

REPORT ON ISRAELI SETTLEMENT IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

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ISRAEL'S FATEFUL CHOICE—"IRON WALL" OR ACCOMMODATION

By Geoffrey Aronson

The diplomatic effort to end Israel's occupation and establish a Palestinian state is in free fall. The U.S. veto in February of a UN Security Council resolution supporting a settlement freeze—the signature element of the Barack Obama administration's policy—marked an ignominious end to its initiative. Having failed to win a settlement freeze and now focused on the extraordinary developments throughout the Arab world, Washington has apparently exhausted its ability to direct the Israel-Palestine diplomatic process. Even so, as Washington's UN vote demonstrated, Obama is not prepared to empower an international coalition that is plainly fed up with Israel's continuing settlement drive.

Others are trying to fill the leadership vacuum. The Palestinian Authority has despaired of Obama's effectiveness and is looking ever more intently to September, when it threatens it will make Palestine's case to the United Nations for recognition as a sovereign state within the June 1967 lines. Some EU countries are suggesting that now is the time for Europe to step out of Washington's shadow and put a peace plan on the table.

"The deadline is September," British Foreign Secretary William Hague said on March 31. "The UK, France and Germany have set out our views on what those principles should be. Two states for two peoples based on: 1967 borders with equivalent land swaps,

security arrangements that protect Israel whilst respecting Palestinian sovereignty by ending the occupation; a fair, realistic and agreed solution for refugees; and Jerusalem as the capital of both states." Hague called on the Quartet and the United States to embrace these principles.

Let Them Call It A State

There are two views in the government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu about Israel's next move. Proponents of the "Iron Wall" option argue that there is no need to do anything except more of the same—to build and settle in the face of consistent but ever-ineffective international opposition and implacable but equally ineffective Arab resistance—and to trust in the future.

As Deputy Prime Minister Moshe Ya'alon explained in a March 3 interview in the magazine *Besheva*,

"Our intention is to leave the situation as it is: autonomous management of civil affairs, and if they want to call it a state, let them call it that. If they want to call it an empire, by all means. We intend to keep what exists now and let them call it whatever they want. . . . Our approach is steadfastness, development, construction, strengthening and so on. This is our approach and this is what we do as a government."

"Construction must be resumed immediately," said Minister of Transportation Yisrael Katz soon after the U.S. veto. Deputy Prime Minister and Regional Development Minister Silvan

Shalom added, "The time has come to resume construction in practice."

Finance Minister Yuval Steinitz asserted, "The freeze is over; we must resume building," and Diaspora Affairs and Information Minister Yuli Edelstein said, "it is unthinkable that a Likud government, of all governments, should not build in the settlement blocs." The YESHA settler council is planning to use these statements in a campaign whose goal is to pressure Netanyahu to continue building.

"They Shoot, We Build"

Despite international commitments to the contrary, in March Israel "legalized" the creation of scores of new settlement "outposts" constructed since 1996, officially recognizing and approving those built on "state lands." Adoption of this standard would enable unrestricted settlement on all parts of the West Bank that Israel has unilaterally designated as state land, which amounts to more than 50 percent of the territory.

Almost 1,000 new apartments have been approved for construction in the East Jerusalem settlement neighborhood of Gilo. Thirteen new settlement dwellings have been approved in East Jerusalem's Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood, where the eviction of 20 Palestinian families to make way for settlers is also proceeding. A new road to the East Jerusalem settlement of Har Homa has been approved. In the neighborhood of Ras al Amud, fourteen dwellings were

