

The European Role in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

**A Conference for European, Israeli and Palestinian
Students**

12-15 August 2002 in Hamburg, Germany

**Under the patronage of the
German Institute for Middle East Studies**

Post-Event 15-18 August 2002



Dear Reader,

In December 2001, the members of the International Politics Working Group of AEGEE-Europe came up with the idea of organising an event focusing not on an internal European issue but on a long-standing conflict present in the media almost every day – the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The objective of this event was to find out how young people from Israel and the Palestinian Territories look at the conflict, what main problems they see and how they might solve them. Moreover, students from both parties were to have the possibility to not only get in touch with one another but also with the 'outside', to become aware of the European perspective.

Therefore, the workshops of the first part of the conference focused on the different perceptions of the 'other'. The topic was introduced by a lecture. For the majority of the conference, however, the workshops discussed the European role, focusing on several specific issues: the economic field, the cultural field, the US-EU relationship and the EU's active involvement. Each group had the task to suggest Europe's future role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

It was the long-term goal that the conference should give the different participating organisations from the region the possibility to meet and to get to know each other, thereby establishing a basis for possible common projects in the future.

However, we did not expect the outcome to be such a success. – The participants were just great in developing fruitful discussions and, amazingly, they also agreed on a common position paper in every single workshop. – A big thanks to all of you!

Another important result of this week is that this conference will not remain the only one: AEGEE is already planning further meetings of European, Israeli and Palestinian students for February and August of next year. Moreover, a project team will be founded in order to co-ordinate the different activities and guarantee further continuous work. AEGEE is among the first organisations to support the integration of the Eastern and the Southeast European regions. This opening of AEGEE towards the Middle-East – our southern neighbours – is therefore an important step and a necessary one if we don't want to ignore what happens outside of "Fortress Europe".

The documentation begins with four essays on an active European engagement in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict – each exploring the situation from a different point of view; the essays were part of the participants' application for the conference. The following part includes the position papers of both parts of the conference – the importance of an intercultural dialogue (Part I) and the European role (Part II). Regarding part I, only one position paper is provided since all workshops dealt with the same issue.

Finally, we decided to also include the evening and Post-Event programs organised by AEGEE-Hamburg in order to remember the nice and very interesting time we spent and which brought us closer together.

Once again we would like to thank Rainer Zimmer-Winkel from the German-Palestinian Association. He has helped us immensely in the preparation of this conference and has agreed to support us in the follow-ups and our further work.

We hope you enjoy reading this documentation and want to thank everybody who made this unique event possible,

Christine Binzel

Main co-ordinator

President AEGEE Hamburg, Secretary of the International Politics Working Group of AEGEE-Europe

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Personal Views about the European Role in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

By Dusan Mihajilovic

Most recent events prove that the Middle East is still very far away from closing the violent chapter of its history. The Oslo Agreement (1993), likewise second Israeli-Palestinian summit in Camp David (2000), were revoked by aggressive and irrational actions from both sides. Therefore, old, worn-out projects should be put aside (to the judgment of history) and **completely new peace platform** should be promoted, in order to reach realistic, universally acceptable and permanent solution.

I am convinced that need for fresh approach to the problem, introduces the EU as important player in creating peace.

Position of the EU

The EU has plenty of motives to accept this massive responsibility

- Previous actions in this field and well-balanced position give Europe strong credibility.
- Good relations Europe cherishes with the US are promising foundation for successful Euro-Atlantic team-work on this particular issue.
- From the practical point of view - involvement in the Middle-East would ultimately shape the EU image in foreign policy and further build-up its authority in the international community.
- There's also the ethical aspect of this problem: only a few events have determined Arab-Israeli relations in

the 20th century more than the Ballfour's document from 1917. Europe has some kind of moral duty to take active role in the peace process.

Prospects

One distinguished Serbian journalist (B.Jaksic) has written that "The Middle East is the territory with the biggest quantity of history per square kilometer". From this specific reason, Europe should be disillusioned about immediate and revolutionary impact on the situation.

It is unrealistic to discuss 9th century injustices, so locating current sources of dismay (suicide bombings, expansion of Jewish settlements etc.) should be a good starting point. Discussing this matter, should be followed by 'step-by-step' diplomacy, which should deal with the topics gradually and override inefficiency of "shuttle-diplomacy".

Partnership between the EU and the USA is extremely important in this segment of work. American presence in this area is strong, long lasting and useful. Existence of anti-American sentiment on behalf of the Arabs should not be the obstacle in this context, as Europe appears as "fresh" mediator, acceptable for both sides.

My personal opinion is that Israeli fear of growing anti-Semitism in Europe (re. recent elections in France, the Netherlands etc.) shouldn't be considered problem and would be dispelled shortly by coherent and constructive European approach.

Speaking of sides in conflict, participation in peace-talks should be enabled to wide range of subjects. Recent tragic events are proving that *the Arrangement* not representing compromise of **all** the important factors, simply isn't **the Solution**.

One of the elements which must be appreciated is the participation of the Arab countries in these talks. It is absurd to make peace without the regional approach.

I'll use H.Kissinger's "ocean of passion" metaphor, to point out that these seas won't be calmed as long as all the fish are not content..

Euro action

The comparative "advantage" of the EU to other mediators has already been mentioned. I think that strengthening these positions should be the vital assignment.

Never will the EU presence in the region be more noticeable than in terms of material and technical assistance.

The EU must pursue with humanitarian aid to refugee settlements, must insist on building homes, schools, infrastructure.

Education of population and reduction of poverty will cause massive blow to radicalism.

The youth of Israel and Palestine are, like in the case of former Yugoslavia, generators of the changes and forces which will bring-up idea of co-habitation.

Maximum of energy and human potential should be aimed in encouraging intercultural dialogue.

Europe can share useful experience in building mutual trust and understanding in community of ethnic and religious diversity. "Economy" is the name of the game, not the "differences" – this is

the praxis where European *missionary work* should originate from.

