



P·A·R·C·C

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
Maxwell School

314.443.2367
parcc@maxwell.syr.edu

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Converging!

(September 2007 in Israel/Palestine)

- Public Information -

The past year has seen noticeable change in the Middle Eastern political arena. As the Al-Aksa Intifada enters its seventh year, it is unclear if the situation should be defined as “The Middle East Peace Process” or whether the term “The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict” is more apt.

Mahmoud Abbas, Chairman of the Palestinian Authority (PA) and the head of the Fatah political party, is not the charismatic father figure that Yasser Arafat was. As a result, the PA –and the Palestinian people–is suffering from internal rifts. Hamas, an Islamist organization with radical views towards Israel and the West, surprised the world not only by participating in the political process for the first time, but also decisively winning in the general elections held in January 2006. Fatah’s monopoly on the Palestinian internal political scene is a thing of the past. Arguments over control of the PA’s security forces have sparked exchanges of gunfire between the two groups, as well as kidnappings and assassination attempts. Recently, Hamas has ousted Fatah from Gaza by force, completely dominating this area while Fatah continues to cling to its old power bases in the West Bank. Most of the nations of the world have not recognized the Hamas-led PA and refuse to deal with it. The ensuing diplomatic confusion complicates the transferring of international aid to the PA and aid agencies in the West Bank and Gaza.

This simulation was an honorable mention winner in our 2007 “Collaborative Public Management, Collaborative Governance, and Collaborative Problem Solving” teaching case and simulation competition. It was double-blind peer reviewed by a committee of academics and practitioners. It was written by Noam Ebner and Yael Efron of Tachlit Mediation and Negotiation Training, Israel, and edited by Laurel Saiz. This simulation is intended for classroom discussion and is not intended to suggest either effective or ineffective handling of the situation depicted. It is brought to you by E-PARCC, part of the Maxwell School of Syracuse University’s Collaborative Governance Initiative, a subset of the Program for the Advancement of Research on Conflict and Collaboration (PARCC). This material may be copied as many times as needed as long as the authors are given full credit for their work.

Israel's unilateral disengagement from the Gaza Strip and the northern West Bank was carried out in August 2005. About 10,000 settlers were evacuated from their homes in these areas, and their houses--along with army bases evacuated by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF)--were bulldozed into rubble. Israeli society and politics were thrown into turmoil as a result of these events. In March 2006, the centrist Kadima party was voted into power, and Ehud Olmert assumed the post of Prime Minister. Olmert has announced his plan to continue to take unilateral steps, in the absence of a negotiated agreement. Meeting in May with President George W. Bush, Olmert announced his "Convergence Plan," which calls for isolated Israeli settlements in the West Bank to be evacuated. Some settlement blocs closer to Israel would be connected to Israel by including them within the envelope of the security barrier Israel has been constructing over the past few years.

The realization of this plan has been delayed, due to the upheavals on the Palestinian side and the recent war in Lebanon, which erupted in July and lasted for 34 days. At present, there is no contact between Israeli figures and any representatives of the PA, with the exception of Chairman Abbas. Israel has halted its withdrawal from West Bank cities kept under Israeli control for the past few years, claiming to have apprehended suicide bombers originating in these cities. Palestinian militants have resumed firing Kassam rockets from the Gaza Strip at Israeli cities.

Olmert recently announced that Dan, a small city that constitutes the last Israeli presence in the northern West Bank, would be evacuated on September 15; Israeli military presence in the area would also cease. He stressed that this step would be performed unilaterally due to the absence of a Palestinian negotiating partner and that Israel would continue to take unilateral measures to set its borders according to its security needs.

Israel sees this as its last opportunity to act against the militant groups and arms factories in the northern West Bank city of Jenin before pulling out of the area. It is preparing for a large-scale incursion. IDF troops have already entered the city and the refugee camp, searching houses for armaments and militants. The last IDF incursion into Jenin in 2002 took a heavy toll from both sides, and caused a local humanitarian crisis. Jenin has been kept under close IDF scrutiny ever since. The damage caused has yet to be repaired and, due to the troubled situation, elections have not been held in the city.

Heading a shaky coalition, Olmert relies heavily on his coalition partner, the left-of-center Labor Party, for political support. While supporting the convergence plan, Labor sees the plan's unilateral nature as its key long-term weakness. Labor officials open a backdoor channel to the Palestinians, hoping to achieve a mutually agreed upon handover of power and territory, and perhaps a first step towards resuming regular negotiations. Labor leaders are confident that Olmert will adopt any reasonable agreement reached by them with the Palestinians rather than risking the collapse of his government.

Through contacts from the Oslo period, Labor leaders make contact with the Governor

of Jenin and the local Fatah commander. Faced with the reality of the IDF incursion, and realizing that to a great degree the fate of the Palestinian nation could turn on what could occur in Jenin, they agree to negotiate. They promise that if a just and reasonable agreement is reached, they would pressure Abbas of Fatah and PA Prime Minister Haniyeh of Hamas to endorse it. If Abbas and Haniyeh do not endorse it, they could be blamed and castigated for all damages resulting from the incursion in Jenin.

The coordinators of the upcoming talks have reached these procedural agreements:

1. They would select non-professional and non-partisan negotiators, a trusted and representative group, and charge them with reaching the best deal possible.
2. The talks would be held in Nicosia, Cyprus, a city with its own ongoing drama of conflict and peacemaking. The time frame of the talks was limited to the two weeks remaining until the planned evacuation of Dan, and a secluded hotel was booked for that period of time.
3. Third-party neutrals would be involved in the process, both to mediate difficult situations and as a means of giving the talks credibility in the future. The coordinators requested assistance from the chief of the UN's permanent mission to Cyprus, situated there to help monitor and facilitate the local peace process. Due to the temporary hiatus in activity on the Cyprus front, the chief of mission agreed to assist the talks by assigning several of his staff to help. It was agreed that they would be assigned observer status for the first part of the talks, taking a more active role only if expressly requested to by the parties. During the second part of the talks, as time becomes shorter, they will intervene more actively. The coordinators and the UN chief agreed that the third-party neutrals would be assigned observer status for the first part of the talks, taking a more active role only if expressly requested to by the parties.
4. Secrecy of the talks is paramount; any leaks would end them. Therefore, the groups will not convene ahead of time, and each member will arrive separately, leaving his or her cell phone at home. The talks will be quarantined – no messages will go in or out except periodic updates sent by each team's coordinator. The only outgoing messages will be actual agreements, passed on through the UN neutrals.