FATEFUL CHOICE, continued on page 6

TO OUR READERS

The Obama administration, wary of further conflict with the government of Benjamin Netanyahu and its American supporters, appears to have retreated from active Israeli-Palestinian diplomacy following its February 18 veto of the UN Security Council Resolution condemning Israeli settlements in the occupied territories. The administration's decision to leave the next round to Netanyahu by inviting an Israeli peace proposal—rather than offering an American plan as the Foundation for Middle East Peace and many others have urged—suggests it is not ready for heavy diplomatic lifting. Washington is back to conflict management, as the situation on the ground deteriorates, multiple crises continue to erupt in the Middle East, and U.S. influence wanes.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has not been a factor in the Arab uprisings, but the protests, and in some cases, the greater freedom that has resulted, could generate even more hostile attitudes toward Israel if it continues to reject a genuine two-state peace. The protests are already stirring activism among Palestinian youth, as

demonstrated by their demand for Palestinian unity, which prompted a new effort by President Mahmoud Abbas to reconcile with Hamas. Israel views the uncertain outcome of the Arab uprisings as another reason to avoid new peace efforts. On the contrary, more forthcoming policies would help ease Israel's isolation and provide a basis for better relations with its neighbors as they adapt to a new era.

One promising development is the Israeli Peace Initiative (IPI), which has received endorsements from many retired Israeli military, security, and intelligence leaders. Like the Geneva Accord, the IPI draws on decades of work by Israelis and Palestinians and offers serious proposals on all final status issues. It responds positively to the historic 2002 Arab League Peace Initiative, which neither Israeli nor the United States has endorsed. The IPI is an impressive Israeli response to an urgent crisis. The United States should support it, even if it is unwilling to offer an American vision for peace.

Philip C. Wilcox, Jr.

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The Foundation, a non-profit I.R.C. 501(c)(3) organization, supports peace and security for Israelis and Palestinians through mutual recognition and a negotiated division of historic Palestine. It publishes the bi-monthly *Report on Israeli Settlement in the Occupied Territories*.

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Source: *Yediot Aharonot*, February 2, 2011

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Child care is supervised by the Education Ministry and the local municipality of Mate Binyamin. The kids in the town's day care enjoy an active life with experienced day care providers with playground activities that allow children to play after hours. First and second graders enjoy playing in the club "Kiddos." Children from 7th grade to 12th grade have access to a club that includes cultural activities, Tae Kwon Do, and art classes.

Lively community life

Anatot continues to grow and expand each year. Today there are approximately 270 families residing in Anatot, with a shopping center and coffee shop. Planning is under way for a pool. Each week the community hosts cultural events for residents: movies, performances, concerts, women's night, sing-along evenings and family trips. Beside cultural events, the town has an advanced library, a gym and a synagogue. There are also soccer and basketball courts. On Saturdays and holidays, the residents of the town enjoy picnics in the park. At the end of the day, one can't help but be amazed at the manicured gardens and the walking paths of the town. Anatot is a town that is good to live in and a perfect place to raise a family.

When was the last time you woke up to the sound of birds chirping and saw the warm morning light streaming into your house, leaving you feeling like you've been awakened from a dream. . . When was the last time you sat on your balcony at home and stared out at an enchanting desert view, while your children played freely in the yard. There are people who experience this dreamy reality on a daily basis.

Living with natural scenery

Anatot lies four minutes from Pisgat Ze'ev and is surrounded with an enchanting desert view. Anatot was founded in 1982 as a secular community just north of Jerusalem within the Binyamin Council. The town is built of Jerusalem-like buildings, giving the residents a unique quality of life just a short drive from Jerusalem. Anatot planners emphasize architecture and community facilities for all ages, particularly for youth. Reaching the town is easy, fast, and safe. Today access to the town is through the Pisgat Ze'ev neighborhood, and in the future there will be a more direct route to the town through French Hill.

Community with values

Its quiet location and natural surrounding in the north of Jerusalem attracts to Anatot people seeking quality of life and peace, in close proximity to their place of work in Jerusalem. The high quality of upper-middle-class residents in the town adds to the town's value. The town's residents hold esteemed positions in the government, policy and private sectors. All of the residents are excited to be part of a secular cultural community with values of patience, independence and quality of life.

First and foremost: Kids

Anatot is an ideal place to raise children.

