadership. The Rapprochement Dialogue Center, for example, has organized courses in childbirth and workshops in alternative medicine and relaxation for the residents of the Palestinian city of Nablus, that are jointly run by Israelis and Palestinians. These activists thus help to initiate or facilitate new programs within the context of their existing organizations, or often form new organizations specifically to address the material aspects of the conflict.

Organizations address the most salient material conditions, such as development and access to resources, as a means not only to fulfill frustrated needs but also to promote peace between Israelis and Palestinians. A great deal of this work is focused in the severely underdeveloped Palestinian society. While the insecurity felt by Israelis is largely psychological and can best be addressed by humanization activities, the resentment and insecurity of many Palestinians is fueled by harsh material conditions. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine that the large segments of the Palestinian population who can barely acquire the means for basic sustenance, particularly those who are living in the squalid conditions of refugee camps, could overcome their resentment and hostility simply by participating in dialogues or encounters. During the decades of Israeli military control, the Israeli authorities have largely defined Israeli security needs in opposition to the needs of Palestinian for sustenance and development. As a result, they have not only failed to provide certain basic services, they also restricted access to basic resources such

as water, land, power, health care and infrastructure such as roads, sewage and communications. They even limited the possibilities of economic advancement, social improvement or recreation in order to maintain tight control over the Palestinian population and ensure Israeli security. The widespread belief among Palestinians in Israeli responsibility for these conditions, along with the stark contrast between their own situation and that of Israelis nearby, fuels resentment, mistrust, and often violence toward Israelis. These feelings of resentment and antagonism are strengthened by those NGOs that provide important services and link them to an ideological program of violent resistance. Hamas, for instance, provides essential services such as orphanages, schools, community centers and hospitals, and continues to advocate and organize violent resistance toward Israelis. Organizations committed to promoting peaceful relations have therefore sought to alleviate the harsh conditions in Palestinian society in order to remove the material sources of resentment and hostility, and to link these activities to advocating a peaceful resolution of the conflict. They have been encouraged by the growing belief among policy-makers, activists and donors around the world that since the frustration of basic material needs is a major source of conflict, "trying to resolve conflict without dealing with underdevelopment is futile." (Azar 39) In addition to economic development needs for basic resources and infrastructure, many organizations have concentrated on addressing social needs, such as access to healthcare, community centers and other services. A few other organizations, like the Wi'am Conflict Resolution Center, attempt to alleviate the negative consequences of trauma and violence which have resulted from years of conflict and deprivation, by providing services of dispute resolution within Palestinian society. In tackling these various economic and social

needs of the community, these organizations are seeking to alleviate the most pressing

material conditions which fuel resentment and insecurity and hinder peaceful relations

between Israelis and Palestinians, and to improve the conditions of peoples' lives.

Many of these organizations are also working to empower the members of each

group, so that they are better able to fulfill their own basic needs for physical and

psychological well-being and cooperate with others on an equal footing. The years of

military occupation and conflict have not only deprived Palestinians of basic means of

survival. They have also left both sides with depleted self-esteem and a lack of the

confidence or skills necessary to improve their own situations, as well as exclusive

identities and antagonistic attitudes which prevent the formation of constructive

relationships. While working to provide the basic means of survival, many organizations

are working to build productive communities with healthy and inclusive collective

identities, by "empowering people to be active and full participants in the decisions and

environment that affect their lives." (Lederach 1995, 21) These organizations are building

the capacity among the local populations to address their own needs, by helping to

provide the basic infrastructure and resources which are necessary for economic

development, providing technical or vocational training, creating jobs through developing

local industry, teaching skills of dispute resolution and mediation, and setting up

community centers and other community service projects to promote the formation of

"interdependent relationships" (21) within and between each community. To promote

local initiatives, Foreign NGOs make sure to involve local organizations and community

leaders in their work. Indigenous organizations, like Interns for Peace, train local leaders

in both societies to work toward their own goals, or involve entire communities in service

projects that allow people to take an active role in helping themselves and their

neighbors. Although much of the work of local and international NGOs has focused on

Palestinians due to their severe underdevelopment in relation to Israelis, Israeli and

international Jewish organizations have also sought to empower Israeli communities,

especially underprivileged immigrant and minority groups[18], toward improving their

situations and working past their insecurity toward Palestinians. In addition to helping to

develop the economic and social life that has been stunted by years of military occupation

and conflict, building capacity for local development helps to build hope among people

who have been living in fear and deprivation, by providing them with the opportunities to

advance their own situations. Given greater opportunities and means to pursue individual

dignity and fulfillment without the constant fear of repression or attack, individuals from

all segments of society can build confidence in their own abilities and in their society as a

whole, thus strengthening a healthy and inclusive collective identity. In the long-term,

greater capacity for growth and self-confidence can eventually begin to alleviate the

material and psychological inequalities between Israelis and Palestinians, and encourage

them to seek constructive relationships, to advance their own situations and to work

toward more humane circumstances free of fear and violence.

The major danger in promoting development by working to empower people in

conflicting groups, however, is that greater confidence in the capacities of one's own

group can serve as a source of greater hostility and thus perpetuate the conflict. There is

growing awareness among relief and development NGOs that empowering a single group

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[18] Since the late 1980's, Israel has absorbed over one million immigrants, primarily from the Former Soviet Union, as well as from Ethiopia and South America. Many of these groups, especially the Ethiopians, have lacked the resources to function prosperously in a developed Israeli economy, and have therefore been the source of considerable poverty and social tension.

in a conflict situation can strengthen boundaries with the other group, and fuel further conflict as group members become more confident and capable to act violently in order to pursue their aspirations. For the Palestinians, the overriding goal of achieving statehood has fostered a widespread belief that achieving this goal will solve most, if not all, of their problems. Although a state will surely address many of the psychological needs for self-esteem and collective dignity, it will not necessarily address economic and social issues, or the material issues of living on the same land with Israelis. While it is often important for development workers to recognize legitimate aspirations for collective dignity, statehood and psychological security on both sides, many Israeli and Palestinian leaders and activists define the struggle for statehood and security in opposition to the other side's aspirations, thus strengthening exclusive group identities and perpetuating mutual insecurity and hostility.

In order to promote inclusive identities and a basis for cooperation, NGOs around the world have been faced with a challenge "to define their program for justice in ways that enlarge the group identity and that strengthen intergroup linkages." (Bock 1999, 335) In addressing these concerns in her study of humanitarian work in situations of conflict, Anderson (1999) has recommended using caution to avoid supporting attitudes and groups that favor continued conflict, while reinforcing "local capacities for peace," such as economic or social interdependence between groups, local associations that promote peace and dialogue, as well as shared values, interests and experiences. Many organizations that address material needs within the Palestinian or Israeli communities thus deliberately link their work to dialogues and other joint activities with the other group, in order to increase the legitimacy of these activities among the population. For

Palestinian NGOs, the struggle for statehood and resistance to Israeli occupation continues to be a central goal, and even organizations, like Wi'am and Palestinian Rapprochement that are devoted to promoting peaceful relations, organize demonstrations to oppose Israeli policies. Yet these organizations encourage the same people who take part in demonstrations to participate in dialogues and joint activities that promote mutual respect and acceptance toward Israeli people. Faced with various impediments in conducting joint activities, due to military restrictions or due to popular fear and suspicion, organizations are often forced to be creative in their efforts to legitimize dialogue. Interns for Peace in Gaza, for instance, faced with the logistical difficulties of bringing Palestinians and Israelis to each others' communities, conducted a letter exchange between Israeli students and the Palestinian youth who were active in their community centers in Gaza. Similarly, in Israeli society an organization that supports official policy, or that focuses on providing specific services, may also promote cooperation and tolerance toward Palestinians. If possible, some organizations actually bring Israeli and Palestinian youth to work together on a service project in one of their communities, thus achieving the benefits of a joint activity while addressing the needs of the community. As organizations gain influence in the community by providing valuable services, they seek to use their leadership to promote messages of nonviolence, cooperation and interdependence, and discredit the confrontation and hostility promoted by other organizations.

One of the most effective ways for NGOs to promote constructive relationships is for them to focus on creating joint projects and cooperative ventures. Rather than concentrating their efforts on solving the problems of one community or the other, many

organizations are working to legitimize and institutionalize practical cooperation in various fields and at various levels of society, by initiating projects in which neither side can fully succeed on its own. Given the geographical proximity of Israelis and Palestinians on the same land, the people from conflicting sides often have no choice but to share the same natural resources. Having largely defined their needs in opposition to each other, and without some incentive for cooperation, the two sides have competed for these resources, to the benefit of one party and the detriment of the other. Such competition puts severe strains on the natural environment as both sides attempt to monopolize and exhaust water resources and build up land in order to establish themselves a presence on the ground.   One of the most successful venues for cooperation has therefore been in environmental conservation and protection. Friends of the Earth-Middle East (formerly EcoPeace), is an umbrella organization that brings together environmental activists, policy makers and other relevant actors from across the region to conduct cooperative development projects that protect fragile natural resources. They focus on areas like the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Aqaba, which are controlled partly by Israelis, Jordanians, Egyptians and Palestinians, and therefore require their cooperation for effective conservation. Issues such as environmental conservation and the distribution of water resources inevitably require some measure of cooperation since they are inherently shared by various groups. Such cooperation can also extend to many other aspects of life, especially for Israelis and Palestinians who are often separated by little more than a military checkpoint or imaginary border. The necessity of cooperation is highlighted in a place like Kalquilya, a Palestinian village, and Kfar Saba, an Israeli village, which despite lying next to each other on either side of the Green Line, (the

unofficial border between the West Bank and Gaza Strip and Israel proper) are closely connected by a river and common sewage. The Peres Center has therefore sought to facilitate a link between the two mayors and municipal governments in order to ensure cooperation in providing a sewage system and waste disposal services to the people of the two villages. While political leaders continue to assert their own interests and insecurities in the context of negotiations, a growing number of organizations are thus working at the practical level to provide the impetus and the means for cooperation between relevant actors, both outside the government as well as among mid-level policy makers. These organizations are seeking to ensure that essential needs that require cooperation are not left unfulfilled due to the conflict, but are resolved in a mutually beneficial way.

The most concrete value of joint projects is that they not only address needs which can not readily be fulfilled by one side alone, but they further expand resources and effectiveness for projects within each community and encourage wider cooperation. Even in cases where cooperation is not absolutely essential, it can increase the quality and range of services for people on both sides of the conflict, who end up benefiting from sharing the same basic infrastructure. IPCRI's environmental program, for example, has facilitated cooperation between Israeli and Palestinian environmental ministries and private contractors in helping to build up the means for Palestinians to dispose of various types of solid and hazardous waste, and for the two environmental ministries to coordinate their efforts to avoid serious environmental and health risks. The Peres Center, meanwhile, helps to develop joint economic ventures between Palestinian and Israeli businesspeople in order to expand the resources available to each side and promote

mutual gain. As officials, activists, businesspeople and community members on each side cooperate in such a project, they expand their resources, options and connections to other members and services in their communities, thus increasing the effectiveness and potential benefits of a particular project. Still, it may be argued that the geographical proximity and inherent interdependence of Palestinians and Israelis makes working together inevitable, and that businesspeople and other members of society are bound to work together even without the help of NGOs. While there is inevitably a great deal of practical interaction, most notably between Israeli employers and Palestinian employees as well as commerce between Israeli and Palestinian businesspeople, much of this interaction reflects the mistrust, hostility and inequality of the wider conflict, often perpetuating such antagonism among the people who do interact. NGOs, meanwhile, have the capability to improve the terms and conditions of cooperation so that joint activities respect the basic interests of all parties and promote cooperation and mutual benefit, rather than hostile competition and antagonism. While helping to expand the capabilities of each side to address the needs of their own community, these organizations are building the capacity for Israelis and Palestinians to address the needs they share in common. They are thus developing the means for them and to constructively resolve the contentious material issues which might continue to cause conflict as they attempt to live on the same land.