Joint programs of education and training are fundamental for elimination of one-sidedness, intolerance, bias, militant behavior, extremisms of all colors and shapes.

The question is how?

I will try to answer this question by focusing on 3 key facts:

1. Europe is the biggest commercial partner with Israel, and the first donor to the Palestinians.
2. Europe is geographically the nearest power to the Middle East

– The Israeli side must be pressured to be more flexible during the negotiations and assume a humanitarian in dealing with the Palestinians and to end occupation.

It should also pressure on the Israelis to stop building the

This conference was mainly supported by the **Robert Bosch Foundation**

The Robert Bosch Foundation, established in 1964, is one of the largest foundations associated with a private German company. It supports philanthropic undertakings in the following areas: health care, international understanding, social welfare, education, training, arts, culture, the humanities, and the social and natural sciences.

Furthermore, the **City of Hamburg** and **DAAD** (German Academic Exchange Service) financed tickets of Israeli and Palestinian students.

By Farid Taamallah

Since the early beginning of the Arab-Israeli conflict, Europe played a very crucial role in finding, managing, directing and influencing the conflict..

Great Britain was responsible for founding the conflict in 1917 when it gave the Jewish people (Belfor promise) to rise and establish their own state in Palestine. It facilitated and urged the Jewish immigration to Palestine during the mandate period (1917-1948).

Europe also played a big role of issuing the secretary council resolution 181 that divides Palestine into two states at 1947. Then it helped and supported Israel into becoming a very strong state and even protected it from outside attacks. This led to create arrogant Israel who refuses to implement the international resolutions. That means Europe holds historic responsibility toward the conflict and it must help and work hard to solve the problem at least for moral reasons.

My argument is that Europe has reasons, motivations, responsibility and ability to play a more effective role in the Middle East peace process and it must protect its interests.

and it influences and is influenced by the tension in the Middle East .

3. Europe played a big role in the conflict specially during the crisis. And it is acceptable to the whole parties.

That means that the EU is qualified and able to make big effect on the peace process, not only by investing its economic facilities to pressure the parties, but also by the political and cultural influence it has in the region.

What I would like to stress is that the EU can invest its huge economic role in confirming its political role to be main sponsor to the peace process side by side with the USA and Russia.

The Arab countries and the Palestinians always welcome a more prominent European role in the peace process, one which always faces opposition or less enthusiasm from Israel.

I think that Europe has a more realistic perspective toward the conflict and it has a deeper understanding of the sensitivity of the negotiable issues. Moreover, it knows the roots of the hostility more than the Russian and Americans because of its historic involvement of the conflict.

In my opinion, Europe must benefit and invest its economic role to achieve the required influence upon the 2 parties:

settlements by threatening to freeze the commercial agreements with Israel.

– The Palestinian side must be pressured to give more democracy, transparency and to fight against corruption.

We desire and are looking forward seriously to the European role in the Middle East to be more effective, to establish a balance in power and positions in front of the American biased position and Russian absent role.

On the other hand, we are eager for a neutral side to give real help for our fledgling democracy to be stronger and deeper , and I think (as many Palestinians do) that Europeans are the most appropriate people who can give honest full effort to, not only because they are democratic countries, but also because they have direct interest in forming democratic countries on the other side of the Mediterranean which will bring stability and welfare to the peoples of the region, something what will positively effect the European security .

So, I think that Javier Solana has a hard job to do in unifying the European foreign policy toward the Middle East and to convince his countries to reappraise their policy to save and keep spheres of influence in the Middle East..

Until that, envoy Moratinos must show a lot of patience toward the Israeli leaders who do not welcome such role.

diplomacy shows us that negotiations, even if accepted, are watered-down versions of each side's agenda. Therefore, the EU

military equipment, it could potentially divide and draw out EU negotiations to the point where the EU becomes an ineffective actor.

Hereby we want to thank the **German Institute for Middle East Studies**, Hamburg, for being our patron, particularly their director **Prof. Dr. Steinbach** and **PD Dr. Hafez**. Moreover, **Mrs Dr. rer. pol. Asseburg** (German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Berlin), **Mr Zimmer-Winkel** (German-Palestinian Association, reg. soc., Berlin) and **Idan Levi** (Doctorand) for their very impressive lectures.

By Katie Tobin

Historically, the most active mediator of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict has been the United States. However, in its new, united role, Europe has also expressed interest in brokering peace in the region. This trend is not unfounded. The EU member states are much closer geographically to the region than the United States. Israel would not exist today if it weren't for the Nazi-led Holocaust, which killed six million European Jews. Muslims, many of them Arabs from the Israeli-Palestinian region, are the fastest-growing minority group in Europe. For these reasons, it seems like a wise idea for the EU to assert a more prominent role in brokering a Middle Eastern peace. Nevertheless, the very structure of the EU makes it difficult to serve as an effective negotiator.

With such varied national interests, histories, and populations, it is a challenge in itself for the EU to establish a coherent common foreign policy relating to an issue as complex as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Unlike the United States, EU members are not accustomed to working together towards mutual foreign policy goals. Therefore, in order to reach any agreement among EU members, this policy would be the result of much debate and compromise. The history of

could only negotiate from either a disunited or a weak standpoint.

Furthermore, the EU's system of a rotating presidency prevents it from establishing necessary continuity and credibility. Because high-level negotiations rarely take place more often than every few months, it is unlikely that the current EU foreign policy representative would meet with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and PLO Chairman Yassir Arafat more than once or twice. Therefore, with every EU presidential rotation, the negotiators must essentially start over establishing trust and credibility. With such a lack of continuity, it is difficult to make much progress. Arafat and Sharon may also try to use this to their advantage, hoping for an EU rotation presenting a policy more in their favor. Despite the EU's claims that their policy remains cohesive regardless of presidency, this is very difficult for third parties to recognize, especially in the new realm of the EU.

