**Israel - Palestine:
Are Civil Society and
Political Conditions
Ripe for Peace?**


**CITpax Document nº 2**


15 September 2005

## Presentation

The CITpax presents herein the results of a survey conducted amongst Palestinians and Israelis about their mutual perceptions of the respective group images, and about the impact these might have on their political conceptions. This document explores the two groups' attitudes towards peace and the possibilities for peaceful coexistence. Based on rigorous scientific methods and premises, this complex survey was conducted recently by the Evens Program for Conflict Resolution and Mediation of Tel Aviv University.

Introducing the survey results in Madrid on 12-14 April 2005, the CITpax organized a seminar which brought together a group of Palestinians and Israelis, comprised of academics, psychologists, sociologists, educators, doctors, journalists, jurists specialised in preventive diplomacy, electoral experts, linguists, historians, anthropologists and politicians, with the aim of promoting and facilitating the creation of a common strategy for peace from within and between both civil societies.

The CITpax strives to facilitate mutual awareness between the two peoples, confronted and divided by one of the longest and most tortuous conflicts in history, and within one of the most critical and sensitive international settings. Knowing the other is always a form of compromise. The interpretation of the survey's results conclusively suggests that stereotypes, prejudices and preconceived ideas are not only a form of ignorance but also a strong source of intransigence, extremism and intolerance.

The CITpax also considered it appropriate and timely to include in this document two articles that – inspired by the seminar's discussions and comments on the results of the survey – examine the current changing conjuncture of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict from complementary perspectives. The possibility of moving towards a peace treaty is contingent upon multiple factors that need to coincide positively so as to create the conditions to reach a final status agreement. It is clear that the existing atmosphere at the heart of both civil societies in this conflict has a direct effect on the viability and the possibility of a real execution for any given political agreement. To the same extent, this also applies to the specificities of both the internal and international political scenes that play a crucial part in this process. Professor Ephraim Yaar, Director of the Evens Program for Conflict Resolution and Mediation of Tel Aviv University, analyses the first group of elements. The second block of factors is analysed by Professor Shlomo Ben-Ami, Vice-President of the CITpax, in an article that tackles the question of whether there is now a real window of opportunity for peace between Palestine and Israel.

In its endeavour to reflect and analyze conflict situations with the practical purpose of bringing together opposing positions and facilitating dialogue, the CITpax borrows Bertrand Russell's quote: "It may seem to you conceited to suppose that you can do anything important toward improving the lot of mankind. But this is a fallacy. You must believe that you can help bring about a better world (...) Everybody can do something toward creating in his own environment kindly feelings rather than anger, reasonableness rather than hysteria, happiness rather than misery". Our environment is now the entire world. Promoting this attitude from civil society is a task that cannot be neglected.

Emilio Cassinello
Director-General, CITpax

## Part I: [1]

### I. Perceptions:

The following traits can be used to describe various groups. The traits are ranked on a scale ranking from 1-5. Using this scale please indicate how you would describe most of the Israelis/Palestinians:

**Table 1: Unintelligent-Intelligent**
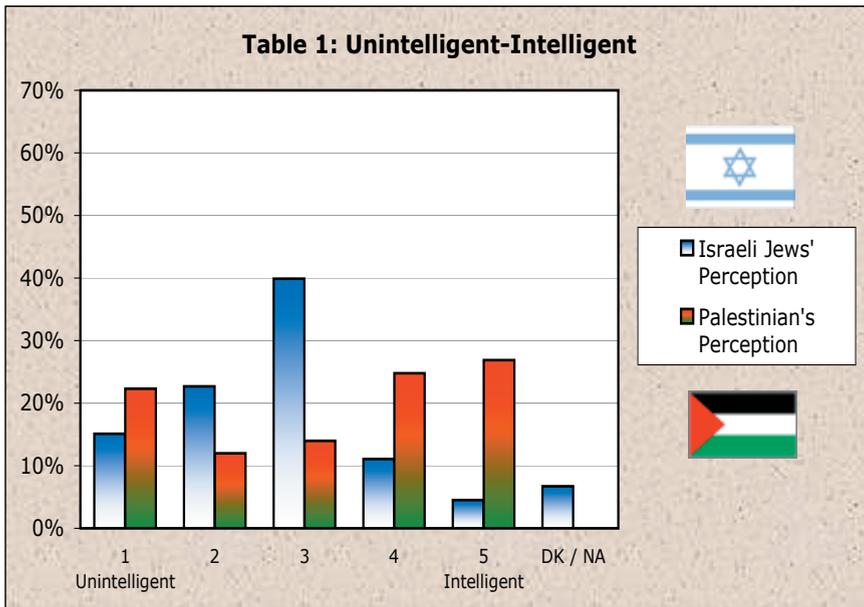
|  | Israeli Jews' Perception | Palestinian's Perception |
|---|---|---|
| 1 Unintelligent | 15,1% | 22,3% |
| 2 | 22,7% | 12,0% |
| 3 | 39,9% | 14,0% |
| 4 | 11,1% | 24,8% |
| 5 Intelligent | 4,5% | 26,9% |
| DK / NA | 6,7% | 0,0% |
| Total | 100.0% | 100.0% |