Arriving in Nicosia, a note in each one's room serves as an invitation to come meet the other members of his or her team. A private meeting room will be used, and the meeting's purpose is to get to know each other and to prepare for the first upcoming meeting with the other side.

Converging!
(September 2007 in Israel/Palestine)
- Private Information for the Israeli Delegation -

This is the first time you are meeting as a group, and the one thing most of you have in common is that you've never expected to be Israel's representative in negotiations with the Palestinians. Of course, you are familiar with most of the issues. Whether you live near Jenin, walk the streets of Tel-Aviv, or do military reserve duty in the Palestinian territories, the conflict is a fact of life. You are excited at the talks' potential, but apprehensive about how to make sure Israel's main interests are satisfied. Bad agreements mean more terror and more deaths. In such a small country, everything hits close to home; whatever happens here will affect you, your families, your friends and your country. Before meeting the other side, read this background summary.

Convergence

The West Bank convergence plan is a done deal. Olmert must implement it in terms of internal politics. It's what he was elected to do! He has made a firm commitment to the U.S. President.

The city of Dan will definitely be evacuated on schedule. Established by Israelis 30 years ago, Dan is isolated in the heart of Palestinian-populated areas, and its very existence causes friction with the Palestinians. The Israeli government is working to put together a compensation package for the 20,000 inhabitants of Dan, who will all be evacuated. Not all of these inhabitants have agreed to evacuate; the ideological settlers among them view the uprooting of an Israeli city as a cataclysmic tragedy. The huge political price for forcibly evacuating them might limit your ability to make too many concessions on other subjects at these talks, so as to avoid your public's feeling that you've sold out. Being able to show considerable concessions from the Palestinian side might make this withdrawal easier to carry out. Olmert has stressed that internal Israeli dialogue will precede any withdrawal he initiates, in order to avoid a social rift. In this spirit, the Israeli coordinator for these talks has invited a member of the settlement movement to be present at these talks as an observer.

Dan is a carefully planned city with modern infrastructure, street system, public buildings and other improvements. The city houses a college with about 2,000 students, commercial areas and a small industrial area providing jobs for about 2,000 workers. Olmert has declared that the city's infrastructure, houses and community buildings will be dismantled, just as the settlements in the Gaza Strip were. However, this subject is deemed negotiable.

Withdrawal Line and Security Wall

The Israeli Defense Force (IDF) has advised that the still uncompleted Security Wall between the West Bank and Israel be completed in its entirety, as a continuous barrier. IDF troops would cross the Wall only in hot pursuit of terrorists. In closed sessions, the IDF has conceded that alternative security measures might be explored in certain sectors instead of the continuous wall concept, but only if a vital segment of the wall is immediately constructed around the Khinanit-Shaked-Reikhan bloc of Israeli settlements and Um El-Fahm (marked A on your map). One purpose served by this segment of wall is to connect the settlement bloc – including the Tel Menashe Industrial Park – to Israel and ensure the bloc's security. The industrial park comprises several dozen factories, which employ close to 3,000 Israeli workers as well as about 500 Palestinian workers from the Jenin region. The second purpose is denying suicide bombers' access to Northern Israel by infiltration via the Israeli-Arab city of Um El-Fahm.

Security Considerations

Occupying less territory makes the IDF's job easier. Defending along a fixed line is simpler than policing Palestinian cities. After convergence, fewer casualties among soldiers and settlers alike (to say nothing of Palestinians) are expected. The fewer the cities, settlements and roads to be defended, the less manpower need be dedicated to the region. Less day-to-day friction with the Palestinians might reduce motivation for terrorism. On the other hand, the pullout will reduce Israel's on-the-ground intelligence-gathering capability. In addition, Israel has always depended on the deterrence of its military might to keep its neighbors at bay. If the evacuation of Dan is viewed as a capitulation to terror, terror organizations will be hailed as the liberators who banished the IDF and their stock will rise among the terror-enabling Palestinian population.

No Linkage

A major concern is that any change in the status quo potentially sets a precedent to be cited in future negotiations. While reaching agreement here can create a positive background for future talks, do not agree to any linkage between these and future negotiations. Israel has never before evacuated a city located east of the Green Line. Several others exist further south, and Israel intends to hold on to at least some of them.

Political Considerations

The recent turnaround in Palestinian internal politics has left Israel in a bind: after enabling and encouraging the Palestinians to set up their own institutions, and after treating the Palestinian Authority (PA) as the other side's legitimate representing authority, Israel is faced with the fact that the PA has been taken over by a terrorist organization. Israel and most Western countries refuse to recognize the Hamas-led PA unless it meets three conditions: renouncing violence, recognizing Israel and respecting past agreements between Israel and the

PA. Hamas has yet to meet any of these conditions. Fatah, although certainly not Israel's friend, is considered more moderate: at least they would stand accountable with regard to previous peace agreements and cease-fires. Israel has much to gain by strengthening Fatah at Hamas' expense – and much to lose if Hamas would overrun the West Bank as Gaza was. Additionally, faced with a possible agreement, internal Palestinian politics may force Hamas into adopting a more moderate line.