In addressing concrete needs, cooperative activities help to build support for peaceful relations by showing people and political leaders the tangible benefits of cooperative relationships. As the people and organizations that provide valuable social services, such as community centers, job training, mediation or infrastructure

development, are increasingly associated with the "peace camp" that also conducts dialogues and joint activities, increasing legitimacy is accorded to these peace activists and their messages of mutual respect, peaceful negotiation and compromise with the other side. Especially in Palestinian society, and to some extent in Israeli society as well, the various competing political factions provide valuable services and tangible benefits as an effective way of bolstering their legitimacy and support among the population. Although more militant organizations like Hamas still enjoy a wide base of support, especially compared to the small number of organizations that promote nonviolence and cooperation, as the peace organizations provide valuable services and people experience their tangible benefits, the peace organizations are building their own base of support. At the middle levels of society, businesspeople, government ministers, environmentalists, professionals and community leaders are increasingly encouraged to participate in joint activities as NGOs provide the impetus, means and incentives to engage in cooperation and demonstrate tangible benefits through successful projects. The number of participants is still rather small on both sides, since people continue to oppose cooperation on ideological grounds, or remain suspicious of the motivations of the NGOs and fear having other interests imposed upon them. Yet by showing the success of joint projects in various aspects of social and economic life, they are beginning to draw people who are attracted by the prospect of material gain or improvement and who might not otherwise participate in a joint activity yet.

As they experience the tangible benefits of cooperative activities, people at all levels of society are more likely to support peaceful negotiations and mutually acceptable policies that make those benefits possible. For instance, a project by Friends of the

Earth-Middle East has sought to provide solar power to a Palestinian, an Israeli and a Jordanian village. This project require the cooperation of environmentalists, engineers and community leaders from the three societies and builds practical relationships between them. In addition, as the villagers receive electricity, water, access to the internet and other material benefits as a direct result of this cooperative project, they are more likely to support other efforts at cooperation, along with government policies that make such cooperation possible. Similarly, in promoting joint industrial and agricultural ventures between Israelis and Palestinians, the Peres Center is not only creating attractive profit-making opportunities for Israeli and Palestinian businesspeople, it is also creating jobs, infrastructure and products. Linking Israeli and Palestinian municipal governments, meanwhile, by expanding the quality and scope of services available for the entire communities in each city, demonstrates the benefits of cooperation and of the mutually acceptable policies and peaceful relations that facilitate such cooperation. As people on both sides, as well as their political leaders, experience these material benefits, they are more likely to support political policies and positions which favor a peaceful solution and increased cooperation. In facilitating cooperation and addressing material needs, organizations are thus hoping to build support for peaceful negotiations and mutually acceptable political solutions in the long-term.

Joint activities are also an important element in the process of building trust between Palestinians and Israelis, in increasing mutual understanding through extended and constructive contact. As Israelis take the initiative to work in Palestinian communities together with Palestinians, and vice-versa, they show to the entire community their good-will and desire to help, more convincingly than conciliatory words

ever could. Taking action to address each others' most pressing material problems constitutes a process of mutual reassurance as each side shows its concern toward the other and seeks to build confidence in the possibility of a positive relationship. Stereotypes and barriers of mistrust are broken down as participants and their communities get to know each other and form working relationships. The clear "superordinate goals" (Amir 1969) that are explicit in joint activities help participants to develop trust and cohesive relationships, even beyond what can be achieved in the context of a dialogue alone. Indeed, dialogue groups often conduct joint activities in order to build that cohesion. As people go to each others' communities, talk to each others' neighbors and witness each others' lifestyles and circumstances, they can develop a first-hand understanding of each others' perspectives that is much more solid than what they can learn from talking. Such an understanding forces participants to be honest about each others' reality and circumstances when they do talk about contentious issues and formulate their own positions. The working relationships achieved in such activities sometimes even engender the formation of more intimate personal relationships, which can serve as the basis for the highest level of mutual understanding and empathy, though this is not a goal of any of these activities and is not necessarily very common. Even through practical, working relationships, people from conflicting groups can break down psychological barriers and achieve a sense of trust and mutual understanding that is at least as deep as the changes which are achieved through humanization activities. Moreover, these benefits extend not only to the participants in a joint activity, but to the entire community as stereotypes are broken and people come to see that there are people

on the other side who are concerned about their well-being. Joint activities are thus part of the process of reconciliation and building trust among the entire societies.

Overcoming psychological barriers, achieving trust and understanding, and even building constructive working relationships toward achieving a shared goal entail great difficulties, however. As Israelis and Palestinians come together in any capacity, their mutual distrust and conflicting interpretations of their situations inevitably surface and threaten their attempts to cooperate. Many joint ventures are threatened not only by peoples' contradictory interpretations of the conflict, but often by different expectations for the project itself and for the participants' roles in it. For instance, Palestinians' and Israelis' different expectations for peace are often exposed when Palestinians voice their grievances and seek to link joint activities to protesting Israeli policies and pushing political leadership toward addressing their basic demands. Many Israelis, meanwhile, see joint activities primarily as a means of overcoming their insecurity and creating a positive relationship independent of the political situation. These different expectations can cause frustration and antagonism as various participants compete to impose their own agendas to the detriment of others and of the project as a whole.

Fortunately, organizations which specialize in facilitating these activities have developed ways for participants to constructively explore each others' different expectations and interpretations throughout a project. By paying careful attention to the conditions and process of a joint activity and confronting conflicting interests and expectations, organizations can help participants to achieve a basic level of equality and mutual respect, while protecting the basic interests of all parties. Through carefully structures processes, they can avoid strengthening the misunderstandings, mistrust and

antagonism which can jeopardize a project. Joint activities thus require a high degree of commitment on the part of participants and expertise on the part of the organizations that facilitate them, to enable participants not only to overcome conflicts and accomplish their goals, but to achieve a higher level of mutual trust and understanding. Especially since this field is relatively new, activists still report frequent difficulties and conflicts both in particular projects and within the organizations themselves, especially those that are run jointly by Israelis and Palestinians. As organizations become experienced in dealing with these issues, however, they are finding ways to successfully address the challenges of cooperation while providing valuable services to their communities.

In order to protect the basic needs and interests of both sides, and ensure the conditions conducive to successful cooperation, many organizations involved in joint activities make every effort possible to ensure equality and symmetry between the people involved in these activities. Given the vast asymmetries in the economic and political capabilities of Israelis and Palestinians, any attempt at a joint project can easily end up serving the interests of Israelis, who are usually better funded and have greater leverage in most aspects of political, economic and social life. Although joint economic ventures, for instance, can promote greater ties and interdependence, many such ventures are primarily funded and controlled by Israelis, while Palestinians end up providing cheap labor and facilities. The most glaring example of Israeli control in the guise of cooperation is in the realm of security, where Israeli security forces appear to be using Palestinian security forces in order to further their own security goals. Even with the best of intentions for addressing both sides' needs, joint projects in any field often end up being controlled by Israelis who usually possess greater access to funding and expertise,

and who tend to be the ones to initiate a project with their own interests or interpretations in mind. In environmental conservation, for example, cooperation between a well-endowed and developed Israeli Environmental Ministry and a smaller, fledgling Palestinian Ministry often consists of the Israelis providing expertise to the Palestinians, and dictating their own terms. On a large scale, a prevalence of cooperative relationships in which Israelis possess most of the resources and provide services to Palestinians can promote an overall relationship of dependence, through which Israeli intentionally, or unintentionally, exercise control over Palestinian economic and social life by dictating their own terms in the relationship.

Given the huge disparity in resources and capabilities between Israelis and Palestinians, such a situation may be inevitable, especially in the short term. Still, many organizations are working against such a trend by ensuring equality and symmetry in any joint project that they facilitate. Some refuse to even undertake a project unless there is symmetry in the resources, expertise and commitment each side brings to it. From this perspective, a project in which Israelis provide Palestinians with a specific service would be much less desirable than one in which experts from both sides come together to find solutions to the problems of both communities. For example, there is an Israeli and a Palestinian organization which are both renowned experts in water issues, and which could both benefit from sharing each others' expertise. Similarly, any joint economic venture would require equal financial investment from both sides, rather than Israelis or foreigners investing in the Palestinian economy on their own terms. In order to ensure equality in every aspect of decision-making, planning, administration, and even the numbers of people from both sides, many organizations create joint committees of

Israelis and Palestinians to oversee a project and protect both sides' interests. These conditions are essential to create an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust in which people can come to learn and understand each others' points of view, without constantly suspecting the other of trying to impose its own interests on a project. By creating projects in which both sides have an equal stake and are able to promote their own interests in a way that benefits both sides, organizations are working to replace the prevalent relationships of dependence and control with ones of cooperation and mutual benefit. While the equal relationships facilitated by NGOs may initially be but a drop in the bucket among the more prevalent relations of dependence and control, eventually, the increasing prevalence of equal and cooperative relationships may reduce the dependency and inequality between Palestinians and Israelis, an increase both sides' ability to fulfill their aspirations and resolve the most complex issues.

The considerable amount of funding that has, since the signing of the Oslo Accords, poured into the region from American and European governments and international organizations to facilitate cooperative activities still raises legitimate concerns about whose interests they are actually seeking to promote. On the one hand, donors are criticized for not funding organizations that oppose the Oslo process, and thus retarding the fulfillment of legitimate needs and aspirations. (see chapter 3) However, organizations that do address material needs and implement cooperative projects do seem to be addressing such concerns. Yet even in the realm of practical projects, much of the funding seems to rest in the hands of the economic and political elites on both sides, since cooperative projects are often aimed at businesspeople, government ministers and other people at the middle or upper levels of society. By aiming projects at these already

privileged groups in both societies, NGOs and donors may be ignoring the more pressing

needs of the rest of the people on both sides, while supporting a rigid class structure and

the interests of economic elites. For example, even though they may protect the interests

of businesspeople on both sides, joint business ventures that invest large sums of money

in particular companies, often in partnership with Israeli government and PNA officials,

are often criticized for supporting monopoly practices by Israel and the PNA and stifling

economic development in the long run. Similarly, extensive funding to a small, elite

group of NGOs to promote cooperation between them can foster their development of a

"class of NGOs" which is primarily interested in furthering their own success. Aiming

considerable funding at the same small group of people also supports corruption and

mismanagement, especially among those NGOs which are connected to the PNA and

have access to the most funding. By giving leaders and elites tangible incentives to

support the Oslo Peace Process, foreign donors may be promoting a particular solution

that supports their own interests for stability in the region, at the expense of the rest of the

population who continue to have their needs unfulfilled.

