Copenhagen Conference August 2003
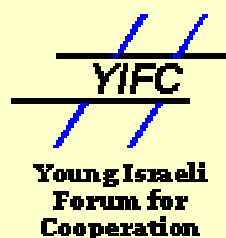
The European Role in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict:
Perceptions and Future Possibilities

4 – 10 August 2003 in Copenhagen, Denmark

Organized by
Palestinian Vision,
the PIE Project Team, and
the Young Israeli Forum for Cooperation

– Documentation –

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Regarding the preparations of the conference, we are very thankful for the ideas and contributions made by the participants from the last conference in Hofgeismar (Feb 2003).

On a more personal note, we would like to thank the members of **AEGEE-Copenhagen** for their efforts during the conference, the organizational support, the well-prepared social programme as well as the Post Event for the Israeli and Palestinian participants.

Dear Reader,

In the beginning of August 2003, 17 European participants and 12 participants from Israel and the Palestinian Territories met in Copenhagen to learn about the perceptions of the 'other' and discuss the following workshop topics: Security and Fear, Refugees and Settlements, and Mass Media and Education. The main result is a common statement of the participants (see page 7).

The Copenhagen conference is the third of a series of exchanges among European, Israeli, and Palestinian students and political activists entitled "The European role in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict". By providing a neutral forum for Israeli and Palestinian students and political activists, the conferences aim at establishing a network of strongly committed young people trying to understand the other 'side', and to acquire awareness for his/her needs, in order to find sustainable solutions for the various problems with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. – The next conference will take place in Amsterdam beginning of March next year (2004).

Similar to the last conference in Hofgeismar, Germany, the working method of the conference was built on four stages: vision – obstacles – solutions – actions. Within each stage, the consensus reaching Workshop Method from the Institute for Cultural Affairs was applied.
In the first step, all participants expressed together a vision for a certain date in the near future: 2008. Based on this vision, a common understanding of the obstacles preventing both societies from achieving this vision was reached within each workshop. In the third step, each workshop elaborated various approaches to overcome the identified obstacles. During the last part – action – the participants eventually discussed how we, youth, can influence our societies and create an open attitude towards the 'other' as well as positive expectations that will enable both societies to risk giving up a little in order to achieve our vision.

By having empathy with the 'other', by sharing fears and hopes, and, by this, recognising the others' identity may enable us to work together and make a change.

We hope you enjoy reading our documentation,

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Executive Director
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Mass Media and Education
by Usama Khalilieh

The Palestinian - Israeli conflict has been in the atmosphere for many long years and it has been the centre of attention in the Middle East for the last 50 years, yet for some reason no one in the world has made a real effort to solve this great mystery which in my opinion was never handled the right way.

During the past 10 years or so, mass media has played a great role in influencing the views and positions of people all over the world in concern with any uprising issue. Of course, media is a strong weapon of control that can either help protect a certain point of view or totally destroy it.

The world now has become a small village were any one in the far west can easily communicate with another person who is in the other side of the world through the Telephone, Internet, Television, etc… and having such facilities through out the world makes a big difference on every level but there remains an important question:
"How can we benefit from these various facilities in communication??? "

A historical fact states that gaining public opinion to your side helps you overcome your opponents and in a world of communications with no limits, the

cause of justice could be well served while in many times things could go in the opposite direction.

In the Israeli - Palestinian conflict, Media has been the key player since the beginning, the Israeli side has used all that is in their power to successfully convey their message to the whole wide world in the way they want the whole world to see it and while I totally respect their commitment and belief in their cause, I blame the Palestinians for not doing so in trying to present their case fairly to the whole world. Some may say that Palestinians had no financial capabilities to do so, that is not true because the problem with the Palestinians was that they totally depended on their belief that Palestine is an Arab country and regardless of how much of that is true, it was simply not enough to the public opinion.

Unlike the United States of America, European countries have different opinions regarding the Israeli - Palestinian conflict and these variations in opinions go back to the effort of the deep, truthful and non bias coverage of some countries to what is really happening on the conflict ground.

Although the European role has made a difference in the conflict reviews, I still believe that there is still much to be done, especially in the coming period in which the world will witness a great deal of changes especially on the

Palestinian side which are in a great need of documentation and follow up since that is the only way of avoiding the waste of a life time chance to make up for the last 32 months of death and destruction to both sides of the conflict and that brings me to suggest a study for a **United European Mass Media Centre** responsible for documenting and presenting the clear image not only in the Israeli - Palestinian conflict but in all the conflicts in the world like in Iraq, Kashmir and many others. As for this media center, there should always be continuous efforts of trying to join people from each side of any conflict and try to help them see each other's point of views which needs to be done frequently.

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Refugees and Settlements
by Nimrod Goren

Israelis and Palestinians are in need of a helping hand. After two and a half years of bitter violent conflict, the two sides are beginning to look for the way back to the negotiating table. Changing global and regional political realities are assisting them in this important endeavour, which can finally bring peace to our war-torn region. The involvement of a third-party, such as Europe, is also essential to the success of such an endeavour; a third party which rather than trying to force an agreement will work together with the two sides to rebuild mutual

trust and understanding, to provide a supportive framework for the negotiations, to assist in bringing up creative solutions, and to assist in implementing whichever agreement is reached.

Two of the most divisive issues which are to be confronted in such a renewed peace process are those of the Israeli settlements in the occupied territories, and that of the 1948 Palestinian refugees. Since the 1993 Oslo Accords, these issues were put aside, claiming that they should be dealt with only in the final stages of negotiations. The political leadership of both sides believed that making concessions regarding these issues will be seen as a sign of weakness and will lessen public legitimacy for any agreement reached. Therefore, the issues remained unresolved, and the 2000 Camp David summit proved how difficult it is to resolve in two weeks problems which have not been dealt with for years.