**Table 2: Uneducated-Educated**
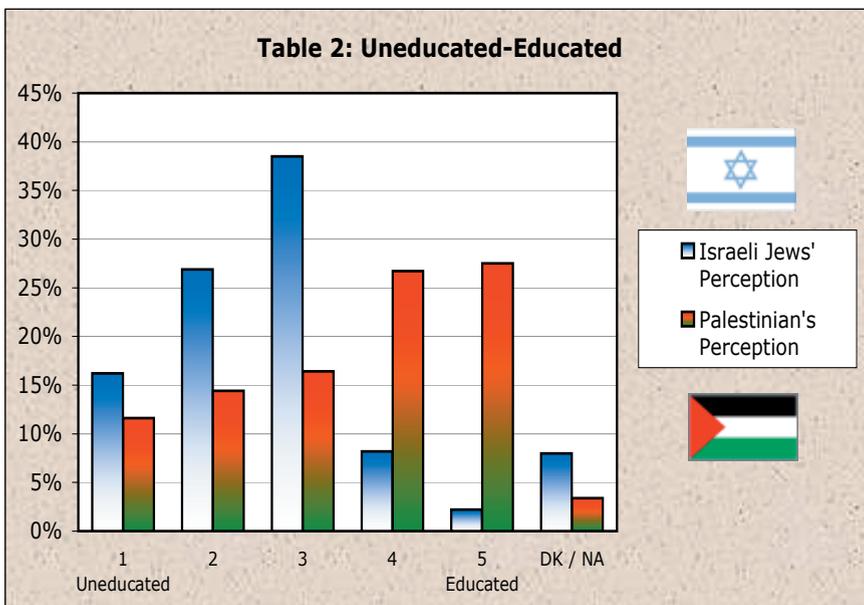
|  | Israeli Jews' Perception | Palestinian's Perception |
|---|---|---|
| 1 Uneducated | 16,2% | 11,6% |
| 2 | 26,9% | 14,4% |
| 3 | 38,5% | 16,4% |
| 4 | 8,2% | 26,7% |
| 5 Educated | 2,2% | 27,5% |
| DK / NA | 8,0% | 3,4% |
| Total | 100,0% | 100,0% |

---

[1] National surveys, March 2005; Israeli Jewish sample N= 449; Palestinian sample N= 501

### Table 3: Dishonest-Honest
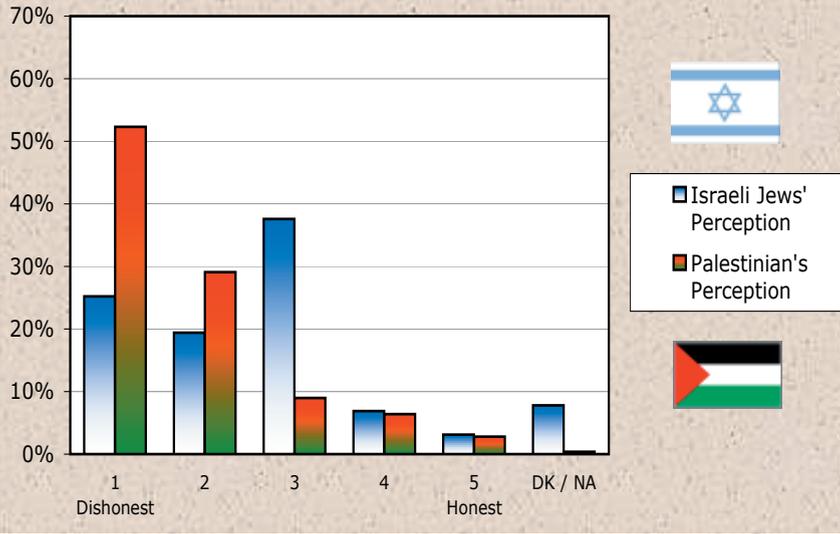


| | Israeli Jews' Perception | Palestinian's Perception |
|---|---|---|
| 1 Dishonest | 25,2% | 52,3% |
| 2 | 19,4% | 29,1% |
| 3 | 37,6% | 9,0% |
| 4 | 6,9% | 6,4% |
| 5 Honest | 3,1% | 2,8% |
| DK / NA | 7,8% | 0,4% |
| Total | 100.0% | 100.0% |

