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THE MIDDLE EAST QUARTET OF MEDIATORS: UNDERSTANDING MULTIPARTY  
MEDIATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS

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A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty and Dean of the Joseph Korbel School of International Studies

University of Denver

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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by

Kris Arthur Bauman

August 2009

Advisor: Dr. Timothy Sisk

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MULTIPARTY MEDIATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS  
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## **ABSTRACT**

This dissertation seeks to answer the question: Under what conditions does multiparty mediation fail to move conflicting parties toward a comprehensive peace agreement? The object of study is the Middle East Quartet of Mediators from its formation in 2002 to the Annapolis Conference in November, 2007.

Although some progress was made during this period, no formal peace agreement was reached and therefore, the ultimate objective of the Quartet was not attained. The study seeks both to deepen our theoretical understanding of multiparty mediation as well as identify specific leverage points that could lead toward resolution of the conflict in Palestine and Israel.

The methodology employed is a qualitative investigation of the multiparty mediation efforts of the Quartet. It is based on an investigation of Quartet statements as well as a series of interviews of key Quartet participants and academic experts on the contemporary Israeli-Palestinian peace process. The ultimate aim is to make future mediation efforts more successful.

Key Words: Multiparty Mediation, Quartet, Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Arab-Israeli conflict, conflict resolution, intractable conflict, peace processes.

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## Chapter One

### Introduction to the Middle East Quartet and Multiparty Mediation

#### *1.1 Introduction*

After six decades of continuous conflict and enormous human suffering, the Israeli-Palestinian dispute continues unabated. The latest open conflagration in Gaza from the end of December 2008 until the middle of January 2009 claimed over 1400 lives. The Middle East Quartet of Mediators, composed of the United Nations, the European Union, the United States, and Russia, spent seven years attempting to resolve the conflict. Yet in spite of all the power, legitimacy, and money that such a group should offer, the Quartet failed to bring any kind of resolution to the conflict.

This study seeks to answer a fundamental question: *Under what conditions does multiparty mediation fail to move conflicting parties toward a comprehensive peace agreement?* Though the Israeli-Palestinian case warrants attention all on its own, the answer to this question has implications that reach far beyond the Middle East; for contained in the lessons of multiparty mediation failure, is the crucial wisdom that will enable future multiparty mediation success.



Multiparty mediation is part of the broader *conflict resolution* field of study. It is closely related to the fields of peace studies, international negotiation, peacemaking, and international mediation.<sup>1</sup> Multiparty mediation has become a regular feature of peacemaking in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As Crocker, Hampson and Aall assert in *Herding Cats*, “The multiplication of mediators is less a matter of choice than a fact of life in today’s world” (1999, 666). Yet despite its omnipresent nature, multiparty mediation is a field that has received scant academic attention. In 1994, I. William Zartman wrote,

Currently, no conceptual work addresses the vast area of multilateral negotiation. Although a few studies of negotiation concepts include a section on multilateral processes and many insightful empirical studies have been made of multilateral cases, an explicit conceptual treatment of the subject is lacking. (1994, xi)

More than a decade has transpired since Zartman wrote those words, but multiparty mediation has remained on the fringes of academic inquiry. This is primarily due to its complexity in practice. It involves far too many variables to be captured in a nice two-by-two matrix. Yet its ubiquitous employment, combined with the gravity of the policy implications involved in its application, beg better understanding.

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<sup>1</sup> The interrelationships of these fields will be explored in the beginning of the next chapter.

The context for this study is Israel-Palestine, one of the most obdurate conflicts in modern history. It is but one case among the 122 currently captured in the Uppsala Conflict Database,<sup>2</sup> but it is a conflict that is *sui generis* in every sense of the phrase. Geographically (and religiously), the conflict encompasses the “Holy Land,” the birthplace of Judaism and Christianity, and the third most important site in Islam. The land is “much too promised,” as Aaron David Miller describes it:

I figured historic Palestine was promised four times, at least, to its inhabitants: first by a Jewish, Christian, and Muslim God who offered an exclusive, even triumphal claim to the same land and its holy sites to those souls who were willing to follow; a second time by the British, who in an effort to protect an empire that stretched from Suez to India made conflicting commitments during the First World War to Zionists and to Arab nationalists; and third by the United Nations General Assembly, whose 1947 partition resolution proposed splitting Palestine into an Arab and a Jewish state. (2008, 3-4)<sup>3</sup>

The overlapping religious and diplomatic claims to the same piece of land have interwoven two peoples into an inseparable fabric of strife that is uniquely problematic. Israel-Palestine is the poster-child of intractability.<sup>4</sup>

In spite of its uniqueness, the conflict has enormous significance for the entire region and increasingly, for the rest of the international community. The struggle to control this tiny stretch of land reaches back at least 3,000 years and the “current” struggle dates back to the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the last thirty years, multiple

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<sup>2</sup> The database may be referenced at: <http://www.pcr.uu.se/database/>.

<sup>3</sup> Miller says the “fourth promise” was made by America through its diplomatic efforts to pass United Nations Security Council Resolution 242: Land for peace was possible via the vehicle of negotiations.

<sup>4</sup> The concept of intractability will be explored shortly.

attempts have been made to reach a resolution of the conflict: Camp David, Madrid, Oslo, Taba, Wye River, Camp David 2000, and more recently, the Quartet and its *Roadmap to Peace*. The labors of the Quartet represent one of the more self-conscious contemporary efforts to apply multiparty mediation to a difficult conflict. However, from the formation of the Quartet in 2002 to the Annapolis Conference in November of 2007, no comprehensive agreement was reached. Does this mean that the conflict is truly irresolvable (not just intractable), and that even multiparty mediation by the world's most powerful international actors offers no hope? Or does it mean that the specific efforts of the Quartet were improperly leveraged? These are the kinds of multiparty mediation failure questions that this study seeks to answer.

### *1.2 Approach and Theoretical Framework*

The approach to this topic is a qualitative case study. This is consistent with Creswell's *Research Design: Quantitative, Qualitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* (2002). As will be shown in chapter 2, multiparty mediation theory remains relatively undeveloped. Serious scholarly inquiry into the Quartet is nearly non-existent. A qualitative approach is therefore well-suited for this study. From Creswell:

If a concept or phenomenon needs to be understood because little research has been done on it, then it merits a qualitative approach. Qualitative research is exploratory and is useful when the researcher does not know the important variables to examine. This type of approach may be needed because the topic

is new, the topic has never been addressed with a certain sample or group of people, or existing theories do not apply with the particular sample or group under study.

One of the chief reasons for conducting a qualitative study is that the study is exploratory. This means that not much has been written about the topic or the population being studied, and the researcher seeks to listen to participants and build an understanding based on their ideas. (Creswell 2002, 22, 30)

The theoretical framework for this study is employed in a manner that is also consistent with Creswell. “Qualitative researchers increasingly use a theoretical lens or perspective to guide their study and raise questions...they would like to address,” (Creswell 2002, 131). Rather than a deductive, quantitative approach that seeks to prove or disprove a specific theory, this study uses portions of theories as lenses to explore Quartet behavior and culminate with the introduction of a new way to examine multiparty mediation. This also aligns with Lijphart’s discussion of the *hypothesis-generating case study*.

Hypothesis-generating case studies start out with a more or less vague notion of possible hypotheses, and attempt to formulate definite hypotheses to be tested subsequently among a larger number of cases. Their objective is to develop theoretical generalizations in areas where no theory exists yet...Of the six types of case studies, the hypothesis-generating and the deviant case studies have the greatest value in terms of their contribution to theory. (1971b, 692)

The study incorporates lenses from three families of theory: coalition theory, negotiation theory, and multiparty mediation theory. These particular tools have an undeniable share of rational choice theory embedded in their foundations. As such, their use here is a partial departure from Creswell. Creswell generally associates

quantitative approaches with positivist or post-positivist epistemologies and qualitative approaches with constructivist epistemologies. However, this study incorporates a qualitative approach based on the nature of the topic, as described above, not on the nature of the author's epistemology. The "real world" of conflict mediation is steeped in concepts like interest, payoff, defection, side-payments, etc. Although a study of the construction of these concepts would make a fascinating project in the future, it would not get at the heart of the research questions at hand. This study explores the behavior of the Quartet in a manner such that the findings are recognizable, and hopefully above all, helpful to negotiators and parties in conflict. Therefore, this study uses tools that best fit the language, behavior, and concepts employed by conflict negotiators. Following are the tools best suited to this inquiry.

1.2.1 Coalition Theory. Coalition theory offers a vast array of rational choice models that can be used in various contexts. However, debate continues to rage over the applicability of these models and the usefulness of their conclusions.<sup>5</sup> This study does not directly apply one of these specific models, but rather uses some of the more general notions to explore issues of Quartet formation. In *The Theory of Political Coalitions*, William Riker derived three interrelated principles that offer insight (1962). He called them the "size principle," the "strategic principle," and the "disequilibrium principle." The principles capture the tendency for coalitions to move

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<sup>5</sup> See for example Powell (2002), Tsebelis (1990, 18-51) or Martin (1978).

toward the minimum size required to “win” in whatever pursuit they are engaged. In the case of the Quartet, several questions are generated: Was some notion of this “minimum winning coalition” operative in the minds of the parties that would become the Quartet? How did that shape its formation? How did that affect its later work? Such explorations should help move beyond simply taking the existence of the Quartet as a given to deepening our understanding of its operation by better understanding its origins.

1.2.2 Negotiation Theory. Daniel Druckman has explored interactions between crises and turning points in international negotiation.<sup>6</sup> His 1986 piece established a framework for analysis that has five components: Stages; Turning Points; Activities of Negotiators; Influences; and Verbal Behavior.

Druckman identifies four *stages* that he claims are part of all negotiations. In the first stage, negotiators establish the scope and agenda of the deliberations. The second stage consists of determining formulae and principles. The third is spent flushing out issues. The fourth stage is the grueling process of determining the details of implementation.

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<sup>6</sup> See Druckman (1986, 327-360). Also see Druckman (2005).

*Turning Points* are related to stages but are not the same thing. There are two types of turning points; those that proceed from an impasse (a breakthrough), and those that emerge from a crisis (a recovery). Druckman claims that these turning points “occur in all negotiations; precisely when they occur varies from case to case,” (Druckman 1986, 333). The first universal turning point occurs when negotiations become a realistic pursuit for both parties. This is often signaled by the publication of a declaration of principles. A second turning point occurs when the parties reach agreement on the interpretation of the problem. This allows enough common ground to enable negotiations to move forward. The third turning point occurs when the parties reach an agreement on a framework for negotiations. The final universal turning point occurs when the parties enter the process of resolving issues point by point.

The third component of Druckman’s framework looks at the *activities* of negotiators. He identifies two types of behavior: monitoring and strategizing. Monitoring consists of “determining the extent to which various parties maintain an interest in the negotiation process” (Druckman 1986, 334). Strategizing is a more active role where the negotiator attempts to shape the mediation by having an impact on the interests of the parties.

Druckman’s fourth component analyzes *influences*, both facilitating and interfering. Influences are categorized four ways: contextual, structural, social / psychological, or bureaucratic. The final component analyzes *verbal behavior* during

negotiations. Druckman adopts a binary categorization of negotiator and party statements as either hard or soft. Hard statements include retractions, commitments, threats, and accusations; soft statements include initiations, accommodations, promises and praise (1986, 337). Druckman explicitly makes the assumption that hard statements move parties away from agreement and soft statements move parties toward agreement. He therefore uses measures of hard vs. soft statements as indicators of progress toward or away from agreement.

Druckman provides very useful clarification on the concept of turning points in his 2005 book chapter, “Conflict Escalation and Negotiation: A Turning Point Analysis,” (2005). He sub-divides the analysis of turning points into three components: precipitants, departures, and consequences. Precipitants are those pre-conditions commonly associated with William Zartman’s concepts of “ripeness” and “hurting stalemates.”<sup>7</sup> Precipitants are changes in the environment that enable turning points to occur, but they are not the turning points themselves. Turning points are actual departures in the negotiation process that result from precipitant conditions. Consequences then follow the process departures.

In our three-part framework (Precipitants -> Departures in process -> Consequences), ripeness refers to the precipitants (or antecedent conditions), while turning points are indicated both by departures in the process itself and by the consequences of those departures. (Druckman 2005, 187)

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<sup>7</sup> See Zartman (2000, 1989a).



Thinking in terms of precipitants, departures and consequences allows a more nuanced application of the turning point concept.

Taken together, Druckman's use of crises and turning points offers a useful approach to analyzing Quartet responses to the five crises or precipitant events listed below (see Table 1.1). Behavior is analyzed both in terms of individual members of the Quartet and the Quartet in aggregate. Since, as Druckman points out, precipitant events and turning points are often not recognized until well after their occurrence, this study will initially refer to the five events as "potential precipitant events."

Another way to think about the use of this tool is the following. Conflicting parties and mediators enter a negotiation with a unique set of interests and options which are ordered by priority. The negotiation is an attempt to reconcile the ordered options and interests of both parties. However, in intractable conflict, such reconciliation may not be possible at a given moment. A crisis (or precipitant event) has the potential of changing the negotiating context sufficiently such that any of the following can happen: new options are introduced, old options are foreclosed, or each party's priority-order of interests is changed.

To illustrate from the case at hand, on numerous occasions throughout the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, a single act of terrorism by Palestinians or Israelis had multiple effects. It usually had the effect of foreclosing the option of political concessions at that moment. However, the same act often opened the possibility of increased security cooperation. Acts of terrorism almost always had the effect of

driving security concerns to the top of the offended party's interest list. An examination of this re-ordering of interests and options, as well as the negotiators' use of these re-orderings, is very useful in understanding the behavior of the Quartet.

The use of the terms "crisis" and "turning point" needs clarification. A potential precipitant event is often (but not always) a crisis. It may not be a crisis to all parties concerned, but it often is a crisis to at least one of the conflicting parties. Generally speaking, a crisis does not usually generate rational or optimal decisions. In fact, the term "crisis decision-making" implies a situation in which a decision is required but time, information, and material resources are all in short supply. In this kind of circumstance, anxiety and fear can overtake rationality and when that occurs, crises can certainly lead to negative developments, i.e., negative turning points.

Occasionally however, a crisis can lead to a positive development. A crisis can create a contextual change in a negotiating environment that enables negotiators or conflicting parties to explore options that were previously infeasible.<sup>8</sup> Druckman's use of crises and turning points acknowledges this possibility. It is important to recognize that this study does not contend that the five potential precipitant events *should* all have led to positive turning points. This is not a normative list. Rather, they are the events from the period of interest that caused contextual changes large enough that they fit Druckman's definition of precipitants. They had the potential to lead to positive turning points, but equally, they had the potential to lead to negative turning

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<sup>8</sup> This is a central idea in Darby (2001) and Höglund (2008).

points. The interviews conducted for the study confirmed that these were the key events of the time period.

1.2.3 Multiparty Mediation Theory. The lens that will be applied from multiparty mediation theory comes from the strengths and weaknesses of multiparty mediation identified by Crocker, Hampson and Aall (2001c). These are listed in Appendix A. Application of this lens helps answer a series of questions for each crisis: Did the Quartet attempt to capitalize on the potential strengths of multiparty mediation during this crisis? Did the Quartet consciously attempt to mitigate the potential pitfalls of multiparty mediation during this crisis? Did issues of formation appear to constrain the Quartet members from capitalizing on strengths and mitigating weaknesses? Is it feasible that this might be changed in the future?

### *1.3 Terminology Definitions*

The beginning of the next chapter will explain the interrelationships among the various fields and sub-fields associated with conflict resolution. The following is a quick summary of the definitions of key terms that will appear throughout this study.

Multiparty mediation: “Attempts by many third parties to assist peace negotiations in any given conflict” (Crocker, Hampson, and Aall 1999, 9).

Intractable conflict: A conflict situation that is, “stubborn or difficult, but not impossible to manage” (Crocker, Hampson, and Aall 2004, 7). This stands in contrast to colloquial use of the term which sometimes implies “irresolvable conflict.”

Potential Precipitant Event: A change in the conditions inside or outside a negotiation that may lead to a departure in process. Precipitants can be procedural (inside), substantive (inside), or external (outside).<sup>9</sup> The five crises listed below are external precipitants.

Departure in Process: An abrupt change in the course of a negotiation.

Consequence: The result of a departure in process that is either positive or negative.

Turning Point: The combination of a departure in process with its consequence. A turning point is subsequently considered positive or negative based on the characterization of its consequence. A positive turning point is indicated by progress toward settlement. A negative turning point is indicated by impasse, stalemate or cessation of the negotiation.

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<sup>9</sup> See Druckman (2005, 191-192).

## Druckman's model of a turning point:

Precipitant -> Departure in Process -> Consequence

### *1.4 Questions about Multiparty Mediation Failure*

After the formation of the Quartet, its members had the opportunity to respond, individually and collectively, to a series of crises (or potential precipitants) between 2002 and 2007. The overarching research question of this study is: *Under what conditions does multiparty mediation fail to move conflicting parties toward a comprehensive peace agreement?* The following research questions, derived from the theoretical lenses described above, are designed to answer this overarching research question:

#### Quartet Formation

- Whose idea was the Quartet? Who was its strongest proponent and why? Many outsiders think it was a creation of the United States. Is this true?
- Why were the particular four members chosen? Were others considered and subsequently eliminated, and if so, why? Why four and not three or five?

#### Quartet Behavior

- Did the Quartet constrain the behavior of the United States Government (USG) or did the USG disregard the preferences of the other members of the Quartet?
- Did the Quartet attempt to leverage the benefits of multiparty mediation?

- Did the Quartet recognize, attempt to mitigate, or succumb to the weaknesses of multiparty mediation?
- Did Israelis and Palestinians accept the efforts of the Quartet? Did acceptance change over time? How did they think the Quartet operated (i.e., was there a single leader, or was it a real multilateral effort?) What did they think its motivations were?
- Did Israelis or Palestinians ever ask the Quartet to step up its efforts? Did it respond? Do they think multiparty mediation offers the best chance for success or do they prefer a single mediator? If so, who?
- How did the Quartet respond to each of the five potential precipitant events? What are the patterns and themes in these responses? Who led in each crisis? Was there resistance to that leadership?
- Do negotiators and experts see other events that were more significant for the negotiations than the five events listed? How did the Quartet respond to those?

### *1.5 The Five “Potential Precipitant Events”*

Five events were chosen for analysis in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict between 2002 and 2007. The specific events were selected because of their potential impact on the peace process. The five events were confirmed in interviews with policy-makers and academics to be the five of greatest potential impact on the peace process between 2002 and 2007. Druckman’s turning point analysis suggests that precipitant events are changes in the environment that enable turning points to occur. In this sense, precipitant events are similar to what Zartman calls “ripeness.” These five events were chosen because they were the incidents that appeared to offer the most promise for a turning point to occur. Under “normal circumstances” they should have lead to departures in process and then to turning points. But this is a study of multiparty

mediation failure so it was known ahead of time that no departure in process took place. The question is, why? The five events are:

**Table 1.1 The Five Potential Precipitant Events**

1	The death of Yasser Arafat	Nov 2004
2	The Israeli withdrawal from Gaza	Fall 2005
3	The stroke of Ariel Sharon	Jan 2006
4	The Hamas election victory	Jan 2006
5	The Mecca Agreement	Feb 2007

### *1.6 Methodology*

This qualitative case study analyzes Quartet behavior through a two-stage process. The first stage involves the construction of a narrative of “what happened” on the ground and within the Quartet between 2002 and 2007. The basis of this narrative is a compilation of Quartet statements, news media accounts, professional and academic commentary, and interviews of key actors in the Quartet and academic experts on the peace process.<sup>10</sup> The second stage is an analysis of the resulting narrative through lenses from the three families of theory described in the previous section. This stage attempts to identify themes and patterns of behavior by focusing

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<sup>10</sup> The interview questions are listed in Appendix B.

the three lenses on Quartet formation and behavior. The key players and academic experts who were interviewed for this study are listed in table 1.2 below. The interviewees were selected in one of two ways. The key players were identified through a process that involved the construction of tables and spreadsheets similar to Table 4.1. These were constructed through research of US State Department, European Union, and United Nations publications and press releases as well as the interview process conducted for this study. As key players and academics were identified, they were asked to identify other key players, especially “behind the scenes” people who were deeply engaged in the process but not publicly known. This proved quite fruitful, resulting in interviews of several very knowledgeable individuals who would never have otherwise been identified.

The author requested interviews with all the key players identified. Several politely, and understandably, refused, including Condoleezza Rice and Tony Blair. Others agreed to be interviewed but were unable to follow through later. This included C. David Welch and Dr. Hanan Ashrawi. Ambassador Welch agreed to be interviewed but had to cancel due to a real-world crisis. Attempts to re-schedule were unsuccessful and the ambassador retired from the State Department shortly thereafter. Dr. Ashrawi also agreed to be interviewed, but on at the time of the appointment, technical challenges would not allow the call to go through to the West Bank. A second appointment was scheduled and the same thing happened again (even though telephone calls in the interim worked fine).



Several other key players never formally declined, but did not respond to multiple inquiries. This includes Kofi Annan, Sergei Lavrov, Terje Rod-Larsen, Ahmed Qurei, and Saeb Erekat. Their insights would have been very valuable, but their staff members were not able to elicit a positive response. The intensity of their schedules makes this quite understandable. Other unsuccessful pursuits included Gadi Baltiansky and Daniel Levy for additional Israeli perspective and Salam Fayed for Palestinian viewpoints. Had all of these been successful, they would have presented a very balanced collection of insights. However, the study did not depend on the interviews alone, or even primarily, for the collection of data, so the missed opportunities did not pose a problem. The interviews that were conducted augmented the primary data collected from document research.

The academics interviewed were chosen because of their reputation for expertise in the fields of conflict resolution in general and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in particular. All the interviews conducted are listed in the following table.

**Table 1.2 Quartet Key Personnel and Middle East Experts Interviewed.**

<b><u>Quartet Principals</u></b>	
Colin Powell	US Secretary of State
Cristina Gallach	Spokesperson for <b>Javier Solana</b> , EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy
<b><u>Quartet Envoys</u></b>	
William J. Burns	Undersecretary for Political Affairs, Career Ambassador, US Ambassador to Russia, Assistant Secretary for Near East Affairs
Marc Otte	EU Special Representative to the Middle East peace process
Alvaro de Soto	UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East peace process
James Wolfensohn	Quartet Special Envoy for Disengagement, President of World Bank
<b><u>Other – Policy</u></b>	
Eival Gilady	Head of Coordination and Strategy Office of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon; Head of Israel Defense Forces Strategic Planning Division
Richard Falk	UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in the Palestinian Territories
Daniel Kurtzer	US Ambassador to Israel; Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Near East Affairs
David Satterfield	Senior Advisor to Secretary of State and Coordinator for Iraq; Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Near East Affairs
Lawrence Wilkerson	Chief of Staff to Secretary of State Colin Powell
Aaron David Miller	Senior Advisor for Arab-Israeli Negotiations
Timothy Murphy	US Defense Attaché, Israel
<b><u>Other - Academics</u></b>	
Chester Crocker	James R. Schlesinger Professor of Strategic Studies, Georgetown University
Nathan Brown	Professor of Political Science and International Affairs, Elliot School of International Affairs, George Washington University
William Quandt	Edward R. Stettinus Professor of Politics, Woodrow Wilson Department of Politics, University of Virginia
I. William Zartman	Professor Emeritus, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University
Amin Kazak	Professor of Middle East Politics, Department of Political Science, University of Colorado Denver
Scott Lasensky	Senior Research Associate, Center for Conflict Analysis and Prevention, United States Institute for Peace

A word needs to be said about the methodology and logistics of interviewing. When faced with the challenge of interviewing high-level government officials and academic experts who live, quite literally, all over the world and who have demanding schedules that change at a moment's notice, it quickly became apparent that conducting interviews in-person would be physically and financially prohibitive. The question then became, would telephone interviews be sufficiently effective? A review of literature on interviewing methodology for the social sciences revealed that, given the right circumstances, telephone interviews can be just as effective (and sometimes more effective) than in-person interviews.<sup>11</sup>

Shuy identifies the advantages of telephone interviews and compares them to the advantages of in-person interviews (2003, 178-183). The advantage of telephone interviews that was most significant to this study was just mentioned: greater cost-efficiency. Shuy also identifies four other advantages: reduced interviewer effects; better interviewer uniformity in delivery; greater standardization of questions; and researcher safety. Shuy then identifies ten advantages of in-person interviewing. Seven of the advantages were not applicable to this study but three were worthy of further consideration to ensure that no benefit was lost due to conducting the interviews via telephone.<sup>12</sup> The first advantage of in-person interviewing that was worthy of

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<sup>11</sup> For a comprehensive academic discussion of contemporary interviewing in social science research, see Holstein and Gubrium (2003).

<sup>12</sup> The seven advantages of in-person interviewing that were not applicable to this study were: greater likelihood of self-generated answers (not important to this study); symmetrical distribution of interactive power (not needed in this study – the respondents were all ‘more powerful’ than the interviewer, the opposite situation from the concern of this ‘advantage’); better for older or hearing-impaired respondents (no respondents in that category); more accurate results owing to lower interviewer workload (not an issue in this study); better response rates (due to the intensity of their

consideration was *more accurate responses owing to contextual naturalness*. Shuy attributes more accurate responses to ‘naturalness’ – the ability to engage in small talk, joking, and nonverbal communication. He considers this to be particularly important when a respondent is uncomfortable or nervous about being interviewed. However, for the high-level government officials and academic experts interviewed in this research, nervousness or discomfort at the prospect of being interviewed was not a factor. The second advantage of in-person interviewing worthy of consideration was *greater effectiveness with complex issues*. Shuy quotes fellow researcher Paul Lavrakas, “It is tiresome to keep the average person on the telephone for longer than 20-30 minutes” (Lavrakas 1993, 6). However, this quotation reveals the irrelevancy of this ‘advantage.’ The respondents in this study were not average people. They were deeply committed to the issues in and around the Israeli-Palestinian peace process and were eager to share, at length, their experiences and insights into the workings of the Quartet. An in-person setting would not have greatly increased their ability to convey complexity in their responses. This also speaks to the third ‘advantage’ of in-person interviews, *more thoughtful responses*. Given the respondents and their passion for the subject matter, there was no difficulty eliciting thoughtful responses. In all, although the personal touch of conducting the interviews in-person would have been preferable, there was little if anything lost by conducting the interviews via telephone.

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schedules, the respondents actually preferred the flexibility of telephone interviews); better for marginalized respondents (no respondents in that category); better for research involving sensitive (personal) questions (not the kind of questions asked in this study).

### *1.7 Overview of the Study*

To answer the central question about multiparty mediation failure, the study proceeds as follows. Chapter 2 begins with an explanation of the interrelationships among the fields of conflict resolution, conflict management, peace studies, peacebuilding, and peace keeping. It then explores previous research in the fields of peacemaking, negotiation, mediation and multiparty mediation. Next it reviews previous research specifically devoted to the Israeli-Palestinian peace process and the role of US foreign policy in that endeavor. The chapter concludes by identifying the research gap that this study fills.

Chapter 3 opens by examining the concept, content, and role of competing narratives in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. It then examines the major events in the peace process from 1991 to 2000 and the difficulties imposed by the competing narratives on those events. With the historical context in place, Chapter 4 begins the specific discussion of the early years of the George W. Bush Administration and the formation of the Middle East Quartet. It examines the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative and the differing levels of acceptance of the Quartet by Israelis and by Palestinians. Next, the chapter analyzes the behavior of the Quartet in the first three potential precipitant events: the death of Yasser Arafat, the unilateral Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, and the incapacitation of Ariel Sharon.

Chapter 5 opens with the pivotal event of the period: the victory of Hamas in the 2006 legislative council elections. It then examines the final potential precipitant

event: the proposed formation of a national unity government with both Hamas and Fatah known as the Mecca Agreement of 2007. Chapter 6 summarizes the key findings about multiparty mediation failure identified in the study, followed by a synopsis of insights from the three theoretical lenses: coalition theory, negotiation theory, and multiparty mediation theory. The chapter ends with a proposed new theory of multiparty mediation evaluation called the Multiparty Mediation Effectiveness Estimate. Finally, the study closes with an epilogue which applies the theoretical lessons of multiparty mediation failure to the current policy context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

## Chapter 2

### Negotiation, Mediation, and the Quartet: Previous Research

#### 2.1 Introduction

Previous research is pertinent to the question at hand: *Under what conditions does multiparty mediation fail to move conflicting parties toward a comprehensive peace agreement?* This research is found in several closely related schools of thought: conflict resolution, peace research, conflict management, peacemaking, negotiation, mediation, and war termination. Occasionally these terms are used with great precision. At other times they are used somewhat interchangeably which can cause confusion. In order to increase clarity and illuminate the linkages between this project and previous research, the first part of this chapter will offer a map of the fields to show their definitions and interrelationships.<sup>13</sup> Once the broad contours of the map are sketched, the chapter will show how previous research in each of the fields helps to answer the question about multiparty mediation, and, where gaps exist that have not been filled by the research to date.

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<sup>13</sup> The definitions presented are generally accepted by scholars and practitioners in the fields. Exceptions will be noted.

There is no universally accepted arrangement of these fields and sub-fields, but there is general consensus on the following definitions and their interrelationships. *Conflict resolution* is a necessary starting point but it can be a perplexing phrase since it may refer to a scholarly field, a negotiation process, or a desired end-state. When used in the sense of a field, it refers to a body of work that is quite diverse, addressing conflict along a wide spectrum that includes everything from interpersonal relationships to interstate world war.<sup>14</sup> The study at hand is interested in resolution of conflict at the intrastate and international levels. This “broad field” use is the sense in which Druckman and Diehl, for instance, use the term (2006). However, there are notable exceptions to the general consensus. For example, Wallensteen defines conflict resolution as:

A social situation where the armed conflicting parties in a (voluntary) agreement resolve to peacefully live with – and /or dissolve – their basic incompatibilities and henceforth cease to use arms against one another. (2007, 47)

This definition is closer to a desired end-state than a field or a process.<sup>15</sup> *Conflict resolution* in this narrower sense implies that the deeper sources of the conflict are actively being addressed and resolved.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> The “in-between” areas of conflict resolution research address topics such as labor-management relations, collective bargaining and dispute resolution. See for example Goldberg et al. (1992), Leap (1995), Ponte and Cavenagh (1999), and Phillips (2001).

<sup>15</sup> Wallensteen tends to use the term “peace research” as the name of broader field (e.g. 2007, 5).

<sup>16</sup> This is more in line with the definition of conflict *transformation*. See below.



Druckman and Diehl's five-volume *Conflict Resolution* (2006), Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, and Miall's *Contemporary Conflict Resolution* (2005), and Kriesberg's "The Development of the Conflict Resolution Field," (1997) are all examples of works that use conflict resolution in the sense of an overarching field. When *conflict resolution* is used in this manner, several of the following sub-fields fall under its purview.

*Conflict prevention* focuses on the causes of conflict and the ways to avert its outbreak.<sup>17</sup> *Conflict containment* does not attempt to end a conflict but instead seeks to prevent its spread. It can involve the use of third party, armed peacekeeping forces. *Peacekeeping* forces "are usually inserted only with the consent of the belligerents and remain impartial with respect to the issues and parties in the dispute," (Lute 2007, 436). *Conflict management* is a broader term that covers "the whole gamut of positive conflict handling," (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, and Miall 2005, 29).<sup>18</sup> It often applies to situations of intractable conflict; i.e., it cannot be resolved without tremendous effort and expense, and therefore, influential actors simply resort to managing it.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> See for example: Churchman (2005), Iklé (1991), and Gurr (1970).

<sup>18</sup> Bar-Siman-Tav, *The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: From Conflict Resolution to Conflict Management* (2007) is an example of a study of actors resorting to conflict management in the face of intractable conflict. (It also happens to be the same case this study addresses.)

<sup>19</sup> Recall the definition of *intractable*: "Extremely difficult, but not impossible, to resolve." Intractability of a conflict and/or lack of capacity or interest on the part of potential mediators can lead to the strategy of conflict management just mentioned.

*Peacemaking* focuses on ending a conflict that previously erupted.

Peacemaking includes the prominent subfields of *negotiation*, (the process in which parties attempt to resolve their conflict through dialogue); and *mediation*, (the process in which negotiation is aided by an outside, third party). *Peace enforcement*, however, is more distinct. In this situation, a powerful third party imposes an end to a conflict by the use of armed force. In peace enforcement, (in contrast to peacemaking), at least one of the conflicting parties does not consent to the use of armed intervention by a third party.

*Conflict settlement* implies a peace agreement or accord has been reached and signed. In practice, this rarely involves true resolution of the underlying causes of the conflict. Therefore, settlements are often fragile and short-lived.<sup>20</sup> *Conflict transformation* is a more recently developed term that does involve addressing the root causes of conflict. Lederach defines it this way:

Conflict transformation is to envision and respond to the ebb and flow of social conflict as life-giving opportunities for creating constructive change processes that reduce violence, increase justice in direct interaction and social structures, and respond to real-life problems in human relationships. (2003, 14)

This process of transformation is part of the purview of *peacebuilding*. Peacebuilding “underpins the work of peacemaking and peacekeeping by addressing structural issues and the long-term relationships between conflictants,” (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, and Miall 2005, 30). Taking several of these concepts together, “*Peacemaking* aims to

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<sup>20</sup> See for example Hampson (1996), Stedman (1997a), Darby (2001), Darby and MacGinty (2000, 2003), Du Toit (2001), Zahar (2006), or Höglund (2008).

change the attitudes of the main protagonists, *peacekeeping* lowers the level of destructive behavior, and *peacebuilding* tries to overcome the contradictions which lie at the root of the conflict,” (Galtung 1996, 112).

This map of the fields and subfields illustrates how tightly interrelated they truly are. Previous research from all of them has potential implications for the question of multiparty mediation failure and the specific case of the Quartet. However, the most fruitful research that helps address the question resides in the fields of peacemaking, negotiation, mediation, and focused studies on intractable conflict. The insights from this research will be explored shortly.

In addition to the general research in the abovementioned fields, there is also a relevant body of research dedicated to the Israeli-Palestinian peace process itself (e.g. Quandt 2005, Rothstein, Ma'oz, and Shikaki 2002, Touval 1982, Roy 2007). This work helps to bridge the gap between worlds of academia and policymaking.<sup>21</sup> It runs the gamut from the highly theoretical (Bar-Siman-Tav 2007, Feste 1991) to the imminently practical (Ross 2004, Kurtzer and Lasensky 2008). There is also a relevant subset of this literature that focuses on the interaction of US domestic interests with US foreign policy in the arena of the Middle East peace process (e.g. Mearsheimer and Walt 2007, Carter 2006, Dershowitz 2008, Petras 2006).

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<sup>21</sup> George (1993) argues that this is an important gap to bridge, even though it will never be completely eliminated. Bridging the gap involves scholars who produce “policy-relevant knowledge” which “contributes to two essential functions in policymaking: the diagnostic task and the prescriptive one,” (1993, xix-xx). His point is that policy-relevant knowledge in the hands of wise policy makers renders superior policy decisions.

Taken together, previous research in peacemaking, negotiation, mediation, the Palestinian-Israeli peace process, and US foreign policy goes a long way toward answering the question of the failure of multiparty mediation in the case of the Quartet. However, significant gaps remain as the following review will illustrate.

## *2.2 Previous Research in Peacemaking, Negotiation and Mediation*

Two overviews of the conflict resolution field offer general context to the question of multiparty mediation success and failure: Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall (2005) and Druckman and Diehl (2006). The former work divides the development of the conflict resolution field into four generations: “Precursors,” 1918 to 1945, “Foundations,” 1945 to 1965, “Consolidation,” 1965 to 1985, and “Reconstruction,” 1985 to 2005.<sup>22</sup> Kriesberg’s chapter in Druckman and Diehl (2006)<sup>23</sup> uses nearly identical time periods and similar labels. He calls 1914 to 1945, “Precursors.” He names 1945 to 1969, “Early Efforts and Basic Research,” and labels 1970-1985, “Crystallization and Expansion.” He calls 1986 to 2006, “Extension, Diffusion, and Institutionalization.” The difference in the labels for the period after 1985 reflects the difference in theoretical orientations of the authors. Ramsbotham,

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<sup>22</sup> Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall exemplify the “Foundations” with the work of Theodore Lentz, Kenneth Boulding, and John Burton. The “Consolidation” is represented by the work of Herb Kelman, Adam Curle, and Elise Boulding.

<sup>23</sup> Originally published in I. William Zartman and J. Lewis Rasmussen (eds) *Peacemaking in International Conflict: Methods and Techniques* (Washington, DC: United States Institute for Peace Press, 1997).

Woodhouse and Miall offer a constructivist account of conflict resolution, whereas Kriesberg's category reflects a more traditional, problem-solving approach.<sup>24</sup>

As noted, under the larger umbrella of international conflict resolution, the areas of peacemaking, negotiation, and mediation are intimately interrelated. A significant portion of this work focuses on the achievement and implementation of *peace agreements*. Peace agreements are unveiled to great public fanfare. The attention is often justified since such agreements can mark a substantial development, and in some minds, a culmination, in a given peace process.<sup>25</sup> Darby and MacGinty (2000) compare peace processes in South Africa, Northern Ireland, Israel-Palestine, Northern Spain, and Sri Lanka. They arrive at the following eight propositions that offer insight into the Israeli-Palestinian peace process (particularly given the ongoing debates about Hamas participation) and potential multiparty mediation success or failure.

Proposition 1: Most ceasefires collapse in the first few months. The survivors are likely to deliver some level of success.

Proposition 2: A lasting agreement is impossible unless it actively involves those with the power to bring it down by violence. As it is never possible to include all those who threaten the process, a principle of 'sufficient inclusion' is necessary.

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<sup>24</sup> Cox (1981) made the distinction between problem-solving theory and critical theory. This will be discussed in more detail shortly.

<sup>25</sup> However, research has shown that such fanfare can prove premature. During the extremely difficult peace agreement *implementation* phase, conflict can reemerge with devastating results. Such was the case, for example, in Angola in 1993 and Rwanda in 1994. For more see, Stedman, Rothchild, and Cousens (2002) and Lederach (2003).

Proposition 3: Spoiler groups can only be neutralized with the active involvement of ex-militants.

Proposition 4: During peace negotiations the primary function of leaders is to deliver their own people. Assisting their opponents in the process is secondary.

Proposition 5: Members of the security forces and paramilitary groups must be integrated into normal society if a peace agreement is to stick.

Proposition 6: Peace accords need to address the needs of victims of violence.

Proposition 7: The search for comparative models is likely to be an increasingly important feature of internal peace processes.

Proposition 8: A peace process does not end with a peace accord.

(Darby and MacGinty 2000, 253-259)

Previous research has much of relevance to say about the effect of violence on peace processes. Darby (2001), Sisk (2006), and Höglund (2008), for example, show that violence can, counter intuitively, be a catalyst that moves a peace process forward. This supports the theoretical framework employed in this study, Druckman's Turning Point Analysis (2005). In the history of the Palestinian-Israeli peace process, violence has often induced crisis. The question here is how the attendant multiparty mediation body, the Quartet, responded to those crises, and, whether those crises, coupled with the Quartet's actions, caused the peace process to move forward or move backward.

Closely related to the work on the effect of violence on peace processes is Stedman's work on *spoilers* (e.g. 1997b) which is supported by Darby and

MacGinty's propositions above (specifically propositions 2, 3, and 5). Stedman observes,

The research presented here strongly suggests that international consensus about norms, coordination behind a strategy of aggressive management of spoilers, and unambiguous signals to peace supporters and spoilers provide the difference between successful and failed implementation of peace agreements. (1997b, 53)

Stedman's insights have readily-apparent application to both multiparty mediation and the Israeli-Palestinian situation.

Stedman's admonition about the need for international consensus and coordination resonates with many scholars who have written about contemporary conflict resolution and multiparty mediation.<sup>26</sup> In the case of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, Hamas occupies an untidy space between process spoiler and official government party. To date, the Quartet has been unable to frame a coherent response. Yet the dilemma created by Hamas is not an unprecedented state of affairs.<sup>27</sup> This research helps answer why multiparty mediation was ineffective in the face of this difficulty.

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<sup>26</sup> For instance, nearly every contributor to Stern and Druckman (2000) noted the need for increased international coordination. Crocker adds, "The issue of 'competitive' peacemaking is a stark fact of contemporary international life. The problem of how to reap the benefits of composite, layered, or sequenced peacemaking while, at the same time, to avoid the negative side effects of 'multiparty mediation' is a serious one," (2007, 6).

<sup>27</sup> Sinn Fein in Northern Ireland and the African National Congress in South Africa are two prominent examples of the challenge.

As mentioned above, this study does not employ a comprehensive constructivist approach. Nevertheless, a limited application of constructivist concepts in the realm of conflict resolution yields insights which are directly applicable to the question of multiparty mediation, the Quartet, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall use Edward Azar's theory of Protracted Social Conflict (PSC) as the starting point for their approach.

For Edward Azar...the critical factor in protracted social conflict...was that it represented the prolonged and often violent struggle by communal groups for such basic needs as security, recognition and acceptance, fair access to political institutions and economic participation. Traditional preoccupation with relations between states was seen to have obscured a proper understanding of these dynamics. (2005, 84)

Azar's theory of protracted social conflict rests on four insights or 'clusters of variables' that are preconditions for PSC. First, the most important unit of analysis is 'communal content' i.e., identity groups, (not the international system or whole states). Second, deprivation of human needs is the foundational source of protracted social conflict. Third, governance by a state is *the critical factor* in determining whether human needs are met or deprived. Fourth, 'international linkages' have to be considered, particularly political-economic relations that incur the economic dependency of weak states on stronger ones, (Azar 1990).

Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall add the following:

Awareness of the normative underpinnings of existing power structures makes it possible to challenge them in the name of those who are excluded and exploited, thus opening up the possibility of a genuinely emancipatory agenda whose aim is to eliminate human insecurity. (2005, 154)



Azar and Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall reveal ways in which power structures can limit or perpetuate conflict. This allows us to consider specific cases of multiparty mediation failure and, rather than take power structures as givens, ask how the structures may have contributed to the failure. This kind of analysis is very useful in the specific case of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. When one considers the Quartet, i.e., the United States, Russia, the European Union, and the United Nations, alongside the belligerents, Israel and the Palestinians, one cannot help but notice a striking feature: five of the six entities belong to the accepted international order. The Palestinians, however, belong to a different and atypical category. They occupy a territory that belongs to no state recognized by the international system. Existing research on multiparty mediation overlooks this key insight, yet it is a critical component to understanding multiparty mediation failure in the case at hand.

### *2.3 Previous Research on Multiparty Mediation*

Unlike the abundance of general conflict mediation literature, work devoted exclusively to *multiparty* mediation remains relatively sparse. Early attempts were made by Zartman (1994), Kriesberg (1996), and Pavri (1997). Later, more substantive research was accomplished by Crocker, Hampson, and Aall (1999, 2001b, 2001c, 2002), Nan (1999), Khachikian (2000), and Steenhausen (2003). Zartman (1994) noted the infancy of the field at that time. His project was an interesting exercise, staging a competition of sorts in which theorists applied frameworks from several

academic disciplines to the topic of multiparty mediation. They attempted to see who could create the best theoretical explanation or model of multilateral negotiation. In the end, Decision Theory, Game Theory, Organization Theory, Small Group Theory, Coalition Theory, and Leadership Theory “all won.” It may be more accurate to say they “all lost,” in the sense that none of the attempts came very close to capturing the complexity of multiparty mediation.<sup>28</sup> The real lesson learned from Zartman (1994) was that understanding and modeling the complexities of multiparty negotiation are difficult in the extreme. Perhaps tellingly, when Zartman and Rasmussen published *Peacemaking in International Conflict* (1997a), they did not address multiparty mediation at all.<sup>29</sup>

Kriesberg (1996) was a notable attempt to derive insights on multiparty mediation. In “Coordinating Intermediary Peace Efforts,” Kriesberg identified four ways a “multiplicity of peace efforts” can hamper effectiveness: “Overloading the adversaries’ attentiveness; conveying competing expectations; intermediaries acting to undercut one another’s policies; and intermediaries pursuing incompatible policies,” (1996, 343). Kriesberg points out that multiple mediators can work sequentially or contemporaneously. He argues that the former usually proves more effective than the latter. He concludes with four strategies to improve multiparty mediation efforts: all parties need to recognize and appreciate the difference between mediator roles and

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<sup>28</sup> If the new models had proven useful, one would have expected to see them reappear in Zartman’s (or others’) later work. However, none of the models seem to have ever been used beyond the initial project.

<sup>29</sup> Nor did Zartman address multiparty mediation in (2005) or (2007).

mediation activities; mediators need to recognize the unique aspects of any given conflict; mediators must exchange information; mediators need to explicitly differentiate their roles. These strategies are helpful to consider when asking questions about multiparty mediation success and failure. The first strategy is the most helpful in the sense that it is the least obvious of the four. It could lead to insights in a particular case of failure that might not otherwise have been apparent. However, the remaining three are self-evident. Like Zartman, Kriesberg did not engage the topic of multiparty mediation a second time (e.g. 2003, 2007b).

Pavri (1997) compared five crises in the Indo-Pakistani conflict and the impact of third-party mediation. Based on her investigation of the cases, she concluded that “third-party intervention is crucial for settlement to occur,” (1997, 369). However, “Single, committed third parties appear to be more conducive [than multiple third parties] to outcomes of eventual settlement,” (Pavri 1997, 379). Her conclusion was based on a small data set. Of five cases, two were mediated (successfully) by a single third party and three were mediated (unsuccessfully) by multiple third-parties. Because it was not the focus of her study, she offers only an abbreviated potential explanation:

This might merely be a reflection of the fact that the lack of multiple parties would also imply a lack of multiple tensions and agendas; it might also be the case, however, that a single third party can be more easily trusted by conflicting sides and its intent more unambiguously interpreted. (1997, 379)

The most recognized book in the field was produced by the prolific team of Crocker, Hampson, and Aall: *Herding Cats: Multiparty Mediation in a Complex*

*World* (1999). They offer three introductory chapters on multiparty mediation in general, twenty case studies of conflict mediation, and a concluding chapter that distills lessons from the case studies. Crocker, Hampson, and Aall (2001b) and (2002) condense and refine the material from the introductory and concluding chapters of *Herding Cats*. The best compilation of the fruit of their research on multiparty mediation is Crocker, Hampson, and Aall (2001c). From their work we know that multiparty mediation is not so much one option among many as it is a given feature of the conflict mediation landscape of the new millennium. Crocker, Hampson and Aall are more optimistic than Pavri about the effect of multiparty mediation. They argue that on the whole, the potential benefit of multiparty mediation outweighs the potential harm, particularly if mediators remain cognizant of its challenges. “A Crowded Stage,” is a straightforward attempt to answer the question, “Do these multiparty mediations help or hurt the cause of peace?” (Crocker, Hampson, and Aall 2001c, 52).

We know that it is quite possible for well-intentioned but poorly coordinated multiparty mediation to do more harm than good. But such liabilities can be outweighed by the benefits of collective action when mediators are prepared to work from a common script. Many of the practitioners who participated in the study [*Herding Cats*] argued that burden sharing, even in circumstances in which the organizations do not fully collaborate, often provides the resources or means to avoid conflict or cement a peace agreement. (2001c, 59)

To avoid the negative effects, they argue that effective multiparty mediation requires not just coordination but a *coherent political strategy* to undergird the peace process. This is the same theme noted in Stern and Druckman (2000) and Crocker (2007).

Nan (1999) and Khachikian (2000) studied conflicts in the former Soviet Union. Nan looked at Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Transdneistria to answer questions about improving mediator complementarity and coordination. Her study adds non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and grassroots movements to work on regional and international governmental organizations and states. Her research offers some of the most insightful findings for the question of multiparty mediation failure to date.

Nan is in agreement with other researchers that overall, coordination needs to improve. Her research takes a further step, however, and identifies specific types of coordination to be improved: information sharing; resource sharing; collaborative strategizing; and concrete collaboration through partnerships. She lists these in order of increasing potential effectiveness. She also offers: “The analysis that intervenors undertake prior to engaging in conflict resolution should include an analysis not only of the conflict, but also of the components of the ongoing peace process,” (1999, 339). Her research would classify the Quartet as concrete or institutionalized collaboration. If the Quartet has been unfruitful, then either Nan’s conclusion is wrong or the Quartet represents something other than concrete collaboration. This is explored in detail in later chapters.

Khachikian (2000) investigated the roles of Russia, the UN, and the OSCE in mediation efforts in the conflict over Abkhazia. Although there are clear differences between the Abkhazian conflict and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, they contain

several common issues of contention: sovereignty, security, occupation, territory, ethnicity, religion, power asymmetries, and refugees. Khachikian writes,

The case is interesting not only because of its historical context, but also because of the “dual mediator” model in which a clearly interested party (Russia) and two neutral international bodies (the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, OSCE) cooperate to mediate a complex dispute. In this particular dual mediator situation, Russia was able to use coercion and political leverage to influence the parties, while the United Nations and the OSCE lent legitimacy and the power of international norms to the process. (2000, 15)

Khachikian notes that the coordination was very good among the mediators of the Abkhazian conflict. They purposely employed a division of labor based on their comparative advantages, much as Crocker, Hampson and Aall (2001b) prescribe, they remained true to those roles, and they consistently communicated with each other.

This case offers empirical support to the arguments about multiparty mediation strengths and weaknesses put forward by Crocker, Hampson and Aall (2001c). It is a case of particular interest for three reasons. First, the case involves (essentially) three of the four members of the Quartet engaged in multiparty mediation. Additionally, Russia was a key mediator of the conflict in spite of its clear sympathy for one of the disputants. This is similar to the US position vis-à-vis the Israelis and Palestinians. Finally, Russia acted rather forcefully to leverage the parties into resolution. This behavior seems to go against much conventional wisdom that says a mediator cannot force peace on disputants. As a case in point:

While the United States has more influence with both parties than any other state, and thus has much leverage to use in its mediating effort, it cannot impose the terms of a solution on the parties. (Telhami 2005, 370)

Khachikian's analysis of Russia's behavior may reveal that there is more room for mediator leverage than has thus far been applied in the Palestinian-Israeli dispute.

Bercovitch (1996) offered insights into mediation by a single third party, but did not add to our understanding of multiparty mediation. Bercovitch (2002) included the significant chapter by Crocker, Hampson, and Aall noted above, but no other research on multiparty mediation. Several other works add greatly to our understanding of mediation and conflict resolution involving a single mediator, but not to our understanding of multiparty mediation (e.g. Kleiboer 1998, Stedman, Rothchild, and Cousens 2002, Kriesberg 2007b).

Steenhausen (2003) made a notable contribution to our understanding of multiparty mediation by analyzing the long-running conflict in Cyprus. He began with the negotiation theory concept, "BATNA" (Best Alternative to Negotiated Agreement), and derived a new concept he named, "BATMA" (Best Alternative to Mediating an Agreement). BATNA applies to the choices faced by each party in a conflict whereas BATMA applies to the choices faced by potential mediators of a conflict situation. Steenhausen also interviewed ten Cypriot officials and academics involved in the negotiations. From these concepts and interviews, he derived the six hypotheses listed in Appendix C. His hypotheses illuminate several of the factors that induce potential mediating parties to engage in multiparty mediation. They also offer

insight into multiparty mediation success or failure based on composition of the mediation group and the perceptions of their individual “BATMAs.”

Previous research on *intractable* conflict such as Crocker, Hampson and Aall (2004) and (2005), Kriesberg, Northrop and Thorson (1989) offers important insights to the study at hand since the Palestine-Israeli conflict is usually at the top of the list of intractable conflicts. The research is generally divided into *sources* of intractability and *responses* to intractability (e.g. Kriesberg, Northrup, and Thorson 1989, Crocker, Hampson, and Aall 2004). Crocker, Hampson, and Aall (2005) addresses eight specific cases in nine chapters.<sup>30</sup> The insights are helpful but there is a gap in the research regarding multiparty mediation. One question thus far unanswered is whether multiparty mediation can “*induce* ripeness.”<sup>31</sup> If the answer to the first question were “yes,” then a follow-on question would be whether a specific multiparty mediation body had the political *will* to attempt to induce ripeness. If the multiparty mediation body stated its goal as resolution of a conflict (even if only at the level of settlement via a formal peace accord), then failure could be the result of either lack of capacity or lack of will. This points to *capacity* and *will* as key components for multiparty mediation failure or success.

As of the beginning of 2009, there have been no book-length studies published on the Quartet. Most article-length scholarly studies have focused on critiquing the

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<sup>30</sup> As the “intractable of intractables,” Israel-Palestine gets two chapters.

<sup>31</sup> “Ripeness for resolution” is Zartman’s concept (ref. 1989a). The weakness of the concept, as Feste points out, is that it is only recognizable in hindsight (Feste 1991, 153).



content of the *Roadmap to Peace* but have had little to say about the inner workings of the Quartet itself. A good example is Levy and Shtender-Auerbach's piece, "The Road Not Taken in the Middle East: A Memo to the Absent Quartet," (2006). They call for more vigorous engagement by the Quartet: "What is needed is leadership by the partners in the Quartet, and especially by the United States, to bring the parties together and lead the way to a permanent solution" (2006, 22). From work like this we know about the policy implications of the Quartet's work, but the intricacies and explanations of multiparty mediation failure are left unexplored.

#### *2.4 Previous Research on the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process*

The literature devoted to the study of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is truly voluminous. Many of the works are clearly sympathetic to one side or the other, but there are numerous examples of a more balanced approach. The section that follows will explore key contributions in this field that offer insight into multiparty mediation success and failure, particularly in relation to the Quartet. Previous research runs the gamut from practical historical narrative to highly theoretical analysis.

Ross (2004) offers a very detailed, personal account of his experience in the peace process.<sup>32</sup> He is the quintessential conflict resolution practitioner. As one would

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<sup>32</sup> Dennis Ross was the lead US mediator in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process throughout the 1990s.

expect, he makes no attempt to employ or address conflict resolution theory. The value of the account is an inside look at negotiation and mediation in practice with the attendant cultural miscues, political drama, personality quirks, and egos of the key players – in a word, the humanity of it all.

Ross's version of the events at Camp David 2000 was challenged by Malley and Agha (2001). They claim, in line with Shikaki (2002), that the 'generous proposals' offered by Barak via Clinton, were in fact heavily favored in Israel's direction. The debate is captured well by Rabinovich (2004, 160-176) and discussed further below. We learn from this account something intangible but important: a sense of what ideas and conceptual tools within the academic realm of conflict resolution theory may have purchase in the rough and tumble world of international diplomacy.

Rabinovich's (2004) scholar-practitioner approach provides useful insights into the attempts to arrive at a peace settlement.<sup>33</sup> One of the early insights he offers is recognition that there is no single Arab-Israeli dispute but a cluster of distinct, interrelated conflicts. First is the core conflict between Israel and the Palestinians; second, the conflict between Israeli and Arab nationalism; third, a series of bilateral disputes between Israel and neighboring Arab states; and fourth, the larger international conflict (2004, 3-4). This observation is both obvious and insightful. It is

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<sup>33</sup> Rabinovich served as Israel's ambassador to the United States from 1993 to 1996 and was Israel's chief negotiator with Syria from 1992 to 1995. He went on to serve as the president of Tel Aviv University, professor at large for Cornell University, and is currently a visiting professor at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government.

obvious that these multilayer and multilevel conflicts are all in play simultaneously.<sup>34</sup> However, the observation is also profound because even seasoned diplomats (and academics) are tempted to oversimplify the complexities of the dispute by rolling these diverse elements into one “Arab-Israeli” conflict. Rabinovich reminds us of this strong temptation that could be a factor in multiparty mediation failure. This will be explored in chapter 6.

Rabinovich enumerates four options debated by the Israeli government vis-à-vis the Palestinians in 2003 (2004, 308-309). The first argued for a full press for a comprehensive settlement. This type of settlement was typified by the “Ami Ayalon – Sari Nusseibah initiative” and the “Geneva Initiative.” A second option being debated was that proposed by President Bush’s more incremental, performance-based “Roadmap to Peace.” The third option was a unilateral move by Israel, such as was eventually manifested in the withdrawal from Gaza. The fourth option was “an effort to perpetuate the status quo through inertia, either through unhappiness with the three first options or through the strength of ideology and belief in Israel’s eventual victory over Palestinian nationalism.” He claimed that at the time, “Ariel Sharon and his government have been shifting among the last three options,” (Rabinovich 2004, 310). Rabinovich’s account is helpful because it gives insight into the strategic thinking of Israeli leaders and their responses to individual members of the Quartet and their initiatives.

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<sup>34</sup> See Putnam (1988) on “two-level games.”

Kurtzer and Lasensky (2008) gives the Bush Administration and the rest of the Quartet rather low marks for their performance in Middle East peacemaking.<sup>35</sup> “When Washington did engage actively, disagreements among senior officials undermined US diplomacy, as did the repeated counsel from senior administration figures to remain on the sidelines,” (2008, 21). This refers, among other things, to the treatment of Secretary Powell during his early attempts to put the process back on track. (This will be explored in greater detail in chapter 5.) Later attempts such as the Roadmap in 2002-2003 did not fare much better.

When major initiatives were put forward, as with the Roadmap peace plan in 2003, they were not aggressively pursued, not monitored, and lacked sustained diplomatic engagement. Backed by the so-called Quartet...the Roadmap was released with fanfare just after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein and set forth an ambitious three-stage, performance-based plan to stabilize Israeli-Palestinian relations, bolster Palestinian institutions, and move the parties back to negotiations over a two-state settlement. But no sustained attempt was made to implement the initiative. Its ambitious goals and timelines were effectively abandoned. (Kurtzer and Lasensky 2008, 21-22)

The study group and those they interviewed recognize the “special relationship” between the United States and Israel. Perhaps surprisingly, even those who self identify as more supportive of the Palestinian cause do *not* recommend a change to that relationship. Palestinians and their sympathizers want the United States

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<sup>35</sup> The United States Institute of Peace (USIP) published the practitioner-scholar assessment of peace efforts by Daniel Kurtzer and Scott Lasensky entitled, *Negotiating Arab-Israeli Peace* (2008). Kurtzer (U.S. Ambassador to Egypt, 1997-2001; U.S. Ambassador to Israel, 2002-2005) and Lasensky (Senior Research Associate, Center for Conflict Analysis and Prevention, USIP) joined forces to lead a study group that included William Quandt, Steven Spiegel, and Shibley Telhami. They interviewed over 100 key figures in the peace process from Israel, the Palestinian Authority, the United States, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, the Arab League, the European Union, and the United Nations.

to be involved in mediation of the conflict because they recognize it is the only state that has leverage with Israel. The entire group, however, does recommend that this special relationship be used more constructively to work toward a final settlement. Based on the study, Kurtzer and Lasensky offer five specific policy recommendations for the Obama administration that will be explored in chapter 6.<sup>36</sup>

In addition to the historical narratives, there is a body of literature that examines the Israeli-Palestinian peace process through theoretical lenses. This research can be organized by theoretical orientation and by time period, especially pre- and post-Oslo. Two pre-Oslo works are Touval (1982) and Feste (1991).

Touval focuses on *mediators* and their efforts from the first Arab-Israeli War to 1979. He chronicles and analyzes the efforts of Count Bernadotte, Ralph Bunche, Robert Anderson, Gunnar Jarring, Henry Kissinger, and Jimmy Carter. From their successes and failures, Touval derives lessons which he compares to the existing literature. He concludes, contrary to the literature at that time, that impartiality is not required on the part of a mediator. “Acceptability” is required, but a mediator can be acceptable to both sides even if the mediator is partial to one. We learn another important lesson from Touval:

The analysis of mediation in the Arab-Israeli conflict suggests that the mediator’s function of *reducing the risks* that the adversaries assume by the concessions they make and by the agreement they conclude may be much more

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<sup>36</sup> At the time of their writing in 2007, their recommendations were addressed to a then-unknown “next administration.”

extensive and more important than is reflected by the theoretical literature.  
(Touval 1982, 327-328)

These two insights, mediator *acceptability* and the mediator role of risk reduction (i.e., ‘provision of *political cover*’) are germane to the question of multiparty mediation failure and the Quartet. The United States clearly acts in favor of Israel. Yet according to Touval, this does not disqualify it from being a mediator that is acceptable to both sides. On the insight of political cover, leaders in both Israel and Palestine clearly need political cover in order to deal with fractious elements in their political midst. These insights will be addressed explicitly in chapter 6.