Resolving both the refugees and settlements issues is a matter of giving up on some sort of a dream – for some Israelis it is the dream of the greater Israel; and for some Palestinians it is the dream of returning to the cities and villages from which they were expelled and fled in the 1948 war. Giving up on a dream is hard to deal with politically, but is possible when both sides are willing to do so. Actual solutions to both issues, both official and unofficial, are already on the table and are waiting to be dealt with – stopping settlement expansion and evacuating isolated settlements, land swaps, Israel annexing settlement blocs, compensation for

the refugees, enabling the right of return to Palestinian territories and a limited return into Israel, and an Israeli recognition of its part in the 1948 Palestinian disaster.

However, when asked to give up on a dream, political solutions are usually not enough. It is an emotional process, which can not be resolved only between the leaders, but must also take place in the hearts of the peoples. It should be a gradual process of shattering taboos and of changing what seems as a zero-sum game to a win-win situation. This can be done by fostering public debate on the issues, by expanding public knowledge regarding them (not many in Israel actually know what the Palestinian stand on the refugee question really is), by bringing people from both sides to meet each other, work together and try to formulate a shared vision.

European countries can have a very positive role in such a process in assisting NGO's to initiate and carry out people-to-people projects, in benefiting the sides from Europe's historical experiences in conflict-resolution and in overcoming war-provoked hatred, in serving as hosts and facilitators for both official and second-track diplomatic efforts, in coming up with creative solutions and in providing the means for their implementation. Europe should be seen by both sides as a friend, and must give legitimacy to the narratives and needs of both sides.

Today we have an opportunity for renewing the peace process, both between the leaders and the peoples. This opportunity should be grasped, and fast. The Israeli,

Palestinian and European young generation can have an important role in this process, working together in dialogue groups and in projects aiming at achieving a genuine attitude change within the wide populations. We must not lose the chance for peace, and Europe can help us in doing so.

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Security and Fear
by Jenny Rosen

The Fear of the Unknown
The security problem of the Middle East is for most a never ending nightmare of violence and military power. A nightmare we would like to forget and wish not to enter our television every evening with more speeches and more blood. We saw it all before, strong leaders assuring and promising the security of "their people" from the other. But the questions never asked are: who are the people searching protecting and from whom they need to be protected? The idea of the people as us and the creation of the other in order to construct the "we" is the ground of any politics of security. So which people are we really taking about? Are we talking about Jews, Muslims and Christians or Arabs or Syrians, Palestinians, Lebanese and Israelis? All these identities may not be contradicting but for most multiplied. A person has many identities, which depend on situations and are relative. The issue of identity is most important for security and the creation of fear. I believe all people are in search of feeling secure and safe in their environment. Fear and insecurity is not the natural

existence of human but a creation of ourselves. We create and build the fear and once we enter into it circle of prejudices, hate and in the end violence. The origin is to be found in the creation of the "us" and "them". We need an "us", a people and a unity which can only be created in the shadow of the other. In order to define ourselves we project the unwanted characteristics on the other.

Through creating and separating between ourselves and the other we disillusion our common goal of humanity. We are not only individual human being but we or them and part of an imagined collective. In the Middle East the creation of the other and the enemy is as strong as it security borders. Not so much the physical fences separates us but the mental boarders and fears for the person on the other side. The security fences keep us a part holding us back from meeting or knowing the other. The other remains the evil enemy created in our minds and as generations passed the prejudices are becoming stronger and deeper. The faces on the other side become less human for everyday as we grow further apart.

The dehumanization of the other may be the most dangerous force in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as well as the world. If the other is no longer a human with a heart, face, mother and dreams he is just the projecting of our fears, a non human that we need to fight before he will fight us. In this law of the strongest security becomes the only matter in society. As we dehumanize the other our fears and

prejudices grow stronger because as he is no longer like me I cant understand or expect his behaviour by referring to myself. Every move becomes a signal of fear and insecurity. As our fears grow stronger the more we come to believe and trust in the strong boarders created to keep us apart.

Of course it all comes back to our definition of peace and security. If we want to put more meaning the word of peace than the absence of violent conflict we need to break our mental as well as physical boarders. We need to meet and respect each other as humans. Only then we can create a viable and trustful peace. We must to start to create an identity and culture of humanity crossing and breaking these boarders. Of course we can still be Palestinians, Christians, Lebanese or Jews but first of all we need to become humans together. To build our common grounds and goals from were we can build real and viable security and peace. Only by meeting and knowing the other we can overcome our fears and prejudices which will bring us real security. The real security lays not in weapons, fences or soldiers but in the heart and minds of the people. If the creation of the other is broken we will no longer fear him as we are all being part of humanity.

The real peace must start in ourselves and how we identify ourselves. We have to ask ourselves what different my people from my enemy. Are we really that different from each other? Are your eyes browner than my or do

you houses bigger? I believe that if we really look to ourselves and start knowing the other we will see that our differences are minor. We are all humans loving and living in this world. We fear the unknown and the other and we can only get over our fears in ourselves by meeting and confronting the other.