The education system in the town includes:

- Day care for children aged 3 months through kindergarten
- "Gan Nahlieli" for children ages 3-4
- "Gan Sanonit" kindergarten for children ages 5-6

לידור

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SETTLEMENT TIME LINE

November 7 The Samaria Settlers Committee condemns a letter signed by artists and other cultural figures calling on performers to boycott a new cultural center in the Ariel settlement. The committee claims the signatories are extremists and that they should be the ones boycotted. (Israel Radio)

November 8 During a visit by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to Washington, the Israeli government approves plans for 800 new homes in the Ariel settlement and more than 1,000 settlement units elsewhere in the West Bank and Jerusalem. (*Ha'aretz*)

November 10 Moshe Zar, a settler and member of the Jewish Underground, which plotted to destroy the Haram al-Sharif in the 1980s, files a lawsuit with the Magistrates Court in Jerusalem calling for the evacuation of hundreds of residents of the Barkan settlement or \$3.6 million in compensation. Zar had purchased a plot of land from a Palestinian in the village of Sarata in the 1980s, but the World Zionist Organization allocated the parcel to the Barkan cooperative society, which built 90 housing units there. (Israel Radio)

November 15 Residents of Salem village, near Nablus, claim that settlers from Elon Moreh had torched 200 of their olive trees. A settler spokesman, David Ha'ivri, claims that the Palestinian farmers had been burning dead wood. The trees in question were on land adjoining the settlement and had been declared by the IDF to be off-limits to their Palestinian owners for security reasons. (Associated Foreign Press)

November 21 Residents of the Rechelim settlement outpost build on land belonging to Palestinian farmers in the villages of Yatma and al-Sawiya, south of Nablus. Settler spokesman David Ha'ivri says, "If residents of neighboring villages claim to have legal ownership of lands within the Jewish communities in the Shomron, I welcome them to present their documentation." (Ma'an News)

Ma'ariv reports that Unilever, after failing to find a buyer for its Bagel Bagel factory in its current West Bank location, has decided to relocate because of sanctions on products produced in the settlements.

November 22 The Knesset passes a bill requiring a referendum to be held following

any Knesset decision to withdraw from territory under Israeli sovereignty. The law applies to the Golan Heights and East Jerusalem, which Israel has unilaterally annexed. (Israel Radio)

November 23 Israeli police evacuate 16 Palestinians from their home in the Jabal Mukabar neighborhood of East Jerusalem. The house was purchased by the Wohl Investment Group, which some have accused of acquiring Palestinian-owned property for the Elad Association, a pro-settlement non-profit group. The Palestinian family says the landlord listed in the sale is dead and that the house had been left to them in his will. (*Ha'aretz*)

November 24 Norway's oil fund and Swedish pension funds drop their investments in Elbit Systems Ltd., an Israeli defense contractor that supplies surveillance equipment for the separation barrier. (Associated Press)

November 30 The Jerusalem Planning and Construction Committee approves plans for 130 apartments in Gilo and Beit Safafa. The area was rezoned from use for construction of a hotel to residential property. (*Makor Rishon-Hatzofe*)

December 1 The Jerusalem Planning and Construction Committee approves construction of 625 new housing units in the Pisgat Ze'ev settlement, in East Jerusalem. (*Ma'ariv*)

December 2 Thirty-five Knesset members, ministers, and deputy ministers from the Likud, Yisrael Beitenu, Shas, United Torah Judaism, Jewish Home, and National Union

WEST BANK CONSTRUCTION UPDATE, 2008–2010

	Housing Completions		Housing Starts		Under Construction*	
	Israel	West Bank	Israel	West Bank	Israel	West Bank
2008	30,443	1,601	32,627	2,105	61,442	3,190
2009	32,617	2,070	34,731	1,920	63,385	3,001
2010	32,780	1,175	39,000	541	66,798	1,833

*Through September 2010.

Source: Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, *Monthly Statistical Bulletin* February 2011.

parties send a letter to Netanyahu calling for Israeli sovereignty to be extended immediately to the Ariel settlement. The letter, in response to the call for performers to boycott a new theater in Ariel, states, "The extremist voices that view Ariel as a settlement in a foreign land and in occupied territory have to be stopped by a statement of principle by the government of Israel, establishing that Ariel is an inseparable part of the sovereign State of Israel." (*Israel HaYom*)

Settlers set fire to 10 dunams of olive trees belonging to Palestinian residents of Khahlet Awana village, near Nablus. (Ma'an News)

December 10 *Ha'aretz* reports that 26 former European Union leaders, including former Secretary General of the Council of the EU Javier Solana, issue a letter calling for boycotts and sanctions against Israeli settlement products to protest Israel's settlement policies.