### Table 4: Bad-Good
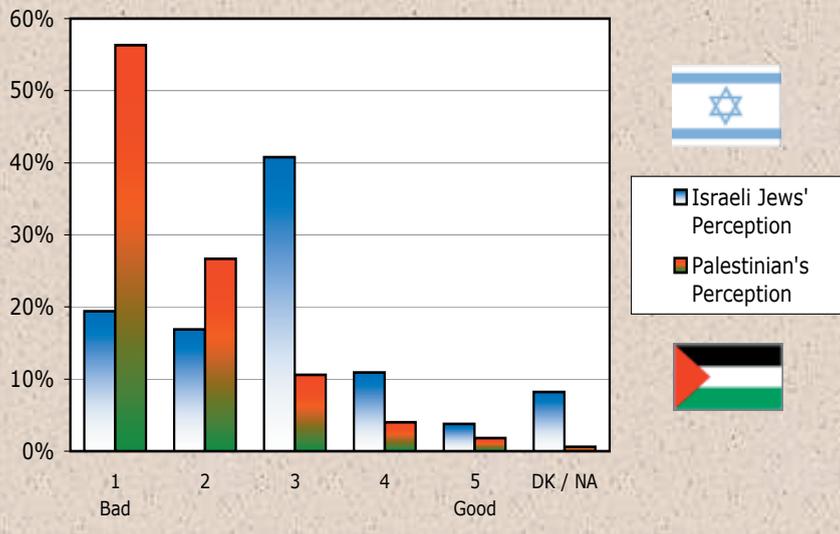


| | Israeli Jews' Perception | Palestinian's Perception |
|---|---|---|
| 1 Bad | 19,4% | 56,3% |
| 2 | 16,9% | 26,7% |
| 3 | 40,8% | 10,6% |
| 4 | 10,9% | 4,0% |
| 5 Good | 3,8% | 1,8% |
| DK / NA | 8,2% | 0,6% |
| Total | 100.0% | 100.0% |

## Table 5: Coward-Brave
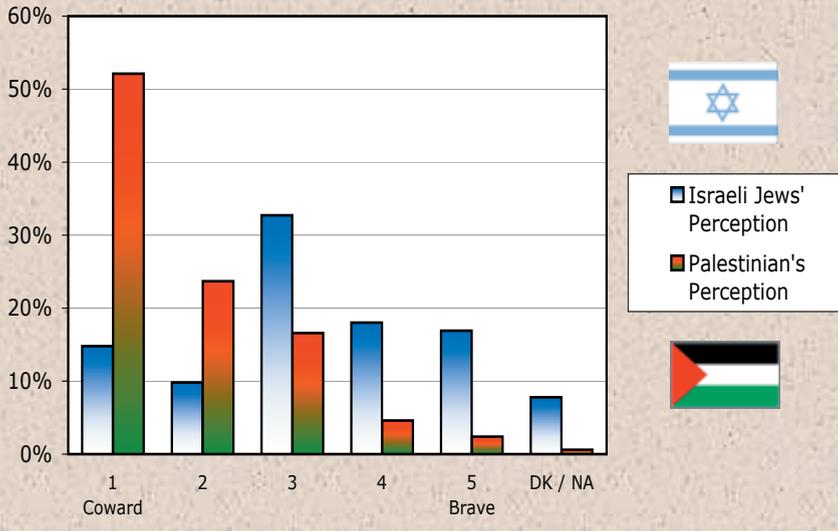


|  | Israeli Jews' Perception | Palestinian's Perception |
|---|---|---|
| 1 Coward | 14,8% | 52,1% |
| 2 | 9,8% | 23,7% |
| 3 | 32,7% | 16,6% |
| 4 | 18,0% | 4,6% |
| 5 Brave | 16,9% | 2,4% |
| DK / NA | 7,8% | 0,6% |
| Total | 100.0% | 100.0% |