The role of Europe in the Israeli/- Palestinian conflict should be to promote this new perspective of security. The history and experience of the European countries after the second world war in creating security and peace through common markets, interests and integration instead of strong boarders and military power is very useful in trying to build a realistic and viable peace process. In my work in Palestine, Israel and Middle East I have come to see myself as a bridge. My experience of living and working in different countries in the Middle East has made me see and meet people, many times with the same visions and interests but with strong boarders and walls keeping them apart and making them fear each other. As Europeans we can bridge this boarders and try to make these people challenge the fears of each other and come together for understanding and respect. I believe that the biggest challenge for Europe concerning this conflict is to challenge our definitions and perspectives of peace and security. To bring in a more humanitarian view building peace from the roots, not enforcing it from the top. Only then a realistic, justice and viable peace can start to grow.

Final Statement of the Conference in Copenhagen

The first two conferences about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Europe's role in it were organized in Hamburg (August 2002) and Hofgeismar (February 2003). Both conferences emphasized the importance of mutual trust and how the perception of the other and the conflict itself can prevent its resolution and a rapprochement of both societies.

In this conference, in Copenhagen, 30 Palestinian, Israeli and European students and political activists who felt connected to the conflict, came together to deepen the mutual understanding of each others' fears and dreams. The participants were divided into three working groups, each dealing with a core problem of the conflict: *Security and Fear*, *Refugees and Settlements*, and *Mass Media and Education*. At the beginning of the conference during the assembly meeting of all participants, a common vision was articulated.

Our Vision…

We could see, not far ahead in the future, a new Middle East in which two sovereign recognized states, Israel and Palestine, exist next to each other in peace, security, cooperation and prosperity.

Both states recognize each other's existence. Security is guaranteed for both parties and geopolitical questions are solved. This implies that mutual violence is rejected by both sides and that the occupation ended.
On the geopolitical level, the problems related to the refugees and settlements have been agreed on.
The wall has been dismantled and freedom of movement has been achieved.
Democracy is promoted and a non-biased education is practiced. Human rights are respected, equality and respect between all people exists.
Regional cooperation and dialogue with neighboring countries will contribute to a high standard of living and sharing of resources. To maintain good relations periodic meetings between all parties are organized. Environmental issues will be considered in cooperation with the region.
Jerusalem is one undivided city, and capital for both Israel and Palestine. There will be access to all holy places.

But Obstacles Still Remain…

In the **first workshop "Security and Fear"** we agreed that the obstacles for overcoming fear and reaching security with regard to physical violence lie in different fields which can be addressed separately. Geopolitical, institutional and personal perspectives have been taken into account. The most important thing would be to break the vicious circle that sustains the logic of violence.

For realizing geopolitical security we identified the major obstacles to be extremism, the inability to define mutual interest in open and fair discussions and the tendency to apply military "solutions" to societal conflicts. Suicide bombings and bad experiences in the past make the idea of deconstructing the wall hard to accept for the Israeli people. In general it seems that the use of violence became an accepted means, there clearly exists a lack of mutual trust and security, forgiving the suffering is hard for both sides and, last but not least, the settlements prevent from ending the occupation. The refugee problem cannot be solved when other aspects such as future borders (kind of

regulation, exact location) and the access to natural resources are left unresolved. Israelis are especially concerned about the demographic growth of Palestinians and the future "Jewishness" of their state. The claim for an own "Right of Return" on both sides makes any solution difficult to achieve. With regard to Jerusalem, the Israeli housing policy is problematic and the access to the holy places for all religions is an issue.

An institutional contribution to security is needed but hard to obtain for various reasons. Democratic institutions, transparency, a proper "governing culture" and appropriate funding are lacking on the Palestinian side. The Palestinian society did not yet develop the necessary conditions and the educational framework to sustain an institutional security environment. Further obstacles are the settlements and the lack of a coherent juridical system. The latter is also a hurdle to the implementation of the rule of law: compliance and enforcement are essential. To end institutional and systematic discrimination in both nations, crime, nepotism and corruption are additional problems. We also have to deal with insufficient self-criticism on either side. Finally mistrust and fear, the lack of a common vision, and religion interpretations with extremist tendencies prevent us from achieving stable frameworks for communication and cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians. An understanding is difficult to achieve anyway due to the unclear prospects.

Also the conditions people experience personally are shaping their feelings of fear. Human dignity relies on mutual respect which is clearly missing for the moment. The current situation also does not provide opportunities to experience a positive interaction with the other. There is no public space in which a civic society could develop, the conditions for a 'rich' and satisfactorily personal life (Vita Activa) are not secured and human rights are not guaranteed and supervised. Instead of terror - through collective punishment and retaliation, certain intelligence methods, police brutality – conditions the live of military and civilians. An end of hate and fear cannot be achieved due to ignorance, arrogance, fanaticism, prejudice and stereotypes. There is not enough direct social interaction, only limited and manipulated information and therefore not enough profound empathy. "Evil" has become a phenomenon of everyday life. Road blocks, the wall, the military presence and territorial discontinuity prevent everybody from moving freely.

The **second workshop "Refugees and Settlements"** dealt with seven different clusters of obstacles.

1. "Breaking the taboo". On both sides there is a lack of knowledge of each other, a lack of a feeling of security and everyone fears to confront and talk about the problems. There also is a lack of hope.
The elder generation is the most difficult to convince with arguments to reach a sustainable agreement.

2. "Common principles". Israel does not recognise that the refugee-problem is a problem and rejects to share the responsibility of the refugee-problem. The refugee status in the Middle East is not solved. Radical groups on both sides reject the recognition of the other side's right of statehood. This is related with the recognition of the Jewish state.

3. "Ideology". Historical, religious and ideological arguments on both sides cause complicated problems. For example the ideological conviction of the settlers or the connection people feel to their land where they were separated from. Both states have to deal with an internal division.