If, conversely, the European Union would want to change its policies in light of changing circumstances, it could become an arduous, complicated process. A new set of negotiations would have to start within the European Union even before they could meet with the Israelis and/or Palestinians. In an issue affecting EU members differently, for example, if the Israelis wanted to purchase German

Furthermore, despite unification, European countries are so small that opportunities for international trade figure quite prominently in their foreign policy. Therefore, the EU is not able to take such hard stances against states like Iran, which has been illegally supplying weapons to the PLO, and Iraq, which has been supporting the

Palestinian suicide bombers. Instead of isolating these countries for exporting terror and complicating matters in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, EU countries are trying to engage them in trade. This is ineffective and counterproductive, making the EU seem soft and not completely committed to resolving the conflict at all costs, even a decrease in trade.

Everything involving EU involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not completely negative, however. The more the EU tries to participate in the traditionally US-dominated role of negotiator, the more it realizes what a difficult role it faces, and is slower to criticize the US for their inability to magically broker a solution. The more unity the EU and US show on this issue, the better. Although it would be strenuous and counterproductive to try to create a mutual stance on the issue, greater US-EU cooperation would not allow the Israelis and Palestinians to "shop around" for a better deal, or

to try to play one mediator off another. Therefore, if the European Union recognizes the difficulties it must face as negotiator and serves as a solid partner for Western mediation, the conflicting parties in the Israeli and Palestinian territories will be ready for real discussion.

contribution, Europe can do much more to help ending the conflict. Europe's role in the political arena has been over shadowed by the United States. America's lead in the Camp David summit is a clear example. In my opinion, it is crucial that Europe should take an active role in the political aspects as well.

impartial Europe. Actually hiring a PR company might also be an option. Currently a lot of the negative Israeli attitude towards Europe is based on nothing but ignorance. Israelis are not familiar with the EU and its institutions. For example, many Israelis actually believe that Israel is a member of

Thanks also to **Mr Herbert** (Deputy Head of Near East Division in the German Foreign Ministry) and **Mr Sterzing** (Member of the German Parliament, Spokesperson for European Affairs) for their attendance at the public panel discussion and **Mr Cichowicz** as moderator.

By Ofer Zalzberg

The possibilities of an active European Role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are vast. Regretfully, so are the problems. Since in my opinion the main problem of an active European role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the Israeli refusal to an active European participation, I would like to concentrate chiefly on examining the different ways that Europe can alleviate this problem.

The possibilities are immense. First, Europe can help - better than any other world power - to enhance the inter-cultural dialog between Israelis and Palestinians. On the other hand, the United States is conceived as a pro-Jewish and anti-Arab superpower – especially since the events of the 11th of September. Second, the geographical proximity is not only an incentive for Europe to establish a stable peace in the region, but also a very important factor that can be used to solve the conflict. A close mediator that will be affected by the results is more easily trusted than a far one who is less affected by the situation.

So far the European involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was significant mainly economic, both as much needed aid to the Palestinian refugees and as aid to the Palestinian authority. Even though it has been an extremely important

The main objection to a more active European role arrives from the Israeli side. Israelis tend to assume that Europe generally favors the Arabs – and more specifically the Palestinians. The assumption is based on European policy towards the Middle East in the last fifty years. This assumption is not the truism that the Israeli public believes it is. Europe has ended the direct financial aid to the Palestinian Authority after discovering that the money was ill-used. Further examples along these lines are of course abundant. Thus, it is my belief that if Europe wants to assume a more central role in ending the Israeli-Palestinian conflict it should deal with the problematic image it has in Israel.

Improving the European image should be directed at both the Israeli leadership and the Israeli public. So far efforts were directed only at the leaders and even these efforts were not enough. While some Knesset members (such as Kolette Avital) have been convinced, an overwhelming majority is still reluctant to even hear about a European mediator. Solana and Moratinos are conceived in Israel as having very few authorities and powers.

Various options are available for Europe to accomplish this task. Speeches by senior European ministers and officials should attempt to enhance the image of an

the EU. Simply encouraging education about the subject in Israel would also help a great deal.

Another facet of Europe's Public Relations problem in Israel is that there is no nearly public debate in the country on the issue of the European role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Examples of Cyprus and Turkey may point to another interesting solution: The public debate on the question of accession to the EU, even without the EU's concession, has greatly increased the public's interest in the EU. The EU has been portrayed as the economic superpower that it really is. This is not to say that Israel should, or should not, join the EU. But, merely conducting a debate in these countries has clarified the importance of maintaining good relations with Europe. This is something that the majority of the Israeli public does not yet fully comprehend.

It is clear that the Israeli image of Europe is not the only obstacle to an active European role in the Israeli Palestinian conflict. Improving this image though will be an important step.

Participants, Workshop Leaders, Organizers,...

Adham Bani Shamsha * Agata Cywinska

Alba Fishta * Alexianne Galea * Andrea Kreitenweis * Areen Hammud

Basel Amer * Baykal Arslanbuga * Beyhan Sentuerk

Dan Dubiner * Dusan Mihajilovic * Emina Popovici * Endre György * Farid Taamallah * Florian Schmid-Sorg

Frank Burgdoerfer * Galya Zolghadr * Ioana Muresan * Irina Lyssenko

Izabela Lewandowska * Jan-Sebastian van Lisum

Jasmin Dirinpur * Jean Blatz

Katie Tobin

Keren Neubauer



Liena Abulaban

Minouche Monaco * Munir Lada`a * Natalia Spartakova

Nicola Rega * Nina Baumeister * Ofer Zalzburg * Olaf Gamal Deussen * Olivier Genkin

Oren Raykin * Peter Baranowski * Radka Langhammerova * Raya Ziad

Rossella Ferrari * Sonja Köppel * Steffen Binzel

Stella Seibert * Steve Oji * Susanne Hofmann * Tamar Amar-Dahl * Tamara Anthony

Thomas Triebs

Wiebke Fleig * Yana Knopova * Zoe Nautre

Part I – The Importance of an Intercultural Dialogue

Perceptions of the “Other”

Workshop II - Progress in the cultural field as a prerequisite for a successful EU-policy in the Middle East

Hamburg, 13.08.02

In discussing the various perceptions Palestinians and Israelis have of each other, as well as the European perception of both societies, we came to the following conclusions:

- most, if not all, of these perceptions are dominated by prejudice and stereotypes from all parties; including Europeans.
- There are certain perceptions which, although not generally true, have certain origins in real situations.
- In general it is dangerous to generalize the perceptions of certain groups of these three societies as being representative of the whole. In the case of Europe this refers mainly to the differences between the countries. In the case of Israelis and Palestinians one must take into consideration that these are not homogenous societies with only one universal perception of the other.