Feste (1991) applies a negotiation theory approach, connecting “major issues and peace plans to negotiation theory and strategy.” Her account, *Plans for Peace: Negotiation and the Arab-Israeli Conflict* covers roughly the same period as Touval but extends the account up to the early 1990s. Of particular interest to this study, Feste analyzes the conflict resolution “solution” of *partition*. She notes, “No partitioned country was able to agree on a mutually acceptable border. In every instance, fighting broke out, and the de facto border became the cease-fire line between conflicting groups,” (1991, 147). Yet partition is the basis of the “land for peace” and the “two-state solution.” Sharon took this to new levels in 2003 with the doctrine of “disengagement.” In spite of the historical track record of failure of partition, the Quartet endorsed Sharon’s plan. Why? This will be explored in chapter 5.

The collapse of the Oslo process was signaled by the failure of Camp David 2000 and the outbreak of the Second Intifada. Scholars began to look for the reasons

for the breakdown. Rothstein, Ma'oz and Shikaki produced an edited volume called *The Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process: Oslo and the Lessons of Failure* (2002).<sup>37</sup> The authors engage in a spirited debate on several fundamental issues. For instance, Rothstein argues that the proposal by Barak and Clinton to Arafat was, “a very generous offer,” which would have “brought the Palestinians a relatively good settlement...” (2002, xiii-xv). Shikaki characterizes Barak’s proposal quite differently. He points out that the Palestinians were expected to,

Pay a price for peace twice: once for admission to the negotiating table, and once again for reaching a peace agreement... To them, the price for making peace has been the recognition of the state of Israel in 78 percent of their homeland and the establishment of Palestinian state in the remaining 22 percent. (Shikaki 2002, 42)

At Camp David 2000, they were being “offered” to relinquish another 25 percent of the remaining 22 percent, reducing their “share” of their original homeland to less than 16 percent. If that were not enough, Shikaki notes that the 16 percent would not be contiguous. Not only would the West Bank be separated from Gaza, but even within the West Bank, Israel would retain sovereignty over Jewish settlements, including the network of roads linking the settlements that Palestinians would not even be allowed

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<sup>37</sup> The individual chapters were written for a conference in March of 2001. The events of September 11<sup>th</sup> occurred after the chapters were written but before the book was published. Although this caused most of authors’ predictions to be overcome by events, their analysis of the Oslo process is still worthy of consideration, particularly for seeing that “non-negotiables” turned out to be, in truth, negotiable. “In any case, what this participant found most valuable – and also most maddening – about our discussions was that they revealed that reasonable men on both sides were far closer to an agreement on the issues than the public debate might suggest” (2002, ix).

to cross, much less travel on. This would, in effect, divide the Palestinian “state” into dozens of islands surrounded by Israeli-controlled territory.<sup>38</sup> Additionally,

With regard to Jerusalem, the Israeli initial offer included demands for Israeli sovereignty over Islam’s second holiest place on earth, al-Haram al-Sharif... Occupied East Jerusalem was to remain under Israeli sovereignty... With regard to refugees, Israel refused to acknowledge its role and responsibility in creating the refugee problem; refused to acknowledge the right of return; and refused to take full responsibility for refugee compensation... On security arrangements, Israel demanded full demilitarization of the Palestinian state, the continued deployment of its military in the Jordan Valley for an unlimited period of time, and the right to send its full army into the territory of the Palestinian state whenever the government of Israel declared an emergency. (Shikaki 2002, 42-43)

In other words, Shikaki would call the Barak offer anything but “generous” and “fair,” Ross’s and Clinton’s post-conference blame-game rhetoric notwithstanding.

Rothstein continues to argue in the concluding chapter that a great opportunity was missed at Camp David 2000. He laments,

“Why were the opportunities, as limited and uncertain as they may have seemed, not grasped? There is no single or simple answer to this question and the answer (or answers) are likely to be as complex as the evolving situation on the ground” (Rothstein, Ma'oz, and Shikaki 2002, 162).

Yet the reason the “opportunities were not grasped” is fairly obvious to Shikaki. He argues that the offer was egregiously unfair to the Palestinians. Arafat knew that to agree to such an offer would be an atrocity to the Arab world in general and to the Palestinian people in particular – and he would go down in history as the man who

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<sup>38</sup> This “series of islands in a sea of Israeli-controlled territory” is exactly the situation in which the West Bank remains in 2009. See reports from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Occupied Palestinian Territory (OCHA OPT) such as “The Humanitarian Impact on Palestinians of Israeli Settlements and Other Infrastructure in the West Bank, July 2007.”



sold out his people by agreeing to this second *nakba*. To Arafat, and to the vast majority of the Arab world, the “peace” that this would buy was in no measure worth the price he was being asked to pay. The debate between Rothstein and Shikaki gives us insight into the deep effects of the contentious issues and competing narratives that will be discussed at length in chapter 3. These are critical to an understanding of the actions and effects of the Quartet as a case of multiparty mediation failure.

The central argument of Bar-Siman-Tav (2007) is that after the failure of the Oslo process, both sides shifted from a strategy of conflict resolution to a strategy of conflict *management*.<sup>39</sup> In other words, both sides recognized that resolution of the conflict was impossible in the political and social environment that followed the Oslo collapse and the beginning of the Second Intifada. The authors examine the conflict from several angles: Israeli society; Palestinian society; the interaction of the military and political establishments in Israel; interaction between Israeli political leaders and Israeli citizens; the role of the Israeli media in the conflict; and Sharon’s disengagement strategy.

Siman-Tav argues that three years of military confrontation, from 2000-2003, convinced Israeli leaders that a military solution was not possible. In light of a lack of other viable alternatives, the Israeli government turned to a policy of separation.

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<sup>39</sup> Bar-Siman-Tav (2007) was the result of the work of a group of Israeli scholars who initiated a study in 2003 to examine the results of the failure of the Oslo process and the impact of the failure on Israeli-Palestinian relations. The result of the study was the edited volume, *The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: From Conflict Resolution to Conflict Management*.

The newly evolving management conception of unilateral disengagement accepted the assessment that no military solution exists for the present confrontation and that only a political solution can end it. However, the conception continued to be grounded in the assumption that there was no prospect for such a solution in the present stage and therefore that terrorism must be dealt with by unilateral measures. (Bar-Siman-Tav 2007, 94)

Siman-Tav notes that the Gaza disengagement itself was remarkably smooth. Despite inevitable tensions, Palestinians and Israelis cooperated on a host of issues. There was surprisingly little resistance, even from the right wing within Israel. This led many to believe that withdrawal from parts of the West Bank might in fact be possible and that a peace agreement might be within reach. For the first time since 2000, the atmosphere of both societies was charged with hope.<sup>40</sup>

Nevertheless, at the beginning of 2006, more than four months after the implementation of the disengagement, the disengagement had still failed to reach its military and political objectives...The Palestinians on their side, blame Israel for triggering the violence and for not resuming the peace process. The argument that the Palestinians are not a viable partner is not less than a cover for Israel's refusal to renew the peace process. The disengagement, has, yet failed to trigger any breakthrough in the conflict and both sides remain in the old stalemate without a real hope for a change. (Bar-Siman-Tav 2007, 277-278)

In other words, in spite of the initial hope for a chance at peace, the Gaza withdrawal produced little change on the ground and even less change in the realm of diplomacy. This episode has major implications for this research and will be explored further in chapter 5.

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<sup>40</sup> See polling data at the Palestine Center for Policy and Survey Research, <http://www.pcpsr.org>.

## 2.5 US Foreign Policy, the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, and the “Israel Lobby”

Because of its relevance to the work of the Quartet, a word needs to be said about the “Israel Lobby.” Mearsheimer and Walt created a firestorm of debate with the publication of their article, “The Israel Lobby” in the *London Review of Books* (2006). They extended their argument to book-length the following year (2007). As strong adherents of political realism, their central argument is unsurprising: The support that the United States gives Israel is not explicable in terms of national interest alone. Since strategic national interest is the primary currency in political realism, the fact that it cannot explain US support for Israel is troubling to realists. They conclude that there is an exceptional influence on US foreign policy exerted by a loose federation of individuals and groups known collectively as the “Israel Lobby.” While this conclusion is not surprising, what *is* surprising is the reaction that putting such a conclusion in print has elicited.

Miller (2008) directly addresses the arguments of Mearsheimer and Walt. Miller’s third chapter, “Israel’s Lawyers: How Domestic Politics Shapes America’s Arab-Israeli Diplomacy” offers a detailed assessment of the strength of the lobby and the disparate sources of that strength: American Jews and Christian Zionists. Generally speaking, he argues, American Jews have great influence in the Democratic Party; Christian Zionists have strong influence in the Republican Party. Therefore, no matter which party is in power, the Israel Lobby is able to muster significant support.

How strong is that influence? Miller's conclusion is that it is quite strong, but not nearly as powerful as its opponents fear and often portray it. Nor is it as weak as many of its proponents claim. It is a powerful lobby, not unlike the NRA or the AARP. It is not some sinister force pulling the strings of a puppet American government. Describing his years at the State Department, Miller writes,

I can't remember a single decision of consequence American peace process advisors made, or one we didn't, that was directly tied to some lobbyist's call, letter, or pressure tactic. But those of us advising the secretary of state and the president were very sensitive to what the pro-Israel community was thinking and, when it came to considering ideas Israel didn't like, too often engaged in a kind of preemptive self-censorship...Despite the influence of domestic politics and the strong case Israel's lawyers make, when the president makes Arab-Israeli diplomacy a top priority and pursues it seriously, domestic politics usually takes a back seat. (2008, 123)

The "pre-emptive self-censorship" is troubling. That is a clear indication of significant influence. And although "domestic politics usually takes a back seat," when a president pursues Middle East peace seriously, domestic politics does not get in the back seat quietly. Nor does it stop trying to steer the car.

Key organizations in the lobby also directly target the administration in power. The principal mission of the Conference of Presidents is to pressure the White House when it acts in ways that the Conference opposes, as it did when Gerald Ford threatened to reassess US support for Israel, when George H. W. Bush briefly withheld loan guarantees in 1992, or...when George W. Bush called for the creation of a Palestinian state in the immediate aftermath of September 11. (Mearsheimer and Walt 2007, 165)

The net effect of the lobby is summarized in one statement: "US leaders have been engaged in virtually every aspect of the peace process, but they have never used the full leverage at their disposal to push the process forward," (Mearsheimer and Walt

2007, 342). The issue of the Israel lobby is raised here because of the significance it has in the story of the Quartet. As will be shown in the following chapters, the lobby had considerable influence in the Bush Administration and the Bush Administration had considerable influence over the rest of the Quartet, and thereby, the entire “peace process” from 2002-2007.

### *2.6 Summary and Identification of the Research Gap*

From historical studies and previous research, we know several things that help to answer the question of multiparty mediation failure and success. From the fields of conflict negotiation and mediation, we know some of the factors that affect success and failure in peace processes in general, such as Darby and MacGinty’s eight propositions. We have a much better understanding of the effects of violence and spoilers on peace processes, some of which is counterintuitive to conventional wisdom. We also know that constructivist accounts of conflict resolution can open windows of understanding into the interaction of power structures and relationships that affect local cases of conflict resolution. All of these are key components in the case of multiparty mediation of particular interest here: the Quartet in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Previous research in the specific area of multiparty mediation is also, of course, instructive in answering the question of success and failure of the Quartet. The

specific cases studied by Crocker, Hampson, and Aall, Nan, Khachikian, and Steenhausen offer insights that help unravel multiparty mediation success and failure and the specific case of the Quartet. Their initial attempts at building multiparty mediation theory offer a foundation that can be expanded. Additionally, research on conflict resolution successes and failures in cases of intractable conflict are directly applicable to the case of Palestine-Israel.

Finally, previous research that explored detailed aspects of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict itself is critical in forming a baseline understanding of the deep issues at stake in this conflict. Without an appreciation of the past attempts at peace among the parties, further single-party or multiparty mediation will have no chance to succeed. Understanding the unique position of the United States in the conflict, its unique array of domestic forces that have particular purchase on this conflict, and its peculiar role within the Quartet, are all key to understanding the Quartet's failure to achieve a lasting settlement from 2002 to 2007.

The specific contribution of this research is its focused analysis on the multiparty mediation mechanism known as the Quartet, and, its detailed, multifaceted explanation of the reasons for the Quartet's failure. The lessons of its failure will be translated into contingent generalizations that can be applied in future attempts to resolve and transform the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and, can be applied to other cases of intractable conflict that may yield in their obstinacy to the mechanism of multiparty mediation.

This chapter has situated the project at hand within the larger field of research in the areas of conflict resolution, multiparty mediation, intractable conflict, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and US foreign policy with regard to the Middle East peace process. The next chapter turns to the historical context of the conflict and the peculiar challenge of competing historical narratives.

## **Chapter Three: Historical Context**

### **The Challenges of Competing Narratives**

#### *3.1 Introduction*

The last chapter helped locate this project within the realm of previous research that has bearing on the question, *under what conditions does multiparty mediation fail to move conflicting parties toward a comprehensive peace agreement?* This chapter begins to narrow the focus of the study to the specific multiparty mediation case of the Quartet by exploring the historical context of the peace process prior to the Quartet's formation. In the previous chapter it was noted, "The analysis that intervenors undertake prior to engaging in conflict resolution should include an analysis not only of the conflict, but also of the components of the ongoing peace process," (Nan 1999, 339). In that spirit, this chapter will explicate pertinent portions of the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict *and* the history of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.



In order to understand the Palestinian- Israeli conflict and the peace process of the 1990s, one must have an appreciation of the *competing narratives* of the two parties.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict for primacy, power, and control encompasses two bitterly contested, competing narratives. Both need to be understood, reckoned with, and analyzed side by side in order to help abate violence and possibly propel both protagonists toward peace. (Rotberg 2006a, vii)

Understanding the two narratives is critical to an appreciation of why the Israeli-Palestinian conflict seems so intractable, even after the death of Yasser Arafat, and why revolutionary mayhem and repressive responses, plus terror and anti-terror, seem so defensible, authoritative, and supported by a reading of their national histories. (Rotberg 2006a, 2-3)

A mediator attempting to engage in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process without an understanding and appreciation for the content and influence of the competing narratives is a mediator doomed to failure.

This chapter will unfold in the following way. First, the concept of narrative will be explained and its general implications explored. With that as background, the two competing narratives will be conveyed – first the Israeli and then the Palestinian. Both will tell their respective stories up to the beginning of the 1990s. Next, after a brief comparison of the two narratives, the major events in the peace process of the 1990s will be explored. The events will be told from a neutral perspective (as neutral as possible), and interpreted from the perspectives of the two narratives. This section will drive at the core purpose of the chapter: to familiarize the reader with the major events in the peace process in the 1990s, and simultaneously to show how these events were interpreted in very different ways by Palestinians and Israelis because of the

effects of the competing narratives. An understanding of both halves of this equation is critical to an appreciation of the context in which the Quartet was formed and operated, the subject of the next two chapters. This analysis will lead to contingent generalizations that answer the question: *Under what conditions does multiparty mediation fail to move conflicting parties toward a comprehensive peace agreement?*

### *3.2 The Concept of Narrative*

A narrative is here defined as the story a people group tells primarily to itself (and secondarily to ‘outsiders’) about its origins and its history. Bar-Tal and Salomon are more precise:

We conceive of collective narratives as social constructions that coherently interrelate a sequence of historical and current events; they are accounts of a community’s collective experiences, embodied in its belief system and represent the collective’s symbolically constructed shared identity...The beliefs comprising the collective narrative are often featured on the public agenda, are discussed by society members, serve as relevant references for decisions that leaders make, and influence choices and courses of action. Societal institutions actively impart these beliefs to society members and encourage their acquisition. (2006, 20)

Related concepts are national epics and founding myths, but narrative includes events that occurred long after the founding of a group. As the related terms imply, narratives often include nationalistic elements and mythological components, from the minor embellishment to the total fabrication. In the case of the United States, the story of George Washington and the cherry tree might stand as an example of the former; in

the case of Greece, Hesiod's *Theogony* might serve as an example of the latter. Most involve 'selective recall' – a recounting of the portions that fit with the group's identity, cultural norms, and values, and a repression or elimination of parts that contradict these.

A narrative is generally embraced by its respective community, but as with any history, there are differences of opinion within (and outside) each community on the details and significance of specific events. Additionally, there are many sub- and supra-versions of each narrative here summarized as the "Israeli narrative" and the "Palestinian narrative." "Even so, there is no single narrative for either side," (Rotberg 2006b, 3). Within (and surrounding) the Palestinian narrative, one could find a broader Arab narrative, a narrower Jordanian-Palestinian narrative, a Lebanese-Palestinian narrative, and so on. Likewise, within the Israeli narrative, one could divine a "traditional" Zionist narrative, a revisionist narrative, a Sephardic narrative, and so on.<sup>41</sup> The permutations are endless. Nevertheless, a core narrative exists among Israelis, and a competing one among Palestinians, that is more or less agreed upon and generally held by the majority of the members of each community. The members would recognize and embrace the narrative as "our story."

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<sup>41</sup> The debate between the "Old Historians" and the "New Historians," (Morris 2007, 2) is worth noting. In this study, the "Israeli narrative" refers to the more traditional, "old historian" view since it remains the dominant viewpoint.

A critical function of narrative is to help define who is inside and who is outside the group. When the narratives of neighboring peoples compete for legitimacy, conflict is exacerbated.

It should be stressed that although the narratives that evolve in a conflict situation enable those involved to adapt better to conditions of intractable conflict, these narratives also maintain and prolong the conflict. They become a prism through which society members construe their reality, collect new information, interpret their experiences, and make decisions about their course of action. (Bar-Tal and Salomon 2006, 36)

Competing narratives invoke strong emotional responses since they are interwoven with the values and identity of a people group. The result can be open conflict or cold peace. Eric Black used the phrase, “Dialogue of Two Monologues,” to capture the often fruitless interaction that occurs between the Palestinian and Israeli narratives (1992).

Postmodernism and critical theory have a great deal to say about narrative and identity formation but the purpose of this chapter is not to explore these concepts or their origins in great depth. Rather, this chapter will take the narratives as more or less given and simply explore their effects on the peace process.

Elites, including negotiators and politicians, usually (but certainly not always) have the ability to see some of the biases contained in their own narrative and are even able, at times, to appreciate the narratives of other communities. However, the same elites remain politically constrained because of the narratives of their respective communities. This is a key point: negotiators and politicians are figuratively

constrained by the narratives themselves. The content of the narratives therefore has a significant impact on the peace process. Hermann and Newman express it this way.

Certain political leaders and negotiators on both sides are ready to reach quick solutions concerning the tangible elements of the conflict, be it due to their sincere conviction that reality justifies such a move, or (perhaps cynically) motivated by their expectation of cashing in on such an external achievement at home in the next elections. *However, this disposition of the elite is often incompatible with that of the general public hindered by deep-rooted fears and long-held definitions of the situation as zero-sum.* Both sides still see themselves as the victims of the injustices inflicted by the 'Other' – either as victims of terror (Israelis) or as victims of uprooting (Palestinians)... Therefore, a much longer time scale is required for the general public to join the peace process bandwagon, endorsing the course of reconciliation with the former enemy. (2000, 108-109)

The Israeli and Palestinian narratives each tell a story about the formation of the modern state of Israel and the struggle between them throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Not surprisingly, these stories often contradict one another.

At the heart of narratives of struggle and response is collective memory. Such memory need not reflect truth; instead, it portrays a truth that most collective memories are tendentious, biased, selective, and appropriately distorted. The social reality of the present explains the past... It should come as no surprise, therefore, that the Palestinian and Israeli narratives examine past events from strikingly different perspectives and that the same occurrence bears different post hoc determinations. Each is "true" in terms of the requirements of collective memory.

Another significant point follows: These competing narratives deeply affect the way each side perceives and interprets the actions and intentions of the other, right to this day. These perceptions and interpretations, almost always negative, are in large measure responsible for the intractable nature of the conflict. This will be

demonstrated by showing the way the competing narratives affected specific events in the peace process in the 1990s.

This is significant because a strictly rational-choice approach to conflict resolution in this region may not be able to account for its ‘intractability.’ To illustrate, consider the following. The formulae for resolving the final status issues in the creation of a Palestinian state and a Palestinian-Israeli peace agreement have been well-known for some time now. All the “final-status issues” have been discussed and negotiated at such length that both sides know what concessions are required by each party.

Ending the bloodshed does not await the discovery of a hitherto secret diplomatic formula. The ingredients of a peace settlement are well-known and sat at the heart of the discussions at Camp David and Taba. The Mitchell Commission covered them in 2001. The Quartet’s Roadmap gave the international community’s endorsement to a political gazetteer for putting them in place in 2002. The Geneva initiative in 2003 demonstrated that there were still courageous men and women in Israel and Palestine who could find the path to peace in a way in which the two states could live harmoniously side by side in what, with shame if not irony, we still call the Holy Land. (Patten 2006, 211)

The difficulty is the *political infeasibility* of publicly acknowledging the need for these concessions, to say nothing of the difficulty of actually implementing them. Put another way, identifying the set of concessions necessary for a two-state solution is not difficult. But *due to the narratives*, the political adoption of the concessions is difficult in the extreme. The next two sections will reveal the highlights of the Israeli and Palestinian narratives, respectively.

### 3.3 *The Israeli Narrative*

Jewish tradition places the pinnacle of Israel's political power at approximately 1000 BCE, during the reigns of King David and his son Solomon. David's kingdom was composed of the land now known as Israel and Palestine, as well as most of what is now Lebanon and Syria, a third of Iraq, all of Jordan, the northwestern portion of Saudi Arabia and part of Egypt. "Eretz Israel," though vaguely defined, roughly corresponds to this territory.<sup>42</sup>

King Solomon surpassed his father in both affluence and influence, but soon after his death, Israel split into two kingdoms due to internal rivalry. Within 400 years, both had been conquered, and mostly exiled or enslaved. The Jewish people slowly returned to their land, but occupation by foreign powers would be a nearly constant presence until their dispersion by the Romans in 70 CE. From that time until the mid-twentieth century, the Jews were a nation without a homeland. They maintained their Jewish identity in the face of innumerable persecutions. As one century of persecution piled on another, Jews were collectively filled with a longing for a home of their own and a position of strength vis-à-vis those who would persecute them further.

(Cleveland 2004, 240)

These longings remained mostly dormant until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when pivotal figures such as Theodor Herzl and Chaim Weizmann took up the cause.

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<sup>42</sup> There remains great debate about the exact geographical boundaries of "Eretz Israel," but even rough estimates of the territory show why a return of Israeli rule over this entire territory would be politically "problematic."

Herzl's 1896 publication, *The Jewish State*, helped transform longings into action by creating the ideological foundation of political Zionism (Shindler 2008, 13-14). Jews immigrated in increasingly larger numbers from Russia and Europe to the land of Palestine, then a territory of the Ottoman Empire. Herzl founded the World Zionist Organization in 1897. It was committed to the realization of a national home for Jews in Palestine which was increasingly seen as the only solution to ever-growing persecution. "For a people without a land, a land without a people," was a famous phrase attributed to Herzl, even though it never appears in his writings. Adam Garfinkle attributes the invention of the phrase to Anthony Ashley-Cooper, the seventh Earl of Shaftsbury and its popularization to Israel Zangwill.<sup>43</sup> The 1890s witnessed the first "aliyah," (wave of immigration) to Palestine, that sought to make the dream a reality.

While immigrants struggled to carve out a life in Palestine, intellectuals like Chaim Weizmann sought diplomatic support among world leaders, particularly in Britain (Cleveland 2004, 243-244, Garfinkle 2000, 46). Their efforts resulted in the famous Balfour Declaration of 1917, a letter from the British Foreign Office to Lord Rothschild which stated,

His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of

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<sup>43</sup> See Garfinkle (1991).



existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.<sup>44</sup>

The declaration was followed by further activism and immigration. “The declaration, and subsequent achievements of the Zionist delegation at the Peace Conference of Versailles, put Zionism on the international map and attested to its historical vitality,” (Gelber 2007, 47).

World War I dramatically altered the future of Palestine as it passed from Ottoman rule to a British mandate at the end of the conflict. For the next quarter-century, the British would find themselves in the middle of an increasingly intense struggle, and would also find themselves as the targets of escalating animosity from both Arabs and Jews (Cleveland 2004, 244-261).

The growing number of Jews arriving in Palestine was alarming to the Arabs already living there. The changes in demographics are depicted in Table 3.1 below. The Jewish National Fund purchased large swaths of land in Palestine from absentee Arab landlords as well as landed Arab families living in Palestine itself (who were attracted by the relatively high prices that the Jews were willing to pay). The Arab peasants living on the land, the *fellahin*, (who had for centuries remained on the land regardless of changes in ownership), were forced to leave to make room for Jewish labor. The *fellahin* were increasingly landless and destitute. In their discontent, they

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<sup>44</sup> The problematic nature of the declaration is apparent. It is not clear how one could establish an area where one people-group already lives as the national home for a different people-group without prejudicing the civil and religious rights of the first group.

attacked Jews who had legally purchased the land (Cleveland 2004, 254-261).<sup>45</sup>

Shindler describes the process in the following way.

In the interwar years, the industrialization of Palestine and increased Jewish immigration under the British Mandate produced prosperity for both peoples. The Arab population in Palestine grew twice as swiftly as those of Syria and Lebanon. Tens of thousands of Arabs entered Palestine from surrounding countries increasing the Arab population by over 8 per cent. These dramatic changes disrupted feudal Palestinian Arab society and partially urbanized an essentially agricultural community. But when an Arab middle class emerged, it proved too weak to provide economic homes for the new Arab proletariat and those who had left – voluntarily or involuntarily – their rural villages. The disruption of their way of life with no suitable replacement with accompanying impoverishment and dispossession sowed the seeds of bitterness which grew into a radicalized Palestinian Arab nationalism. (Shindler 2008, 30-31)

**Table 3.1 Population of Palestine by Ethnic Group, 1931-1946. Source: McCarthy (1990); Reproduced in Cleveland (2004, 255).**

	Arab	%	Jewish	%	Other	%	Total
1931	864,806	82	174,139	16	18,269	2	1,057,601
1936	983,244	71	382,857	28	22,751	2	1,388,852
1941	1,123,168	68	489,830	30	26,758	2	1,639,756
1949	1,310,866	67	599,922	31	31,562	2	1,942,350

The violence, especially the riots of 1921, offered several “lessons” for the Jewish community in Palestine:

<sup>45</sup> See also Morris (2008, 10-16).

Separation made more sense than co-operation; segregation, not commingling with the Arabs, became a new focus leading to an exodus from Jaffa and the development of Tel Aviv; acquiring large swaths of contiguous territory took on a new urgency; and self-reliance, especially with regard to defense, became an article of faith...security was not only a necessity but a way of life. (Ross 2004, 18)

The riots in 1929 and throughout the 1930s only increased in intensity, hostility, and violence. In similar fashion, Ben-Ami writes:

The State of Israel was born in war and it has lived by the sword ever since. This has given the generals and the military way of thinking, at least since the last Arab Revolt in the late 1930s, a paramount role in the Jewish state and too central a function in defining both Israeli's war aims and her peace policies. (2006, 363)

The horror of the Holocaust began to unfold in the second half of the 1930s.<sup>46</sup>

As the atrocities became known, sentiment even outside the Zionist movement grew dramatically in support of the goal of a home for Jews in Palestine. The debate about whether the state of Israel could have come into being without the Holocaust continues to rage, but it is actually beside the point here. What is important to appreciate in order to understand this narrative is how the Holocaust absolutely cemented in the minds of Jews that every previous encounter with discrimination and persecution were not exceptional – rather, these were, and always would be, the norm. Therefore, Jews needed to move from a position of weakness to a position of strength. If before the 1930s any Jew had thought that a national home was simply a matter of convenience,

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<sup>46</sup> To be absolutely clear, this author fully believes the Holocaust did indeed occur. More than six million Jews were murdered in one of the most horrific episodes of human history. To discuss the Holocaust in the context of the Israeli narrative is not to imply that the events were fabricated, as some anti-Zionists have alleged. Rather, it is to show how this real event affects the overall narrative and how, in turn, the overall narrative affects the peace process. For detailed histories see, for example: Bergen (2003), Edelheit (1995).

the Holocaust forever altered that perspective. It was no longer just a matter of convenience; it was literally a matter of survival.

After Auschwitz, Jews had never felt so alone. At the least, then, the Holocaust finally convinced Jews and Jewish survivors the world over of the need for a Jewish state. It was Hitler who finally made Zionism a majority movement among world Jewry. (Garfinkle 2000, 51)

In September of 1947, the British announced that they would terminate their mandate in Palestine on May 15, 1948. According to the Israeli narrative, full scale intercommunal war broke out in Palestine as both sides sought to “create facts on the ground” before the May deadline. In response to the hostility, among Israelis

...a distinct mindset took root: create an unmistakable reality that would leave the Arabs no choice but to accept and to adjust to that which they opposed...Peace was therefore possible, but not until the Arabs adjusted to Israel as a fact that could not be undone...Unquestioned strength, creating facts, and self-reliance became part of the Israeli sociology. (Ross 2004, 19)

This mindset was only reinforced when, upon declaration of the state of Israel on May 15, 1948, neighboring Arab states immediately declared war. The notion that the Jews “only wanted to live in peace” and that “the moment we declared a state, the Arabs declared war,” is a common theme in the Israeli narrative.<sup>47</sup>

The Israeli narrative has an explanation for the origin of the refugee problem. According to the narrative, as violence was increasing between Arabs and Jews in the first few months of 1948, Palestinian elites began sending their families and their

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<sup>47</sup> See, for example, (Garfinkle 2000, 58) and (Ross 2004, 19-20). For other examples see: “AIPAC Briefing Book / Why Israel?” available at <http://www.aipac.org/publications>, or see the Israeli government’s official narrative on the website of their Ministry of Foreign Affairs: “History: The State of Israel,” at <http://www.mfa.gov/MFA>.

wealth to neighboring counties for safety and safekeeping. In a standard description of the story, Adam Garfinkle writes, “First slowly, then with increasing intensity, this flight wrecked the local Arab economy and contributed greatly to the growing flight of Arabs from Palestine” (Garfinkle 2000, 57). He notes that many Jewish communities were being attacked, inside and outside Palestine. “The Zionist Provisional National Council, under the direction of David Ben-Gurion, at first adopted a defensive posture against Arab attacks, which were aided by Arab volunteers from Syria and elsewhere prior to May 1948” (Garfinkle 2000, 58). As the narrative continues, it tells of the Zionist leadership wrestling with a decision as to what to do about the fleeing population. It is worth quoting at length:

On the one hand, all Arabs were seen as potential security threats. On the other hand, in hopes of eventually gaining peaceful relations with the Arabs, and wanting to avoid a politically damaging refugee issue after the war, Ben-Gurion pleaded with the Arab population to stay where they were, assuring them that no harm would befall them. Also, even if the Zionist leadership had wanted to drive out the Arabs against their will, it lacked the means to do so. There was no formal, official or accepted plan to do so, either...Nevertheless, again, what was going on locally, place by place, took on a dynamic that no one controlled...By May, when the state was proclaimed and the second war began, the refugee flight was in full force. By the time it was over in 1949, as the dust of war was settling, around 750,000 Arabs had left Palestine and about 165,000 had stayed. (Garfinkle 2000, 58)

Most Arabs still believe that Israel purposely did something unspeakable to the native Arab population. Most Israelis still believe that the Arabs would have done something unspeakable to them had they not successfully defended themselves in a war they had not wanted and they had not started. Moreover, it is clear to them that throughout the Mandate period the Jews were willing to compromise with the Arabs, but that the Arab political leadership refused all conciliation, all compromise, even all negotiation. And the Zionists accepted partition, while the Arabs did not. Given the continuing, unabating Arab hostility after the war, now compounded by the humiliation of military failure, Israel lost little time in planning a future without the refugees. Abandoned

lands became state lands, adding greatly to the land Jews had purchased through the Jewish National Fund during the Mandate times and the state lands it inherited. For a time, as noted, Israel offered to let 100,000 Arabs return, but the Arabs refused the offer. (Garfinkle 2000, 65)

The military victories in the 1948 *War of Independence* and the subsequent 1967 *Six Day War* created in Israel an atmosphere of nothing short of euphoria (Segev 2005, 437-454). For the first time in three millennia, Jews were able to operate from a position of strength instead of a position of weakness. These wars electrified the population and expanded the territory of the state of Israel far beyond the proposed UN partition plan of the mid-1940s. These victories reinforced the view that Israel must *always* be able to deal from a position of strength. In the opposite manner, the initial losses in the 1973 *Yom Kippur War* were a distressing reality check, but they too reinforced the notion that security would always be the number one concern of Israelis (Shindler 2008, 144-146, Garfinkle 2000, 218-225).

The United Nations General Assembly passed Resolution 3379 in 1975 which equated Zionism with racism. The last part of the resolution read:

[The General Assembly] taking note also of the Political Declaration and Strategy to Strengthen International Peace and Security and to Intensify Solidarity and Mutual Assistance among Non-Aligned Countries, adopted at the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries held at Lima from 25 to 30 August 1975, which most severely condemned Zionism as a threat to world peace and security and called upon all countries to oppose this racist and imperialist ideology, Determines that Zionism is a form of racism and racial discrimination.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> From: "Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination," United Nations General Assembly Resolution 3379, UN GAOR, 30<sup>th</sup> Session, 2400<sup>th</sup> Plenary Meeting, 10 November 1975.

In the Israeli narrative, the resolution was yet another manifestation of anti-Semitism and generalized hatred toward Jews. Chaim Herzog, the Israeli Ambassador to the United Nations at that time, addressed the General Assembly in light of the resolution and closed as follows:

The vote of each delegation will record in history its country's stand on anti-Semitic racism and anti-Judaism. You yourselves bear the responsibility for your stand before history, for as such will you be viewed in history. We, the Jewish people, will not forget...For us, the Jewish people, this resolution based on hatred, falsehood and arrogance, is devoid of any moral or legal value. (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1975)

Israelis felt this was also an indicator of the rising influence of Arab states over the international community, a result, no doubt, of the expanding power of OPEC. The resolution remained in place until 1991 when it was removed as a precondition for Israel's participation in the Madrid Peace Conference (Baker 1999, 201). Regardless of its removal, Israel has remained aloof from the United Nations ever since. As will be shown later, this had a direct impact on Israel's lack of receptivity of the Quartet since the United Nations was one of the four members.

Egyptian President Anwar Sadat recognized the value of a relationship with Israel and broke ranks with his fellow Arab in 1977 by personally visiting Jerusalem and speaking before the Knesset. His overture led to the Camp David Accords in 1978 and the Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty of 1979.<sup>49</sup> This offered hope to Israelis that neighboring Arab states might accept Israel's existence as legitimate after all.

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<sup>49</sup> See, for example, Quandt (1986).

However, Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, as well as in neighboring countries, remained unmoved by Sadat's overture.

The Palestine Liberation Organization, operating from Lebanon, became a serious problem for Israel in the early 1980s.<sup>50</sup> The PLO had been forced from Jordan in 1970 but had reestablished itself in Beirut (Sela and Ma'oz 1997). The presence of large numbers of Palestinian refugees and PLO leaders was a major contributing factor to the outbreak of the Lebanese Civil War in 1975. The PLO took advantage of the chaos and launched terrorist attacks on Israel from its strategic location. The government of Lebanon was incapable of exercising control over its territory, so in 1982, in an effort to stop those attacks, Israel invaded Lebanon. There were several "unfortunate incidents" that took place as a result of tensions between Palestinians and Lebanese Phalangists.<sup>51</sup> Israeli Defense Forces remained in Lebanon longer than originally planned, but the terrorist attacks from Lebanese territory eventually ceased.

In 1987, Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza launched a terror campaign against the citizens of Israel (Garfinkle 2000, 247-258). Israel responded with the minimum force necessary to quell riots and break up terrorist organizations. Although some collateral damage did occur to civilians and a few homes were demolished in order to discourage the harboring of terrorists, all in all, the campaign was handled in a

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<sup>50</sup> The formation of the PLO is discussed in the next section.

<sup>51</sup> These will be discussed in the next section.



manner unlike any Arab government would have handled it if a similar situation had occurred in their nation.

Saddam Hussein's Iraqi army invaded its neighbor Kuwait in 1991. In spite of the fact that Israel did not take part in the retaliatory campaign led by the United States, Iraq launched SCUD missiles against unarmed Israeli population centers. It was the first time Tel Aviv was struck in the entire Arab-Israeli conflict.<sup>52</sup> Even in the face of this flagrant provocation, Israel showed great restraint and remained out of the war.

### *3.4 The Arab and Palestinian Narratives*

The purpose of exploring the Israeli and Arab narratives is to reveal some of the contributing causes of multiparty mediation failure in the case of the Quartet. It became apparent through the interview process that many key actors were sympathetic toward one narrative or the other but not toward both. This will be explored more deeply in chapters four and five. For now, the narratives themselves are the focus.

The Arab and Palestinian narratives tell a story of the founding of the modern state of Israel that is quite different from the Israeli narrative. As described above, there are multiple narratives and sub-narratives under the general heading of the "Arab narrative," just as there are multiple narratives under the heading, "the Israeli narrative." Archeologists use the concept of *multivocality* to capture "multiple

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<sup>52</sup> BBC News, "On this Day," 18 January, 1991.

interpretations of the past,” (Habu, Fawcett, and Matsunaga 2009). One of the strongest proponents of multivocality is Ian Hodder who advocates listening to multiple narratives, particularly those that were previously silenced or marginalized, to arrive at better understandings of otherwise colonized, historical accounts (Hodder 2009). This section attempts to explicate a generalized Arab narrative and Palestinian sub-narrative that are less familiar to American audiences. As a convention, the term *Arab narrative* will be used unless there are specific departures between it and the more focused Palestinian narrative.<sup>53</sup>

A major theme in the broader Arab narrative is betrayal by western powers. The betrayals were epitomized by the events surrounding World War I and the contradictory arrangements in the McMahon-Hussein Correspondence, the Sykes-Picot Agreement, and the Balfour Declaration.<sup>54</sup> Instead of independence and unification for Arabs in exchange for their uprising against the Ottoman Turks (as they believed was promised to them in the McMahon-Hussein correspondence), Arabs received territorial division and further subjugation. These events shaped the modern Arab narrative of “broken promises, betrayal, and efforts to deny the Arabs their rightful destiny” (Ross 2004, 31). Outsiders imposed borders, were free to break their promises, and were never held accountable. “Consequently, defying outsiders and

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<sup>53</sup> The departures between the Arab and Palestinian narratives increased significantly in the 1960s after the founding of the PLO and especially after the defeat of the Arab armies in the 1967 Six Day War.

<sup>54</sup> The three embodied significantly contradictory British policy positions toward Arabs. Detailed discussions of each can be found in (Cleveland 2004, 158, 163, and 243 respectively)

standing up to those who inflict humiliation have come to be embedded in the broader psychology of the Arab world” (Ross 2004, 33).

A continuous challenge to the Arab cause has been a lack of unity among Arab leaders. Until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Arabs in Palestine did not draw their primary identity as “Palestinians” but rather as members of their respective families and tribes. Rivalries among these groups were commonplace. Faced with the common threat of Jewish immigration, the disparate groups began to come together to fight a common enemy, but competition and discord was still frequent among them. Even though the founders of Israel came from many nations and diverse cultural backgrounds, they were nonetheless able to coalesce around a relatively unifying ideology: Zionism. This proved to be quite advantageous. For the Arabs in Palestine at the beginning of the twentieth century, there was no corresponding ideology to unite them.

The Arab narrative tells a different story regarding the transfer of land from Arabs to Jews in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In order to fulfill the vision of Zionism, Jewish organizations set about the task of purchasing as much land as possible from Arab land owners. The new owners would then evict any Arab tenant farmers from the land, regardless of how long their families (usually measured in centuries) had lived on and worked the land. This was a dramatic shift from centuries of practice. “Traditionally, when ownership of a plot of land, or even a whole village, changed hands, this did not mean that the farmers or villagers had to move,” (Stein

1984). Labor Zionism insisted that Jewish land be worked only by Jewish farmers for a very specific reason: it would accelerate the process of creating a Jewish state. Even if individual Jews were sympathetic toward the Arabs, the Arabs were not allowed to remain.

Palestine was an agricultural society and the new landlord would need the tenants to continue cultivating his lands. But with the advent of Zionism all this changed. [Yossef] Weitz personally visited the newly purchased plot of land...and encouraged the new Jewish owners to throw out the local tenants, even if the owner had no use for the entire piece of land. (Stein 1984)

As more and more tenant farmers were evicted from the land that Jews purchased from Arabs, they became a visible manifestation of the threat to Arab existence. A sufficient number of Jews were outspoken about their hopes to take over all of Palestine that their intentions became well-known among the Arab population. The official Jewish story was that they were purchasing plots of land by legal means. However, "It mattered little to the Arabs of Palestine that the land had been purchased by the Jews from Arab landowners. What mattered was that Arabs were being dispossessed, and that the Jewish presence was growing at the expense of the Arabs," (Ross 2004, 33).

Exacerbating this problem was a British taxation system which required cash payments, unlike the Ottomans who had accepted payment in kind. Arabs owning small parcels of land were forced to borrow money at high interest to pay the taxes and often ended up defaulting on the loans. They were then forced to sell the land either directly to the Jewish National Fund, or indirectly to Jewish interests via the

larger land owning Arab families. The net result was a rapid transfer of the small amount of arable land available in Palestine and a growing displaced population of unemployed Arab peasants.

Alienated from their own political elite, who seemed to profit from their plight; from the British, who appeared unwilling to prevent their expulsion from the land; and from the Zionists, who were perceived to be at the root of their problems, they expressed their discontent in outbreaks of violence against all three parties. (Cleveland 2004, 256)

Several factors related to the Arab narrative combined to leave the Arabs in Palestine in an inferior position vis-à-vis the Jewish settlers. One factor was an insistence on “principle over practicality.” The Arabs in Palestine believed that if they capitulated to pragmatism, they would surrender the moral force of their claims. This was related to the second factor: a general belief that outsiders would come to their defense. The Arabs of Palestine expected the international community or other Arab states to fight for their cause and right the wrongs that had been inflicted on them. Unfortunately, they were disappointed time after time (Hadawi 1991, 78, 84).

A third factor that exacerbated the overall situation was the common belief that once Arab armies or the international community came to the aid of the Palestinians, the Jewish immigrants could be easily defeated. The combination of these three factors lulled the Arabs of Palestine into inaction. They believed the injustices inflicted by the Jews on the Arabs of Palestine were plain to see; the Arab states or the international community would recognize these injustices and come to their aid; the Jews in

Palestine would be forced to return the land to Palestinian Arabs, or, if they refused, they would be defeated militarily by the Arab states. Because of these threats, there was no reason to either create their own facts on the ground, nor to compromise or even negotiate with the Jews. This posture of relative inaction enabled more and more facts to be created on the ground in favor of the Jewish settlers.

It should be noted that, in general, Arabs did not deny the horrific injustices inflicted on the Jews during World War II. Arabs just did not believe that they should pay for it. The flood of evictions of tenant farmers created a growing sense of injustice: Palestinians were paying for the crimes of Europeans. “Make the enemy and the oppressor pay...It is the Christian Germans who stole their homes and lives,” (Ross 2004, 35). This sense of injustice, combined with the normal competition that existed between tribes, made compromise with the Jews a virtual impossibility.

During the months between September 1947, when Britain announced that it would leave Palestine, and May 1948, when Israel declared its statehood, thousands of Palestinians were forced from their homes and off their lands, homes and lands which had been in their families for generations. By December of 1948, 750,000 Arabs had fled. This is absolutely central to the Arab narrative: Unlike the Holocaust, this was not a case of genocide. But, according to the Arab narrative, *it was clearly a case of ethnic cleansing*.<sup>55</sup> This perceived injustice inflicted on the Palestinians explains Arab

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<sup>55</sup> Petrovic (1994) defines “ethnic cleansing” as: “a well-defined policy of a particular group of persons to systematically eliminate another group from a given territory, often based on economic principles, or nationalist claims to the land. Such a policy often involves violence and is very often connected with military operations.”

refusal to accept any compromise solutions. In the Arab narrative, compromise with the Jews meant ignoring the injustice done to the Palestinians. This would be considered selling them out, multiplying the injustice already inflicted on them. “The Islamic movements’ position, as well as that of individual scholars, are not, and cannot be, against peace. It is treaties that *consecrate injustice* that they oppose. Justice remains the prerequisite for peace” (Abu Sway 2002, 86, emphasis added).

All the elements of Petrovic’s definition of ethnic cleansing were present in this case: a well-defined policy of one group removing another group from a certain territory, nationalist claims, and violence. The Irgun, the Hagana, and the Stern Gang all employed acts of violence to terrorize Palestinian Arabs into leaving their land. The infamous *Plan Dalet* “provided for the conquest and permanent occupation, or leveling, of Arab villages and towns” (Morris 1987, 63). One of the more infamous examples occurred at the village of Deir Yasin.

During the course of the intercommunal war, the Irgun perpetrated one of its most notorious acts: It massacred the 250 civilian inhabitants of the village of Deir Yasin near Jerusalem. News of the massacre spread among the Arab population and contributed to the panic that made so many flee their homes. (Cleveland 2004, 266)

They fled their homes expecting to return in weeks or months. Sixty years later, they and their descendants were still waiting. Many went to refugee camps in neighboring Arab countries, but the camps, “were designed to keep the cause of Palestine alive, not to resolve their problem. While the Palestinians in them lived with the hope of

returning to their homes, their Arab hosts did very little for them – politically, economically, or socially” (Ross 2004, 36). According to the Arab narrative, the refugees are living testimony to the ethnic cleansing campaigns of 1947-1949.

The Arab narrative offers a significantly different explanation of the causes of the first Arab-Israeli war in 1948. The narrative explains that the Arab states attacked Israel not out of some sense of anti-Semitism but rather because of the grave injustices that were being inflicted on the Arabs in Palestine along with the fact that the international community was doing nothing about it (Hadawi 1991, 92). They attacked on May 15<sup>th</sup> not because Israel declared itself a state, but because the British heretofore had prevented the Arab states from intervening on behalf of the Arabs in Palestine. It was the departure of the British, more than the declaration of the state of Israel, that motivated the Arab states to attack.

Not surprisingly, the 1967 war had the opposite effect on Arabs that it had on Israelis. The humiliating defeat essentially ended both the reign of Nasser and the popularity of the Pan-Arab movement. However, it did give rise to the notion among Palestinians that they could no longer hope for outsiders to come to their defense. They would have to fight for themselves. The Palestine Liberation Organization had been formed only three years earlier and now it took on a heightened significance as a unifying voice for the Palestinian people.

In March of 1968, Palestinian fighters and Jordanian army regulars engaged Israeli forces who had crossed the Jordan River to attack al-Fatah headquarters in the



town of Karameh. There were high casualties on all sides, but eventually the Israeli troops were forced to retreat by artillery bombardment. Even though the artillery came from the Jordanian army, the Palestinian fighters, who stood their ground until the Israelis retreated, were considered heroes. “It gave them stature; it gave them an identity; it gave them a reason to be respected,” (Ross 2004, 37). The leader of those fighters was Yasser Arafat and this event helped propel him to the head of the PLO in 1969. Part of his appeal among Palestinians was that he was not concerned about Arabs in general; instead, his sole purpose was to fight for the cause of the Palestinians who felt abandoned by the Arab states. This enabled him to pull the various factions together in a semi-cohesive organization. Keeping them together would prove extremely difficult and would necessitate a skillful use of the Arab narrative.

The opening of the 1973 war electrified Arabs in general and Palestinians in particular. Even though the Arab states eventually lost the war, the initial victories helped break the mystique of Israeli invincibility and Arab incompetence. However, Arab unity was still not forthcoming.

Hopes for Arab leverage soared after the 1973 war, given its success on the battlefield and the use of the oil weapon. But Arab leverage required real unity, and what became increasingly apparent was that each Arab country – while obliged to speak the idiom of Arab unity – pursued and protected its own interests. (Ross 2004, 41)

According to the Arab narrative, the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon was an outrageous, illegal, and immoral provocation conducted with the complicity of the

United States. Smith argues that a peace proposal by Crown Prince Fahd of Saudi Arabia in August, 1981, presented a threat to Prime Minister Begin's designs to "consolidate his control over the entire West Bank." Therefore, Begin and his defense minister, Ariel Sharon, began planning an invasion of Lebanon with two goals in mind: Derail any possibilities of the creation of a Palestinian state; and destroy the leadership of the PLO (Smith 2007, 379). Sharon presented plans to American Secretary of State Alexander Haig in May, 1982.

Haig again informed Sharon that such an undertaking required a major provocation, one acceptable to the international community...The catalyst for the Israeli invasion of Lebanon came with the attempted assassination of the Israeli ambassador in London on June 3...They had their excuse and ordered Israeli jets to attack West Beirut, strikes that resulted in over a hundred casualties. These air attacks were intended to cause PLO gunners to shell northern Israel, thus providing the justification to invade. They succeeded. (Smith 2007, 380)

Israel invaded Lebanon on 6 June 1982. The military action was successful in the sense that the PLO was removed from Israel's northern border. However, thousands of Lebanese civilians were killed. The city of Beirut was placed under siege. In the refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila, over 1000 civilians were massacred. The killings were carried out by Lebanese Maronite Phalangists and not the IDF, just as the Israelis claim. But according to the Arab narrative, what Israelis fail to mention, or choose to ignore, is that the area was under the control of the invading Israeli Defense Forces and that the IDF command had arranged for the Phalangists to be transported to the area surrounding the camps (Smith 2007, 382).

Instead of protecting the civilians as it claimed it was doing, the Israeli military allowed units of the Phalange to enter the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila and to massacre over 1,000 men, women, and children who had been left unprotected by the PLO evacuation...the government created a board of inquiry, the Kahan Commission, to investigate the events at Sabra and Shatila. The commission found that Israeli officials, both civilian and military, were indirectly responsible for the massacres. Defense Minister Sharon's role was singled out, and he was forced to resign his portfolio. The political career of Prime Minister Begin was destroyed by the Lebanon war. (Cleveland 2004, 388)

PLO leadership was displaced once again, this time to Tunis. It struggled, mostly unsuccessfully, to regain influence over the plight of the Palestinian people. Then in 1987, events completely out of its control set in motion a series of actions that gave the PLO the opportunity to become the official representatives of Palestinians everywhere.

The first intifada erupted as a result of years of humiliation and frustration. It was not a centrally-controlled, well-coordinated terrorist campaign, as the Israeli narrative alleges. Rather, it was a widespread, spontaneous uprising of the general Palestinian public (Ashrawi 1996, 36-43). Average Palestinians engaged in public demonstrations and acts of civil disobedience that often pitted stone-throwing youths against heavily armed Israeli soldiers, armored personnel carriers, and tanks.

What distinguished the intifada from past resistance efforts was not the increasingly draconian Israeli measures but the level of inclusion of nearly all sectors of Palestinian society and the media's capturing the horrifying images of their everyday life and the heroic struggle of an unarmed population against a vicious army. (Farsoun and Aruri 2006, 225)

Arafat attempted to maneuver the PLO into a position of leadership of the intifada and the Palestinians. He strengthened ties between the external PLO

leadership and the internal Palestinian resistance movement. In a gesture to the international community, he made a huge concession in the fall of 1988 by changing the PLO's positions on Israel and terrorism. Arafat announced that the PLO accepted Israel's right to exist and he renounced the use of terrorism. He embraced UN Resolutions 242 and 338 as the basis for negotiations. Finally, he proclaimed a Palestinian state in Gaza and the West Bank with East Jerusalem as its capitol by issuing a Palestinian Declaration of Independence (Smith 2007, 424-425, 448-449).

The Palestinian Declaration, however, lacked one critical necessity that had been obtained for the Israeli Declaration of Independence 40 years prior: the backing of the United States. From the perspective of the Arab narrative, it was Israel's resistance to Arafat's compromises, combined with support for Israel's position by the US Congress that derailed Arafat's overtures and kept the Palestinian Declaration of Independence a reality on paper only. Feeling betrayed by the United States, Arafat made his ill-fated decision to back Sadaam Hussein in the 1991 Persian Gulf War (Smith 2007, 426-427). It was not until the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993 that the PLO would finally receive its official recognition as the representative of the Palestinian people.

Regarding a potential solution to the conflict, the Arab narrative asks, "Why does it make sense for the Jew to "return" after thousands of years, and not the Palestinian who is still alive and literally holds the keys of her home from which she was deported in 1948?" (Abu Sway 2002, 80).

A solution, in order to be legitimate, should undo the injustice that befell the Palestinian people. If and only if the Palestinian individual is recognized and recategorized as a human being entitled to all the rights that should be enjoyed by humanity, we might see a light at the end of the tunnel. (Abu Sway 2002, 80)

Another way of understanding the Arab narrative is to consider not the people of Palestine, but the land. Islamic jurisprudence considers the land of Palestine an Islamic endowment or “*waqf*.”

Once a piece of land or property is declared *waqf*, not even the person who used to own it can change its legal status...Islamic literature and rhetoric is filled with references to Palestine as an Islamic trust or endowment. These references contribute to the Islamist’s psyche that rejects the Oslo process, because it means that part of this *waqf* will be passed, or rather has already, to non-Muslim hands, thereby changing its legal status. (Abu Sway 2002, 84-85)

Consider the changes in the amount of land controlled by Jews or the state of Israel over time. In 1946, after approximately 50 years of concerted effort, Jews owned a little over six percent of the total land area of Palestine. In spite of this low percentage of holdings, the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) recommended a partition plan, adopted by the General Assembly in 1947, that allotted 56 percent of the land area to the Jews and only 44 percent to the Arabs (in spite of the fact that Arabs still made up two-thirds of the total population and owned more than 93% of the land).<sup>56</sup> Hence the total rejection of the partition plan by the Arab community.

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<sup>56</sup> See the “United Nations Special Committee on Palestine: Report to the General Assembly, Volume 1,” UN GAOR, A/364, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, 3 September 1947.

Israel accepted the plan and increased its holdings from six to 56 percent of the total area overnight. By the end of the war in 1949, the new state of Israel had accumulated another 23 percent of the territory, bringing their total to 78 percent, and had exiled 750,000 native Palestinians. By the end of the Six-Day War in 1967, Israel had occupied the remaining 22 percent and soon annexed Jerusalem. The ongoing, government-approved expansion of settlements in the West Bank acts as tangible confirmation to those who embrace the Arab narrative that the state of Israel is still not finished, regardless of the continuing injustice inflicted on the Palestinian people.

### *3.5 Contrasts in the Narratives*

Differences in narratives are significant for multiparty mediation. If the mediators in a multiparty mediation body are as divergent in their understanding (or embrace) of the narratives as are the parties to the conflict, then resolution of the conflict by the mediators is unlikely. This is because the strengths that multiparty mediation would otherwise have brought to the negotiation are effectively neutered. Table 3.2 lists the strengths of multiparty mediation as identified by Crocker, Hampson and Aall (2001c).

**Table 3.2 Multiparty Mediation Strengths and Weaknesses, (Crocker, Hampson, and Aall 2001c).**

<b><u>Strengths</u></b>	Leverage
	Ability to Restructure Relationships
	Ability to Gain Entry to Mediation
	Comparative Advantage of Different Mediators
	Ability to Open New Channels
	Ability to Break Logjams
<b><u>Weaknesses</u></b>	Lack of a Common Vision
	Potential for Mixed Signals
	Difficulty of Communication and Coordination
	Propensity of Conflicting Parties to “Forum Shop”
	Possibility of Mediators Dropping the Ball
	Temptation to Pass the Buck

The primary strength of multiparty mediation is leverage.<sup>57</sup> However, if the mediators are not aligned with each other, then the leverage of the mediators is reduced. If the mediators are, in fact, opposed to one another, then any potential leverage may be cancelled altogether.

Here is another way to view the same idea. If there is a large asymmetry between the conflicting parties, and the narrative of the stronger party aims to maintain the asymmetry, then the narrative is here defined as a “status quo narrative.”

<sup>57</sup> Leverage enables or increases four of the remaining strengths, the abilities to: restructure relationships, gain entry, open new channels, and break logjams.

If additionally there is asymmetry among the mediators, and the strongest of the mediators embraces the status quo narrative, then the multiparty mediation body will not have meaningful leverage over the conflicting parties.

This was largely true in the case of the Quartet. There is a large power asymmetry between Israel and the Palestinians. The Israeli narrative supports the maintenance of the asymmetry.<sup>58</sup> Within the Quartet, the United States is the dominant power and Bush Administration policy was sympathetic to the Israeli narrative. UN and EU policy were more sympathetic to the Arab narrative. Any potential leverage the Quartet may have had in moving the conflicting parties toward resolution was therefore, in effect, cancelled. Thus the introduction of the Quartet only served to reinforce the existing impasse.

The striking differences in the narratives of both sides are generally not created by complete fabrications, but rather by selective omissions. Both narratives contain legitimate grievances, but both simultaneously omit glaring injustices done by one side to the other. A summary of the differences in the narratives shows this to be the case.<sup>59</sup> The Arab narrative includes the displacement of tenant farmers from the 1890s to the 1940s but generally fails to acknowledge that most land transfers were legal property sales. The Israeli narrative includes the Arab revolts in the 1920s and 1930s, but generally fails to acknowledge that the revolts were spurred by Jewish practices of

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<sup>58</sup> This is reflected in the Israeli mantra, “Security above all else”.

<sup>59</sup> In this summary, the differences in the narratives are simplified for the sake of space, but greater detail does not appreciably change the manner in which the core issues affect the conflict today.



tenant farmer dispossession. Refusal to acknowledge these omissions and many others like them, on the part of both parties, exacerbates the intractability of the conflict.

The primary dissonance between the narratives centers on the events from 1947-1949. The traditional Israeli narrative maintains that 750,000 Palestinians left their homes voluntarily and that once they left, there were not entitled to return. The Arab narrative maintains that 750,000 Palestinians were ethnically cleansed and that they are clearly entitled to their homeland. Entitlement to the land lies at the heart of all the core “final status” issues: security, borders, settlements, refugees, and Jerusalem.

Interviews with key officials made it clear that different mediators in the multiparty mediation body either had different understandings or different sympathies for the Israeli and Arab narratives. The relevant point for members of the Quartet, or anyone else attempting to engage in the peace process, is that negotiators must understand and appreciate *both* narratives. They must understand that any peace proposal is going to be viewed and interpreted differently by each side in the conflict. The key to understanding, and possibly even predicting, those views and interpretations, is to understand and appreciate the differences and nuances in the two narratives. The narratives, and the dissonance between them, were enormously important factors in each of the major events of the peace process throughout the 1990s.

### 3.6 Major Events in the Peace Process, 1991-2000

The formation of the Quartet did not occur in a vacuum. The peace process of the 1990s formed the immediate historical, political, and diplomatic context. Here, then, are the major events that occurred in the decade prior to the Quartet's formation.