In order to ensure that they are protecting the interests of the majority of people,

rather than those of donors or governments, many organizations do work hard to remain

flexible and responsive to the social, economic and political grievances of the people with

whom they work. Many activists recognize the importance of building support and

legitimacy for political negotiations and an eventual settlement at both the official and

popular levels, especially since large segments of the population, along with their

political leaders, remain quite skeptical of any notion of peace with the people they

regard as their enemies. Still, recognizing that there are politicians and organizations that

are corrupt and are serving primarily their own economic and political interests, other NGOs have devised ways to ensure that they are responding to community needs rather than imposing an outside agenda. Development NGOs, for instance, have devised multiple techniques for going into communities and assessing their needs, through surveys, community meetings, speaking with local leaders and other processes designed to create development and infrastructure projects according to the most pressing needs of people in a community. They also work as much as possible with local NGOs, experts, and community leaders, in order to ensure that the work is being carried out according to their needs and interests. Many of the indigenous NGOs, meanwhile, act primarily as a response to the needs in their own communities, and request funding accordingly. The Rapprochement Dialogue Center, for instance, has expanded its activities to provide services to people in Palestinian communities primarily as a response to the requests of its Palestinian members who are part of those communities. Before embarking on a project, many organizations make sure that there are people on both sides sufficiently interested in addressing those needs that they will commit seriously to working on them together. By requiring extensive interest and commitment from everyone involved, equal decision-making and involvement by local actors, facilitating NGOs are more likely to address the most pressing needs and interests for the members of both Israeli and Palestinian societies. In addition, activists emphasize the necessity of increased communication with donors and more systematic evaluation of their projects in order to reduce mismanagement and improve their capacity to provide effective services. Although many organizations have not yet developed the capacity to effectively evaluate their projects, evaluation is increasingly recognized as essential to remaining sensitive to

the needs of their communities, and not compromising peoples' political or social rights in their efforts to build an environment more conducive to peace.

Critics argue, however, that any effort to build cooperative relationships before resolving the major political issues and fulfilling

collective aspirations for statehood and security would not only be an overly difficult task, but may inherently serve Israeli interests by postponing efforts to resolve the most central issues. Advancing normal relations with Palestinians and with neighboring Arab countries is a primary Israeli goal that would allow them to achieve security and stability for Israel as a Jewish state. Palestinians, however, aspire beyond simply fulfilling their basic material needs, to achieving collective dignity in the context of a Palestinian state. If too much emphasis is placed on creating cooperative relationships within the current situation of inequality, Israelis could easily become content to put off indefinitely the process of relinquishing control or dealing with the most contentious issues such as Jerusalem and the plight of Palestinian refugees. Even as they continue to politically dominate the Palestinians, they could point to these constructive relationships to show their efforts toward peace, to ease any international pressure, while better fulfilling their material needs through cooperative projects. The Palestinians, meanwhile, would endure the continued frustration of their demands for statehood and security, without any political leverage or support. It can be argued, therefore, that in order to achieve truly constructive relationships that enable both sides to satisfy their basic needs for security and the public affirmation of their collective identity, "the only means of integration in the long term, is through local autonomy in the short term. Separation promotes a sense of security from which there can be cooperative

transactions between communities, leading finally to a higher degree of functional cooperation." (Burton 140) Promoting interdependence before allowing the Palestinians to affirm their collective identity in the context of state control and achieve some measure of collective dignity, would only perpetuate the existing relationships of inequality, and the sense of domination by Israelis would jeopardize any effort at cooperation. Palestinian activists and government officials, as well as more radical Israelis, therefore continue to resist joint activities, or any effort to normalize relationships before their national aspirations have been fulfilled. As a result, many Israeli activists have expressed difficulty in establishing contacts with their Palestinian counterparts. (Maoz 65) Due to Palestinian resistance and constraints from Israeli policies, the number of equal, cooperative relationships facilitated by NGOs remains rather low. Yet from this perspective, the Israeli government's official policy of physical separation can also be seen as a way for both sides to ease their fear of each other and fulfill their aspirations for security and collective dignity, and create a basis for peaceful relations in the future.

Although it is essential for both sides to achieve their basic demands in the context of a political settlement as soon as possible, complete separation and lack of relations between Israelis and Palestinians is largely unfeasible. Rather, promoting relationships that are equal and cooperative is essential for achieving both a mutually acceptable political solution and peaceful relations in the future. Both of the official positions, that of anti-normalization and that of separation, are quite problematic, not least because politicians on both sides engage in extensive cooperation, joint activities and other "People-to-People" activities as called for in the Oslo Accords, while simultaneously condemning such activities when it suits them politically. Moreover, the

Israeli policy of separation can be interpreted more as a means to reduce the sense of Israeli threat by removing the existence of Palestinians from within Israel, as well as a means of control over the Palestinians as they dictate the terms of separation. In any event, complete separation or lack of interaction is largely impossible, given the physical proximity of Israelis and Palestinians, and their shared infrastructure and natural resources, while any effort at separation would be quite damaging to the economies, environment and social lives on both sides. The organizations which promote and facilitate cooperation are working to make existing and inevitable interaction more beneficial to both sides by ensuring equality and protecting both sides' interests and helping to expand potential benefits. They are using the immediate necessity of interdependence to transform the atmosphere. By remaining sensitive and responsive to people's needs, they are also seeking to ensure that the needs of the wider society, rather than simply those of the elite, are addressed.

Recognizing that peaceful relations cannot fully be achieved until the political leadership negotiates a settlement that fulfills each side's basic demands, many activists choose to take active stances against government policy, in order to push them toward mutually acceptable solutions. The policy of separation poses especially significant challenges for organizations involved in cooperative activities, who must struggle with checkpoints, closures, permit requirements, and limited access to water and other resources. These organizations often take stances against such policies, if only to facilitate their own work. Indeed, NGOs are often in a position in which they can exercise their leadership to try to influence policies which are detrimental to political and practical progress. By linking their practical work to political activism and statements of

policy, many activists seek to ensure that their work does not serve as an excuse to postpone such progress. Taking political stands, however, often jeopardizes their ability to attract people to practical projects, by alienating certain segments of the population. Political stance can also threaten their relationships with donors and governmental authorities, on whom they often rely for logistical support, funding, and in many cases, potential participants. Certain organizations therefore prefer to remain as neutral as possible in order to concentrate on expanding their activities and fulfilling material needs. Though they are criticized by some for promoting Israeli political interests, they emphasize that their wok lies outside of the political sphere, and that they are primarily concerned with practical matters. The decision about the extent of political involvement thus requires navigating a fine line between maintaining the flexibility that is necessary for practical projects, and ensuring that this work is not hindering political progress or favoring the interests of one side or the other.

In the long term, by promoting and facilitating cooperative relationships at various levels of society, many organizations are hoping to build a social foundation for peace between Israelis and Palestinians, as these relationships eventually become widespread and institutionalized in various aspects of life. Focusing on practical cooperation has the advantage that it requires working directly with only those people who are involved in providing services and leadership in their communities. By providing the framework for equal relationships, protecting both sides' interests and promoting mutual understanding, NGOs give people the opportunity to experience a different type of relationship with people from the other side. They directly affect the rest of the population by providing tangible benefits, and by legitimizing cooperative

relationships across society. By including as many different actors as possible, these organizations hope to spread the experience of cooperation to various sectors, and to eventually institutionalize these relationships. As these practical relationships become established, and eventually require sanction from higher level leaders in order to function, they eventually become necessary in dealing with issues of shared resources at all levels of society. Such relationships, along with the NGOs that facilitate them, can eventually build an "infrastructure for peace." This infrastructure is crucial for Palestinians and Israelis to resolve the most contentious issues which will arise even after a mutually acceptable political agreement, as they share limited natural resources in close proximity. Morevoer, organizations are working "to build and maintain a sustainable infrastructure that has a chance of ameliorating not just manifestations, but also the causes, of conflict." (Aall 439) More than simply helping to resolve practical issues, the predominance of cooperative relationships can eventually serve as the basis for transforming the relationship between the two peoples. As the process of building cooperative relationships gains increasing legitimacy and eventually becomes a norm for people throughout society, these constructive relationships can transform the way people interact and relate to each other, and how they perceive the overall relationship between the two groups. "If a cooperative relationship became institutionalized and ritualized, that is, it filtered through to the core sense of identity, then the transformation would be likely to last." (Northrup 80) Building cooperative relationships through joint projects cannot necessarily solve the most contentious issues of the conflict. Yet the prevalence of cooperative relationships, as opposed to ones of control and antagonism, would constitute the reality of peaceful relations as people throughout society experience them in their day

to day lives, and would thus serves as the strongest and most tangible foundation for a transformation in the way people perceive each other. The widespread existence of practical, cooperative relationships would differentiate a "cold peace," such as the peace between Israel and Egypt which is written and signed in treaties yet has little tangible effect for most people, and a warm peace which can be experienced by the entire societies. Although such a transformation is certainly a long-term goal, the more cooperative and equal relationships are created, the stronger the foundation for a peaceful relationship between Israelis and Palestinians.

In working to fulfill the needs and provide services in ways that support cooperation and equality between Palestinians and Israelis, NGOs are building the foundation for peaceful relationships between the two peoples. While their most immediate goals are to improve material conditions for people throughout the societies, in the process these organizations are alleviating some material sources of hostility, breaking down psychological barriers, promoting mutual trust and understanding, and demonstrating the tangible benefits of cooperation on an equal basis. Facilitating cooperative relationships at various levels of society also legitimizes such cooperation and builds the constructive relationships which are the basis for peaceful relations between groups, and for societies that are not hindered by fear or mistrust. On the other hand, without careful attention to protecting the interests of both sides, to ensuring symmetry and equality, and to the political and social ramifications of promoting cooperative relationships for different segments of society, this work can favor the interests of one side and perpetuate damage to the other side or to the less privileged people in society. Yet while political leaders are working to create peace agreements that

address the political and structural conditions of the relationship, or even when the leaders are not even talking, these organizations are creating a reality of peace between people, while supporting the efforts of those leaders who are working to protect the interests of both sides. NGOs are thus working to improve peoples' lives and build peaceful and constructive relations in psychological and material realms that are not within the scope of governmental activity.

Conclusion

In addressing the psychological and material aspects of the conflict that are left out by governments, NGOs play a unique role in transforming relations between Israelis and Palestinians. Understood primarily as a competition over material resources or a drive for physical security, the most significant aspects of the conflict could, theoretically, be addressed through a political agreement. Yet these material issues are rooted in a deeper struggle for collective dignity and psychological security. In struggling for political control in the same territory, Palestinians and Israelis have sought to symbolically affirm central tenets of their collective identities as being rooted in the same territory. In legitimizing their own claims to the territory, each group has denied the claims of the other group. Meanwhile the existence of the other group and their opposing claims, ever-present in the form of an existing state or the pursuit thereof, present a threat to the other group's collective identity as it has been defined, and serves as a source of considerable insecurity. Although Israeli Jews have attained their goal of statehood, they remain threatened by the Palestinians, and have sought to remove that threat. The Palestinians, meanwhile, have suffered continued frustration of their territorial claims and of their efforts to affirm their identity through political control.

Fueled by resentment at being treated as second class by Israelis and by the rest of the world, their violent resistance toward Israelis has been legitimized by their denial of Israelis' right to exist on the territory.

The Oslo Accords, and especially the accompanying letters of recognition, were a significant step in both sides recognizing each others' existence as a people. Yet as people on both sides continue to deny the identity of the other group, the threat of their existence and challenge to those claims remain, and continue to fuel mistrust and antagonism. Even as the leaders of each group quickly negotiate agreements and struggle to define a final political arrangement, many of the people in each group remain unwilling to acknowledge the rights and aspirations of the other group, and continue to resist compromise. Israelis, in a position of political control, have been unwilling to relinquish control over part of the territory and sacrifice their claims to the land. As long as they experience harsh material conditions and second class status, Palestinians continue to feel resentment and antagonism toward Israelis. Even if political leaders do manage to impose an agreement that respects the needs of both sides, the continued hostility fueled by insecurity and resentment will still prevent constructive relationships between Israelis and Palestinians at other levels of society. As they maintain exclusive identities and continued insecurity, the two peoples would not be experiencing peaceful relationships, but at best an uneasy and unstable coexistence. On a practical level, without a basis of understanding and acceptance of the other side's basic needs, zero-sum competition for limited resources in a small geographical area would inevitably benefit one group and frustrate the other, while perpetuating conflict and even escalating into violence. Moreover, there would be no basis on which to resolve the issues that

inherently bind Israelis and Palestinians together, including, among others, the natural environment, water resources, economic issues, labor relations and religious sites. While the government may eventually provide a structural framework in which to deal with these issues, it could not readily provide the psychological and technical basis for Palestinians and Israelis to improve their relations and deal with contentious issues on a day-to-day level.