Monday, 12 August

9:00 h opening ceremony

PART I : THE IMPORTANCE OF AN INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

10:00 h lecture by **PD Dr. Kai Hafez**,
German Institute for Middle East Studies,
Hamburg

11:00 h break

11:15 h workshops
getting to know each other

12:30 h lunch

13:30 h workshops
the distorted perception of the 'other' as an
obstacle towards a resolution of the conflict

15:00 h break

15:30 h continuation of the workshops

17:00 h closure of the day

The following perceptions were deemed to have the most negative effect on a progress towards a rapprochement between the two societies as well as a just role for European mediation:

- the labelling of the whole Palestinian society as terrorists and every action as terrorism.
- The perception of Israel by Palestinians and Arabs in general as being an extension of European imperialism and refusing to acknowledge the reasons in Jewish history leading to its founding. Similarly the ignorance of the Israeli side of the Palestinian identity and their history in the contested land.
- The distorted European view concerning both societies. On the one hand Israel is mainly perceived as a “western” liberal, pluralistic society whereas Palestinians are seen as an “oriental” authoritarian, irrational society.

Part II – The European Role

Workshop I - Economics and the Middle East Conflict

We are the group working on the economic aspects of the conflict in the Middle-East in the conference on the European role in the Israeli-Palestine conflict organized by AEGEE-Hamburg. Participants of our assembly are from both Israel and Palestine as well as from various European countries. We believe that economics play a crucial role in the conflict for all the parties involved. Europe has clear economic interests in the Middle-East. Continuation of the conflict will jeopardize these interests. Our discussions during the workshop sessions led us to formulate four major areas of the most vital economic issues: economic causes of the conflict, economic effects of the conflict, economic means of the EU to resolve the conflict, non compromise issues.

Tuesday, 13 August

9:00 h	short presentation of the reportage of each workshop
10:00 h	workshops – preparatory meetings to part II
11:00 h	break
11:15 h	continuation of the workshops
12:30 h	lunch

PART II: THE EUROPEAN ROLE

13:30 h	lecture by Mrs Dr. rer. pol. Asseburg , German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Berlin
15:00 h	break
15:30 h	workshops
17:00 h	closure of the day

Economic causes:

As outlined in the Paris protocols Israel tries to control production factors in the Palestinian territories, such as water and other natural resources as well as labour movement. Land confiscation is another factor we considered although it is not mentioned in the Paris protocol. By preventing the development of an independent Palestinian economy, Israel aims at controlling Palestinian consumer markets and thereby maintains the inequality of living standards.

Economic effects:

We distinguish between effects on the economies of the Palestinian occupied territories and Israel, respectively. For the Palestinians the conflict leads to the destruction of infrastructure, education and production facilities. This essentially causes the halt of economic development, massive unemployment and extreme poverty. At the same time, the Israeli government is primarily concerned with the security of Israel and upholding the occupation of the Palestinian Territories, thereby neglecting pressing economic problems. There are several problems such as increasing unemployment and lower social spending because of high military and security expenses. Both sides are adversely affected by the substitution of Palestinian labour by foreign workers, as well as by the reduction of foreign investment and the tourism industry.

Economic means of the EU to resolve the conflict:

We have doubts that imposing economic sanctions on Israel would be adequate. Alternatively, we propose the full enforcement of the Association Agreement. This would force Israeli exporters pay taxes on goods produced in the settlements because the latter do not belong to the territory of the state of Israel. Giving state aid and grants to the Palestinian Authority is a way of strengthening their economy. Transparency in the use of these funds must be a prerequisite for granting them. The underlying aim of these measures should be to facilitate an independent Palestinian economic and financial policy.

Non Compromise Issues:

The discussions touched upon a wide range of topics that cannot be extensively listed here and a lot of questions remain unsolved. An example of such a disagreement is the following: Some argue that the arms trade as an economic cause doesn't affect the conflict, while others claim that the military industrial lobby has an economic interest in continuing the conflict.



Andrea Kreitenweis, Louaay Messari, Susanne Hofmann, Jasmin Dirinpur, Agata Cywińska, Izabela Lewandowska, Baykal Arslanbuga, Dan Dubiner, Farid Taamallah

Moderator: Thomas Triebs

Workshop II – Concerning the cultural aspects of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict and the role of the EU

The Workshop Council,

Taking into consideration the setbacks and inefficiency of higher politics and official diplomacy in finding a solution and reaching peace in the region,

Gravely concerned about the deteriorating situation in Israel and Palestine and the dire, depressing effect it has on the inhabitants,

Having in mind the vital Role of Europe and specifically the EU in the Mediterranean Region,

Convinced that an alternative way of approach to the conflict must be found,

The Workshop Council has taken the following approach,

Contrasting different perspectives of the three societies (Palestinian, Israeli, European) against each other,

Comparing the different perspectives the members have about the concepts of culture, civil society and democracy with the intention to reach a definition of the aforementioned,

Putting in relation the state of democracy respectively democratization in Israeli and Palestinian society in order to get a better understanding of the functioning of both societies,

Convinced that more emphasis on cultural dialogue and understanding between the two parties and Europe is a major factor for achieving a satisfying solution to the conflict,

Based on that the Workshop Council has reached the following conclusion,

1. Europe:

Came to the conclusion that through analyzing the Role of the EU in the region the European Identity is still in the process of making, although there exists a common heritage whose content is not clear. We nonetheless give credit to the third concept of the Barcelona Process, even though we believe it did not amount to much, in placing cultural aspects on the same level as high politics and economy.