**Table 3.3 Major Events in the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process, 1991-2002.**

Year	Event
1991	Madrid Conference – Restart Talks
1993	Oslo Accords – First Israel-PA direct talks; Declaration of Principles
1994	Jordan-Israel Peace Treaty
1995	Taba (Oslo II) – Interim Agreement on West Bank and Gaza Strip
1997	Hebron Agreement – IDF withdrawal
1998	Wye River Memo – Plan to implement Interim Agreement of 1995
1999	Sharm el-Sheikh Memo – Implementation of Taba “and others since 1993”
2000	Camp David Summit – unsuccessful attempt at final status agreement
2000	Second Intifada Begins

#### 3.6.1 The Madrid Peace Conference, 1991

Zartman analyzes the conditions leading to the Madrid Conference in terms of ripeness (Zartman 1997b, 196-198). He found that the initiation of the talks was the result not of a mutually hurting stalemate (a key component of his definition of

ripeness)<sup>60</sup> but rather a mutually enticing opportunity. At the end of the Gulf War, the United States found itself in an unprecedented position internationally (Baker 1999). The Gulf War was as stunning a military success as it was a thorough diplomatic triumph. The collapse of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s radically altered the global balance of power. With the fears of the Cold War removed from the strategic equation, the United States was free to engage Iraq. It sought the favor of other Arab states by promising to engage in the Israeli-Palestinian issue after the war. The United States ejected Sadaam Hussein from Kuwait, but then it stopped short of invading the rest of Iraq, just as it had promised. This gave the US administration substantial credibility in the Arab world and the rest of the international community (Miller 2008, 199). Former Secretary of State James Baker noted, “American credibility in the region and internationally was higher than at any time since the end of World War II. I believed it was a historic opportunity,” (Baker 1999, 186).

Months of intense shuttle diplomacy on the part of Secretary Baker produced an unprecedented event: Israelis and Palestinians sat down together for official talks. In light of the competing narratives, this was truly extraordinary. Up to this point, the two narratives, in effect, forbid the acknowledgement of the other side. At Madrid, a long-standing taboo against direct negotiations was finally broken and it paved the way for the Oslo process. Miller stresses the significance of this accomplishment. “We forget – procedural breakthrough or not – that Madrid came out of an environment in

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<sup>60</sup> Zartman defines “ripeness” as: “A situation characterized by a mutually hurting stalemate (MHS), optimally reinforced by an impending or narrowly avoided catastrophe to produce a deadlock and a deadline, plus the presence of valid spokesmen for the parties and the perception of each party that a way out is present,” (1997b, 196).

which the sides had no contact, no trust, no agreed-upon anything. In fact, they were openly hostile and disdainful,” (2008, 201).

Although Israelis were willing to sit down with Palestinians, they refused to meet with any members of the Palestine Liberation Organization. “The Palestinian delegation was a West Bank group, connected to the PLO, but direct representation by the PLO and recognition of it was blocked by Israel and the US,” (Zartman 1997b, 198). This introduced an odd set of circumstances where every member of the Palestinian delegation had to be vetted by the Israeli government. Many candidates were barred from participation and the Conference nearly derailed on multiple occasions before it even convened. In the event, it was obvious to all that the “non-PLO” Palestinian delegation, technically part of the Jordanian delegation, was in constant contact with the PLO itself. The delegation followed the dictates of the PLO, a source of great irritation for the Israelis. In light of the challenge of the competing narratives, Baker rightly assessed that the primary value of the conference was that it occurred at all (Baker 2006, 304).

Zartman assesses Madrid thus: “The Madrid process was begun out of *contrived ripeness*, a mutually enticing opportunity,” (1997b, 211 emphasis added). He argues that although Palestinians were in a hurting stalemate, Israelis clearly were not. “Israel was not hurting at all, except under the pressure exerted by the US,” (1997b, 196). This importantly demonstrates that the US can, in fact, induce ripeness

in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process if it chooses to do so.<sup>61</sup> One would surmise then, that if the US were aligned with the EU, the UN, and Russia, then the Quartet could certainly induce ripeness as well.

### 3.6.2 The Oslo Accords, 1993

The Madrid Conference initiated a series of official negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians. However, the narratives quickly began to bog down the process and within two years, the “track one” process was at a standstill (Abbas 1995, 115, Ross 2004, 103). In order to overcome the inertia, Terje Rød-Larsen, a Norwegian academic, began to pave the way for unofficial, back-channel communication between the parties (Pruitt, Bercovitch, and Zartman 1997, 178). These efforts resulted in another ground-breaking achievement: the Declaration of Principles.<sup>62</sup>

The Declaration of Principles was based on the results of the Madrid Conference. The Declaration was preceded by the exchange of three letters of

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<sup>61</sup> This is not to argue that the US or the Quartet would be able to induce ripeness under *any* circumstances. Some conditions could render any mediator efforts completely ineffective. But this case does demonstrate that leverage is not just a conceptual tool. At a minimum, this case shows that leverage can bring conflicting parties to the negotiating table who would not chose to do so on their own.

<sup>62</sup> See Appendix E, Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements.

recognition.<sup>63</sup> Kelman argues, “In my view, the most important feature of the Oslo accord was the exchange of letters of mutual recognition between the PLO and the State of Israel,” (1997, 193). The accord was sealed by an official signing ceremony and the handshake of Yitzak Rabin and Yasser Arafat at the White House on 13 November. The DOP was to guide negotiations for a five-year period culminating in an independent Palestinian state. The principles set the framework for those negotiations. The accords included several significant ‘firsts:’ Official, public recognition by the Palestine Liberation Organization of the right of the state of Israel to exist; public repudiation of terrorism by the PLO; official, public recognition by the state of Israel of the PLO as the official representative of the Palestinian people; and, the creation of the Palestinian Authority as the official body of governance over the Palestinians.<sup>64</sup>

These ‘firsts’ hailed significant departures from both narratives, but there followed an unintended side effect: the core of both narratives intensified. The incremental approach had been a deliberate choice of strategy.

What made it possible for Israel to accept this accord was the distinction between the interim and the final stage. Although the logic of the accord clearly implied the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, the Israeli decision makers were not ready to commit themselves at the outset to such an outcome. They wanted a gradual process, which would demonstrate to the Israeli public – and indeed to themselves – that relinquishing control to the Palestinians did not threaten Israel’s security. (Kelman 1997, 193)

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<sup>63</sup> See Appendix D, Israel-PLO Mutual Recognition Letters, 1993.

<sup>64</sup> See Appendices D and E.

There is an obvious linkage between the narratives and the so-called “final status issues” of Jerusalem, refugees, borders, settlements and security. Said another way, these issues are “final status” because the narratives frame them as crucial, “non-negotiable” to each side. Jerusalem is sacred to the religious traditions of both Judaism and Islam. Therefore, any ‘division’ of the city is anathema to both. The fate of Palestinian refugees is perhaps the central issue of the Arab narrative. But in Israel, acknowledgement of a right of return for the refugees is seen as a security threat. It would alter the demographics of the state such that Israel would lose its “Jewish character.” Official agreement on specific borders would solidify the abandonment of certain existential goals for portions of both parties. To the far political right in Israel,<sup>65</sup> it would signify the abandonment of the pursuit of the full Zionist vision of governing all of Eretz Israel. To the far right in the Palestinian Territories,<sup>66</sup> agreement on specific borders would signify the abandonment of the goal of the destruction of Israel and the re-taking of the land.

These are examples of an unfortunate phenomenon that has occurred as the peace process has moved forward (even if in fits and starts). As concessions are made on peripheral issues, extremists on both sides, and sometimes semi-moderates, tend to grasp *more tightly* to the remaining core issues. Initial concessions portend the threat of further concessions which causes elements within the parties to become more

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<sup>65</sup> Examples are Shas , Yisrael Beiteinu, the National Religious Party, and the Nation Union (of Ahi, Moledet, and Tkuma).

<sup>66</sup> Examples are Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

entrenched rather than less so. This is exacerbated by a zero-sum bargaining strategy where both parties save concessions as long as possible for use as bargaining chips in final rounds of negotiations.<sup>67</sup> This is why many moderates on both sides of the conflict increasingly speak of a need to abandon incrementalism and settle all the remaining issues simultaneously.<sup>68</sup> In sum, incremental progress was supposed to create momentum toward final settlement. Instead, the narratives tend to turn progress on peripheral issues into occasion for further entrenchment on core issues.

This is a significant consideration for multiparty mediation in general and the Quartet in particular. If the collective goal of a multiparty mediation body is a comprehensive peace accord, and the multiparty mediation body sees leverage as its primary asset, then it must consider whether its leverage is better used in pursuit of an incrementalist or final-status, “all-in” approach. The theoretical advantage of incrementalism is that it allows confidence to grow between the conflicting parties before the most difficult issues are addressed. The reality of the incrementalist approach, however, is that it causes deeper entrenchment on core issues. This suggests that a final-status approach may be more advantageous for the Quartet.

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<sup>67</sup> For an overview of game theory, see Powell (2002) or Tsebelis (1990). For bargaining strategies, see Lebow (1996, 55-134).

<sup>68</sup> As noted earlier, the formulae for such a solution are known. All the final status issues have been discussed at such length that both sides know where the concessions will take them. The difficulty is the political achievement of these concessions. Put another way, finding the set of concessions necessary for a two-state solution is not difficult. But due to the narratives, the political adoption of the concessions is difficult in the extreme.



### 3.6.3 The Jordan-Israel Peace Treaty, 1994

Prior to 1994, Egypt was the only Arab state to have signed a peace treaty with Israel. Despite the lack of an official treaty, King Hussein of Jordan had always been the most moderate Arab leader in the Middle East, and many secret attempts had been made at reaching an agreement. The Oslo Accords paved the diplomatic path for the treaty between Israel and Jordan which was signed 26 October 1994 (Cleveland 2004, 505). The state of war between them was ended. Diplomatic relations were normalized. The border between the two countries was settled and crossing points were established. Trade relations became official, security arrangements were made, and frameworks were established to deal with the remaining issues of Jerusalem, refugees, and water (Ross 2004, 181-187).

The Israel-Jordan peace was offensive to the Arab narrative. Jordan joined Egypt as pariah governments in the Arab world. Any treaty with Israel represented an abandonment of the position that Israel had no right to exist. However, at this juncture, King Hussein decided that peace with Israel was more advantageous than sticking to the script of the Arab narrative. The treaty would be beneficial to him economically and politically. The state of belligerence with Israel since 1948 had cost Jordan dearly in direct military expenditures and lost economic opportunities. A peace treaty would stop much of this hemorrhage. He also wanted to have some kind of influence on

issues regarding the future of the West Bank. He believed that only a peace treaty could gain him the necessary leverage.

Zunes and Kidron (1995) have a different view. “It appears that King Hussein was essentially forced by the Clinton Administration to accept terms that may eventually place the entire peace process in jeopardy,” (1995, 57). They argue that although the terms of the agreement were not unfair to Jordan,<sup>69</sup> the opportunity was missed to use the agreement as leverage for the Palestinians and the rest of the Arab states. “The major compromise by Jordan was not in regard to any of its own purely nationalistic interests, but in that this final treaty took place outside of a comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace agreement,” (Zunes and Kidron 1995, 57).

In contrast to the Arab narrative, the Israeli narrative is generally supportive of peace with its neighbors. Peace treaties lend an increased sense of legitimacy and permanence to the state. That is, as long as the treaties do not require Israel to give up land in Eretz Israel. The treaty with Egypt required the return of the Sinai, but the Sinai was not part of Eretz Israel and was therefore acceptable. The treaty with Jordan did not involve the return of land, (although there were small exchanges as noted above), and therefore it also was acceptable. This distinction has direct application in the work of the Quartet where the Oslo formula of “Land for Peace” still applies in the Road Map. In this case, the land in question is in the West Bank. This land *is* considered part of Eretz Israel, hence the settler movement which is a premeditated

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<sup>69</sup> For details on Israeli-Jordanian land exchanges, see Fischbach (1997, 42-46).

endeavor to “retake the land.” Success in the form of a comprehensive peace agreement requires deep consideration of this difficult issue.

#### 3.6.4 Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza, 1995 (aka, “Taba” or “Oslo II”)

The Interim Agreement, signed 28 September 1995, elaborated on the original Oslo Accords (Smith 2007, 461). Its most significant features dealt with Palestinian government, administrative control of land within the West Bank and Gaza, and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the same areas. The Agreement contained five chapters: the Palestinian Council; Redeployment and Security Arrangements; Legal Affairs; Cooperation; and Miscellaneous Provisions. The Agreement established the Palestinian Council (later called the “Palestinian Legislative Council”) which would become the official government of the Palestinian people. It also established the administrative arrangements of Area A, Area B, and Area C. Area A covered the large Palestinian population centers of Jenin, Qalqiliya, Tulkarem, Nablus, Ramallah, Bethlehem, and Hebron.<sup>70</sup> Area B consisted of Palestinian villages. Area C contained the remaining 72 percent of the land area and included all settlements, military bases, and “state lands.”

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<sup>70</sup> Part of Hebron (3.5 square km), in which 400 Israeli settlers lived, was to remain under complete Israeli control.

**Table 3.3 West Bank Areas of Administration and Security in “Oslo II Agreement.” Source: *Report on Israeli Settlement in the Occupied Territories 5(6)*, Foundation for Middle East Peace, November-December 1995.**

	Control of Administration & Security	Percent of West Bank Land Area
Area A	Palestinian Administration Palestinian Security	1
Area B	Palestinian Administration Israeli Security	27
Area C	Israeli Administration Israeli Security	72

Oslo II interacted with the narratives much like with Oslo I. Oslo II was threatening to the Israeli narrative because it conceded further Palestinian control in the West Bank which was offensive to those advocating control of all of Eretz Israel. Increased Palestinian control ostensibly increased the security risks of Israel.

But the Taba document isn't really an agreement. Nor is it an Israeli-Palestinian compromise. It is an array of Israeli concessions to Yasser Arafat...Most of its 400 pages are devoted to what Israel will be giving the Palestinians. Israel will be giving them concrete things, while the Palestinians do no more than repeat, in even more obscure terms, the clauses of the Oslo agreement, which they didn't honor...As before, Israel is staking everything, not keeping any cards in reserve. (Zak 1995)

Oslo II was offensive to the Palestinian narrative when details emerged about how little real control was actually being transferred.

So it is no surprise that the just-signed Oslo II interim accord extending limited Palestinian authority to parts of the West Bank reflects, in large measure, Israeli's successful effort to preserve what it considers to be its cardinal

interests in the West Bank – principally its demands to remain in strategic control of the entire area and to preserve its exclusive control over its settlements and settlers. (Oslo II Accords Herald New Era in Israeli-Palestinian Relations 1995, 9)

In spite of concerted negotiation efforts, very little was actually accomplished on the ground. Taba serves as another good example of how the narratives render even minor concessions extremely difficult. Taba set the stage for the Hebron Agreement and the Wye River Memorandum.

### 3.6.5 Hebron Agreement, 1997

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin was assassinated on November 4, 1995. His death was a palpable shock to the people of Israel. To many, it rang the death knell for the peace process. To others, as Darby (2001) and Höglund (2008) would predict, it at least temporarily strengthened resolve to reach a settlement.

The support for Oslo hit the lowest point in April 1995, after a series of fatal Palestinian attacks on Israelis within the Green Line (pre-1967) borders, and peaked later on, in November of the same year, immediately after Prime Minister Rabin was assassinated by a right-wing Jewish extremist who was opposed to the continuation of the Oslo process. However, this peak was apparently part of a transitory shock effect, and did not indicate a genuine accumulation of support and hope in the process *per se*, as suggested by the fairly rapid decrease of public support for the process in the ensuing months almost back to its pre-assassination level. (Hermann and Newman 2000, 119)<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> This suggests that ripe moments may be very narrow windows of opportunity. Clearly, some will pass too quickly for mediators to effectively utilize. Nonetheless, leaders of conflicting parties are usually sensitive to shifts in public opinion and mediators should be poised to leverage them. See discussion on the importance of “cognitive legitimacy” below.

Rabin had been the embodiment of the peace movement in Israel. Although his successor, Shimon Peres, was also a strong proponent of the peace process, four suicide bombings in nine days during February and March of 1996 coupled with attacks by Hezbollah from Lebanon, drove the Israeli public into the open arms of Likud and Benjamin Netanyahu (Smith 2007, 468-470). Netanyahu ran a campaign that played on the public's security fears and ruled out compromise with the Palestinians. His campaign played to the Israeli narrative and was reinforced by events on the ground. The prospects for the peace process looked bleak indeed.

In the beginning of his term, Netanyahu fulfilled his promises and derailed the peace process almost completely. However, he soon found that his policies were inciting Palestinian violence and unnecessarily alienating a large portion of the Israeli electorate. After events culminating in the provocative opening of the Hasmonean Tunnel,<sup>72</sup> he had created such a backlash that he was politically in need of making amends with the center-left in Israel (Smith 2007, 472). He viewed a resumption of the peace process as a means to that end and he found the continuation of Oslo to be his only viable path (Andoni 1997, 18). He openly declared his intent to enter negotiations

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<sup>72</sup> The Hasmonean Tunnel was an aqueduct constructed during the Hasmonean period of Jerusalem. It runs near the perimeter of the Temple Mount / Haram al-Sharif. Jewish religious authorities lobbied for years to open the tunnel but Muslim religious authorities insisted it remain closed. The latter portrayed any attempt to open it as a plot by the Jews to rebuild their temple on the site of the Haram al-Sharif, implying destruction of the Muslim site. Therefore, anytime the matter of the tunnel was raised, it would literally cause riots. Because of that sensitivity, the tunnel remained closed. However, in the middle of the night on September 24, 1996, the Israelis opened the tunnel. Netanyahu laid the blame at the feet of Ehud Olmert, the mayor of Jerusalem. Regardless, riots broke out immediately. It was a public relations disaster for Netanyahu, as many Israeli citizens disapproved the needless provocation of the Palestinians.

with the Palestinians over Hebron. “Nothing could have more clearly demonstrated that Bibi [Netanyahu] understood he did not have an alternative to Oslo, and that he needed an agreement” (Ross 2004, 281).

The “Protocol Concerning the Redeployment in Hebron,” was the result of a grueling series of negotiations. The agreement detailed the implementation of a specific component of Oslo II by establishing a complex framework for the withdrawal of IDF troops from the West Bank city of Hebron. The protocol was the sum of five individual agreements signed between the 7 and 21 January, 1997. The immediate results of the protocol were the progressive opening of the Shuhuda Road in Hebron and the withdrawal of IDF troops from 80 percent of the city. The longer-term agreements called for further Israeli withdrawal (“further redeployments” or “FRDs”) from the remainder of the West Bank. Most of those never occurred, largely because of the impact of the competing narratives. Edward Said described the Hebron Agreement from the Palestinian perspective.

How else could even the most hardened Israeli explain the fact that the Palestinians had accepted a formula for “coexistence” in Hebron which gave 450 people who sat there with the Israeli army guarding them, the choicest 20 percent of the town’s commercial center, whereas the 160,000 resident Palestinians were expected to be happy that they got an 80 percent that was so bogged down with conditions, reservations, and stipulations as to make it virtually a peripheral part of the Israeli enclave. What sort of “strategic” calculation on the part of the Palestinian leadership produced acquiescence in that bizarre mathematics where by an Israeli settler population of less than .03 percent got 20 percent of an Arab city, were allowed to carry their arms, were abetted by Israeli patrols who were given virtually the run of the hills surrounding the town, while the Palestinian police were limited to a few poorly armed men, theoretically subject to Israeli restraints in everything they did? (1997, 31-32)

The implementation of the Hebron Agreement, or lack thereof, is another example of the effects of the competing narratives. Throughout the Palestinian-Israeli peace process, agreements were reached that were never implemented. One side would accuse the other of failing to live up to their obligations, thus excusing the first party from their own obligations. Then the second party would return the favor. These oft-repeating episodes reinforced the negative manner in which each side viewed the other. Moshe Kohn expressed the sentiment of the Israeli narrative in this regard.

The list of PLO/PNA violations of both the letter and the spirit of the Oslo Accords is too long for us to consider them serious peace partners...Here are just a few additional examples of Palestinian delinquency regarding “the process”: The PNA and its Council, and the Palestinian communal, religious and intellectual leadership in general, have chronically acted lethargically, to put it mildly, against terrorist activity by their adherents and others in their jurisdiction; released members of terrorist groups, many of whom have been actively involved in terror acts; frequently called for jihad against Israel; conferred “martyr status” on bloody terrorists; repeatedly refused to hand over to Israel requested terrorist suspects. (1997, 11)

The narratives continually disrupt the “cognitive legitimacy” of mutual accommodation between the conflicting parties.<sup>73</sup> Mediators engaged individually or in multiparty mediation must recognize Darby and MacGinty’s Proposition 4: *During peace negotiations the primary function of leaders is to deliver their own people. Assisting their opponents in the process is secondary.* This can be a specific application point for leverage. If a leader of either conflicting party plays to their extremist constituents by disparaging the peace process and/or their ‘peace partner,’

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<sup>73</sup> “Cognitive legitimacy” is a term employed by Hermann and Newman. “We maintain that, for a legal peace treaty to be translated into a reality of mutual accommodation, the nation’s leaders and political elites who are responsible for promoting such a political reorientation must ensure that it attains ‘cognitive legitimacy’ at the grass-roots level,” (2000, 108).



then the cognitive legitimacy of the process is diminished. Mediators, and especially aligned mediators in multiparty mediation bodies, can exert leverage over leaders of the conflicting parties to get them to endorse, rather than disparage, the peace process, thereby increasing cognitive legitimacy of the process among their publics.

### 3.6.6 Wye River Memorandum, 1998

The Wye River Memorandum takes its name from the location of its negotiation: the Wye Plantation of the Aspen Institute's Wye River Conference Centers in Maryland. Like the Hebron Agreement, Wye was also supposed to expand implementation of Oslo II.

The basic trade-off seemed fairly straightforward. Arafat would have to make a major effort on security and perhaps once again reject the parts of the National Charter that challenged Israeli's right to exist; and Netanyahu would have to agree to further withdrawals from Zones B and C, totaling at least another 13 percent of the West Bank and Gaza. (Quandt 2005, 354)

Nine days of negotiation in October, 1998, produced agreements in the areas of further Israeli redeployments, economic issues, security issues, and permanent status negotiations (with the goal of signing a permanent status agreement by May, 1999). The agreement would increase the territory administered by the Palestinian Authority to approximately 40 percent of the West Bank. (Israel would still maintain "responsibility for security" in well over half of that 40 percent.) However, throughout

the negotiations, each side accused the other of demanding new concessions while offering none in return.

Immediately following the signing of the agreement and the return of both leaders to their own countries, it was clear that both sides interpreted the implementation of the Wye Agreement differently, and that it was unclear whether or not it would actually be implemented on schedule. (Hermann and Newman 2000, 117)

It would not. The narratives again worked against tangible progress. The implementation of the Wye Memorandum was a repeat performance of the Hebron Agreement. In spite of the agreements reached, within months, both sides were accusing the other of lack of faith in implementation and therefore both withdrew their support. Both the Hebron Protocol and the Wye Memorandum highlight the difficulties of implementing peace agreements.<sup>74</sup>

The Wye Memorandum was the undoing of Netanyahu's government. "When he gave up part of Hebron, he upset his constituency and at the same time there was no way he could receive endorsement from the pro-peace camp. Wye River made Netanyahu look inconsistent, and when he tried to avoid implementing what he himself signed, he looked even worse. (Hassassian 2002, 126)

By signing the Wye agreement that gave the Palestinians additional land in Judaea and Samaria (13 percent of it) Netanyahu sealed his political fate and saw his coalition rapidly melting away... With Oslo in shambles, the philosophy of interim agreements at a dead end, and the trust upon which the Israelis and Palestinians were supposed to build the final settlement at its lowest ebb since 1993, Ehud Barak, who positioned himself as the inheritor of Rabin's legacy of peace with security, emerged as the new hope. (Ben-Ami 2006, 239)

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<sup>74</sup> For more on the difficulty of the implementation of peace agreements, see Hampson (1996), Stedman and Rothchild (1996), Walter (2002), Stedman, Rothchild and Cousens (2002) and Jarstad and Sisk (2007).

### 3.6.7 Sharm el-Sheikh Memorandum, 1999

The significance of the Sharm Agreement, signed 3 September 1999, was more in process than substance. In Israeli political leadership, Ehud Barak had replaced Netanyahu as Prime Minister and hopes for the peace process immediately rose. Of interest from a negotiation standpoint, the agreement was reached with far less third-party involvement than either Hebron or Wye. The primary negotiators were Saeb Erekat for the Palestinians and Gilad Sher for the Israelis. Both consulted with Dennis Ross on a regular basis, but the negotiations were almost exclusively between Erekat and Sher (Ross 2004, 506-508).

On substance, the agreement recast the permanent status agreement timetable. It would now resume almost immediately, 13 September, and was to be completed by 13 September of 2000. It also reset the timetables for further redeployments of the Israeli Defense Forces and addressed the remaining open issues from Oslo II.

Once the Sharm Memorandum was signed, Barak's attention shifted almost exclusively to searching for an agreement with Syria. Efforts along this track were substantial and they appeared to be headed for success. In the end, President Asad of Syria would not close a deal. Assad was in many ways the personification of an Arab leader driven by the Arab narrative. He considered any compromise with Israel an abandonment of justice. Therefore it was not altogether surprising that in the end, an

agreement was not reached. However, the effort cost Barak a great deal of time and political capital (Ross 2004, 509-591).

Unfortunately for the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, Barak chose to ignore the Palestinians for most of this period. That left little time for the Clinton Administration to work for a final negotiated settlement. The failure to broker a peace treaty with Syria was a major defeat that personally stung both Barak and Clinton. It led directly to the last ditch effort that became Camp David 2000.

### 3.6.8 Camp David Summit, 2000

Camp David 2000 was to be the culmination of the Oslo process: a Palestinian state, side by side with Israel, both living in peace. Instead, it was a miserable failure that set the stage for the second intifada with both sides laying the blame at the feet of the other (Shamir 2005, 7-8). Camp David 2000 is a vivid example of the effect of the competing narratives.

One of the major impediments to success at Camp David was that both President Clinton and Prime Minister Barak were on very short political time tables. Chairman Arafat, by contrast, was not, and he recognized the leverage that this afforded him (Indyk 2005, 28-29).<sup>75</sup> Barak was facing extreme domestic opposition to

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<sup>75</sup> Indyk (2005) described this with the question, "Who can afford to walk away?" "For both Barak and Clinton, time for achieving the deal that each needed was running out... Thus the question of who can

his efforts at reaching an agreement with the Palestinians, some from within his own cabinet. The opposition was predictably consistent with the Israeli narrative. He knew he did not have long before his governing coalition would collapse. It had been his desire to reach agreement with both the Syrians and the Palestinians. He had failed with the Syrians and it had cost him. Now, facing the probable loss of his role as Prime Minister, he turned his efforts to securing peace with the Palestinians (Quandt 2005, 365).

President Clinton was similarly under temporal pressure. His advisors advocated a summit before the Democratic and Republican national conventions that would be held in August (Ross 2004, 638). That left July, and President Clinton was scheduled to attend a G-8 Conference on the 19<sup>th</sup>. He hoped to arrive at the G-8 Conference with an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement in hand so that he could rally the G-8 partners for financial support for the venture. The Israelis, Palestinians and Americans settled on July 11<sup>th</sup> and the summit convened at Camp David (Ross 2004, 649).

Debate continues as to who was responsible for the failure of the summit.<sup>76</sup>

The Clinton Administration, particularly the president himself, as well as Dennis Ross, initially blamed Arafat. Arab states and the Palestinians blame Israel. The nature of the

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walk away from a negotiation without a deal is perhaps a better predictor of results than all the other factors mentioned," (Indyk 2005, 29).

<sup>76</sup> For a summary of four categories of explanations of the Camp David II failure, see Rabinovich (2004, 160-180). For an abbreviated version of Rabinovich's explanation, but a much more detailed analysis of the summit's failure, see the edited volume by Shamir and Maddy-Weitzman (2005).

“blame debate” is reflective of the competing narratives. Israelis were convinced that they had offered Arafat everything he could have possibly wanted (or at least reasonably expected) and he simply refused because he wanted more. To those who embraced the Israeli narrative, this proved that Arafat could never be satisfied and that he had no real interest in peace. To those who embraced the Arab narrative, however, the actual offer made by Barak was “not much short of an insult,” (Pundak 2005, 157).<sup>77</sup> Charles Smith captures the essence of the competing narratives well:

*Both sides were constrained by basic preconceptions unintelligible to the other.* Israelis expected Palestinians to be grateful for their offer to withdraw from up to 90 percent of the West Bank. Palestinians saw this as insulting. Having lost 78 percent of former Palestine in 1948, they were determined to keep the remaining 22 percent, thereby forcing Israel’s withdrawal to the 1967 lines. (Smith 2007, 506, emphasis added)

The argument here is that the “unintelligible preconceptions” that constrained each side are the competing narratives.

Barak moved further than any Israeli leader before him, crossing his own “red-lines” by offering concessions on Jerusalem, reducing Israel’s control over land in the West Bank to nine percent, even discussing ways to share custody of the Haram al-Sharif / Temple Mount. It was a dramatic move for an Israeli Prime Minister and it won him no favors with the right wing at home (Pundak 2005, 151-153). Barak maintains that the summit failed because of Arafat.

I emphasize that the summit was a story of leadership failure...The basic fact is that Arafat refused, time and time again, to accept the proposals made to him

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<sup>77</sup> See the characterization of the offer by Farsoun and Aruri below.

– mostly by the Americans – as a basis for serious discussion. This is why the negotiations never actually took off...I conclude that Arafat simply and fundamentally refused to recognize Israel as a Jewish state, period...Arafat's face was exposed for all to see, that face which I have just described. (Barak 2005, 118-120)

However, Barak's "final" offer, made by Clinton as though it were an American initiative, was vague on several key issues (Ross 2004, 688-670). The offer included a plan to partition Jerusalem, which was an unprecedented move, but the details were unclear. The definition of "custodianship" over the Haram al-Sharif was uncertain. The offer included land exchange, but appeared to be at a rate of 9:1 in favor of Israel. On for the refugee question, there would only be an undefined "satisfactory solution." Arafat, in agreement with all the key Palestinian negotiators including Mahmoud Abbas, Ahmed Qurei (Abu Ala), and Mohammad Dahlan, refused the offer. In keeping with the Arab narrative, Farsoun and Aruri summarize it this way:

But when those issues were finally placed on the table, it became clear that in exchange for having accepted Israel on 78 percent of their national patrimony, the Palestinians would be allowed to have a borderless, nonsovereign, and fragmented Palestinian "state" in only 61 percent of the remaining 22 percent of Palestine. Israel's "compromise" on Jerusalem consisted of placing under Palestinian "administrative control" less than 15 percent of the sixty-four square kilometers it had annexed from the West Bank after 1967. On the issue of refugees, Israel's "pragmatic" solution would have referred to UN Resolution 194...Israel would simply have taken back less than 100,000 out of approximately 5 million refugees under a family reunification plan and on a case-by-case basis over a long period of time. (2006, 286)

Robert Malley, serving on the American negotiation team, disputed Barak's explanation for the summit's failure and his characterization of the "generous offer" (Malley and Agha 2001). He expounded later:

If there is one myth that has to be put to rest, it is that the deal was something that any Palestinian could have accepted. One should not excuse the Palestinians' passivity or unhelpful posture at Camp David. But the simple and inescapable truth is that there was no deal at Camp David that Arafat, Abu Mazen, Dahlan, or any other Palestinian in his right mind could have accepted. That has become far clearer in hindsight. What was put on the table was not a detailed agreement but vague proposals: nine percent of the West Bank would have been annexed by Israel with a one percent swap of Israeli territory in return, a satisfactory solution to the refugee problem, a custodianship for the Haram al-Sharif / Temple Mount, Palestinian sovereignty over the Muslim and Christian quarters, and a hybrid arrangement for the rest of Jerusalem in which some areas would fall under Palestinian sovereignty and some under functional autonomy. When the Palestinians came to us and asked, "Why the 9:1 ratio?" we had no answer other than the fact that those were the numbers that we were transmitting from Israel. When they asked us which neighborhoods would be under Palestinian sovereignty, we had no answer. When they asked us what the satisfactory solution on the refugee problem would be, again there was no answer. In all instances, the best we could do was to explain that this was the best that Israel could do, which is no answer at all. (Malley 2005, 111)

The tragedy of Camp David 2000 went far beyond the political arena. The frustration and anger caused by yet another political failure added to the despair of the Palestinians. Ariel Sharon's September 28 visit to the Temple Mount / Haram al-Sharif was a spark on dry tinder. Resonating with the worst parts of both narratives, his visit set off a series of demonstrations, suicide bombings, and IDF reprisals that became the Second Intifada.



There are two key lessons for multiparty mediation from this episode that are worthy of attention. First, the power of the competing narratives is evident. Even in the face of clearly articulated, “rational”<sup>78</sup> explanations, Barak still considers Arafat’s “intransigence” as the cause of the failure of the summit. Likewise, Palestinians did not have an appreciation for the magnitude of Barak’s concessions, when viewed from the perspective of his Israeli narrative. Once again, mediators have to have an understanding and appreciation for the effects of the narratives.

The second lesson is in the area of third-party mediation in general. Some observers (and participants) of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process believe that third-party mediation is unhelpful. For example:

My sense is that each side has to ‘take the bull by the horns’ and face its dilemma directly with a view to solving it, rather than depend on the ingenious efforts of third parties, however positively disposed they are to helping us. Frankly, Israel is not in need of a mediator to speak on behalf of Palestinian concerns, nor are the Palestinians in need of a mediator to speak on behalf of Israeli concerns. A resolution reached directly by the protagonists stands far more chance of lasting than one reached through third-party mediation. (Nusseibeh 2005, 20)

However, majority opinion is, especially in the Israeli-Palestinian case, that such a resolution would never be reached in the first place absent a strong third party. Most argue that third-party mediation is absolutely necessary, even at very detailed levels. “However, the great irony of what happened at Camp David...is that the Israelis and the Palestinians cannot seem to work out the details on their own. They

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<sup>78</sup> Each narrative has its own sense of “rationality.”

seem to depend on the US to help them with the details,” (Indyk 2005, 28).

Mohammed Dajani, a Palestinian negotiator adds,

The question is sometimes asked whether the US intervention was needed to convene the summit, and whether the US, which assumed the role of third party, did not fail in its task to guide the two negotiation parties to a mutually acceptable accommodation. Much criticism was directed at the US performance as a third party, but without US intervention and pressure on both parties, negotiations would not have taken place at all. Moreover, the US presence was required for preparing, managing, and orchestrating the negotiation process, in order to increase the likelihood of achieving the desired outcome. (Dajani 2005, 83)

These case-specific anecdotes about the usefulness of third-party mediators are supported in the broader literature on mediation.<sup>79</sup> Although there are many wise caveats, third-party mediation is generally considered helpful. Further, it is most helpful when it comes with leverage, otherwise known as resources. Rubin identified six categories or bases of resources: Reward, coercion, expertise, legitimacy, referent, and informational (1992).<sup>80</sup> Whereas no single mediator would be likely to have resources in all six categories, a multiparty mediation body easily could. In fact, a multiparty mediation body should be composed with the goal of compiling strong capabilities in all six categories. This brings to mind Terje Rød-Larsen’s assessment of the Quartet’s composition:

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<sup>79</sup> See, for example: Bercovitch (2002, 2007), Pruitt (2005), Aall (2007) and Zartman and Touval (2007).

<sup>80</sup> Aall (2007) expanded the explanations of these categories. She adds an important point: “Leverage results from a combination of powers, the skillful use of powers, and the confidence that the principals have that the mediators know what are doing and can produce results,” (2007, 487). In other words, raw power does not automatically translate into leverage; rather power must be wielded with skill and discretion in order to gain leverage with the conflicting parties.

As Larsen likes to say, it is necessary to have ‘power (US), money (EU), and legitimacy (UN)’ together so as to manage the crisis and move the peace process forward. Hence the Quartet, as a means to harness American power and get the US government involved and active. Plus we added the Madrid co-sponsor, Russia. (Le More 2008, 101)

This illustrates the general need for multiparty mediation in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It also reinforces the notion that mediators in a multiparty mediation body must be aligned in their efforts to resolve a conflict.

### *3.7 The Narratives and the Nineties: Summary and Conclusions*

In order to set the stage for the analysis of multiparty mediation failure, this chapter has attempted to accomplish two purposes simultaneously. It has outlined the historical context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict prior to the formation of the Quartet, and, it has demonstrated the extreme difficulty that competing narratives pose for would-be mediators. Competing narratives pose challenges to any peace process. However, the competing narratives of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict pose challenges in the extreme. A brief overview of the history of each of the parties from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the 1990s showed the origin and development of each respective narrative. Then, a short review of the peace process in the 1990s demonstrated how the same events, proposals, counter-proposals, and agreements were viewed and interpreted in diametrical ways by the opposing parties. This chapter has also attempted to achieve a third purpose. That purpose is to show that the narratives do actually, albeit slowly,

change over time. This is demonstrated by the number of “firsts” that were achieved as the 1990s progressed, “firsts” that required modifications to the basic narratives of each party.

The 1991 Madrid Peace Conference witnessed the first time that Israelis and Palestinians officially sat together to address their concerns. This required a modification to both narratives that had previously refused to acknowledge the existence of the other. The Oslo Accords represented several firsts. Israel recognized the PLO as the official representation of the Palestinian people. This required a significant alteration to the Israeli narrative that heretofore considered the PLO solely a terrorist organization. In exchange for this recognition, the PLO renounced terrorism and recognized Israel’s right to exist. In so doing, according to their narrative, the Palestinians ceded 78 percent of their homeland to the Jewish state.

In 1994, King Hussein of Jordan made peace with Israel. This violated the Arab narrative, but fortunately this ground had been broken by Egypt in 1979, making Jordan’s foray easier. Oslo II in 1995 began to make the original accords more tangible. The Palestinians made steps toward democracy with the formation of the Palestinian Legislative Council. The Israeli narrative was altered as the government ceded sovereignty over small parts of Eretz Israel to Arabs. This chapter also highlighted the problem induced by incrementalism; that certain sectors within conflicting parties grasp more tightly to their core interests when they see their peripheral interests compromised. Thus changes in narratives over time are not linear,

nor are they even unidirectional within a group. This is a significant challenge to conflict mediation and resolution.

The Hebron Protocol of 1997 was significant because, for the first time, a Likud government ceded territory to the Palestinians, and the territory was in a historically and religiously significant city. The Hebron Protocol and the Wye Memorandum of 1998 both encountered challenges from the parties' narratives upon implementation. After struggling under the Netanyahu government, the peace process was re-energized under the Barak government in 1999 with the Sharm el-Sheikh Memorandum. However, contrary to Palestinian expectations, Barak focused his attention on achieving a Syrian peace agreement. Unfortunately, it never materialized. When Barak returned his attention to the Palestinians, President Clinton's time in office was running short and Barak's coalition government was dissolving. The competing narratives met head-on in the train wreck that was Camp David II. Yet, in spite of not reaching an agreement, another "first" occurred. Israelis and Palestinians addressed the taboo topic of dividing Jerusalem. Such a discussion had previously been unthinkable.

This chapter has identified several contingent lessons for multiparty mediation failure and success that will be explored more deeply later. It has repeatedly shown the need for mediators (and multiparty mediators) to understand and appreciate the competing narratives of the conflicting parties. A grasp on the narratives should help mediators anticipate how the parties will react to various proposals, and where

leverage might be successfully applied. A lack of appreciation of the narratives will lead to multiparty mediation failure. Related, this chapter has tentatively shown that mediation with leverage, when skillfully applied, can lead to positive developments. Mediators can, in fact, in some cases, induce ripeness. Next, the chapter has tentatively established that multiparty mediators must be aligned in their purposes, and their purposes must be aligned toward resolution of the conflict. Otherwise, multiparty mediation failure is nearly assured. The argument was introduced that incrementalist approaches can lead to deeper entrenchment on core narrative issues among more conservative elements of a given group. Finally, and perhaps most importantly for multiparty mediation success and failure, this chapter has shown that the general narratives of groups in intractable conflict can change over time in a direction that is more conducive to resolution of their disputes. With these as background, the discussion now turns to the Quartet itself – its formation and its behavior between 2002 and 2007.

## Chapter Four

### A Glimmer of Hope for Multiparty Mediation: The Quartet Before 2006

#### 4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter and the next is to focus on the question of multiparty mediation failure in the specific case of the Quartet from 2002-2007. The first two sections of this chapter will introduce the transformation in Middle East policy from the Clinton Administration to the George W. Bush administration and the Arab Peace Initiative. The next section addresses the formation of the Quartet. The story of its formation is derived from interviews of key players and academic experts as well as Quartet statements, news reports and policy analyses. Then the chapter analyzes the formation of the body using Riker's principle of *minimum winning coalitions*, paying particular attention to the motivations of the individual members for joining the coalition. The next section will discuss the differing levels of acceptance of the Quartet by Palestinians and Israelis. The acceptance of the mediation body by the conflicting parties is significant because it has a direct effect on the potential

effectiveness of the mediation. The third section will address Quartet behavior in the midst of the first three potential precipitant events: the death of Yasser Arafat in 2004, the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza in 2005, and the incapacitation of Ariel Sharon in the beginning of January, 2006. This section employs Druckman's concept of Turning Point Analysis to aid the discovery of patterns of behavior, as well as motivations for that behavior, among the members of the Quartet. This approach makes the reasons for the Quartet's failure readily apparent. It also establishes the foundation for several contingent generalizations on multiparty mediation success and failure that will be explored in chapter 6.

The division of material between chapters four and five, which is presented primarily in chronological order, reflects the centrality of a key event in this time period. In several ways the story of the Quartet turns around the Hamas legislative council election victory in January, 2006. Before this point, there was a "glimmer of hope" for the efforts of the multiparty mediation body. It functioned much like one might expect a body of mediators to work. The parties consulted with each other and derived policies that they could mutually support.<sup>81</sup> Doubtless there were contextual challenges that limited its impact, and these will be explored in conjunction with the five potential precipitant events. But in spite of these challenges, there remained the possibility that the Quartet could reignite a meaningful peace process. In late 2005, the

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<sup>81</sup> This is in direct contrast to later Quartet operations described euphemistically by Alvaro de Soto: "The Quartet did not operate as one would expect a collective mediating body to operate," (de Soto, interview with the author, 2008). Instead, it became something more akin to a policy arm of the United States (de Soto 2007a, 19-21).



Quartet appeared to slip into a state of suspended animation. After the Hamas election victory, a qualitative change came over the Quartet. It more or less ceased being a multiparty mediation body and instead, increasingly took the form of an instrument of the unique US foreign policy of the Bush Administration. If there had been a glimmer of hope before 2006, then the lights went out afterward.

#### *4.2 The First Years of the Bush Administration, 2001-2002*

George W. Bush entered office with little motivation to engage in the Palestinian-Israeli peace process. In fairness to the administration, they inherited the worst situation on the ground since the 1973 Arab-Israeli war. After the failure of Camp David II and the onset of the Second Intifada, prospects for a peace agreement were effectively nil. Additionally, nearly all of Bush's senior advisors operated with a strongly held belief about what should govern their policy-making: "ABC, anything but Clinton." Aaron Miller put it this way:

Already inclined to see things Israel's way, persuaded that there was little he could or should do by getting in the middle of a white-hot conflict, and determined to be different in as many ways as possible from Bill Clinton, George W. Bush came into office with a mindset already predisposed to disengaging America from the Arab-Israeli issue. After 9/11, with Afghanistan under his belt and Iraq on the way, the predisposition to steer clear of the issue became a willful and purposeful policy during the administration's first term. (Miller 2008, 324)

The defining moment for George W. Bush's presidency was, of course, September 11, 2001. The impact of 9/11 on the administration's foreign policy was total. For a decade prior, American politicians and security experts had groped for a foreign policy paradigm that would replace the framework of the Cold War. Now, through tragic circumstances, it had one: the Global War on Terrorism. No senior official in the George W. Bush administration considered resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to be closely related to the Global War on Terrorism – except one.

Secretary of State and former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Colin Powell, did believe there was a strong connection between the Israeli-Palestinian issue and the War on Terrorism.

Powell wanted to address one of the “root causes” of terrorism – the Israeli-Palestinian conflict – and to build a wide antiterror effort that would include many Arab and Muslim partners. The neo-cons, now allied with Rumsfeld and Cheney, wanted to move against Iraq and destroy its supposed weapons of mass destruction, and they were prepared for the United States to do so on its own, if need be. Having listened to the arguments, Bush hinted that he basically agreed with the hardliners but would start with Powell's recommendation...In early November 2001, Bush gave a major speech to the United Nations, in which he put forth the first version of his vision of two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace...this was the first time an American president had so forthrightly spoken of a Palestinian state. (Quandt 2005, 395)

Powell believed Osama Bin Laden's claims that the Palestinian cause was one of the primary motivations for the attacks of 9-11. He was familiar with Bin Laden's “Letter to America,” where Bin Laden answered his own question, “Why are we fighting and opposing you?...[First and foremost] the issue of Palestine” (Bin Laden 2002). Nearly every statement Bin Laden issued reiterated the Palestinian theme. Reporting on a

statement released in response to the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the state of Israel (May, 2008), the Associated Press quoted Bin Laden as saying, “The fight for the Palestinian cause was the most important factor driving al-Qaeda’s war with the West and fueled 19 Muslims to carry out the suicide attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001,” (Bin Laden 2002).

Perhaps because of his military background, Powell was more attuned to the connection than other senior advisors. He considered an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement to be a high priority for US national security interests. Although he remained nearly alone in that view within the senior levels of the administration, he had convinced the president to try his approach, and he found other world leaders who shared his convictions regarding the Middle East. With those leaders, he also found a new mechanism with which to attempt to reach a peace accord between Israelis and Palestinians: multiparty mediation in the form of the Middle East Quartet.

#### *4.3 In the Beginning: Quartet Formation*

The *Al-Aqsa Intifada* spontaneously erupted in the fall of 2000 because of the anger and disillusionment among Palestinians after the failure of Oslo, their ongoing, daily affliction, and the visit of Ariel Sharon to the Haram al-Sharif / Temple Mount area. At this time the Quartet began to form as an idea in response to the violence.

Although it was only in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 2001 that the Quartet emerged as a public entity, its creation dated back to an intense diplomatic effort undertaken by Annan, with Rød-Larsen's support, to address the crisis precipitated by the outbreak of what became known as the "second intifada" in September 2000. (Whitfield 2007, 238)

On the first day of June, 2001, a Hamas suicide bomber attacked the Dolphinarium Discotheque in Tel Aviv and killed 21 Israelis while injuring more than 100 others. Terje Rød-Larsen was in Israel at the time as the UN Secretary General's *Special Representative to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority*. Also present was German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, representing the European Union. Together, they condemned Arafat for not preventing the attack. This show of international unity was strong enough to convince Arafat to publicly issue a cease-fire order the next day, in the presence of Rød-Larsen and Fischer. According to US Ambassador David Satterfield, this response by Arafat led many to believe that coordinated international pressure might be an effective tool for dealing with the PLO.<sup>82</sup>

Along with the European Union and the United Nations, the United States and Russia were also engaged in Israeli and Palestinian affairs. All four parties had an interest in helping Israelis and Palestinians achieve a peace settlement. According to US Ambassador Daniel Kurtzer, the formal Quartet was an outgrowth of the informal

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<sup>82</sup> David Satterfield, interview with the author, 2008. In 2001, Ambassador Satterfield was the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Affairs.

relationship among these four parties who were individually attempting to bring peace to the region.<sup>83</sup> From the UN perspective,

The United Nations never aspired to lead the mechanism that emerged the following year binding the Middle East's "little three," as the Quartet members referred to the EU, Russia, and the United Nations, to the dominant "one" of the United States. Its composition, as Rød-Larsen has described it, matched the "power of the United States, the money of the European Union, and the legitimacy of the United Nations" with a political need to respect Russia's role in the region. (Whitfield 2007, 238)

The EU and the UN had an additional motivation. They both considered the United States to be the key mediator in this conflict due to its historical 'special relationship' with Israel combined with its acceptability to the Palestinians. However, they had seen the Bush Administration's disinclination to pursue the Israeli-Palestinian peace process during its first nine months in office. With the terrorist attacks of 9-11, they were concerned that the United States would abandon the pursuit completely. A high-level European Union official reported that European Union *High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy*, Javier Solana, and United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan met near the end of September, 2001, in order to discuss ways to encourage the United States to reengage.<sup>84</sup> The idea of a coalition of mediators emerged. They decided it would also be fitting to include Russia because of its historical role in the region and because Russia and the United States had co-

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<sup>83</sup> Daniel Kurtzer, interview with the author, 2008. Kurtzer was the US Ambassador to Egypt from 1997 to 2001 and the US Ambassador to Israel from 2001 to 2005.

<sup>84</sup> Cristina Gallach, interview with the author, 2008.

sponsored the 1991 Madrid Peace Conference (discussed in the previous chapter). Their efforts led to an informal meeting in the Secretary General's office at the end of November between Annan, Solana, US Secretary of State Colin Powell and Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov. The four met or consulted informally on several occasions between November and the following April, when the first formal and public meeting of the Quartet took place in Madrid. The four envoys were meanwhile in constant contact in the region.<sup>85</sup>

The situation on the ground in Israel and Palestine and the climate of the international community were, of course, key to the Quartet's formation. Both arenas were characterized by chaos. The violence of the Second Intifada continued through all of 2001, although attention to the issue by the West was drastically reduced after the attacks of September 11. Then a single event in Israel eclipsed all others and sealed Arafat's fate with George W. Bush.

In January of 2002 the IDF seized a ship called the *Karine A*. It was found to be carrying a stockpile of weapons from Iran to the Palestinian Territories (Smith 2007, 514). Arafat initially denied any knowledge of the shipment, including in a phone call to President Bush. This only served to further reduce his credibility in Israeli eyes, (if that were possible). But it terminated his relationship with Bush and effectively ended Bush's support of Powell's approach (although this would not become apparent until later). Ariel Sharon, barely able to contain his delight at having

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<sup>85</sup> Cristina Gallach, interview with the author, 2008.

caught Arafat red-handed, put the weapons on display for the world to see. It was a diplomatic triumph for Sharon. Miller calls the “*Karine A* Affair” a turning point in Bush Administration policy.

For many in the administration, particularly Don Rumsfeld and Dick Cheney, *Karine A* pulled all the pieces together. Not only did Arafat endorse suicide terror; now he was in cahoots with Iran, Hezbollah, and Syria. *Karine A* may well have focused the administration on regime change in Palestine. (Miller 2008, 340-341)<sup>86</sup>

#### 4.4 *The Arab Peace Initiative, 2002*

At nearly the same time, Arab states were contemplating ways to end the statelessness of the Palestinians. The Arab Peace Initiative was first proposed by Saudi Arabia’s Crown Prince Abdullah at the Arab League Summit in Beirut in 2002. The initiative offered Israel an end to the Israeli-Arab conflict in conjunction with an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In essence, the Arab states offered full recognition of and normal relations with the state of Israel in exchange for Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories and a just solution for the refugee problem.<sup>87</sup>

The initiative faced enormous contextual challenges. Only ten of the twenty-two Arab leaders actually attended the summit. Yasser Arafat was told by the Israeli government that if he left Ramallah in order to attend, he would not be allowed to

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<sup>86</sup> See also Quandt (2005, 397).

<sup>87</sup> The Arab Peace Initiative was once again fully endorsed by the Arab League at its summit in Riyadh in 2007. It was most recently reiterated by Jordan in May, 2009 (Ravid 2009).

return. On the day of the summit, 27 March 2002, a Hamas militant detonated a suicide bomb in a hotel dining room in Netanya. Thirty Israelis were killed and over a hundred were injured. The Passover Massacre, as it came to be called, is still the largest suicide attack, in terms of number of deaths, by Hamas to date. Several of the victims were Holocaust survivors.<sup>88</sup> This attack had a searing effect on the Israeli public. The uproar over the bombing completely drowned out any potential of the Arab Peace Initiative to be taken seriously.

The IDF responded to this and several other suicide bombings by launching Operation Defensive Shield. A refugee camp in the city of Jenin was put under siege from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup> of April. In the political environment of 2002, the Sharon government had no interest in the Arab initiative. In other circumstances, it might have placed the government in an awkward position, but the Netanya bombing gave Sharon the cover to completely disregard the gesture. The suicide bombing therefore achieved exactly what Hamas had hoped: immediate disqualification of any serious consideration of the proposal. The attack and its aftereffects had germane lessons for the Quartet. John Darby writes, “A lasting agreement is impossible unless it actively involves those with the power to bring it down by violence. As it is never possible to include all those who threaten the process, a principle of ‘sufficient inclusion’ is necessary” (Darby 2001, 118). *Sufficient inclusion* is a concept that is directly applicable to the Hamas question, which will be explored in chapters five and six.

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<sup>88</sup> “Passover Suicide Bombing at Park Hotel in Netanya,” Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 27 March 2002. <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/MFAArchive>.



The international diplomatic response to the violence in the “Holy Land” was almost as chaotic as the situation on the ground in Israel and Palestine itself. One senior Bush Administration official put it this way: “Every week a different European foreign minister was presenting a new ‘plan’ to the Israelis and Palestinians. It was total confusion.”<sup>89</sup> The increasingly desperate situation on the ground, combined with the anemic and disjointed international response, convinced the State Department that the only hope for improvement was a coordinated and unified international diplomatic mission.

The Quartet as a formal body coalesced with a press conference in Madrid on April 10, 2002 at the same moment Jenin was under siege. Remarks were given by the Spanish Foreign Minister Josep Pique, who hosted the event, as well as Annan, Ivanov, Solana, and Powell. Shortly after the press conference, reporters referred to the group as the “Madrid Quartet.” Their remarks were later posted on the US State Department’s website as the first “Middle East Quartet Statement.”<sup>90</sup> Less than one month later, the same group met again, this time in Washington, DC, to continue their work on re-starting a peace process. In a press conference following these meetings, Colin Powell referred to the group as, “We, the Quartet, as we have named ourselves...” (Remarks on Madrid Quartet Initiative 2002).

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<sup>89</sup> Interview with the author, 2008.

<sup>90</sup> See Appendix E, (Quartet Statement, April 10, 2002: Remarks with Foreign Minister of Spain Josep Pique, United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan, Foreign Minister of Russia Igor Ivanov, and European Union Senior Official Javier Solana 2002).

Within the United States, there was strong disagreement on the direction that US foreign policy should take toward the Israeli-Palestinian problem. Secretary of State Powell found himself the only senior official in favor of attempting to mediate a peace agreement between the belligerents. Several phenomena already mentioned contributed to this: the “anything but Clinton” orientation of the White House; the personal disdain for Arafat that most senior administration officials had, particularly after the *Karine A* Affair; and the real threat of wasted political capital on such a difficult issue that held such low prospects for success.

All of these issues were in play as the Quartet was formed. The questions here are: Can sense be made of it all? Were there issues present at the Quartet’s formation that contributed to multiparty mediation failure afterward? To answer these, the discussion now turns to William Riker and the formation of political coalitions.

Riker’s *Theory of Political Coalitions* offers a lens useful for the analysis of the formation of the Quartet. He derived a mathematical concept about coalition formation that he called the “size principle” and then translated it into a “descriptive statement or sociological law.”<sup>91</sup> “In social situations similar to n-person, zero-sum games with side-payments, participants create coalitions just as large as they believe

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<sup>91</sup> Riker derived three concepts in *Theory of Political Coalitions*. *The size principle*: This is the assertion that, with complete and perfect information, winning coalitions tend toward the minimal winning size. *The strategic principle*: This is the assertion that, in systems or bodies in which the size principle is operative, participants in the final stages of coalition-formation should and do move toward a minimal winning coalition. *The disequilibrium principle*: This is the assertion that, in systems or bodies where the size and strategic principle are operative, the systems or bodies are themselves unstable. That is, they contain forces leading toward decision regardless of stakes and hence toward the elimination of participants. (Riker 1962, 211)

will ensure winning and no larger” (Riker 1962, 47). This lens leads one to ask of the Quartet: during its formation, was there evidence of behavior that resembled a tendency for the actors to strive for a minimum winning coalition?

At first blush, the answer appeared to be, “No.” The parties appeared to come together out of convenience. This, in fact, was the view of the United States. Several high-level State Department officials told the story in this manner – that the formation was almost accidental.<sup>92</sup> However, the Europeans tell a different story. As mentioned above, Solana met with Annan for the express purpose of discussing the formation of a coalition that could push the Palestinian-Israeli peace process forward. They quickly concluded that an effective coalition, in Riker’s terms a “winning coalition,” would have to include the United States. Thus far, Riker’s model holds true. The addition of Russia to the coalition is less explicable. It is true that Russia co-chaired the 1991 Madrid Peace Conference and it is also true that Russia had a better relationship with Syria than the other three potential partners.<sup>93</sup> However, one could argue that its inclusion was not absolutely necessary and that it therefore violated Riker’s size principle.

The real empirical challenge to Riker’s size principle in the case of the Quartet is the nature of two of the partners: the UN and the EU. Both are themselves coalitions of sorts, made up of a large number of states. This raises an interesting “weighting

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<sup>92</sup> David Satterfield, interview with the author, 2008 (for example).

<sup>93</sup> Due to the unresolved issue of the Golan Heights, a working relationship with Syria would be necessary for attaining a lasting agreement with all Israel’s neighbors.

issue.”<sup>94</sup> The United States and Russia, both being members of the United Nations, “count twice.” Likewise, the member states of the European Union are also all members of the United Nations and therefore “count twice” as well. However, the composition of the bodies seems to matter far less than the capabilities of the bodies. Here again Rød-Larsen’s explanation of the Quartet’s composition is applicable: The Quartet combines the power of the US with the money of the EU and the legitimacy of the UN. Based on the concept of capability, Riker’s theory of minimum winning coalition still holds.<sup>95</sup>

Add to this mix the complication of interplay between the UN Secretary General, the UN Security Council and the General Assembly, not to mention the tripartite nature of the European Union’s leadership and representation at many meetings of the Quartet principals, and the complexity quickly becomes apparent. Though it might be tempting to derive a mathematical model to attempt to account for all this, such an endeavor would miss the real point. The real point is that Quartet members had different motivations for joining, and the motivations were not necessarily linked directly to the actual resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

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<sup>94</sup> Riker loosely defines “weight” as the “influence or power or significance” of a member of a coalition relative to other members. See (Riker 1962, 102)

<sup>95</sup> With the exception of Russia, as noted above. Although not explicable by Riker’s *minimum winning coalition* hypothesis, the inclusion of Russia may be best explained simply along the lines offered by US State Department officials: It truly was a matter of convenience. Even though this explanation did not apply to the other three members, it could still have been true in Russia’s case.

The European Union and the United Nations had the most similar agendas. They both wanted to re-start the peace process and achieve a “two-state solution” that included a viable state for the Palestinians. They realized the necessary role of the United States toward this end and therefore drew it into the coalition.

Rather than pursuing new initiatives on its own, the EU prioritized its involvement in the Quartet and in efforts to ensure a reengagement of the Bush administration...For the EU, reform conditions under the Roadmap were too front-loaded. However, diplomats admitted that this concern was subjugated to the desire to make sure that the US reengagement was sustained...French diplomats unenthusiastically endorsed the Roadmap as the only means of attaining a new US involvement...Despite the misgivings, the EU did attempt to harness the Roadmap for a further ratcheting up of the focus on broader democratic and governance reform. (Youngs 2006, 152-153)

Though perhaps not totally necessary, Russia was still a valuable player and so it was drawn in also. Russia had its own motives. Its interests were both about an equitable two-state solution and its perceived re-emergence as a great power.<sup>96</sup> As will be shown, it took great pains to publicly show itself a ‘team player’ on par with the other Quartet members. With the exception of its more open policy toward Hamas, it rarely deviated from the positions of the United States. Alvaro de Soto remarked that for Russia, “It was important just to be at the table,” and that he “was surprised at the things they went along with.”<sup>97</sup> This behavior, while counterintuitive to past US-

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<sup>96</sup> William J. Burns, interview with the author, 2008.

<sup>97</sup> Alvaro de Soto, interview with the author, 2008.

Russia relations, is consistent with the idea of a rising Russia trying to re-emerge on the world stage.