Many NGOs are working to transform relations at various levels of society by addressing these psychological aspects of mistrust and mutual denial, and by alleviating the harsh conditions that fuel resentment. Through humanization activities such as dialogues and encounters, they are fostering mutual understanding and acceptance of each others' basic needs and rights. More than simply breaking down stereotypes, these activities deal with the underlying needs on both sides in order to expose the deeper struggle and how it has impacted peoples' lives. Humanization activities are intended to promote mutual acceptance of both sides' right to exist in the territory, or at the very least, a basic mutual understanding of each others' basic needs and aspirations. Such a basic understanding is essential for achieving constructive relationships that would enable Palestinians and Israelis to tackle the difficult issues that bind them together. In addition, these activities can help build support for a political compromises, as people become more aware of the impact of their government's policy on the material lives of others. As the participants in these activities develop empathy, they are often encouraged to take action to improve their situation. Other organizations are providing valuable services to address the material conditions and to alleviate the sources of resentment and insecurity that fuel the conflict. These activities are especially significant when they are linked to

messages of tolerance, mutual understanding and nonviolence. Over the long-term, these activities can build the capacity for communities to improve their own situations and seek constructive relationships. Finally, other NGOs take an active role in facilitating cooperative projects, in order to deal with the reality of shared problems. Such cooperative efforts are essential before a settlement, while leaders are too concerned by political considerations and conflicting interests to address certain concrete issues. When a political agreement is eventually concluded, these cooperative projects can serve as the basis for dealing with conflicts over shared resources when such issues come up on a day-to-day basis. More significantly, all of these activities are gradually transforming relationships between Israelis and Palestinians. While humanization activities are laying a psychological foundation for constructive relationships through mutual understanding, other NGOs are building the practical capacity for Palestinians and Israeli to constructively address the material and symbolic issues that will continue to bind them as long as they live in the same territory.

Non-governmental organizations are, indeed, well-suited to address these aspects of the conflict. They are less constrained by public opinion, by international or domestic pressure or by other political or financial considerations that make it difficult or undesirable for governments to engage in certain activities, especially those that entail long-term processes. They are also more in tune with local needs, cultures and traditions, and are flexible enough to adapt to changing circumstances. On the other hand, the ability of NGOs to effectively conduct these activities is determined, and often constrained, by their relationships with societies, governments, donors, and other NGOs. In Palestinian society, NGOs have been a prevalent and accepted feature of social,

economic and even political life. Yet they are now struggling to define their relationship with a government-in- formation that is increasingly constricting. At the same time, they must compete with other NGOs and with the PNA in obtaining funding and in establishing the legitimacy of their specific activities. Reports of corruption and suspicion of their underlying interests has hindered the efforts by peace-building NGOs to achieve widespread legitimacy and participation. Meanwhile, the unequal relationship with Israeli society has led many Palestinian NGOs to oppose joint activities as a form of resistance to Israeli control, even if they are seeking to promote tolerance and nonviolence. In Israeli society, NGOs are a much newer phenomenon. They are gradually increasing their legitimacy as the role of the government contracts and leaves greater gaps for their activities to fill. Yet they are regarded suspiciously by certain segments of the population for promoting a narrow political ideology and advancing foreign interests. These suspicions, along with the political nature Israeli-Palestinian relations, often limits the scope of participants and forces them to find innovative ways to expand their participation. The Israeli government's policies of separation and the military's security measures can also pose logistical difficulties for carrying out joint activities.

In addition to these constraints, NGOs that are working for peaceful relations receive quite a bit of criticism from all different sides. Advocates of the Israeli Right criticize these NGOs for compromising Israeli interests to satisfy Palestinian and foreign ones, and for not paying adequate attention to the power politics that govern relations in the region. Many of these NGOs are indeed working against the notion of power politics favored by these critics, in order to end the violence that has been fueled by the zero-sum

conception of relations, and to replace this notion with an ideal of cooperation and mutual gain. As they continue and expand their activities, activists hope that their ideals achieve greater currency and play a role in policy-making. Meanwhile, other critics question whose interests are being promoted by NGOs. NGOs involved in building peace are mostly indigenous and local organizations, while their flexibility and commitment allows them to adjust to local needs and traditions. Indeed, although much of the funding and some of the activists themselves originate from North American and Europe, the ideals and values of those societies most often become molded to local sensibilities when they are put into practice in these societies. Still, as much of the funding seems to remain in the pockets of the privileged elites and many small and more critical organizations are unable to secure funding, the question remains whether this work is aimed at fulfilling the frustrated needs of the widest segments of the population, or whether it is simply appeasing the self-interests of the upper classes and promoting stability at the expense of the rest of the population. One of the main attributes of NGOs is their diversity, and their potential to give voice to a wide variety of people, of ideas and innovative approaches to solving salient problems. Although some NGOs may indeed favor the interests of the upper class, others are present to address the needs of the underprivileged and oppressed, and include them in the process of change. If, in fact, the diversity of NGOs and their ability to address the needs and aspirations of underprivileged segments of the population is being constrained by donor's and their own focus on elites and the institutionalization of NGOs themselves, than this is indeed cause for concern.

A final criticism specifically of NGOs that facilitate joint activities is that for many Palestinians, meanwhile, along with the advocates of the Israeli far Left, any joint

activity is perceived to favor Israeli interests. In advancing Israeli goals for reconciliation

and normal relations on their own dominant terms, such activities could be postponing

the political process of relinquishing control and allowing the Palestinians the justice they

deserve. For these latter critics, political change should come first, in order to provide

basic security for both sides and allow the Palestinian to achieve some measure of equal

footing before cooperating with the more powerful Israelis. In response to these

criticisms, activists argue that a political settlement that respects both sides is unlikely

until people begin to recognize and accept each others' rights and basic needs. By

focusing on people at all levels of society, especially the younger generation, many

NGOs are building support for a more just solution than what is achievable in the present

environment of mistrust and hostility. Meanwhile, they are creating the infrastructure

that will allow an eventual agreement to translate more quickly into peaceful relations

that respect the psychological and material needs of people on both sides, and at all levels

of society. In the long-term, by educating people to understand each others perspectives,

and developing the expertise and the means to facilitate projects that protect both sides'

interests, NGOs are building the capacity to resolve inevitable disputes even after an

agreement has been signed between the leaders. Since Israelis and Palestinians are

geographically bound together, NGOs are finding ways to make the reality of

interdependence beneficial for both sides. In the meantime, many NGOs do take political

stances, or do everything possible to ensure that their activities translate into action

toward political, social and economic progress. In response to the question of which

should come first, political change or grassroots social changes, as one activists put it, it

is a "two-way, multi-lane street." (Zoughby) A two-way street requires both Israeli and

Palestinians to work actively toward change. A multi-lane street entails activity in various fields and at various levels of society, from the bottom-up, from the top-down, and from the middle-out.

NGOs can, most likely, not resolve the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. They are not a unified popular movement that can shape political developments, nor do they have the power to control government policies. Yet they do make important contributions in easing the harsh conditions of conflict in the short term and helping to transform relations in the long run. In the short term, they are addressing material needs that are not addressed by governments, alleviating harsh conditions caused by conflict, reducing the sources of resentment and violence, confronting shared issues, and expanding resources on both sides. In the long term, they are making more fundamental transformations to the relationship between Israelis and Palestinians. In conducting dialogues and joint activities, they are gradually legitimizing different types of relationships, and introducing new ideas and new experiences into the public discourse. As they expand their activities and increase the currency of different points of view, and of cooperative relationships that respect the basic interests of both sides, they are gradually shifting the exclusive identities of Israelis and Palestinians and preparing them to build constructive relationships in the small territory. This is a lengthy and gradual process of change that lies beyond the scope of almost any government or any political agreement. By slowly transforming relationships they are slowly expanding the potential peace between leaders to build a genuine peace between people.

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Interviews

Note: All interviews were conducted in January, 2000

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Baskin, Gershon, Israel-Palestine Center for Research and Information (IPCRI).

Benvenisti, Meron.

Bock, Joseph G., Catholic Relief Services.

Fine, Miriam, Oz VeShalom/Netivot Shalom.

Gish, Art, Christian Peacemaker Teams.

Gorni, Ada, Play for Peace.

Green, Judith, Rapprochement Dialogue Center.

Halabi, Rabah, School for Peace.

Hermann, Tamar, The Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Research.

Jadou, Amal, Peace Research Institute in the Middle East (PRIME).

Koren, Tzachi, The Peres Center for Peace.

Kullab, Hisham, Interns for Peace-Palestinian.

Lazarus, Ned, Seeds of Peace.

Lichman, Simon, Traditional Creativity in the Schools Project.

Lisk, Alicia, Friends of the Earth Middle East.

Mollov, Ben, Project for Arab-Jewish Dialogue.

Natil, Ibrahim, The Palestinian Center for Helping Resolve Community Disputes.

Pomerance, Lilah, Interns for Peace – Israel.

Rishmawi, George, Palestinian Center for Rapprochement Between People

Twite, Robin, Israel-Palestine Center for Research and Information (IPCRI).

Zoughby, Zoughby, Wi'am Palestinian Conflict Resolution Center

Appendix 1: List and Description of NGOs Included in this Study

Note: This is a brief list of NGOs from which a member was interviewed for this study. Descriptions include only their most common activities. For a more detailed description of their activities and objectives, refer to their Web sites.

Bat Shalom of the Jerusalem Link, Jerusalem : The Jerusalem Link combines Bat Shalom (and Israeli NGO) with the Jerusalem Center for Women (a Palestinian NGO) for advocacy and consciousness raising through conferences, symposia, tours, public statements, as well as dialogues for Israeli and Palestinian women. Web Site: www.batshalom.org

Catholic Relief Services, Jerusalem: An international NGO that runs development projects in Palestinian communities. CRS also runs an anti-incitement project that brings together Jewish, Muslim and Christian religious leaders to reduce speech and actions that can incite people to violence.