December 12 *Ha'aretz* reports on a request by Israel's civil administration that West Bank Palestinian residents submit their correspondence to them in Hebrew only.

December 13 The Palestinian Authority minister of prisoners affairs, Issa Qaraqe, says Israeli authorities detained 423 Palestinians, including 80 children, in November. Most of the arrests allegedly took place when Palestinians attempted to defend themselves against attacks or encroachment on their land by settlers. (Ma'an News)

December 14 Israel approves the immediate construction of 24 new homes in the East Jerusalem settlement of Beit Orot. Yair Gabai, the Jerusalem municipality's repre-

NEW TAX RULE IN EAST JERUSALEM MAY THREATEN RESIDENCY RIGHTS

The Jerusalem municipality has halted the collection of city property taxes (*arnona*) from Palestinian holders of Jerusalem ID cards who live in areas of East Jerusalem outside the separation barrier. While no one likes to pay taxes, elimination of this requirement may well signal the latest unilateral Israeli effort to reduce Israel's obligations towards Palestinians long-considered to be residents of Jerusalem and which may imperil their access to the city.

For the Palestinian population, payment of the *arnona* tax has been used by the Israeli-controlled Jerusalem municipality as a test for maintaining residency rights in the city. This "center of life" policy was introduced in 1995. Palestinians with Jerusalem IDs were required to prove continuous residency in Jerusalem by submitting documents to demonstrate that they had actually resided in the city for the previous seven years. According to the Jerusalem Center for Social and Economic Rights (JCSER), "To maintain their residency rights in Jerusalem, Palestinians are required to provide [the] office of the Israeli Interior Ministry with the following documents: *arnona* residency tax [forms] for the previous two to seven years; electricity bills for the previous two to seven years; telephone bills for the previous two to seven years; school certificates of all children to show that the school is located inside the municipal borders; and work certificates."

JCSER warns that "such a policy could be a beginning of a major Israeli initiative to revoke the residency rights of thousands of Palestinian holders of Jerusalem IDs who are currently living outside the wall."

Approximately 125,000 Palestinian holders of Jerusalem ID cards are affected by the new policy, residing principally in the neighborhoods of Kufr Aqab, al-Ram, Dahiyat al-Barid, Shu'fat refugee camp, Dahiyat al-Salam, Abu Dis, Azariya, and Bir Nabala.

Since the construction of the separation barrier, many of these neighborhoods have been all but abandoned by the municipality, from street maintenance to police protection. ♦

sentative on the District Planning and Construction Committee, says, "It ought to be clear to the Americans and the entire international community that there won't be any discrimination in Jerusalem. . . . Jews have the right to live within the entire city of Jerusalem, and we will not let anyone restrict or deny that right." (*Israel HaYom*)

Ha'aretz reports on Israeli government plans to expand the Seven Arches (Intercontinental) Hotel, which belongs to the Jordanian royal family, on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem.

December 20 The Swedish lock manufacturer Multilock announces its decision to relocate a factory in the Barkan industrial zone, near the Ariel settlement, to a location in Israel, near Yavne. Human rights organizations and the Church of Sweden had pressured Assa Ablov, Multilock's parent company, warning that its activities in the West Bank could lead to prosecution for violating international law. (*Ma'ariv*)

December 21 The human rights organization Yesh Din files a complaint with the police asserting that hundreds of documents have been stolen from its database. (*Ha'aretz*)

December 23 Israeli High Court justice Neil Hendel rejects a request for a temporary stop-work order on the construction of 60 housing units in the settlement of Nili. Residents of nearby Deir Elkandis claimed that the land for the project belongs to them. An attorney for Nili argued that the construction is on state-owned land. (*Arutz 7*)

December 24 The Israeli Defense Ministry acknowledges a 47-year-old Palestinian from Jit as being the victim of a hostile act and provides him an allowance from the National Insurance Institute. The decision comes more than a year after the man suffered severe neurological trauma when settlers pelted him with stones. The victim's attorney said that an IDF unit had been in the area when the incident took place, but the sol-

diers neglected to arrest the settlers involved. The case was then closed without investigation. (*Israel Radio*)