2. Perception:

Came to the conclusion that the overwhelming negative perceptions of oneself and each other is a major obstacle for a resolution of the conflict.

3. Civil society:

Came to the conclusion that there is a developed civil society in both parties of the conflict, and accepting the vital role civil society has in shaping a pluralistic, participatory and free society, although being aware that there are also inherent dangers in civil society to the development of democracy.

4. Israel

Realizing that although the State of Israel is classified as a democracy there are several elements that do not apply to the concept of a democracy, mainly the active discrimination against the Palestinian Arab minority by the Jewish majority.

5. Palestine

Realizing that there is a large potential for the development of democracy inside the Palestinian society although there are many obstacles which can derail this development, mainly the authoritarian style of rule and the occupation.

Wednesday, 14 August

9:00 h	lecture by Idan Levi , Doctorand – "Problems of an active European engagement in the Israeli perspective"
9:45 h	continuation of the workshops
10:45 h	break
11:00 h	continuation of the workshops
12:30 h	lunch
13:30 h	lecture by Mr Zimmer-Winkel , German-Palestinian Association, reg. soc.
14:15 h	continuation of the workshops
15:15 h	break
15:45 h	continuation of the workshops
17:15 h	closure of the day

Based on these conclusions the Workshop Council recommends the following,

Calls upon the EU to take a more active role by supporting the civil society and through it the process of democratization and intercultural dialogue,

Request that civil society on both sides of the conflict take a more active role in promoting contact on the cultural level in order to change the perspectives of each other in a positive way.

Alba Fishta, Maja Kambovska, Michelle Grima, Nicola Rega, Wiebke Fleig, Radka Langhammerova, Maier Yagod, Areen Hammoud, Endre György, Peter Baranowski, Nina Baumeister, Irina Lyssenko

Moderator: Munir Lada`a



Workshop III – The EU-US Relationship in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Preamble:

We believe that a just and comprehensible peace is the only solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

While taking into consideration, the interests and backgrounds of both the Israelis and Palestinians, we identify several obstacles to lasting peace:

Problem: Mutual mistrust exists among leaders and populations

Proposal: Foreign involvement is necessary and must be acceptable to both sides. We have identified as viable partners the United States, the European Union and the United Nations, pending approval from both sides. Foreign involvement would take the form of a combination between a facilitator and a moderator. An arbitrator would be judgemental and would require consensus from both parties, which would be significantly difficult to achieve.

The foreign involvement must have a political and economical power in order to guarantee the implementation of a resolution. This foreign party would mediate negotiations between committees comprising Israeli and Palestinian ministerial-level delegates and envoys, as opposed to the summit meetings held by political leaders.

Problem: Absence of "the other" entails mutual misperceptions which hinder the peace process

Proposal: Foreign intervention is necessary to provide a framework and setting for civil society dialogue. This could include joint education and youth exchange programs, as part of a bottom-up approach.

Problem: The status of Jerusalem

Proposal: With respect to Jerusalem, the city was recognized as a stumbling point in the peace process due to its political-religious significance. Participants were hopeful, however, that these differences could be overcome. While aware that their opinions do not reflect those of large segments of the Israeli-Palestinian populations, participants advocated an administrative partition of Jerusalem into Israeli and Palestinian capitals, in accordance to the 1967 borders. The Western Wall will fall under Israeli supervision and the Dome of the Rock will be under Palestinian jurisdiction. In both cases, religious freedom for all parties will be ensured. In case of disputes, international monitoring would be an option.

Problem: A sovereign internationally-organized Palestinian state must have clearly-defined borders

Proposal: A Palestinian state will be defined according to the 1967 borders, with the exceptions of some Israeli settlements. In exchange for settlements, Israel will grant Palestine land equal in quantity and quality.

Thursday, 15 August

9:00 h continuation of the workshops – position papers
 10:30 h break
 11:00 h presentation of the position paper of each workshop
 12:30 h lunch
 13:30 h evaluation, résumé, closing ceremony

The West Bank and Gaza Strip will be connected via a demilitarized, internationally-monitored corridor (similar to the situation in the Brčko region of Bosnia-Herzegovina as per the Dayton Peace Accords).

19:30 h – Public Panel Discussion (ESA A)

Moderator: Mr Cichowicz, Head of the Foreign Desk at the Northern German TV-station and Anchorman of the TV-program "Weltspiegel" which presents weekly reports of Channel One correspondents

Guests:

Prof. Dr. Steinbach, Director of the German Institute for Middle East Studies, Hamburg

Mr Sterzing, Member of the German Parliament, Spokesperson for European Affairs

Mr Herbert, Deputy Head of Near East Division in the German Foreign Ministry

& short presentation of the results of the conference

Problem: There are almost four million Palestinian refugees

Proposal: We could not reach an agreement regarding the right of return to Israel. However, reorganization of the state which is to ensure the transition to democracy and human rights protection via a monitoring process, and the launching of development recovery programs. In addition, other states could grant diplomatic assistance.

Problem: A framework is necessary for the post-conflict situation

Proposal: We believe that the Barcelona Process is necessary. This should be coupled with a continuation of NGO activities and initiatives already present in the region.

Conclusion:

During the workshop sessions, participants preferred not to specify the roles which the United States and the European Union respectively had to play. We sustain Kagan's thesis that while the Americans generally favour policies of coercion rather than persuasion, tend towards unilateralism, and are less inclined to act through international institutions, Europeans try to influence others through subtlety and indirection, preferring negotiation, diplomacy and persuasion to coercion and support multilateralism.