The Jenin Incursion

Jenin has been a hornet's nest of terrorist activity for the past few years, and suicide bombers originating in Jenin have struck at buses, restaurants and bus stations across Israel, killing hundreds of civilians. While you certainly feel empathy for Jenin's inhabitants, living in cramped living conditions and enduring searches and curfews, you also know that terror organizations promote these problems by hiding their operations and operators among the civilian population.

The IDF estimates there are 10,000 firearms in Jenin, besides the weapons held by the semi-functioning, Fatah-controlled, PA police forces. The IDF is particularly worried that militants have smuggled Kassam rocket launchers into Jenin, capable of striking at the Israeli city of Afula. Their primary mission is to capture these arms stockpiles. The IDF also plans to demolish the homes of three suicide bombers and to arrest local terrorist leaders, leaving the terrorist infrastructure in Jenin in a shambles in the hope that more moderate elements might gain control. During the IDF's 2002 incursion into Jenin, the Palestinians claimed Israel civilians and committing war crimes. A UN commission later found none of the accusations were even close to the truth.

Before you sit down with the Palestinian team, review the boundaries of your negotiating mandate:

- The evacuation of Dan will be executed.
- No formal linkage between these talks and this evacuation to any other talks or withdrawal plans will be allowed.
- Full security must be achieved along Line A.
- The strategic threat posed by the weapons caches in Jenin must be neutralized.

Beyond these points, anything and everything is negotiable at your discretion. You can affect not only the big picture, but you can also reach immediate, local or interim agreements regarding the Jenin incursion, the Security Wall or any other issue. These agreements can be put into immediate effect by notifying your coordinator. Your job is to achieve an agreement that would best serve Israel's interests.

Use your preparation time well; you will soon be meeting with the Palestinian team.

Converging!
(September 2007 in Israel / Palestine)
-Private Information for the Palestinian Delegation-

This is the first time you're meeting as a group. None of you ever expected to represent Palestine in negotiations with the Israelis on such existential issues. Of course, you are all familiar with most of the issues. Whether you live in a refugee camp, walk the streets of Jenin, or get held up for hours at the Israeli occupiers' checkpoints, the conflict is a fact of life. Bad agreements, from Palestine's standpoint, mean more Israeli terror and more deaths. In such a small state, everything hits close to home; whatever happens here will have immediate effects on you, your families, and your country. You don't trust Israel, and you're not sure whether to trust the Israeli delegation. Before you sit down with them, here is a background summary necessary for the talks.

Jenin

Little has changed in Jenin since the death of Yasser Arafat and the transfer of power to Mahmoud Abbas. The Israeli army continues to maintain checkpoints round the city, strangling commerce and cutting the city off from its outlying areas and other Palestinian cities. As a result of the occupation, Jenin's inhabitants did not participate in the general election held in January, and Hamas' victory has not had much effect here. The area is still under the control of the pro-Fatah governor, and most of the local security forces are Fatah loyalists. However, Hamas has been increasingly flexing its muscles in the region and will certainly attempt to use any Israeli withdrawal as a pretext for attempting to take over local power bases. Since the Hamas takeover in Gaza, the sporadic violence between Fatah and Hamas throughout the West Bank has not passed over Jenin. In acknowledgement of the shift in the Palestinian political scene, the talk's coordinator has invited a representative from the Hamas in Jenin to participate in the talks as an observer.

You feel uncomfortable. Back home, soldiers are entering the city and arrests have begun. Your people sit in their homes wondering if the Israeli tanks and bulldozers are coming for them, and here you are about to talk to them as if they were decent human beings. And yet, this may be the only way to stop the killing. The last time the Israeli Army entered Jenin in 2002, hundreds were murdered. People were shot by snipers, targeted from helicopters or buried under their homes by bulldozers. The world stood silently by as the Israelis destroyed a Palestinian city. Only the Palestinian resistance, killing hundreds of the invaders, left the city some pride. The Hamas and Islamic Jihad martyrs have promised to resist. Foreseeing the violent Israeli reaction to this, you feel responsible to prevent a massacre and a humanitarian crisis. You must do whatever you can to stop, slow down or limit the attack.

Israeli Withdrawal

You have no objection to Israel's withdrawal. Olmert's coordinating of the convergence plan with the Americans and not the Palestinians, though, is insulting. These talks are a chance for the Palestinian voice to be heard, but the looming ultimatum angers you. Make it clear that you will demand your right to be heard on the issue of Israeli withdrawal. This disengagement should be the first step, linked to future withdrawals in the West Bank.

The Israeli city of Dan, built on stolen Palestinian land, has always been a bone in your throat. The open sewage running through the streets of the Jenin refugee camp, contrasts with the villas owned by the Jews across the valley in Dan. It might be enjoyable to watch Israeli bulldozers tear down the city just as they tore down hundreds of houses in Jenin. However, the handover of these homes, undamaged, could have benefits. Refugees, left homeless by Israel's last invasion, could move into Dan. Evacuating Jenin's refugee camp, housing some 50,000 people, could allow the Jenin to get a fresh start. Dan's modern infrastructure, commercial areas and public buildings are far beyond anything you could hope to establish on your own. The city also currently houses a college with about 2,000 students, commercial areas and a small industrial area providing jobs for about 2,000 workers, including about 500 workers from Jenin, when the IDF allows them to enter Dan.