Friends of the Earth Middle East, Jerusalem: An environmental umbrella organization which brings together Israeli, Palestinian, Jordanian and Egyptian environmental NGOs with relevant business and governmental actors to facilitate joint projects toward environmental conservation and sustainable development. Web Site: www.foeme.org

Interns for Peace – Israel, Tel-Aviv **and Interns for Peace – Palestinian**, Gaza: Separate organizations in Tel-Aviv and Gaza train interns to work in their communities, and organize community development projects, education for democracy and Israeli-Palestinian and Jewish Israeli-Palestinian-Israeli encounters and joint activities. Web Site: www.internsforpeace.org

Israel-Palestine Center for Research and Information (IPCRI), Bethlehem: A cooperative Israeli-Palestinian think-tank which organizes workshops, conferences and publications to present proposals and solutions for various aspects of Israeli-Palestinian relations and the peace process, and seeks to feed these insights into policy-makers. IPCRI also facilitates practical cooperation in the field of environment and health, and through its Pathways into Reconciliation project, has developed and begun to implement a proposal for an "Education for Peace" curriculum that includes teacher training and student encounters. Web Site: www.ipcri.org

Oz Veshalom/Netivot Shalom, Jerusalem: An organization of Orthodox Jews that seeks to build support for peaceful relations among the Orthodox community in Israel, through meetings, public forums, workshops, visits to Palestinian communities, demonstrations and other political activism. Web Site: www.ariga.com/ozveshalom

Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA), Jerusalem: A research center that organizes conferences, workshops, dialogues, publications and training workshops. Web Site: www.passia.org

Palestinian Center for Helping Resolve Community Disputes, Gaza: Provides conflict resolution and mediation services and training and civic education within Palestinian society. Web Site: home.palnet.com/~pchrcd

Palestinian Center for Rapprochement Between People, Beit Sahour**:** Brings together Israelis and Palestinians, as well as Christian and Muslim Palestinians, for dialogues, educational programs, demonstrations and public forums.
Web Site: www.rapprochement.org

Peace Research Institute in the Middle East (PRIME), Beit Jala: Facilitates joint research and outreach activities, as well as conferences and workshops for Israelis and Palestinians.

The Peres Center for Peace, Tel-Aviv: Facilitates and guides long term practical cooperative Palestinian-Israeli and regional projects in the fields of business, technology, agriculture, medicine and health, culture and media, municipal links and social welfare, youth and education and academia, science and research.
Web Site: www.peres-center.org

Play for Peace, Tel-Aviv: Brings together Israeli and Palestinian children for cooperative play led by Israeli and Palestinian high school student facilitators.
Web Site: www.playforpeace.org

Project for Arab-Jewish Dialogue, Jerusalem: Organizes dialogues between religious Jewish and Muslim university students.

Rapprochement Dialogue Center, Jerusalem: Facilitates and organizes Palestinian-Israeli dialogues, tours, public forums and activism, and provides services such as courses for childbirth educators, workshops in alternative medicine in Palestinian communities.

The School for Peace at Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam: Conducts encounters and educational projects between Jews and Palestinians in Israel, between Israelis and Palestinians from Palestine, and between Palestinians from Israel and Palestine, for students, teachers, lawyers, journalists and social activists. Web Site: nswas.com

Search for Common Ground, Washington, D.C.: Facilitates a variety of joint projects, dialogues, workshops, conferences, conflict resolution training and practical projects for people at various levels of society in conflict situations around the world.
Web Site: www.sfcg.org

Seeds of Peace, Washington D.C./Jerusalem: Brings together Arab and Israeli teenagers from through the Middle East to an annual three-and-one-half week conflict resolution summer camp, and organizes visits, presentations and various workshops and projects for the campers when they return to the region.

Web Site: www.seedsofpeace.org

Traditional Creativity in the Schools Project, Jerusalem: Works within Palestinian, Palestinian Israeli and Jewish Israeli schools to facilitate learning about their folklore and traditions, and brings the Jewish and Palestinian children, teachers and parents together for encounters in which they share their folklore and learn about each other.

Wi'am Palestinian Conflict Resolution Center, Bethlehem: Provides Sulha traditional conflict resolution and mediation services, volunteer training and youth and education projects in Palestinian society. Web Site: www.planet.edu/alaslah

Appendix 2: Timeline of Major Historical Events

1517-1918   Palestine exists as part of Greater Syria under the Ottoman Empire.
               Settlement by European Jews begins in 1880s.

1914-1918   World War I; Break-up of the Ottoman Empire.

1917   Balfour Declaration: British government proclaims support for a Jewish national
         homeland in Palestine.
         The population of Palestine is 85% Arab inhabitants, 15% Jewish inhabitants.

1919-1922   Britain secures mandate for Palestine from the League of Nations.

1936-1939   Palestinian Arab Great Revolt.

1939-1945   World War II.

1947   A UN Partition Plan recommends that half of Palestine be allotted to a Jewish state
         and half to an Arab state. The population is 1/3 Jewish and 1/3 Arab. The plan is
         accepted by the Jews and rejected by the Arabs.

1948   End of Britain's mandate in Palestine.
         Israeli is established as a Jewish homeland.
         First Arab-Israeli war – Armies from surrounding Arab countries invade Israel.
         Half a million Palestinian refugees flee their homeland. The war is known to
         Israelis as the War of Independence and to Arabs as Al-Nakba – the catastrophe.

1956   Egypt nationalizes Suez Canal
         Israeli-Egyptian War.

1967   Six Day/June Arab-Israeli War. Ends with the Arab armies defeated and Israeli
         occupation of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights
         and the Sinai Peninsula.
         UN Security Council 242 provides for "the withdrawal of Israeli armed forces
         from territories occupied in the recent conflict."

1969-1970   War of Attrition (Israel-Egypt).

1973   The October/Yom Kippur War (Egypt, Syria-Israel).

1973-1975   US brokered Israeli-Egyptian and Israeli-Syrian disengagement
               agreements

1978   US brokered Camp David Accords between Israel and Egypt.

1979   Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty.

1981   Assassination of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat.

1982   Lebanon War (Peace for the Galilee) is launched by Israel.

1987   Outbreak of the Intifada (Palestinian Uprising).

1988   PLO decision to terminate the armed struggle against Israel.

1990-1991   Iraq invades Kuwait; The Gulf War.

1991   Madrid Peace Conference.

1992   Israeli elections: The Labor Party wins for the first time since 1977. Yitzhak
          Rabin is elected Prime-Minister.

1993   Signing of The Declaration of Principles (the Israeli-PLO Oslo Accords)

1994   Israeli-Jordanian Peace Treaty.

1995   Israeli interregnum (Oslo B) is signed
          Assassination of Rabin.

1996   Israeli elections: The Likud Party takes over, Benyamin Netanyahu is elected
          Prime
          Minister.

1997   Israeli-PLO Hebron Accord is signed.

1998   Wye River agreement is signed after long break in Israel-PLO negotiations. The

          agreement is not implemented.

1999   Israeli elections: The Labor Party wins, Ehud Barak is elected Prime-Minister.
          Sharm-el-Sheikh Agreements resume the Oslo Peace Process.

All statistics and information drawn from: Cleveland, William, <u>A History of the Modern
Middle East</u>. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994.

Appendix 3: Relevant Documents

2. **The Balfour Declaration**

November 2, 1917

Foreign Office
November 2nd, 1917

Dear Lord Rothschild,

I have much pleasure in conveying to you, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted to, and approved by, the Cabinet.

"His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."

I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.

Yours sincerely,
Arthur James Balfour

Source: http://www.israel-mfa.gov.il/mfa/go.asp?MFAH00pq0

B. The Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel

May 14, 1948

ERETZ-ISRAEL [(Hebrew) – the Land of Israel, Palestine] was the birthplace of the Jewish people. Here their spiritual, religious and political identity was shaped. Here they first attained to statehood, created cultural values of national and universal significance and gave to the world the eternal Book of Books.

After being forcibly exiled from their land, the people kept faith with it throughout their Dispersion and never ceased to pray and hope for their return to it and for the restoration in it of their political freedom.

Impelled by this historic and traditional attachment, Jews strove in every successive generation to re-establish themselves in their ancient homeland. In recent decades they returned in their masses. Pioneers, ma'pilim [(Hebrew) – immigrants coming to Eretz-Israel in defiance of restrictive legislation] and defenders, they made deserts bloom, revived the Hebrew language, built villages and towns, and created a thriving community controlling its own economy and culture, loving peace but knowing how to defend itself, bringing the blessings of progress to all the country's inhabitants, and aspiring towards independent nationhood.

In the year 5657 (1897), at the summons of the spiritual father of the Jewish State, Theodore Herzl, the First Zionist Congress convened and proclaimed the right of the Jewish people to national rebirth in its own country.

This right was recognized in the Balfour Declaration of the 2nd November, 1917, and re-affirmed in the Mandate of the League of Nations which, in particular, gave international sanction to the historic connection between the Jewish people and Eretz-Israel and to the right of the Jewish people to rebuild its National Home.

The catastrophe which recently befell the Jewish people – the massacre of millions of Jews in Europe – was another clear demonstration of the urgency of solving the problem of its homelessness by re-establishing in Eretz-Israel the Jewish State, which would open the gates of the homeland wide to every Jew and confer upon the Jewish people the status of a fully privileged member of the commity of nations.

Survivors of the Nazi holocaust in Europe, as well as Jews from other parts of the world, continued to migrate to Eretz-Israel, undaunted by difficulties, restrictions and dangers, and never ceased to assert their right to a life of dignity, freedom and honest toil in their national homeland.

In the Second World War, the Jewish community of this country contributed its full share to the struggle of the freedom- and peace-loving nations against the forces of Nazi wickedness and, by the blood of its soldiers and its war effort, gained the right to be reckoned among the peoples who founded the United Nations.

On the 29th November, 1947, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution calling for the establishment of a Jewish State in Eretz-Israel; the General Assembly required the inhabitants of Eretz-Israel to take such steps as were necessary on their part for the implementation of that resolution. This recognition by the United Nations of the right of the Jewish people to establish their State is irrevocable.

This right is the natural right of the Jewish people to be masters of their own fate, like all other nations, in their own sovereign State.

ACCORDINGLY WE, MEMBERS OF THE PEOPLE'S COUNCIL, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF ERETZ-ISRAEL AND OF THE ZIONIST MOVEMENT, ARE HERE ASSEMBLED ON THE DAY OF THE TERMINATION OF THE BRITISH MANDATE OVER ERETZ-ISRAEL AND, BY VIRTUE OF OUR NATURAL AND HISTORIC RIGHT AND ON THE STRENGTH OF THE RESOLUTION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HEREBY DECLARE

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A JEWISH STATE IN ERETZ-ISRAEL, TO BE KNOWN AS THE STATE OF ISRAEL.

WE DECLARE that, with effect from the moment of the termination of the Mandate being tonight, the eve of Sabbath, the 6th Iyar, 5708 (15th May, 1948), until the establishment of the elected, regular authorities of the State in accordance with the Constitution which shall be adopted by the Elected Constituent Assembly not later than the 1st October 1948, the People's Council shall act as a Provisional Council of State, and its executive organ, the People's Administration, shall be the Provisional Government of the JewishState, to be called "Israel".

THE STATE OF ISRAEL will be open for Jewish immigration and for the Ingathering of the Exiles; it will foster the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; it will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture; it will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions; and it will be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

THE STATE OF ISRAEL is prepared to cooperate with the agencies and representatives of the United Nations in implementing the resolution of the General Assembly of the 29th November, 1947, and will take steps to bring about the economic union of the whole of Eretz-Israel.

WE APPEAL to the United Nations to assist the Jewish people in the building-up of its State and to receive the State of Israel into the comity of nations.

WE APPEAL – in the very midst of the onslaught launched against us now for months – to the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel to preserve peace and participate in the upbuilding of the State on the basis of full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its provisional and permanent institutions.

WE EXTEND our hand to all neighbouring states and their peoples in an offer of peace and good neighbourliness, and appeal to them to establish bonds of cooperation and mutual help with the sovereign Jewish people settled in its own land. The State of Israel is prepared to do its share in a common effort for the advancement of the entire Middle East.

WE APPEAL to the Jewish people throughout the Diaspora to rally round the Jews of Eretz-Israel in the tasks of immigration and upbuilding and to stand by them in the great struggle for the realization of the age-old dream – the redemption of Israel.