Dusan Mihajilovic, Jean Blatz, Katie Tobin, Maik Meuser, Zoe Nautre, Natalia Spartakova, Rossella Ferrari, Jan-Sebastian van Lissum, Keren Neubauer, Oren Raykin, Mohammed Hussein

Moderators: Alexianne Galea, Ioana Muresan

Workshop IV – The EU's active involvement

I. Background

1. *European Interest in the Near East*
2. *"Carrots and Sticks" Europe potentially has available*
3. *The EU as an actor in the international arena*

II. Approaches

1. *Diplomatic Efforts*
2. *Barcelona Process*
3. *European Support for the Palestinians*
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7. *With regard to our own association AEGEE*



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I. Background

1. *European Interest in the Near East*

We collected the following elements of European interest in the region and other possible motivations for European involvement in Israel and Palestine:

Political Stability

- in Europe (absence of crises and situations difficult to handle)
- in the region (avoidance of illegal weapon trading;
avoidance of drug trading
avoidance of migration)
- reliable governments for co-operation

Economic Interests

- stable access to markets
- stable access to oil
- protection of own investments

Geopolitical Interests

- own influence without the USA
- demonstration of one European voice; Europe as one global player
- support of multilateral approaches in world politics
- support of the application of elements of the "European Model" elsewhere
- Arab-European relations
- Israel as an Strategic Agent
- Palestinians as reliable partners in the Near East

Idealistic Motives

- Support of
 - Peace
 - Democracy
 - Human Rights
 - Same rights for Israelis and Palestinians
- Feeling of "moral responsibility"
- Sometimes also a feeling of responsibility for the "Holy Land"

2. *"Carrots and Sticks" Europe potentially has available*

We intensively discussed which means the Europeans use or could use in order to influence the behaviour of the conflict parties. We identified "carrots" which could serve as an incentive or as conditional support, and "sticks" to be possibly applied as a threat. The European "toolbox" roughly looks as follows:

“Carrots”	“Sticks”
<p>I. Help for the Palestinian Authority (funds, expertise)</p> <p>II. Fostering co-operation with the Arab world (carrot for Israel)</p> <p>III. Support of a solution for stable water supplies (financing a pipeline from Turkey (“Pipeline of Peace”) and/or back up such a project internationally)</p> <p>IV. Finances / financial guarantees for other specifically defined projects</p> <p>V. Support of the improvement of education (both materials and teacher training)</p> <p>VI. Support of dialogue and interaction in the field of media and NGOs</p> <p>VII. Access to EU-Markets</p> <p>VIII. Access to EU-Programmes</p> <p>IX. Invitations to Summits etc.</p> <p>By providing expertise e.g. on the potential gains of closer co-operation the benefits both sides could achieve by co-operation could be clarified.</p>	<p>X. Customs for products from the region (by now only with effect on Israel)</p> <p>XI. Freezing of transfers/support to the Palestinian Authorities</p> <p>XII. Boycotts on products</p> <p>XIII. Freezing of co-operation (e.g. scientific programmes...)</p> <p>XIV. Withdrawal of diplomatic relations</p>

3. The EU as an actor in the international arena

When trying to understand the role of the EU and the prospects for EU involvement in the regulation of the Near East conflict, it is necessary to have a glance at the inner structure and nature of the Union. These basic features determine to a large extent, how and to which extent the Europeans can act in the international arena.

The EU is neither a state nor a “classical” international organisation. It combines “inter-governmental” elements such as close co-operation of its member states (e.g. in foreign policy or justice and home affairs) with “supranational” institutions (mainly responsible in the economic field).

The effect of this is a **organisational "dualism" of EU** concerning

- external representation
- decision making procedures
- instruments

With regard to the Near East peace process this means that it depends on the kind of action to be taken *who acts* based on *whose decision* (respectively on which legitimation) by *which means*.

For example, as the supranational EU institutions are solely responsible for international trade, all policies related to this issue are put in practice by the EU commission (in particular e.g. Commissioner for external relations Chris Patten) based on a decision-making process involving the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament. Implementation will be done by EU staff and financed by the EU budget.

The main part of international relations are done in responsibility of the national governments, which usually closely co-ordinate their actions. The Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) is represented by the rotating presidency of the Union (in July – December 2002 Denmark) and the High Representative (currently Javier Solana). The implementation of common policies is primarily done by national governments and at their cost. Involvement in CFSP anyway does not constitute a legal obstacle to national activities on members' own initiative and without involvement of the partners.

In effect the **EU is represented by many different people** and inconsistent EU positions and statements are possible.

Based on respective geographic locations and historical experience there often are **different perceptions and interpretations of international developments in different member countries**, which are then mirrored in media reports, public debates and national parliament decisions and different approaches and initiatives.

II. Approaches

1. Diplomatic Efforts

Since more than three decades the European Union has been trying to influence developments in the Near East by diplomatic means. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, there are differing perceptions in Europe (some states are said to be "closer" to the Palestinians, others "closer" to the Israelis), many representatives of EU and complicated and nontransparent decision-making and co-ordination procedures.

For these reasons the EU often appears

- **inefficient,**
- **unpredictable** and
- **incapable of "real" action.**

Israel perceives the EU as Pro-Palestinian and thus does not accept it as a possible guarantor of agreements. Since the EU lacks its own military means (until now) this attitude is strengthened.

Our working group agreed that the special and unique features of the Union partly could also provide particular assets.

- Special ties of different member states to both sides involved in the conflict can serve as a **good base for empathy and understanding of both views.**
- Different perceptions and approaches provide a chance for the development of **more creativity**
- Resting itself on the principle of mutual respect and trust and on agreements, the European Union is a **living proof of the validity of the ideas it promotes**, also including the aim of creating win-win situations.

A major challenge for the Union is the development of special capabilities based on the specific assets and strengths of the European Union. In addition, the EU must win profile and self-confidence by doing so.

We agree that institutional reforms could help overcome the problems of inefficiency, nontransparency and unclear representation (as far as wanted by the member states).

We disagree concerning the question whether Europe basically should try to reach comparable status and capabilities as the US or whether it should solely search for its own role based on its own specificities.