Motivations for the United States were altogether different. At the top of the State Department, Powell's motivation was more or less the same as the EU and the UN. He wanted to find a workable and fair two-state solution that aligned with the interest of the United States. But for the rest of the Bush Administration (and other elements within the State Department as well) the motivation for joining the Quartet was on two levels. The secondary agenda was aligned with the goals of the Israel Lobby: to use the collective pressure of all four Quartet members to force the Palestinians, Arafat in particular, to agree to a two-state 'solution' that was much more amenable to Sharon's demands. However the primary motivation for the Bush Administration to join the Quartet and write the Roadmap was to pave the road toward an invasion of Iraq. Vice President Cheney visited several Middle Eastern countries in March of 2002.

The trip was something of a wake-up call for the vice president. The leaders pounded him not about Iraq, or the threat of Saddam Hussein, or terrorism, but about the Middle East peace process. He kept hearing that the president had better get involved and throw his weight around to set the region on some process to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This was the message that Powell had been sending the White House nonstop. (Woodward 2004, 112)

For the neo-cons, the Quartet and the Roadmap became visible ways to show the Arab world that the administration was serious about engaging in the peace process so that

the road to Baghdad would be easier.<sup>98</sup> This is a crucial point. Before the *Karine A* affair, the president was willing to try Powell's approach. But after the *Karine A* affair in January and Cheney's trip in March, the President's motivation for working with the Quartet shifted away from conflict resolution in Israel-Palestine and toward building a coalition to invade Iraq. This coincided well with the "level 2" motivation, i.e., to align with domestic forces in support of Sharon. Although the basic goal of "mediation" changed, Bush apparently did not inform Powell right away. As will be shown, Sharon's idea of a settlement was quite different than anything envisioned by Powell, Annan, or Solana. Not much later, Bush referred to Sharon as "a man of peace," (Slevin and Allen 2002).

These competing motives and differing visions among the Quartet's partners at its formation manifested themselves in later Quartet behavior. Part of the difficulty in analyzing Quartet behavior lies in the fact that the motivation for US participation underwent this fundamental change even before the Quartet had completely formed. It appears that even Powell did not fully appreciate the shift immediately. He therefore continued to meet with Annan, Solana and Ivanov with what seemed to be aligned goals among them toward resolution of the conflict. After the US objective changed, the resulting misaligned goals of the Quartet partners led to multiparty mediation failure.

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<sup>98</sup> This interpretation was also endorsed by Nathan Brown, interview with the author, 2008.

#### 4.5 Quartet Acceptance

Palestinian Acceptance of the Quartet. The Palestinians were dubious about the potential effectiveness of the Quartet in achieving a just settlement, but they were nonetheless supportive of its efforts (Shikaki 2007, 4). Palestinians saw the Quartet as a way to balance US favor toward Israel and increase the legitimacy of their own cause.<sup>99</sup> The active engagement by the Quartet powers lent legitimacy and attention to the plight of the Palestinians, and this could only help their cause, or so they felt. Arafat in particular courted the Quartet's involvement in the process.

There was some renewed hope on the Palestinian side because the formation of the Quartet seemed to dilute U.S. influence on the peace process, and therefore might lead to a more balanced approach- but when the Quartet failed to object to continuing settlement expansion, that sent a disillusioning message that nothing new or substantive could be expected.<sup>100</sup>

Mahmoud Abbas welcomed the Quartet initially, just like Arafat, but he had an even higher degree of skepticism about the Quartet's level of commitment to actually reaching a settlement. Arafat, Abbas, and the rest of the Palestinian leadership recognized that Israel had special favor with the United States. Nonetheless, although they knew the US would always favor Israel, they also knew that no other player could influence Israel to the same degree. Therefore Palestinians generally welcomed the

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<sup>99</sup> Daniel Kurtzer, interview with the author, 2008 and Cristina Gallach, interview with the author, 2008.

<sup>100</sup> Richard Falk, interview with the author, 2009.



Americans' involvement, especially when they came as part of the Quartet, where US policy might be tempered by the United Nations and the European Union.

There are two qualifications to this general acceptance, however. The first qualification relates to the framework of the Roadmap. Although the Oslo Accords are considered by many as a major breakthrough in the peace process, there are many on the Palestinian side of the equation who are not "extremist," but who nonetheless reject the Oslo Accords because they consider them to be skewed in Israel's favor.

The Zionist movement negated entirely the mere presence of Palestinians, and went so far as to claim that there is not such a thing as Palestine but rather what some called "pre-state Israel." Now let us make a major leap from Herzl to the Oslo process. Throughout the seven years of peace negotiations, Israeli negotiators toiled with the same old notion and failed to acknowledge that Palestinians have a fundamental right to a free and independent Palestine. (Hassassian 2002, 116)

In other words, their view was that the Oslo accords assumed a viable state for Israel on all the land that it had taken from the Palestinians, and it assumed that the Palestinians should try to make a state out of what was left over, whether viable or not. They hold similar objections about the Roadmap since it begins with similar assumptions. Since the Roadmap is the primary working document of the Quartet, this group of Palestinians is less than ecstatic about the Quartet's efforts.

The second qualification includes the first but goes further: this is embodied in the point of view of groups like Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad. These groups reject the very existence of the state of Israel and therefore have no use for the Quartet

or its agenda, in any form. These groups are classic examples of John Stedman's *spoilers*. The stated objective of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, for instance, is "the establishment of an Islamic Palestinian state and the destruction of the state of Israel."<sup>101</sup> The case of Hamas is more complicated. It also calls for the destruction of Israel, but it is now part of a government, voted into power in free and fair elections. This will be addressed in chapter 5.

Israeli Acceptance of the Quartet. Israelis were much cooler in their reception of the Quartet. Ariel Sharon in particular was almost disdainful of its efforts and chose to deal with individual members of the Quartet on a strictly bilateral basis. "There was no Quartet as far as Sharon was concerned. Israel did not trust the non-US members of the Quartet. They feared the loss of US ability to protect Israel. They feared the 'ganging up' phenomenon."<sup>102</sup> This reception was not surprising since the Quartet appeared to threaten the "special relationship" between the United States and Israel. The European Union was more sympathetic to the Palestinian cause than the United States. Many European leaders have been openly critical of Israeli policies toward the Palestinians.<sup>103</sup> Sharon viewed the United Nations with similar skepticism. Even though Israel's existence is partly due to the United Nations, the relationship between

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<sup>101</sup> *Country Reports on Terrorism, 2008*. US Department of State, 2008, available at <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/srt/2008/122449.htm>.

<sup>102</sup> Daniel Kurtzer, interview with the author, 2008.

<sup>103</sup> For more discussion of the EU's activities in the Quartet see Youngs (2006, 145-168).

the state and the world body has been difficult ever since 1948. This culminated in the “Zionism equals racism” resolution. Russia’s relations with Arab states were no source of comfort to Israel either. Taken together, three parts of the Quartet were threatening to Sharon’s policies toward the PA. The Quartet had little to offer and much to fear. After Sharon’s incapacitation, Ehud Olmert was more accepting of the Quartet’s efforts, both in rhetoric and in practice. He met with Tony Blair as the Quartet Envoy on several occasions and even invoked the Quartet’s name in demands on the new PA government for recognition of Israel, renunciation of violence, and acceptance of past agreements (Benn, Issacharoff, and Alon 2007).

#### *4.6 Quartet Behavior*

The Quartet was confronted with a number of crises that had the potential to become turning points in the peace process. A crisis certainly has the potential to foreclose options in a negotiation that were previously open. Crises usually create uncertainty and uncertainty invokes fear. In conflict situations, fear often drives parties to embrace their narratives more tightly and to refuse to take new risks. This has happened time and again, for instance, when a suicide bombing or other act of terror occurred at exactly the wrong moment and the peace process was stalled. As Darby notes:

The starting motor for all peace processes is the ending of violence, so its resumption is the most common cause of their collapse. The cease-fire in the

Basque Country was ended by bombs in 1999. The same was true of cease-fires in South Africa in 1992 and in Northern Ireland in 1996. (Darby 2001, 96)

But crises have also, on numerous occasions, altered a political environment such that new options and pathways were opened, even options that were previously considered unthinkable. For example, as described in chapter 3, the violence of the 1991 Gulf War victory opened a space for the 1991 Madrid Peace Conference. But Darby narrows the concept from “the spoils of victory” to specific acts of violence. He continues: “Alongside this familiar record, however, is a small but growing body of atrocities that, instead of derailing a peace process, sparked a public sense of outrage and became the catalyst for negotiations” (Darby 2001, 96). Conflict resolution literature refers to this as a component of “ripeness for resolution.”<sup>104</sup>

Between 2004 and 2007, there were at least five events or crises that significantly affected the political environment in Israel / Palestine. In the language of this study, they are considered potential precipitants. Many observers believe that at least four of the five could have led to new openings in the peace process. This study included interviews with many of the key players in and around the Quartet in order to gain an insider’s perspective on what transpired during these five events. The goal was to find out how the Quartet really operated during the crises, whether the Quartet considered each event to be an opportunity worth pursuing, and if they did, how they

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<sup>104</sup> The term was coined by I. William Zartman and is most associated with his work, *Ripe for Resolution* (1989a).

attempted to capitalize on it. In the following sections, each of these events will be discussed in turn:

1. The death of Yasser Arafat (November 2004)
2. The Israeli withdrawal from Gaza (Fall 2005)
3. The stroke of Ariel Sharon (Early January 2006)
4. The Hamas election victory (Late January 2006)
5. The Mecca Agreement (February 2007)

#### *4.7 Potential Precipitant Event One: The Death of Yasser Arafat (Nov 2004)*

The Bush 43 Administration decided early on that even if it wished to engage in the Israel-Palestine peace process, it could never do so with Yasser Arafat himself. This was not a position that the administration kept to itself. European Union diplomat Chris Patten writes, “Throughout the first Bush administration, we were told in Europe that Arafat himself was *the* problem. I heard Condoleezza Rice say it over and over again. She would brook no disagreement,” (Patten 2006, 212). As mentioned earlier, the *Karine A* affair appears to have been a turning point for the entire Quartet process even though it occurred before the Quartet had completely formed. The affair convinced the president that the neo-cons were right, Powell’s approach was unworkable, and “regime change” was needed. The complaints about Arafat were endless and references to a need for his departure were thinly veiled. Any remaining threads of the veil were removed completely by President Bush’s speech on June 24, 2002: “Peace requires a new and different Palestinian leadership, so that a Palestinian

state can be born. I call on the Palestinian people to elect new leaders, leaders not compromised by terror.”<sup>105</sup>

Because of this posture, it seemed obvious that the departure of Arafat would be immediately embraced as a clear opportunity to move the peace process forward. “Now we have the real test in circumstances made more propitious by the arrival in 2004 of time’s winged chariot, and its departure with Mr. Arafat on board...the problem is no longer there, so progress should be a lot easier” (Patten 2006, 212). Palestinian pollster, Dr. Khalil Shikaki, put it plainly: “With Arafat out of the way, progress became possible” (Shikaki 2007, 4). Shikaki went on to list five specific contextual changes in Palestine that occurred because of the passing of Arafat that directly affected prospects for the peace process. “The political system became more open; optimism regarding the future increased; economic conditions improved; public willingness to accept compromise in a political settlement with Israel increased; and the order of Palestinian priorities changed” (Shikaki 2007, 5).

However, the Quartet as a body did not embrace the passing of Arafat as a moment to be seized. When the man who “never missed an opportunity to miss an opportunity” created a glaring one, the Quartet returned the favor and missed an opportunity itself. What is striking is that those who were part of the Quartet, or very close to it, expressed a counterintuitive but nearly uniform view of the event: despite all the previous rhetoric about Arafat being the problem, they did *not* consider his

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<sup>105</sup> This speech became a pivotal moment. See (Bush Outlines Middle East Peace Plan 2002).

departure to be an especially great opportunity.<sup>106</sup> This consistent perception seems to have been caused by at least two significant factors.

First, as long as Sharon was Prime Minister, as far as he was concerned, there *was no peace process* that could experience a turning point. Dov Weisglass was one of Sharon's closest advisors. In an interview with Haaretz, Weisglass expressed Sharon's opinion of a peace process with the Palestinians. Referring to the Gaza Disengagement Plan (which will be discussed shortly) he said, "The disengagement is actually formaldehyde. It supplies the amount of formaldehyde that's necessary *so that there will not be a political process with the Palestinians.*"<sup>107</sup> The members of the Quartet recognized that as long as Sharon was Prime Minister, opening space for negotiation would be extremely difficult. From this perspective, it mattered not who the leader of the Palestinians was.

A second and related reason that Arafat's death was not viewed as a potential turning point at that time was that all attention was focused on the possibility of an Israeli withdrawal from Gaza: the proposed Disengagement Plan just mentioned. There was great uncertainty as to whether Sharon would actually implement the plan, but the potential was intriguing enough to cause the Quartet to all but ignore Arafat's departure. The United States had accepted Sharon's plan and the rest of the Quartet followed suit. President Bush and Prime Minister Sharon met at the White House on

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<sup>106</sup> David Satterfield, Daniel Kurtzer, and William Burns, interviews with the author, 2008.

<sup>107</sup> (Shavit 2004a), emphasis added. Available at: <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/pages/ShArt.jhtml?itemNo=485929>, accessed May 18, 2008.

April 14, 2004 and exchanged official letters regarding the proposed withdrawal. The letter from Bush to Sharon expressed the President's full support for withdrawal: "We welcome the disengagement plan you have prepared, under which Israel would withdraw certain military installations and all settlements from Gaza, and withdraw certain military installations and settlements in the West Bank" (Bush 2004).

Was it a serious offer on Sharon's part? In retrospect, regarding Gaza, the answer is obviously yes. In spite of widespread cynicism, it appears that Sharon really did intend to eventually evacuate the settlements deep inside the West Bank as well. What Sharon did not intend to do, however, was re-start a peace process that would lead to the realization of a Palestinian state any time in the foreseeable future. This will become evident when we examine further comments made by Dov Weisglass in the next section.

A significant component of the overall strategic concept of disengagement was the *momentum* that was supposed to be generated by the Gaza withdrawal. Momentum from a successful withdrawal from Gaza was to aid the more difficult withdrawal from parts of the West Bank. However, all 'forward' momentum ceased when Sharon was incapacitated by a stroke on 4 January 2006.

The point of including information on the Gaza withdrawal in this section on Arafat's departure is to show that when Arafat died in November of 2004, regeneration of the peace process was nowhere in the plans of Ariel Sharon. In fact, quite the opposite was true: he wanted the process to remain stalled indefinitely, "until



the Palestinians turn into Finns,” as Weisglass put it (Shavit 2004a). The United States, intentionally or unintentionally, endorsed this position with the letter from President Bush to Prime Minister Sharon (which will also be addressed in more detail in the next section). In the international political climate of late 2004, the rest of the Quartet acquiesced to the position of the United States and largely ignored the passing of Arafat. This too begs explanation. For this to make sense, one has to peer into the inner workings of the Quartet before 2005.

During the period from the Quartet’s inception in 2002 until the end of 2004, Colin Powell’s frustration over the administration’s stance regarding Israel and Palestine grew beyond repair. As described above, Powell was the only senior administration official who advocated for the resumption of a peace process (Quandt 2005, 402). In spite of opposition from his fellow senior staffers, he worked within the president’s guidance, striving for meaningful progress with the other members of the Quartet.

When Powell worked with the other three Quartet principals, he would step into his element.<sup>108</sup> When faced with a specific crisis in the region, he would work with his counterparts to merge four policy positions into one. He was able to do this because of the sheer force of his personality and his personal credibility. In other words, Powell played a key leadership role that helped the Quartet function.

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<sup>108</sup> Lawrence Wilkerson, interview with the author, 2008.

The Quartet functioned fairly well during the first part of its existence at least partially due to the fact that the disconnect between the president and his secretary of state had not yet become a complete rupture. In the early years, the United States often took the lead in calling Quartet meetings, but once convened, Powell and the others would turn to Kofi Annan to lead the actual proceedings. Thus, in the early days, the Quartet was neither a nefarious instrumental creation of the United States, nor a mechanism co-opted by the United States to do its bidding. It was a practical multilateral approach to address a superbly complex problem. And it worked. Coordination among the Quartet partners on Israeli-Palestinian issues was vastly improved. European foreign ministers were content to funnel their initiatives through the Quartet so the conflicting plans and differing approaches ceased. This drastically reduced “diplomatic confusion.”<sup>109</sup>

Because of his testimony before the United Nations in February of that year regarding Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, Powell’s credibility was damaged.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Senior administration official, interview with the author, 2008.

<sup>110</sup> Wilkerson had personally accompanied Powell to the headquarters of the Central Intelligence Agency for multiple marathon sessions in which they reviewed the evidence against Iraq and built the presentation that would be given to the United Nations. (Wilkerson had worked for Powell when both were still in the military. Powell deeply trusted Wilkerson’s ability to penetrate the bureaucratic glaze that often obscures information presented to senior leaders.) The evidence they were given had been stripped of any reservations regarding its credibility. “Burn notices,” in intelligence parlance, are an example of such qualifications. Standard procedure is to include any known burn notices alongside associated information. However, when Powell (and Wilkerson) were briefed on the evidence against Iraq, all burn notices had been removed. They spent hours reviewing and challenging the information and insisting on clarification for numerous chains of evidence. Despite question after question, no assessments were produced that called into doubt the quality of the sourcing. In an interview with Tim Russert on NBC’s *Meet the Press*, Powell stated that he believes there were people “in the room” who

He was increasingly being bypassed by the president who cut deals directly with Sharon, once even while Powell was in the region (Miller 2008, 200).<sup>111</sup> By the time of Arafat's death, the incongruity between Powell and the rest of the administration had become public and his influence over US policy on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict had been greatly diminished. As noted above, Powell's leadership was an important component of the early functionality of the Quartet. When he could no longer provide that leadership, and when the Administration's policies clashed with the rest of the Quartet, the Quartet did not function well. Both Sharon and Bush were committed to a stance of non-cooperation with the Palestinians.

The weaknesses of multiparty mediation identified by Crocker, Hampson and Aall were being clearly manifested at this point.<sup>112</sup> The first weakness, *lack of a common vision*, was glaring. It should be emphasized, however, that this was not the case from the inception of the Quartet, hence the additional confusion.<sup>113</sup> After Bush departed from Powell's approach, common vision among the Quartet members was lost. This was the single greatest cause of multiparty mediation failure in the case of

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knew that such qualifications had existed and had been removed, but who deliberately concealed their knowledge of those qualifications.

<sup>111</sup> Also, Cristina Gallach, interview with the author, 2008.

<sup>112</sup> See table 3.2.

<sup>113</sup> Again, in late 2001 Bush had agreed to pursue the Palestinian-Israeli issue and the broader Middle East using Powell's approach (Quandt 2005, 395). In the 18 months between the Karine A affair and Powell's trip to the region in May of 2003, Bush abandoned Powell's approach in favor of Sharon and the corresponding neo-conservative strategy.

the Quartet. The Bush Administration began pursuing a vision very different from the UN, the EU, or Russia. This led directly to *mixed signals* and *coordination difficulties*. Needless to say, Sharon was the consummate *forum shopper*. He played to the US and mostly ignored the other members of the Quartet.

Even before the death of Arafat, Israel had the chance to strengthen Mahmoud Abbas after his election to Prime Minister in 2003.

The key point during this period was when Israel, after years of pushing for stronger prime ministerial autonomy from Arafat, undermined Abbas by refusing to lift checkpoint restrictions or halt settlement activity. The EU did little – either itself or through pressure on Israel – to give Abbas a chance to consolidate an independent reform-oriented power base. (Youngs 2006, 156)

For years, Arafat had been characterized as the biggest single block to a successful peace process. Rather suddenly, he was gone. This was a potential precipitant event. But because of the misalignment of goals at that time, the Quartet was not able to embrace the passing of Arafat and convert it into a departure in process. Therefore, no departure occurred and the opportunity slipped away.

#### *4.8 Potential Precipitant Event Two: The Israeli Withdrawal from Gaza (Fall 2005)*

As the previous section already noted, the potential of an Israeli withdrawal from Gaza captured everyone's attention. Sharon announced the plan in early 2004.

Many skeptics doubted that he would actually implement the plan, but implementation was in fact his intention from the very beginning.<sup>114</sup> More significant than the plan itself is the strategic concept that undergirded the plan, which according to its author, reflected accurately the mind of Sharon, at least at that time. Sharon had concluded that a peace process with the PLO was unworkable. He further concluded that the only workable solution to the conflict was complete *separation* from the Palestinians. Gaza was the easy place to start.<sup>115</sup> There were relatively few Jewish settlers there; Gaza had no real strategic value; and as the man who was considered one of the founding fathers of the settler movement, Sharon uniquely had a kind of “Nixon-to-China-authority” to challenge part of the settlement vision.

Sharon’s strategic concept started with the total withdrawal of all settlers and Israeli military presence from Gaza in a very short time period. This was to demonstrate the seriousness of the plan and to put the onus of self-government on the Palestinians themselves. Sharon wanted to force the Palestinians into a position where they could no longer use the Israeli presence as an excuse for non-performance, whether that performance was in the arena of economics, security, or otherwise. Importantly, this plan was to return the strategic initiative to Israel and away from the international community, i.e., the Quartet. Israel would move and the Palestinians (and

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<sup>114</sup> Eival Gilady, interview with the author, 2007. Gilady was the head of the Strategic Planning Division in the IDF and as such, was the primary author of the Gaza Disengagement Plan. In 2005, he left active duty to serve Sharon directly as the head of Coordination and Strategy in the Office of the Prime Minister. He moved to this position in order to oversee the implementation of the plan that he had written, i.e., the Gaza Disengagement Plan.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

the rest of the world) would have to react. This was very important to Sharon, as Weisglass confirmed: “[The Disengagement Plan] transfers the initiative to our hands. It compels the world to deal with our idea, with the scenario we wrote” (Shavit 2004a).

The next phase of the strategic concept was to be withdrawal from most of the West Bank (while leaving the large settlements near Jerusalem in place). In contrast to the rapid implementation of the Gaza withdrawal, this part of the plan would be executed more slowly, over several years in fact. The isolated settlers deep in the West Bank would be offered strong financial incentives to move to the Israeli side of the fence. The Gaza withdrawal was intended to prepare the ground by demonstrating to the West Bank settlers the seriousness of the Israeli government. The hope was that the relatively few settlers who lived deep in the West Bank would be motivated by the example of the Gaza withdrawal to move voluntarily. In the end, if they still refused to leave, the IDF would force them to leave, just as it had the settlers in Gaza. Thus the isolated settlements would be completely evacuated. However, the vast majority of the West Bank settlers would remain in place, notably the aforementioned large settlements surrounding Jerusalem.<sup>116</sup>

This is one of the final status issues about which there is fairly widespread agreement: the borders of Jerusalem would have to be re-drawn such that, as Gadi Baltiansky put it, “The Jewish neighborhoods would go to Israel and the Arab

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

neighborhoods would go to Palestine.”<sup>117</sup> Of critical importance, one should note: it did not matter how well understood this tacit agreement was. No Palestinian negotiator would offer this concession freely. They would expect to receive something significant in exchange. The importance of this point will become apparent shortly.

Another vital component of the withdrawal plan was its *unilateral* nature. Gilady emphasized that on several occasions the Palestinians insisted on negotiating issues about the withdrawal. However, each time, the Israelis refused to negotiate. The Israelis insisted that they would plan and execute their withdrawal unilaterally. They were willing to *coordinate* with the Palestinians in order to make it as orderly as possible,<sup>118</sup> but there would be no negotiation regarding the withdrawal itself, nor would there be any negotiations on other matters that would be linked to the withdrawal.

After a decade of the Oslo process, this was difficult for the Palestinians to grasp. Gilady recalled that, on several occasions, the Palestinians would come back to the Israelis and say, in effect, “OK, let’s get serious now and start negotiating about the withdrawal.” But each time, the Israelis would refuse, offering only to coordinate their actions. In his opinion, this left the Palestinians rather flat-footed. The Israeli motivation for the plan’s unilateral nature was to return the *strategic initiative* to Israel

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<sup>117</sup> Gadi Baltiansky was a diplomat in the Israeli Foreign Ministry and also Press Secretary for Prime Minister Ehud Barak. He was an official member of the Israeli negotiation teams working with Syria and the Palestinians.

<sup>118</sup> This is where James Wolfensohn made a significant and positive impact.

which had been challenged both by the Quartet and by the Arab Peace Initiative. Sharon's plan was to give Israel an undisputed advantage in matters of its own security and in any final status negotiations with the Palestinians. The Palestinians seemed to believe that if there were no negotiations, then there was not in fact going to be a withdrawal. Sharon's strategy was to use the disengagement to change the situation on the ground. Needless to say, this strategy was deeply criticized from several directions at once.

Predictable criticism came from the *far right* within Israel. By withdrawing from part of Eretz Israel, even a relatively unimportant part, Sharon was signaling that the dream of an Israeli state covering all of the land Eretz Israel was officially over. "Sharon's withdrawal from Gaza ended Greater Israel—the idea that Israel could hold the occupied territories forever" (Wittes 2006). Alvaro de Soto put it, "It shattered forever the illusion of the Israeli right that they would be able to hold on to all of Eretz Israel forever" (de Soto 2007b). Sharon violated the basic premise of the Israeli narrative about entitlement to the land. To say the least, this met with opposition from the religious and political right.

Sharon's move to disengage from Gaza was particularly irksome to the *far right* because he had run for election on a platform directly opposed to any withdrawal from the territories. He had famously remarked to the Knesset's Foreign Affairs Committee in April 2002 that "the fate of Netzarim is the fate of Tel Aviv," implying that small settlements in Gaza were as important as the state's largest cities (Burston



2004). His Labor opponent in the 2003 elections, Amram Mitzna, had campaigned on a platform that proposed re-opening negotiations with the Palestinians. If those negotiations failed, Mitzna proposed disengaging from Gaza and most of the West Bank and setting the final borders of the state *unilaterally*. Sharon blasted Mitzna for that position and Mitzna lost the election badly. Later, in a rather remarkable reversal, Sharon proposed his own plan for unilateral disengagement that bore striking resemblance to Mitzna's plan. The right was furious.

But opposition also emanated from the more moderate "*center-right*." Since he expected to be vindicated, Sharon agreed to put the question to members of the Likud party via referendum in May of 2004. To his surprise, it was rejected by 65% of Likud voters. Sharon had not expected this kind of opposition. However, reflection on the Israeli narrative makes this result understandable. Although the majority of both the Israeli and Palestinian public support the concept of a peace agreement, when specific concessions are discussed, support drops.<sup>119</sup> This is the power of the competing narratives and Sharon should probably have anticipated it.

Less predictable, but certainly not unforeseeable, was the opposition from the *left* within Israel. Although moderates on both sides appeared to support withdrawal, some on the far left accused Sharon of giving up Gaza in order to further secure Israel's holdings in the West Bank. In other words, they believed that he never intended to withdraw from any part of the West Bank. This was also the accusation

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<sup>119</sup> See Dowty (2005, 163).

from the Arab world, consistent with the Arab narrative: the Gaza withdrawal was a move to strengthen Israel's hold on its settlements in the West Bank.<sup>120</sup>

Many Palestinians declared the imminent withdrawal a victory for resistance. Just days before the withdrawal began, 84% of Palestinians considered the withdrawal a victory for Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad. But simultaneously, 62% opposed further armed attacks against Israel from the Gaza strip and 77% supported the cease-fire then in place (Shikaki 2005b). In the immediate aftermath of the withdrawal, most Palestinians were encouraged by the move and held out hope that it portended a more positive future. In an interview with the Council on Foreign Relations, Palestinian pollster Khalil Shikaki said,

This is a dynamic that has been triggered by disengagement. In my view, this is the most important development that we have seen here in the last six months and this is entirely due to the disengagement. And it reflects, I believe, a real opening for Palestinians and Israelis because these are major changes. The level of optimism is back very high, as high as it has ever been before the start of the Intifada [in 2000]. So, we are looking at a level of public perception that is not only supportive of compromises but, at the moment, is willing to act on this in terms of voting in the elections in terms of support for discontinuation of violence. (Gwertzman 2005)

But other Palestinians looked past the euphoria of the Gaza withdrawal and considered its implications for the West Bank. As mentioned above, they were concerned that the Israeli government would do exactly what the Israeli left accused him of: give up Gaza in order to consolidate its hold on the West Bank. The unilateral

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<sup>120</sup> See, for instance, Khalidi (2006, 200-217) or Roy (2007, 309-321).

nature of the withdrawal was worrisome, particularly when it was none other than Ariel Sharon leading the way, a man for whom most Palestinians held deep mistrust at best.

The Quartet was generally supportive of the move but early on, there was dissent among the members. To understand the dissent, one must take a closer look at the 14 April 2004 letter from President Bush to Prime Minister Sharon. In the letter, Bush handed Sharon two major concessions on final status issues. First, regarding refugees, he said,

It seems clear that an agreed, just, fair, and realistic framework for a solution to the Palestinian refugee issue as part of any final status agreement will need to be found through the establishment of a Palestinian state, *and the settling of Palestinian refugees there, rather than in Israel.* (2004)

Second, regarding borders he said,

In light of new realities on the ground, including already existing major Israeli population centers, *it is unrealistic to expect that the outcome of final status negotiations will be a full and complete return to the armistice lines of 1949,* and all previous efforts to negotiate a two-state solution have reached the same conclusion. (2004)

To understand the significance of these concessions, one must first recall that these positions on refugees and borders are themselves not surprising. They are part of the tacitly understood “known concessions” that Palestinians would probably have to accept in order to achieve statehood. However, for the Prime Minister of Israel to receive these concessions in writing, *before* any final status negotiations, and from the

President of the United States, was a serious blow to the Palestinians. Sharon and Weisglass both knew it and Weisglass, in an interview in October 2004, openly revealed in what he considered a diplomatic coup. This will be addressed momentarily.

The concessions from President Bush did not go unnoticed within the Quartet. Brian Cowen, the Foreign Minister of Ireland simultaneously serving as the EU President, expressed a direct challenge to Bush's letter. Speaking for the EU, Cowen said,

The European Union recalls its established position, restated by the European Council of 25-26 March, that the Union *will not recognize any change to the pre-1967 borders* other than those arrived at by agreement between the parties. The Union emphasizes that *no declared views on the possible shape of a final settlement can pre-empt the negotiation* of that settlement.<sup>121</sup>

By the end of the Quartet meeting on 4 May 2004, the group had re-established a unified position. Kofi Annan read the Quartet's Statement: "We took positive note of Prime Minister Sharon's announced intention to withdraw from all Gaza settlements and parts of the West Bank."<sup>122</sup> Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov seemed at pains to emphasize the unanimity of the Quartet, and his support of it, in each of the three responses he gave during the press briefing following the Quartet meeting. He said,

Today's statement by the Quartet...confirms that this is definitely the only unified position, the one unified position, of the Quartet...the Quartet has

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<sup>121</sup> (European Union Statement, April 17, 2004: Statement on the Middle East Peace Process 2004), emphasis added.

<sup>122</sup> See the full statement (Quartet Statement, May 4, 2004: UN Quartet: Kofi Annan, Sergey Lavrov, Brian Cowen, Javier Solana, Chris Patten, and Colin L. Powell 2004) in Appendix E.

maintained its position and I would say has consolidated its position...That's the general position of the roadmap of the Quartet and I subscribe to it.<sup>123</sup>

The Quartet was once again unified, but the statement it produced that day contained language not seen before in their declarations:

*We also note that no party should take unilateral actions that seek to predetermine issues that can only be resolved through negotiation and agreement between the two parties. Any final settlements on issues such as borders and refugees must be mutually agreed to by Israelis and Palestinians based on Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, 1397 and 1515; the terms of reference of the Madrid Peace Process, previous agreements; and the initiative of Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah endorsed by the Beirut Arab League Summit. It must also be consistent with the roadmap.*<sup>124</sup>

This new language revealed that the other members of the Quartet were still willing to push back against the United States, and in some measure, were able to constrain US behavior. This language appeared in several subsequent Quartet statements.

It turns out that Cowen was right to check Sharon's intentions because Sharon had another motive for the unilateral withdrawal from Gaza. As mentioned above, one of his closest aides was Dov Weisglass. He saw in the withdrawal an opportunity to put off Palestinian statehood indefinitely. With President Bush's letter to Sharon in hand, Weisglass described the diplomatic triumph.

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<sup>123</sup> These are excerpts from the three statements made by Lavrov. See (Quartet Statement, May 4, 2004: UN Quartet: Kofi Annan, Sergey Lavrov, Brian Cowen, Javier Solana, Chris Patten, and Colin L. Powell 2004) in Appendix E.

<sup>124</sup> The "new language" is highlighted with italics. See (Quartet Statement, May 4, 2004: UN Quartet: Kofi Annan, Sergey Lavrov, Brian Cowen, Javier Solana, Chris Patten, and Colin L. Powell 2004)

On the other hand, in regard to the large settlement blocs, thanks to the disengagement plan, we have in our hands a first-ever American statement that they will be part of Israel...Sharon can tell the leaders of the settlers that he is evacuating 10,000 settlers and in the future he will be compelled to evacuate another 10,000, but he is strengthening the other 200,000, strengthening their hold in the soil. Arik [Sharon] can say honestly that this is a serious move because of which, out of 240,000 settlers, 190,000 will not be moved from their place...

Weisglass's bravado increased as the interview progressed.

I found a device, in cooperation with the management of the world, to ensure that there will be no stopwatch here. That there will be no timetable to implement the settlers' nightmare. I have postponed that nightmare indefinitely. Because what I effectively agreed to with the Americans was that part of the settlements would not be dealt with at all, *and the rest will not be dealt with until the Palestinians turn into Finns*. That is the significance of what we did. The significance is the *freezing of the political process*. And when you freeze that process you prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state and you prevent a discussion about the refugees, the borders and Jerusalem. *Effectively, this whole package that is called the Palestinian state, with all that it entails, has been removed from our agenda indefinitely. And all this with authority and permission. All with a presidential blessing and the ratification of both houses of Congress.* (Shavit 2004a, emphasis added)

The Israeli newspaper *Haaretz* won a Pulitzer Prize in the category of

“Understatement in a Headline” when it published a follow-on article to the Weisglass interview: “US Asks Israel to Clarify Comments Made by Top PM Aide” (Shavit and Benn 2004b).

Unlike the passing of Yasser Arafat, the Quartet unanimously considered the Gaza withdrawal to be a potential turning point, and one to be seized. Secretary Powell emphasized several times during the press conference on May 4 that this was a moment to be apprehended. He said,

I think what we have to look at now is how to move forward, and that's what the Quartet was focused on today: how do we take advantage of this new opportunity of the evacuation of settlements...and how can we get the Palestinians to take advantage of this opportunity...And this gives us something to work with, and we're trying to take advantage of that opportunity...And so this is a time for us to look at the opportunity that has been presented...If we seize this opportunity...And so we look at this as an opportunity to be seized.<sup>125</sup>

Clearly, Powell saw this as a potential turning point. In one of his more telling statements about the inner workings of the Quartet and his belief in its potential to be effective, he stated,

Where were we going with this process? Where were we a few weeks ago? We were still hoping for something to break, something to come into the equation that would change the equation and give us something to work with. We now have that with the stated intention of Prime Minister Sharon and with the clear support of the Israeli people to move in this direction.<sup>126</sup>

The Quartet Statements of 9 May 2005 and 23 June 2005, both emphasized the need to not miss this potential turning point: "The Quartet reiterates its belief that this is a moment of optimism in the search for peace in the Middle East, and is an opportunity that should not be missed to revitalize the Roadmap" (Quartet Statement, May 9, 2005). However, turning this sentiment into reality proved altogether difficult. In retrospect, Weisglass's assessment has turned out to be largely true. The withdrawal from Gaza, and the events that followed, truly have become formaldehyde to the peace process.

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<sup>125</sup> See (Quartet Statement, May 4, 2004: UN Quartet: Kofi Annan, Sergey Lavrov, Brian Cowen, Javier Solana, Chris Patten, and Colin L. Powell 2004) in Appendix E.

<sup>126</sup> See (Quartet Statement, May 4, 2004: UN Quartet: Kofi Annan, Sergey Lavrov, Brian Cowen, Javier Solana, Chris Patten, and Colin L. Powell 2004) in Appendix E.

Before leaving the topic of the Gaza withdrawal, a Quartet success should be noted. This came through the work accomplished by James Wolfensohn, former president of the World Bank, who became the newly appointed Quartet Envoy. Exactly what a “Quartet Envoy” was, however, was not at first clear. Each member of the Quartet had *principals* (secretary general / secretary of state / foreign minister level) and *envoys* (officials from each of the four members at the next level down) to the Quartet, but the Quartet had never had an envoy “of its own.” (Table 4.1 shows the principals and envoys by year from 2002 to 2008.) This caused considerable confusion and some consternation among the members of the Quartet, particularly at the envoy level, and it caused even more confusion among Palestinians and Israelis trying to understand who was who.<sup>127</sup> Wolfensohn was going to be a special envoy to the Quartet for the United States but at the last minute, Kofi Annan convinced Secretary Rice and the other partners to name Wolfensohn a “Quartet envoy.” Alvaro de Soto, the UN envoy to the Quartet said,

His involvement had the effect of at least partially eclipsing and somewhat diminishing the role of the other envoys to the Quartet... Wolfensohn did little to hide his aspiration to broaden his mandate, but this was resisted perhaps most strongly by the US Department of State which had proposed him in the first place. (de Soto 2007a, 6)

It should be noted that regardless of this tension, de Soto had much praise for Wolfensohn’s work. In spite of his frustrations with the political dimensions of the use

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<sup>127</sup> Alvaro de Soto, interview with the author, 2008.



(or abuse) Quartet, de Soto considered Wolfensohn's efforts to be one of the bright spots of the Quartet's efforts.

Wolfensohn devoted his considerable clout to bring about some semblance of coordination between Israel and the Palestinians so as to ensure a smooth disengagement. He also set out the preconditions for economic revival in the post-disengagement period...During his tenure, Wolfensohn forced a semblance of coordination between Israel and the Palestinians which contributed to the smooth disengagement...[He also] contributed greatly to highlighting the notion first put forward by the World Bank that the Israeli closure system was *the determining factor* in the decline of the Palestinian economy.<sup>128</sup> (de Soto 2007a, 6, 9)

**Table 4.1: Quartet Principals and Envoys by Year, 2002-2008.**

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>Principals</b>							
US	Powell	Powell	Powell	Rice	Rice	Rice	Rice
Russia	Ivanov	Ivanov	Lavrov	Lavrov	Lavrov	Lavrov	Lavrov
EU	Solana	Solana	Solana	Solana	Solana	Solana	Solana
US	Annan	Annan	Annan	Annan	Annan	Ban	Ban
<b>Envoys</b>							
US	W.J. Burns	W.J. Burns	W.J. Burns	Welch	Welch	Welch	Welch
Russia	Vdovin	Vdovin	Vdovin	Kalugin	Kalugin	Saltanov	Saltanov
EU	Moratinos	Moratinos	Otte	Otte	Otte	Otte	Serry
US	Rød-Larsen	Rød-Larsen	Rød-Larsen	de Soto	de Soto	Williams	Williams
<b>Quartet Envoy</b>	-	-	-	Wolfensohn	-	Blair	Blair
<b>National Leaders</b>							
US Pres	G.W. Bush	G.W. Bush	G.W. Bush	G.W. Bush	G.W. Bush	G.W. Bush	G.W. Bush
Israeli PM	Sharon	Sharon	Sharon	Sharon	Olmert	Olmert	Olmert
PA Pres	Arafat	Arafat	Arafat	Abbas	Abbas	Abbas	Abbas

<sup>128</sup> For analysis of the economic impact of the closure system, see (The Economic Effects of Restricted Access to Land in the West Bank 2008)

Wolfensohn's efforts rendered the coordination between Israelis and Palestinians on withdrawal matters much more effective. As a result of IDF planning, Israeli and Palestinian cooperation, and Wolfensohn's attention to details, the withdrawal itself went off remarkably well. There were protests by some Israelis. A small portion of the Gaza settlers had to be physically removed by the IDF (which of course received international media attention), but by and large the actual withdrawal was surprisingly uneventful. This is not to minimize the emotional trauma experienced by the settlers who were removed. However, in comparison to the potential for widespread violence in such a religiously and politically delicate situation, the actual withdrawal proceeded more smoothly than anyone dared to hope. In this limited sense, the Quartet was successful, but this was far short of mediating a comprehensive peace agreement, which was the Quartet's real goal.

Once the withdrawal was complete, the question became, would there be a "return to the Roadmap?" Would there be some other opening for negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis? Would a peace agreement finally be brokered? Unfortunately, the answer turned out to be no. Alvaro de Soto provided a poignant analysis a year and a half later that is worth quoting at length:

In Israel today [2007] there is great unhappiness at the results of the Gaza disengagement, which had clear majority support at the time but is now regarded, in retrospect, as having been a failure...The policy of unilateral withdrawal from occupied territory which is at the heart of Kadima's agenda took a severe beating. Unilateral disengagement, justified by the urgent need to

set Israel's borders before the demographic time bomb of Palestinian population growth overwhelmed the Jewish state, was shelved; however, it was not replaced by a renewed urgency to negotiate a settlement, but by a do-nothing policy reflecting the weakness of the Israeli government as well as the unreadiness to accept that the 1967 line must be the basis for a settlement. In truth, the PLO is entitled to ask of Israel whether it is a partner as Israel regularly asks of the PLO and PA. (de Soto 2007a, 10-11)

Of all the events that occurred in Israel and the Palestinian Territories between 2002 and 2008, the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza had the highest promise as a potential precipitant event. Of all the moments the Quartet could have chosen to turn a potential precipitant event into a departure in process and thereby a positive turning point, the Gaza withdrawal was the greatest possibility. This relates to the competing narratives.

Narratives drive public opinion, but the relationship is recursive. Changes in public opinion can lead to modification of narratives.<sup>129</sup> One tangible impact of the Oslo process was on the competing narratives – they changed. As issues were discussed that were previously taboo (such as the legitimacy of “the other,” the final status of borders, refugees, Jerusalem, etc.), public opinion toward those issues softened.<sup>130</sup> As public opinion softened, the narratives changed. The taboo issues are now debated openly.

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<sup>129</sup> See related discussion in Bar-On (2006, 142-144).

<sup>130</sup> However, at the same time, opinions hardened among the more extreme elements of each society, as described earlier.

This is significant for the Gaza withdrawal because public support for some kind of progress in the peace process was the highest of the period. Reflecting on the period of the withdrawal, Wolfensohn said,

I think it was certainly easier in the glowing moment when there appeared to be an agreement that would give hope to the Palestinians and security to the Israelis – and you need to have both. You need to have a Palestinian community that feels it can have hope. The polls show that Israelis and Palestinians have such a balance – they'd like to come to a deal on borders, they'd like to reach a situation in which each can get on with their lives and live side by side for centuries. (Smooha 2007)

Favorable public opinion offers politicians the opportunity to make the kinds of concessions that are required for comprehensive peace settlements. Instead, the Sharon government pursued its policy of unilateralism. Because of its divergent goals, the Quartet did not push back. It therefore became the greatest missed opportunity of that era.

However, this was a missed opportunity in a second way. Sharon could have used the occasion of the Gaza withdrawal to build the standing of the new President of the Palestinian National Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, in the eyes of Palestinians. With cooperation from Israel, Abbas could have pointed to the withdrawal as tangible progress on the ground which is so desperately sought among Palestinians. This would have raised his credibility in their eyes and given him leverage to make his own concessions toward a comprehensive peace agreement. Given Sharon's reluctance, the Quartet could have stepped in and pressed the issue. But the Quartet's goals were not

aligned, Sharon was not challenged, Abbas was not strengthened, and Israel subsequently complained that it had no partner who could deliver in the peace process.

The Quartet's acceptance of unilateralism removed from the agenda any effort at getting Israelis and Palestinians to agree on anything...It is true that for Gazans, the evacuation did create a new reality...However, arrangements that would have allowed for a real opening and economic upswing that were sealed in negotiations last November were never implemented...The Quartet failed to seize the post-Arafat moment, failed to support Abbas after his election to the presidency, [and] lent a hand to Israeli unilateralism. (Levy and Shtender-Auerbach 2006, 16, 19, 20)

#### *4.9 Potential Precipitant Event Three: The Stroke of Ariel Sharon (January 2006)*

The first potential precipitant event considered above was the passing of Yasser Arafat. There it was shown that the Quartet missed this opportunity primarily because the goals of its members were not aligned. The multiparty mediation body instead missed the opportunity to strengthen Abbas and fixated on Sharon's unilateral Gaza withdrawal plan. The second potential precipitant event was the withdrawal itself. The conflicting visions of the Quartet members again caused multiparty mediation failure, this time by allowing Sharon to proceed with a unilateral withdrawal divorced from any pretense of concluding a peace agreement with the Palestinians. Raised hopes in Israel and Palestine for a settlement were dashed. Both missed opportunities seemed to be linked directly to Sharon. Since the withdrawal was now complete and Arafat was gone, the remaining "obstacle" to the peace process

appeared to be Sharon himself. Would the exit of Sharon open new space for negotiation?

To put the third potential precipitant event in context and appreciate its implications for multiparty mediation failure, one must first understand the political changes that occurred between the end of the Gaza withdrawal in September, 2005, and Sharon's incapacitation in January of 2006. This will also serve as context for the potential precipitant events in the next chapter. Public support for the disengagement had vacillated over time. As described above, support was initially high when the idea was still a concept. However, as the reality of the withdrawal began to encounter the Israeli narrative, support dropped (as evidenced by the rejection of the plan by the Likud party referendum).

As the withdrawal itself approached, Sharon launched an extensive public relations campaign that was successful at assuaging fears and answering concerns. It is important to note that only around ten percent of Israelis identify themselves as Orthodox Jews. The majority of Israeli citizens are sympathetic to the ideology of the religious right, but they are not beholden to it. From this more pragmatic, if pessimistic, viewpoint, they listened to Sharon's arguments about how the disengagement would reduce the burden on the IDF, reduce the expense of supporting the settlers in Gaza, and put the onus of self-government on the Palestinians. Sharon argued that *separation* would increase security for Israelis. The withdrawal from Gaza, combined with the construction of the "security barrier" in the West Bank, seemed to

be a plausible solution to their security problems, and it was worth the cost of giving up part of the land. Therefore, as the withdrawal approached, the public embraced Sharon's message and support for withdrawal increased once again.<sup>131</sup>

The immediate aftermath of the withdrawal appeared to vindicate Sharon by fulfilling everything that he had promised. As discussed above, the operation went off more smoothly than anyone could have hoped. Unilateral disengagement appeared to be the way forward for Israel. In the flush of triumph, Sharon decided to consolidate his victory and shed his opposition. He left the Likud party and formed Kadima.<sup>132</sup>

Alvaro de Soto described it this way:

Sharon decided to rid himself of the ankle-biters in Likud by founding a new party, Kadima ("Forward"), and taking with him the cream of Likud, leaving the carcass to Binyamin (Bibi) Netanyahu. There was no doctrine for the new party other than Sharon himself and the unwritten understanding that he was trustworthy and would lead Israel to further unilateral disengagement from large parts of the West Bank while tightening his grip on the bits he wanted to keep. (de Soto 2007a, 11)

Sharon initially tried to claim that he had come up with the idea of a new centrist party "overnight" but this was belied by a slip of one of the new party's

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<sup>131</sup> A poll reported by the Israeli newspaper, Yediot Ahronot, on 1 July 2005 found that 62% of respondents supported disengagement.

<sup>132</sup> The word Kadima means "forward" or "onward" but has special significance as a military term: it refers specifically to a charge of officers. It is similar to the English word, "Charge!" but with the added connotation that the officers of a unit are the ones doing the charging. Israeli media speculated that Sharon chose the title for his new party in order to invoke the success of his military career and thereby convey confidence in his ability to handle security matters.

officials.<sup>133</sup> It was belied even more by the immediate flurry of defections from both the right and the left to the new party – the ground had obviously been well-prepared. Shimon Peres from the left, Ehud Olmert and Tzipi Livni from the right, and dozens of other leaders (mostly from Likud but from other parties also), became the party's founders. It was described as the “big bang” in Israeli politics.

Although in truth Kadima was formed on more than just Sharon himself, he was undoubtedly the central figure and his ideas became the new party's platform. The central tenets of the first platform were reportedly drafted by Livni:

- The Israeli nation has a national and historic right to the whole of Israel. However, in order to maintain a Jewish majority, part of the Land of Israel must be given up to maintain a Jewish and democratic state.
- Israel shall remain a Jewish state and homeland. Jewish majority in Israel will be preserved by territorial concessions to Palestinians.
- Jerusalem and large settlement blocks in the West Bank will be kept under Israeli control.
- The Israeli national agenda to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and achieve two states for two nations will be the road map. It will be carried out in stages: dismantling terror organizations, collecting firearms, implementing security reforms in the Palestinian Authority, and preventing incitement. At the end of the process, a demilitarized Palestinian state devoid of terror will be established.
- Israel's political system will be modified to ensure stability. One possibility to achieve this goal would be to hold primary, regional and personal elections to the Knesset and the Prime Minister's office.
- Kadima would not rule out a future coalition partnership with any Israeli political party or person. (Mualem 2005)

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<sup>133</sup> The official was the party's new Director General, Avigdor Yitzhaki.



Although it was short on details, the issues addressed in the platform were indeed significant. It explicitly stated that parts of “Greater Israel” must be given up; it acknowledged the ‘demographic problem,’ i.e., that if the Occupied Territories were included in the state of Israel, then Arabs would soon outnumber Jews such that Israel could be either Jewish or democratic but not both; it acknowledged the intention to maintain control of large settlements; finally, and perhaps most significantly, it openly embraced a two-state solution. The platform codified the overall strategic concept of withdrawal that was described in the previous section. To declare this as the party’s central platform was quite significant. It proved to be enormously popular and it would remain so – as long as the principle of unilateral withdrawal delivered what it had promised: increased security.

However, not long after the withdrawal was complete, several challenges to the disengagement strategy emerged. The IDF continued to control the borders of Gaza, often closing them for ‘security reasons.’ That continued to disrupt any prospects for economic development in Gaza, and despite Mr. Wolfensohn’s best efforts, unrest was inevitable. The subsequent rocket attacks from Gaza fueled the worst fears of Sharon’s opponents: Israel had given up part of Eretz Israel and had received nothing in return – except more terrorist attacks.

Another issue emerged during the fall that eroded the attractiveness of Kadima’s disengagement strategy. As discussed above, a key component of the strategy was its unilateral nature. This was supposed to return the strategic initiative to

Israel and enable it to implement the strategy on its own terms and in its own timing. This theoretically would give the government maximum control over the security of the state, even if it came at the cost of giving up land. However, Tamara Coffman Wittes writes:

In the Israeli security establishment, those responsible for implementing the Gaza disengagement knew from the outset that it could be unilateral in name only. The self-determined aspects of Israel's withdrawal from Gaza were few: the decision to leave, the timing of the departure, and the extent of the pullout. Everything else required cooperation from the Palestinian Authority. (2006, 1)

The high level of required coordination was a serious blow to the disengagement strategy because it belied the "unilateralism" myth. More importantly, it was widely known that withdrawal from the West Bank would be far more difficult than withdrawal from Gaza. Yet the Gaza withdrawal in practice had required much more coordination with the Palestinians than anticipated. The West Bank would be exponentially more difficult and therefore little about it could truly be unilateral. The key point is that this afforded the Palestinians far more leverage than Sharon ever intended. If that were true, then the cost of giving up land in Eretz Israel appeared less attractive than it had originally. By November of 2005, the Kadima platform, which had been founded on the strategy of disengagement, was rapidly losing its popularity.

On the 18 December 2005, Sharon suffered a minor stroke. He recovered quickly, and although nerves were rattled, no political harm came from it. Polls showed strong support for Kadima in spite of Sharon's health scare. (Franklin 2006a). However, on 5 January 2006, he suffered a "significant" stroke and was rushed to

Jerusalem's Hadassah Medical Center. This time his prognosis was bleaker.

Ehud Olmert stepped into the role of Acting Prime Minister and continued to preach Sharon's message of peace and security via Kadima's platform of withdrawal and separation. For a while, the shock of Sharon's departure was assuaged and support for Kadima remained strong. (Franklin 2006b, b). Olmert was a savvy politician and Kadima would go on to win the elections in March. But Ehud Olmert was no Ariel Sharon. His government would be tainted by several rounds of corruption allegations. Although Sharon himself had rarely been far from similar accusations, he possessed a "Teflon coating," as Alvaro de Soto put it, that Olmert simply did not have.

In the beginning of 2006, there may have been a fleeting moment when the Quartet could have attempted to seize the opportunity of Sharon's departure to push Israel toward negotiations with the Palestinians. That moment, however, was quickly eclipsed by the election victory of Hamas on 25 January. But even before the Hamas election victory, the Quartet faced great difficulty in achieving anything like success in the peace process due to another factor: the relative weakness of the two leaders. Arafat and now Sharon were out of the picture. Abbas and Olmert emerged as the new leadership of the contending parties. But neither would have the influence of their predecessors, either in the first few weeks of January, 2006, nor anytime in the two years thereafter (the scope of this study). The weakness of both was most apparent in the area of security.

Consider Olmert and the issue of security. In order for an Israeli leader to move the peace process forward, at least two things are required. First, the leader must have the trust of the general population on security matters. Second, the leader must be willing to engage with the Palestinian leadership. (Yitzak Rabin, for example, met both of these requirements.) Considered in this manner, Sharon and Olmert can be seen as mirror-image opposites of each other. Sharon had the trust of the Israeli people on security matters, but he was unwilling to engage the Palestinians. Olmert, by contrast, was willing to meet with the Palestinian leadership, but did not have the trust of the Israeli people on security matters. Therefore, for opposite reasons, neither Sharon nor Olmert would or could personally make much progress toward peace in the climate of the beginning of 2006.

Sharon escaped most of the criticism for the unilateral withdrawal policy because of his incapacitation. But that left Olmert and the rest of Kadima in a difficult position. What do you do with your party, (and your government), when both the founding *idea* of your party and the founding *personality* of your party ‘depart’ at nearly the same time? Olmert, although a smart and experienced politician, was clearly not the charismatic war hero that Sharon was. After Gaza began unwinding, even Sharon would have had a hard time maintaining the faith of the people in his ability to provide for their security. Olmert had not a prayer. Wittes again:

But this is where the loss of Sharon matters. While his legacy is complicated indeed, Sharon’s political comeback occurred because he was the toughest, meanest, biggest ex-general Israelis had on offer in the midst of a fierce Palestinian uprising. Israelis from left and right came to trust him on security.

Without Sharon, Israelis will be more fearful of disengagement undertaken in close coordination with an inconstant and imperfect Palestinian partner – in other words, the version of disengagement that is most likely to work. (Wittes 2006, 3)

Now consider Mahmoud Abbas. He was in a similar position to Olmert in January, 2006, but for different reasons. Abu Mazen was a consummate negotiator. He had been one of Arafat's top aides and had participated in nearly all of the major events of the peace process since the early 1990s (Quandt 2005, 401, 506 note 44). However, even as the president of the Palestinian National Authority and the chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, he had only marginal influence over several of the factions within Palestine (Shikaki 2007, 6, Quandt 2005, 403-404). This was largely due to the history of Arafat's machinations with intra-Palestinian rivalries. Out of fear of challenge to his own leadership, Arafat often pitted his lieutenants against one another. He tried to ensure that no single person had the support of too many Palestinian factions. The result was predictable. After Arafat's demise, even though Abu Mazen was the "most popular" leader, he still lacked credibility among large portions of the Palestinian people and the Palestinian Authority. Like Olmert, he was severely limited in what he could actually deliver from his government.

The Quartet Statements just before and after the Gaza withdrawal consistently called for a "return to the Roadmap," since both parties had clearly departed from it. The 23 June 2005 Quartet statement said, "In this context, the Quartet reminds both parties that they continue to have obligations under the Roadmap; and reaffirms the

need to avoid any action that contravenes the Roadmap or prejudices final status negotiations.”<sup>134</sup> The 20 September Quartet statement, just after the withdrawal, said:

The Quartet calls for renewed action in parallel by both parties on their obligations in accordance with the sequence of the Roadmap. As part of the confidence-building process the Quartet urged both sides to return to the cooperative agenda reached at Sharm el-Sheikh.<sup>135</sup>

The Israeli government had violated the Roadmap by allowing construction of settlements to continue. The Palestinian Authority had violated the Roadmap by allowing terrorist violence to continue. Both sides blamed the other for their own indiscretions. Since the Quartet defined success as a return to the Roadmap, the question for the Quartet was whether Olmert could deliver on cessation of settlement activity and Abbas could deliver on cessation of rocket attacks. But since the goals of the US were not aligned with the goals of the rest of the Quartet, and since this was further exacerbated by the fact that the US was the most powerful actor in the Quartet, Olmert never felt real pressure to stop settlements. The continuation of settlement expansion and the continuation of the occupation offered no motivation for Palestinian

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<sup>134</sup> See statement in Appendix F (Quartet Statement, June 23, 2005: Quartet Statement on Middle East Peace 2005).

<sup>135</sup> (Quartet Statement, September 20, 2005: Quartet Statement on Middle East Peace 2005) The reference to Sharm el-Sheikh is to the summit held there in February of 2005 between Sharon, Abbas, President Mubarak of Egypt, and King Abdullah II of Jordan. At the end of the summit, Sharon and Abbas read statements pledging an end to the reciprocal violence of the Al-Aqsa Intifada and a return to the Roadmap to Peace.

extremists to cease terror attacks. The undercutting of Abbas left him unable to control the militias in his midst.

Here again, the misalignment of the goals of the mediators rendered the strengths of multiparty mediation moot and brought the weaknesses of multiparty mediation to the fore. The primary strength of multiparty mediation, leverage, was unavailable due to the conflicting agendas of the mediating parties. The absence of leverage left the other “strengths” empty, with the exception of *comparative advantage of mediators*. The European Union continued to attempt to build the capacity of Palestinian institutions and Palestinian civil society. Unfortunately, that proved too much for both.

Given this context, (and this context is only half the story – the next chapter will address the Hamas election victory), the view from the Quartet’s vantage point in January was rather bleak. The Quartet principals and envoys did not consider Sharon’s departure to be a potential turning point because Olmert was not strong enough to deliver on any substantive issues, even if he wanted to do so. Likewise, Abbas was not strong enough to reciprocate. In yet another case, a potential precipitate event was missed because of the misalignment of mediator goals. Therefore, no departure in process occurred and no turning point resulted.

The confluence of these factors offered bleak prospects for success, even if these were all the difficulties that the parties were facing. If ever there were a chance of success for the framework of the Roadmap and the multiparty mediation

mechanism of the Quartet between 2002 and 2008, it would have to have occurred before the election victory of Hamas. The departure of Ariel Sharon was in close proximity to the Hamas election. However, the Quartet was unlikely to cause a departure in process even if the election were much later. But the passing of Yasser Arafat, and especially the withdrawal from Gaza, were potential precipitant events that the Quartet could have seized in order to move to a departure in process and subsequently to a positive turning point in the peace process.

The election victory of Hamas was a ground-breaking event that would completely alter the context of the peace process. Unfortunately, the manner in which the Quartet handled this event foreclosed any prospect of progress toward a peaceful settlement any time during the remaining tenure of the George W. Bush Administration and sealed multiparty mediation failure. The study now turns to these events.



## **Chapter Five**

### **Lights Out: The Quartet after January 2006**

#### *5.1 Introduction*

The previous chapter analyzed multiparty mediation failure in the case of the Quartet from the beginning of the George W. Bush Administration in 2001 to the first weeks of 2006. There it was found that multiparty mediation failure was due primarily to the mismatched goals of the mediators, specifically the differing goals between the US and the other three partners. Beginning in 2006, the multiparty mediation failure of the Quartet went to a new level.

This chapter will address two potential precipitant events. As this study has already alluded, the pivotal moment in the entire six-year period from Quartet formation to the Annapolis Conference was the election victory of Hamas. The Quartet response to this development unfortunately foreclosed almost all opportunities for progress. This is worthy of study. One other event stands out as a significant

opportunity in the peace process. It might be considered the last gasp of hope from the period before Annapolis: the Mecca Agreement of February, 2007. We turn first to the Palestinian election process.