Withdrawal Line and Security Wall

The so-called Security Wall is a horrendous crime. Although primarily built along the Green Line, in some regions it cuts deeply into Palestinian lands. The Wall serves as a physical barrier, denying thousands of Palestinians access to employment in Israel, after 40 years of occupation had made you dependent on the Israelis for employment. The Wall also ends any territorial hopes Palestinians may have west of the Green Line, in Israel. Many people in Jenin once lived in Haifa and Jaffa, now cities in Israel, before the Israelis expelled them in the 1948 war; some have never come to terms with Israel's existence. Parts of the Wall are still unbuilt, and you want to prevent their completion. At the very least, arrangements should be made to allow free passage into Israel. In particular, you hope to stop the Wall from being built around the Israeli settlements of Shaked, Rekhan and Khinanit, all built on Palestinian lands west of the Jenin (line A on your map). In this area, the Wall diverges from the Green Line, tears off a big chunk of Palestinian land, and will block thousands of laborers from Jenin from employment in the Tel Menashe Industrial Park. In addition, the planned Wall will cut off family and business ties between residents of Jenin and the Israeli-Arab city of Um el-Fahm. The Governor has stressed that you must keep the larger picture of Palestinian national interests in mind at all times. These demand that Israel withdraw to the Green Line, dismantle parts of the wall and cease to build the unfinished segments. Settling for less might set a dangerous precedent.

Control of Jenin and Dan

While the Palestinian internal situation has not yet degenerated into civil war, gunfire is being

exchanged daily between Fatah and Hamas militants, as Hamas attempts to consolidate its power and Fatah struggles to attain its former supremacy. After the Israelis withdraw from Jenin, a major power struggle will take place in that city between Hamas and the remnants of the PA security forces loyal to Abbas and Fatah. The city of Dan could play an important role in this struggle. If Hamas gains control of the evacuated city, it could use the opportunity to set up a Hamas-governed city, threatening the supremacy of Fatah in the entire area, including Jenin. An agreed handover of power directly to the Governor might just allow him to retain control.

Economic Considerations

A unilateral Israeli pullback might seem to be a considerable concession, but would in reality strangle Jenin economically by denying its inhabitants employment in Israeli industrial parks and business opportunities in Um el-Fahm. International resources are often made available to support new peace initiatives. Such funding could enable Jenin's renovation. If an agreement is reached and implemented, positive local and national effects could result. Jenin might become the focus of West Bank political activity, having positive effects on local commerce. Security in the area might encourage the establishment of an Israeli-Palestinian joint industrial park, solving Jenin's 60 percent unemployment rate while Israeli companies enjoy access to West Bank markets.

At the very least, you **must**:

- Achieve at least some rapid concessions on the ground in Jenin.
- Attain at least some concession on the issue of the Wall, the most symbolic to the Palestinian public. Under no circumstances can the entire Wall be built.
- Achieve an organized handover of power, preserving Palestinian dignity.
- Agree to local interim agreements, but do not agree to a final, overall solution to the conflict with the Israelis achieving anything less than a pullback to the Green Line.

Beyond these, anything and everything is negotiable at your discretion. Any agreements reached can be put into immediate effect by notifying your coordinator. Your job is to achieve an agreement that would best serve Palestine's interests. Use your preparation time well; you will soon be meeting with the Israeli team.

Converging!
(September 2007 in Israel / Palestine)
- Private Instructions for the UN Team -

The UN team has been assigned the mission of facilitating informal Track II talks between Palestinians and Israelis prior to Israel's carrying out the recently announced withdrawal in the northern West Bank. Your chief of mission is not participating in these talks himself. Because the talks are not between official representatives of the parties, the UN involvement must remain low profile. He has selected you all for your experience in third-party roles gained working on the Cyprus issue. You have been assigned observer status during the first part of these unofficial, top-secret, behind-the-scenes talks. However, the chief of mission has allowed you to take a more active role in mediating or facilitating the negotiations, provided the parties agree to this. At any rate, during the later phases of the talks you will definitely intervene to speed things up; time is running out for everyone. Successful UN intervention would be an important feather in the team's cap.

This is the first time you've met as a group. Of course, you are all familiar with most of the issues – you follow them on the news and read briefings; some of you have dealt with them professionally. Cyprus is merely an hour's flight from Israel and the West Bank, and you are careful to keep abreast of developments in the region. In addition, your chief of mission has provided you with the following briefing paper, covering what seem to be the parties' interests and viewpoints, what the UN's view is and what your job is.

Convergence

The convergence plan itself is a done deal. Olmert will be able to implement it in terms of internal politics and has made a firm promise to the U.S. President on this issue. He has too much riding on this to let it slip.

Olmert is planning to evacuate the city of Dan. Established 30 years ago by a small group of settlers, the city now numbers some 20,000 inhabitants. Dan is a carefully planned city with modern infrastructure, street system, public buildings and other improvements. The city houses a college with about 2,000 students, commercial areas and a small industrial area providing jobs for about 2,000 workers. Dan is isolated in the heart of Palestinian areas, and its existence causes much friction with the Palestinians. This is the first time the Israelis have considered the possibility of evacuating an entire city. In the Gaza evacuation last summer 25 small settlements, totaling about 10,000 inhabitants altogether, were evacuated.

Withdrawal Line and Security Wall

The exact pullback line has not yet been declared. Olmert's security advisors have aired their opinion that the security wall being built between the West Bank and Israel should be completed in a continuous manner over the entire withdrawal line, so as to prevent giving

suicide bombers free access to Northern Israel. You think the Israelis might agree to leave parts of the wall unbuilt if the Palestinians agree to alternative security measures.

Security Issues

On one hand, less territory actually occupied by Israel makes the IDF's job easier. Defending along a fixed line is much simpler than continued presence in Palestinian cities. Less day-to-day friction between the parties might reduce motivation for terrorism, particularly for suicide bombers. On the other hand, Israel has always depended on military deterrence to keep its neighbors at bay. If the disengagement is viewed as capitulation to terror or as a retreat under fire, terrorist organizations would be seen as liberators who banished the IDF and this would encourage their further activity. This would be compounded by Israel having reduced its on-the-ground intelligence-gathering capability.

Linkage and Future Negotiations

Israel will try to avoid setting precedents that could be cited in future negotiations; such linkage may be important to the Palestinians. Overcoming this may take creativity on your part. Positive results from these talks just might result in full-blown peace talks.