## Table 6: Violent-Non violent
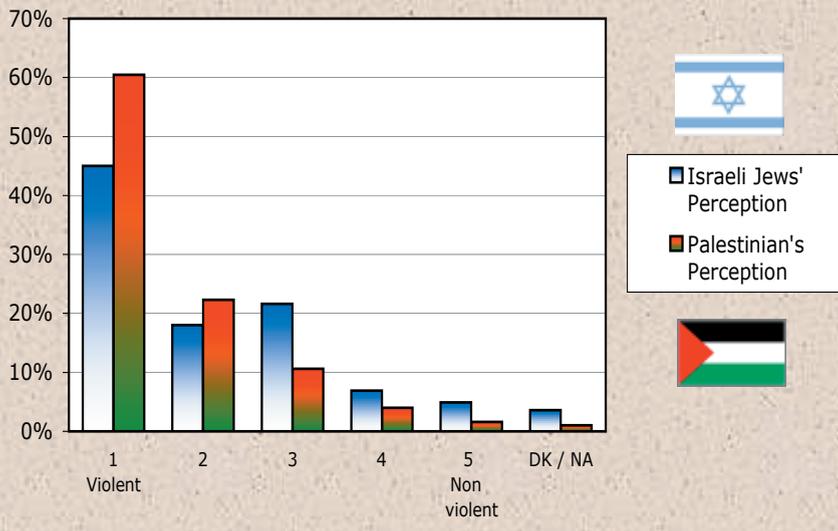


|  | Israeli Jews' Perception | Palestinian's Perception |
|---|---|---|
| 1 Violent | 45,0% | 60,5% |
| 2 | 18,0% | 22,3% |
| 3 | 21,6% | 10,6% |
| 4 | 6,9% | 4,0% |
| 5 Non violent | 4,9% | 1,6% |
| DK / NA | 3,6% | 1,0% |
| Total | 100.0% | 100.0% |

**Table 7: Cruel-Merciful**
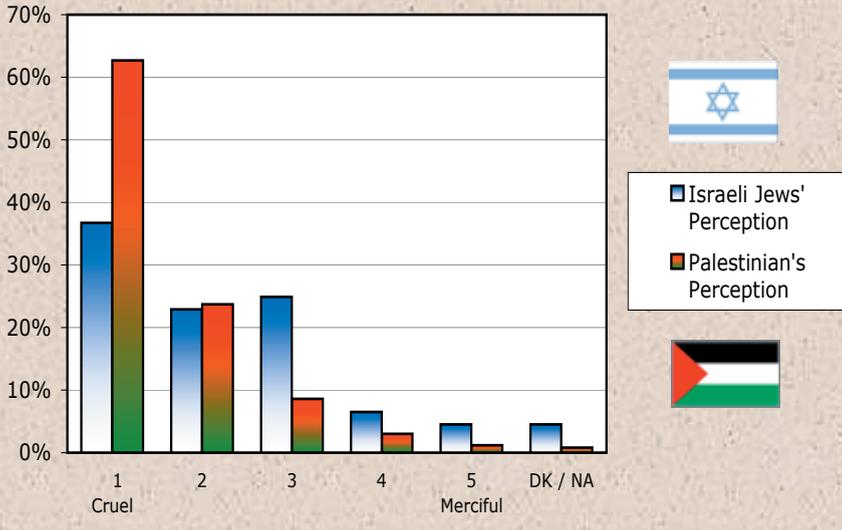
|  | Israeli Jews' Perception | Palestinian's Perception |
|---|---|---|
| 1 Cruel | 36,7% | 62,7% |
| 2 | 22,9% | 23,7% |
| 3 | 24,9% | 8,6% |
| 4 | 6,5% | 3,0% |
| 5 Merciful | 4,5% | 1,2% |
| DK / NA | 4,5% | 0,8% |
| Total | 100.0% | 100.0% |

II. Emotions: To what extent do you have the following emotions towards Israelis/ Palestinians?

**Table 8: HATE**
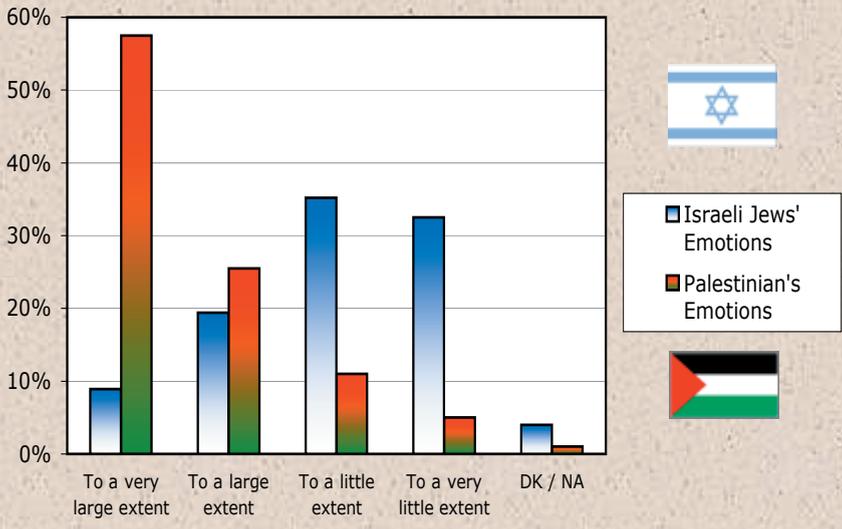
|  | Israeli Jews' Emotions | Palestinian's Emotions |
|---|---|---|
| To a very large extent | 8,9% | 57,5% |
| To a large extent | 19,4% | 25,5% |
| To a little extent | 35,2% | 11,0% |
| To a very little extent | 32,5% | 5,0% |
| DK / NA | 4,0% | 1,0% |
| Total | 100.0% | 100.0% |