PLACING OUR TRUST IN THE ALMIGHTY, WE AFFIX OUR SIGNATURES TO THIS PROCLAMATION AT THIS SESSION OF THE PROVISIONAL COUNCIL OF STATE, ON THE SOIL OF THE HOMELAND, IN THE CITY OF TEL-AVIV, ON THIS SABBATH EVE, THE 5TH DAY OF IYAR, 5708 (14TH MAY,1948).

Source: http://www.israel-mfa.gov.il/mfa/go.asp?MFAH00pq0

C. U.N. Security Council Resolution 242
November 22, 1967

This resolution, numbered 242, established provisions and principles which, it was hoped, would lead to a solution of the conflict. Resolution 242 was to become the cornerstone of Middle East diplomatic efforts in the coming decades.

The Security Council, Expressing its continuing concern with the grave situation in the Middle East,

Emphasizing the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war and the need to work for a just and lasting peace in which every State in the area can live in security,

Emphasizing further that all Member States in their acceptance of the Charter of the United Nations have undertaken a commitment to act in accordance with Article 2 of the Charter,

1.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:

Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict;
Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgement 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;

2.Affirms further the necessity

For guaranteeing freedom of navigation through international waterways in the area;
For achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem;
For guaranteeing the territorial inviolability and political independence of every State in the area, through measures including the establishment of demilitarized zones;

3.Requests the Secretary General to designate a Special Representative to proceed to the Middle East to establish and maintain contacts with the States concerned in order to promote agreement and assist efforts to achieve a peaceful and accepted settlement in accordance with the provisions and principles in this resolution;

4.Requests the Secretary-General to report to the Security Council on the progress of the efforts of the Special Representative as soon as possible.

D. U.N. Security Council Resolution 338
October 22, 1973

The Security Council,

1.Calls upon all parties to present fighting to cease all firing and terminate all military activity immediately, no later than 12 hours after the moment of the adoption of this decision, in the positions after the moment of the adoption of this decision, in the positions they now occupy;

2.Calls upon all parties concerned to start immediately after the cease-fire the implementation of Security Council Resolution 242 (1967) in all of its parts;

 3.Decides that, immediately and concurrently with the cease-fire, negotiations start between the parties concerned under appropriate auspices aimed at establishing a just and durable peace in the Middle East.

Source: http://www.israel-mfa.gov.il/mfa/go.asp?MFAH00pq0

E. The Palestinian National Charter

Resolutions of the Palestine National Council,

July 1-17, 1968

Article 1: Palestine is the homeland of the Arab Palestinian people; it is an indivisible part of the Arab homeland, and the Palestinian people are an integral part of the Arab nation.

Article 2:Palestine, with the boundaries it had during the British Mandate,is an indivisible territorial unit.

Article 3: The Palestinian Arab people possess the legal right to their homeland and have the right to determine their destiny after achieving the liberation of their country in accordance with their wishes and entirely of their own accord and will.

Article 4: The Palestinian identity is a genuine, essential, and inherent characteristic; it is transmitted from parents to children. The Zionist occupation and the dispersal of the Palestinian Arab people, through the disasters which befell them, do not make them lose their Palestinian identity and their membership in the Palestinian community, nor do they negate them.

Article 5: The Palestinians are those Arab nationals who, until 1947, normally resided in Palestine regardless of whether they were evicted from it or have stayed there. Anyone born, after that date, of a Palestinian father - whether inside Palestine or outside it – is also a Palestinian.

Article 6: The Jews who had normally resided in Palestine until the beginning of the Zionist invasion will be considered Palestinians.

Article 7: That there is a Palestinian community and that it has material, spiritual, and historical connection with Palestine are indisputable facts. It is a national duty to bring up individual Palestinians in an Arab revolutionary manner. All means of information and education must be adopted in order to acquaint the Palestinian with his country in the most profound manner, both spiritual and material, that is possible. He must be prepared for the armed struggle and ready to sacrifice his wealth and his life in order to win back his homeland and bring about its liberation.

Article 8: The phase in their history, through which the Palestinian people are now living, is that of national (watani) struggle for the liberation of Palestine. Thus the conflicts among the Palestinian national forces are secondary, and should be ended for the sake of the basic conflict that exists between the forces of Zionism and of imperialism on the one hand, and the Palestinian Arab people on the other. On this basis the Palestinian masses, regardless of whether they are residing in the national homeland or in diaspora (mahajir) constitute – both their organizations and the individuals – one national front working for the retrieval of Palestine and its liberation through armed struggle.

Article 9: Armed struggle is the only way to liberate Palestine. This it is the overall strategy, not merely a tactical phase. The Palestinian Arab people assert their absolute determination and firm resolution to continue their armed struggle and to work for an armed popular revolution for the liberation of their country and their return to it . They also assert their right to normal life in Palestine and to exercise their right to self-determination and sovereignty over it.

Article 10: Commando action constitutes the nucleus of the Palestinian popular liberation war. This requires its escalation, comprehensiveness, and the mobilization of all the Palestinian popular and educational efforts and their organization and involvement in the armed Palestinian revolution. It also requires the achieving of unity for the national (watani) struggle among the different groupings of the Palestinian people, and between the Palestinian people and the Arab masses, so as to secure the continuation of the revolution, its escalation, and victory.

Article 11: The Palestinians will have three mottoes: national (wataniyya) unity, national (qawmiyya) mobilization, and liberation.

Article 12: The Palestinian people believe in Arab unity. In order to contribute their share toward the attainment of that objective, however, they must, at the present stage of their struggle, safeguard their Palestinian identity and develop their consciousness of that identity, and oppose any plan that may dissolve or impair it.

Article 13: Arab unity and the liberation of Palestine are two complementary objectives, the attainment of either of which facilitates
the attainment of the other. Thus, Arab unity leads to the liberation of Palestine, the liberation of Palestine leads to Arab unity; and work toward the realization of one objective proceeds side by side with work toward the realization of the other.

Article 14: The destiny of the Arab nation, and indeed Arab existence itself, depend upon the destiny of the Palestine cause. From this interdependence springs the Arab nation's pursuit of, and striving for, the liberation of Palestine. The people of Palestine play the role of the vanguard in the realization of this sacred (qawmi) goal.

Article 15: The liberation of Palestine, from an Arab viewpoint, is a national (qawmi) duty and it attempts to repel the Zionist and imperialist aggression against the Arab homeland, and aims at the elimination of Zionism in Palestine. Absolute responsibility for this falls upon the Arab nation – peoples and governments - with the Arab people of Palestine in the vanguard. Accordingly, the Arab nation must mobilize all its military, human, moral, and spiritual capabilities to participate actively with the Palestinian people in the liberation of Palestine. It must, particularly in the phase of the armed Palestinian revolution, offer and furnish the Palestinian people with all possible help, and material and human support, and make available to them the means and opportunities that will enable them to continue to carry out their leading role in the armed revolution, until they liberate their homeland.

Article 16: The liberation of Palestine, from a spiritual point of view, will provide the Holy Land with an atmosphere of safety and tranquility, which in turn will safeguard the country's religious sanctuaries and guarantee freedom of worship and of visit to all, without discrimination
of race, color, language, or religion. Accordingly, the people of Palestine look to all spiritual forces in the world for support.

Article 17: The liberation of Palestine, from a human point of view, will restore to the Palestinian individual his dignity, pride, and freedom. Accordingly the Palestinian Arab people look forward to the support of all those who believe in the dignity of man and his freedom in the world.

Article 18: The liberation of Palestine, from an international point of view, is a defensive action necessitated by the demands of self-defense. Accordingly the Palestinian people, desirous as they are of the friendship of all people, look to freedom-loving, and peace-loving states for support in order to restore their legitimate rights in Palestine, to re-establish peace and security in the country, and to enable its people to exercise national sovereignty and freedom.

Article 19: The partition of Palestine in 1947 and the establishment of the state of Israel are entirely illegal, regardless of the passage of time, because they were contrary to the will of the Palestinian people and to their natural right in their homeland, and inconsistent with the principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, particularly the right to self-determination.

Article 20: The Balfour Declaration, the Mandate for Palestine, and everything that has been based upon them, are deemed null and void. Claims of historical or religious ties of Jews with Palestine are incompatible with the facts of history and the true conception of what constitutes statehood. Judaism, being a religion, is not an independent nationality. Nor do Jews constitute a single nation with an identity of its own; they are citizens of the states to which they belong.

Article 21: The Arab Palestinian people, expressing themselves by the armed Palestinian revolution, reject all solutions which are substitutes for the total liberation of Palestine and reject all proposals aiming at the liquidation of the Palestinian problem, or its internationalization.

Article 22: Zionism is a political movement organically associated with international imperialism and antagonistic to all action for liberation and to progressive movements in the world. It is racist and fanatic in its nature, aggressive, expansionist, and colonial in its aims, and fascist in its methods. Israel is the instrument of the Zionist movement, and geographical base for world imperialism placed strategically in the midst of the Arab homeland to combat the hopes of the Arab nation for liberation, unity, and progress. Israel is a constant source of threat vis-a-vis peace in the Middle East and the whole world. Since the liberation of Palestine will destroy the Zionist and imperialist presence and will contribute to the establishment of peace in the Middle East, the Palestinian people look for the support of all the progressive and peaceful forces and urge them all, irrespective of their affiliations and beliefs, to offer the Palestinian people all aid and support in their just struggle for the liberation of their homeland.

Article 23: The demand of security and peace, as well as the demand of right and justice, require all states to consider Zionism an illegitimate movement, to outlaw its existence, and to ban its operations, in order that friendly relations among peoples may be preserved, and the loyalty of citizens to their respective homelands safeguarded.

Article 24: The Palestinian people believe in the principles of justice, freedom, sovereignty, self-determination, human dignity, and in the right of all peoples to exercise them.

Article 25: For the realization of the goals of this Charter and its principles, the Palestine Liberation Organization will perform its role in the liberation of Palestine in accordance with the Constitution of this Organization.

Article 26: The Palestine Liberation Organization, representative of the Palestinian revolutionary forces, is responsible for the Palestinian, Arab people's movement in its struggle - to retrieve its homeland, liberate and return to it and exercise the right to self-determination in it - in all military, political, and financial fields and also for whatever may be required by the Palestine case on the inter-Arab and international levels.

Article 27: The Palestine Liberation Organization shall cooperate withm all Arab states, each according to its potentialities; and will adopt a neutral policy among them in the light of the requirements of the war of liberation; and on this basis it shall not interfere in the internal affairs of any Arab state.

Article 28: The Palestinian Arab people assert the genuineness and independence of their national (wataniyya) revolution and reject all forms of intervention, trusteeship, and subordination.

Article 29: The Palestinian people possess the fundamental and genuine legal right to liberate and retrieve their homeland. The Palestinian people determine their attitude toward all states and forces on the basis of the stands they adopt vis-a-vis to the Palestinian revolution to fulfill the aims of the Palestinian people.

Article 30: Fighters and carriers of arms in the war of liberation are the nucleus of the popular army which will be the protective force for the gains of the Palestinian Arab people.

Article 31: The Organization shall have a flag, an oath of allegiance, and an anthem. All this shall be decided upon in accordance with a special regulation.

Article 32: Regulations, which shall be known as the Constitution of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, shall be annexed to this Charter. It will lay down the manner in which the Organization, and its organs and institutions, shall be constituted; the respective competence of each; and the requirements of its obligation under the Charter.

Article 33: This Charter shall not be amended save by [vote of] a majority of two-thirds of the total membership of the National Congress of the Palestine Liberation Organization [taken] at a special session convened for that purpose.