The Jenin Incursion

Jenin is one of the most cramped, underdeveloped towns in the Middle East. One of its neighborhoods is actually a refugee camp, with scarce electricity and sewage running in the streets. You can't understand how the Israelis can live with this happening in their backyard. Jenin has been a hornet's nest of militant activity for the past few years, a breeding ground for suicide bombers and terrorists who take refuge among the civilian population. Thousands of firearms are kept in the camp, illegal under the Oslo Accords. The CIA has reported attempts by Hamas to smuggle in artillery and ground-to-air missiles – with possible success. In the IDF's last large-scale operation in Jenin in 2002, troops met fierce local resistance and took heavy casualties. Palestinian claims of massacred civilians and war crimes committed by soldiers were investigated by a UN commission, which found that 54 Palestinians had been killed, and that the accusations were inaccurate and inflated, to say the least. However, human rights violations at IDF checkpoints are a day-to-day matter.

Political Considerations

Ever since the peace process began over 15 years ago, the Fatah party (and its operative arm, the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO)) has always been Israel's negotiating partner. The recent turnaround in Palestinian internal politics has Israel and the world in a bind: after enabling and encouraging the Palestinians towards setting up their own institutions and treating the PA as the other side's legitimate representing authority, this body has been taken over by a group viewed by Israel and most Western countries as a terrorist organization.

These countries refuse to recognize the Hamas-led PA unless they meet three conditions: renouncing violence, recognizing Israel and respecting past agreements between Israel and the PA. Hamas has yet to meet any of these conditions. While the UN has not yet reached any resolution on the subject, you have received reports from administrators of UN-backed aid organizations on their dealings with the new Palestinian Authority. On the one hand, they are finding it difficult to get aid money transferred into the Palestinian areas due to Western concerns that the money will be used to fund militant activity. On the other hand, they report a lack of transparency and accountability, and admit that they themselves cannot be certain where the money is ending up and whether it is being used for peaceful goals.

Although elements of Fatah have been involved in attacks against Israel, they are considered more moderate and are at least accountable to Israel and the world with regard to previous peace agreements and cease-fires. Fatah leaders such as Yasser Arafat have addressed the UN's General Assembly. Hamas is viewed as a radical group with religious, even Jihadist, orientation, but it is yet unclear how they will act now that they are in power, with duties to their people and under the public eye.

UN Interests:

- Restore a dialogue track, to promote quiet in this volatile region.
- Achieve tangible results, which can create a more favorable atmosphere of dialogue in the region, with an eye towards Iraq, the Iranian nuclear issue and other current hotspots.
- Regain favor with both parties, who have not been favorable towards UN assistance in recent years.

Possible UN Incentives:

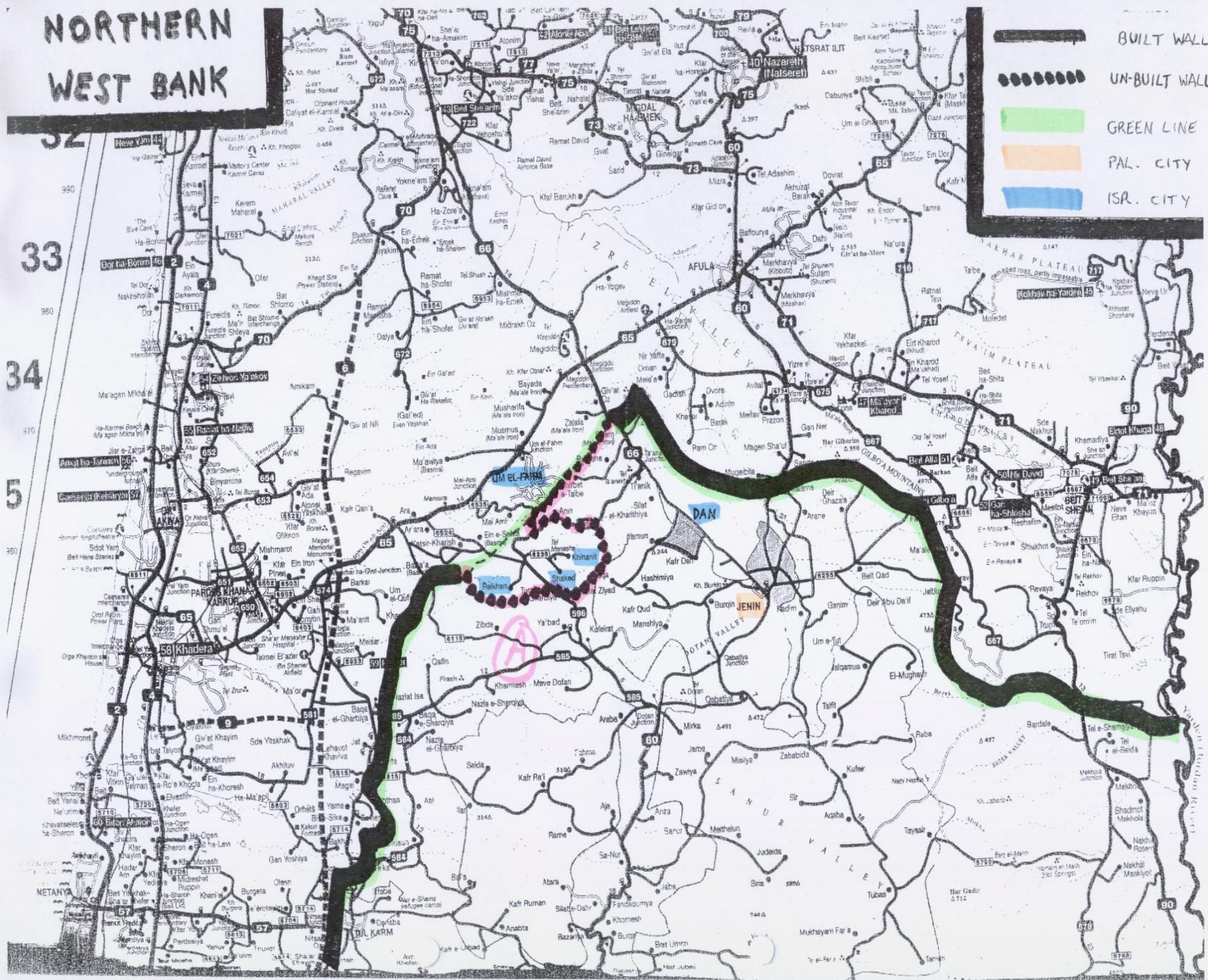
Besides its willingness to facilitate the talks, the UN can offer its own involvement and other incentives in order to get a peace process off the ground.