The Israeli cabinet approves a national master plan for photovoltaic solar installations of up to 750 dunams in the Golan Heights, Gaza Strip, and Beersheva. (*TheMarker*)

December 26 Jerusalem mayor Nir Barkat asserts that despite a court order, residents of Beit Yehonatan, in East Jerusalem, would not be evicted. In exchange, the Ateret Cohanim agreed not to evict Arabs from a nearby building. (*Army Radio*)

December 27 *Israel HaYom* reports that some 20 Israeli companies have signed contracts with the administration of the new Palestinian city of Rawabi that commits them to avoid using settlement products or services from settlements. YESHA Council chairman Danny Dayan has called for a boycott of the participating Israeli companies. Dayan says, "They are prepared to sign a contract that calls our capital 'occupied Jerusalem' in order to make a few bucks off the Arabs. . . . This is shameful capitulation of Israeli companies to the Arab boycott, and they are effectively joining it." Knesset Members Aryeh Eldad and Zeev Elkin say they will introduce a bill prohibiting Israeli companies from boycotting Israeli products.

December 28 *Ha'aretz* reports that the Palestinian Authority has backed off from a proposal to bar Palestinians from working in West Bank settlements because it is unable to find alternative employment for them.

December 29 *Ha'aretz* reports on a Knesset bill introduced by Yairiv Levin of Likud that would authorize the Interior Ministry to deport or prevent entry to anyone who denies the Holocaust or advocates boycotting Israeli products.

approved for construction on the site of a former police station, which relocated some years ago to a new building in E-1, an area just east of the Mount of Olives that successive Israeli leaders have promised Washington not to develop for settlement. The Israeli construction company Dona will market this year forty-eight new dwellings in Givat Ze'ev north of Jerusalem, 18 units in Ma'ale Adumim, and a similar number in East Jerusalem's Neve Ya'acov.

On March 3, the settler community organized a "day of rage" in response to a violent confrontation between settlers and the IDF in which troops used rubber bullets during an attempted evacuation of a settlement outpost. "At the height of rush-hour, along Israel's main traffic arteries and for a lengthy period of time: extreme right wing activists blocked Israel's major roads and succeeded in provoking the rage of the drivers who found themselves trapped in the traffic jam," reported *Yediot Aharanot* the next day. "Settler youth blocked roads and carried out 'price tag' operations in Palestinian villages. They apparently shattered the windows of Palestinian vehicles in Hebron and threw a firebomb at a house in Hawara."

Revenge attacks against Palestinians and their property prompted criticism from an unlikely source. MK Uri Orbach, from the rightist Jewish Home party, commented on his Facebook page, "The Kahanist march in Jaffa, the blocking of roads in this morning's 'day of rage,' and the entire violent and menacing price tag culture constitutes a dangerous savagery that could bring disaster to both the State of Israel and the settlements."

On March 11, a family of five was murdered by as yet unidentified assailants in the settlement of Itamar. Relations between the settlement and its Palestinian neighbors have long been particularly tense. In the wake of the killings Israeli forces made large-scale arrests and imposed a closure upon the nearby village of Awarta.

The murders at Itamar re-energized the all-too-familiar narrative of murder, retaliation, and settlement expansion. "They shoot, we build. We will build our land," Netanyahu declared during a visit to the bereaved family. In a decision

that recalled previous "Zionist responses" to terror during the early 1980s, the government approved 500 new dwellings in the settlements of Kfar Eldad in the Etzion bloc (48 units), Ma'ale Adumim (100 units) as well as large-scale developments in Kiryat Sefer and Ariel.

Netanyahu's heart and soul favor the Iron Wall, the strategy of state-building that the then weak and embattled Jewish *Yishuv* originally adopted in the 1920s. However, Netanyahu must also take a broader view of Israel's interests, one that reflects Israel's contemporary status as a regional heavyweight and the unprecedented Arab and Islamic interest in a negotiated peace agreement.