### *5.2. Potential Precipitant Event Four: The Hamas Election Victory (Jan 2006)*

Well before January of 2006, the Palestinians *were* on a path toward democracy. This path included elections at the local and “national” level. But it was not until the passing of Yasser Arafat that the political system began to experience significant changes, including the participation of Hamas.

The opening up of the political system after Arafat’s death allowed the integration of Hamas into the political process and facilitated the holding of local elections beginning in December 2004, followed by presidential elections in January 2005. In March 2005, a nationalist-Islamist agreement brokered by Egypt and known as the Cairo Declaration was reached. In return for the nationalists agreeing to hold parliamentary elections, in which Hamas would take part, in 2005 (later postponed to January 2006); adopting a new electoral system; an inviting Hamas to join the PLO, Hamas agreed to a cease-fire. (Shikaki 2007, 5)

In 2005, Mahmoud Abbas was not enthusiastic about holding elections for the next Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC). Polls showed that Hamas could be poised to win significant support. The Palestine Center for Policy and Survey Research conducted a poll in June, 2005 and found that Hamas could be expected to win 33% of

the seats in the legislature (Shikaki 2005a). In an agreement with Hamas, Abbas postponed the elections from July 2005 to January 2006 (Shikaki 2007).

Fatah's popularity had been declining for some time. As January 2006 approached, the popularity of Hamas (or disaffection with Fatah) became even stronger (Shikaki 2007). Beginning to sense the possibility of defeat, members of Fatah lobbied for a second postponement (Erlanger 2006). However, Abbas was under enormous pressure from several sources to allow the January elections to proceed and not postpone them a second time. He was under indirect pressure from the United States<sup>136</sup> because of its continuing quest for Middle East democratization. But he was also under pressure from Hamas. Hamas had successfully arranged a cease-fire in exchange for inclusion in the political process. As just noted, they had agreed to the first postponement of elections from June 2005 to January 2006, but they strongly resisted a second one. Abbas intended to co-opt and eventually disarm Hamas by including it in the political process, in much the same way that the PLO had been co-opted a decade earlier (de Soto 2007b, Erlanger 2006). The Quartet approved Abbas's approach in September and December of 2005 (Quartet Statement, December 28, 2005: Quartet Statement on Palestinian Legislative Council Elections 2005). There is strong precedent for this approach.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> The pressure from the United States was applied, oddly enough, on the Sharon government to allow the elections to proceed.

<sup>137</sup> For examples of extended discussions of the potential moderating effects of democracy on Islamism, see Fuller (2005), Nasr (1995; 2005), and Hunter and Malik (2005).

Democratization was the centerpiece of the Bush Administration's Middle East policy. The 2002 National Security Strategy said,

The United States will use this moment of opportunity to extend the benefits of freedom across the globe. We will actively work to bring the hope of democracy, development, free markets, and free trade to every corner of the world. (Bush 2002, v)

The Palestinians were encouraged to proceed along a path to democratic utopia.<sup>138</sup> In spite of opposition from within his party and his own unease, Abbas allowed the elections to proceed. Khalil Shikaki believes he had no real choice.<sup>139</sup> “A [second] retreat from the March 2005 deal with Hamas by canceling elections would have resulted in civil war” (Shikaki 2007, 6). An international panel of impartial observers declared the election free and fair. Even though multiple polls had portended success for Hamas, the actual election results were stunning. Hamas not only won the election; it won by a landslide. The margin of victory was beyond any predictions. It was astonishing to all interested parties, perhaps most of all, to Hamas itself (de Soto 2007a, 16).

Hamas achieved victory for two reasons. First, the ruling party, Fatah, had become increasingly corrupt and increasingly unpopular. Second, Hamas ran a very well-disciplined campaign. The Fatah party had been, under Yasser Arafat's

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<sup>138</sup> This is not to disparage democracy, rather the awkward imposition of it, particularly by force, otherwise known as the neo-conservative view of foreign policy. For substantive work on democracy and democratization, see Dahl (1989), Putnam (1993), Lijphart (1999), Sisk (1995), and Diamond (1999). For specific work on democracy in a Middle East or Muslim context, see Hunter and Malik (2005), Sisk (1992), Kamrava (1998), and Carothers and Ottaway (2005).

<sup>139</sup> Khalil Shikaki is the director of the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Results (PCPSR).

leadership, the dominant power in Palestinian politics and the Palestine Liberation Organization since 1967. But since Arafat's death in November of 2004, its power had been in decline due to internal struggles and popular disaffection with the Oslo process. Although it was aware of its internal power struggles, Fatah apparently did not apprehend how far its popularity had receded among average Palestinians. Palestinians were increasingly frustrated with the widespread corruption of Fatah and its related inability to deliver basic services, improve living conditions, or make any progress toward ending the occupation. These conditions led to the sweeping victory of Hamas on January 25<sup>th</sup>, where it took 74 of the 132 seats in the Palestinian Legislative Council compared to only 45 seats for Fatah.

A closer look at the election reveals that a new Palestinian electoral system,<sup>140</sup> approved by the PLC when Fatah was still in power, transformed a slim lead in the popular vote into a dramatic victory in terms of legislative seat allocation. In the new design, half the seats were awarded under a nation-wide, proportional representation system, and half under a majoritarian system distributed among sixteen districts.<sup>141</sup> Hamas studied the electoral system closely and waged a highly disciplined campaign. They presented exactly one candidate per available seat. Fatah, by contrast, was much less regimented, and often presented as many as three candidates per seat. This created a vote-splitting effect, greatly diluting Fatah's votes in the majoritarian

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<sup>140</sup> The new electoral system, approved on 18 June 2005 by the Palestinian Legislative Council, was implemented as part of the March 2005 Cairo Declaration (Shikaki 2007, 5).

<sup>141</sup> See "Electoral System – PLC Elections," Central Elections Commission, Palestine. <http://www.elections.ps/template.aspx?id=143>.

districts (Blanc 2006). The closeness of the race can clearly be seen in the results of the popular vote: Hamas won 44% while Fatah won 41%. The mixed electoral system translated this 3% margin into a 22% difference in the number of legislative seats allotted to each: 74 seats for Hamas (56% of the total available) and 45 seats for Fatah (34% of the total available). According to the International Foundation for Election Systems, “If the votes for the Fatah-affiliated candidates had gone to the official Fatah candidates, the party might have won as many as 18 additional seats – giving them a small plurality over Hamas, with 63 seats to 59,” (Blanc 2006). The election was deemed “free and fair” by a number of international electoral observers from the National Democratic Institute and the Carter Center.<sup>142</sup>

The day after the election, before the results of the election were very clear, the Quartet issued a statement that said it, “congratulates President Abbas and the Palestinian people on an electoral process that was free, fair and secure.” It went on to say, quite ironically in hindsight, “The Quartet calls on all parties to respect the results of the election and the outcome of the Palestinian constitutional process so that it may unfold in an atmosphere of calm and security.”<sup>143</sup> It also reiterated a tripartite demand that any new Palestinian government, “commit to the principles of nonviolence, recognition of Israel, and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations,

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<sup>142</sup> For more details on the election, see Shikaki (2006), Malki (2006), and Ibrihim (2007).

<sup>143</sup> See statement in Appendix E (Quartet Statement, January 26, 2006: Quartet Statement on Palestinian Legislative Council Elections 2006).

including the Roadmap.” This demand had first been issued in the 28 December 2005 Quartet Statement and would be repeated in many subsequent statements.<sup>144</sup>

When the results of the election were revealed, the world was stunned. The Hamas victory was a startling blow to the Bush Administration and its Middle East democratization policy. The Quartet issued a follow-on statement only four days later. Regarding the newly elected Palestinian leadership, this statement read,

The Quartet concluded that it was inevitable that future assistance to any new government would be reviewed by donors against that government's commitment to the principles of nonviolence, recognition of Israel, and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the Roadmap.<sup>145</sup>

In essence, the Quartet threatened Hamas to meet its conditions or face serious economic sanctions. This change of posture by the Quartet was vigorously debated among its members. However, the proponents of the sanctions, i.e., the US, prevailed. The UN envoy to the Quartet, Alvaro de Soto, noted in his *End of Mission Report* that this decision,

Effectively transformed the Quartet from a negotiation-promoting foursome guided by a common document (the Roadmap) into a body that was all but imposing sanctions on a freely elected government of a people under occupation as well as setting unattainable preconditions for dialogue. (de Soto 2007a, 19)

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<sup>144</sup> See statement in Appendix E (Quartet Statement, December 28, 2005: Quartet Statement on Palestinian Legislative Council Elections 2005).

<sup>145</sup> See statement in Appendix E (Quartet Statement, January 30, 2006: Quartet Statement on the Situation in the Middle East 2006).

This was a transformative moment for the Quartet. As noted above by de Soto, any pretense of being a mediator vanished.

The new Hamas-led government was formed in February and March. It published a “program” that left the question of Israel and terrorism unaddressed. Based on Hamas’s past rhetoric, one would have expected the new government’s program to overtly call for the destruction of Israel. The fact that the new government remained silent on several key issues was taken by many as a signal of a willingness to move toward accommodation.<sup>146</sup> The Quartet as a whole appeared to ignore it. Instead, the Quartet responded with another statement, this one dated 30 March:

The Quartet welcomed President Abbas' call for the new Palestinian government to commit to a platform of peace and, having carefully assessed the program of the new government approved on March 28, noted with grave concern that the new government has not committed to the principles spelled out on 30 January. The Quartet recalled its view that future assistance to any new government would be reviewed by donors against that government's commitment to the principles outlined above. *The Quartet concurred that there inevitably will be an effect on direct assistance to that government and its ministries.* (Quartet Statement, March 30, 2006: Quartet Statement on Middle East Peace 2006), emphasis added.

The Bush Administration advocated economic sanctions against the Hamas-led government; the European Union, for reasons to be explained shortly, followed suit. “Once Hamas assumed office in March 2006, the United States persuaded the European Community to cut off funding to the Palestinian Authority, still led by

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<sup>146</sup> See, for instance, Shikaki (2007), Levy and Shtender-Auerbach (2006), and de Soto (2007a).



Mahmoud Abbas, who presided over a Hamas-led parliament, and Prime Minister Ismail Haniya” (Smith 2007, 531).

Before the elections, the European Union gave approximately \$600 million per year (or approximately \$50 million per month) in aid to the Palestinians. The United States gave approximately \$420 million per year (or \$35 million per month), primarily through USAID (Pan 2006). After the elections, both were reduced to zero. Many Palestinians and outside observers expressed frustration that the Bush Administration had pushed for elections and then punished Palestinians for the results.

But the Quartet, I regret to say, can’t escape its share of responsibility for feeding despair. What the Palestinians – Abu Mazen as much as Hamas – refer to as the “siege” that has befallen them since the January 2009 [sic]<sup>147</sup> elections is widely seen in the occupied Palestinian territory and in the “Arab street” as collective punishment for their democratic choice, and the Quartet is seen as the punisher. There is plenty of empirical evidence that the siege has served only to radicalize Palestinian sentiment, and create the kind of institutional chaos and social suffering that strengthens radical elements. (de Soto 2007a, 30)

The logic behind the policy was to make governance by Hamas as difficult as possible. By cutting off its revenue stream and choking off the flow of goods into the Gaza strip, the administration hoped to prevent Hamas from experiencing anything like success. Life would be so miserable for average Palestinians that they would be dissatisfied with the leadership of Hamas, or so the logic went. New elections would be held in which Palestinians, having seen the error of their ways in electing Hamas, would vote Fatah back into power. The International Crisis Group summarized the policy this way:

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<sup>147</sup> The original document says “2009” but the context (and the fact that the document was written in May 2007) make it clear that the intention is to refer to the elections of January 2006.

Faced with the intensifying inter-Palestinian struggle, the calculus of the Quartet – the US, EU, Russia and the UN, who have been in charge of the disappearing peace process – and other outside actors has been simple: pressure the government, count on popular dissatisfaction with its (non-) performance and find ways to strengthen Abbas and ensure the Hamas experience in power comes to a rapid and unsuccessful end. The approach comes in different variants, from the more confrontational (seeking to subvert the Hamas-led government through political and economic isolation), to the more subtle (hoping to circumvent the government through Abbas's empowerment). Yet in both cases outside actors, by openly bolstering one faction against the other, *exacerbate internal strife*. (ICG 2006, i-ii, emphasis added)

The economic impact on the people of Gaza was swift and devastating. Within two months the economy was reeling and social strife was emerging. “With access to outside funds blocked, Fatah-Hamas tensions exploded in Gaza in May [2005] when 140,000 people were not paid. These clashes called attention to Gaza’s desperate social and economic circumstances” (Smith 2007, 531). But aid sanctions by the Quartet members were only the beginning of the economic story.

Israel imposed its own set of economic sanctions on the Palestinians. Unlike the Quartet members, Israel had been against Hamas participation in Palestinian elections from the beginning. Only under substantial pressure from the United States (ironically enough) had Israel allowed the elections to proceed. After the elections, Israel quickly aligned itself with the United States and the European Union in economic punishment of the Palestinians for their democratic choice – the choice made via the same democratic elections that the United States had advocated. Israel had several methods of economic punishment at its disposal.

The “Protocol on Economic Relations between the Government of Israel and the PLO,” or “Paris Protocol,” signed as part of the Oslo Accords on 29 April 1994, governs the collection and transfer of tax revenue between the two entities. As arranged in the protocol, Israel collects a substantial portion of the taxes due to the Palestinian Authority in the form of import duties received at Israeli ports and value added taxes on goods destined for the Palestinian territories. Israel then transfers these taxes, minus charges for electricity and water, to the Palestinian Authority. To illustrate, in 2005 the taxes collected by Israel averaged about \$75 million per month. From this they subtracted an average of \$15 million per month for the cost of utilities and passed a net \$60 million to the PA.

After the election of Hamas, Israel continued to collect the taxes. However, it ceased the transfer of this revenue to the PA.<sup>148</sup> Another insight into the workings of the Quartet is relevant here. Throughout early 2006, the angst among the members was on the rise. Alvaro de Soto again:

Israel’s cutoff of the main source of income of the PA *was never intended by three of the Quartet members*. The UN (myself) was the first to call on Israel not to do this, the very day that the decision was communicated to international representatives. The EU has since repeatedly called on Israel to resume transfer; the sums withheld surely add up to the high hundreds of millions of dollars by now. *However, the Quartet had been prevented from pronouncing on this because the US, as its representatives have intimated to us, does not wish Israel to transfer these funds to the PA...*In general, the other *consequence of Quartet policy has been to take all pressure off Israel*. With all focus on the

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<sup>148</sup> See Shikaki (2007) and Pan (2006).

failings of Hamas, the Israeli settlement enterprise and barrier construction has continued unabated. (de Soto 2007a, 20-21, emphasis added)

Taken together with the EU and US sanctions, the monthly income of the PA dropped from approximately \$180 million to around \$34 million. The PA claimed that it required \$115 million per month just for government salaries. Work for the PA accounts for approximately 40% of all employment in Gaza.<sup>149</sup> In addition to this dramatic reduction in income, Israel further tightened its grip on the flow of goods into and out of Gaza. At times, Gaza's one and a half million residents were under a total blockade. The flow of goods in and out would expand and contract in an unpredictable manner. The International Monetary Fund / World Bank summed up the situation as of 2006:

The worsening political and security situation has clearly been detrimental to economic growth. Production has been lost due to outright destruction of physical infrastructure and assets, or dampened by the numerous closures and checkpoints, the shortage of funds to finance government spending, as well as by the increased uncertainty about the Palestinian territories prospects.<sup>150</sup>

The 9 May 2006 Quartet statement endorsed the idea of a “temporary international mechanism” (TIM) to keep the Palestinian territories from experiencing a total humanitarian disaster. The TIM's purpose was to get financial aid to the Palestinian public but channel it outside the control of the Hamas-led government. The

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<sup>149</sup>See (West Bank and Gaza: Economic Developments in 2006 - A First Assessment 2007, 10) .

<sup>150</sup> (West Bank and Gaza: Economic Developments in 2006 - A First Assessment 2007, 2-3).

European Union offered to design the mechanism and the rest of the Quartet accepted its proposal.

The Quartet discussed the humanitarian situation in the West Bank and Gaza. It expressed serious concern about deteriorating conditions, particularly in Gaza...Recalling its commitment of January 30 that it is mindful of the needs of the Palestinian people, the Quartet expressed its willingness to endorse a temporary international mechanism that is limited in scope and duration, operates with full transparency and accountability, and ensures direct delivery of assistance to the Palestinian people. If these criteria can be met, the operation of the temporary international mechanism should begin as soon as possible and be reviewed after three months to determine whether it should continue. The Quartet welcomed the offer of the European Union to develop and propose such a mechanism.<sup>151</sup>

The rapid work of the TIM Management Unit (TIM-MU) enabled funds to begin flowing as soon as June and it was successful in staving off an immediate humanitarian crisis. However, this policy had deleterious effects on Palestinian institutions, the very institutions which had been touted as a major focus of democratization efforts. The institutions were now bypassed and therefore rendered irrelevant. This subsequently caused service delivery to the population to be even more chaotic than in the past. But possibly the worst effect of all from a policy perspective was that bypassing the institutions of the Palestinian Authority gave Hamas the perfect excuse for its inability to govern. It could very reasonably claim that all the suffering experienced by average Palestinians was not due to the ineptness of Hamas, but rather to the malfeasance of Israel and the Quartet partners, who were

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<sup>151</sup> See statement in Appendix F (Quartet Statement, May 9, 2006 : Quartet Statement on Middle East Peace 2006) .

after all, directly responsible for the worsening conditions on the ground. The majority of Palestinians embraced this explanation (de Soto 2007a, 30).

The election victory of Hamas and the Quartet's response to this development were the low point of the Quartet's operations from 2002 to 2008. C. David Welch was the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs from 2005 through 2008, and in that capacity, also served as the primary US envoy to the Quartet. During a farewell ceremony marking his retirement in December 2008, he offered a compliment to Secretary Rice that captured the difficulty of the Hamas election and its aftermath. "Even in tough moments – 2006 comes to mind – you were positive."

The Hamas ascension to political power was a potential precipitant event. It dramatically altered the political and diplomatic context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Quartet had the opportunity to capitalize on this event by recognizing Hamas's signals of willingness to moderate. Many voices urged the Quartet and Israel to work with Hamas. For instance, in an interview with the Council on Foreign Relations, Henry Siegman offered,

I believe that Hamas is undergoing a transformation, or at least there is a very strong potential for a transformation in the direction of moderation and responsibility and away from violence and terror. And in fact a great deal has happened to indicate that that transformation is actually taking place. So what we ought not to be doing is to undermine the moderates and strengthen the extremists. Hamas declared well over a year ago that it will no longer sponsor terror bombings, and it has in fact stopped doing that... Hamas has been meeting quietly with Islamic Jihad, trying to persuade them... that the time has come for new and different national priorities... It is clear that if you really want to stop the violence and get a peace agreement and put the parties on a road toward a peace process, no one except Hamas can deliver.

[Interviewer]: Is this like the situation in 1972 that only a right-wing president like Richard Nixon could open the door to China?

That's exactly what it is. Hamas has the credibility. In the Palestinian view, they're martyrs and heroes. So if Hamas says the time has come to make certain compromises and to move to end the conflict, it certainly can sell it to the Palestinian public. Hamas would have no problem doing that. (Gwertzman 2006)

Many other voices counseled the same advice. Colin Powell said, "I think you have to find some way to talk to Hamas...They won an election that we insisted upon having. And so, as unpleasant a group as they may be, and as distasteful as I find some of their positions, I think that through the Quartet or through some means, Hamas has to be engaged," (Siegel 2007). Nathan Brown added, "These measures could only succeed by working to integrate or outmaneuver Hamas rather than vanquish it," (2007). Khalil Shikaki concluded, "Nonetheless, a need to engage Hamas exists," (2007). These voices reflect Darby's concept of *sufficient inclusion*, repeated here:

Proposition 2: A lasting agreement is impossible unless it actively involves those with the power to bring it down by violence. As it is never possible to include all those who threaten the process, a principle of 'sufficient inclusion' is necessary. (2001, 118)

The point is hard to miss. Given the widespread popularity of Hamas and its official status in the governance of Palestinians (as a result of the elections that the Quartet endorsed), some kind of inclusion of Hamas is absolutely necessary if a peace agreement is event to be reached, much less implemented and sustained.

The election victory of Hamas could have led to a departure in process, but the Quartet chose not to pursue this course of action. The results would be far-reaching. The tension among the Quartet's members grew considerably in this period. There was substantial difference of opinion over this issue. So why did the EU choose to remain part of the "multiparty mediation" body? The EU chose to stay the course, in spite of its disagreements with the Bush Administration, for the sake of maintaining some sort of peace process.<sup>152</sup> Solana feared that a breakup of the Quartet would lead to even greater despair and subsequent violence on the ground in the territories. There is precedent for his concern.

William Quandt points out that during the years of the Clinton administration when the peace process was being actively pursued, approximately 1,100 Israelis and Palestinians were killed in the conflict in eight years, an average of 12 per month. During the first four years of the Bush administration, when the "peace process" was essentially dead,<sup>153</sup> more than 4,000 people died (most were non-combatants), an average of 85 per month, seven times more than during the Clinton years. "In short, Bush's wholehearted backing of Sharon's tough policies had done little to bring Israel either peace or security" (Quandt 2005, 409). The concern of the EU was that disbanding the Quartet, in spite of the meager appearance of its efforts to those on the ground, could lead to even more violence. EU members also felt they could have more influence over US policy from inside the Quartet than they could from outside the

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<sup>152</sup> Cristina Gallach, interview with the author, 2009.

<sup>153</sup> Hence the title: *The Mideast Peace Process: An Autopsy*. (Kozodoy 2006).



mechanism.<sup>154</sup> So the EU remained in the Quartet, but it began to make its disagreements more widely known. The Hamas victory did not lead to a departure in process or to a positive turning point, but it did affect everything that happened in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict thereafter.

Once Hamas came to power, the US and the EU refused to deal with it. This strengthened Israel's "no partner" argument as more "facts were created on the ground" daily in the settlements. The economic and diplomatic sanctions continued to have their devastating effects on the Palestinian population. With no resolution to the Palestinian troubles, Hezbollah increased its attacks from the north. This eventually provoked Israel into a disastrous invasion of Lebanon that put the entire nation of Israel into a malaise and ended with the firing of the minister of defense and the IDF chief of staff. The stalemate and horrific impact of what were now publicly considered to be the Quartet's policies, would lead to continued frustration among Palestinians, escalating tension between Fatah and Hamas, and rocket fire from Gaza. The split between Fatah and Hamas would lead to a violent split between Gaza and the West Bank, further imperiling everyday Palestinians. The rocket fire from Gaza would once again provoke a military response from Israel. Multiparty mediation failure would be complete. But before this last spiral of despair, there was one remaining hope for a turning point.

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<sup>154</sup> Cristina Gallach, interview with the author, 2009.

### *5.3 Potential Precipitant Event Five: The Mecca Agreement (Feb 2007)*

The opening lines of the International Crisis Group Report, “After Mecca: Engaging Hamas,” written at the end of February, 2007, were both foreboding and prescient:

The 8 February 2007 Mecca Agreement between the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) and Palestinian National Liberation Movement (Fatah) has the potential to transform the Palestinian political system and its relations with the outside world. It may also amount to little more than a fragile and possibly temporary intra-Palestinian ceasefire. (ICG 2007a, 1)

[The Mecca Agreement] offers the chance of a fresh start: for Hamas and Fatah to restore law and order and rein in militias; for Israelis and Palestinians to establish a comprehensive ceasefire and start a credible peace process; and for the Quartet (or at least those of its members inclined to do so) to adopt a more pragmatic attitude that judges a government of national unity by deeds, not rhetoric. The adjustment will not be comfortable for anyone. But the alternative is much worse. (ICG 2007a, i)

Instead of embracing the potential for a fresh start, all sides chose the alternative, and just as predicted, it was much worse. Within four months of the writing of those words, a civil war had erupted in Gaza that ended with Fatah ousted from power and Hamas in control of the territory. Fatah, stinging from its defeat in Gaza, consolidated its control in the West Bank. When they most needed unity as a people, Palestinians were more separate than ever. In keeping with its policies since the Hamas election victory of 2006, the members of the Quartet tightened their sanctions on Gaza (while relaxing them on the West Bank) in an attempt to discredit Hamas and ultimately force it out of power. Two years after the Hamas takeover, the

same policies remained in effect. Palestinians remained divided between Hamas and Fatah and the divide between the parties had never been greater. And in spite of the policies that have had devastating effects on the people, Hamas remained firmly in control of Gaza.

Many observers considered the February 2007 Mecca Agreement, brokered by Saudi Arabia between Hamas and Fatah, to be a way back from the abyss. What was the “Mecca Agreement?” Did it offer a potential precipitant event in the ‘peace process’ which the Quartet could have exploited? How did the Quartet respond to this moment? These questions will be explored in the next section.

### 5.3.1 The Run-up to Mecca

The Hamas election victory, discussed in the previous chapter, left Hamas and Fatah at odds with one another – but not irreconcilably so. As discussed earlier, although few anticipated the level of success that Hamas would ultimately achieve, there were many indicators that Hamas would indeed win several seats. Mahmoud Abbas saw this as an opportunity to pursue a strategy of inclusion that would eventually lead Hamas to ideological, or at least practical, moderation. Indeed, statements by Hamas had left maneuvering room that signaled moderation was a real possibility. Shikaki cites several examples of this behavior and then summarizes:

But important elements in Hamas have been willing to moderate its positions...In sum, although Hamas is unwilling to make a strategic shift, it nonetheless has expressed a willingness to moderate its views and to change its behavior, particularly regarding violence and normal day-to-day contacts with Israel. The group is not a homogenous one. Moderate leaders and a more moderate constituency provide the movement with an opportunity to change. (Shikaki 2007, 12)

Mahmoud Abbas recognized this potential for moderation as a result of inclusion in the political process. He had been pursuing it since the summer of 2005 (de Soto 2007a, 14). However, although the US approved Abbas's approach before the election, once Hamas won, the approach was rejected. Israel had opposed the approach all along. After the election victory, both Israel and the US pursued a policy of isolating Hamas in the hopes that the suffering of Palestinians in Gaza would lead them to cast off Hamas' rule. As quoted earlier:

Faced with the intensifying inter-Palestinian struggle, the calculus of the Quartet...and other outside actors has been simple: pressure the government, count on popular dissatisfaction with its (non-) performance and find ways to strengthen Abbas and ensure the Hamas experience in power comes to a rapid and unsuccessful end. (ICG 2006, ii)

In spite of many calls for a different approach, this remained the predominant position of the US and therefore, the Quartet, through the remainder of 2006.

By the fall of 2006, as violence was escalating between Hamas and Fatah loyalists in the streets, the leadership of both groups recognized the strategic implications of their internecine conflict. As long as Hamas and Fatah remained divided, Israel could continue to claim that it had no partner with which to negotiate

peace. More than anyone else, it was the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza who paid the price for the ongoing rift. Mahmoud Abbas, Ismail Haniya and Khaled Mashal therefore attempted to forge the basis of a unity government.<sup>155</sup> They continued their efforts, to little avail, through the fall of 2006. The New Year dawned with a glimmer of hope as the parties edged toward one another. Near the end of the first month, an agreement appeared within reach.

By the end of January [2007], Musa Abu Marzuq, the Hamas Politburo deputy chairman, asserted that only one word separated the Islamists and Fatah from a national unity government:

The main difference between us, perhaps the only difference, regards previous agreements. It is now a matter of one word. We said we would *honor* past agreements, Abbas wants us to *comply* with them. But some of these agreements go against Palestinian interests. We can talk with Israel and others on how best to correct some of these agreements.

At Mecca, the two sides split the difference. (ICG 2007a, 18)

The Mecca Agreement did not offer novel concepts, nor did it resolve the core differences between Hamas and Fatah. But it did give them a mechanism that would in theory enable them to move forward by forming a unity government, which was a necessary achievement – necessary but not sufficient. Their ability to move forward in practice would also depend on the reception of the agreement by the members of the Quartet. In the fall of 2006, when Hamas and Fatah were just beginning to negotiate

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<sup>155</sup> Khaled Mashal is the Chairman of the Hamas Political Bureau. Ismail Haniya is a Hamas leader who is also the Prime Minister of the Palestinian National Authority.

an agreement to form a government with shared powers (several months before the Mecca Agreement was reached), Gareth Evans wrote:

The Quartet members, when they meet in New York, should acknowledge all this as a significant turning point. But there is a serious risk they will not. While there have been encouraging signs from the other Quartet members, the door of the US has remained shut. That is a mistake. Hamas cannot be eliminated by denial and has earned the democratic right to a place in government. As the Quartet announced in its first post-election statement, all parties should respect the results. Moreover, since then Hamas leaders have displayed some ideological flexibility, making clear that they are ready to share power with Fatah and to yield the negotiating mandate to the leader of the PLO. These developments are all the more remarkable when judged against the background of a raging conflict in Gaza and a fiscal crisis artificially stimulated through a financial and trade embargo. (Evans 2006)

### 5.3.2 The Response of the Quartet

The agreement of 8 February presented a critical potential precipitant event. Recognizing the failure of its attempt to isolate Hamas and drive it from power, the Quartet at that moment could have chosen to ease its three conditions on Hamas, permit the unity government to form, and allow the political process to moderate Hamas. Or it could stay the course with the same policy, the course preferred by the Bush Administration. There was intense debate among the members of the Quartet but the Quartet statement issued 9 February primarily reflected the US position (de Soto 2007a, 27-28):

The Quartet welcomed the role of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in reaching the agreement to form a Palestinian National Unity government. The Quartet expressed hope that the desired calm would prevail.

While awaiting formation of the new Palestinian government, the Quartet reaffirmed its statement of February 2 regarding its support for a Palestinian government committed to nonviolence, recognition of Israel, and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the Roadmap.<sup>156</sup>

Subsequent Quartet statements on 21 March and 5 May reinforced the conditions on the emerging Palestinian unity government, but a new and significant phrase appeared in the March statement.

The Quartet reaffirmed its previous statements with regard to the need for a Palestinian government committed to nonviolence, recognition of Israel and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the Roadmap, and encouraged progress in this direction. The Quartet agreed that the commitment of *the new government in this regard will be measured not only on the basis of its composition and platform, but also its actions.*<sup>157</sup>

The last phrase about “action” was new language in a Quartet Statement. On the surface, it appeared to be an even stronger insistence on the three pre-conditions: the new government would be appraised on words and *now deeds as well*. But an alternative interpretation is that the Quartet was opening, however slightly, a door for Hamas. The intent of the Quartet could have been interpreted: “If we can measure moderation in Hamas’s actions, we will pay less attention to Hamas’s words.”

It turns out that the latter interpretation was exactly what the non-US members of the Quartet intended. Gallach confirmed that the EU had included the phrase as a

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<sup>156</sup> (Quartet Statement, February 9, 2007: Quartet Statement on the Agreement to Form a Palestinian National Unity Government 2007)

<sup>157</sup> (Quartet Statement, March 21, 2007: Statement of the Middle East Quartet 2007)

signal to Hamas.<sup>158</sup> Russia had been disregarding the wishes of the United States and meeting openly with Hamas for some time. Now the EU was pushing for similar moderation in the US position. But in spite of the new phrase, for the reasons stated earlier, the EU still would not allow an open rupture of the Quartet, even over this issue. The United States held fast and this potential precipitant event passed by.

#### *5.4 The Result of the Quartet's non-Response: the Hamas Takeover of Gaza*

On the ground, the key area of friction between Fatah and Hamas was, unsurprisingly, control of security forces. Individual units were not loyal to the Palestinian Authority per se, but rather were loyal to Fatah or to Hamas. Hamas, in light of its election victory, strove to establish a security apparatus that answered exclusively to it. The party created the Executive Support Force (ESF) in April of 2006 in order to consolidate its power. However, Abbas insisted that all security forces should be consolidated under the control of the presidency. Violence between the factions had increased all through 2006 and into the beginning of 2007, motivating the Saudis to broker the Mecca Agreement in the first place. After Mecca, violence temporarily ceased (almost immediately) and efforts were made to integrate the security forces of Hamas and Fatah. (ICG 2007b, 3)

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<sup>158</sup> Cristina Gallach, interview with the author, 2009.



But the US continued to pursue a policy of strengthening Fatah and Abbas and weakening Hamas and Haniyeh. Mutual distrust between Fatah and Hamas grew deeper with each side hedging its bets on collapse of the agreement. “From March to May, nearly 150 Palestinians were killed in factional fighting between Hamas and Fatah.”<sup>159</sup> Both sides accused the other of acting in bad faith and attempting to exploit the chaotic situation for its own gain.

In effect, each party implemented its obligations on the presumption the other was acting in bad faith, so sought to sacrifice as little of its power and leverage as necessary to keep the agreement afloat. This in turn confirmed the worst suspicions each had, namely that the other’s objective remained to establish – by hook or by crook – hegemony over the political system. (ICG 2007b, 6)

Both sides prepared for the worst – a military confrontation between rival security forces. Tensions escalated to the point that violence was more or less a foregone conclusion. In June, the situation erupted.

By 10 June swords were drawn. On that day, a militant from Fatah and one from Hamas were thrown to their deaths from high-rise buildings in Gaza City. Fatah assassinated Muhammad al-Rifati, a prominent Islamist imam at one of Gaza’s largest mosques. According to a Palestinian journalist, “Riafati’s assassination was the best possible gift to Hamas radicals; they easily transformed the killing of a cleric into a call to arms by many who were otherwise not eager for a fight.” (ICG 2007b, 11)

On 11 June, both sides targeted the leadership of the other. Over the next several days, Hamas began to consolidate its hold over the area. By the 14<sup>th</sup>, it had control over the entire Gaza Strip. Fatah then asserted its control over the West Bank. By the 17<sup>th</sup>,

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<sup>159</sup> See (Infighting Between Fatah and Hamas in the Gaza Strip: Timeline 2007) at Miftah.org.

Abbas had dissolved the unity government led by Hamas and installed a new emergency government led by Salam Fayyad, the former finance minister. Fatah accused Hamas of executing a coup. Hamas accused Fatah of the same by dissolving the unity government and denying Hamas the political power that it had earned in free and fair elections.

In the aftermath, the US and Israel called the event a premeditated coup d'état by Hamas. Many disagreed. "The version of those events which has gained currency – that it was a 'violent takeover' or coup d'état by Hamas, which implies premeditation – is a stretch that is disputed by many observers of the events" (de Soto 2007b). No military or police force would stand idly by while an opponent readied itself for confrontation. Hamas and Fatah were no different. It was a classic security dilemma on a smaller scale.

The coups accusation is rather ironic given the position of the Quartet members, but especially the US, in the months between the Mecca Agreement and the June violence. In spite of the rapidly deteriorating situation on the ground, the policy of the Quartet remained rigid in application, exacerbating the tension between Fatah and Hamas operatives. The International Crisis Group offered a poignant assessment in 2007.

By refusing to deal with the national unity government and only selectively engaging some of its non-Hamas members, by maintaining economic sanctions and providing security assistance to one of the parties in order to outmaneuver the other, *they* [the US and the EU] *contributed mightily to the outcome they now publicly lament*. Through their words and deeds, they helped persuade

important Fatah elements that the unity government was a transient phenomenon and that their former control of the Palestinian Authority (PA) could be restored. And they helped convince important Hamas elements that the unity government was a trap, that time was not on their side and they should act before their adversaries became too strong. *The crisis was not produced by the Mecca Agreement but rather by deliberate and systematic attempts to undermine it.* (ICG 2007b, i, emphasis added)

This was a sad commentary on the group that began as a multiparty mediation body committed to negotiating an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Lest it be forgotten, Colin Powell articulated the vision of the Quartet almost a year before the Roadmap had even been written.

We, the Quartet, as we have named ourselves, are committed to working with the Israelis and the Palestinians, with Arab governments and with the international community to restore the hope of all the people in the region for a peaceful, secure and prosperous future...we committed ourselves to the promotion of serious and accelerated negotiation toward a settlement...The United States will do its part, and I'm pleased that our fellow members in the Quartet have made that same commitment. The Israelis, the Palestinians, our Arab friends, and the international community must also rise to the challenges ahead.<sup>160</sup>

The Mecca Agreement was not a conclusive settlement of differences between Fatah and Hamas. It was however, a significant move by both parties toward accommodation, and had it been endorsed by the Quartet, rather than undermined by it, the agreement may very well have led to a departure in process and perhaps even a

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<sup>160</sup> (Remarks on Madrid Quartet Initiative 2002)

positive turning point. But given the response of the Quartet, it remained just one more ignored potential precipitant event.

Lack of alignment of the goals of the mediators continued to plague not only the Quartet, but the conflicting parties they were supposed to be helping. The worst multiparty mediation failure of this period was not that the Quartet was unable to coax the conflicting parties into negotiating a comprehensive peace agreement, but rather that the Quartet pretended that such an event was still a goal, all the while sustaining the unsustainable status quo. Meanwhile, the status quo, or something close to it, was the strategic objective of one of the parties, namely Israel. In other words, it went beyond being unhelpful to being positively harmful by lending a sense of legitimacy to an appalling situation. Henry Siegman writes in “The Great Middle East Peace Process Scam,”

The Middle East peace process may well be the most spectacular deception in modern diplomatic history... Anyone familiar with Israel's relentless confiscations of Palestinian territory – based on a plan devised, overseen, and implemented by Ariel Sharon – knows that the objective of its settlement enterprise in the West Bank has largely been achieved... Gaza, the evacuation of whose settlements was so naively hailed by the international community as the heroic achievement of a man newly committed to an honorable peace with the Palestinians, was intended to serve as the first in a series of Palestinian Bantustans. Gaza's situation shows us what the Bantustans will look like if their residents do not behave as Israel wants. Israel's disingenuous commitment to a peace process and a two-state solution is precisely what has made possible its open-ended occupation and dismemberment of Palestinian territory. *And the Quartet – with the EU, the UN secretary general and Russia obediently following Washington's lead – has collaborated with and provided cover for this deception by accepting Israel's claim that it has been unable to find a deserving Palestinian peace partner.*

It is the failure of the international community to reject (other than in empty rhetoric) Israel's notion that the occupation and the creation of 'facts on the ground' can go on indefinitely, so long as there is no agreement that is acceptable to Israel, that has defeated all previous peace initiatives and the efforts of all peace envoys. Future efforts will meet the same fate if this fundamental issue is not addressed. (Siegman 2007, emphasis added)

The most crucial "variable" through all five cases was alignment of mediator goals toward the settlement of the conflict. The goals of the mediators were not aligned. Instead, the goal of one of the mediators, the US, was aligned with the goal of one of the conflicting parties, Israel. This was multiparty mediation failure at its worst. The strengths and weaknesses of multiparty mediation were no longer relevant. No potential precipitant events were sought, no departures in process were contemplated, and no turning points in the peace process resulted.

## **Chapter Six**

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

#### *6.1 Key Findings Overview*

This chapter will summarize the key findings on multiparty mediation failure generated by this study and relate these findings to each of the three theories: coalition theory, negotiation theory, and multiparty mediation theory. These two steps will lead to the third section: an offering of a new way to think about multiparty mediation and its prospects for success and failure. This study did not begin with a theory and then search for cases to support or disconfirm the theory. Rather, it started with a case and an approach to conflict resolution and then sought theories that could explain them. The study will end with new ways to think about both.

The case was the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the approach was multiparty mediation. Relative to other fields within the broader arena of conflict resolution,

multiparty mediation has received only sparse attention. The sparse attention is not due to a lack of empirical cases but rather to the complexity of the phenomenon. Taking into account these considerations, a qualitative approach to the topic was chosen. Recall from the introduction,

If a concept or phenomenon needs to be understood because little research has been done on it, then it merits a qualitative approach. Qualitative research is exploratory and is useful when the researcher does not know the important variables to examine. (Creswell 2002, 22)

This research found that the key cause of multiparty mediation failure in the case of the Quartet was misalignment among mediator goals. The research makes it clear that resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict *was* the primary purpose of the UN, the EU, and the US during the Quartet's formation. However, for the dominant player in the Quartet, the US, resolution of the conflict did not remain its primary goal for long. Secretary Powell worked with the other Quartet members driven by the original goal; but at some point the President shifted to a new strategy without informing Powell, hence the diplomatic undercutting of the Secretary during his trip to the region in 2003 and Sharon's "acceptance" of the Roadmap with 14 "reservations." In sum, the key variable of *mediator goal alignment* shifted before the Roadmap was even officially published. Several of the key findings of the study are displayed in the following tables.

**Table 6.1 Quartet Members and Capabilities**

<u>Quartet Member</u>	<u>Added Value to Coalition?</u>	<u>Capabilities Added to Coalition</u>	<u>Initial Goal</u>
United Nations	Yes	Legitimacy	Conflict Resolution
European Union	Yes	Finance	Conflict Resolution
United States	Yes	Power, Relationship w/ Israel	Conflict Resolution
Russia	Maybe	Relationship w/ Syria	Great Power Status?

Table 6.1 displays attributes of the members of the Quartet when it formed in 2002. It is, of course, a subjective call as to whether a particular member added value to the multiparty mediation body. If one measures value in terms of the results of the mediation, then none of the members added value to the Quartet. However, if one thinks of value in terms of potential *leverage* over the conflicting parties (the primary strength of multiparty mediation identified by Crocker, Hampson and Aall), then it has more meaning for evaluating multiparty mediation success and failure. This concept of value also helps illuminate the interaction of the capabilities of different mediators, otherwise identified by Crocker, Hampson and Aall as the multiparty mediation strength of *comparative advantage*. To illustrate with the case at hand, the UN brings legitimacy to a multiparty mediation body so that the body can *gain access* (another strength identified by Crocker, Hampson and Aall) to mediation in a conflict. The access opens the door for the strengths of other mediators to be applied, in this case the power of the US and the money of the EU.



**Table 6.2 Key Variables in Quartet Formation and Operations, 2002-2007**

Event	Alignment of Mediator Goals?	Event Viewed as PPE?	Event Seized, Led to Departure in Process?
Formation	Yes	n/a	n/a
Arafat's Death	No	Partially	No
Gaza Withdrawal	No	Yes	No
Sharon's Incapacitation	No	No	No
Hamas Election	No	No	No
Mecca Agreement	No	No	No

Table 6.2 displays the key variables found in the study. It shows that although mediator goals were aligned during Quartet formation, they were misaligned during all five potential precipitant events. Further, the misalignment was of the worst possible nature. The most powerful member of the Quartet was misaligned with the other members, and it was instead directly aligned with one of the disputants. And in this case, the disputant, Israel, was actively opposed to reaching a settlement. This opposition was clearly articulated by Weisglass.<sup>161</sup> As a result, there were no departures in process or positive turning points thereafter.

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<sup>161</sup> See Shavit (2004a).

## 6.2 Coalition Theory

Riker's *Theory of Political Coalitions* offered a model called the "Size Principle" – roughly, the idea that participants create coalitions only as large as they think necessary to win a given game and no larger. On initial examination, the Quartet seemed to represent nearly the exact opposite of Riker's principle. Two of the members of the Quartet were themselves international governmental organizations that each represent enormous "coalitions."

However, a more nuanced look reveals that the participation of the "United Nations" was not by the General Assembly nor even the Security Council but rather only the Secretary General himself (and his secretariat). This is why Alvaro de Soto questioned the legal basis of the UN's participation in the Quartet on multiple occasions, but perhaps most forcefully in his *End of Mission Report*. "The Secretary General is not in the Quartet pursuant to a mandate from the Security Council or the General Assembly, nor does he represent the member states..." (de Soto 2007a, 32-33). If the Secretary General were truly representing all of the General Assembly, this would indeed be a puzzle to Riker's theory. But since the secretary is "on his own," (relative to the Security Council and the General Assembly), it actually aligns with Riker's theory.

De Soto's complaint about the arrangement confirms the independent nature of the Secretary General's participation in the Quartet. "He is apparently at liberty to take positions without having to consult members, but he has the handicap of not really being able to speak for the UN as a whole" (de Soto 2007a, 33). The heart of de Soto's frustration, expressed throughout the *End of Mission Report*, is that the participation of the Secretary General in the Quartet gave the appearance that all of the UN was behind the Quartet – exactly the appearance that the United States found useful – when in fact, the General Assembly was often diametrically opposed to the positions of the Quartet, or perhaps more accurately, the positions of the United States. This may be troubling from an international law perspective, but it is exactly the sort of behavior predicted by Riker's coalition theory, which could be re-stated as, "Form the strongest coalition available with the fewest constraints possible."

Viewed from the US perspective, the UN Secretary General was the perfect partner. The UN brought a deeply-needed sense of legitimacy to the Quartet that the US could not have achieved on its own. The case of the EU is similar. The EU was the primary financier for the Palestinians, and as a multi-state body, it also added legitimacy to the Quartet. Russia's key contribution was its relationship with Syria, and later, its willingness to deal with Hamas. These are the capabilities reflected in Table 6.1.

Where Riker's coalition theory really gets interesting though, is when you turn the last paragraph on its head and look not at the resulting composition of the Quartet

but rather the way it actually came together. The United States did not invent the idea of a Quartet and then recruit the UN, the EU, and Russia to join it. According to the interviews conducted for this study, it was actually the other way around. Kofi Annan and Javier Solana came up with the idea and then set about recruiting the US and Russia. As early as the end of September, 2001, they were concerned that 9-11 would push the Palestinian-Israeli conflict “off the radar” of US pursuits. Annan and Solana were motivated to help forge a comprehensive peace settlement strictly on the merits of the situation but they realized that such an accomplishment would be impossible without US involvement. So *they* set about building a minimum winning coalition that included the US and Russia. All in all, this case provides strong empirical support for Riker’s theory.

### *6.3 Negotiation Theory*

Application of negotiation theory, in this case, Druckman’s use of precipitants, departures in process, and turning points was applied to explore multiparty mediation failure. Patterns in Quartet behavior were identified, but the patterns were different than expected.

Six potential precipitant events were selected at the beginning of the study. Their selection was based on the potential of the event to affect the environment of the peace process sufficiently to lead to a turning point, positive or negative. Originally,

the Lebanon War of 2006 was included on the list. It appeared that a regional clash of its magnitude with clear ties to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict would provide a sufficiently large “systemic shock” that a turning point could have developed. It was later eliminated from the study, however, because the Quartet never engaged in the Lebanon conflict in any meaningful way. The individual members of the Quartet were involved, but not as the Quartet. Therefore the event offered no insights into multiparty mediation success or failure.

It was, of course, known at the beginning of this study that there were no significant positive turning points in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process between 2002 and 2007; the question was why. Why did multiparty mediation fail? The answer turned out to be differing goals among the mediators, particularly the Bush Administration’s policies and dominance over the Quartet. If the leadership in Washington DC had been amenable to progress toward a final settlement, several of the potential precipitant events might easily have led to a turning point. This highlights the single “constant variable” across all five events which prevented any progress toward a settlement from 2002 to 2007.

The constant was the Bush Administration’s policy toward Israel and Palestine. The predisposition against any policy that would be viewed unfavorably by Israel before 2006 was galvanized by the Hamas election victory. The administration’s lack of intent to enforce the Roadmap was wholly exposed by one recurring issue: continuation of Israeli settlement expansion in the West Bank. Between 2000 and

2006, the total settler population grew by another 18%, from 387,859 to 473,362.<sup>162</sup> It is true that one could make an analogous argument regarding Palestinian terrorism, but there is one major difference between the two. Israeli government control over settlement expansion is far greater than Palestinian Authority control over terrorism. If the US were serious about the Roadmap, it would have held the Palestinian Authority and Israel accountable for their continual violations.

The irony of the banter between Israel and the PA on the issues of settlements and terrorism (“They haven’t done their part so we won’t do our part”) is that in many cases the very actions of Israel, the United States, and the Quartet have diminished, rather than strengthened, the PA’s control over Palestinian factions. For instance, Israel and the Quartet could have greatly strengthened Abbas by working with him during the withdrawal from Gaza, giving him and the Roadmap credit, in the eyes of Palestinians, for improvements on the ground. Instead, they marginalized Abbas during the withdrawal, pushed him to hold elections, and then decried the results when Hamas was voted into power. Abbas advocated continued engagement with Hamas so that the practicalities of everyday governance could slowly moderate Hamas over time. But Israel and the Quartet refused to engage with Hamas and instead turned Gaza into an open-air prison. Two wars have resulted, thus far.

One of the key patterns exposed by Druckman’s turning point analysis was a series of changes that occurred in the interaction of the members of the Quartet,

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<sup>162</sup> “Comprehensive Settlement Population, 1972-2007.” Foundation for Middle East Peace. [http://www.fmep.org/settlement\\_info](http://www.fmep.org/settlement_info).

especially at the envoy level. As each event passed with no movement toward a settlement, the other members of the Quartet became increasingly frustrated with the US. For instance, consider the first potential precipitant event, the death of Arafat. Although members of the Quartet thought the moment was important, it was not fully embraced as a potential turning point and the opportunity was missed. In private, there was consternation among the members, but in public, there was complete unity. This largely replayed itself during the Gaza withdrawal but with two exceptions. This time, all the members embraced it as a key opportunity, and the frustration as a result of missing the opportunity was much greater. After the election victory of Hamas, however, the dissent among the envoys grew considerably. Wolfensohn quit. Alvaro de Soto wrote his unflattering “End of Mission Report.” The Europeans were more forceful with their positions. After two years of relative inaction, Condoleezza Rice decided to take Middle East peace-making seriously and pulled together the Annapolis Summit.

#### *6.4 Multiparty Mediation Theory*

Regarding multiparty mediation theory, it must be remembered that the Quartet was different things to different people. Some of the envoys considered it to be strictly an informal contact group as opposed to a mediation body. The Quartet’s statements suggest something closer to the latter. In truth, the Quartet did not mediate as a body per se, but this is not unexpected. The cause of its failure was less about its methods

and more about its goals. Nonetheless, the typology of strengths and weaknesses offered by Crocker, Hampson and Aall are quite useful in focusing on multiparty mediation failure.

Crocker, Hampson and Aall identified six strengths and six weaknesses inherent in multiparty mediation (2001b).<sup>163</sup> The strength of *leverage* was clearly recognized by the members of the Quartet. Although leverage was not used in the direction of a peaceful settlement, it was nonetheless employed on a regular basis. On the *ability to restructure relationships*, there was little activity by the Quartet that fit this category. One could cite its efforts to support Fatah over Hamas as a possible example of restructuring relationships, but this is not on the scale that Crocker et al intended when they identified this trait. It could be argued that the Quartet used its standing in order to *gain entry to mediation*, but that role was there for the taking by the United States, with or without the other Quartet members. The multiparty nature of the Quartet did not afford it additional leverage in this sense. The Quartet did consciously employ the multiparty mediation strength of *comparative advantage of different mediators*. The summary by Terje Rød-Larsen captured this in his description of the Quartet: “the power of the United States, the money of the European Union, and the legitimacy of the United Nations...” However, some found the division of labor to be less than ideal. In testimony before the British House of Commons Foreign Affairs

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<sup>163</sup> See Appendix A.



Committee, Nomi Bar-Yacov, an independent foreign policy advisor offered an assessment.

[Bar-Yacov] suggested that a past mistake of the Quartet was to let the US deal with political and security issues, whilst the UN and the EU focused on aid. The latter found themselves pouring vast sums of money into a bottomless pit due to continued insecurity. (Global Security: The Middle East. Eighth Report of the Session 2006-07)

Crocker et al list two other strengths of multiparty mediation: *ability to open new channels* and *ability to break logjams*. Neither of these appears to have been attempted.

Turning to multiparty mediation weaknesses, *lack of a common vision* was clearly an issue. The desire to keep the Quartet together drove the lowest common denominator approach cited earlier. Quartet statements therefore had a patina of coherence. But it is difficult to say whether this had an overall positive or negative effect. True, the Quartet stayed together, and perhaps that was encouraging to Palestinians: “something” was happening in the peace process. But the polls cited earlier suggested that Palestinians perceived the outward unity of the Quartet as little comfort in light of the devastating effects of Israeli and Quartet policies in their daily lives.

The *potential for mixed signals* was certainly high, given the disparate nature of the Quartet players. Yet the incidence of mixed signals at the official level was surprisingly, or perhaps discomfortingly, low. Quartet policy and message, as

transmitted via its Quartet Statements, remained steady through most of the six year period. The glaring mixed signal of the entire time period was the disconnect between official Quartet policy that stated the intent to find a negotiated settlement and the actual practice of the Quartet, and especially the United States, of siding with Israel and not actually seeking a settlement. Likewise, when the Roadmap's provisions were violated, there was no consequence. This was particularly true on the issues of settlement construction and control of terrorism, as mentioned above.

It should also be noted, in a more general nature, that although there is a propensity among multiparty mediators to send mixed messages, the flipside is this: what is the alternative? The events in the Middle East peace process before 2002 are testimony that the lack of a multiparty mediation body in no way ensures that messages are not mixed. In fact, it is quite the opposite. Lack of a coordinated intentional effort nearly guarantees that there will be mixed messages and general confusion.

Regarding the *propensity of conflicting parties to "forum shop,"* this was kept to a minimum by the Quartet. When it did occur, the Quartet used it as a strength rather than a weakness. For instance, the United States overtly asked the European Union to deal directly with Yasser Arafat so that the US would not have to. This benefitted the US politically and it offered the EU a significant role in the process. Likewise, although the US outwardly shunned Hamas, it used Russia's relationship with Hamas to maintain contact with the group. There was no transfer of mediation

responsibilities along the way so there was no *possibility of mediators dropping the ball*. Finally, although there were plenty of failures, the Quartet did not engage in a great deal of blaming exercises, or as Crocker termed it, *temptation to pass the buck*. In the case of the Quartet, the buck still stopped on the same desk on which Harry Truman first placed the placard.

#### *6.5 A New Model: The Multiparty Mediation Effectiveness Estimate*

The list of strengths and weaknesses offered by Crocker, Hampson and Aall provide a good starting point for thinking about multiparty mediation success and failure. But to evaluate multiparty mediation efforts more thoroughly and possibly even predict the success of a group of mediators in a given conflict resolution situation, a new model is needed. A new model needs to tie the capabilities of Crocker, Hampson and Aall's list to the willingness of the mediators to employ those capabilities.

The model proposed here is called a *Multiparty Mediation Effectiveness Estimate* or MMEE. The model attempts to estimate multiparty mediation success and failure by comparing key features of the multiparty mediation body and its individual members. The generic model is shown in figure 6.3:

**Table 6.3 Multiparty Mediation Effectiveness Estimate**

<u>Mediator</u>	<u>Capabilities Added to Coalition</u>	<u>Constraints on Using Capability</u>	<u>Goal</u>	<u>Willingness to Work in Coalition</u>
1				
2				
3				
4				

Mediators can bring any number of capabilities to a mediation effort. Instead of just “leverage”, the model captures different kinds of leverage or power such as legitimacy, finance, military/security, diplomacy, institution building, relief aid, prior relationships, etc. But mediators also come with restraints on their raw capabilities. The most obvious example is sensitivity to domestic constituencies. Others include international opinion, international law, specific domestic laws that apply to the conflict (such as prohibitions on dealing with groups identified as terrorist), poor relationships with the conflicting parties, etc. As seen throughout this study, the goal of the individual mediators is crucial, and in spite of the mediator’s self-identification as a mediator, their primary goals may not always include resolution of the conflict at hand. Finally, the model considers the willingness of the mediators to work together in their coalition. Note that this is different than willingness to “be seen” as part of the coalition. Finally, the mediators are rank ordered in terms of their estimated overall

leverage with the conflicting parties. In the case of the Quartet, the model would look as follows:

**Table 6.4 MMEE and the Quartet**

<u>Mediator</u>	<u>Capabilities Added to Coalition</u>	<u>Constraints on Using Capability</u>	<u>Goal</u>	<u>Willingness to Work within Coalition</u>
1 - US	Military, Economic, Relationship w/ Is.	Strong domestic constituency supports only one side	Status Quo	Low
2 - EU	Economic, Institution building	Shunned by Is.	Conflict Resolution	Medium
3 - UN	Legitimacy, Aid	Limited Funding, shunned by Is.	Conflict Resolution	Medium
4 - Russia	Relationship w/ Syria	Limited applicability to Is/Pal conflict	Great Power Status	High

Three things are immediately apparent. First, the goal of the strongest party is not resolution of the conflict. Second, the same party has a low level of willingness to cooperate with the other members of the multiparty mediation body. Third, the same party has a strong domestic constituency that supports only one side in the conflict. The model does not attempt to assign numerical values or calculate scores. What it offers instead is a methodical way to consider the many, interrelated variables of multiparty mediation so that potential effectiveness can be estimated or, perhaps more importantly, areas of difficulty can be identified in advance of mediation activities.

The usefulness of the model should be evaluated through a two-step process. First, it should be applied to several cases where multiparty mediation has “finished,”

both successfully and unsuccessfully, to see if it reflects empirical reality. Second, it should be applied to several cases of emerging multiparty mediation. If it yields helpful insights for predicting success or failure, or if it helps identify areas of potential friction, then its utility will be verified.

More generally, this study has addressed the question: *Under what conditions does multiparty mediation fail to move conflicting parties toward a comprehensive peace agreement?* Based on the MMEE model and the application of coalition, negotiation, and multiparty mediation theory to the case of the Quartet, the following contingent generalizations are offered as ways to avoid multiparty mediation failure.

1. *The goals of the mediators must be, above all else, resolution of the conflict.* One might be tempted to believe that international actors would only join a multiparty mediation body if they held resolution of the conflict as their primary goal. However, international politics being what they are, this is not necessarily always the case. At times, the appearance of involvement is politically more important than actual conflict resolution.
2. *The goals of the mediators must be aligned with one another.* This is related to the previous point. Even if several parties in a multiparty mediation body are committed to resolving a conflict, if one powerful party is not so committed, the multiparty mediation effort may be doomed to failure.

3. *The multiparty mediation body should designate a lead mediator, but the lead mediator must remain attentive to the other mediators.* Several practitioners noted that the grinding process of face to face negotiation can realistically only be mediated by a single mediator at any given time. Multiparty mediation parties can, and should, coordinate their positions and use their leverage in concert with one another, but the mediation of face to face negotiations should be conducted by one actor.
4. *Domestic constraints on mediators must be taken into account.* This applies to specific domestic sympathies with the narratives of the conflicting parties as well as to the broader interests of the mediating parties. Understanding the strength of the sentiment toward each narrative, as well as the political strength of the groups that hold those sentiments, will go a long way toward accurately predicting the potential for success or failure of a particular multiparty mediation effort.
  5. *The mediators should be willing to apply significant leverage to conflicting parties.* Mediators cannot impose a settlement, but they can structure rewards and punishments that move the parties in that direction. This is true even when the parties are not particularly pleased about such movement. The reality of the rewards and punishments being wielded may provide the leaders of the conflicting parties the very political cover they need to move toward a settlement.

## **Epilogue**

### **The Way Forward: Policy Recommendations**

Never before in the history of the world have so many rights for so many of the world's peoples been so well-defined, while so many remain imperiled by the very authorities designated to preserve those rights.

Jane Hull Lute  
(2007, 449)

#### *Considerations before Charting a Way Forward*

There is little argument that the United States is the key outside player in negotiating an Israeli-Palestinian peace accord. Practitioners and scholars, Israelis and Palestinians, Europeans and Americans all recognize the unique role available to the United States in mediating a settlement to this conflict. In this regard, Shibley Telhami's words are very representative of general opinion:



Although it is theoretically possible to contemplate roles for a number of international actors such as the European Union and the United Nations, in mediating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, only the United States has the ability to succeed, in large part because it can provide both the assurance and the lever with Israel and has more influence with Arab states and the Palestinians than any other international actor. (Telhami 2005, 369-370)

By contrast, there is far less consensus on the specific utility of the Quartet. Opinions of both practitioners and academics vary greatly from, “It’s totally useless,” to, “It’s absolutely necessary.”<sup>164</sup> The preponderance of opinion is that an instrument like the Quartet could (or somehow should) be very helpful, but the manner in which the Quartet operated from 2002 to 2007, and especially the latter half of that period, was simply not the right approach.