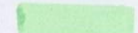


If the situation warrants it, you can consider the following proposals:

- The UN can provide on-the-ground monitoring for implementation of any agreement reached.
- The UN can provide up to \$10,000,000 for humanitarian efforts and urban development in Jenin. An effort can be made to seek similar investments from the EU and the World Bank.
- The UN can provide consultants on civil engineering and urban development.

Use your preparation time to work out your game plan. You will soon be meeting with the delegations.

NORTHERN WEST BANK



-  BUILT WALL
-  UN-BUILT WALL
-  GREEN LINE
-  PAL. CITY
-  ISR. CITY

Converging!
(September 2007 in Israel / Palestine)
Personal Role Information – Israeli Team

1 A professor of International Relations at Hebrew University, you specialize in the Arab-Israeli conflict from a historical perspective. You've never felt the urge to actively promote change, but having been asked by a childhood friend, now a cabinet member from the Labor party, to take part in these talks, you've reconsidered. Success here could springboard your friend into a position from which he could make you a serious offer, leading to an interesting career change towards politics. Labor's program is to steer things back to the negotiating table, despite anything Olmert or the Palestinian leadership might say or do. While making promises of linking this pullback to any other concessions is categorically forbidden, he's told you there is no reason it can't be informally used as an incentive. After all, if we're talking to them now, we'll be talking to them again before future pullbacks. Labor lags far behind Olmert's party in the polls, and needs you to achieve an agreement that they can take credit for during a future election race.

2 You know that other members of the delegation may not be happy with your presence, but you won't let this keep you a passive observer. A resident of the Itamar settlement near Shechem (Nablus), you have been active in the settlement movement for the past decade. You can't believe Olmert, after all his right-wing posturing in the past, is capitulating. The entire West Bank should be part of Israel. The Oslo concept of cooperation with the Palestinians was all a big mistake, one that cost Israel dearly. The disengagement from Gaza two years ago has proved to be a costly mistake: Gaza has been taken over by Hamas and is serving as a launching pad for Kassam rockets into Israeli cities and towns. You know that the settlers of Dan are willing to be relocated, but fear that this precedent could form the basis for uprooting other settlements, including your own. You understand you cannot prevent the withdrawal, but perhaps you can affect its scope and the nature of the precedent set. You want the government to adopt a scorched-earth policy, leaving no Israeli-built structures or infrastructure in the settlements evacuated for the Palestinians to enjoy.

3 You are a civil engineer, living in soon-to-be evacuated Dan. Three years ago you ended a career of 15 years as a lieutenant colonel in the Army Engineering Corps. Asked to provide expert input on engineering issues at these talks, you also have strong views on other topics. You believe a continuous Security Wall is vital for Israel; any gap would require extraordinary alternative measures to prevent infiltrations. Your neighbors, having heard rumors regarding the talks, pressed you to make sure they receive adequate compensation for their homes. Of course, these talks seem to have nothing to do with this issue, but keep it in mind. You have mixed feelings on the question of demolishing the city. You spent two years building your own home, and know that demolishing it would be painful. On the other hand, seeing a Palestinian family simply move into it might hurt just as badly. You know that with a concentrated effort, all traces of the city could be simply erased from the earth in a few days.

4 A former diplomat, you were asked to join the talks as someone who could lend a wider perspective. You think the city of Dan, once evacuated, should be turned over to the Palestinians undamaged, as needless destruction would do little to promote reconciliation. While the Security Wall concept is one good idea, other alternatives could be implemented at no security risk in certain areas. Gain your delegation's trust in you by sharing the experience you have gained at previous dialogue attempts, but don't divulge your other purpose at those talks. Your diplomatic position serves as a cover for your position in the Shabak, Israel's internal intelligence agency. Working undercover, you are on the lookout for secrecy infringements – disclosure of military or government secrets to Palestinians by Israeli delegates to the peace negotiations. When disclosure is done inadvertently, delicately prevent it by steering the subject away. If this doesn't work, you might warn the speaker privately, or report him. Here as negotiator and undercover agent, stress the first, acting naturally and according to your own views, but keep the other in mind. Of course, your identity mustn't be revealed by your team or the Palestinians.

5 When your son was killed during military service in Ramallah, your whole life changed. Working through the pain by sharing with other parents who have undergone similar experiences, you eventually became director of Israel's Veteran Memorial Organization. In such a small country, the whole community shares personal grief. Your position gives you a certain degree of influence over politicians and policymakers. You believe that Israel has made a big mistake by remaining in the West Bank as occupiers. The settlements have locked Israel into an indefensible position, strategically as well as morally. The sooner they are dismantled, the sooner the IDF can pull out of the West Bank. Saving precious lives, this would also prevent the deterioration of morale and morality among Israeli soldiers and civilians, and return the army to performing its original mission of protecting Israel's borders. Israel should simply get up and leave, without any demonstrative demolition or humiliating physical barriers preserving the dispute. Immediate bilateral talks can then lead to security agreements and cooperation far more valuable than walls.