4. "Geography". The existence of settlements is an obstacle. Settlers are settled because of economical, religious and ideological reasons. There is a lack of territorial continuity within the Palestinian Territories. There is for example no convenient connection between the West Bank and Gaza, and the checkpoints are humiliating and take a large amount of time.

5. "Definitions". Some definitions are not clear. Where is the border between Israel and the state of Palestine? What is the definition of a settlement? Which settlements to evacuate? Who is a refugee? Where will the refugees return to? What will be the Arab-Israeli ID?

6. "Implementation". There are many practical problems regarding the implementation of an agreement. Some settlers are unwilling to move. Some of them are even armed.

Israel controls resources. Where will the compensation money come from? There are difficulties regarding landownership and control of power. Another important practical problem arose regarding access to holy places and the old city of Jerusalem.

7. "Aggression". There was agreement that the killing of innocent civilians intentionally is a synonym for terror. Violence on both sides is a very large obstacle in reaching our vision.

The **third workshop "Mass media and Education"** divided the obstacles in three groups on which they focused:

1. Focusing on education and media.
2. Focusing on aid and the social structure which influence both, education and media.
3. Focusing on attitudes and incites contained in both of them.

For the educational systems we saw an obstacle in the fact that there are limited sources of information available especially if this leads to a discrepancy between e.g. the textbooks of both sides.

One of the obstacles that we experienced ourselves within the group was the different way of understanding history which can partly be led back to the limited sources of information.

We all agreed on the obstacle that religious indoctrination on both sides causes for the peace process. In a whole we observed that there is a lack of an inter-educational system which promotes inter-educational institutions and channels of communication.

A fundamental condition for education is that it has to be available for everybody. That is why we saw a problem in the lack of freedom of movement especially on the Palestinian side.

Regarding the media firstly we saw an obstacle in not having sufficient access to foreign media, which we think contains wider information. Although we agreed that even foreign media is often biased towards one of both sides and often it is superficial and focuses on the negative side of the conflict. This we regard as an obstacle as well.

We agreed that the tendency of media to take things out of context is promoting a risk for the misunderstanding of the other side.

We criticised the politicization, which means the influence of political parties on the content of the media. This can be a major obstacle when it leads to a lack of freedom of speech or if there is no variety in the political voices.

Another obstacle on the way to our common vision was discovered in the lack of professional assistance and constructive financing.

But media and education should not just be supported by official aid, but also by the social structure which is at the same time the result of the education. Concerning the social structure we agreed on the problem of a lack of democracy and the impression of democracy being forced on by the western world.

The discrimination of minorities in public schools and the lack of integration which results in further social differences were seen as an obstacle. Furthermore we analysed that media and education were lacking social models, which can help us to learn to live peacefully together.

Last but not least we saw important obstacles in the attitude and incites which are reflected in education and media. Here we figured out that the self- victimization on both sides and the common fear of annihilation serve as excuse for the current situation and prevents both parties from taking the responsibility of changing things. Furthermore hate- propaganda and the promotion of violence and the use of force incite the conflict and hence fore they are problematic on the way to reach our vision.

These are all serious obstacles, but for every obstacle there is a solution…

Regarding the **first workshop** *"Security and Fear"* the solution was formulated as follows:

We agreed that the only chance to create real security in a broad sense is a continuous process. All parties involved must agree on a common vision how to achieve security and overcome fear. This must be done step by step in a way which is controllable and transparent for everybody. Mutual trust and confidence in the future steps have to be created. Once the process is agreed upon, there is no use in directly connecting single steps as the different parties have to contribute to different extends throughout different phases.

	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III
Palestine	—	——	—
Both	——	—	———
Israel	———	—	—
Internat.	—	——	—

In a first phase the Palestinian Authorities must cut any financial support to organizations related to terrorism. Israel has more opportunities to contribute to security and trust here: It has to freeze the building of settlements, stop building the wall, end the collective punishment by house demolitions, release political prisoners, change the housing policy in Jerusalem, allow easier movement of Palestinians to Israel and inside of occupied areas, and finally stress her own respect for Human rights by concrete measures. Both sides have to agree on a future borderline, negotiations must be based on the status of 1967. All this can only find public support if the leaders on both sides set clear examples and insist in their determination to go through the whole process together. It is essential that both societies clearly reject any usage of violence. The international community - especially the Quartet (USA, EU, Russia & UN) - needs to monitor the implementation of the agreement, fixing clear sanctions proportional to the vulnerability of both sides and the degree of violation of the principles set. The holy sites and the Old City of Jerusalem will be taken under international supervision.

In a second phase Israel has to evacuate all settlements located outside the (possibly modified) borders of Israel. The Palestinians should draft and democratically enact a constitution guaranteeing for the democratic character of future Palestine, in particular for the *Trias Politica* (legislative, executive and juridical powers independent from each other), full transparency and accountability of the whole Palestinian administration and last but not least independent media. A Civic Auditor should be established who will on a regular basis make public any violation of these principles. A modern well equipped high-quality police force will be established. Measures to increase civic participation will be taken. Essential during this phase is that both sides follow the good faith principle. As far as cooperation between Israel and the Palestinians is concerned, officials on both sides must be held fully accountable for their acts. Close cooperation based on real competence must be encouraged and fostered, for this purpose specific committees (on security, water supply, arms control, border control, refugees, economy, environment, etc.) will be established. The work of this committees and the realization of their agreements will be enforced and in parts also financed by the international community within an international framework Israelis and Palestinians have to agree upon. Experience from transformation, democratization and reconciliation processes in other parts of the world will be utilized. All security forces will be supervised internationally; all the steps and progresses of all partners will be monitored under the auspices of the Quartet and possibly by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe which has gained a lot of experience on this field in other cases. An agreement on the status of Jerusalem as one single city being two capitals with free access to the holy sites for everybody under international authority will be negotiated and implemented.