This begs the question: Can the Quartet be “re-tuned” in some way to make it truly effective? To answer this question, it is useful to consider the main arguments proposed by John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt in *The Israel Lobby and US Foreign Policy* and Aaron David Miller in *The Much Too Promised Land*. After these positions have been explored, US foreign policy options and a potential future role for the Quartet will be considered.

Telhami goes on to say,

The problem for US leaders is this: while public opinion in the United States could be rallied behind an effective mediation effort, there is no built-in

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<sup>164</sup> Interestingly, the difference of opinion does not correlate with one’s identity as a practitioner or a scholar. In the interviews conducted for this study, there were practitioners for and against using a mechanism like the Quartet, just as there were scholars on both sides of the debate.

political incentive for a president to expend leverage both domestically and internationally to tackle the Arab-Israeli issue. In fact, conventional wisdom among US politicians is quite the opposite – that it is a thankless job with a high political cost. (2005, 371)

As discussed in Chapter 2, Mearsheimer and Walt argue that the influence of the “Israel Lobby” is strong enough to deter US politicians from applying any significant pressure on Israel to reach a meaningful Israeli-Palestinian settlement. From Chapter 2, “US leaders have been engaged in virtually every aspect of the peace process, but they have never used the full leverage at their disposal to push the process forward” (Mearsheimer and Walt 2007, 342). The core argument of their book is that the overwhelming amount of economic, military and diplomatic support that the United States provides to Israel is not coherent with US strategic interests (and in fact is counter to both US interests and Israeli interests) but rather is due to the strength of the Israel lobby (Mearsheimer and Walt 2007, 5). They argue that the Israel lobby prevents American politicians from engaging meaningfully in the Israeli-Arab, and particularly the Israeli-Palestinian, peace process.

Aaron David Miller believes the “two professors,” as they have come to be called, overstate their case (Miller 2008, 76). Nonetheless, he is sympathetic and even supportive of much of their argument. Regarding the Israel lobby, he concludes that it is powerful, but not all-powerful. It wields considerable influence, but it does not always get its way. A careful reading of the evidence and conclusions of Mearsheimer, Walt and Miller shows that the three are really not that far apart on their assessments

of the influence of the Israel lobby. It is true that the Israel lobby does not always get what it wants. It is not a secret cabal. It is certainly not anything like the fabricated *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* portray. But it is a very powerful lobby.

The flagship of the lobby is AIPAC, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee. It is one of the most powerful political action groups in the United States. Yet AIPAC is simply a lobbying organization that operates in the same manner as the National Rifle Association and the AARP. It just happens to be more influential than most. This is due to several reasons that both Miller and the two professors enumerate – another general point on which they agree – the predominant one being its ability to influence both Republicans and Democrats alike. In US foreign policy on the Middle East, it is a force that must be reckoned with, but it is a force that can be reckoned with in the right circumstances.

The vast majority of practitioners and scholars agree that an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement is in the interest of the United States, and, is in the interest of Israel and the Palestinians. This is the thrust of the entire book by the two professors. Aaron David Miller writes, “I believe with equal conviction that the Arab-Israeli issue is now more vital to our national interests, and to our security, than at any time since the late 1940s” (Miller 2008, 365). Recent public opinion polls among Palestinians show a majority supports a two-state solution. Public opinion in Israel also supports the general concept of a two-state solution (Levy and Shtender-Auerbach 2006, 17, Shikaki 2007, 6).

Most inhabitants of Israel and Gaza, government officials, and outside observers agree that of the available options, a two-state solution is the only truly viable one. A one-state solution would instantly render Israel a non-Jewish majority state, an unacceptable situation for most Israelis. Massive deportation of either population is unworkable and morally repugnant. Continuation of the status quo occupation is theoretically possible (who would have thought it could have lasted this long?), but it is also legally, morally, and increasingly logistically problematic.

On the surface, Mearsheimer, Walt and Miller disagree on the amount of political capital that would be required to change the direction of US foreign policy sufficiently to bring about real change in Arab-Israeli peace. Miller says it is only a matter of presidential willpower: “It is a matter of summoning up the necessary political will and courage” (Miller 2008, 371). Mearsheimer and Walt would argue that given the strength of the Israel lobby, no president with such an agenda could be elected in the first place. Empirical support of their point was recently demonstrated. As was easily predicted, all major candidates in the 2008 US presidential election campaign, including Barak Obama, pledged their unwavering support for the special relationship between the United States and Israel.

The following two sections are offered as policy recommendations that are based on the research that was conducted for this study. Because of the dominant role of the United States in the Quartet, and the critical role that the United States plays vis-à-vis the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the first section will offer policy

recommendations specifically to the Obama Administration. The last section will offer recommendations to the Quartet as a whole.

### *The Way Forward for the Obama Administration*

First, Israeli-Palestinian and broader Israeli-Arab peace must be at the top of the President's foreign policy agenda from the very beginning of his administration. A flurry of activity in the eighth year of an administration will simply not suffice. The immediate appointment of Senator George Mitchell as a Special Envoy for Middle East Peace is very encouraging in this regard.

Second, the administration should be willing to use tangible leverage with Israel and the Palestinian Authority to find a fair settlement for both parties. Although the United States cannot impose a final status agreement on the conflicting parties, it can use far more leverage than it has chosen to use in the last 16 years. Mearsheimer and Walt argue that \$3-4 billion per year of direct support to Israel ought to buy the United States some serious leverage – but it has not. Likewise, the nearly unconditional diplomatic support given to Israel, particularly vis-à-vis the United Nations Security Council, ought to gain American influence over Israeli policy toward the Palestinians – but it has not. As a case in point, the United States has on numerous occasions 'expressed its displeasure' at the continuing construction of Israeli settlements in the West Bank. Yet over the last 16 years, settlement construction has continued. In spite of Israel's disregard of stated US policy, US aid and diplomatic

support have continued unabated. Neither of the previous two presidents was willing to stand up against this behavior. Mearsheimer, Walt, and to a lesser but still substantial degree, Miller, argue that this is largely due to the influence of the Israel lobby. Miller believes that it can be overcome by a president committed to the peace process.

Third, the President must personally engage at the right moments. To his credit, President Clinton had the political courage to do this on a number of occasions. President George W. Bush, unfortunately, remained detached for eight years. This is not to say that ‘presidential presence’ should be squandered. Personal involvement by the president is a powerful tool but it depreciates quickly if overused. President Carter was infamous for delving into details that would have been better handled by his staff. President Clinton also occasionally crossed this line. But personal attention from the President is indispensable at the right moments in a difficult peace process.

Fourth, President Obama should use the Quartet mechanism not as political window dressing, but as an actual mediation tool. It would be uncommon for a contact group to perform in this manner, but it is nonetheless possible. The United States should acknowledge its leadership within the Quartet and its indispensable role in bilateral relations with the conflicting parties. But it should also lead with humility, consulting with the other Quartet members and shepherding (not cajoling) the group into a unified, legitimized position vis-à-vis the conflict. This was Colin Powell’s vision of the Quartet and it should be revived.

Fifth, the Obama administration, backed by the Quartet, should present Israelis and Palestinians a viable and complete two-state solution with fair and detailed compromises on all final status issues. It cannot present “the Israeli solution” and then strive for Palestinian compliance, as was so often the case in the Clinton years; nor can it present “the Palestinian solution,” ignoring valid Israeli security concerns, and then force it on the Israelis. The parameters for such a solution are well known (Patten 2006, 211). The Clinton parameters, the Geneva Initiative and the Arab Peace Initiative provide solid models.

What both Israeli and Palestinian leaders desperately need to meaningfully engage in a peace process is *political cover*. If an Israeli prime minister can go to his cabinet and legitimately say, “This is what the United States, backed by the rest of the Quartet, is offering, and the United States is willing to reduce its economic and diplomatic support if we reject it,” then he or she may have the political cover needed to obtain domestic support for an agreement. Likewise, Palestinians of most stripes would be willing to accept an offer that is fair and is backed by a Quartet that includes the United States and the Arab League.<sup>165</sup>

One of the many reasons for the continued rejectionist stance among Palestinians is the series of offers put forward in the past that so overwhelmingly favored Israeli interests. Maintaining the West Bank as a non-contiguous collection of hamlets sliced up by a web of uncross-able roads, fences, barriers, and settlements is

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<sup>165</sup> This will be discussed in the next section.

economically unviable, and in practice, unlivable. Yet this is what was offered to Arafat at Camp David in 2000. In the Palestinian narrative, as discussed earlier, they have already conceded 78 percent of their land to the state of Israel. In 2000, they were asked to agree to the concession of another 40 percent of what was remaining along with permanent cantonization, permanent settlements, and essentially, permanent occupation. Of course they rejected it. This sort of offer, portrayed as “generous” and “the absolute best we can do and what you must accept” pours high octane fuel on the fires of rejectionism. An equitable agreement with a real chance at peace would smother most of those flames.

Sixth, the Obama Administration must find creative (but legal) ways to include Hamas in a solution. The attempts over the last three years to exclude Hamas have been abysmal failures. The Palestinian population has endured appalling hardship because of the failed policies of Israel, Fatah, and the Quartet. Deeds speak louder than words. Its past tactics of targeting civilians are deplorable and I offer neither excuse nor provision for them. But as described above, Hamas has shown itself capable of renouncing terrorism in practice, if not in word. And a peace agreement without Hamas is currently an impossibility. Again as described above, if given a fair offer, Hamas has the credibility among Palestinians to say, “It’s time to accept peace.” Fatah has no such ability at this time.



## *The Way Forward for the Quartet*

The Quartet has rarely, if ever, conducted actual multiparty mediation. Although many Quartet Statements give the impression that the Quartet was engaged as a whole in multiparty mediation, this has never really been the case. The Quartet members conferred with *one another*, but they did not engage the conflicting parties as a Quartet. Instead, they acted as a contact group and engaged the conflicting parties bilaterally. This was due to a kind of path dependency, both in regard to the Quartet's history and the precedents set by other contact groups.

When the Quartet was formed, the Sharon government initially refused to even acknowledge it, much less engage with it. The pattern thus developed early that the members of the Quartet only engaged Israel bilaterally. This was exacerbated by Sharon's "contamination policy" – those mediators who spoke with Arafat or other PLO leaders were not allowed to speak with officials in the Israeli government during the same trip. This happened to Javier Solana on a number of occasions.<sup>166</sup> The nature of contact groups contributes to this pattern as well. Teresa Whitfield defines such groups as, "ad hoc, informal, issue-specific mini-coalitions of states or intergovernmental organizations that become involved in and provide support for resolving conflicts and implementing peace agreements" (Whitfield 2007, 9).<sup>167</sup> The groups use the ad hoc, informal nature to their advantage – so that they cannot be

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<sup>166</sup> Cristina Gallach, interview with the author, 2009.

<sup>167</sup> To be precise, Whitfield uses this phrase to define "friends groups" and she calls contact groups a subset of friends groups.

bound by the actions of other members of the group. However, individual members may or may not consider their role to be that of a mediator. This picking and choosing of roles can also lead to many of the weaknesses noted by Crocker, Hampson and Aall.

The Quartet should incorporate the following changes. First, it should move beyond the status of a contact group and instead assume a new form by concluding a formal agreement on its modus operandi. This goes against precedent for contact groups and it would induce legal complications. But the agreement would not need to be on the level of an international treaty. A memorandum of understanding may suffice. The positive effect of such an undertaking would come not from the memorandum itself, but from the exercise of spelling out, in writing, the roles and responsibilities of each member.

Second, the Quartet should be expanded to a “Quartet plus one” with the addition of the Arab League as an adjunct member. Because of the nature of US domestic politics, Israel’s interests will always be well-represented and defended by the United States. Everyone recognizes this. The addition of the Arab League offers the Quartet deeply-needed legitimacy within the Arab world. This is a particularly important move given the track record of the Quartet, from the viewpoint of the Arab narrative, over the last six to seven years. The Arab League is already unified in its commitment to a lasting, just peace agreement. The Arab Peace Initiative offers Israel a formal end to the Arab-Israeli conflict as well as normalized relations between Israel

and all Arab states (and as of the 2007 Riyadh Summit, all Muslim states as well) in exchange for a viable Palestinian state.

Third, the newly formed Quartet plus One should formally agree to allow the United States to assume the mantle of official lead negotiator because it is the sole international actor with the clout to influence both Israelis and Palestinians. Everyone recognizes the pivotal role played by the United States. The difficulty with the current arrangement is that although the United States works bilaterally with the Israelis and the Palestinians, it does not do so with the real backing of the rest of the Quartet. The policy positions of the George W. Bush Administration were often opposed to the positions of the other members. When policy positions conflicted, and they often did, the Quartet members defaulted to a central goal of maintaining the integrity of the Quartet. The members decided that regardless of internal disagreements, they would “keep from pronouncing the Quartet a dead entity because of the extremely negative impact this would have on the situation on the ground.”<sup>168</sup> As explained earlier, this directly led to a “lowest common denominator” strategy when Quartet Statements were produced. The potential now exists for the policies of the US, the EU, the UN and Russia on the Middle East to be more closely aligned than ever. This opportunity should not be missed.

Fourth, the United States, even in its acknowledged lead role, must work with the rest of the Quartet plus One to arrive at mutually supported courses of action. It

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<sup>168</sup> Cristina Gallach, interview with the author, 2009.

should accommodate differences of opinion on policy approaches and incorporate the positions of all the members into a coherent strategy. Then, the United States can go to the table with Israelis and Palestinians and truly speak with the weight of all five members.

Fifth, as mentioned above, the Quartet must find a way to meaningfully engage Hamas. As discussed above, because of the popularity and perceived legitimacy of Hamas among the Palestinian people, a workable solution is not currently possible without some form of inclusion. The current challenges of working with Hamas are not unlike the challenges of working with the PLO up to the early 1990s. Hamas has signaled that it is prepared to operate with moderation. Israel and the Quartet should find a way to positively respond.

Finally, the key alignment that must take place is a new US policy on Middle East peace that is closer to the policies of the other members of the Quartet. Such a policy must be fair to Palestinians, offering a viable state and real sovereignty. Such a policy must also be fair to Israelis, offering real security and meaningful peace. Such a policy is in the best interest of Israelis, the best interest of Palestinians, and the best interest of Americans.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Strengths and Weaknesses of Multiparty Mediation<sup>169</sup>

#### **Strengths**

Leverage  
Ability to Restructure Relationships  
Ability to Gain Entry to Mediation  
Comparative Advantage of Different Mediators  
Ability to Open New Channels  
Ability to Break Logjams

#### **Weaknesses**

Lack of a Common Vision  
Potential for Mixed Signals  
Difficulty of Communication and Coordination  
Propensity of Conflicting Parties to “Forum Shop”  
Possibility of Mediators Dropping the Ball  
Temptation to Pass the Buck

\*Lack of a Recognized Authority Structure (added to Crocker framework)

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<sup>169</sup> (Crocker, Hampson, and Aall 2001b)

## Appendix B: Interview Questions

### Questions for Quartet Members

#### Quartet Formation

- Whose idea was the Quartet? Who was its strongest proponent and why? Many outsiders think it was a creation of the United States. Is this true?
- Why were the particular four members chosen?

#### Quartet Behavior

- Did the Quartet constrain the behavior of the United States Government (USG) or did the USG disregard the preferences of the other members of the Quartet?
- How did individual members of the Quartet, and then the Quartet as an aggregate, respond to each of the five crises? Who led in each crisis?
  1. The death of Yasser Arafat (Nov 2004)
  2. The Israeli withdrawal from Gaza (Fall 2005)
  3. The stroke of Ariel Sharon (Jan 2006)
  4. The Hamas election victory (Jan 2006)
  5. The Lebanon War (Summer 2006)
  6. The Mecca Agreement (February 2007)
- Do negotiators and experts see other events that were more significant for the negotiations than the six events listed?
- How did the Quartet attempt to leverage the benefits of multiparty mediation?
- Did the Quartet recognize, attempt to mitigate, or succumb to the weaknesses of multiparty mediation?
- Have we missed any general points about the Quartet that you would like to make?

## Questions for Israelis and Palestinians

- Did Israelis and Palestinians accept the efforts of the Quartet? Did acceptance change over time?
- How did Israelis and Palestinians think the Quartet operated (i.e., was there a single leader, or was it a real multilateral effort?)
- What did they think the Quartet's motivations were?
- Did Israelis or Palestinians ever ask the Quartet to step up its efforts? Did it respond?
- Do Israelis and Palestinians think multiparty mediation offers the best chance for success or do they prefer a single mediator? If so, who?
- Have we missed any general points about the Quartet that you would like to make?

## **Appendix C: Steenhausen's BATMA**

(Best Alternative to Mediating an Agreement)

Deciding whether to attempt mediate a peace agreement:

1. If a potential mediator's perceived alternative to mediating is worse than the alternative perceived by a disputant (such as fighting), the disputant will attempt to block the mediation and will probably succeed.
2. If potential mediators perceive that their alternatives to mediation are not equally attractive, the one that sees the alternative as worse for itself will attempt to worsen the other's perception of its alternative as a means of drawing it into a coalition of mediators when the former judges the latter's involvement to be desirable.
3. If a mediator with the less favorable alternative to mediation is successful at worsening the other third party's perception of its alternative so that their batmas become symmetrical, the multiparty mediation mission will follow the path of hypothesis 4.

Attempting to mediate a peace agreement:

4. The more equal the multiple mediators' batma perceptions, the more their tactics toward one another will tend toward the integrative at the expense of the distributive and vice versa.
5. In cases involving mediators with equally unattractive batma perceptions, the third parties will use an active and mixed mediation strategy on the conflicting parties, increasing the likelihood that the mediation effort will succeed. Conversely, the more unequal the multiple mediators' batma perceptions, the more the mediators' behavior toward the disputants will tend to contradict each other, decreasing the likelihood that the mediation effort will succeed.
6. Efforts to build a third party coalition and actually mediate a peace settlement will be more likely to succeed when they are led by a hegemonic or larger-sized mediation manager with an unattractive batma that chooses an active and mixed strategy when bargaining with other (potential or actual) mediators as well as with the conflicting parties.

## **Appendix D: Israel-PLO Mutual Recognition Letters, 1993**

### **1. LETTER FROM YASSER ARAFAT TO PRIME MINISTER RABIN:**

September 9, 1993

Yitzhak Rabin  
Prime Minister of Israel

Mr. Prime Minister,

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sincerely,

Yasser Arafat  
Chairman  
The Palestine Liberation Organization

**2. LETTER FROM YASSER ARAFAT TO NORWEGIAN FOREIGN MINISTER:**

September 9, 1993

His Excellency  
Johan Jorgen Holst  
Foreign Minister of Norway

Dear Minister Holst,

I would like to confirm to you that, upon the signing of the Declaration of Principles, the PLO encourages and calls upon the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to take part in the steps leading to the normalization of life, rejecting violence and terrorism, contributing to peace and stability and participating actively in shaping reconstruction, economic development and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Yasser Arafat

Chairman

The Palestine Liberation Organization

**3. LETTER FROM PRIME MINISTER RABIN TO YASSER ARAFAT:**

September 9, 1993

Yasser Arafat  
Chairman  
The Palestinian Liberation Organization

Mr. Chairman,

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

Yitzhak Rabin  
Prime Minister of Israel

**Appendix E: Declaration of Principles on  
Interim Self-Government Arrangements  
Washington DC, 13 September 1993**

Declaration of Principles

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

Accordingly, the two sides agree to the following principles:

Article I: AIM OF THE NEGOTIATIONS

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

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

Article II: Framework for the Interim Period

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

Article III: ELECTIONS

1. In order that the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip may govern themselves according to democratic principles, direct, free and general political elections will be held for the Council under agreed supervision and international observation, while the Palestinian police will ensure public order.
2. An agreement will be concluded on the exact mode and conditions of the elections in accordance with the protocol attached as Annex I, with the goal of holding the elections not later than nine months after the entry into force of this Declaration of Principles.
3. These elections will constitute a significant interim preparatory step toward the realization of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and their just requirements.

Article IV: Jurisdiction

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

#### Article V: Transitional period and permanent status negotiations

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

1. Permanent status negotiations will commence as soon as possible, but not later than the beginning of the third year of the interim period, between the Government of Israel and the Palestinian people representatives.
2. It is understood that these negotiations shall cover remaining issues, including: Jerusalem, refugees, settlements, security arrangements, borders, relations and cooperation with other neighbors, and other issues of common interest.
3. The two parties agree that the outcome of the permanent status negotiations should not be prejudiced or preempted by agreements reached for the interim period.

#### Article VI: Preparatory transfer of powers and responsibilities

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

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

#### Article VII: Interim Agreement

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

1. The Interim Agreement shall specify, among other things, the structure of the Council, the number of its members, and the transfer of powers and responsibilities from the Israeli military government and its Civil Administration to the Council. The Interim Agreement shall also specify the Council's executive authority, legislative authority in accordance with Article IX below, and the independent Palestinian judicial organs.
2. The Interim Agreement shall include arrangements, to be implemented upon the inauguration of the Council, for the assumption by the Council of all of the powers and responsibilities transferred previously in accordance with Article VI above.
3. In order to enable the Council to promote economic growth, upon its inauguration, the Council will establish, among other things, a Palestinian Electricity Authority, a Gaza Sea Port Authority, a Palestinian Development Bank, a Palestinian



Export Promotion Board, a Palestinian Environmental Authority, a Palestinian Land Authority and a Palestinian Water Administration Authority, and any other Authorities agreed upon, in accordance with the Interim Agreement that will specify their powers and responsibilities.

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

#### Article VIII: Public order and security

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

#### Article IX: Laws and military orders

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

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

#### Article X: Joint Israeli-Palestinian liaison committee

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

#### Article XI: Israeli-Palestinian cooperation in economic fields

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

#### Article XII: Liaison and cooperation with Jordan and Egypt

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

#### Article XIII: Redeployment of Israeli forces

1. After the entry into force of this Declaration of Principles, and not later than the eve of elections for the Council, a redeployment of Israeli military forces in the West Bank and the

Gaza Strip will take place, in addition to withdrawal of Israeli forces carried out in accordance with Article XIV.

2. In redeploying its military forces, Israel will be guided by the principle that its military forces should be redeployed outside populated areas.
3. Further redeployments to specified locations will be gradually implemented commensurate with the assumption of responsibility for public order and internal security by the Palestinian police force pursuant to Article VIII above.

Article XIV: Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho Area

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

Article XV: Resolution of disputes

1. Disputes arising out of the application or interpretation of this Declaration of Principles, or any subsequent agreement pertaining to the interim period, shall be resolved by negotiations through the Joint Liaison Committee to be established pursuant to Article X above.
2. Disputes which cannot be settled by negotiations may be resolved by a mechanism of conciliation to be agreed upon by the parties.
3. The parties may agree to submit to arbitration disputes relating to the interim period, which cannot be settled through conciliation. To this end, upon the agreement of both parties, the parties will establish an Arbitration Committee.

Article XVI: Israeli-Palestinian cooperation concerning regional programs

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

Article XVII: Miscellaneous provisions

1. This Declaration of Principles will enter into force one month after its signing.
2. All protocols annexed to this Declaration of Principles and Agreed Minutes pertaining thereto shall be regarded as an integral part hereof.

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

For the Government of Israel: [*Shimon Perez*]

For the P.L.O.: [*Mahmoud Abbas*]

Witnessed by:

The United States of America: [*Warren Christopher*]

The Russian Federation: [*Andrei Kozyrev*]

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## Annex I

### Protocol on the mode and conditions of elections

1. Palestinians of Jerusalem who live there will have the right to participate in the election process, according to an agreement between the two sides.
2. In addition, the election agreement should cover, among other things, the following issues:
  - The system of elections;
  - the mode of the agreed supervision and international observation and their personal composition; and
  - rules and regulations regarding election campaign, including agreed arrangements for the organizing of mass media, and the possibility of licensing a broadcasting and TV station.
3. The future status of displaced Palestinians who were registered on 4th June 1967 will not be prejudiced because they are unable to participate in the election process due to practical reasons.

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## Annex II

### Protocol on withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Gaza Strip and Jericho Area

1. The two sides will conclude and sign within two months from the date of entry into force of this Declaration of Principles, an agreement on the withdrawal of Israeli military forces from the Gaza Strip and Jericho area. This agreement will include comprehensive arrangements to apply in the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area subsequent to the Israeli withdrawal.
2. Israel will implement an accelerated and scheduled withdrawal of Israeli military forces from the Gaza Strip and Jericho area, beginning immediately with the signing of the agreement on the Gaza Strip and Jericho area and to be completed within period not exceeding four months after the signing of this agreement.
3. The above agreement will include, among other things:
  - Arrangements for a smooth and peaceful transfer of authority from the Israeli military government and its Civil Administration to the Palestinian representatives.
  - Structure, powers and responsibilities of the Palestinian authority in these areas, except: external security, settlements, Israelis, foreign relations, and other mutually agreed matters.
  - Arrangements for the assumption of internal security and public order by the Palestinian police force consisting of police officers recruited locally and from abroad (holding Jordanian passports and Palestinian documents issued by Egypt). Those who will participate in the Palestinian police force coming from abroad should be trained as police and police officers.
  - A temporary international or foreign presence, as agreed upon.
  - Establishment of a joint Palestinian-Israeli Coordination and Cooperation Committee for mutual security purposes.
  - An economic development and stabilization program, including the establishment of an Emergency Fund, to encourage foreign investment, and financial and economic support. Both sides will coordinate and cooperate jointly and unilaterally with regional and international parties to support these aims.

- Arrangements for a safe passage for persons and transportation between Gaza Strip and Jericho area.
- 2. The above agreement will include arrangements for coordination between both parties regarding passages:
  - a. Gaza--Egypt; and
  - b. Jericho--Jordan.

The offices responsible for carrying out the powers and responsibilities of the Palestinian authority under this Annex II and Article VI of the Declaration of Principles will be located in the Gaza Strip and in the Jericho area pending the inauguration of the Council.

Other than these agreed arrangements, the status of the Gaza Strip and Jericho area will continue to be an integral part of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and will not be changed in the interim period.

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### Annex III

#### Protocol on Israeli-Palestinian Cooperation in economic and development programs

The two sides agree to establish an Israeli-Palestinian Continuing Committee for Economic Cooperation, focusing, among other things, on the following:

1. Cooperation in the field of water, including a Water Development Program prepared by experts from both sides, which will also specify the mode of cooperation in the management of water resources in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and will include proposals for studies and plans on water rights of each party, as well as on the equitable utilization of joint water resources for implementation in and beyond the interim period.
2. Cooperation in the field of electricity, including an Electricity Development Program, which will also specify the mode of cooperation for the production, maintenance, purchase and sale of electricity resources.
3. Cooperation in the field of energy, including an Energy Development Program, which will provide for the exploitation of oil and gas for industrial purposes, particularly in the Gaza Strip and in the Negev, and will encourage further joint exploitation of other energy resources. This Program may also provide for the construction of a Petrochemical industrial complex in the Gaza Strip and the construction of oil and gas pipelines.
4. Cooperation in the field of finance, including a Financial Development and Action Program for the encouragement of international investment in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and in Israel, as well as the establishment of a Palestinian Development Bank.
5. Cooperation in the field of transport and communications, including a Program, which will define guidelines for the establishment of a Gaza Sea Port Area, and will provide for the establishing of transport and communications lines to and from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to Israel and to other countries. In addition, this Program will provide for carrying out the necessary construction of roads, railways, communications lines, etc.
6. Cooperation in the field of trade, including studies, and Trade Promotion Programs, which will encourage local, regional and inter-regional trade, as well as a feasibility study of creating free trade zones in the Gaza Strip and in Israel, mutual access to these zones, and cooperation in other areas related to trade and commerce.
7. Cooperation in the field of industry, including Industrial Development Programs, which will provide for the establishment of joint Israeli-Palestinian Industrial Research and Development Centers, will promote Palestinian-Israeli joint ventures, and provide guidelines for cooperation

in the textile, food, pharmaceutical, electronics, diamonds, computer and science-based industries.

8. A program for cooperation in, and regulation of, labor relations and cooperation in social welfare issues.
9. A Human Resources Development and Cooperation Plan, providing for joint Israeli-Palestinian workshops and seminars, and for the establishment of joint vocational training centers, research institutes and data banks.
10. An Environmental Protection Plan, providing for joint and/or coordinated measures in this sphere.
11. A program for developing coordination and cooperation in the field of communication and media.
12. Any other programs of mutual interest.

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#### Annex IV

#### Protocol on Israeli-Palestinian cooperation concerning regional development programs

1. The two sides will cooperate in the context of the multilateral peace efforts in promoting a Development Program for the region, including the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, to be initiated by the G-7. The parties will request the G-7 to seek the participation in this program of other interested states, such as members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, regional Arab states and institutions, as well as members of the private sector.
2. The Development Program will consist of two elements:
  - An Economic Development Program for the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.
  - A Regional Economic Development Program.

A. The Economic Development Program for the West Bank and the Gaza Strip will consist of the following elements:

3. A Social Rehabilitation Program, including a Housing and Construction Program.
4. A Small and Medium Business Development Plan.
5. An Infrastructure Development Program (water, electricity, transportation and communications, etc.).
6. A Human Resources Plan.
7. Other programs.

B. The Regional Economic Development Program may consist of the following elements:

8. The establishment of a Middle East Development Fund, as a first step, and a Middle East Development Bank, as a second step.
9. The development of a joint Israeli-Palestinian-Jordanian Plan for coordinated exploitation of the Dead Sea area.
10. The Mediterranean Sea (Gaza) - Dead Sea Canal.
11. Regional Desalination and other water development projects.
12. A regional plan for agriculture development, including a coordinated regional effort for the prevention of desertification.
13. Interconnection of electricity grids.
14. Regional cooperation for the transfer, distribution and industrial exploitation of gas, oil and other energy resources.

15. A regional Tourism, Transportation and Telecommunications Development Plan.
16. Regional cooperation in other spheres.

1. The two sides encourage the multilateral working groups, and will coordinate towards their success. The two parties will encourage inter-sessional activities, as well as pre-feasibility and feasibility studies, within the various multilateral working groups.

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Agreed minutes to the declaration of principles on interim self-government arrangements

A. General understandings and agreements

Any powers and responsibilities transferred to the Palestinians pursuant to the Declaration of Principles prior to the inauguration of the Council will be subject to the same principles pertaining to Article IV, as set out in these Agreed Minutes below.

B. Specific understandings and agreements

Article IV

It is understood that:

1. Jurisdiction of the Council will cover West Bank and Gaza Strip territory, except for issues that will be negotiated in the permanent status negotiations: Jerusalem, settlements, military locations, and Israelis.
2. The Council's jurisdiction will apply with regard to the agreed powers, responsibilities, spheres and authorities transferred to it.

Article VI(2)

It is agreed that the transfer of authority will be as follows:

1. The Palestinian side will inform the Israeli side of the names of the authorized Palestinians who will assume the powers, authorities and responsibilities that will be transferred to the Palestinians according to the Declaration of Principles in the following fields: education and culture, health, social welfare, direct taxation, tourism, and any other authorities agreed upon.
2. It is understood that the rights and obligations of these offices will not be affected.
3. Each of the spheres described above will continue to enjoy existing budgetary allocations in accordance with arrangements to be mutually agreed upon. These arrangements also will provide for the necessary adjustments required in order to take into account the taxes collected by the direct taxation office.
4. Upon the execution of the Declaration of Principles, the Israeli and Palestinian delegations will immediately commence negotiations on a detailed plan for the transfer of authority on the above offices in accordance with the above understandings.

Article VII(2)

The Interim Agreement will also include arrangements for coordination and cooperation.

Article VII(5)

The withdrawal of the military government will not prevent Israel from exercising the powers and responsibilities not transferred to the Council.

#### Article VIII

It is understood that the Interim Agreement will include arrangements for cooperation and coordination between the two parties in this regard. It is also agreed that the transfer of powers and responsibilities to the Palestinian police will be accomplished in a phased manner, as agreed in the Interim Agreement.

#### Article X

It is agreed that, upon the entry into force of the Declaration of Principles, the Israeli and Palestinian delegations will exchange the names of the individuals designated by them as members of the Joint Israeli-Palestinian Liaison Committee. It is further agreed that each side will have an equal number of members in the Joint Committee. The Joint Committee will reach decisions by agreement. The Joint Committee may add other technicians and experts, as necessary. The Joint Committee will decide on the frequency and place or places of its meetings.

#### ANNEX II

It is understood that, subsequent to the Israel withdrawal, Israel will continue to be responsible for external security, and for internal security and public order of settlements and Israelis. Israeli military forces and civilians may continue to use roads freely within the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area.

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

For the Government of Israel: [*Shimon Perez*]

For the P.L.O: [*Mahmoud Abbas*]

Witnessed by:

The United States of America: [*Warren Christopher*]

The Russian Federation: [*Andrei Kozyrev*]

## Appendix F: Quartet Statements 2002 – 2007

Following are the Quartet Statements from 10 April 2002 to 17 December 2007 as they appeared on the website of the US State Department on 31 December 2008.

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**Remarks with Foreign Minister of Spain Josep Pique, United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan Foreign Minister of Russia Igor Ivanov, and European Union Senior Official Javier Solana**

**Secretary Colin L. Powell**

Madrid, Spain  
April 10, 2002

FOREIGN MINISTER PIQUE (translated from Spanish): Good morning to all, thank you for your presence. We have less than 30 minutes for this press conference. I will make a very brief introduction so I can turn it over to the Secretary General of the United Nations, who will be the spokesperson for all of us, and then there will be time for questions; but keep in mind the time constraints that we have. As you know, we have just met -- the institutions that we represent, the EU, the UN, the US, the Russian Federation -- to discuss the grave situation in the Middle East and to express a joint declaration on our vision of the situation and the possibilities of getting to a swift solution. Now I will turn it over to the Secretary General of the United Nations, who will read the declaration and make comments he deems necessary. Mr. Annan.

SECRETARY GENERAL ANNAN: Good morning ladies and gentlemen. Before sharing the joint statement with you, I would like to say a few words about the grave situation in the Middle East. We are all meeting today against a backdrop of a steadily escalating three-fold crisis in the Middle East. We face continuing intensification of fighting between the Israelis and the Palestinians. We face mounting humanitarian and human rights crises in the West Bank and Gaza with enormous suffering for the innocent civilian population caught up in the hostilities, and we face rising tensions throughout the region, particularly along Israel's northern border.

I am, frankly, appalled by the humanitarian situation. The international community demands that the Government of Israel honor its obligation under international law to protect civilians and that the IDF stop the damage to and destruction of civilian and personal property. Respect for international humanitarian law and the humanitarian organizations is the most basic requirement for any nation that lays claim to democracy and membership of the international community. I also call on the donor community to be generous in assisting UNRWA and the other humanitarian organizations in meeting the urgent challenges.

With reference to the disturbances along the Blue Line emanating from Lebanese territory, I call on the Government of Lebanon and all relevant parties to condemn and prevent such violations. The Security Council itself confirmed in June 2000 that Israel had withdrawn from southern Lebanon in compliance with UN Security Council resolutions 425 and 426. Attacks at any point along the Blue Line, including in the Shebaa Farms area in the occupied Golan Heights, are violations of Security Council resolutions. Respect for decisions of the Security Council is the most basic requirement of international legitimacy. Finally, I would like to thank the government of Spain for hosting us today in Madrid just over ten years since the Madrid conference set out the essential principles for a comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

I will now share with you the communiqué that we have agreed on.

"We express our grave concern about the present situation, including the mounting humanitarian crisis and the growing risk to regional security. We reiterate our shared condemnation of violence and terrorism, express our deep distress at the loss of innocent Palestinian and Israeli life, and extend our



deepest sympathy to the families of those killed and wounded. Believing that there has been too much suffering and too much bloodshed, we call on the leaders of Israel and the Palestinian Authority to act in the interests of their own people, the region, and the international community and to immediately halt this senseless confrontation.

"In this regard, we express our grave concern about the most recent attacks from Lebanon across the UN-determined Blue Line. The Quartet calls on all parties to respect the Blue Line, halt all attacks, and show the utmost restraint. The conflict should not be allowed to spread and threaten regional security and stability.

"The UN, EU and Russia express their strong support for Secretary of State Powell's mission, and urge Israel and the Palestinian Authority to cooperate fully with his mission and with their continuing efforts to restore calm and resume a political process.

"We reiterate that there is no military solution to the conflict and call on the parties to move towards a political resolution of their disputes based on UNSCR 242 and 338, and the principle of land for peace, which formed the basis for the Madrid Conference of 1991. We reaffirm our support to the objective expressed by President Bush and spelled out in UNSCR 1397, of two states, Israel and Palestine, living side-by-side within secure and recognized borders. We warmly welcome Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah's peace initiative, as endorsed in Beirut by the Arab League, as a significant contribution towards a comprehensive peace, including Syria and Lebanon.

"To enable progress towards our shared goals, we reaffirm that UNSCR 1402 must be fully implemented immediately, as called for in UNSCR 1403. We call on Israel to halt immediately its military operations. We call for an immediate, meaningful cease-fire and an immediate Israeli withdrawal from Palestinian cities, including Ramallah, specifically including Chairman Arafat's headquarters. We call on Israel to fully comply with international humanitarian principles and to allow full and unimpeded access to humanitarian organizations and services. We call on Israel to refrain from the excessive use of force and undertake all possible efforts to ensure the protection of civilians.

"We call on Chairman Arafat, as the recognized, elected leader of the Palestinian people, to undertake immediately the maximum possible effort to stop terror attacks against innocent Israelis. We call on the Palestinian Authority to act decisively and take all possible steps within its capacity to dismantle terrorist infrastructure, including terrorist financing, and to stop incitement to violence. We call on Chairman Arafat to use the full weight of his political authority to persuade the Palestinian people that any and all terrorist attacks against Israelis should end immediately and to authorize his representatives to resume immediately security coordination with Israel.

"Terrorism, including suicide bombs, is illegal and immoral, has inflicted grave harm to the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people, and must be condemned as called for in UNSCR 1373.

"We call on Israel and the Palestinian Authority to reach agreement on cease-fire proposals put forward by Gen. Zinni without further delay. We commend the efforts of Gen. Zinni to date to achieve this objective.

"The Quartet stands ready to assist the parties in implementing their agreements, in particular the Tenet security work plan and the Mitchell recommendations, including through a third-party mechanism, as agreed to by the parties.

"We affirm that the Tenet and Mitchell plans must be fully implemented, including an end to all settlement activity. We affirm that there must be immediate, parallel and accelerated movement towards near-term and tangible political progress, and that there must be a defined series of steps leading to permanent peace involving recognition, normalization and security between the sides, an end

to Israeli occupation, and an end to the conflict. This will allow Israel to enjoy enduring peace and security and the Palestinian people to realize their hopes and aspirations in security and dignity.

"In support of these objectives, we call on the international community, particularly the Arab states, to preserve, strengthen and assist the Palestinian Authority, including through efforts to rebuild its infrastructure, security and governance capacity. We call also on the donor community and the international financial institutions to renew their commitment to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, and to assist in economic and institutional reconstruction. We pay tribute to the courageous efforts of the humanitarian agencies and workers.

"We agreed on the need to keep the situation in the Middle East under review by the Quartet at the principals level through regular consultations. Our Special Envoys will continue their efforts on the ground to assist the parties in reaching an end to confrontation and resumption of political negotiations."

The Minister reminded me to share with you that the Quartet is hoping to meet fairly shortly and we are going to remain consistently seized of the problem. Of course Secretary Powell, as I said, is going with our full support. Depending on the outcome of his mission, we will meet sooner than later.

**QUESTION:** I would like to ask Secretary Powell whether you share Kofi Annan's opening statement and the level of which he says he is frankly appalled by Israel's actions and their interference with humanitarian efforts, and also ask Mr. Annan and any others who might want to comment to respond to the latest terror attack today in Haifa?

**SECRETARY POWELL:** We are concerned about the humanitarian situation. In that instance, the Secretary General was speaking in his own authority as the Secretary General of the United Nations, but certainly all of us are concerned with the humanitarian situation.

**SECRETARY GENERAL ANNAN:** I will say that obviously the situation is very grave, the humanitarian situation. I suspect that none of us will know the full gravity of the situation until we gain access to all the territories that are now the theater of battle. I have a sense that we will be shocked by what we see. We are getting too many independent reports for it not to be credible.

But let me say that on the question of the suicide attacks, I think the statement that I read made it quite clear that it is morally repugnant and should be condemned and no one can defend it. Attacks against innocent and unarmed civilians is terrorism that we cannot tolerate.

**QUESTION:** Judy Dempsey Financial Times. You mentioned a third-party mechanism. Is there now a consensus among the Quartet that there should be some kind of monitoring mechanism either to implement a cease-fire or to monitor how the cease-fire can be implemented? Could you spell out what you would like, although the Israelis have always resisted this?

**SECRETARY POWELL:** As you may recall from the G-8 summit meeting last year when this was discussed, the US indicated that it would be willing to put in place US monitors at the beginning of the Tenet Process, the Mitchell Process, and that still remains our position. I think some limited US presence would be acceptable of course by both sides; and once we get started, we might take a look at what else might be done to allow the two sides to have confidence in what either side is doing and to keep the process moving along. The reference here in the first instance refers to the US monitoring offer that was made at the G-8 meeting last year.

**QUESTION:** Secretary Powell, the communiqué said that you hope to coordinate activities. I was wondering if that may include the possibility of trade sanctions which are being contemplated by the Europeans. Were sanctions discussed, what is the US position on sanctions, and do you think that is an appropriate step for the Europeans to take?

**SECRETARY POWELL:** We did not discuss sanctions in our Quartet meeting, and I will leave it to Minister Pique if he wishes to say anything about the European Union position. I know there have been different ideas presented, but I will yield to him with respect to that.

**FOREIGN MINISTER PIQUE (translated from Spanish):** Thank you very much. What we are considering is the possibility of convening the Council of Associations between the European Union and Israel to analyze the situation and to have a profound political dialogue on what we should do to

make peace and guarantee security. We will continue to analyze the different possibilities; it is premature to predict.

What we should do is concentrate on what we are doing now and focus on the expression of the communiqué, and the support of the mission of Secretary Powell and to see the evolution of the results.

**QUESTION (translated from Spanish):** Can you be more specific on the question of sanctions? What position will the US take if your mission fails, if in the next few days you meet with no results? And to Minister Pique, if after today's meeting the EU might have a role in the crisis as far as the finance of the reconstruction?

**SECRETARY POWELL:** Well, I'm hoping for a success in my mission so it would be premature and rather hypothetical for me to speak about what other actions the United States might take either alone or in coordination with our partners. That is not something we are considering right now within the United States Government.

**FOREIGN MINISTER PIQUE:** In respect to your question, I'll be brief. We are here.

**QUESTION:** Secretary Powell and other members, you've spoken a lot of the political track, about advancing political talks. Can you be more concrete? Do you have any ideas for some sort of political process, another Madrid Conference, some sort of forum where you can bring together these leaders, something you can hold out in particular to the Palestinians to show them why they should cease fire now?

**SECRETARY POWELL:** We are exploring different ideas and ways this might happen. It would be premature to announce here this morning, but let me make the point that in the Mitchell Plan -- and I am pleased to be standing next to one of the authors, Javier Solana -- its whole purpose was to get to a political discussion and negotiations; and we have been coming back from that purpose by putting in place first a need for security measures, ceasefires and the like.

What I have been saying in recent days is that we need to accelerate the political process closer to the ceasefire and the security apparatus that might be put in place because I think the Palestinian people, the world, the Israeli people, should be anxious to get to a dialogue that will result in a negotiation process that will lead to a solution to this crisis. I think we are all in agreement and the world is in agreement that the solution will not be produced by terror or a response to terror, this is not going to get us there. What will get us there are political discussions, and the sooner we can get to them the better. Now I have to speak to the parties in the region at greater length to see how they view this matter and to see how we can go forward and, in due course, I'm sure that we will let the whole world know what we believe is the proper way to go forward.

**QUESTION:** Question for Mr. Powell and Mr. Annan. Acts of resistance in the occupied territories, not in Israel, against the soldiers of occupation, not against Israeli civilians. Is it terrorism for you, and for you?

**SECRETARY POWELL:** What I would say right now is that violence of whatever form, whether one would call it an act of terrorism or an act of resistance at this point is counterproductive. It does not lead to the vision that the Palestinian people have of the state where they can live side by side in peace with Israel.

What we have to see now is an end to the violence; with whatever title you want to give to that violence, it is violence nonetheless. It is totally destabilizing the region and it is destroying that vision, and so our call today is for violence to end and response to violence to end. Withdrawal from current incursions that the Israeli Government is conducting is a way of moving forward with all of us united, Palestinian people, the international community, the Israeli people all committed to a vision of two states, a Jewish state called Israel and a Palestinian state called Palestine, living behind recognized borders in peace with one another. The violence we are now seeing detracts from that vision, whatever title one puts on it.

**QUESTION:** Two short questions for Minister Ivanov and Mr. Solana. What is your idea of the chance of use of embargo from the European Union, and Mr. Solana, do you agree that Europe has been too timid in this phase of the crisis? Thank you.

**FOREIGN MINISTER IVANOV:** (In Russian, no translation available)

**MR. SOLANA:** I don't agree. I think that maybe people think Europe could have gone farther but I do think we have done what we should in order to bring peace to the place, which is very close to the interest and values of Europe.

**QUESTION:** The Secretary of State told us yesterday that he is making an effort to have Syria and Iran do what they could to restrain militia activities, terrorists, pick your word. How do you feel about Syria's behavior? Is this something that you would support, that Syria and Iran should curb particularly in Lebanon?

**SECRETARY GENERAL ANNAN:** No, I have in recent days and weeks been in touch with the leaders in the region particularly with regards to the Blue Line -- which as you know was traced by the UN -- and I have spoken to President Assad, Prime Minister Hariri, and President Lahud, and Foreign Minister Peres and doing everything to keep the border quiet because no one wants to open a second front. The leaders have given me the assurance that they are going to do whatever they can to respect the Blue Line, and the Security Council has itself indicated that these violations must cease. I have not spoken to Iran recently on this issue, but we have had a chance to talk in the past. The last question please.

**QUESTION:** Mr. Secretary, you talked several times about the physical destruction of the Palestinian authority. Can I ask both you and General Annan....

**SECRETARY GENERAL ANNAN:** We have only one general in the room. (laughter)

**QUESTION:** What Palestine institutions do you believe need to be rebuilt, by whom, and how soon?

**SECRETARY POWELL:** This was a subject of discussion this morning; it's also a subject I discussed with the other Arab leaders I met in the course of the week. If we are going to move forward, there will have to be an authority to work with. There will have to be tools of governance, tools of government, and an administration, organizations rebuilt that have been damaged or destroyed in recent months. There will have to be some sort of security apparatus that can control the populations and work with the Israelis. The whole purpose of the security arrangement is to exchange intelligence, exchange information and develop confidence and that they would act on such information to keep terrorist acts from happening, to control the violence. I have spoken to my colleagues here this morning and the other Arab leaders about the need for all to be ready to move forward to make the necessary investments of time, of money, of the resources to reconstruct that part of the Palestinian Authority that has been damaged in recent months. That's an essential predicate in order to move forward.

**SECRETARY GENERAL ANNAN:** I was going to say that in addition to what Secretary Powell has said, we also have to remember that it is a really deplorable economic and social situation in the occupied territory where we would also have to step up our assistance to the Palestinians to get them into meaningful activities when the violence subsides as well as rebuild all the infrastructure that Secretary Powell has referred to. So we have lots of work to do but we must first get the violence down.

Released on April 10, 2002

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### **Middle East Quartet Statement of July 16, 2002**

New York City

July 16, 2002

After meeting at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York City, the Quartet issued the following Statement:

United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, Danish Foreign Minister Per Stig Moeller, High Representative for European Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana and European Commissioner for External Affairs Chris Patten met in New York today. The Quartet members reviewed the situation in the Middle East and agreed to continue close consultations, as expressed in the Madrid Declaration, to which the Quartet remains fully committed, to promote a just, comprehensive, and lasting settlement of the Middle East

conflict. The Quartet expresses its support for the convening of a further international Ministerial meeting at an appropriate time.

The Quartet deeply deplores today's tragic killing of Israeli civilians and reiterates its strong and unequivocal condemnation of terrorism, including suicide bombing, which is morally repugnant and has caused great harm to the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people for a better future. Terrorists must not be allowed to kill the hope of an entire region, and a united international community, for genuine peace and security for both Palestinians and Israelis. The Quartet expresses once again its profound regret at the loss of innocent Israeli and Palestinian lives, and extends its sympathy to all those who have suffered loss. The Quartet members expressed their increasing concern about the mounting humanitarian crisis in Palestinian areas and their determination to address urgent Palestinian needs. Consistent with President Bush's June 24 statement, the UN, EU and Russia express their strong support for the goal of achieving a final Israeli-Palestinian settlement which, with intensive effort on security and reform by all, could be reached within three years from now. The UN, EU and Russia welcome President Bush's commitment to active U.S. leadership toward that goal. The Quartet remains committed to implementing the vision of two states, Israel and an independent, viable and democratic Palestine, living side by side in peace and security, as affirmed by UN Security Council Resolution 1397. The Quartet members, in their individual capacity and jointly, pledge all possible efforts to realize the goals of reform, security and peace and reaffirm that progress in the political, security, economic, humanitarian, and institution-building fields must proceed together, hand-in-hand. The Quartet reiterates its welcome of the initiative of Saudi Arabia, endorsed by the Arab League Beirut Summit, as a significant contribution towards a comprehensive peace.

To assist progress toward these shared goals, the Quartet agreed on the importance of a coordinated international campaign to support Palestinian efforts at political and economic reform. The Quartet welcomes and encourages the strong Palestinian interest in fundamental reform, including the Palestinian 100-Day Reform Program. It also welcomes the willingness of regional states and the international community to assist the Palestinians to build institutions of good government, and to create a new governing framework of working democracy, in preparation for statehood. For these objectives to be realized, it is essential that well-prepared, free, open and democratic elections take place. The new international Task Force on Reform, which is comprised of representatives of the U.S., EU, UN Secretary General, Russia, Japan, Norway, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, and which works under the auspices of the Quartet, will strive to develop and implement a comprehensive action plan for reform. The inaugural meeting of this Task Force in London July 10 discussed a detailed plan including specific Palestinian commitments. It will meet again in August to review actions in areas including civil society, financial accountability, local government, the market economy, elections, and judicial and administrative reform.

Implementation of an action plan, with appropriate benchmarks for progress on reform measures, should lead to the establishment of a democratic Palestinian state characterized by the rule of law, separation of powers, and a vibrant free market economy that can best serve the interests of its people. The Quartet also commits itself to continuing to assist the parties in efforts to renew dialogue, and welcomes in this regard the recent high-level ministerial meetings between Israelis and Palestinians on the issues of security, economics and reform.

The Quartet agreed on the critical need to build new and efficient Palestinian security capabilities on sound bases of unified command, and transparency and accountability with regard to resources and conduct. Restructuring security institutions to serve these goals should lead to improvement in Palestinian security performance, which is essential to progress on other aspects of institutional transformation and realization of a Palestinian state committed to combating terror.

In this context, the Quartet notes Israel's vital stake in the success of Palestinian reform. The Quartet calls upon Israel to take concrete steps to support the emergence of a viable Palestinian state. Recognizing Israel's legitimate security concerns, these steps include immediate measures to ease the internal closures in certain areas and, as security improves through reciprocal steps, withdrawal of Israeli forces to their pre-September 28, 2000 positions. Moreover, frozen tax revenues should be released. In this connection, a more transparent and accountable mechanism is being put into place. In addition, consistent with the Mitchell Committee's recommendations, Israel should stop all new

settlement activity. Israel must also ensure full, safe and unfettered access for international and humanitarian personnel.

The Quartet reaffirms that there must be a negotiated permanent settlement based on UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 338. There can be no military solution to the conflict; Israelis and Palestinians must address the core issues that divide them, through sustained negotiations, if there is to be real and lasting peace and security. The Israeli occupation that began in 1967 must end, and Israel must have secure and recognized borders. The Quartet further reaffirms its commitment to the goal of a comprehensive regional peace between Israel and Lebanon, and Israel and Syria, based upon Resolutions 242 and 338, the Madrid terms of reference, and the principle of land for peace. The Quartet looks forward to upcoming consultations with the Foreign Ministers of Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and other regional partners, and determines to continue regular consultation on the situation in the Middle East at the principals' level. The Quartet envoys will continue their work on the ground to support the work of the principals, to assist the Task Force on Reform, and to aid the parties in resuming a political dialogue in order to reach a solution to the core political questions.

Released on July 16, 2002

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### **Middle East Quartet Communique of September 17, 2002**

New York City  
September 17, 2002

United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, Danish Foreign Minister Per Stig Moeller, High Representative for European Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, and European Commissioner for External Affairs Chris Patten met today in New York and issued the following Communique:

Reaffirming their previous statements, the Quartet members reviewed developments since their last meeting, on July 16, 2002. They deplored and condemned the morally repugnant violence and terror, which must end. They agreed to intensify their efforts in support of their shared goal of achieving a final Israeli-Palestinian settlement based on their common vision, as inter alia expressed by President Bush, of two states, Israel and an independent, viable and democratic Palestine, living side by side in peace and security.

The Quartet will continue to encourage all parties to step up to their responsibilities to seek a just and comprehensive settlement to the conflict based on UN Security Council resolutions 242, 338, and 1397, the Madrid terms of reference, the principle of land for peace, and implementation of all existing agreements between the parties. The Quartet reaffirms the continuing importance of the initiative of Saudi Arabia, endorsed at the Arab League Beirut Summit, which is a vital part of the foundation of international efforts to promote a comprehensive peace on all tracks, including the Syrian-Israeli and Lebanese-Israeli tracks.

The Quartet is working closely with the parties and consulting key regional actors on a concrete, three-phase implementation roadmap that could achieve a final settlement within three years. Comprehensive security performance is essential. The plan will not succeed unless it addresses political, economic, humanitarian, and institutional dimensions and should spell out reciprocal steps to be taken by the parties in each of its phases. In this approach, progress between the three phases would be strictly based on the parties' compliance with specific performance benchmarks to be monitored and assessed by the Quartet.

The Quartet also supports, in preparation for establishment of a Palestinian state, efforts by the Palestinians to develop a constitution which ensures separation of power, transparency, accountability, and the vibrant political system which Palestinians deserve.

The plan will contain in its initial phase (2002-first half of 2003) performance-based criteria for comprehensive security reform, Israeli withdrawals to their positions of September 28, 2000 as the

security situation improves, and support for the Palestinians' holding of free, fair, and credible elections early in 2003, based on recommendations established by the Quartet's International Task Force on Palestinian Reform. The first phase should include a ministerial-level meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLC) to review the humanitarian situation and prospects for economic development in the West Bank and Gaza and identify priority areas for donor assistance, including to the reform process, before the end of the year. The Quartet Principals will meet alongside the AHLC ministerial. In the plan's second phase (2003), our efforts should focus on the option of creating a Palestinian state with provisional borders based upon a new constitution, as a way station to a permanent status settlement.

In its final phase (2004-5), the plan envisages Israeli-Palestinian negotiations aimed at a permanent status solution in 2005. Consistent with the vision expressed by President Bush, this means that the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 will be ended through a settlement negotiated between the parties and based on U.N. resolutions 242 and 338, with Israeli withdrawal to secure and recognized borders. The Quartet welcomes the Task Force's report on the progress of the seven Reform Support Groups, and notes that a number of significant achievements, especially in the area of financial reform, have been realized in a short period of time under very difficult circumstances. Under the aegis of the Quartet, the Task Force will continue its work of supporting the Palestinians and the Palestinian Authority as they establish and prioritize reform benchmarks, particularly on the issues of elections, judicial reform, and the role of civil society.

Both the reform effort and the political process must include Israeli measures, consistent with Israel's legitimate security concerns, to improve the lives of Palestinians, including allowing the resumption of normal economic activity, facilitating the movement of goods, people, and essential services and to lift curfew and closures. Consistent with transparent and accountable Palestinian budget arrangements, the Quartet welcomes Israel's decision to transfer part of the Palestinian VAT and customs revenue that has been withheld since September 2000, and calls on Israel to continue this process and reestablish regular monthly revenue transfers to the Palestinian Ministry of Finance. And consistent with the recommendations of the Mitchell Commission, Israeli settlement activity in the occupied territories must stop.

The Quartet welcomes the report of UN Secretary-General's Personal Humanitarian Envoy Catherine Bertini as well as the latest UNSCO report on the impact of closures. It calls on Israel and the Palestinians to recognize and act upon their respective responsibilities and to move quickly to ameliorate the sharply deteriorating humanitarian situation in the West Bank and Gaza. In particular, Israel must ensure full, safe and unfettered access for international and humanitarian personnel. Reiterating the critical importance of restoring lasting calm through comprehensive performance on security, the Quartet calls on the Palestinians to work with the U.S. and regional partners to reform the Palestinian security services, strengthen policing and law and order for the civilian population, and fight the terror that has severely undermined the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinians. Israelis and Palestinians should reestablish security cooperation and reciprocal steps should be taken by Israel as the Palestinians work to combat terrorism in all its forms.

The Quartet will continue to discuss the timing and modalities of an international conference.

The Quartet also met and discussed these issues with the Foreign Ministers of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and Syria, as representatives of the Arab League Follow-up Committee, and with representatives of Israel and the Palestinian Authority. The Quartet looks forward to continuing consultations.

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Joint Statement  
**Office of the Spokesman**  
Washington, DC  
December 20, 2002

**Joint Statement by the Quartet**

United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, Danish Foreign Minister Per Stig Moeller, High Representative for European Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, and European Commissioner for External Affairs Chris Patten met today in Washington with President Bush and Secretary of State Powell. In his meeting, President Bush expressed strong support for the efforts of the Quartet and his firm commitment to the Quartet's roadmap, which would realize his vision of two states -- Israel and Palestine -- living side-by-side in peace and security. Reaffirming their previous statements, the Quartet members reviewed developments since their last meeting, on September 17, 2002. They condemned the brutal terror attacks carried out by Palestinian extremist organizations since the last meeting, which aim to diminish the prospects for peace, and only harm legitimate Palestinian aspirations for statehood. The Quartet deplores the killing of innocent Palestinian civilians and UN employees in IDF security operations, and calls on the Government of Israel to review its rules of engagement and disciplinary procedures to avoid such civilian casualties. The Quartet took stock of the results of the ongoing consultations with the parties on the elements of a three-phase performance-based and goal-driven roadmap to realize the vision expressed in President Bush's June 24 speech of two states -- Israel and an independent, viable, sovereign, and democratic Palestine -- living side-by-side in peace and security. The Quartet commended the constructive spirit that characterized its discussions with all parties. The Quartet, based upon a common understanding on the content and goals of this process, made substantial progress toward finalizing a roadmap for presentation to the parties in the near future. The Quartet agreed to further intensive work to develop a credible and effective monitoring mechanism. In the meantime, the Quartet calls on the parties to carry out as rapidly as possible their responsibilities to restore calm, pursue reforms, and improve the humanitarian situation -- steps that will lead to a political process culminating in Palestinian statehood. Specifically, the Quartet calls for an immediate, comprehensive, cease-fire. All Palestinian individuals and groups must end all acts of terror against Israelis, in any location. In this regard, the Quartet welcomes the initiative of Egypt to work with Palestinians to achieve this end. Such a cease-fire should be accompanied by supportive measures undertaken by the Government of Israel. As calm is established, Israeli forces should withdraw from Palestinian areas and the pre-Intifada status quo on the ground should be restored. The Quartet calls on the Palestinian leadership to work with the U.S. and others to restructure and reform the Palestinian security services.