6 It seems coincidental that you were requested to join the talks just as you were considering a career change to public affairs. During your successful business career, you've formed a wide-world view that you think can also be implemented on the community and international levels. In your experience, commerce goes a long way towards allowing co-existence. People making money together might argue over the size of their piece of the pie, but they rarely kill the goose that lays their golden eggs. The more free access Israelis and Palestinians have to each other's markets the better. Having more joint ventures and partnerships and more interdependence created between the two economies can only help. You realize that initially the Israeli side might seemingly have to give more, as the Palestinian economy is currently in a shambles, but eventually it would pay off financially, as well as reduce terrorism and violent friction.

7 Four years ago, you were offered the position of Project Director for the founding of a Labor Party youth wing. Labor had just lost the elections and the party was in a shambles, but

someone must have been thinking ahead. You agreed, not so much from any political belief, but rather in order to pay the rent. Today, with Labor wielding immense parliamentary power as Olmert's primary coalition partner, you find yourself, at age 25, running an organization consisting of over 5000 members, young activists who will form the backbone of the next election campaign. Your generation will soon be asked to make historic decisions, and your position may set you at the forefront. You feel you need to know more. You are here mainly in order to meet the other side, to hear their side of the story, and to discover whether they can be trusted, or at least worked with. You sense that the way these talks go will affect your political outlook profoundly, and due to your influence on the party activists, your impressions may affect which way Labor will lean in the future. One thing you know for certain: if Labor can't claim credit for reaching agreement with the Palestinians, they don't stand a chance of upsetting Olmert in the upcoming elections.

8 A respected journalist for Israel's second largest newspaper, you had to promise you would never write this story unless both parties agreed. Not only could shining a spotlight on the talks end them instantly, it might also put the participants, particularly those on the Palestinian side, in severe danger. You appreciate their willingness to come to the table, risking condemnation by their peers as collaborators. You've covered many rounds of talks in the past, criticizing what each side was doing wrong. You've been able to accurately predict when various talks might end. But last week, you received a phone call from a Labor source, offering you a chance to join these talks and put your money where your mouth is. Although used to observing, your bluff was called, and you hope you can translate this experience into negotiating skills. You can also provide input on use of the media to promote any initiative that may result from these talks. If there is a media representative on the Palestinian team, then at least you could propose doing some joint work.

Converging!
(September 2007 in Israel / Palestine)
Personal Role Information – Palestinian Team

1 You are currently a history teacher in Jenin, but your family originally comes from Haifa, today a major city in Israel. Expelled from your home in 1948, you spent the rest of your childhood in various refugee camps before settling permanently in Jenin. You see part of your identity as being a living history of the Palestinian experience. You feel that you are responsible not only to the inhabitants of Jenin, but also to Palestinians as a whole, both in Palestine and abroad. Eventually, you hope to see both Palestine and Israel open to the return of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees. You would also like to see your students studying in the modern, air-conditioned classrooms of Dan, and dream of the day when Jenin will house a university, the only Palestinian university in the area.

2 You are the childhood friend and trusted confidante of the Fatah military commander in Jenin, as well as his second-in-command. You were sent to be his eyes and ears at the talks. He has asked you to prevent the Hamas representative from dominating the talks, and to work towards an orderly handover of power in Jenin by the Israelis to the Governor, whose administration is reliant on the Fatah movement. You also need control of Dan – whether standing or razed – in order to prevent Hamas gaining control of the area and moving in thousands of Hamas supporters and their families. You know that one of the Israelis' main interests in the latest incursion is the seizing of Hamas' arms caches. You are also worried about Hamas' weapons, and would be happy for them to be extracted from the city in order to weaken Hamas. When Hamas took over Gaza, many Fatah authority figures either escaped to the West Bank or were executed. Careful, though! You don't want to appear to be a collaborator with Israel.

3 An attorney by training, you have been the Governor of Jenin's right-hand person for years. You know that in order to keep him in power you must do whatever you can to bring the current invasion by the IDF to a halt, or at least enable immediate humanitarian relief. The governor is a long-time Fatah supporter, and Hamas will certainly seek to use its newly found power to remove him as soon as they are capable of it. When Hamas took over Gaza, many Fatah authority figures either escaped to the West Bank or were executed. The Governor needs the Israelis to pass control of Jenin over to him in an orderly fashion once they withdraw their troops. Similarly, he needs them to hand Dan over to his authority to prevent it from becoming a Hamas-dominated city. Any way Hamas can be weakened along the way is fine by you, as long as it doesn't lead to civil war. Your family owns several shops in the Israeli-Arab city of Um El-Fahm, northeast of Jenin, selling farm produce from around Jenin. If the planned Wall cuts off delivery routes to these stores, your family business will crash.

#4 You represent one of Jenin's wealthiest and most influential families. Your family has formed secret partnerships with several Israeli factories operating in the Tel Menashe Industrial Park. Due to your connections, many of your relatives in Jenin have been given jobs in these

plants. You know that if security arrangements reduce the Industrial Park's profitability, or if access to it is denied to Palestinian workers from Jenin, you stand to lose a lot of money. You have used a lot of your family's influence in the past to keep the Governor in power, and you won't hesitate to seek a return on the favor by leaning on the personal representative you are sure he has included in the group. If the Governor doesn't choose to structure his priorities correctly, maybe the Hamas representative will offer you a better deal.

#5 Realizing that agreements will eventually be reached in these talks or in others, Hamas has decided to take part. Their recent victory in the general elections showed that only Hamas truly represent the real interests of the Palestinian people. After the Hamas takeover in Gaza, you feel it is just a matter of time before Hamas consolidates its power in the West Bank as well. As a high-ranking Hamas leader in Jenin, you have no intention of staying in a passive observer role at these talks. When the Israelis leave the region, Hamas will be putting pressure on the Governor and the remnants of the PA in the Jenin region to accept the new reality, and the better you help this process along, the more your own standing is likely to skyrocket.