In a third phase the focus will be the cooperation between Israel and Palestine. Together they will establish a Truth and Reconciliation Committee. A "Terror Hotline" run by psychologists and not related to the police will give advice to anybody knowing about Terror activities. Specific projects will be developed in order to involve the civil society on both sides in cross-border activities (culture, sports, youth exchange etc). Every pupil in Israel and Palestine will learn both Hebrew and Arabic. Concrete measures for a close economic and security cooperation will be taken. A joint border control agency will be established and strong border controls with Palestine's Arab neighbors will be implemented. Free movement of Palestinians to Israel will be assured and a safe passage between the West Bank and Gaza (both road and train) will be built. In Israel, intensive efforts will be taken in order to achieve national reconciliation. In Palestine attractive civic and civil places like parks and public buildings will be realized in order to create a proper surrounding for the development of a public space which would support the emergence of a civil and democratic society. A Palestinian state will be formally established and internationally recognized through UN membership and formal diplomatic relations. Regional cooperation and integration of the Middle East will move ahead with support of the international community, in particular the European Union.

As for the **second workshop "Refugees and Settlements"** the solutions were found around one main general principle.

The main principle underlying all our solutions regarding the location, borders and size of the Palestinian state is:
"Keeping the borders of 1967 with land-swaps and border modifications, while maintaining the territorial size of 1967 (excluding West-Jerusalem)."

Firstly, this means that the borders of 1967 are recognised and respected on both sides. Secondly, after this recognition some modifications are possible without changing the size of the Palestinian land according to 1967. Land will be swapped to achieve this. This principle is the central consensus on which we build our solutions.

Furthermore, we discussed and agreed on solutions for different issues related to the subject of this workshop. This resulted in four main groups of solutions. The first group is related to basic fundaments, "Basics". The second group will deal with a solution for the refugees-problem, "Refugees". The third group will deal with the "Settlements". The fourth and last group was not that much related to our workshop but came up during our discussions, "Reconciliation".

"Basics". The following basic fundaments were agreed on:

- Recognition of a Palestinian state and an Israeli state from both sides.
- Palestinians need to agree on a legitimate leadership to represent them.
- International guarantors are necessary to guarantee the implementation of the signed agreements.
- Both sides officially express their sorrow for the victims on both sides of the conflict.
- Establishment of a committee which controls the right of the minorities in both states.
- Both governments agree in compensation for refugees and settlers, which are financed by national and international funds.
- Access to resources applying to international law.
- Jerusalem will remain one city, but represent two capitals; the Old City will be under international control.
- Underground tunnel from West Bank to Gaza, under Palestinian control with Israeli supervision on the ground.

"Refugees". Solutions for the refugees-problem:
Israel recognizes that all Palestinian refugees have the *right* to return to Israel. However, only an agreed amount will return to Israel. This amount will be agreed on by both governments. Only the Palestinian government will decide who is within this fixed amount. This fixed amount of Palestinian refugees will become Israeli residents with Palestinian citizenship. After a certain amount of years these residents can apply for citizenship.

Israel should officially apologize for the suffering inflicted upon the Palestinian refugees.
All refugees with lost property within the state of Israel will get compensation for the land or house they owned. The compensation can be financially or it could be a house in evacuated settlements.
A regional committee dealing with the status of the Palestinian refugees in the Middle East will be established, but there will be no more claims on Israel.

"Settlements". Solutions for the settlements-problem:
In principle all settlements should be evacuated. After reaching agreement on the principle of removal exceptions can be negotiated.
The future of the settlements was discussed after dividing them into three different types:
- Settlements which should be removed or evacuated.

- Settlements which will come under Israeli control after land-swaps.
- An agreed amount of settlers are allowed to stay under the condition of becoming Palestinian residents with Israeli citizenship. This amount will be agreed on by both governments. The Israeli government will decide who is within this fixed amount. After a certain amount of years these residents can apply for citizenship.

Israel has the responsibility to remove all settlers (physically). All settlers should be offered compensation (a house for a house). However, the infrastructure and housing of the settlements should remain intact in order to provide housing for Palestinians. In case infrastructure would be destroyed by leaving settlers their compensation will be sanctioned.

"Reconciliation".
Some more solutions were found which actually were beyond the subject of this workshop. These are mentioned here in this apart cluster.

- Israel should release all the political prisoners.
- Youth exchange programs should be established between both states, in which the language, history and culture of the other will be taught.
- Scientist cooperation programs should be promoted.
- A committee of incitement will be established by participants from both sides to observe the development of media and education in the two states.
- Politicians should present concrete visions in the media.

The solutions found in the **third workshop "Mass Media and Education"** can be structured in the same way as the obstacles:

Firstly, we defined solutions for the educational system and media. Secondly we defined solutions to support both of them by changing aid and the social structure. Thirdly we looked at the attitudes and incites in media and education and how to solve them.

Above all we agreed that the end of occupation and all forms of terror is fundamental for the peace process.
Concerning the education we proposed to make the information and narratives of the other side accessible and available in schools and other educational institutions. For teaching we suggest a curriculum about the history of religions which contains not only one's own but also other monotheistic religions. Concerning the educational system we wish that there was given responsibility to a common ministry of education for example in publishing new textbooks to prevent an education which promotes hate.
A great chance for reaching our aims we saw in joint activities, exchange programs, sandwich-programs and meeting like our conference. *What is a sandwich program?* For the joint activities we propose that they start as early as possible (e.g. in elementary schools) and that they should be on a continuous basis.