Recognizing the importance of well-prepared Palestinian elections to the process of building strong, democratic, institutions in preparation for statehood, the Quartet supports the accelerated work of the Constitutional Committee to draft a Palestinian constitution. The Quartet notes the progress made in the reform process under difficult circumstances and calls for increased efforts by the Palestinian Authority to move forward in a comprehensive and sustained manner, in cooperation with the Task Force on Palestinian Reform, on institutional reforms. In this context, the Quartet welcomes the initiative of the United Kingdom and Prime Minister Blair to convene a meeting early next year to encourage and accelerate the reform process.

The Quartet expresses concern at the deepening humanitarian crisis in Gaza and the West Bank. It calls for increased effort by the Government of Israel to ease the humanitarian situation in the West Bank and Gaza. It also calls on Israel and the Palestinians to implement fully the recommendations of the Bertini report. The Quartet welcomes the recent transfer by Israel of VAT and other revenues due to the Palestinian Authority, and calls on Israel to continue these monthly transfers, including arrears. The Quartet reiterates the importance of immediate Israeli measures, consistent with legitimate security concerns, to improve the lives of Palestinians, including allowing the resumption of normal economic activity, facilitating the movement of goods, people, and essential services and lifting curfew and closures. The Quartet calls on Israel to avoid actions that undermine trust and create further hardship for innocent Palestinian civilians, including demolition of houses and civil infrastructure.

The Quartet welcomes efforts to re-organize and update donor coordination mechanisms in order to simplify and strengthen an already unified international effort so as to revive and support peace efforts. The Quartet reiterates the critical importance of sustaining hope on the part of Israelis and Palestinians for the vision articulated by President Bush, and supported by the Quartet in its previous statements and ongoing engagement with the parties and in the region, of a future in which both peoples can live -- in



their own states -- in genuine peace and security. Consistent with this goal, the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 will be ended through a settlement negotiated between the parties and based on resolutions 242 and 338, with Israeli withdrawal to secure and recognized borders. For this goal to be achieved, violence and terror must come to an end. Israeli settlement activity must stop, consistent with the recommendations of the Mitchell report.

The Quartet will continue to encourage all parties in the region to seek a just, lasting and comprehensive settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict based on the foundations of the Madrid Conference, the principle of land for peace, UNSCRs 242, 338 and 1397, agreements previously reached by the parties, and the initiative of Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah -- endorsed by the Beirut Arab League Summit -- for acceptance of Israel as a neighbor living in peace and security, in the context of a comprehensive settlement. This initiative is a vital element of international efforts to promote a comprehensive peace on all tracks, including the Syrian-Israeli and Lebanese-Israeli tracks. The Quartet looks forward to continuing consultations on achieving the above goals, and a further meeting of the Quartet principals in the near future to adopt the roadmap and present it to the parties. Released on December 20, 2002

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Press Statement

**Richard Boucher, Spokesman**

Washington, DC

February 20, 2003

#### **Joint Statement of Quartet Envoys London**

Following is the Joint Statement issued by Quartet envoys on February 19, 2003, following their meeting in London.

"Representatives of the Middle East Quartet -- the United States, the Russian Federation, the European Union, and the United Nations -- met at the Envoys level in London February 19 to review the current situation in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and prospects for giving new impetus to peace efforts. They expressed very serious concern at the continuing acts of violence and terror planned and directed against Israelis and at Israeli military operations over the past several days in the West Bank and Gaza, which led to Palestinian civilian fatalities. The Envoys discussed the next steps toward the adoption and implementation of the Quartet's Road Map, as it is the means for progress toward the vision described by President Bush on June 24, 2002: two democratic states living side by side in peace. They reaffirmed that the Roadmap should be formally adopted and presented to the parties as soon as possible.

"The Quartet envoys reaffirmed the call of the Quartet principals in Washington on December 20 for an immediate, comprehensive cease-fire. All Palestinian individuals and groups must end all acts of terror against Israelis, in any location.

"The Envoys reiterated their call for the Palestinians to build credible institutions to prepare for statehood and welcomed the Palestinians' decision to appoint a Prime Minister as a significant step. The Envoys underscored the importance of appointing a credible and fully empowered Prime Minister. They urged the immediate convening of the relevant legislative and executive Palestinian bodies to exercise their authority in this regard, and called on the Government of Israel to facilitate these meetings. The Quartet also encouraged the Palestinians to continue the process of preparing a constitution that would form the basis for a strong parliamentary democracy.

"Noting Israel's important role in facilitating the Palestinian reform process, they recognized the positive effect of the resumption of monthly revenue transfers and return of outstanding arrears. Likewise, the Quartet Envoys emphasized Israel's obligation, consistent with legitimate security concerns, to do more to ease the dire humanitarian and socio-economic situation in the West Bank and Gaza, including facilitating freedom of movement and access, alleviating the daily burdens of life under occupation, and respecting the dignity of Palestinian civilians. They welcomed the opportunity for direct discussions between the donor community and Israelis and Palestinians to address this critical issue."

Press Statement  
**Office of the Spokesman**  
Movenpick, Dead Sea  
June 22, 2003

**Statement By The Quartet**

Representatives of the Quartet – United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, Greek Foreign Minister George Papandreou, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, High Representative for European Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, and European Commissioner for External Affairs Chris Patten - met today at the Dead Sea in Jordan. The Quartet members reviewed developments since their last meeting in Washington, on December 20, 2002. They welcome the appointment of Palestinian Prime Minister Abbas and the strong start he and his government have made in difficult circumstances, and the acceptance by Israeli and Palestinian authorities of the roadmap presented to the parties on April 30, 2003, leading to realization of the goal expressed by President Bush and shared by the Quartet members, of two states - Israel and Palestine - living side by side in peace and security, in 2005. They strongly endorse the results of the Red Sea Summit meetings, and pledge to support actively Prime Minister Abbas and Prime Minister Sharon in carrying out the commitments made at these meetings.

They welcome the very positive message and personal commitment of President Bush, and his decision to place a mission on the ground charged with helping the parties to move toward peace, through establishment of a credible and effective structure led by the United States, in close cooperation with the Quartet, to coordinate, monitor, and promote implementation of the parties' commitments and responsibilities, as laid out in the roadmap. The Quartet fully shares President Bush's expectation that both parties will meet their obligations in full, and welcomes the initial steps taken by the parties toward this goal.

The Quartet members deplore and condemn the brutal terror attacks against Israeli citizens carried out by Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade since the roadmap's presentation. The Quartet calls for an immediate, comprehensive end to all violence and welcomes efforts by the Government of Egypt and others to achieve such an immediate and comprehensive halt to armed action by Palestinian groups. All Palestinian individuals and groups must end acts of terror against all Israelis, anywhere. The Quartet calls on the Palestinian authorities to take all possible steps to halt immediately the activities of individuals and groups planning and conducting attacks on Israelis. The Quartet supports immediate Palestinian action to restructure and consolidate under Prime Minister Abbas all security services, and calls on all states to assist in such efforts.

The Quartet welcomes the discussions between Israel and Palestinian authorities over transfer of security responsibility in Gaza and Bethlehem. They call on both sides to reach agreement as soon as possible on workable arrangements and timetables for implementation.

The Quartet calls on all states in the region and around the world to end immediately any form of support, including fund-raising and financial assistance, to groups and individuals that use terror and violence to diminish the chances for peace, and calls for an end to all forms of incitement to violence and hatred.

The Quartet expresses its deep concern over Israeli military actions that result in the killing of innocent Palestinian and other civilians. Such actions do not enhance security and undermine trust and prospects for cooperation. While the Quartet recognizes Israel's right to self-defense in the face of terrorist attacks against its citizens, it calls on the Government of Israel to respect international humanitarian law and to exert maximum efforts to avoid such civilian casualties.

The Quartet also calls on the Government of Israel to make all possible efforts to support Palestinian authorities and ease the plight of the Palestinian people through immediate actions. The Quartet strongly urges Israel to facilitate movement of people and goods, as well as access by international

humanitarian organizations. These steps must be taken as rapidly and comprehensively as possible to improve the humanitarian situation and normalize the daily life of the Palestinian people. The Quartet recalls its position that settlements activity must stop. In this context, it welcomes the undertaking made by Prime Minister Sharon at Aqaba, and first steps taken by Israel on the ground, to remove unauthorized outposts.

The Quartet members reviewed progress made on Palestinian institutional reform, endorsed the result of the meetings of the Task Force and Ad Hoc Liaison Committee Meetings held earlier in the year, and reaffirmed their support for all efforts to fulfill the reform goals set forth in the first phase of the roadmap - including adoption of a Palestinian Constitution and preparations for free, open and fair Palestinian elections as soon as possible.

The Quartet reaffirms its commitment to a just, comprehensive, and lasting settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict, including progress toward peace between Israel and Syria, and Israel and Lebanon. Such a peace would be based on the foundations of the Madrid Conference, the principle of land for peace, UNSCRs 242, 338, 1397, agreements previously reached by the parties, and the initiative of Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah - endorsed by the Beirut Arab League Summit - calling for acceptance of Israel as a neighbor living in peace and security, in the context of a comprehensive settlement.

The Quartet looks forward to continuing to work together in close consultation on these issues with the parties.

Released on June 22, 2003

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**Final Quartet Statement  
September 26, 2003  
New York, New York**

Representatives of the Quartet -- United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, Italian Foreign Minister Franco Frattini, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, High Representative for European Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, and European Commissioner for External Affairs Chris Patten -- met today in New York.

The Quartet members view with great concern the situation in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza which has stalled implementation of the roadmap. The Quartet reminds both parties of the need to take into account long-term consequences of their actions, and the obligation for both parties to make rapid progress toward full implementation of the roadmap for peace. They reaffirm their commitment to President Bush's vision -- shared by Russia, the EU and UN -- of two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security; and call on both Israelis and Palestinians to fulfill their obligations and responsibilities under the roadmap and the commitments both sides made to President Bush at the Red Sea Summit in Aqaba.

The Quartet members remind all sides that they have obligations and responsibilities to each other that must be performed. Each party must do more to immediately and simultaneously address the core concerns of the other, as described in the roadmap. The Quartet members reaffirm their commitment to the roadmap and to resumed progress by the parties toward its rapid implementation.

They condemn the vicious terror attacks of August and September carried out by Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade. They again affirm that such actions are morally indefensible and do not serve the interests of the Palestinian people. They call on Palestinians to take immediate, decisive steps against individuals and groups conducting and planning violent attacks. Such steps should be accompanied by Israeli supportive measures, including resumption of full security cooperation. They further call on all states to end harboring and support, including fund-raising and financial assistance, of any groups and individuals that use terror and violence to advance their goals.

The Quartet members affirm that the Palestinian Authority security services must be consolidated under the clear control of an empowered Prime Minister and Interior Minister and must be the sole armed authority in the West Bank and Gaza. Noting that the first Palestinian prime minister has resigned his

post, they urge that the new Palestinian Prime Minister form a cabinet as soon as possible, and ask that cabinet to re-commit itself to the pledges made in the roadmap and at Aqaba. The Palestinian Authority must ensure that a “rebuilt and refocused Palestinian Authority security apparatus begins sustained, targeted, and effective operations aimed at confronting all those engaged in terror and dismantlement of terrorist capabilities and infrastructure.”

The Quartet members recognize Israel's legitimate right to self-defense in the face of terrorist attacks against its citizens. In this context and in the context of international humanitarian law, they call on the Government of Israel to exert maximum efforts to avoid civilian casualties. The Government of Israel must “take no action undermining trust, including deportations, confiscation and/or demolition of Palestinian homes and property, destruction of Palestinian institutions and infrastructure; and other measures specified in the Tenet Work Plan.” The Quartet members call on the Government of Israel to take immediate steps to ease the humanitarian and economic plight of the Palestinian people, including through easing the movement of people and goods, and ensuring access to international humanitarian organizations. The Quartet members reaffirm that, in accordance with the roadmap, settlement activity must stop, and note with great concern the actual and proposed route of Israel's West Bank fence, particularly as it results in the confiscation of Palestinian land, cuts off the movement of people and goods, and undermines Palestinians' trust in the roadmap process as it appears to prejudice final borders of a future Palestinian state.

The Quartet calls upon the international and regional community to continue to provide well-coordinated assistance to the Palestinian Authority for the implementation of reforms and institution building and to consider steps that could be taken with respect to the socio-economic development of the region. The Quartet members will continue to follow closely the implementation by the parties of their obligations. The Quartet members will coordinate their efforts through regular meetings of Quartet representatives, as well as through discussion among the Quartet Principals. The Principals will next meet prior to the end of the year.

The Quartet members look forward to continuing to work closely together, as well as in association with regional parties, to help achieve progress, both between Israelis and Palestinians and toward the goal of a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East.

[end]

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Press Availability

**Office of the Spokesman**

New York, New York

May 4, 2004

**UN Quartet: Kofi Annan, Sergey Lavrov, Brian Cowen, Javier Solana, Chris Patten, and Colin L. Powell**

**UN Secretary General Kofi Annan,  
Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov of the Russian Federation,  
Foreign Minister Brian Cowen of Ireland in the Capacity of EU Presidency,  
Javier Solana, High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy of the EU,  
European Commissioner for External Relations Chris Patten,  
and U.S. Secretary of State Colin L. Powell**

**SECRETARY GENERAL ANNAN:** Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for waiting. Let me now read you what the Quartet has agreed:

We reaffirm our commitment to our shared vision of two states living side by side in peace and security. One of those states will be Israel and the other a viable, democratic, sovereign and contiguous Palestine. We call on both parties to take steps to fulfill their obligations under the roadmap, as called for in Security Council Resolution 1515 and in our previous statements, and to meet the commitments they made at the Red Sea summits in Aqaba and Sharm el-Sheikh.

In that context, we welcome the Israeli Government's recent reaffirmation of its readiness to implement certain obligations under the roadmap, including progress towards a freeze on settlement activity. We urge the Israeli Government to implement these commitments and to fully meet its roadmap obligations. We view the present situation in the Middle East with great concern. We condemn the continuing terror attacks on Israel and call on the Palestinian Authority to take immediate action against terrorist groups and individuals who plan and execute such attacks.

While recognizing Israel's legitimate right to self-defense in the face of terrorist attacks against its citizens within the parameters of international humanitarian law, we call on the Government of Israel to exert maximum efforts to avoid civilian casualties.

We also call on the Government of Israel to take all possible steps now, consistent with Israel's legitimate security needs, to ease the humanitarian and economic plight of the Palestinian people, including increasing freedom of movement for people and groups, both within and from the West Bank and Gaza, removing checkpoints and other steps to respect the dignity of the Palestinian people and improve their quality of life.

The Government of Israel should take no actions undermining trust, such as deportation, attacks on civilians, confiscation and/or demolition of Palestinian homes and property, and other measures specified in the Tenet work plan.

The Quartet calls for renewed efforts to reach a comprehensive ceasefire, as a step towards dismantlement of terrorist capabilities and infrastructure and renewed progress towards peace through implementation of the roadmap.

We note the Government of Israel's pledge that the barrier is a security rather than political barrier and should be temporary rather than permanent. We continue to note with great concern the actual and proposed route of the barrier, particularly as it result in confiscation of Palestinian land, cuts off the movement of people and groups, and undermines Palestinians' trust in the roadmap process by appearing to prejudice the final borders of the future Palestinian state.

We took positive note of Prime Minister Sharon's announced intention to withdraw from all Gaza settlements and parts of the West Bank. This should provide a rare moment of opportunity in the search for peace in the Middle East. This initiative, which must lead to a full Israeli withdrawal and complete end of occupation in Gaza, can be a step towards achieving the two-state vision and could restart progress on the roadmap.

We further note that any unilateral initiatives of the Government of Israel should be undertaken in a manner consistent with the roadmap and with the two-state vision that underlies the roadmap.

We reaffirm President Bush's June 24, 2002 call for an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 through a settlement negotiated between the parties.

We also note that no party should take unilateral actions that seek to predetermine issues that can only be resolved through negotiation and agreement between the two parties. Any final settlements on issues such as borders and refugees must be mutually agreed to by Israelis and Palestinians based on Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, 1397 and 1515; the terms of reference of the Madrid Peace Process, previous agreements; and the initiative of Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah endorsed by the Beirut Arab League Summit. It must also be consistent with the roadmap.

We have agreed to undertake the following steps, with appropriate mechanisms established to monitor progress and performance by all sides.

First, we will act on an urgent basis, in conjunction with the World Bank and the UN Special Coordinator and the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee on the basis of a World Bank/UNSCO Rapid Assessment Study, to ensure that Palestinian humanitarian needs are met, Palestinian infrastructure is restored and developed, and economic activity is reinvigorated.

Two, we are prepared to engage with a responsible and accountable Palestinian leadership committed to reform and security performance. The Quartet members will undertake to oversee and monitor progress on these fronts.

Three, we will need to ensure that -- we will seek to ensure that arrangements are put in place to ensure security for Palestinians and Israelis, as well as freedom of movement and greater mobility and access for Palestinians. We underscore the need for agreed transparent arrangements with all sides on access, mobility and safety for international organizations and for bilateral donors and their personnel.

As Israel withdraws, custody of Israeli-built infrastructure and land evacuated by Israel should be transferred through an appropriate mechanism to a reorganized Palestinian Authority which, in coordination with representatives of the Palestinian civil society, the Quartet and other representatives of the international community, will, as quickly as possible, determine equitable and transparent arrangements for the ultimate disposition of these areas.

Four, effective security arrangements continue to be critical to any possibility of progress. Palestinian security services should be restructured and retrained consistent with the roadmap to provide law and order and security to the Palestinians and to end terror attacks against Israel.

Finally, we reaffirm our commitment to a just, comprehensive and lasting settlement to the Arab-Israel conflict, based on Resolutions 242 and 338. We remind all parties of the need to take into account the long-term consequences of their actions and of their obligation to make rapid progress towards resumption of a political dialogue.

An appropriate coordinating and oversight mechanism will be established under the Quartet's authority. We call on all states in the region to assert every effort to promote peace and to combat terrorism.

Thank you very much, and we will now take your questions.

**MODERATOR:** The first one goes to Tony Jenkins of Expresso, Portugal.

**QUESTION:** My question is to Secretary Powell.

Sir, what is the purpose of this group when George Bush and Ariel Sharon are making deals on their own that seem to have rendered much of the work of this group irrelevant?

**SECRETARY POWELL:** I don't think that the exchange of letters between Prime Minister Sharon and President Bush has done any such thing.

If you look carefully at the exchange of letters and statements of President Bush and Prime Minister Sharon, you'll see a commitment to not prejudging final status issues; you will see a commitment to final status issues being resolved by agreement between the two parties; you will see a commitment to 242, 338 and the other relevant resolutions; you will see a commitment to the roadmap process.

Nothing anticipated doing, as we go forward, will be inconsistent with the roadmap. So if you read carefully what the President said, and what he put into the letter to Prime Minister Sharon, you will see that it is all consistent with what we are doing here today.

And, in fact, what we have done here today is note the new opportunity that exists for progress in the Middle East because, for the first time, we have an Israeli Prime Minister who has stood up and said that he wants to evacuate the settlements: 21 in the West Bank -- excuse me, 21 in Gaza and 4 in the West Bank.

Now, Mr. Sharon had a setback, obviously, with the Likud Party the other day, but he continues to say that is his goal, to go forward with evacuations, and he's examining how best to do that.

And I take note that all polling suggests that the majority of Israeli citizens would like to see a movement in this direction. In the process of discussing this matter with the Israelis, the President and the Prime Minister took into account certain realities that we believed were appropriate to be taken into account with respect to right of return and with respect to alignment of the armistice lines that might be appropriate.

Previous negotiations knew that these features would have to be taken into account, these realities would have to be taken into account, and any future negotiations would have to take them into account. And the President made it explicit.

I think what we have to look at now is how to move forward, and that's what the Quartet was focused on today: how to take advantage of this new opportunity of the evacuation of settlements, as opposed to just relying on the statements of the past, but something that can actually occur -- the evacuation of settlements -- and how we can get the Palestinians ready to take advantage of this opportunity and to get back into the roadmap, get back on the path to peace.

**QUESTION:** Thank you. I'd like us to stay on the subject of the Middle East initially. We'll go to other subjects later.

Barry Schweid, Associated Press, Washington.

**QUESTION:** (Inaudible) Palestinian Authority, or do you just mean a strengthened security force? Do you favor reorganizing the leadership of the Palestinian Authority, so there will be a chance to come to terms with Israel?

**SECRETARY GENERAL ANNAN:** Basically, yes, security was part of it, but we didn't focus just on security. In the past, when we talked about the reform of the Palestinian Authority, we had also talked about empowered Prime Minister working with the international community and reform of the security sector. Quite a lot of work has been done with the Palestinians, particularly by the European Union, on the economic and financial area, also with the World Bank and IMF involved.

So we are looking at this whole set of reforms that will give us -- will give the Palestinians capacity and will have a counter -- a government or an authority on the other side that can take on these responsibilities with full capability.

**MODERATOR:** Raghida Dergham, Al-Hayat, New York.

**QUESTION:** Yes, a follow-up to this question, please. What do you mean by appropriate mechanism when you're saying that you have not determined once Israeli withdraws from certain areas to whom it will be transferred?

And, Mr. Secretary Powell, why is it difficult for you to give the King of Jordan, King Abdallah, a letter of assurances, which is really not asking very -- for much, although you have give such a letter to Prime Minister Sharon? Aren't you undermining his efforts? And did he commit to come to the United States regardless, if you give him the letter or not?

**SECRETARY GENERAL ANNAN:** On your first question, let me say that we are dealing with an evolving situation. As Secretary Powell indicated, the Likud Party voted against the plan. The Prime Minister has reaffirmed his intention to go ahead. We are monitoring it and we are waiting to see how things evolve and then adapt our plans or mechanisms accordingly.

And so this is why we didn't come up and say, "This is what we are going to do." We need to see how the situation evolves.

Thank you.

**SECRETARY POWELL:** Well, I think I -- yeah, the only thing I would say is that Jordanian officials are in Washington today, and we're discussing this situation with them and looking over various language that might be used. But I will just let those discussions take place among our officials in Washington and leave it at that for the moment because I've been here for the last couple of hours.

**MODERATOR:** Benny Avni, Israel Radio, New York.

**QUESTION:** My question also has to do with that reorganization plan. There's an effort in the World Bank to raise funds for the Palestinians. My question: Is this a condition? And is it more involvement of the international community with the Palestinian economy? And aren't we risking turning it into an Oil-for-Food-type program?

**SECRETARY GENERAL ANNAN:** I think the World Bank has already been involved in the situation for quite some time. As I indicated, there's been quite a lot of assistance to the Palestinian Authority.

And, of course, when we talk about Palestinians fulfilling certain obligations and taking on certain action, they need to have the capacity, they need to be able to organize their society and move ahead. We cannot let the economic and humanitarian situation wait till some other day. Whenever we can strengthen their capacity and improve the economic and humanitarian situation, I think it should be done.

**MODERATOR:** Conor O'Clery, Irish Times, Dublin. Conor O'Clery.

**QUESTION:** I'd like to ask the Russian and Irish Foreign Ministers what their impressions are. Is the roadmap back on track after this meeting today?

**FOREIGN MINISTER LAVROV:** Thank you. I think that the roadmap never disappeared in terms of our moving forward, and today's statement by the Quartet, which has just been cited by the Secretary General, confirms definitely that this is the only unified position, the one unified position, of the Quartet.

**FOREIGN MINISTER COWEN:** Well, in answer, Conor, I think (inaudible) meeting of the Quartet at a time when hope is in short supply. But the Quartet has reaffirmed its commitment to a comprehensive, inclusive settlement negotiated between the parties and the support for a two-state solution and for the roadmap as a means of achieving this.

The final status issues, such as frontiers and refugees, can only be decided by agreement between the parties themselves, and there's an important reassurance that a settlement will not be imposed.

We have identified a number of obstacles to progress on which we believe immediate action is necessary, including violence and terrorism, Israeli settlement activity, the route of the separation barrier, and we're agreed that a full Israeli withdrawal from Gaza could mark an important step towards implementation of the roadmap and the realization of a Palestinian state.

The Quartet is ready to provide support in bringing that about, and we're looking for the support for the international community in reaffirming our commitment to such an outcome.

**MODERATOR:** Dmitry Gorokhov, ITAR-TASS Moscow.

**QUESTION:** A question for Minister Lavrov. Russia was the initiator of this meeting?

**FOREIGN MINISTER LAVROV:** Yes, the Quartet members were interested in this meeting taking place as soon as possible, and so I would call it a collective initiative, but we did actively call for this type of meeting to take place.

The focus, I would say, and what just has been noted by the Secretary General, the Quartet has maintained its position and I would say has consolidated its position, as was already stated. We agreed to set up a monitoring and oversight situation to see how each one of the parties will deal with and comply with their roadmap obligations and the steps that they have promised to undertake and which they signed to undertake.

It's very important, in particular, not only to reaffirm the roadmap and all the Security Council resolutions and all the agreements that the parties have entered into as a basis for a Middle East settlement, but it's also necessary to achieve this settlement only through negotiations, including, of course, all final status issues.

So I think that just that alone emphasizes the importance of today's meeting. And I would add that the Quartet says that any unilateral steps take have to be in line with all the undertakings under the roadmap, and the Quartet will facilitate the parties doing this through the oversight mechanisms I've alluded to and will ask the donors to provide assistance in reform to the Palestinian Authority and so that Palestinians themselves will be able to deal with their land.

**MODERATOR:** Glenn Kessler, Washington Post, Washington. Glenn Kessler.

**QUESTION:** Mr. Secretary, laying aside the question of a letter for the King of Jordan, there is a perception in the Arab world that President Bush gave away two of the best bargaining chips the Palestinians had when he gave his letter to Sharon. Why is the Administration resistant to the idea of making a balancing statement that would recognize concessions the Palestinians might receive from the Israelis?

And I'm also interested to see if the other parties up there are interested in -- whether they think such a statement would be appropriate at this time.

**SECRETARY POWELL:** We are in conversation with Arab leaders, with King Abdallah and his associates, President Mubarak and his colleagues. We are in contact with Prime Minister Abu Alaa. I spoke to him last week explaining our position. And I think that the statement we have issued today on behalf of the Quartet, consisting of the European Union, the United States, the United Nations and the Russian Federation, I think is some assurance to the Arab world and to the whole world that we are committed to the basis upon which the peace process rests. That's the appropriate UN resolutions.

We are committed to the parties agreeing amongst themselves on final status issues and not having those final status issues opposed. So, to some extent, I think we've put out a statement here that should provide that sort of assurance to the Arab world and to Palestinians.

And we are in conversation with our other Arab friends to see what assurances and comments they may need from us to make sure that they know that the President has not abandoned them, has not abandoned the hope for the creation of a Palestinian state. He has not abandoned the vision that he laid out in June of 2002.

But where were we going with that vision? Where were we going with this process? Now where were we a few weeks ago?

We were still hoping for something to break, something to come into the equation that would change the equation and give us something to work with. We now have that with the stated intention of Prime Minister Sharon and with the clear support of the Israeli people to move in this direction. And this gives us something to work with, and we're trying to take advantage of that opportunity.



That's what the Quartet has done here today. That's what President Bush did a few weeks ago, by embracing what Prime Minister Sharon stated was his intention. And so this is the time for us to look at the opportunity that has been presented, rather than to get into arguments that don't take us anywhere. This takes us somewhere.

If we seize this opportunity and work with the parties, we'll get back onto the roadmap, both sides will be expected to meet their obligations under the roadmap and settlements will be evacuated. Settlements will be gone from Israeli occupation and that settlement property will be converted to constructive use on the part of the Palestinian people who will be free to move about these areas and build a society for themselves, a civil society, political infrastructure, a security force that will protect them and also keep terrorists from taking advantage of this freedom that the Palestinian people will have.

And so we view this as an opportunity to be seized. That's what the Quartet said today, and I think a statement that we put out today should be read that way by our friends and colleagues in the Arab world.

**MODERATOR:** Talal Al-Haj, Al-Arabiya, Washington Bureau.

**QUESTION:** And my question is to the Secretary General first. It's a simple question, sir.

Does the announcement of President Bush during the Sharon conference and the letters exchanged between the two leaders live to the letter and spirit of 242, 338, and especially, 194, the right of return? And my question to you, to Secretary Powell: President Bush went to war to uphold the United Nations resolutions in Iraq; 194 preserved the right of the return for the Palestinians; 338 and 242 also speaks about the armistice line of 1949. Wasn't it the right podium to change these rules of the game here in the United Nations, the Security Council, instead of bilateral letters between the two leaders and through press conferences?

**SECRETARY GENERAL ANNAN:** I think on the -- on your first question, let me say that the Quartet, which includes the U.S., today has reaffirmed again the basis for the peace process, including the resolution you have cited, 242, 338. And we also refer to the Arab initiative of Crown Prince Abdullah, which was endorsed by the Arab League.

And so the basis for moving forward and the land-for-peace is clear and accepted by all of us. And you heard Secretary Powell indicating that that is a basis that we are all moving forward, including Washington.

**SECRETARY POWELL:** 194, 242, 338, 1397, 1551, all well known to us, and we understand that the parties themselves have to mutually agree between them before any of these issues are settled in final status negotiations. That's what the President's exchange of letters with Prime Minister Sharon says. In every paragraph, that is reaffirmed. So we believe we are operating on this solid basis.

The President also said -- and this gets to the heart of your question -- that we have to consider certain realities on the ground. The parties have to consider them as they go into final status discussions. But, ultimately, all of the issues that you touch on are matters to be resolved between the parties themselves and we did not prejudge.

We made a statement that what we believed was appropriate, what might have to happen in order to get to final settlement. But ultimately, final settlement is something to be resolved between the two parties themselves in negotiation with each other, with the assistance of the international community in a manner consistent with the roadmap, and the Quartet stands ready to assist in this process.

**MODERATOR:** Leopold. Reuters. New York.

**QUESTION:** Secretary Powell, the Prime Minister of Israel is revising plans because of the Likud vote. Would the U.S. endorse a partial withdrawal?

And I have another question for the Secretary General and for Minister Lavrov and Solana.

The last time we sat here, you talked about "bold moves were necessary by the international community." Do you consider Sharon's move the bold one, or do you have something else up your sleeve?

**SECRETARY POWELL:** Since I don't know what Prime Minister Sharon might do, all I've seen is press reporting of potential modifications, let's wait and see what he does, rather than give a speculative answer to a hypothetical possibility.

**SECRETARY GENERAL ANNAN:** Javier, do you want to say something?

**HIGH REPRESENTATIVE SOLANA:** (Inaudible.)

**SECRETARY GENERAL ANNAN:** Okay. No, I think on your second question, let me say that when you look at the communiqué we issued today, we are taking initiatives and saying things we have not done before.

I have also had a chance to say in this building, when I was asked if the roadmap was dead, that it may have been in distress, but it wasn't dead. And today I think we are -- you have seen the effort by the members of the Quartet to push ahead with the process and work with the parties to honor their commitments and obligations they undertook, and help them implement the agreement.

But as --

**HIGH REPRESENTATIVE SOLANA:** Let me say that once the document is in your possession, you can read it. I'm sure you will agree with me on one issue. This document is a very important document that states in a very clear manner that the objective of the Quartet and the objective of the roadmap is to end the occupation that started in 1967 through the construction of two states: Palestinian state and Israeli state. That is the essence of the document.

But on top of that, it put forward some mechanisms to achieve that goal, mechanisms in which, as Secretary Powell and Secretary Annan have said, go through also the mechanism stated by Prime Minister Sharon of withdrawal from Gaza.

We said very clearly that that withdrawal has to be total. It has to be the end of the occupation in that territory. And I think it's a very important document, the one we have achieved here today among the Quartet, got put recorded again at the center of gravity of the peace process.

**FOREIGN MINISTER LAVROV:** (Via Interpreter) If could add that we are actually looking at the stated intentions of Israel to leave Gaza as a very important step that with -- if it's done, would begin the process which for a long time was at a standstill. It's an important step, but it is an initial step for a comprehensive settlement to end the occupation and to fully meet all the obligations of the roadmap. That's the general position of the roadmap of the Quartet. And so I subscribe to it.

Whether it's bold or not bold, that's up to the journalists to use their discretion.

**MODERATOR:** Last question, Elise Labott, CNN, Washington.

**QUESTION:** This question is for Secretary Powell, but if other members of the panel could address it, I think we've covered the Quartet meeting in great depth.

If I could move over to Iraq, this is on the issue of the international backlash over the prison abuse photos, which you, yourself, have called despicable.

It seems that there's great international outrage over this. Your Department has put out Warden Messages for Americans abroad on possible threats against Americans for the backlash, and I'd like to refer you to a report prepared by your Department Bureau of Intelligence and Research suggesting that this could affect U.S. standing abroad in foreign policy.

How are you going to counter this, and are you afraid that this is going to complicate efforts in the diplomatic world? And also, do you think this could affect how any future Iraqi government could trust the U.S. in the future?

Thank you.

**SECRETARY POWELL:** The photos that we all saw last week and into this week stunned every American. It was shocking. They showed acts that are despicable. The President has spoken to this. It's totally out of character of what we expect from our men and women in uniform. What they did was illegal, against all regulations, against all standards. It was immoral.

When our military commanders learned of what happened, within a day or so, they had launched investigations. Those investigations produced results as to who might have been responsible rather quickly.

Secretary Rumsfeld has now launched additional investigations. We'll deal with the training of our troops, the accountability of our commanders, and we'll get to the bottom of this.

Yes, I'm deeply concerned at the horrible image this has sent around the world, but at the same time, I want to remind the world that it was a small number of troops who acted in an illegal, improper manner. We will let the military justice system, that I have nothing to do with and it is another Department -- and the reason I say that because ultimate legality will have to be determined by the Department of Defense.

But it's just a few number of troops. When you compare that to the tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of young men and women who have served in Iraq and who've served around the world, and not just in its current period but in the past, who have come to build, build hospitals and schools and restore civil society and rebuild devastated nations in Europe and Asia, and who are doing likewise in Afghanistan today, and I know also doing it in Iraq. These wonderful young men and women are distressed that some of their fellow soldiers acted in this manner.

The one thing you can be sure of is that justice will be done. We are a nation of justice. These sorts of actions are not tolerated, and these individuals will be brought into our military justice system and will be dealt with in a way that the world can observe and watch. And I can assure you that no stone will be left unturned to make sure that justice is done and to make sure that nothing like this ever happens again.

**MODERATOR:** Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. I'd remind you to stay in your seats for another moment. And you will find copies of the Quartet statements at the exits of the room on each side.

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### **Statement by Middle East Quartet**

United Nations Press Release

SG/2091

September 23, 2004

The following is the text of a statement issued by the Middle East Quartet (United States, Russian Federation, European Union and United Nations), following their informal meeting at United Nations Headquarters on 22 September 2004:

The Quartet met in New York today and strongly reaffirmed its 4 May statement. The situation on the ground for both Palestinians and Israelis remains extremely difficult and no significant progress has been achieved on the Road Map.

The Quartet notes with deep concern that genuine action is still needed so that an empowered Prime Minister and cabinet can fulfill the Palestinian Authority's obligations under the Road Map, including an unequivocal end to violence and terrorism, and the dismantlement of terrorist capabilities and infrastructure. The Quartet noted in this regard the need for the Palestinian Authority to prepare for assumption of control over Gaza, in particular by reforming its security forces and re-establishing the rule of law.

The Quartet underscores its continued readiness to engage with an accountable and reformed Palestinian leadership, and strongly urges the Palestinian Authority to take steps now that contribute to constructive meetings to be held this fall of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee and Task Force on Palestinian Reform. The Quartet welcomes steps towards well prepared, free and fair, Palestinian municipal elections, and urges Israel and the Palestinian Authority to cooperate towards this goal. The Quartet urges the Government of Israel to implement its obligations under the Road Map, including dismantling of settlement outposts erected since March 2001, and to impose a settlement freeze, as called for by President Bush and in the Road Map. The lack of action in this regard is a cause for concern. They also call on the Government of Israel to take all possible steps now, consistent with Israel's legitimate security needs, to ease the humanitarian and economic plight of the Palestinian people.

The Quartet reaffirms the concerns expressed in its statement of 4 May with respect to the actual routing of the Israeli separation barrier and takes note of the ICJ advisory opinion on this subject. The Quartet urges positive action by the Government of Israel with respect to the route of the barrier and reiterates its view that no party should undertake unilateral actions that could prejudice issues that can only be resolved through negotiations and agreement between the parties.

The Quartet reaffirms its encouragement for Prime Minister Sharon's intention to withdraw from all Gaza settlements and parts of the West Bank and reiterates that withdrawal from Gaza should be full and complete and be undertaken in a manner consistent with the Road Map, as a step towards an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967, through direct negotiations between the sides leading to the goal of two States, Israel and a sovereign, independent, viable, democratic and territorially contiguous

Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. The Quartet urges both Israel and the Palestinian Authority to coordinate closely preparation and implementation of the withdrawal initiative. The Quartet expresses its deep appreciation and support for Egypt's efforts to help reform and rebuild Palestinian security services, to reach a comprehensive and lasting end to all violence, and to advance the goal of security, stability and prosperity in Gaza as withdrawal is implemented. The Quartet calls upon all concerned parties, including Israel, the Palestinian Authority, the donor community and the World Bank, to engage constructively on economic aspects of Gaza and West Bank withdrawal. In this respect, the Quartet members reiterate their support for the World Bank Trust Fund and call on all donors to contribute to it. The Quartet reaffirms its commitment to a just, comprehensive, and lasting settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict based upon resolutions 242 and 338, and will remain engaged with all parties to help ensure that progress towards this goal is achieved.

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Press Statement  
**Office of the Spokesman**  
London, England  
March 1, 2005

### **Joint Statement by the Quartet**

The Quartet met in London today and strongly reaffirmed our commitment to help Israelis and Palestinians make progress toward the two-state solution which is so deeply in both their interests. The Quartet condemned in the strongest possible terms the terrorist attack that occurred in Tel Aviv on February 25, which killed and wounded dozens of innocent victims and undermines the recent positive steps taken by Israel and the Palestinians. The Quartet called for immediate action by the Palestinian Authority to apprehend and bring to justice the perpetrators. The Quartet welcomed President Abbas' condemnation of the attack and pledge to act against those responsible, noted the initial steps taken in this regard, and stressed the need for further and sustained action by the Palestinian Authority to prevent acts of terrorism. Noting the fragility of the current revived momentum in discussions the Quartet encourages the two parties to continue on the path of direct dialogue and negotiation.

The Quartet recognizes the importance of the Sharm el-Sheikh summit of February 8 at which President Abbas announced a halt to violence against all Israelis, and Prime Minister Sharon announced a halt to military activities against all Palestinians, and expresses its appreciation to Egypt and Jordan for their roles. The Quartet urges the full implementation of the mutual commitments made at the summit by both parties, and urges all countries to support their efforts. The Quartet commends the Israeli cabinet's recent approval of the initiative to withdraw from Gaza and parts of the West Bank, and reiterates that withdrawal from Gaza should be full and complete and should be undertaken in a manner consistent with the Roadmap, as an important step toward the realization of the vision of two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. The Quartet calls for the resumption of progress towards the implementation of both parties' obligations under the Roadmap. The Quartet reiterates its view that no party should undertake unilateral actions that could prejudice the resolution of final status issues. Quartet members agree on the need to ensure that a new Palestinian state is truly viable, including with contiguous territory in the West Bank. A state of scattered territories will not work.

The Quartet welcomes the recent vote of confidence by the PLC for a new Palestinian cabinet, as well as today's international meeting in London to support Palestinian institution building. The Quartet urges the international community to review and energize current donor coordination structures, with a view to streamlining them in order to increase their effectiveness. The Quartet emphasizes the need for the international community to play a vital role in providing additional financial support to the Palestinians, which is essential in order to support needed reforms, and to help prepare the Palestinian Authority prepare to assume control over areas from which Israel intends to withdraw. The Quartet

members encourage an early meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee to prepare for a pledging conference shortly afterwards.

The Quartet members reiterated their commitment to the positions and principles outlined in their joint statements of 4 May and 22 September 2004. The Quartet remains ready to engage actively, reaffirms its encouragement and support for both sides for the progress they have made in recent weeks, and reiterates its commitment to the fulfillment of the vision of two states, a safe and secure Israel and a sovereign, contiguous, democratic Palestine, living side by side in peace and security.

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**2005/253**

Released on March 1, 2005

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Press Statement

**Tom Casey, Acting Spokesperson**

Moscow, Russia

May 9, 2005

### **Quartet Statement**

Following is the text of the Quartet Statement:

BEGIN TEXT:

The Quartet met today in Moscow. The Quartet emphasizes that this is a hopeful and promising moment for both Palestinians and Israelis, and that they deserve the full support of the international community in helping them with the hard work and difficult decisions required in order to make positive use of this opportunity. The Quartet welcomed the commitments of the parties at the Sharm el-Sheikh summit of February 8 and urged them to renew their efforts to fulfill the commitments they agreed to at that time, in order to maintain momentum at this fragile moment of opportunity. The Quartet, underscoring the urgency of the matter, affirms its commitment to fully support the efforts of both parties to ensure successful Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and parts of the northern West Bank. The Quartet strongly reiterated its commitment to the two-state solution, and to Israeli withdrawal as a way to re-energize the Roadmap. The Quartet stresses the importance of full and complete Israeli withdrawal from Gaza in a manner consistent with the Roadmap as an important step paving the way toward realizing the vision of two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. The Quartet affirms that a new Palestinian state must be truly viable, with contiguity in the West Bank; reminds all concerned that a state of scattered territories will not work; and emphasizes that no party should take unilateral actions that prejudice final status issues. The Quartet also affirms that the two-state vision and the Roadmap are the best means of achieving a settlement negotiated between the two parties, leading to a permanent peace and an end to the occupation that began in 1967. With respect to this, the Quartet observes that the Roadmap has been endorsed by Israel and the Palestinian Authority and remains the objective of the international community; and urges both parties to take steps to fulfill all their obligations under the Roadmap.

The Quartet expresses its full support for its Special Envoy for Gaza Disengagement, James Wolfensohn. His mandate is to focus on the non-security aspects of withdrawal, particularly disposition of assets; passages, access and trade; and revival of the Palestinian economy during and after Israeli withdrawal. This will require close coordination with both Israel and the Palestinians to identify and implement those actions and policies that will ensure a smooth and successful implementation of the Israeli initiative. On the Palestinian side, this includes above all a strong commitment to security reform and performance; and the building of transparent, accountable government institutions and an investor-friendly climate, with a view to restoring growth. On the Israeli side, this involves relieving the economic hardships faced by the Palestinian people and facilitating rehabilitation and reconstruction by easing the system of restrictions on the movement of Palestinian people and goods and taking further steps to respect the dignity of the Palestinian people and improve their quality of life -without

endangering Israeli security -and taking into consideration the World Bank report of December 2004. At the London meeting on March 1, the international community underscored its readiness to play a vital role by providing financial support to the Palestinians at this critical moment. Creating the environment conducive for a long-term, sustainable and viable economic development of all the Palestinian territories would constitute a suitable basis for additional assistance efforts by the international community.

The Quartet emphasizes Mr. Wolfensohn's mandate to promote direct dialogue and cooperation between Palestinians and Israelis on these economic issues, to ensure a smooth transition in Gaza and parts of the northern West Bank. In this context, the Quartet stresses the urgent need for Israelis and Palestinians to coordinate directly and fully on withdrawal preparations.

The Quartet recognizes that economic development and progress on security go hand in hand as security reforms and the reestablishment of the rule of law are necessary to create an enabling environment for economic growth and political progress. The Quartet also recognizes the need for continued efforts by the international community to assist the PA in accomplishing these tasks, including rebuilding the capabilities of the Palestinian security services. Ongoing assistance by the international community, in particular members of the Quartet and countries of the region, constitutes a significant contribution to these efforts. The Quartet calls upon Israel and the Palestinian Authority to facilitate these efforts.

In that regard, the Quartet expresses its full support for General William Ward, U.S. Security Coordinator, to assist the Palestinians in reforming and restructuring their security forces, and to coordinate international assistance towards those efforts. The Quartet welcomes the recent concrete steps that President M. Abbas has taken towards reform of the Palestinian security services, and stresses the need to continue implementation of these reforms in order to permanently reinstate law and order in Gaza and the West Bank.

The Quartet commends the Palestinian people's and leadership's commitment to democracy and attaches great importance to a successful continuation of the democratic process. The latest round of municipal elections has just been conducted. The Quartet commends the Government of Israel for facilitating the operations. The holding of free, fair, and transparent multi-party legislative elections in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem, under the scrutiny of international observers, will be another vital step forward on the path towards building a reformed and accountable Palestinian Authority. As additional voter registration for these elections has just begun, the Quartet calls on both the PA and Israel to urgently take all necessary steps, including freedom of movement for candidates and voters, to achieve this goal and renews its offers of technical support and providing election observation services.

The Quartet deems it necessary to ensure continued efforts aimed at full implementation of the Roadmap following Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and parts of the northern West Bank.

The Quartet reiterates its commitment to the principles outlined in its previous statements, including those of March 1, 2005 and May 4, 2004; and reaffirms its commitment to a just, comprehensive, and lasting settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict based upon resolutions 242 and 338, and will remain engaged with all parties to help ensure that progress towards this goal is achieved.

END TEXT.

**2005/487**

Released on May 9, 2005

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### **Quartet Statement on Middle East Peace**

Text released by the United Nations, London, United Kingdom, 23 June 2005

The Quartet met today in London and reaffirmed its support for Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and parts of the northern West Bank, and an orderly Palestinian takeover there. The Quartet reiterates its belief that this is a moment of optimism in the search for peace in the Middle East, and is an opportunity that should not be missed to revitalize the Roadmap. The Quartet encourages Israelis and Palestinians to take full advantage of this opportunity in order to move closer to the goal of two democratic states,

Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. The Quartet affirms that a new Palestinian state must be truly viable with contiguity in the West Bank.

The Quartet welcomes the meeting on June 21 between Prime Minister Sharon and President Abbas. Contacts between the parties should now be intensified at all levels.

The Quartet notes that less than two months remain until the announced start to disengagement, and emphasizes the urgent need for Israel and the Palestinians to work directly and cooperatively with each other, with the assistance of James Wolfensohn, the Quartet Special Envoy for Gaza Disengagement.

The Quartet underlines that the coordinated support of the international donor community is crucial for the success of Mr. Wolfensohn's mission, and urges Arab states to engage fully in this regard.

The Quartet members reiterate their full support for Mr. Wolfensohn and his efforts to assist with the non-security aspects of disengagement and revival of the Palestinian economy. These efforts include strengthening the overall capacity of the Palestinian Authority; facilitating legal and judicial reform; completing the reform of the financial system to establish a sound, transparent regulatory regime; and implementing anti-corruption efforts, a comprehensive budget strategy, and wage and pension reform. Private sector job creation is also critical in reviving the economy, as is a vibrant civil society sector.

The Quartet also urges Israel to take immediate steps, without endangering Israeli security, to relieve the economic hardships faced by the Palestinian people and to facilitate rehabilitation and reconstruction by easing the flow of goods and people in and out of Gaza and the West Bank and between them.

The Quartet notes that peace and security are essential components for political and economic revival; and stresses that the Palestinians must confront violence and terror in order for political and economic life to flourish. It urges both parties to avoid and prevent any escalation in violence so that withdrawal can proceed peacefully. The Quartet encourages continued Israeli-Palestinian security cooperation towards that end. The Quartet condemns the recent upsurge in violence in Gaza, including the firing of mortars and Qassams into Israeli towns and homes, and which has claimed innocent lives on both sides. In this regard, the Quartet notes and welcomes the Palestinian Authority's full cooperation with the mission of General William Ward, the U.S. Security Coordinator, to assist the Palestinians in reforming and restructuring their security forces, and to coordinate international assistance towards those efforts. Rapid reform of the security services and strengthening of the rule of law are essential elements that can improve security for Palestinians and Israelis alike.

As we work to make disengagement succeed, we must not lose sight of the path ahead. The Quartet reaffirms that the two-state vision and the Roadmap are the best way to achieve a permanent peace and an end to the occupation that began in 1967. The Quartet expresses its concern over settlement activity. In this context, the Quartet reminds both parties that they continue to have obligations under the Roadmap; and reaffirms the need to avoid any action that contravenes the Roadmap or prejudices final status negotiations. Any final agreement must be reached through negotiations between the two parties. The Quartet reiterates its commitment to the principles outlined in its previous statements, including those of May 9, 2005; March 1, 2005; and May 4, 2004; reaffirms that the two-state vision and the Roadmap are the best way to achieve a mutually-agreed settlement between the two parties; and reiterates its commitment to a just, comprehensive, and lasting settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Quartet envoys will convene again before the beginning of withdrawal.

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#### **Quartet Statement on Middle East Peace**

Text released by the United Nations

New York City

20 September 2005

Representatives of the Quartet -- U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, U.K. Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, High Representative for European Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, and European Commissioner for External Relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner -- met today in New York to discuss the Gaza disengagement and the prospects for movement towards peace in the Middle East.

The Quartet recognizes and welcomes the successful conclusion of the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and parts of the northern West Bank and the moment of opportunity that it brings to renew efforts on the Roadmap. The Quartet reiterates its belief that this brave and historic decision should open a new chapter on the path to peace in the region. It paid tribute to the political courage of Prime Minister Sharon and commends the Israeli government, its armed forces and its police for the smooth and professional execution of the operation. It also expresses its appreciation for the responsible behavior of the Palestinian Authority and people for helping maintain a peaceful environment during the evacuation. The Quartet applauds the close coordination between the Israeli and Palestinian security services during the process. These significant developments create new opportunities and call for renewed focus on the responsibilities of all parties. The conclusion of disengagement represents an important step toward achieving the vision of two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side-by-side in peace and security.

The Quartet commends continued cooperation between both parties and the U.S. Security Coordinator, General William Ward, on security issues related to the disengagement. The Quartet calls for an end to all violence and terror. While the PA leadership has condemned violence and has sought to encourage Palestinian groups who have engaged in terrorism to abandon this course and engage in the democratic process, the Quartet further urges the Palestinian Authority to maintain law and order and dismantle terrorist capabilities and infrastructure. The Quartet reaffirms the continued importance of comprehensive reform of the Palestinian security services. The rule of law through authorized security institutions is fundamental to democratic practice. The Quartet expresses appreciation to those parties which have made contributions to the security reform effort, particularly Egypt, the European Union, and the United States. Finally, the Quartet welcomes the agreement between the Governments of Israel and Egypt on security arrangements along the Gaza-Egypt border.

At today's meeting, Quartet Special Envoy Wolfensohn's report on his current efforts and initiatives was discussed. The Quartet encourages his further work to facilitate continued discussion between the parties to build on the success of disengagement. The Palestinian Authority should demonstrate its ability to govern, and all members of the international community should look for ways to support these efforts. The Quartet will continue to lead international efforts to support sustainable growth of the Palestinian economy and to strengthen the overall capacity of the Palestinian Authority to assume its responsibilities through an aggressive pursuit of state building and democratic reform efforts. Given the critical importance of free movement in the West Bank to the viability of the Palestinian economy, the Quartet urges an easing of the system of movement restrictions, consistent with Israel's security needs. The Quartet reaffirms that coordinated action by the international donor community is crucial for the success of the Quartet Special Envoy's Quick Impact Economic Program, as well as for the longer term three year plan for Palestinian development. In this regard, it notes the importance of the \$750 million in assistance which will be disbursed to the Palestinian Authority during the remainder of this year. The Quartet urges Arab states to implement existing commitments and to engage fully and positively in response to the Special Envoy's initiatives. To ensure the success of this effort, the Quartet views continued progress on institutional reform of the Palestinian Authority, as well as progress in combating corruption, as essential. The Quartet also welcomes the announcement of Palestinian Legislative Council elections and upcoming municipal elections.

Looking beyond disengagement, the Quartet reviewed progress on implementation of the Roadmap. The Quartet calls for renewed action in parallel by both parties on their obligations in accordance with the sequence of the Roadmap. As part of the confidence-building process the Quartet urged both sides to return to the cooperative agenda reached at Sharm el-Sheikh. Contacts between the parties should be intensified at all levels. The Quartet charges the Envoys to keep progress under review.

Both parties are reminded of their obligations under the Roadmap to avoid unilateral actions which prejudice final status issues. The Quartet reaffirms that any final agreement must be reached through negotiation between the parties and that a new Palestinian state must be truly viable with contiguity in the West Bank and connectivity to Gaza. On settlements, the Quartet welcomed the fact that, in areas covered by disengagement, Israel has gone beyond its obligations under the first phase of the Roadmap. The Quartet expresses its concern that settlement expansion elsewhere must stop, and Israel must remove unauthorized outposts. The Quartet continues to note with concern the route of the Israeli



separation barrier, particularly as it results in the confiscation of Palestinian land, cuts off the movement of people and goods, and undermines Palestinians' trust in the Roadmap process as it appears to prejudice the final borders of a Palestinian state.

The Quartet members exchanged views on the Russian proposal to hold an international meeting of experts in Moscow. Contacts on this matter will continue, taking into consideration the need to give attention to the various aspects of the Middle East situation, including multilateral matters.

The Quartet reiterates its commitment to the principles outlined in previous statements, including those of May 4, 2004, May 9, 2005, and June 23, 2005, and reaffirms its commitment to a just, comprehensive, and lasting settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict based upon U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

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#### **Quartet Statement on Middle East Peace**

Text released by the United Nations

New York City

28 October 2005

Representatives of the Quartet -- U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, U.K. Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, High Representative for European Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, and European Commissioner for External Relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner -- spoke today on the situation in the Middle East.

The Quartet condemns the October 26 terrorist attack on the Hadera market, responsibility for which was claimed by Palestinian Islamic Jihad, headquartered in Damascus . The Quartet urges the Syrian government to take immediate action to close the offices of Palestinian Islamic Jihad and to prevent the use of its territory by armed groups engaged in terrorist acts.

The Quartet denounces all acts of terrorism and urges all parties to exercise restraint, avoid an escalation of violence, and keep the channels of communication open. The Quartet strongly encourages and supports the Palestinian Authority in its immediate effort to take steps to prevent armed groups from acting against law and order and the policy of the Authority itself.

The Quartet believes it is imperative that all involved act decisively to ensure that terror and violence are not allowed to undermine further progress in accordance with the Roadmap.

The Quartet will remain seized of these matters.

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#### **Quartet Statement on Middle East Peace**

Text released by the United Nations

New York City

5 December 2005

Representatives of the Quartet -- U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, U.K. Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, High Representative for European Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, and European Commissioner for External Relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner -- consulted today on the situation in the Middle East.

The Quartet condemns today's terrorist attack in Netanya in the strongest possible terms.

Representatives of Palestinian Islamic Jihad have claimed responsibility for the bombing through al-Manar television. The Quartet repeats its demand that the Syrian government take immediate action to close the offices of Palestinian Islamic Jihad and to prevent the use of its territory by armed groups engaged in terrorist acts.

The Quartet denounces all acts of terrorism and urges all parties to exercise restraint, avoid an escalation of violence, and keep the channels of communication open. The Quartet encourages and supports the Palestinian Authority's efforts to take immediate steps to prevent armed groups from

acting against law and order and the policy of the Authority itself. The Quartet reiterates its support for efforts to assist the Palestinian Authority in the reform and restructuring of its security services. The Quartet believes it is imperative that all involved act decisively to ensure that terror and violence are not allowed to undermine further progress in accordance with the Roadmap. The Quartet will remain seized of these matters.

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Press Statement

**Adam Ereli, Deputy Spokesman**

Washington, DC

December 28, 2005

### **Quartet Statement on Palestinian Legislative Council Elections**

Following is the text of the Quartet Statement:

The Quartet welcomes the upcoming Palestinian Legislative Council elections as a positive step toward consolidation of Palestinian democracy and the goal of a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Quartet calls on the Palestinian Authority and the Central Elections Commission to ensure a free, fair, and open process in accordance with Palestinian law. The Quartet noted the continued importance of security in this regard, and calls on the Palestinian Authority to take immediate steps to ensure law and order, prevent terrorist attacks and dismantle the infrastructure of terrorism. The Palestinian Authority must also assure the security of polling stations and of Central Election Commission personnel, enforce existing law, regulations, and decrees, particularly those prohibiting the public display of weapons, external financing of campaigns, and the use of religious facilities for campaign purposes.

The Quartet recalled its September 20 statement, together with the Secretary General's subsequent statement on behalf of the Quartet that ultimately those who want to be part of the political process should not engage in armed group or militia activities, for there is a fundamental contradiction between such activities and the building of a democratic state. In this regard, the Quartet calls on all participants to renounce violence, recognize Israel's right to exist, and disarm. The Quartet is encouraged by the negotiation of a Code of Conduct governing participation in the legislative council election. It calls on all parties and candidates in the Palestinian Legislative Council elections to agree and fully adhere to this Code to ensure an environment conducive to free and fair elections and international observer support. The Quartet welcomed the Palestinian Authority's invitation to international election observers.

Furthermore, the Palestinian Authority should take additional steps to ensure the democratic process remains untainted by violence, by prohibiting political parties from pursuing their aims through violent means, and by moving expeditiously to codify this as Palestinian law. In particular, the Quartet expressed its view that a future Palestinian Authority Cabinet should include no member who has not committed to the principles of Israel's right to exist in peace and security and an unequivocal end to violence and terrorism.

The Quartet believes it is essential that direct dialogue begin immediately between the Israeli government and the Palestinian Authority to coordinate preparations for the Legislative Council elections. Proactive measures are essential to the movement of voters, elections committee staff and materials, and international observers throughout the election process, as outlined in the Roadmap. Both parties should work to put in place a mechanism to allow Palestinians resident in Jerusalem to exercise their legitimate democratic rights, in conformity with existing precedent.

**2005/1215**

Released on December 28, 2005

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Press Statement  
**Sean McCormack, Spokesman**  
Washington, DC  
January 26, 2006

### **Quartet Statement on Palestinian Legislative Council Elections**

Following is the text of the Quartet Statement:

BEGIN TEXT:

The Quartet consulted today on the Palestinian Legislative Council elections. It congratulates President Abbas and the Palestinian people on an electoral process that was free, fair and secure. The Quartet calls on all parties to respect the results of the election and the outcome of the Palestinian constitutional process so that it may unfold in an atmosphere of calm and security.

The Palestinian people have voted for change, but it is the view of the Quartet that their aspirations for peace and statehood, as articulated by President Abbas in his statement following the closing of polls yesterday, remain unchanged. The Quartet reiterates its view that there is a fundamental contradiction between armed group and militia activities and the building of a democratic state. A two-state solution to the conflict requires all participants in the democratic process to renounce violence and terror, accept Israel's right to exist, and disarm, as outlined in the Roadmap.

END TEXT.

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**2006/95**

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Press Statement  
**Sean McCormack, Spokesman**  
Washington, DC  
January 30, 2006

### **Quartet Statement on the Situation in the Middle East**

Following is the text of the Quartet Statement:

BEGIN TEXT:

Representatives of the Quartet -- U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, Austrian Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, High Representative for European Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, and European Commissioner for External Relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner -- met today in London to discuss the situation in the Middle East.

The Quartet congratulated the Palestinian people on an electoral process that was free, fair and secure. The Quartet believes that the Palestinian people have the right to expect that a new government will address their aspirations for peace and statehood, and it welcomed President Abbas' affirmation that the Palestinian Authority is committed to the Roadmap, previous agreements and obligations between the parties, and a negotiated two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It is the view of the Quartet that all members of a future Palestinian government must be committed to nonviolence, recognition of Israel, and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the Roadmap. We urge both parties to respect their existing agreements, including on movement and access.

The Quartet received updates from Quartet Special Envoy James Wolfensohn and U.S. Security Coordinator LTG Keith Dayton at today's meeting. The Quartet called on the Palestinian Authority to ensure law and order, prevent terrorist attacks and dismantle the infrastructure of terror. The Quartet acknowledged the positive role of the Palestinian Authority security forces in helping maintain order during the recent elections. It expressed its view that progress on further consolidation, accountability and reform remains an important task.