Any attacks on Israeli troops or civilians are not only justified, they serve a holy purpose. The proof of this is Allah's forcing the Israelis to turn tail and leave the Palestinian lands in Gaza and now Dan, just as he forced them from Southern Lebanon a few years ago. You have no mandate -- or desire -- to offer the Israelis a cease fire; they only understand violence. On the other hand, you may reach agreement with Fatah on how life in Jenin will go on once the Israelis are gone. At the very least, you want Fatah's assurance that elections for local government will be held as soon as possible, with external observers. You feel that, violence aside, Hamas may have a chance of politically ousting the whole corrupt Fatah administration and bureaucracy.

6 Despite the fact that you raised your children on moderate Islamic values of charity, brotherhood and community, and set a good example for them by being a well respected leader of the Jenin community, impoverished life in the refugee camp made your teenaged son easy prey for the Hamas recruiters. Promised paradise and financial aid for his family, he died a martyr's death as a suicide bomber at a bus stop near Tel Aviv, killing five Israeli soldiers. Although your son's comrades from Hamas told you that you should be proud of his martyrdom and your family received a small aid package, your grief overcomes your hatred towards the Israelis. You find no religious consolation in his "martyr's death." You also have the rest of your family to consider, and have a bad feeling the Israelis will demolish your home in retribution for your son's actions unless the invasion into Jenin is halted.

7 As a young doctor in the Jenin Medical Center, a 20-bed clinic in the center of the city, you feel guilty being here while you picture the Israeli tanks and bulldozers moving into Jenin. You were in the thick of it last time. You still can't erase the nightmarish memories of dozens of wounded patients lying on the clinic's floor while you struggled to save their lives without electricity, medicine or running water. Body after body was removed from the operating table, only to be replaced by another. Even after the Israelis withdrew, the destroyed sewer system, the lack of water, food and medicine, and the denial of access to Israeli hospitals just 20

minutes away kept you busy for months. As the city's infrastructure has not properly been repaired since then, this time might even be worse. The clinic's director told you before you left, "Forget the fighting, the land, the history. Your job is to keep people alive." You can't help but fantasize about directing a medical center in the modern Dan medical clinic.

8 Director of the local Jenin local radio station, you are sure the Israelis have already taken over your broadcasting offices. You've never let Israeli sensitivities concern you when speaking your mind and spreading the truth. Acting in concert with local radio initiatives all over the West Bank, your station gives ordinary citizens a chance to tell their own personal stories. Most of the people focus on their treatment by the Israeli Army, while some discuss issues of national pride. As a public service, you also provide reports on movements of Israeli Army units, traffic conditions at army checkpoints and warnings of helicopter gunship sightings. You feel you are assisting the Palestinians to form a national identity. Your station stresses the common factors and the shared characteristics among stories from different locales. Your main concern at these talks is to stress the need to keep the common Palestinian issues at the forefront at all times, as opposed to focusing on Jenin alone. It has taken a long time for solidarity to form, and infighting would be the worst thing that could happen to the Palestinian cause now.

Converging!
(September 2007 in Israel / Palestine)
Personal Role Information – UN Team

1 You have been working on the Cyprus issue for the past couple of years, observing and reporting on the different aspects of the peace efforts. Although you were in contact with all the higher-ups on both sides, it was always in a junior role. This assignment seems to be an opportunity to have a real effect on important decisions. You never expected to be in the role of international mediator, but you sure are glad you took Conflict Resolution 101 in college. You'll be watching the parties closely during the opening phases of negotiation, trying to figure out a process that would help them discuss things productively.

#2 After completing your graduate degree in International Relations, you've been working with the United Nations for the past seven years, mainly as a junior staffer on low-level negotiation groups on international trade issues. One thing you've witnessed is the power of joint economic gains to pave the road to agreement even between the bitterest of enemies. This assignment might be your chance to break out of the pack and stand out, perhaps earning yourself a permanent post on the UN's Middle East team. You are optimistic about the positive role the UN can play in ongoing conflicts in the region, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is probably the best place to start. It's time those conflict resolution courses you took in college start paying off for you. You'll be watching the parties closely during the opening phases of negotiation, trying to figure out what their real interests are.

3 An experienced CIA field agent, you long ago worked your way into the UN administration and have been working undercover at different posts around the Middle East since you finished your training at Langley eight years ago. None of your colleagues to the UN mission on Cyprus know of your CIA role; they consider you one of them. You've accompanied several peacemaking rounds in the Middle East, and have seen how fragile diplomacy is. You've spent the past three years here on Cyprus, assisting the Secretary General's peace initiative while at the same time reporting home to Washington and keeping an eye out for U.S. interests. You feel there isn't much about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict you don't know, and if asked to mediate, you could actually put your knowledge of the situation to good use, both to help the parties out and to keep an eye out for issues in which the U.S. might have an interest.

4 As a career aid administrator for nearly ten years, you have served in various capacities at UN missions across the Middle East, including Gaza, Lebanon, Iraq and now Cyprus. You had hoped your next position would take you back to UN Headquarters, preparing you for assuming a senior mission role. You were surprised by the orders attaching you to the Israel-Palestine project staff. Your boss impressed upon you the importance of your team's mission. If these negotiations are fruitful, they could jump-start the whole peace process. The fact that success here could save thousands of lives excites you, and you feel a heavy burden of responsibility. His promise to help you get posted back to New York if these talks are fruitful

is also a powerful incentive. You are going to put every ounce of energy you've got into this and feel that, if need be, you can help the parties reach agreement by sheer persistence and will. You decide not to be put off by any amount of stonewalling or walkouts. You're going to keep coming up with fresh, inventive ideas to solve the issues the parties raise.