We all agreed that media can contribute a lot to the peace process. The solutions we propose for the media in order to reach our vision can be subdivided in three clusters. They firstly concern the foreign media, secondly the content of media and thirdly journalism in media.
For foreign media we propose the following issues to be taken note of:
Foreign media should convey mainstream local options. Furthermore it should be open for local critique and let consequences to this critique follow. We wish that the media covers all aspects of life in the Middle East that

means besides the conflict it should transmit more of the Israeli and Palestinian culture. This issue leads us to the content of media. For this we propose to set more emphasise on the positive issues happening during the conflict like peace achievements or for example programs of joint Israeli-Palestinian encounters. We see an achievement towards a better mutual understanding in establishing joint publications in academic as well as public press. Furthermore space should be given to spokesman from the other side.

For the journalists we see an important step towards our common vision in establishing a journalistic dialogue between the two sides.

Which aid can support media and education to realize our solutions?

As aid we propose a constructive financing, which is not just focussing on economical or political aims. We see a solution in establishing personal networks to build up a trustworthy progress. For Europe and other genuine foreign countries we ask them to offer the availability of professional assistance (that means giving expertise in a sensitive manner).

The social structure in both Israel and Palestine can contribute a lot to reach our common vision.

Since it is a product of education as well as it is reflected in education and media we propose the following issues to be considered:

In order to strengthen civil society a common education of citizenship should be established and values of freedom promoted. The people should be allowed and supported in building their own national democratic model. Finally cooperative peace movements should be supported by national institutions and assisted by international support.

How can attitudes and incites in both media and education be solved?

We propose to work with educators like teachers and people in power to change the perceptions and attitudes towards the other side. The overall aim is to multiply the ability for compassion and empathy with the other side (for example by learning to listen to each other even though this might seem difficult sometimes). Furthermore we propose to provide psychological assistance in schools and community centres to help people to deal with their fear and their feelings of victimization.

After presenting the results of the different workshops to the entire group the participants were divided into smaller groups again to think about possible projects. These should deal with potential programmes which could contribute and assist in establishing mutual understanding and building trust.

As a first step, all participants agreed to create a mailing list to further discuss issues and inform each other about the current situation. Meanwhile, the mailing list has been established and is very active. Moreover, the Israeli and Palestinian organizers suggested to organize a follow-up meeting for the Israeli and Palestinian participants in the vicinity of Jerusalem. This meeting will allow the participants to discuss the events that took place since the conference and to see if they can cooperate and initiate together various peace building projects. Also, the European participants are encouraged to get involved in the European organisation or certain projects, respectively.

Articles about the conference by participants

Ilan Baron, London

…Just the notion of death is perfect. Peace, like life itself, is not a burst of love or a mystical compromise between opposites.

Amos Oz
"Peace, Love and Compromise"
Israel, Palestine and Peace

I never cease to be amazed at the way they delight in showing us other people's cruelties and injustices, as if they themselves were pure as the driven snow.

Ludvík Vaculík
"A Few Words for the British Government"
A Cup of Coffee with my Interrogator

Although it is readily apparent who 'they' are in Vaculík's statement, it is not always as clear as snow. When we first got to know each other and started talking about our shared vision of what the Israeli-Palestinian resolution would look like, it was obvious that we all have not only different narratives of the conflict, but also different ways of understanding each other. Palestinians, Israelis, and Europeans all have different pragmatisms, but we all share remarkably similar ethics. These ethics come down to the issue of respect. Yet, when the structures of violence pervade almost all aspects of life, respecting others in Israel-Palestine is not always easy. Nevertheless, respect is possible.

Who could have imagined a group of future leaders from opposing sides, dancing together, drinking together, and sharing each other's fears and concerns during a time of such tension in the region? Although our activities could not have taken place in Israel or Palestine, the fact that they are possible is itself a sign of mutual respect, a sign of hope. The conclusions which we reached are another. We did solve the conflict, even if our current leaders seem to be incapable of it. And we did it by respecting what each other has to say.

The immense progress which we made in our work groups leads me to ask whether trusting each other is not such a distant possibility. Trust is a leap of faith, it reveals the self more than it does the other, but it relies on the other's actions. Does this mean that to trust you have to take a chance on the other, or does this mean that you have to be willing to risk your own security? I have no answer to this question, but I believe that ultimately trust is possible. Trust is possible because in the end, Israelis and Palestinians are asking for the same thing.

Often the claims made by both Israelis and Palestinians sound right. Israelis are correct in saying that it is intolerable to live under the conditions of suicide bombings. Palestinians are correct in saying that it is intolerable to live under the conditions of a humiliating occupation. Why should one people privilege their claims at the expense of the other when both sides are making reasonable demands: end suicide bombings and end the occupation. Jerusalem, the refugee problem, and land rights are not the underlying issue. The underlying issue is about life. What sort of life do 'I' want in Israel or in Palestine? What has happened is that property rights have trumped human rights, on both sides. As a member of the security and fear working group, the radical solution which we agreed on is, I believe, proof that we can trust, and that we ultimately recognize that what is at stake is life itself. Moreover, we are aware that life is about *understanding* as best one can, and respecting the other. It is a respect and an engagement with difference which underlies life, politics, peace, and security.