*English rendition as published in Basic Political Documents of the Armed Palestinian Resistance Movement; Leila S. Kadi (ed.), Palestine Research Centre, Beirut, December 1969, pp.137-141.
Source: gopher://israel-info.gov.il:70/00/mad/basic/680717.gui

F. State of Palestine Declaration of Independence

November 15th, 1988

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Palestine, the land of the three monotheistic faiths, is where the Palestinian Arab people was born, on which it grew, developed and excelled. Thus the Palestinian Arab people ensured for itself an everlasting union between itself, its land, and its history.

Resolute throughout that history, the Palestinian Arab people forged its national identity, rising even to unimagined levels in its defense, as invasion, the design of others, and the appeal special to Palestine's ancient and luminous place on the eminence where powers and civilizations are joined. All this intervened thereby to deprive the people of its political independence. Yet the undying connection between Palestine and its people secured for the land its character, and for the people its national genius.

Nourished by an unfolding series of civilizations and cultures, inspired by a heritage rich in variety and kind, the Palestinian Arab people added to its stature by consolidating a union between itself and its patrimonial Land. The call went out from Temple, Church, and Mosque that to praise the Creator, to celebrate compassion and peace was indeed the message of Palestine. And in generation after generation, the Palestinian Arab people gave of itself unsparingly in the valiant battle for liberation and homeland. For what has been the unbroken chain of our people's rebellions but the heroic embodiment of our will for national independence. And so the people was sustained in the struggle to stay and to prevail.

When in the course of modern times a new order of values was declared with norms and values fair for all, it was the Palestinian Arab people that had been excluded from the destiny of all other peoples by a hostile array of local and foreign powers. Yet again had unaided justice been revealed as insufficient to drive the world's history along its preferred course.

And it was the Palestinian people, already wounded in its body, that was submitted to yet another type of occupation over which floated that falsehood that "Palestine was a land without people." This notion was foisted upon some in the world, whereas in Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations (1919) and in the Treaty of Lausanne (1923), the community of nations had recognized that all the Arab territories, including Palestine, of the formerly Ottoman provinces, were to have granted to them their freedom as provisionally independent nations.

Despite the historical injustice inflicted on the Palestinian Arab people resulting in their dispersion and depriving them of their right to self-determination, following upon U.N. General Assembly Resolution 181 (1947), which partitioned Palestine into two states, one Arab, one Jewish, yet it is this Resolution that still provides those conditions of international legitimacy that ensure the right of the Palestinian Arab people to sovereignty.

By stages, the occupation of Palestine and parts of other Arab territories by Israeli forces, the willed dispossession and expulsion from their ancestral homes of the majority of Palestine's civilian inhabitants, was achieved by organized terror; those Palestinians who remained, as a vestige subjugated in its homeland, were persecuted and forced to endure the destruction of their national life.

Thus were principles of international legitimacy violated. Thus were the Charter of the United Nations and its Resolutions disfigured, for they had recognized the Palestinian Arab people's national rights, including the right of Return, the right to independence, the right to sovereignty over territory and homeland.

In Palestine and on its perimeters, in exile distant and near, the Palestinian Arab people never

faltered and never abandoned its conviction in its rights of Return and independence. Occupation, massacres and dispersion achieved no gain in the unabated Palestinian consciousness of self and political identity, as Palestinians went forward with their destiny, undeterred and unbowed. And from out of the long years of trial in ever-mounting struggle, the Palestinian political identity emerged further consolidated and confirmed. And the collective Palestinian national will forged for itself a political embodiment, the Palestine Liberation Organization, its sole, legitimate representative recognized by the world community as a whole, as well as by related regional and international institutions. Standing on the very rock of conviction in the Palestinian people's inalienable rights, and on the ground of Arab national consensus and of international legitimacy, the PLO led the campaigns of its great people, molded into unity and powerful resolve, one and indivisible in its triumphs, even as it suffered massacres and confinement within and without its home. And so Palestinian resistance was clarified and raised into the forefront of Arab and world awareness, as the struggle of the Palestinian Arab people achieved unique prominence among the world's liberation movements in the modern era.

The massive national uprising, the intifada, now intensifying in cumulative scope and power on occupied Palestinian territories, as well as the unflinching resistance of the refugee camps outside the homeland, have elevated awareness of the Palestinian truth and right into still higher realms of comprehension and actuality. Now at last the curtain has been dropped around a whole epoch of prevarication and negation. The intifada has set siege to the mind of official Israel, which has for too long relied exclusively upon myth and terror to deny Palestinian existence altogether. Because of the intifada and its revolutionary irreversible impulse, the history of Palestine has therefore arrived at a decisive juncture.

Whereas the Palestinian people reaffirms most definitively its inalienable rights in the land of its patrimony:

Now by virtue of natural, historical and legal rights, and the sacrifices of successive generations who gave of themselves in defense of the freedom and independence of their homeland;

In pursuance of Resolutions adopted by Arab Summit Conferences and relying on the authority bestowed by international legitimacy as embodied in the Resolutions of the United Nations Organization since 1947;

And in exercise by the Palestinian Arab people of its rights to self-determination, political independence and sovereignty over its territory,

The Palestine National Council, in the name of God, and in the name of the Palestinian Arab people, hereby proclaims the establishment of the State of Palestine on our Palestinian territory with its capital Jerusalem (Al-Quds Ash-Sharif).

The State of Palestine is the state of Palestinians wherever they may be. The state is for them to enjoy in it their collective national and cultural identity, theirs to pursue in it a complete equality of rights. In it will be safeguarded their political and religious convictions and their human dignity by means of a parliamentary democratic system of governance, itself based on freedom of expression and the freedom to form parties. The rights of minorities will duly be respected by the majority, as minorities must abide by decisions of the majority. Governance will be based on principles of social justice, equality and non-discrimination in public rights of men or women, on grounds of race, religion, color or sex, and the aegis of a constitution which ensures the rule of law and an independent judiciary. Thus shall these principles allow no departure from Palestine's age-old spiritual and civilizational heritage of tolerance and religious coexistence.

The State of Palestine is an Arab state, an integral and indivisible part of the Arab nation, at one with that nation in heritage and civilization, with it also in its aspiration for liberation, progress, democracy and unity. The State of Palestine affirms its obligation to abide by the Charter of the League of Arab States, whereby the coordination of the Arab states with each other shall be strengthened. It calls

upon Arab compatriots to consolidate and enhance the emein reality of state, to mobilize potential, and to intensify efforts whose goal is to end Israeli occupation.

The State of Palestine proclaims its commitment to the principles and purposes of the United Nations, and to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It proclaims its commitment as well to the principles and policies of the Non-Aligned Movement.

It further announces itself to be a peace-loving State, in adherence to the principles of peaceful co-existence. It will join with all states and peoples in order to assure a permanent peace based upon justice and the respect of rights so that humanity's potential for well-being may be assured, an earnest competition for excellence may be maintained, and in which confidence in the future will eliminate fear for those who are just and for whom justice is the only recourse.

In the context of its struggle for peace in the land of Love and Peace, the State of Palestine calls upon the United Nations to bear special responsibility for the Palestinian Arab people and its homeland. It calls upon all peace-and freedom-loving peoples and states to assist it in the attainment of its objectives, to provide it with security, to alleviate the tragedy of its people, and to help it terminate Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories.

The State of Palestine herewith declares that it believes in the settlement of regional and international disputes by peaceful means, in accordance with the U.N. Charter and resolutions. With prejudice to its natural right to defend its territorial integrity and independence, it therefore rejects the threat or use of force, violence and terrorism against its territorial integrity or political independence, as it also rejects their use against territorial integrity of other states.

Therefore, on this day unlike all others, November 15, 1988, as we stand at the threshold of a new dawn, in all honor and modesty we humbly bow to the sacred spirits of our fallen ones, Palestinian and Arab, by the purity of whose sacrifice for the homeland our sky has been illuminated and our Land given life. Our hearts are lifted up and irradiated by the light emanating from the much blessed intifada, from those who have endured and have fought the fight of the camps, of dispersion, of exile, from those who have borne the standard for freedom, our children, our aged, our youth, our prisoners, detainees and wounded, all those ties to our sacred soil are confirmed in camp, village, and town. We render special tribute to that brave Palestinian Woman, guardian of sustenance and Life, keeper of our people's perennial flame. To the souls of our sainted martyrs, the whole of our Palestinian Arab people that our struggle shall be continued until the occupation ends, and the foundation of our sovereignty and independence shall be fortified accordingly.

Therefore, we call upon our great people to rally to the banner of Palestine, to cherish and defend it, so that it may forever be the symbol of our freedom and dignity in that homeland, which is a homeland for the free, now and always.

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful:

"Say: 'O God, Master of the Kingdom,

Thou givest the Kingdom to whom Thou wilt,

and seizes the Kingdom from whom Thou wilt,

Thou exalted whom Thou wilt, and Thou

abasest whom Thou wilt; in Thy hand

is the good; Thou are powerful over everything."

Source: http://www.pna.net/facts/pal_independence.htm

G. Israel-PLO Recognition

2.   LETTER FROM YASSER ARAFAT TO PRIME MINISTER RABIN:

September 9, 1993

Yitzhak Rabin
Prime Minister of Israel

Mr. Prime Minister,

The signing of the Declaration of Principles marks a new era in the history of the Middle East. In firm conviction thereof, I would like to confirm the following PLO commitments:

The PLO recognizes the right of the State of Israel to exist in peace and security.

The PLO accepts United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

The PLO commits itself to the Middle East peace process, and to a peaceful resolution of the conflict between the two sides and declares that all outstanding issues relating to permanent status will be resolved through negotiations.

The PLO considers that the signing of the Declaration of Principles constitutes a historic event, inaugurating a new epoch of peaceful coexistence, free from violence and all other acts which endanger peace and stability. Accordingly, the PLO renounces the use of terrorism and other acts of violence and will assume responsibility over all PLO elements and personnel in order to assure their compliance, prevent violations and discipline violators

 In view of the promise of a new era and the signing of the Declaration of Principles and based on Palestinian acceptance of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, the PLO affirms that those articles of the Palestinian Covenant which deny Israel's right to exist, and the provisions of the Covenant which are inconsistent with the commitments of this letter are now inoperative and no longer valid. Consequently, the PLO undertakes to submit to the Palestinian National Council for formal approval the necessary changes in regard to the Palestinian Covenant.

Sincerely,
Yasser Arafat
Chairman
The Palestine Liberation Organization

3. LETTER FROM PRIME MINISTER RABIN TO YASSER ARAFAT:

September 9, 1993

Yasser Arafat
Chairman
The Palestinian Liberation Organization

Mr. Chairman,

In response to your letter of September 9, 1993, I wish to confirm to you that, in light of the PLO commitments included in your letter, the Government nof Israel has decided to recognize the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people and commence negotiations with the PLO within the Middle East peace process.

Yitzhak Rabin

Prime Minister of Israel

2. Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements (The Oslo Accords)

September 13, 1993

The Government of the State of Israel and the P.L.O. team (in the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to the Middle East Peace Conference) (the "Palestinian Delegation"), representing the Palestinian people, agree that it is time to put an end to decades of confrontation and conflict, recognize their mutual legitimate and political rights, and strive to live in peaceful coexistence and mutual dignity and security and achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement and historic reconciliation through the agreed political process. Accordingly, the, two sides agree to the following principles:

ARTICLE I
AIM OF THE NEGOTIATIONS

The aim of the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations within the current Middle East peace process is, among other things, to establish a Palestinian Interim Self-Government Authority, the elected Council (the "Council"), for the Palestinian people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, for a transitional period not exceeding five years, leading to a permanent settlement based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

It is understood that the interim arrangements are an integral part of the whole peace process and that the negotiations on the permanent status will lead to the implementation of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

ARTICLE II
FRAMEWORK FOR THE INTERIM PERIOD

The agreed framework for the interim period is set forth in this Declaration of Principles.