On March 1, Netanyahu cautioned those advocating demonstrative settlement efforts: "We are engaged in efforts to protect existing construction, but it needs to be understood that we are in a very difficult international reality. It is possible to hit your head against the wall, but I will not behave in that manner. The American veto was achieved with great effort. We can try to hide from everything but I have an overall responsibility."

Israel "Needs To Do Something"

U.S. officials are convinced that Netanyahu is prepared to accept the creation of a Palestinian state. In the wake of the fiasco at the Security Council, it was reported that Washington is expecting "payment" from Netanyahu in the form of a diplomatic initiative.

Netanyahu may not need much American prodding to take command of the diplomatic agenda in the coming months, if only to forestall other, even less welcome initiatives. Many Israeli leaders have concluded that a Palestinian state is a clear *Israeli* interest. The critical issue Netanyahu confronts is how

to create a Palestinian state that accommodates Israel's expansive settlement and security demands. Deputy Prime Minister Dan Meridor is prominent among those advising Netanyahu to in effect impose Israel's vision of Palestinian statehood, with Palestinian agreement if possible, but unilaterally if necessary. He believes that Israel should transfer more territory from Area C, currently under full Israeli control, to the Palestinian Authority (Area A) (see chart on page 8). "This is an Israeli interest of the highest order. If we don't make a diplomatic initiative, the entire world is going to recognize a Palestinian state in the 1967 border[s]," Meridor explained in

A third element of a positive American agenda for the Middle East is the pursuit of comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace. The status quo between Arabs and Israelis is no more sustainable than the sclerotic political systems that have crumbled in recent months. Neither Israel's future as a secure Jewish, democratic state nor the legitimate aspirations of Palestinians can be secured without a negotiated two-state solution. While the parties themselves must ultimately make the hard choices necessary for peace, there is also no substitute for continued active American leadership. We continue the persistent, day-in-and-day-out, high-level American engagement, working privately with all parties to create an environment for resumed, meaningful and substantive negotiations on all core issues.

Testimony of Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs William J. Burns, Senate Foreign Relations Committee, March 17, 2011

an interview with Israel's Army Radio on March 7.

"We have to be proactive, before calamity hits, before we are isolated. There are more than a few measures we could push forward if we really do [intend to create a] Palestinian state, it will need area, space for it to exist. We must define our goal quickly. There is a danger that if we leave things unclear we will reach a situation that we've seen recently at the UN Security Council. It will all suffer the same fate—the Jewish Quarter [in East Jerusalem's Old City] together with [the isolated settlements of] Elon Moreh and Bracha."

Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman and Defense Minister Ehud Barak both believe that the creation of a Palestinian state is a price that Israel needs to pay to consolidate international support for its territorial and security demands in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Barak recently explained that, "We have no choice; we need to separate from the Palestinians for our own interests."

Lieberman acknowledges that Israel "needs to do something." He has proposed a Palestinian state with "temporary borders" on 50 percent of the West Bank. Areas A and B of the West Bank currently comprise 40 percent of the territory. Lieberman, like former minister of defense Shaul Mofaz, supports the transfer of additional territory now under Israeli control—without dismantling any settlements or changing the status of East Jerusalem.

Netanyahu has already begun staking out Israel's redlines. Speaking to reporters on March 9, Netanyahu said,

"Our security border is here on the Jordan and our defense line begins here. If that line is breached they will be able to infiltrate terrorists, rockets and missiles all the way to Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Haifa, and Be'er Sheva and throughout the country. There is no alternative to the IDF's line of defense. Therefore, in any future situation, and I say in any future arrangement as well, the IDF must stay here, i.e. along the Jordan River. This is the State of Israel's insurance policy. If this was true before the major unrest now shaking the Middle East and the entire region, it is doubly true today. The IDF must remain along the Jordan River."