It was Edward Said who wrote that, "…just as no Jew in the last hundred years has been untouched by Zionism, so too no Palestinian has been unmarked by it." As controversial as it sounds, I would propose that this touch and this mark can be a source for possibility for all sides. In my last conversation at the conference I said that as a Zionist I have to believe in the right of Palestinian statehood; the logic of Zionism, as an ideology of statehood, compels me to. Emmanuel Lévinas, one of my favourite thinkers, wrote that the question about life itself is not, "Is my life righteous?" but "Is it righteous to be?" He tells us that life is about the other that life is about

ethics, and that an ethical obligation to the other is the commandment of life itself. I believe, as a human being, and as a Jew, that we have an obligation to take the mark and touch of Zionism and make if flourish for everyone, not only a privileged few.

I believe that the conference was proof that it is possible for us to flourish together, although it is not always easy or even apparent how to do so. The proof is that we saw solutions to be creating sites of understanding and conditions of possibility for togetherness, instead of drawing lines (or walls) in the sand.

However as we also learned, it is all too easy to slip back into an us versus them logic, to revert to uncertainty and mistrust, and attempt to claim the truth of what is really going on and why. "Yes, but", was probably one of the most often used combination of words, and it proved to be one of the most destructive combinations. At once it responds to what the other said, and yet ignores what the other said, trying to colonize his or her voice to suit an alternative impression of reality; in uttering these two words both speech and listening are at risk because these two words are contrary to real communication, and instead find as their audience a solipsistic morality, however noble the intentions might be.

What the conference ultimately showed me was that if we are to get along, enjoy each others company, relish in a hope for the future and work towards it, we must respond to Lévinas' challenge and answer whether it is, "righteous to be?"

My PIE experience in Copenhagen by Usama Khalilieh, Beit Jala
"Why are you going to speak with them??? They will not listen anyway …"

that is what many people I know told me, they were telling me that it's useless and if you want to go just go to have fun and visit the city there …to be honest with everyone, sometimes their words got to me since that many activities like the PIE project in Copenhagen have took place with no visible outcome.

But then I got to think about it even more and after some time I thought to myself: what's wrong with going there and presenting the facts and arguments from my point of view since that I've always been complaining that there is no one representing the youth's ideas and their views in Palestine and for that I decided to finally apply; fortunately I got invited to participate.

When we (*Palestinian participants*) reached Copenhagen and got introduced to the organizers and some of the European participants I was so happy just to be there but inside me I was thinking what if things do not go as smooth as anticipated???, what if we (*Palestinians & Israelis*) start fighting during the workshops ???? Those were the questions that worried me the most so I decided to just be objective, rational and open minded about what every one had to say which I actually did.

As the conference started, I was merely trying to listen to everyone before saying what I had in mind and at first both sides tried to say things that best fit their own interests both used different terminologies in their speeches some of which were provocative to the other side but as things moved on and people were listening to each other the discussion progressed to a level were it was possible to talk about many issues that the conflict was built on in the first place and that was a result to the fact that each side showed respect to the other since that mutual respect among different sides in any conflict is the best way to start the way for solving the conflict.

In my own opinion about what made the conference a success is that both sides were willing to compromise and listen to the other side's view of the story, although at some times the discussion got stuck at certain points but that is just natural since that we are individuals with different attitudes but the same goal which is peace between the two nations.

However, there are always different groups on each side who will do everything in their power to avoid and stand against these kinds of projects such as the PIE project where sides in a conflict can sit and discuss possible means that are acceptable for both parties to reach a final and stable solution and having such groups is never an excuse to avoid such projects because as for me, this is one of the few chances I will get to

sit with the other side and tell them what I think, my ideas, my points of view and what solutions I have and this is by no chance called **_NORMALIZATION_** which I am personally against because the two sides (*Palestinians & Israelis*) are not living in a state of peace and stability, the issue here is that we were trying to open channels of communication to work out fundamental conflict issues.

On the other side, the participation of the Europeans from all over Europe in the conference made all the difference in setting the light on major conflict issues specially that they were never bias towards any side; on the contrary, they were hard on both sides sometimes and I personally think that the absence of the European side on a significant level in the conflict is one things that is standing in the way of solving the conflict and maintaining peace in the region.

Finally, I would like to say that I am overwhelmed and actually proud to have participated in the PIE conference in Copenhagen, August 2003 for that I got the chance to express the way I feel and many Palestinians feel too, I also got the chance to know how the other side thinks not to mention how great the experience it self has been and if I have the chance to participate again in such activities **_I will never think twice_**.

Smadar Bakovic, Neve Ilan

One of the hardest things to do, is to listen to others. Another hard thing to do is to listen to another person, and to try to see things from his or her own perspective. Both Israelis and Palestinians have tremendously suffered in the past 3 years, since the Second Intifada broke out in October 2000. Both sides feel that they are the main, if not the only, victims of the conflict. Wrapped in suffering and pain, it has become almost impossible for Israelis and Palestinians to come together and tell one another about their day to day experiences. The PIE conference in Copenhagen enabled Israelis, Palestinians and Europeans to come together and find solutions to the lingering and senseless conflict. It became evident to all the participants that the first step in solving the conflict was to LISTEN to people from the other side, to emphasize with their situation, and to understand and accept the legitimacy of their arguments. Ultimately, both Israelis and Palestinians realized that they were not the only ones suffering from the conflict, and that accepting the existence of the other in his or her own state was a basis to all other things.