ARTICLE III
ELECTIONS

2.   In order that the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip may govern themselves according to democratic principles, direct, free and general political elections will be held for the Council under agreed supervision and international observation, while the Palestinian police will ensure public order.

2. An agreement will be concluded on the exact mode and conditions of the elections in accordance with the protocol attached as Annex I, with the goal of holding the elections not later than nine months after the entry into force of this Declaration of Principles.

3. These elections will constitute a significant interim preparatory step toward the realization of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and their just requirements.

ARTICLE IV
JURISDICTION

Jurisdiction of the Council will cover West Bank and Gaza Strip territory, except for issues that will be negotiated in the permanent status negotiations. The two sides view the West Bank and the Gaza Strip as a single territorial unit, whose integrity will be preserved during the interim period.

ARTICLE V
TRANSITIONAL PERIOD AND PERMANENT STATUS NEGOTIATIONS

2.   The five-year transitional period will begin upon the withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho area.

2. Permanent status negotiations will commence as soon as possible, but not
later than the beginning of the third year of the interim period, between the Government of Israel and the Palestinian people representatives.

3. It is understood that these negotiations shall cover remaining issues, including: Jerusalem, refugees, settlements, security arrangements, borders, relations and cooperation with other neighbors, and other issues of common interest.

4. The two parties agree that the outcome of the permanent status negotiations should not be prejudiced or preempted by agreements reached for the interim period.

ARTICLE VI
PREPARATORY TRANSFER OF POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2. Upon the entry into force of this Declaration of Principles and the withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area, a transfer of authority from the Israeli military government and its Civil Administration to the authorised Palestinians for this task, as detailed herein, will commence. This transfer of authority will be of a preparatory nature until the inauguration of the Council.

2. Immediately after the entry into force of this Declaration of Principles and the withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho area, with the view to promoting economic development in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, authority will be transferred to the Palestinians on the following spheres: education and culture, health, social welfare, direct taxation, and tourism. The Palestinian side will commence in building the Palestinian police force, as agreed upon. Pending the inauguration of the Council, the two parties may negotiate the transfer of additional powers and responsibilities, as agreed upon.

ARTICLE VII
INTERIM AGREEMENT

2. The Israeli and Palestinian delegations will negotiate an agreement on the interim period (the "Interim Agreement")

 2. The Interim Agreement shall specify, among other things, the structure of the Council, the number of its members, and the transfer of powers and responsibilities from the Israeli military government and its Civil Administration to the Council. The Interim Agreement shall also specify the Council's executive authority, legislative authority in accordance with Article IX below, and the independent Palestinian judicial organs.

3. The Interim Agreement shall include arrangements, to be implemented upon the inauguration of the Council, for the assumption by the Council of all of the powers and responsibilities transferred previously in accordance with Article VI above.

4. In order to enable the Council to promote economic growth, upon its inauguration, the Council will establish, among other things, a Palestinian Electricity Authority, a Gaza Sea Port Authority, a Palestinian Development Bank, a Palestinian Export Promotion Board, a Palestinian Environmental Authority, a Palestinian Land Authority and a Palestinian Water Administration Authority, and any other Authorities agreed upon, in accordance with the Interim Agreement that will specify their powers and responsibilities.

5. After the inauguration of the Council, the Civil Administration will be dissolved, and the Israeli military government will be withdrawn.

ARTICLE VIII
PUBLIC ORDER AND SECURITY

In order to guarantee public order and internal security for the Palestinians of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the Council will establish a strong police force, while Israel will continue to carry the responsibility

for defending against external threats, as well as the responsibility for overall security of Israelis for the purpose of safeguarding their internal security and public order.

ARTICLE IX
LAWS AND MILITARY ORDERS

2. The Council will be empowered to legislate, in accordance with the Interim Agreement, within all authorities transferred to it.

2. Both parties will review jointly laws and military orders presently in force in remaining spheres.

ARTICLE X
JOINT ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN LIAISON COMMITTEE

In order to provide for a smooth implementation of this Declaration of Principles and any subsequent agreements pertaining to the interim period, upon the entry into force of this Declaration of Principles, a Joint Israeli-Palestinian Liaison Committee will be established in order to deal with issues requiring coordination, other issues of common interest, and disputes.

ARTICLE XI
ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN COOPERATION IN ECONOMIC FIELDS

Recognizing the mutual benefit of cooperation in promoting the development of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and Israel, upon the entry into force of this Declaration of Principles, an Israeli-Palestinian Economic Cooperation Committee will be established in order to develop and implement in a cooperative manner the programs identified in the protocols attached as Annex III and Annex IV.

ARTICLE XII
LIAISON AND COOPERATION WITH JORDAN AND EGYPT

The two parties will invite the Governments of Jordan and Egypt to participate in establishing further liaison and cooperation arrangements between the Government of Israel and the Palestinian representatives, on the, one hand, and the Governments of Jordan and Egypt, on the other hand, to promote cooperation between them. These arrangements will include the constitution of a Continuing Committee that will decide by agreement on the modalities of admission of persons displaced from the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967, together with necessary measures to prevent disruption and disorder. Other matters of common concern will be dealt with by this Committee.

ARTICLE XIII
REDEPLOYMENT OF ISRAELI FORCES

2. After the entry into force of this Declaration of Principles, and not later than the eve of elections for the Council, a redeployment of Israeli military forces in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip will take place, in addition to withdrawal of Israeli forces carried out in accordance with Article XIV.

2. In redeploying its military forces, Israel will be guided by the principle that its military forces should be redeployed outside populated areas.

3. Further redeployments to specified locations will be gradually implemented commensurate with the assumption of responsibility for public order and internal security by the Palestinian police force pursuant to Article VIII above.

ARTICLE XIV
ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM THE GAZA STRIP AND JERICHO AREA

Israel will withdraw from the Gaza Strip and Jericho area, as detailed in the protocol attached as Annex II.

ARTICLE XV
RESOLUTION OF DISPUTES

2.   Disputes arising out of the application or interpretation of this Declaration of Principles. Or any subsequent agreements pertaining to the interim period, shall be resolved by negotiations through the Joint Liaison Committee to be established pursuant to Article X above.

2. Disputes which cannot be settled by negotiations may be resolved by a mechanism of conciliation to be agreed upon by the parties.

3. The parties may agree to submit to arbitration disputes relating to the interim period, which cannot be settled through conciliation. To this end, upon the agreement of both parties, the parties will establish an Arbitration Committee.

ARTICLE XVI
ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN COOPERATION CONCERNING REGIONAL PROGRAMS

Both parties view the multilateral working groups as an appropriate instrument for promoting a "Marshall Plan", the regional programs and other programs, including special programs for the West Bank and Gaza Strip, as indicated in the protocol attached as Annex IV .

ARTICLE XVII
MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

2.   This Declaration of Principles will enter into force one month after its signing.

2. All protocols annexed to this Declaration of Principles and Agreed Minutes pertaining thereto shall be regarded as an integral part hereof.

Done at Washington, D.C., this thirteenth day of September, 1993.

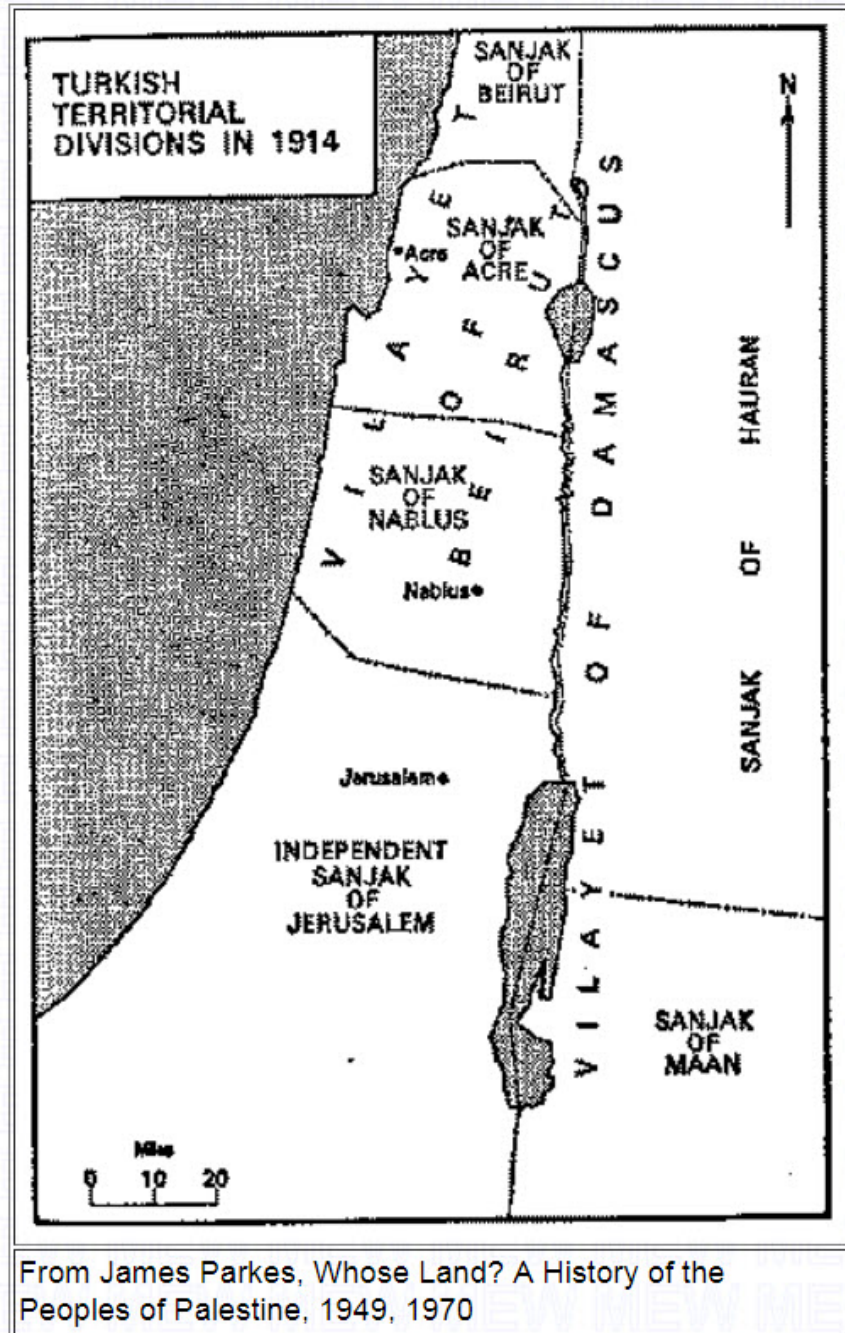For the Government of Israel
For the P.L.O.

Witnessed By:

The United States of America
The Russian Federation

Source: http://www.usip.org/library/pa/israel_plo/oslo_09131993.html

Appendix 4: Maps

A. Map of Ottoman Palestine – Territorial Divisions

From James Parkes, Whose Land? A History of the Peoples of Palestine, 1949, 1970

Source: www.mideastweb.org

B. Israel, the West Bank and Gaza

Source: www/mideastweb.org

C. Current and Projected Israeli Redeployment According to the Wye River Memorandum, 1998

Source: www.mideastweb.org