2. Barcelona Process

In 1995 the 15 EU members and 12 Mediterranean non-members agreed to begin with the Barcelona process. It was to include 3 baskets: security and political, economic and cultural.

The process as a forum has some very unique and positive aspects: first, being the only forum where Israel and Syria participate together. Second, being the only forum that includes the Palestinian Authority as an equal to Israel and the Mediterranean countries.

Unfortunately, as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict escalated the process became stuck. Syria used its veto frequently claiming that it can achieve no agreement with Israel while the occupation continues. The success gained in the economic basket was mainly in the bilateral channels and did not really use the multilateral framework.

The major lessons that can be drawn from the peace process are thus:

- *There could be an option for groups of countries to advance at different speeds (much like the idea of Europe at different speeds)*
- *In spite of the relative failure so far, the process should be "kept alive" – if only for the time when Israel and Syria will again desire to talk and negotiate. This channel for a dialogue might be very important in the future.*
- *Since EuroMeSco is the only real success it should be imitated and expanded. Creating a framework of intercultural discussions on the academic level should be expanded to the student level – mainly by creating conferences that include students from all of the 27 participating countries. This will help to deal with problems of misperceptions.*
- *In sum, we agree that the Barcelona process has not succeeded so far but believe it might still aid in alleviating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.*

3. European Support for the Palestinians

By supporting the Palestinians the EU aims to

- Provide emergency help in the currently difficult situation of Palestinians
- Create and show concrete future perspectives
- Contribute to the process of "nation building" in order to establish structures and institutions which are able to serve as an "anchor" of identity, provide security, administer the country, and represent the Palestinians towards the Israelis and the rest of the world.

The means of the European Union for doing so are

- humanitarian aid
- financial, technical and expert support for the Palestinian Authority (PA)
- financial, technical and expert support of infrastructure projects
- financial, technical and expert support for NGOs
- invitation of the PA to or other representatives of Palestine to summits, meetings or multilateral projects

Discussed most with regard to the European support for the Palestinians is the question whether all money is used for the purposes for which it is designated. This includes two aspects: Is the money used efficiently? Is it used for the purposes it was given for, particularly, can it be guaranteed that Europe does not indirectly finance terrorism?

We agree that control and transparency are essential when giving support to the Palestinian Authority or others.

Palestinian initiatives with that aim should be involved in this whenever possible, furthermore the Palestinian Parliamentary Assembly needs to exercise efficient budget control. In addition, European representatives should always be present to support efficient use of funds and enhance efficient administration in general.

Important in our point of view is the support of close co-operation and mutual trust between the Palestinian Authority and NGOs.

Cross-border projects and contacts (especially with Israel) must be encouraged whenever possible.

4. European Support for Israel

The support that the EU gives to Israel comprises 3 main parts:

- The Free Trade Agreement – since 1995 Israel has a free trade agreement with the EU. Because the EU is Israel's biggest trade partner the importance of this component is not to be underestimated.
- Scientific Co-operation – Israel is currently the only non-EU member that participates in the European research and development program and thus benefits from sharing European knowledge.
- The EU gives financial support to different NGOs in Israel.

We agree that seen from the Israeli perspective Europe is not as essential as from the Palestinian perspective. However, we are deeply convinced that Europe can only serve its own and the region's interest by being a reliable and predictable partner for both sides and by seeking close ties to all actors relevant for peace and the future of the Near East.

Thus, close relations with Israel are in the core of Europe's interest with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. As in the Palestinian case, this of course does not rule out a critical attitude towards Israeli policies and strategies, which are perceived as obstacles for a solution of the conflict.

Contacts not only with the government but also with the opposition and civil society are essential, even more as Europe should try to involve Israeli groups in common action with Palestinian ones as much as possible.

Just as in the case of Palestine Europe has to be a good partner: open, constructive, predictable, decisive and critical.

III. Ideas and Recommendations

In general Europe should do everything in order to improve public awareness of and interest for the situation in the Near East. The situation should be understood and communicated as a challenge for Europe!

1. With regard to a "Common Vision"

- Europe should promote the idea of *win-win situations* as a result of co-operation (which stands in the core of European integration).
- Europe should communicate and develop the vision of a peaceful and co-operative Mediterranean region as a framework for a common future of Israel and its neighbours together with the European Union.
- Europe should initiate and finance a common experts' analysis of "The cost of non-peace" quantifying the current losses accumulating throughout the time the conflict is not settled.

2. With regard to diplomacy

- Europe should always keep its own interest as transparent as possible in order to contribute to an atmosphere of openness and mutual trust.
- Europe should invite Palestinian representatives wherever appropriate together with other representatives of the region in order to fight their perception of being neglected.
- Europe should understand the different perceptions of the conflict in different European nations and the special links of certain European countries to different actors involved in the conflict as an asset enabling the EU better to understand and influence the development.

3. With regard to financial support

- Europe should only give financial support conditionally and monitor intensively and critically the measures supported.
- Europe should support any solution of the refugee problem negotiated by Israel and the Palestinian Authority by appropriate measures and means.
- Europe should support solutions to common regional projects aiming at sufficient water supply (financially and technically).

4. With regard to trade

- Europe should strictly conditionalise any agreement with any side.
- Europe should involve the Palestinian Authority as much as possible in trade and co-operation agreements.
- Europe should support common initiatives by Israel and the Palestinians whenever possible and appropriate.

5. With regard to the development and improvement of state institutions

- Europe should continue to support Palestinian *nation building* in order to create the conditions for a real and lasting solution (by sending experts or money to the region or by taking Palestinian politicians to Europe in order to show them the functioning of democratic systems in Europe).
- Europe should develop common training programmes for public servants' participation in international projects and co-operation.
- European institutions could offer "intercultural communication courses" for politicians, public servants, businessmen etc.