After two years of defying U.S. diplomatic efforts, Netanyahu has been asked by the Obama administration to draw his own picture of the future and how the next stage of diplomatic engagement should unfold. This offer is certainly a challenge for an Israeli government that rejects the dramatic changes in its territorial and settlement policies essential to ending the occupation and establishing a Palestinian state at peace with Israel. Netanyahu is expected to unveil his ideas during a May visit to Washington. He sees no reason to forsake the Iron Wall strategy, but prefers to make the case for a Palestinian vassal state, an option that postpones rather than advances a durable solution to the conflict. ♦

Our opposition to the resolution before this Council today should . . . not be misunderstood to mean we support settlement activity. On the contrary, we reject in the strongest terms the legitimacy of continued Israeli settlement activity. For more than four decades, Israeli settlement activity in territories occupied in 1967 has undermined Israel's security and corroded hopes for peace and stability in the region. Continued settlement activity violates Israel's international commitments, devastates trust between the parties, and threatens the prospects for peace.

The United States and our fellow Council members are also in full agreement about the urgent need to resolve the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, based on the two-state solution and an agreement that establishes a viable, independent, and contiguous state of Palestine, once and for all. . . . But the only way to reach that common goal is through direct negotiations between the parties, with the active and sustained support of the United States and the international community.

It is the Israelis' and Palestinians' conflict, and even the best-intentioned outsiders cannot resolve it for them. . . . Unfortunately, this draft resolution risks hardening the positions of both sides. It could encourage the parties to stay out of negotiations and, if and when they did resume, to return to the Security Council whenever they reach an impasse. . . .

While we agree with our fellow Council members—and indeed, with the wider world—about the folly and illegitimacy of continued Israeli settlement activity, we think it unwise for this Council to attempt to resolve the core issues that divide Israelis and Palestinians. We therefore regrettably have opposed this draft resolution.

Explanation of the U.S. Vote by
Ambassador Susan E. Rice, U.S. Permanent
Representative to the United Nations, on the
Resolution on the Situation in the Middle East,
including the Question of Palestine, in the UN
Security Council, February 18, 2011

ISRAELI REDEPLOYMENTS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

Agreement	Redeployment Stages	Area A (%)	Area B (%)	Area C (%)
Gaza-Jericho Agreement	(May 4, 1994) As part of the Gaza-Jericho accord, Israeli military forces withdrew from areas of Gaza and near Jericho, under the direction of the newly established Joint Israeli-Palestinian Security Coordination and Cooperation Committee. The withdrawals were completed on May 18, 1994.			
Oslo II, Sept. 28, 1995		2.0	26.0	72.0
Protocol Concerning the Redeployment in Hebron	(January 17, 1997) The Palestinian police assumed security responsibilities in Area H-1 (80% of Hebron) similar to those it had in other West Bank cities. Israel retained all powers and responsibilities for internal security and public order in Area H-2 (20%). In addition, Israel continued to have responsibility for the overall security of Israelis.			
Wye River Oct. 15-23, 1998	I Further Redeployment (Nov. 16, 1998)	9.1	20.9	70.0
	II Further Redeployment (Nov. 16-Dec. 21, 1998) (Not implemented)	9.1	26.9	65.0
	III Further Redeployment (Dec. 14-Jan. 31, 1998) (Not implemented)	17.2	23.8	59.0
Sharm al-Sheikh Sept. 4, 1999	I Further Redeployment (Sept. 10-13, 1999)	9.1	27.9	63.0
	II Further Redeployment (Nov. 15, 1999)	11.1	28.9	60.0
	III Further Redeployment (January 20, 2000)	17.2	23.8	59.0

This is a defining moment for the people of the region and, by extension, a critical moment for Central Command to remain engaged with our partners and to clear away obstacles to peace and prosperity. On that note, while Israel and the Palestinian territories are not in my assigned theater, lack of progress toward a comprehensive Middle East peace affects U.S. and CENTCOM security interests in the region.

I believe the only reliable path to lasting peace in this region is a viable two-state solution between Israel and Palestine. This issue is one of many that is exploited by

our adversaries in the region, and it is used as a recruiting tool for extremist groups. The lack of progress also creates friction with regional partners and creates political challenges for advancing our interests by marginalizing moderate voices in the region. By contrast, substantive progress on the peace process would improve CENTCOM's opportunity to work with our regional partners and to support multilateral security efforts.

Gen. James Mattis, commander, U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), testimony before the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee, March 1, 2011

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