The role of the European students in the conference was of major importance and priceless. Looking at the conference in retrospect, it is obvious that all constructive dialogue between the Israeli and Palestinian participants was possible thanks to their presence. When arguments turned into personal attacks, or when one side was unable to listen to the other, the European voice brought back reason and dialogue. In spite of the fact that many of the European students did not understand the conflict in all its entirety, they were able at times, maybe because of this fact, to see things both Israelis and Palestinians overlooked. Using their experience and knowledge, they contributed immensely to the conference, and there is no doubt that most of them, if not all, went through a certain personal transformation when listening to the experiences, stories, and pains of the other participants.

I have an impression that there is not one person who came to the conference and stayed the same. People learned a lot about the conflict, but equally important, they also learnt new things about themselves. Maybe above all they learned that they were important in solving the conflict that they had a lot to contribute, and that as the next generation, it was their responsibility not to lose hope.

Ruth Beute, Bielefeld

Looking at my role as an European mediator (or participant) in the workshop „Refugees and Settlements" I can say that it wasn't always easy. Of course – nobody expected it to be easy.

But my fear was that it would be for one side in some cases to hard and difficult to be confronted with the other side. Most of the Israeli and Palestinian hadn't had the chance to meet people from the other side in such an intense way before.

I was amazed about the way they dealt with each other. In my workshop (but also in the assembly) we had many kinds of discussions:
- needed ones (e.g. those to explain each other their feelings)
- hard and difficult ones (especially in the agreement-finding-process in the solution part)
- painful ones (when emotions went high and when we came to those points which are deep inside the conflict, in the very personal point of view)
- but also fruitful ones, when we found agreements

But as everyone can see in our results we succeed. We were able to talk and to listen to each other.

During the conference I think that both sides (Israeli and Palestinian) became more open minded to the other side.
Together we were able to find agreements I sometimes really wonder about. Wonder, especially when we were able for agreements (and especially the Israeli and Palestinian participants) which we never saw between the politicians.

I learnt that it is important to listen to each other. And also to try to understand the other side in their point of view. If this happens we will be able to talk to each other, and to succeed.

There I see the role for the EU and me as and European participant. We have to be in a way neutral. But we also have to talk to both – Israelis and Palestinians – to learn more about the conflict, and to be able to mediate.

While the conference it was helpful that there were people who try to listen, but also to negotiate, who stopped to emotional discussions and who summarized the discussions to the main points (here special thanks to the facilitators!).

During the "social program" in the evenings we had time to spend together, to talk together (also about daily stuff), to go around through the town and to enjoy together the sun and parks. It was time for having fun together and for making friends.

As someone who also joint the post-event I can say that I was so touched to see how close both sides came to each other.

However this will be continued I'm sure that everybody will take home that there are people on the other side who also want the conflict to be ended and who are able for compromise. And that there had been built up the basic for trust and friendship.

To recognize that both sides of the conflict are human beings, and that there is on both sides the wish for a solution – and peace.

I thank everybody for being open minded, for our fruitful conversations and discussions, for the will to talk and to listen to each other.

But also thanks for creating such a great atmosphere, for joining together the free time with playing games, going out for dancing, sight-seeing, lying around in parks and for telling jokes. ☺ It was so impressive to meet all of you!

Ilai Saltzman, Jerusalem

PIE Conference Copenhagen – August 2003

"Show them what we got… don't sell us out too cheap… win one for Israel… tell the Europeans the truth… be aggressive…" etc. These are a few "tips" some of my friends gave me before going to the PIE conference in Copenhagen (it should be mentioned that others were much more positive). Not only that it didn't help me, but that attitude confused me and made me reflect the meaning of the event for me, Ilai, as an individual

I wanted to hear and to be heard, and this aim was achieved by the serious approach all the participants shared. I sought to meet Palestinians and Europeans that want peace and to make them aware of Israeli's will to achieve peace in return. That goal was achieved through a multilateral

discussion in the General Forum, but also within the specific workshops.

The usage of the term "Vision" as a starting point was too optimistic for me at first. But as soon as people started to talk, I noticed that almost all of us hold the same views about how it should look like. Suddenly, it seemed that by merely talking, many issues were addressed with the most honest and serious intentions.

As an Israeli I was shocked (to say the least), that there is so much pragmatism in the Palestinian side. The immediate result was a growing feeling of optimism that in retrospect was shared by all of us. "Obstacles" was the next stop in which we discussed what is preventing from us fulfilling a peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Same results here: the basic agreement was reached very fast by the people in our workshop. Optimism was enforced with pragmatism and realism to form a solid understanding of what needs to be done in order to formulate the "Solutions" required. Since it was the last part of the workshop's process, we were even more attentive to each other and to the nuances of what we had to say.

Agreement among our group's members was obtained through dialogue, convincing, reasoning and most important – listening. Positive feelings of all sorts surrounded us, although some issues were left unsolved. These issues did not constitute a major setback because they were dealt with in other workshops. We thought that since we focused on "Security and Fear" – as the workshop's title indicated – stumbling on non workshop issues was fertile and not in place. Focusing on the agreed topics was more than enough for us.

Presenting the workshop's outcomes was a success as many in the General Forum concurred with our conclusions and recommendations. More than negotiators, we turned into partners of a process, of the peace process. No matter what will happen, and how much attention Israeli, Palestinian or European policy-makers pay to our final paper, we can be proud at the things we achieved. We managed to get to know each other, to hear different perspectives about the conflict and to voice our view of the solution. But most important, we were exposed to the fact that there are people like us on the "other" side, there is a genuine hunger for peace among all of us.

This not only makes me more positive about the future, but also makes me feel proud because I was a part of that. It doesn't mean that the road to peace is an easy one. It can only guarantee that there will always be people with the drive to try, dare and dream of a better and more peaceful future for all of us. I left Copenhagen some-what different, more open minded and a more optimistic person.

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