6. With regard to mutual contacts

- European institutions and NGOs should initiate, support and co-operate in
 - Language courses for Palestinians and Israelis (Hebrew and Arabic)
 - Media projects (such as a newspaper, a radio station or an internet web site) with teams of Israeli, Palestinian and European journalists aiming to establish professional "neutral" sources of information for all sides
 - Common initiatives, events and projects (sports, music, culture,...)
 - "Education for peace": printing new neutral schoolbooks, intercultural communication courses...
- Europe should involve Israeli and Palestinian partners and individuals in
 - Common Mediterranean projects
 - Scientific and student exchange programmes: possibly starting with contacts between Israelis/Palestinians and Europeans (e.g. bringing Palestinians to Europe), later direct exchange between Israelis and Palestinians
 - European NGO and expert networks
- Europeans should be encouraged to volunteer in NGOs that are active in the region
- Israelis and Palestinians living in Europe should be encouraged to get in contact and to co-operate.

7. With regard to our own association AEGEE

As the organiser of the Hamburg conference, the IPWG has taken a first step – others (such as the Cultural Working Group CWG, the Human Rights Working Group HRWG or AEGEE locals) should be invited and encouraged to contribute!

- AEGEE should try to establish contacts and partnerships with student NGO's in the region.
- AEGEE should initiate projects involving students from the Near East and creating awareness for the Near East's situation.
- A common mailing list of the conference's participants should be opened for the discussion of topics interesting for people from Palestine, Israel and Europe. (IPWG-PIE-L). This list should be open for anybody interested!.
- A follow-up event of the Hamburg conference should be organised, this time involving students from the Near East more actively.
- Students from the Near East should be informed about and invited to AEGEE events and meetings.
- The AEGEE network and its means of communication (mailing lists, webpages, Calendar of Events, print publications such as the *Key to Europe* or the *News Bulletin*) should be used in order to spread information about the Near East and student initiatives there.
- AEGEE should start an initiative aiming at the opening of the ERASMUS programme to students from Israel and the Palestinian area.



Evening Program & Post-Event

Sunday, 11th of August

- 12:30 h: welcome of the participants at the youth hostel "Auf dem Stintfang"
- 18:00 h: dinner
- 19:30 h: getting-to-know games
- 20:00 h: language courses: Arabic, Hebrew for the Europeans; German for the Israeli and Palestinian participants
- 22:00 h: walk through the old "Elbtunnel"

Hamburg's Fun Park – an excellent place for spying (and fun).



Monday, 12th of August – First day of conference

- 19:30 h: presentation of Israeli/Palestinian student organisations & projects (I)
- 20:30 h: leaving to the park "Planten un Blomen" near "U3 – St. Pauli"/"S Dammtor" (on foot); at 21:30 h : Waterlightshow ("Wasserlichtspiele")

Tuesday, 13th of August

- 19:20 h: leaving to the "City Park" ("U3" direction "Barmbek"; meeting at 20:00 h at the stop "Borgweg") – playing games/relaxing

Wednesday, 14th of August

- 20:00 h: presentation of Israeli/Palestinian student organisations & projects (II)
- 21:00 h: DOM summer fair – one ride free on Ferris wheel



Thursday, 15th of August

- 15:00 h – 19:30 h: free time / moving house
- 19:30 h: Public Panel Discussion at ESA W 221, University of Hamburg
- 22:30 h: party at the "Kiez"/"Reeperbahn"



Thanks to the City of Hamburg, all participants could enjoy an early morning a harbour sightseeing tour.

Friday, 16th of August

- Group One: 9:00 h – 10:30 h: Harbour sightseeing tour
- 11:00 h – 12:00 h: Afghan Museum (Sandtorkai 32, 1. floor)
- Group Two: 9:00 h – 10:00 h: free time
- 10:30 h – 12:00 h: Harbour sightseeing tour
- 13:15 h: guided tour at the town hall
- 14:00 h: reception by Mr. Dr. Chrobot, Deputy Head of International Co-operation Division, City of Hamburg
- 14:30 h: free time in order to prepare traditional food from the home country or alternatively little 'show' (e.g. traditional dance/song)

- 19:00 h: party at the dormitory "Berliner Tor/Gustav-Radbruch-Haus", Borgfelder Str. 16 ("U/S Berliner Tor" – go right over the bridge, after about 200 m on the right side) – party room in the cellar: dinner and show/presentation

Can you dance?!



Saturday, 17th of August

Time to sleep late...

14:00 h: Begin of the "City Rally" – meeting at "Reeperbahn"

18:00 h: barbecue at the "Elbstrand" (beach) – take the boat ("Landungsbrücken") direction "Finkenwerder" and get off at the second stop "Övelgönne"; go to the beach (left).

22:00 h/ 23:00 h: Kiez (disco/Hans-Albers-Platz)

06:30 h: meeting in front of the "Fischauktionshalle" – visit of the famous fish market – breakfast



In front of the town hall.

To gain some perspective, participants visited Hamburg's artificial "mountain"-- the TV tower.



Sunday, 18th of August

17:00 h: dinner at the dormitory "Überseekolleg", Alsterdorfer Str. 499; "U/S "Ohlsdorf", bus 110 called "airport express" direction "airport" and get off at the first stop - you will stand directly in front of the dormitory

Hereby we want to thank
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AEGEE-Europe**

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AEGEE – European Students' Forum

www.aegee.org

AEGEE (Association des Etats Généraux des Etudiants de l'Europe) aims to promote the European idea amongst students. We achieve this by organising international events, which gives young Europeans the chance to experience the diversity of European cultures in order to inspire them to actively build the European society of tomorrow.

AEGEE strives for the creation of a true common European identity beyond any national borders. We are achieving our aims through our main fields of action, which are Peace and Stability, Active Citizenship, Higher Education and Cultural Exchange.

AEGEE is a secular, non-profit association and not linked to any political party. With over 20.000 student members in 261 towns of Europe, we are the biggest interdisciplinary European student association.

website of the conference: www.aegee.org/wg/ipwg/act/hamburg