Mindful of the needs of the Palestinian people, the Quartet discussed the issue of assistance to the Palestinian Authority. First, the Quartet expressed its concern over the fiscal situation of the Palestinian Authority and urged measures to facilitate the work of the caretaker government to stabilize public finances, taking into consideration established fiscal accountability and reform benchmarks. Second, the Quartet concluded that it was inevitable that future assistance to any new government would be reviewed by donors against that government's commitment to the principles of nonviolence, recognition of Israel, and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the Roadmap.

The Quartet calls upon the newly elected PLC to support the formation of a government committed to these principles as well as the rule of law, tolerance, reform and sound fiscal management.

Both parties are reminded of their obligations under the Roadmap to avoid unilateral actions which prejudice final status issues. The Quartet reiterated its view that settlement expansion must stop, reiterated its concern regarding the route of the barrier, and noted Acting Prime Minister Olmert's recent statements that Israel will continue the process of removing unauthorized outposts.

The Quartet expressed its concern for the health of Prime Minister Sharon and its hope for his rapid recovery.

The Quartet reiterated its commitment to the principles outlined in the Roadmap and previous statements, and reaffirmed its commitment to a just, comprehensive, and lasting settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict based upon U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. The Quartet will remain seized of the matter and will engage key regional actors.

END TEXT.

**2006/106**

Released on January 30, 2006

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#### **Quartet Statement on Middle East Peace**

Text released by the United Nations

New York City

30 March 2006

The Quartet recalled its statement of January 30 and its call for the new Palestinian government to commit to the principles of nonviolence, recognition of Israel, and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the Roadmap.

The Quartet welcomed President Abbas' call for the new Palestinian government to commit to a platform of peace and, having carefully assessed the program of the new government approved on March 28, noted with grave concern that the new government has not committed to the principles spelled out on 30 January.

The Quartet recalled its view that future assistance to any new government would be reviewed by donors against that government's commitment to the principles outlined above. The Quartet concurred that there inevitably will be an effect on direct assistance to that government and its ministries.

The Quartet encouraged continued humanitarian assistance to meet the basic needs of the Palestinian people. The Quartet noted in that context the importance of improved movement and access.

The Quartet reiterated its commitment to the principles outlined in the Roadmap and previous statements, and reaffirmed its commitment to a negotiated solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict leading to two democratic states living side by side in peace and security.

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#### **Quartet Statement on Middle East Peace**

Text released by the United Nations

New York City

9 May 2006

Representatives of the Quartet -- U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, Austrian Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, High Representative for European Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, and European

Commissioner for External Relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner -- met today in New York to discuss the situation in the Middle East. The Quartet also met with Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed About Gheit, Jordanian Foreign Minister Abdelelah al-Khatib, and Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister Saud al-Faisal to exchange views on regional issues.

The Quartet expressed its appreciation for the service of James Wolfensohn as Quartet Special Envoy for Gaza Disengagement, and noted his central role in the conclusion of the Agreement on Movement and Access and the promulgation of an agenda for Palestinian economic recovery.

The Quartet underscored its continued commitment to the principles of partnership and negotiation leading to a two-state solution, as embodied in the Roadmap. A lack of action by the parties in certain key areas has stalled progress on the Roadmap. The Quartet underscored the need for both parties to avoid actions which could prejudice final status issues or undermine progress toward this goal.

The Quartet reiterated its grave concern that the Palestinian Authority government has so far failed to commit itself to the principles of nonviolence, recognition of Israel, and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the Roadmap. The Quartet noted the absence of a commitment to these principles has inevitably impacted direct assistance to that government and expressed its deep concern about the consequences for the Palestinian people. The donor members noted their willingness to work toward the restoration of international assistance to the Palestinian Authority government once it has committed to these principles.

The Quartet discussed the current situation in Israel and the West Bank, and Gaza. It condemned the Palestinian Authority government's failure to take action against terrorism and the justification of the April 17 suicide bombing in Tel Aviv. The Quartet urged it to act decisively against terrorism and bring an end to violence. The Quartet noted that President Abbas condemned the April 17 attack as he has consistently condemned all acts of terrorism in the past.

The Quartet expressed its concern over Israeli military operations that result in the loss of innocent life. The Quartet calls for restraint and asks Israel to bear in mind the potential consequences of its actions for the population. The Quartet expressed its concern about settlement expansion. It continues to note with concern the route of the barrier, particularly as it results in the confiscation of Palestinian land and cuts off the movement of people and goods. The Quartet reiterated the importance of both parties avoiding unilateral measures which prejudice final status issues.

The Quartet discussed the humanitarian situation in the West Bank and Gaza. It expressed serious concern about deteriorating conditions, particularly in Gaza. The Quartet expressed concern about delivery of humanitarian assistance, economic life, social cohesion, and Palestinian institutions. The Quartet reiterated its support for assistance directed to help meet the basic human needs of the Palestinian people and promotion of Palestinian democracy and civil society, and called upon the international community to respond urgently to assistance requests by international organizations, especially UN agencies, active in the West Bank and Gaza. The Quartet urged both parties to take concrete steps to implement their obligations under the Agreement on Movement and Access. Recalling its commitment of January 30 that it is mindful of the needs of the Palestinian people, the Quartet expressed its willingness to endorse a temporary international mechanism that is limited in scope and duration, operates with full transparency and accountability, and ensures direct delivery of assistance to the Palestinian people. If these criteria can be met, the operation of the temporary international mechanism should begin as soon as possible and be reviewed after three months to determine whether it should continue. The Quartet welcomed the offer of the European Union to develop and propose such a mechanism. It invites other donors and international organizations to consider participation in such a mechanism. It urged Israel in parallel to take steps to improve the humanitarian situation of the Palestinian people. The Quartet reiterates that the Palestinian Authority government must fulfill its responsibilities with respect to basic human needs, including health services, as well as for proper fiscal management and provision of services.

The Quartet welcomed Prime Minister Olmert's call for negotiations with a Palestinian partner committed to the principles of the Roadmap, as the most stable and desired basis for the political process. The Quartet welcomed President Abbas' continued commitment to a platform of peace. The Quartet is encouraged by these statements of intent.

Finally, the Quartet reaffirmed its commitment to its previous statements and to a just, comprehensive, and lasting settlement to the conflict based upon UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, 1397 and 1515. The Quartet will remain seized of the matter.

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Media Note

**Office of the Spokesman**

Washington, DC

June 17, 2006

**Quartet Statement**

Following is the text of a statement issued by the Quartet (United Nations, Russian Federation, The United States and European Union).

Begin Text:

Recalling its statements of January 30 and May 9, and mindful of the needs of the Palestinian people, the Quartet endorsed a European Union proposal for a temporary international mechanism, limited in scope and duration, which operates with full transparency and accountability. The mechanism facilitates needs-based assistance directly to the Palestinian people, including essential equipment, supplies, and support for health services, support for the uninterrupted supply of fuel and utilities, and basic needs allowances to poor Palestinians. The Quartet expressed its hope that other donors, international organizations, and the State of Israel would consider participation in this mechanism. The Quartet will review the continued need for such a mechanism after three months. Donors are also encouraged to respond to humanitarian and other assistance requests by international organizations, especially UN agencies, active in the West Bank and Gaza.

The Quartet reiterated its call for the Palestinian Authority government to commit to the principles of nonviolence, recognition of Israel, and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the Roadmap. The Palestinian Authority government must fulfill its responsibilities with respect to basic human needs, including health services, as well as for proper fiscal management and provision of services.

End Text.

**2006/621**

Released on June 17, 2006

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**Quartet Statement on Middle East Peace**

Text released by the United Nations

New York City

20 September 2006

The following statement was issued today by the Middle East Quartet (United Nations, European Union, Russian Federation, United States):

Quartet principals -- United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, Finnish Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja, United States Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, High Representative for European Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana and European Commissioner for External Relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner -- met today in New York to discuss developments in the Middle East since their last meeting on 9 May.

Taking stock of recent developments in the region, the Quartet stressed the urgent need to make progress towards a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. The Quartet expressed its concern at the grave crisis in Gaza and the continued stalemate between Israel and the Palestinians. The Quartet welcomed the efforts of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to form a Government of National Unity, in the hope that the platform of such a Government would reflect Quartet principles and allow for early engagement.

The Quartet underlined the urgent need for the parties to implement fully all aspects of the Agreement on Movement and Access. Accordingly, Rafah and all other passages should remain open, consistent with relevant agreements.

The Quartet encouraged greater donor support to meet the needs of the Palestinian people, with a particular emphasis on security-sector reform, reconstruction of damaged infrastructure and economic development. The Quartet commended the efforts of the World Bank and the European Union to facilitate needs-based assistance directly to the Palestinian people via the Temporary International Mechanism endorsed by the Quartet on 17 June. Mindful of the continuing needs of the Palestinian people, the Quartet endorsed the continuation and expansion of the Temporary International Mechanism for a three-month period, and agreed to again review the need for such a mechanism at the end of that period.

The Quartet noted that the resumption of transfers of tax and customs revenues collected by Israel on behalf of the Palestinian Authority would have a significant impact on the Palestinian economy. The Quartet encouraged Israel and the Palestinian Authority to consider resumption of such transfers via the Temporary International Mechanism to improve the economic and humanitarian conditions in the West Bank and Gaza.

The Quartet welcomed the initiative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to request James D. Wolfensohn to report on the situation on the ground.

The Quartet reaffirmed its commitment to the "Road Map" as the means to realize the goal of two democratic States -- Israel and Palestine -- living side by side in peace and security. The Quartet stressed the need for a credible political process in order to make progress towards a two-State solution through dialogue and parallel implementation of obligations. In this context, the Quartet welcomed the prospect of a meeting between Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and President Abbas in the near future. The Quartet agreed to meet on a regular basis in the coming period at both the principals and envoys level, including with the parties and other regional partners, to monitor developments and actions taken by the parties and to discuss the way ahead.

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Media Note

**Office of the Spokesman**

Washington, DC

February 2, 2007

**Quartet Statement**

**Following is the text of a statement issued by the Quartet (United Nations, Russian Federation, The United States and European Union).**

**Begin Text:**

The Quartet Principals - Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, High Representative for European Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, and European Commissioner for External Relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner - met today in Washington to discuss the situation in the Middle East.

The Quartet welcomed UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the representative of the EU Presidency, German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier.

Recognizing the critical need to end the Palestinian/Israeli conflict, which would contribute to security and stability in the region, the Quartet pledged to support efforts to put in place a process with the goal of ending the occupation that began in 1967 and creating an independent, democratic and viable Palestinian state, living side-by-side in peace and security with Israel, and reaffirmed its commitment to a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace based on UNSCRs 242 and 338.

The Quartet expressed the hope that the result-oriented dialogue initiated between Israeli and Palestinian leaders will continue in the framework of a renewed political process with the aim of launching meaningful negotiations.

The Quartet undertook to give active follow-up to these meetings and to remain closely engaged at this moment of increased activity and dialogue. The Quartet reaffirmed its commitment to meet regularly at both the principals and envoys level according to an agreed calendar, including with the parties and other regional partners, to monitor developments and actions taken by the parties and to discuss the way ahead.

The Quartet noted its support for renewed dialogue between Israeli and Palestinian leaders and welcomed the December 23 meeting between Israeli PM Olmert and PA President Abbas, and the subsequent implementation of some steps discussed at that meeting. The Quartet urged the parties to implement fully steps discussed at the December 23 meeting, to refrain from taking any measures that could predetermine the number of issues that will be resolved in negotiations, to meet their respective obligations under phase one of the Roadmap and under the Agreement on Movement and Access, and to seek to fulfill their obligations under the Sharm el-Sheikh Understandings of 2005.

The Quartet discussed U.S. efforts to facilitate discussions between the parties. The Quartet welcomed the upcoming meeting between Prime Minister Olmert, President Abbas, and Secretary of State Rice, that could begin to define more clearly the political horizon for the Palestinian people, and help engender a sense of partnership. The Quartet affirmed the primacy of the Roadmap, and welcomed U.S. efforts to accelerate progress on the Roadmap.

The Quartet noted the continuing importance of the Arab Peace Initiative, particularly its reflection of a shared commitment to a two-state solution.

The Quartet reiterated its call for an immediate and unconditional end to all acts of violence and terror. It condemned the suicide bombing in Eilat on 29 January and called once again for an immediate end to all rocket attacks against Israel.

The Quartet expressed its deep concern at the violence among Palestinians and called for respect for law and order.

The Quartet called for continued international assistance to the Palestinian people, and encouraged donors to focus on preserving and building the capacity of institutions of Palestinian governance as well as the development of the Palestinian economy. The Quartet welcomed international efforts to reform the Palestinian security sector and thus to help improve law and order for the Palestinian people. It called for the Temporary International Mechanism to be further developed to support the political process, to identify suitable projects for international support in the areas of governance, institution building and economic development, and urged other members of the international community to consider practical support to the parties.

The Quartet called for Palestinian unity in support of a government committed to nonviolence, recognition of Israel, and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the Roadmap. The Quartet reaffirmed that these principles endure. The Quartet reiterated its call for the PA government to commit to these principles.

**2007/071**

Released on February 2, 2007

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Media Note  
**Office of the Spokesman**  
Washington, DC



February 9, 2007

**Quartet Statement on the Agreement to Form a Palestinian National Unity Government  
Following is the text of a statement issued by the Quartet (United Nations, Russian Federation,  
the United States and European Union).**

**Begin Text:**

The Quartet Principals -- Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, High Representative for European Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, and European Commissioner for External Relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner -- discussed by telephone today the situation in the Middle East.

The Quartet welcomed the role of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in reaching the agreement to form a Palestinian National Unity government. The Quartet expressed hope that the desired calm would prevail.

While awaiting formation of the new Palestinian government, the Quartet reaffirmed its statement of February 2 regarding its support for a Palestinian government committed to nonviolence, recognition of Israel, and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the Roadmap.

Quartet members will meet February 21 in Berlin to continue their consideration of these developments, and to review formation and implementation of the agreement on the government. They welcomed the upcoming February 19 trilateral meeting between U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, and Palestinian National Authority President Mahmoud Abbas. The Quartet will discuss the way ahead at the February 21 meeting.

**2007/092**

Released on February 9, 2007

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Media Note

**Office of the Spokesman**

Washington, DC

February 21, 2007

**Statement of the Middle East Quartet**

The following is a statement issued by the Middle East Quartet following their meeting in Berlin, Germany:

The Quartet Principals - Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, High Representative for European Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, and European Commissioner for External Relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner - met today in Berlin to discuss the situation in the Middle East.

Secretary Rice reported on her recent February 18 meetings with PM Olmert and President Abbas, the February 19 trilateral and U.S. efforts to facilitate discussions between the parties. The Quartet welcomed these efforts and expressed the hope that the result-oriented dialogue initiated between Israeli and Palestinian leaders will continue in the framework of a renewed political process, with the aim of defining more clearly the political horizon and launching meaningful negotiations. The Quartet reaffirmed its determination to promote such a process, in cooperation with the parties and other regional partners. The Quartet urged the parties to refrain from measures that prejudice issues to be resolved in negotiations.

The Quartet reaffirmed its statements regarding its support for a Palestinian government committed to nonviolence, recognition of Israel, and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the Roadmap, and encouraged progress in this direction.

The Quartet discussed efforts underway for a Palestinian national unity government, pursuant to the agreement reached in Mecca on February 8. The Quartet expressed its appreciation for the role of King Abdallah of Saudi Arabia and the cessation of violence among Palestinians.

The Quartet concluded with a discussion of possible further steps by the international community in the context of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

It welcomed preliminary ideas put forward by the European Commission to meet the need to better coordinate and mobilize international assistance in support of the political process and to meet the needs of the Palestinian people.

The Quartet reaffirmed its commitment to meet regularly and asked envoys to monitor developments and actions taken by the parties and to discuss the way ahead. It was agreed to schedule a meeting in the region soon.

**2007/121**

Released on February 21, 2007

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Media Note

**Office of the Spokesman**

Washington, DC

March 21, 2007

**Statement of the Middle East Quartet**

The Quartet Principals -- Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, High Representative for European Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, and European Commissioner for External Relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner -- discussed by telephone the situation in the Middle East, and in particular the establishment of a Palestinian National Unity Government.

The Quartet reiterated its respect for Palestinian democracy and the agreement reached in Mecca on 8 February 2007, which laid the foundation for Palestinian reconciliation. The Quartet expressed hope that the establishment of a new government on 17 March 2007 would help end intra-Palestinian violence and ensure calm. The Quartet reaffirmed its previous statements with regard to the need for a Palestinian government committed to nonviolence, recognition of Israel and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the Roadmap, and encouraged progress in this direction. The Quartet agreed that the commitment of the new government in this regard will be measured not only on the basis of its composition and platform, but also its actions. The Quartet expressed its expectation that the unity government will act responsibly, demonstrate clear and credible commitment to the Quartet principles, and support the efforts of President Abbas to pursue a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, thereby achieving the peace, security, and freedom the Israeli and Palestinian people desire and deserve.

The Quartet reiterated the continuing need to coordinate and mobilize international assistance in support of the Palestinian people, and endorsed the continuation of the Temporary International Mechanism (TIM) for a three-month period while it evaluates the situation and the international community works to develop a more sustainable international mechanism for support to the Palestinians.

The Quartet expressed its strong support for Secretary Rice's efforts to further facilitate discussions with President Abbas and Prime Minister Olmert with the aim of defining more clearly the political horizon for the establishment of a Palestinian state and an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Quartet agreed to meet in the region soon to review developments and discuss the way ahead.

**2007/215**

Released on March 21, 2007

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Media Note

**Office of the Spokesman**

Potsdam, Germany

May 30, 2007

**Joint Statement of the Quartet**

The Quartet Principals - Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, High Representative for European Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, and European Commissioner for External Relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner - met today in Berlin to discuss the situation in the Middle East.

The Quartet expressed its deep concern over recent factional violence in Gaza. It called for all Palestinians to immediately renounce all acts of violence and respect the ceasefire. It called upon the Palestinian Authority government, in cooperation with President Abbas and regional actors, to do everything necessary to restore law and order, including the release of kidnapped BBC journalist Alan Johnston.

The Quartet strongly condemned the continued firing of Qassam rockets into Southern Israel as well as the buildup of arms by Hamas and other terrorist groups in Gaza. It endorsed PA President Abbas' call for an immediate end to such violence, and called upon all elements of the PA government and all Palestinian groups to cooperate with President Abbas to that end. The Quartet called for the immediate and unconditional release of Israeli Corporal Gilad Shalit. The Quartet urged Israel to exercise restraint to ensure that its security operations avoid civilian casualties or damage to civilian infrastructure. It noted that the detention of elected members of the Palestinian government and legislature raises particular concerns and called for them to be released. The Quartet noted its support for the May 30<sup>th</sup> Security Council Press Statement on the breakdown of the ceasefire in the Gaza Strip.

The Quartet welcomed continued dialogue between Prime Minister Olmert and President Abbas, including bilateral summits, and expressed support for U.S. efforts to effect progress on security and movement and access issues. The Quartet agreed that movement and access are essential and in this regard called on both parties to implement fully the Movement and Access Agreement of 15 November 2005. The Quartet urged the parties to work positively and constructively in order to build confidence and to create an environment conducive to progress on the political horizon for Palestinian statehood, consistent with the Roadmap and relevant UN Security Council resolutions, which should also be addressed in these bilateral discussions. Palestinians must know that their state will be viable, and Israelis must know a future state of Palestine will be a source of security, not a threat.

The Quartet commended the excellent work of the Temporary International Mechanism (TIM) and endorsed its extension for three months from July until September 2007. It called on donors to follow through on past pledges of support. The Quartet noted that the resumption of transfers of tax and customs revenues collected by Israel on behalf of the Palestinian Authority would have a significant impact on the Palestinian economy. The Quartet encouraged Israel and the Palestinian Authority to consider resumption of such transfers via the Temporary International Mechanism to improve the economic and humanitarian conditions in the West Bank and Gaza. In light of increased regional support for the Palestinians, the Quartet agreed to review where additional donor assistance should be focused, with particular consideration for infrastructure and development programs that can directly improve the daily lives of Palestinians. The Quartet invited concrete proposals from the parties on specific international support that could be useful at this stage.

The Quartet welcomed the extension of the EU Border Assistance Mission at Rafah (EU-BAM). It reiterated the importance of resuming normal operations at the Rafah crossing. Taking note of the continuing threat to Israel and Palestinian security posed by smuggling, the Quartet welcomed progress in the Quadrilateral Security Committee and called for greater efforts by all parties to improve security along the Egypt-Gaza border.

The Quartet welcomed the re-affirmation of the Arab Peace Initiative, noting that the initiative is recognized in the Roadmap as a vital element of international efforts to advance regional peace. The Arab Peace Initiative provides a welcome regional political horizon for Israel, complementing the

efforts of the Quartet and of the parties themselves to advance towards negotiated, comprehensive, just and lasting peace. The Quartet noted its positive meeting with members of the Arab League in Sharm al-Sheikh on May 4, and looked forward to continued engagement with the Arab states. It welcomed the intention of the Arab League to engage Israel on the initiative, and Israeli receptiveness to such engagement. Recalling elements of the April 18 decision by the Arab League Follow-up Committee, the Quartet urged all involved to demonstrate their seriousness and commitment to making peace. In that context, the Quartet reiterated the need for a Palestinian Government committed to nonviolence, recognition of Israel, and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the Roadmap, and reaffirmed its willingness to support such a government. The Quartet encouraged continued and expanded Arab contacts with Israel, and Israeli action to address concerns raised in the April 18 Arab League decision, including a cessation of settlement expansion and the removal of illegal outposts, as called for in the Roadmap.

Looking ahead, the Quartet discussed a calendar for the coming months to support and encourage progress on the bilateral and regional tracks. The Quartet principals agreed to meet in the region in June with the Israelis and Palestinians to review progress and discuss the way forward. The Quartet also agreed to meet in the region with members of the Arab League to follow up on the Arab Peace Initiative and efforts to advance the regional track. Principals instructed the envoys to meet beforehand to follow up and explore options for the way forward.

**2007/T9-3**

Released on May 31, 2007

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Media Note

**Office of the Spokesman**

Washington, DC

June 16, 2007

**Statement of the Quartet**

Following is the text of the statement by the Quartet Principals -- Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, High Representative for European Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier and European Commissioner for External Relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner -- on their June 15 telephone call.

In a telephone call on June 15, Quartet Principals shared their deep concern over the welfare and security of all Palestinians -- especially those in Gaza, whose lives have been most seriously affected by the ongoing crisis. The Quartet expressed its support for efforts to meet the humanitarian needs of Palestinians and called for respect for the human rights of all those in Gaza and the safety and security of international workers. It called for an urgent end to the violence, and the cooperation of all parties to ensure appropriate security and access conditions for the passage of humanitarian goods and personnel both within the Gaza Strip and at key crossing points.

The Quartet expressed understanding and support for President Abbas' decisions to dissolve the Cabinet and declare an emergency, given the grave circumstances. The Quartet recognized the necessity and legitimacy of these decisions, taken under Palestinian law, and welcomed President Abbas' stated intention to consult the Palestinian people at the appropriate time. The Quartet noted its continuing support for other legitimate Palestinian institutions.

The Quartet supports the efforts of responsible regional states to help calm the situation, and will continue to promote a negotiated, comprehensive, just and lasting Middle East peace in line with relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

**2007/488**

Released on June 16, 2007

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Media Note  
**Office of the Spokesman**  
Washington, DC  
June 27, 2007

**Quartet Representative – Quartet Statement**

Quartet Principals noted that recent events in Gaza and the West Bank make it more urgent than ever that we advance the search for peace in the Middle East. The Quartet reaffirms its objective to promote an end to the conflict in conformity with the Roadmap and expresses its intention to redouble its efforts in that regard. The urgency of recent events has reinforced the need for the international community, bearing in mind the obligations of the parties, to help Palestinians as they build the institutions and economy of a viable state in Gaza and the West Bank, able to take its place as a peaceful and prosperous partner to Israel and its other neighbors.

To facilitate efforts to these ends, following discussions among the Principals, today the Quartet announced the appointment of Tony Blair as the Quartet Representative. Mr. Blair, who is stepping down from office this week, has long demonstrated his commitment on these issues.

As Quartet Representative, he will:

- Mobilize international assistance to the Palestinians, working closely with donors and existing coordination bodies;
- Help to identify, and secure appropriate international support in addressing, the institutional governance needs of the Palestinian state, focusing as a matter of urgency on the rule of law;
- Develop plans to promote Palestinian economic development, including private sector partnerships, building on previously agreed frameworks, especially concerning access and movement; and
- Liaise with other countries as appropriate in support of the agreed Quartet objectives.

As Representative, Tony Blair will bring continuity and intensity of focus to the work of the Quartet in support of the Palestinians, within the broader framework of the Quartet's efforts to promote an end to the conflict in conformity with the Roadmap. He will spend significant time in the region working with the parties and others to help create viable and lasting government institutions representing all Palestinians, a robust economy, and a climate of law and order for the Palestinian people.

Tony Blair will be supported in this work by a small team of experts, based in Jerusalem, to be seconded by partner countries and institutions.

The Quartet Representative will report to and consult regularly with the Quartet and be guided by it as necessary.

The Quartet looks forward to welcoming Mr. Blair at its next meeting.

**2007/516**

Released on June 27, 2007

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**Appointment of Tony Blair as the Quartet Representative  
Statement by Secretary Condoleezza Rice** Washington, DC  
June 27, 2007

I welcome Tony Blair's appointment as the Quartet's Representative to the Middle East. For the past decade, former Prime Minister Blair has been at the forefront of international efforts to promote peace and reconciliation around the world, from Northern Ireland to the Balkans and beyond. He is a renowned statesman, respected and listened to by the international community. He will bring tremendous dedication to efforts to create viable and lasting Palestinian government institutions,

strengthen the Palestinian economy, and establish law and order for the Palestinian people. I look forward to working closely with him in his new capacity.

**2007/521**

Released on June 27, 2007

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Media Note

**Office of the Spokesman**

Washington, DC

July 20, 2007

### **Quartet Statement Following July 19 Meeting**

Following is the Quartet Statement released at the conclusion of the July 19, 2007 meeting of Quartet Principals in Lisbon, Portugal:

**BEGIN TEXT:**

The Quartet Principals - Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, High Representative for European Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, Portuguese Foreign Minister Luis Amado, and European Commissioner for External Relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner - met today in Portugal to discuss the situation in the Middle East. They were joined by Quartet Representative Tony Blair.

The Quartet reaffirmed its commitment to bring about an end to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict and to work to lay the foundation for the establishment of an independent, democratic and viable Palestinian state living side by side with Israel in peace and security, as a step towards a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in the Middle East, consistent with the Roadmap and UN Security Council resolutions. The Quartet welcomed President Bush's July 16 statement renewing U.S. commitment to a negotiated two-state solution, and supported President Bush's call for an international meeting in the fall. The Quartet looks forward to consultations as the meeting is prepared. The Quartet agreed that such a meeting should provide diplomatic support for the parties in their bilateral discussions and negotiations in order to move forward on a successful path to a Palestinian state.

The Quartet welcomed the agreement by Tony Blair to be the Quartet Representative and discussed with him the urgent work that lies ahead. Noting the centrality of reform, economic development, and institutional capacity building to the establishment of a stable and prosperous Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza that will unite all Palestinians, and live in peace and security with Israel and its other neighbors, the Quartet urged the parties and all states in the region to work closely with Mr. Blair, and encouraged robust international support for his efforts, including the convening of an Ad Hoc Liaison Committee meeting in the fall.

The Quartet expressed support for the Palestinian Authority government headed by Salam Fayyad, which is committed to the political platform of President Abbas, that reflects the January 30, 2006 Quartet principles. The Quartet encouraged direct and rapid financial assistance and other aid to the Palestinian Authority government to help reform, preserve, and strengthen vital Palestinian institutions and infrastructure, and to support the rule of law.

The Quartet welcomed the resumption of bilateral talks between Prime Minister Olmert and President Abbas, and expressed support for steps taken by the Israeli Government, including the resumption of tax and customs revenue transfers and the decision to release Palestinian prisoners. The Quartet encouraged continued bilateral dialogue and further cooperation, including on the political horizon as the necessary framework to move forward. It urged both parties to work without delay to fulfill their previous commitments and to build confidence.

Recognizing the continuing importance of the Arab Peace Initiative, the Quartet looked forward to the planned visit to Israel by representatives of the Arab League to discuss the Initiative. The Quartet

expressed support for continued and expanded dialogue between Israel and the Arab states. It looked forward to an early meeting with the Arab states to follow up on their May meeting in Sharm el-Sheikh. The Quartet emphasized the need to find ways to sustain Palestinian economic activity and the importance of creating circumstances that would allow for full implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access, particularly in view of the impact of crossings on the Palestinian economy and daily life. The Quartet encouraged both parties to address their Roadmap obligations, including an end to settlement expansion and the removal of unauthorized outposts, and an end to violence and terror. The Quartet expressed its deep concern over the humanitarian conditions in Gaza and agreed on the importance of continued emergency and humanitarian assistance. The Quartet agreed to continue to consult regularly on developments, and to meet again in September to take stock of developments, hear from Mr. Blair on his strategy for the economic and institutional agenda, and discuss the way ahead.

**2007/614**

Released on July 19, 2007

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**Remarks With United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, High Representative for European Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, European Union Commissioner for External Relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Portuguese Foreign Minister Luis Amado, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, and Quartet Representative Tony Blair**  
**Secretary Condoleezza Rice**

UN Headquarters

New York City

September 23, 2007

(6:25 p.m. EDT)

**SECRETARY-GENERAL BAN:** Good evening, ladies and gentlemen of the media. We had a very good constructive Quartet meeting this afternoon and I'm going to read out the joint statement. And I'd like to inform you that after this press conference, we are going to have another meeting with the Arab partners over dinner, Iftaar dinner. The joint statement reads as follows.

The Quartet principals met today together with the Quartet Representative Tony Blair. The Quartet recognized the present opportunity for progress and the robust regional and international desire for peace in the Middle East. The Quartet expressed its strong support for the ongoing bilateral talks between Prime Minister Olmert and President Abbas and welcomed the formation of Israeli and Palestinian teams to discuss the core issues that are essential to progress towards their shared goal of a negotiated two-state solution and the establishment of a viable Palestinian state living side by side with a secure Israel.

The Quartet welcomed parallel steps taken by the parties to build confidence and improve conditions on the ground. The Quartet underscored the need for immediate additional steps to meet previous commitments, including those under the Roadmap and the Agreement on Movement and Access, so as to create a positive atmosphere conducive to progress towards a two-state solution.

The Quartet expressed support for the international meeting on Israeli-Palestinian peace called for by President Bush in his July 16th statement. Principals discussed the meeting and agreed that it should be substantive and serious, providing support to the parties in their bilateral discussions and negotiations in order to move forward urgently on a successful path to a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza that will unite all Palestinians. The goal of this meeting is to bring together key members of the international community in support of efforts between Israelis and Palestinians to end their conflict and help bring a final peace in the Middle East.

The Quartet expects the meeting to affirm its support for the two-state solution based on a rejection of violence and its support for progress by the parties in their bilateral discussions. The meeting should also review progress that has been made toward building Palestinian institutions and discuss innovative

and effective ways to support further Palestinian reform. The Quartet will work for a successful international meeting and for the implementation of its conclusions.

The Quartet Representative Tony Blair briefed the Quartet on his meetings and discussions in the region and discussed the way forward on the development of a functioning Palestinian economy and the institutions of governance that will form the foundation of a Palestinian state. The Quartet agreed that Mr. Blair should work closely with the Palestinian Authority government in developing a multi-year agenda for institutional and economic development and looked forward to strong technical and financial support from the international community in support of these efforts, beginning with the September 24th Ad Hoc Liaison Committee meeting.

In that context, the Quartet called upon all countries that are able to contribute to urgently provide financial support to the Palestinian Authority. The Quartet endorsed an extension of the Temporary International Mechanism, TIM, until December 31st, 2007 and expressed its hope that during this period, a mechanism would be established to facilitate the transition to direct international assistance to this Palestinian Authority government.

The Quartet expressed concern over conditions in Gaza. It agreed on the importance of continued emergency and humanitarian assistance without obstruction. The Quartet called for the continued provision of essential services. It expressed its urgent concern over the continued closure of major crossing points given the impact on the Palestinian economy and daily life. The Quartet further noted its grave concern over the continued rocket fire from Gaza into Israel and recent efforts by Hamas to stifle freedom of speech and the press.

The Quartet discussed its forthcoming meeting with members of the Arab League Follow-up Committee to consult on next steps of the Arab Peace Initiative and regional support for bilateral talks between the parties. The Quartet reaffirmed its commitment to a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East based on UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 338.

Thank you very much.

**MODERATOR:** The first question goes to the President of the United Nations Correspondents Association, Tuyet Nguyen, dpa.

**QUESTION:** I don't see any light – okay. Mr. Secretary General and distinguished members of the Quartet, I would like to welcome you all on behalf of the UN Correspondent Associations and a particular welcome to Mr. Blair, who is making his first appearance in the United Nations since you assumed your duties.

In the statement, you express only concern over the conditions in Gaza in sharp contrast to what's really happening on the ground here. And relief organization like (inaudible) International say unless you solve the humanitarian conditions there, especially starvation, the peace process has no chance to proceed. I wonder if you have any comment in light of the short meeting you had today and whether you'll meet – waiting for the meeting in Washington happening soon organized by the White House in order to seek real solutions for Gaza Strip.

**SECRETARY-GENERAL BAN:** Well, thank you very much. The humanitarian – United Nations has broad humanitarian responsibilities all around the world wherever they need our assistance. It is much more so in Gaza Strip, Palestinian state. I have expressed my concern on several occasions already by this closure of the crossings and all these difficulties. Palestinian people are suffering. There are 1.4 million people. Among them, over – more than 80 percent depending upon the humanitarian assistance from the United Nations agencies led by UNRWA and other agencies. Therefore, it is crucially important that United Nations continue, without any hindrance, this humanitarian assistance.

At the same time, just providing daily humanitarian assistance will not help much in revitalizing their economy. Therefore, there should be free movement and opening of the crossings. This is a very important aspect. At the same time, this peace process should continue. It is encouraging that the Palestinian and Israeli leaders have been meeting regularly. Our Quartet Representative Mr. Tony Blair has been actively engaged together with Secretary Rice and many other – our Quartet principals. These diplomatic activities will continue and will have to continue and we sincerely hope that the international meeting called for by President Bush in the fall, in November, will also address this issue over a comprehensive agreement.

**MODERATOR:** Would anyone else like to respond? No. The next – CNN –



**QUESTION:** (Inaudible) of the *Washington Post*.

**QUESTION:** Thank you. Madame Secretary, one of your aides said that the Follow-up – that the Follow-up Committee of the Arab League will be invited to the conference this fall. Based on your discussions here, how confident are you that Saudi Arabia and Syria will attend the peace conference? And do these invitations mean that this conference is evolving into an effort to push for a full-scale comprehensive peace in the Middle East beyond the bilateral track that's been discussed previously.

**SECRETARY RICE:** Well, I think that the contours of the meeting have been described as a meeting to encourage and support the bilateral track that the Israelis and the Palestinians have established and on which I think there is a good deal of momentum. The meeting, of course, will obviously take note of the fact that ultimately there has to be a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. That is why its framework is Resolution 242, 338, why the roadmap and the Arab Peace Initiative, all of which contemplate a comprehensive peace, will form the framework, the basis for the meeting. But we have an opportunity on the Israeli-Palestinian track to move that forward because of the maturing of the bilateral discussions between Prime Minister Olmert and President Abbas, and we should not miss the opportunity to support and push forward on that track.

I should note that the meeting will, I believe, take note not only of the importance of that bilateral political track and will clearly need to have serious and substantive discussions about the core issues that are being discussed in that track, but it will also be very important to have this meeting take note of the importance of the capacity-building efforts that Prime Minister Blair is involved in. It will have to take note of the importance of pushing forward the improvements on the situation in the ground. We have a series of meetings and activities coming up. We've had the Quartet meeting here. We'll have the Iftar with the Arab League Follow-up Committee after this press conference. We have a meeting of the AHLC tomorrow which will lay the groundwork for a donors conference in December. And of course, we have the international meeting. So I think that there is a sense of momentum in support of the Palestinians and the Israelis in their efforts to end the conflict.

Now, there is a lot of work to do, a lot of hard work ahead of us. And so, as is always the case with the Middle East, one should recognize that the road ahead is one that is very difficult. But given that it has been a number of years since the Israelis and the Palestinians have expressed their interest in discussing the core interests between – the core issues between them, it is very important that the regional players of the international community mobilize to support them.

Now, as to the invitations, we haven't issued invitations as such. But it's only natural that we would hope that the participants would include the members of the Arab Follow-up Committee because that is the committee that has been charged by the Arab League with following up with the international community on the Arab Peace Initiative, which we would hope would be one part of the discussions or one of the primary means for discussing these issues at the international meeting. And we have a lot of work to do before we get to the question of who will accept and who will come, but it will be an only natural outcome of all that has happened that the members of the Follow-up Committee would hopefully be there.

**MODERATOR:** Mr. Segal, Channel 2, Israel.

**QUESTION:** A question, please, for Madame Secretary and Foreign Minister Lavrov. After reports of Syria going on a nuclear efforts, can you explain how the international community missed that fact? And do you think that Syria should be part of the international community?

And Mr. Lavrov, can you tell us if the fact that your country is supplying weapon to Syria, and from there to Hezbollah, is something that helps with general peace process?

**SECRETARY RICE:** Well, the United States has made no secret of its concerns about proliferation in general. I'm not going to comment on any specific issues, but I've seen press reports. I won't comment on anything specific. But we obviously are very concerned about dangerous activities in a region that is already very dangerous. We have spoken repeatedly about the need of the Syrian regime to change behavior that is, frankly, very harmful to the region; to accept the international community's insistence that Lebanon be able to carry out its constitutional processes without intimidation; that Lebanese sovereignty should be respected. We have been very clear that we have grave concerns about the terrorists that are being allowed to cross the border into Iraq and are putting at danger innocent Iraqis as well as coalition forces. And of course, there's the question of support for those who would reject a

two-state solution. And so this is – obviously, the position of the United States is very clear about the need for change in the behavior of the Syrian regime.

The process on which we are about -- the process on which we (inaudible) launched is try and support the nascent, very fragile work that Palestinians and Israelis are doing together should have the support of the entire international community and it should especially have the support of the regional neighbors. And in a sense, we would hope that those who choose to come to this meeting are indeed signaling that they support the two-state solution, that they support the renunciation of violence and that they support the many agreements that Palestinians have – Palestinian leaders have signed on behalf of their people that would lay the framework for a two-state solution.

**FOREIGN MINISTER LAVROV:** (Via interpreter) We are selling weapons to Syria, as we do to many other countries; accordingly, we are doing the same as many other producers of arms. Everything that we sell is fully transparently meets our international obligations and our export legislation, export control legislation, one of the toughest in the world. And when the (inaudible) of our deliveries is determined for Syria in that we do not allow any deliveries that would disrupt the balance of power in the region, particularly in the Middle East region. Deliveries to Syria are for defensive arms and in no way can that balance be disrupted. Moreover, given the particular delicacy of questions related to deliveries of arms to this region, we, in our contracts, we always prohibit the transfer of weapons to anyone apart from the direct receiver of such weapons. And with regard to Syria, we have mechanisms and inspections. We can see where the arms that we have delivered – where they are, to whomever (inaudible). There are facts – if there are facts that the obligations are not being fulfilled, if those obligations have been violated, we always investigate such instances. But in this instance, we haven't received any facts. We have spoken about this to our Israeli colleague and they are worried about this. And the last point I want to make that in principle, in order to attain the goals mentioned by the – by Secretary Rice that this meeting that is planned to be held in Washington this autumn, to make it effective, make it really to mean – move to practical steps that ultimately would not only to an Israeli-Palestinian settlement but to a Middle East settlement on all tracks, definitely the countries of the region have to be involved. We shouldn't try to isolate them. And I'm convinced that through this policy of involvement and not exclusion or isolation we will achieve much more than simply what we would achieve through talks about who is guilty. First, you need the facts and then you need honest cooperation involving everyone in the process of settlement. We shouldn't leave anyone out of that.

Thank you.

**MODERATOR:** To Khaled Dawoud, Al Jazeera.

**QUESTION:** Yes, thank you, Michele.

Secretary Rice, just can we have a clear answer on whether Syria will be invited or not? I mean, yes or no? And also, at the same time, obviously you've dealt with the situation in Gaza. Can you kindly tell us how do you think the situation there will be solved? Obviously, it can't go on forever.

And I'd like also to hear what Mr. Lavrov said about that because you've had your own talks with Hamas there. Thank you.

**SECRETARY RICE:** First of all, all of the members of the Arab Follow-up Committee, we believe, would be natural invitees for this meeting. It is extremely important, though, to note that the purpose of this meeting in supporting the Israelis and the Palestinians has to be a commitment to actually supporting a two-state solution. And so since we believe that the Arab Initiative, in effect, is intended to do that, it makes sense that the members of the Follow-up Committee would be natural participants. As to Gaza, the position of the United States on Gaza is very clear: first of all, that the West Bank and Gaza are both constituent parts of the Palestinian territories and when there is a Palestinian state would be constituent parts of a Palestinian state; secondly, that Prime Minister Fayyad and President Abbas are the legitimate authorities, the legitimate representatives of all the Palestinian people wherever they live. And in that regard, what happened in Gaza with the undermining – in effect, the overthrow -- of legitimate Palestinian institutions does not mean that the legitimate Palestinian authority is not still the – should not still be the recognized authority for Gaza.

Third, and most importantly, the United States will never abandon the people of Gaza simply because they live in Gaza. We will continue our humanitarian efforts. We have intensified those efforts over the last year and a half, increasing substantially our humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people. And

we do agree that that humanitarian assistance needs to be delivered to the people of Gaza without obstruction. We have talked with our – I have talked with the Israelis about the importance of maintaining a focus on the humanitarian plight of the people of Gaza. There are innocent people there who should not have to suffer because of the political coup d'état that took place as a result of what Hamas did several – a couple of months ago.

So we hope that ultimately the prospect, the beginnings of -- the emergence of concrete idea of the Palestinian state, will be a unifying factor for all Palestinians. But I just think it's extremely important that we recognize that Gazans are a part of the Palestinian people, and Abu Mazen – President Abbas – and Salam Fayyad represent the Palestinian people.

**FOREIGN MINISTER LAVROV:** (Via interpreter) I'll speak Russian.

As I already said, we will attach particular importance to the upcoming U.S. meeting, the meeting that was proposed by President Bush. And we supported that initiative and all members of the Quartet said they were ready, they had interest in participating in the preparation for it to make it a success. And today, we agreed how specifically to work in this area.

If everything comes off, then if the – that could lay the beginning for the first time – I don't know for how many years now – but it could set the beginning for practical progress, moving towards a settlement not just between the Palestinians and the Israelis but on the whole in the Middle East, on all tracks, and will open the way to an international conference on Middle East. And this was mentioned by President Putin repeatedly and in favor of this has – the members of the League of Arab States has said they were in favor of this, and in the Quartet meeting we said that we would definitely have this prospect in mind and we will plan further steps to that.

So a comprehensive settlement, as I said. It is clear that it is impossible unless – if one part is left in isolation, if part of that people – one people is left on the roadside. As Secretary Rice has said, the Palestinians of Gaza are an intrinsic part of the Palestinian people, so we gave special attention to that during our discussions to the fact that we should prevent a situation which has just – this nascent process that is getting underway, where any part of the Palestinian people would be isolated. That would only increase this fracture that has occurred now. And I am sure that the restoration of the unity of the Palestinians, I think that is a priority. And in parallel with the preparation for steps in the Palestinian-Israeli track we need to see to it that the Palestinian part of the equation be united and would also strengthen their negotiation position.

Of course, there's a separate question about the humanitarian situation in Gaza. Of course, I think many of you know the draft report of the World Bank. It contains a very grim picture. Very grim prospects are given in that report. So therefore in our statement that was read out by the Secretary General we particularly highlight the need for unimpeded – and I stress that – unimpeded access to humanitarian assistance and as well as emergency assistance to Gaza. Russia is interested in this because the assistance – well, three weeks ago we sent assistance, the food, medicines. So far, it can't get to Gaza. Thank you.

**QUESTION:** Secretary Rice, you saw the Saudi Foreign Minister today. Do you have any reason to believe that he would attend the November conference?

Also, can you and Prime Minister Blair shed some more light on the substance of the meeting? Do you expect actual agreements on the outlines of how to solve the core issue of borders, refugees, Jerusalem, even final status?

And Mr. Blair, you had a request on economic development summit from Israeli businessmen at the same time as the November summit. Is that going to be part of it?

**SECRETARY RICE:** Thank you, and then I'll turn it over to Tony Blair.

First of all, let me just go back for one moment to the Gaza question because we are very concerned about the people of Gaza. I think it bears noting that we also have to be concerned about the security situation. We have to be concerned about rockets being fired from Gaza into Israel and we have to be concerned about the security situation for Palestinians. And so let's remember how we got to where we are. And the Quartet statement also notes that it's extremely important that the steps be taken or that the security situation in Gaza be addressed and that the rocket fire stops. So I want to make that very clear. As to attendance at the meeting, as I said, we will be working on this issue and we are very clear in our discussions with our colleagues that this meeting is going to be serious and substantive, that of course it

has to address the core issues. It would make really no sense for the United States to invite members of the international community, regional actors, the parties themselves, to have a meeting that was not serious and substantive and didn't address the core issues. We have many things to do, and so I am sure we could find something better to do than to have a meeting that did not address those issues.

And so we also recognize that in coming to the meeting we hope that those who come are really committed to helping the Israelis and the Palestinians find a way through. And that means renouncing violence. It means working for a peaceful solution. It means working on the basis of all of the many documents that to now have formed the framework for an eventual peace. And so coming to this meeting also brings with it certain responsibilities and we hope that there will be full participation of those who want to see a Palestinian state established, as the United States and as the members of the Quartet most certainly want to see.

**MR. BLAIR:** First of all, I think it's important just to understand what the big picture is, if you like, arising out of the meetings that have been happening out in the region and the Quartet meeting today. The most important thing is that things are moving again. There is momentum back in this process. That doesn't mean to say that we are foolishly optimistic after all the difficulties of the past. But things are moving again.

And there are three parts to that. The first is that there is a reinvigoration of the political process. That is the importance of the meeting that the Americans are calling. That political process, of course, is not going to be able to resolve all the outstanding issues straightaway, of course not. But it will give a political horizon that puts credibility back into the process. That is the aim, that's what people want to see, and that is something that President Abbas and Prime Minister Olmert will negotiate together. The second thing is that there is going to be then the publication of the Palestinian national agenda for action, which is about creating the institutions of a Palestinian state, because a state without proper functioning institutions is not a state. A state is not just about territory; it's about capacity, capability, about governance.

And then the third aspect of this is that there have got to be things happening on the ground that give hope to people in Israeli and on the Palestinian side that their lives are going to improve, that things are going to change, that people – the prospect of an improvement in their living standards and their ability to live normal lives. And that is where, for example, the proposals put by Israeli businessmen, by Palestinian businessmen, by others in the international community, are also important.

So these three things move together the whole time: the reinvigoration of the political process; the Palestinians building the institutions of a serious, well-functioning state; and things improving on the ground.

And the important thing I think also to realize is that over these next few months there will be two very important meetings, not just one by two, actually. The first will, of course, be the meeting that Secretary Rice has referred to, but the second will also be an opportunity for the international community as supporters and donors to the Palestinian Authority to come behind the Palestinian agenda for action and support it.

So our aim, if you like, is to get to the end of this year, the end of the period of the next few months with real hope back in the political process with a sense of what this Palestinian state could look like in terms of capability and governance, and with things improving on the ground. And that is – those are in one sense quite ambitious objectives for the next few months, but I think they are achievable if the right will and the right focus is there. And certainly, it's important that it is.

**MODERATOR:** We'll take two more questions. I go to Raghida Dergham, Al Hayat. I understand that at the meeting, the follow-on meeting (inaudible) that two members, two directly involved parties in the conflict of the Middle East are not invited, Palestine and Lebanon. I can't understand the logic why would you exclude both Palestine and Lebanon from the next meeting coming up. If I am wrong, I stand corrected, please.

And Madame Rice, why is it you think that you are -- despite your goodwill, there is lack of confidence in what you are trying to do to bring about this important conference?

And why is it that, for example, Mr. Lavrov, if you care to tell us, how much do you care that (inaudible) comprehensive, how much do you care that the Lebanon issue is very much on the table, for

example, to safeguard the constitutional process so that there will be an elected president and that the country will (inaudible) together at least to get to the table there?

**SECRETARY GENERAL BAN:** For the first part of your question, we have invited exactly same countries who participated in Arab partners meeting in Sharm el-Sheikh in May.

**SECRETARY RICE:** This was a meeting also with the Arab Follow-up – she thinks that you invited the people who participated (off mike). We'll get you a complete guest list, but our understanding is that it is the Follow-up Committee that the Arab League produced or named to follow up on the Arab Initiative. But that is the purpose of the meeting. But the Secretary General will comment further on that later.

**QUESTION:** The other question?

**SECRETARY RICE:** Yeah, sure. The question about confidence in what we're doing? Look, there have been many, many disappointments over many decades about moving this forward. And I understand that. And I understand that perhaps there's skepticism as to whether or not we can succeed this time. As Tony Blair said, anyone who has dealt with issues in the Middle East knows to be cautious in your optimism about whether we can achieve what we're trying to achieve. But I would just note that we have come a long way since the end of the Camp David process in 2000. We've been through a lot of ups and downs. President Bush enunciated in 2002 the desire to see two states living side by side, one Israel, one Palestine, in peace and freedom. He was the first American President to make that statement as a matter of policy. Even this year we have been through a lot of ups and downs to get to where we are now. I would remind that I think when I was in Jerusalem and we held the trilateral in February, frankly, conditions were not very good and the atmosphere was not very good.

And so we've come a long way in a relatively short period of time. We believe that the international meeting has the potential to galvanize people on the political front and to give the international community, the regional states, and most importantly the parties something to shoot for, something to look forward to. And that is, frankly, all that we can do, and then to work as hard as possible so that the meeting has the kind of substantive, serious core that we all want it to have. But I'm not surprised that people wonder if we're going to succeed. If this conflict had been easy to solve, it would have been solved long ago. But the commitment of this President of the United States, myself personally, of the United States Government, and I sense of the international community, to trying to make progress here is very firm. And all that you can do is to put in your best effort. I think there is a lot of goodwill, there is a lot of commitment, and hopefully this time we'll succeed.

**FOREIGN MINISTER LAVROV:** (Via interpreter) I didn't quite get the point of your question. You asked about Lebanon or what my attitude is to the constitutional process in Lebanon? Well, my attitude is one of respect for the constitutional process in any country and I'm convinced that if no one impedes the Lebanese, then they will be able to agree on how to overcome the current crisis. We know that many eminent politicians in Lebanon are thinking about how to prevent another slippage in the situation leading to a profound crisis and (inaudible) initiatives. And I repeat the main thing is not to get in the way of the Lebanese, then I think everything will be fine.

**MODERATOR:** One question for media – Raghida, we have three – you had three questions. We go to Philip Gélie of Le Figaro.

**QUESTION:** There seems to be a new emphasis and even a new urgency in pushing the proclamation of Palestinian state, which was supposed to be at the end of the roadmap. So is the roadmap dead? And if it is not, how do you reconcile this new process that you are trying to push with the roadmap? And also, what are the concrete conditions on the ground for a Palestinian state to be acceptable in your view? Thank you.

**SECRETARY RICE:** Well, I'm very glad that you asked the question because I think the roadmap – the roadmap is still a reliable guide that is supported by the entire international community on how a Palestinian state gets established. And if you look at the phase one commitments, it is very hard to imagine the establishment of a Palestinian state in which the phase one commitments have not been realized or have not been carried through. And so absolutely those phase one commitments have to be met.

What is very clear is that after some experience over the last several years is that the political horizon for the Palestinian people and indeed for the Israeli people is an important ingredient of the momentum

and the commitment and the sense of a real outcome in order for people to have the capability and the energy, if you will, to meet those phase one commitments.

I don't think it was ever envisioned in the roadmap that it wouldn't be possible to even discuss or talk about or potentially even negotiate the outlines, the contents of a Palestinian state. But it is absolutely the case that you are not going to be able to establish a Palestinian state if you don't have a commitment to end terror, if you don't have a commitment to end settlement activity, if you don't have a commitment to nonviolence. All of those things have to be achieved. The Palestinians will have to have capacity. They will have to have security forces that can provide security for – against terrorism but can also provide security for the Palestinian people.

All of these things are integral and essential for the establishment of a Palestinian state. So the roadmap remains in place. The roadmap remains a reliable guide. It also remains a document to which the international community is committed through a Security Council resolution. It is going to be critical that the roadmap obligations be met if the Palestinian state is going to be established, and it's one reason that the work that Tony Blair is doing, and by the way, the work that General Keith Dayton is doing on the establishment of reliable, integrated Palestinian forces that truly report to the Palestinian Authority.

**MR. BLAIR:** If I might just add to that very briefly. The roadmap remains, and as Secretary Rice has just said, all the issues that matter, the valid issues, will have to be addressed if you're ever going to get a solution. The important thing I think, however, to understand about what has been happening recently is, first of all, that for people to make advances they need to have some sense of where the process is heading politically. And the question that people were asking a few months back, or a few weeks back, were all about the meeting that President Bush had called for – was it going to be substantial or was it not going to be substantial? I think the importance of today's communiqué is there's an answer to that: It is going to be substantial. We want it to be a substantive, serious discussion with an outcome that allows us to see how we then move the process forward. So that's on the political horizon which is taken forward, as I say, by Prime Minister Olmert and President Abbas.

But the second point about the Palestinian capability, let me just make this very clear. In the end, for a Palestinian state to be created, there are questions about the nature of that state – has it got a proper security infrastructure, are its public services properly functioning, does it have the infrastructure that it needs, are the systems of governance in place – that are a vital part of the questions you would ask about any state. And the important thing I think to keep in your mind the whole time is that these things shouldn't be divorced from each other. They actually go together. But a political horizon so that people know what they're aiming for and know what they're trying to achieve, and the practical steps necessary to make a reality of that. And I think it's both of those things going together, plus the immediate changes that we need on the ground to give people some sense things are really happening, that is the work of the next few months.

**MODERATOR:** Thank you very much.

2007/799

Released on September 23, 2007

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Media Note

**Office of the Spokesman**

Washington, DC

November 26, 2007

**Quartet Statement**

Following is the text of a statement by the Quartet following their November 26 meeting in Washington, DC:

The Quartet Principals -- Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, High Representative for European Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, Portuguese Foreign Minister Luis Amado, and European Commissioner for External Relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner -- met today in Washington to discuss the situation in the Middle East ahead of the upcoming Annapolis Conference. They were joined by Quartet Representative Tony Blair.

The Quartet expressed strong support for the November 27 Annapolis Conference. It welcomed the commitment of the Israeli and Palestinian leaders to launch bilateral negotiations toward the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza and the realization of Israeli-Palestinian peace. This reflects the results of months of work by the parties and by the Quartet, including the Quartet's engagement with members of the Arab League Follow-Up Committee to expand the circle of support for peace. The Quartet welcomed the parties' continuing efforts to fulfill their respective commitments under Phase One of the Roadmap and urged the international community to provide robust support for all the parties' efforts. Principals took note of the broad international support for the Annapolis Conference, and looked forward to the December Paris Donors' Conference to muster international financial backing for efforts to build the foundation for a viable and prosperous Palestinian state. The Quartet agreed to remain closely involved, and to that end will meet again in December, and looks forward to inviting members of the Arab League Follow-Up Committee to attend.

The Quartet affirmed its commitment to seize this opportunity to mobilize international support to achieve meaningful progress towards a just and lasting negotiated settlement to this conflict, and ultimately a comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

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Media Note

**Office of the Spokesman**

Paris, France

December 17, 2007

**Quartet Statement Following December 17, 2007 Quartet Meeting in Paris, France**

The Quartet Principals -- Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, High Representative for European Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, Portuguese Foreign Minister Luis Amado, and European Commissioner for External Relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner-- met today in Paris to discuss the situation in the Middle East. They were joined by Quartet Representative Tony Blair.

The Quartet lauded the success of the November 27 Annapolis Conference, which resulted in agreement to launch bilateral Israeli-Palestinian negotiations in order to conclude a peace treaty and demonstrated broad regional and international support for Israeli-Palestinian and comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace.

The Quartet welcomed the commencement of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations to resolve all outstanding issues, including all core issues, and looked forward to vigorous, ongoing and continuous negotiations. The Quartet reaffirmed its commitment to remain closely involved and to support the parties' efforts in the period ahead as they make every effort to conclude an agreement before the end of 2008.

The Quartet reaffirmed the importance of Palestinian economic and institutional capacity building in order to lay the foundation for a viable and prosperous Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza. In that regard, the Quartet expressed its strong support for the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan presented by Palestinian Authority (PA) Prime Minister Fayyad, welcomed the generous support of the international community at the Paris Donors' Conference, and urged donors to maximize the resources available to the PA. The Quartet underlined that the success of this plan depends on the cooperation of all partners: the PA, donors and Israel. In this context, it stressed the importance of improved movement and access. The Quartet commended the excellent work of the European Commission and World Bank

in establishing and managing the Temporary International Mechanism (TIM) since June 2006. Now, with the establishment of a responsible PA government committed to peace, the re-establishment of a functioning PA single treasury account, and in light of the excellent Palestinian Reform and Development Plan presented to donors in Paris, the Quartet urged donors to resume direct bilateral assistance to the PA. Principals endorsed a final extension of the TIM until the end of March 2008 to allow sufficient time for donors to make this transition.

Quartet Principals noted the continuing importance of improving conditions on the ground and creating an environment conducive to the realization of Israeli-Palestinian peace, and the establishment of a Palestinian state living side by side with Israel in peace and security. In this regard, the Quartet expressed concern over the announcement of new housing tenders for Har Homa/Jabal abu Ghneim. Principals called for all sides to refrain from steps that undermine confidence, and underscored the importance of avoiding any actions that could prejudice the outcome of permanent status negotiations. The Quartet called on both parties to make progress on their Phase One Roadmap obligations, including an Israeli freeze on settlements, removal of unauthorized outposts, and opening of East Jerusalem institutions, and Palestinian steps to end violence, terrorism, and incitement.

The Quartet condemned the continued rocket fire from Gaza into Israel and called for an immediate cessation of such attacks.

The Quartet gave its strong support to the projects developed by Quartet Representative Blair and commended the constructive support of the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority for their implementation.

The Quartet reiterated its deep concern over the humanitarian conditions facing the population of the Gaza Strip and emphasized the importance of continued emergency and humanitarian assistance without obstruction. The Quartet called for the continued provision of essential services, including fuel and power supplies. It expressed its urgent concern over the continued closure of major crossing points given the impact on the Palestinian economy and daily life. The Quartet encouraged contacts between Israel and the Palestinian Authority to consider ideas such as Prime Minister Salam Fayyad's proposal for the PA to assume responsibility for the Palestinian side of the Gaza crossings in order to improve operations and oversight for the passage of goods and people.

Recognizing the crucial role that Arab states must play in support of the peace process, and the importance of the Arab Peace Initiative, the Quartet commended the broad and constructive Arab participation at Annapolis and called for their political and financial support for the Palestinian Authority government and institutions. Principals looked forward to their meeting with Arab foreign ministers, to be hosted by the Portuguese Foreign Minister, which would present an opportunity to discuss the way ahead.

The Quartet agreed to meet regularly in 2008, to review progress and provide support for the parties' efforts. Envoys will meet to follow up and discuss how best to harness international support for progress towards peace.

The Quartet reaffirmed its commitment to a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace in the Middle East based on UNSCRs 242 and 338.

2007/1141

Released on December 17, 2007