## Table 9: FEAR
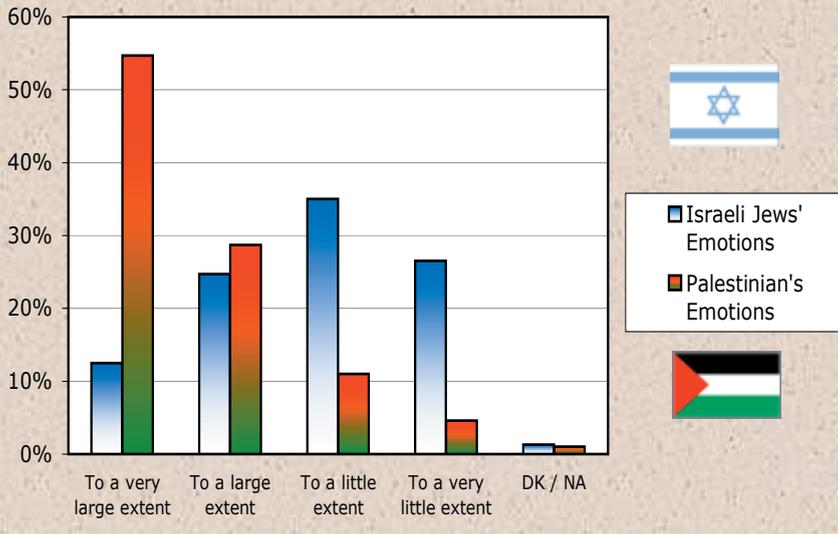


| | Israeli Jews' Emotions | Palestinian's Emotions |
|---|---|---|
| To a very large extent | 12,5% | 54,7% |
| To a large extent | 24,7% | 28,7% |
| To a little extent | 35,0% | 11,0% |
| To a very little extent | 26,5% | 4,6% |
| DK / NA | 1,3% | 1,0% |
| Total | 100,0% | 100,0% |

## Table 10: ANGER
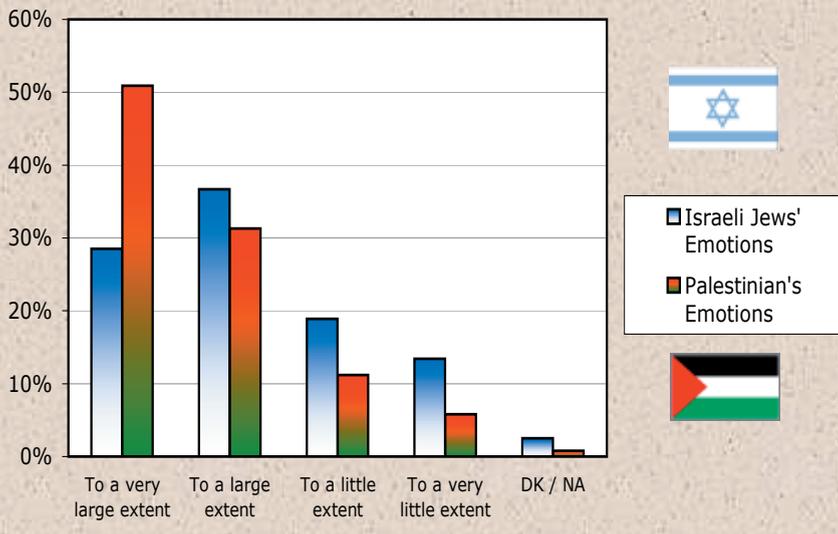


| | Israeli Jews' Emotions | Palestinian's Emotions |
|---|---|---|
| To a very large extent | 28,5% | 50,9% |
| To a large extent | 36,7% | 31,3% |
| To a little extent | 18,9% | 11,2% |
| To a very little extent | 13,4% | 5,8% |
| DK / NA | 2,5% | 0,8% |
| Total | 100,0% | 100,0% |

9

## Table 11: LIKING
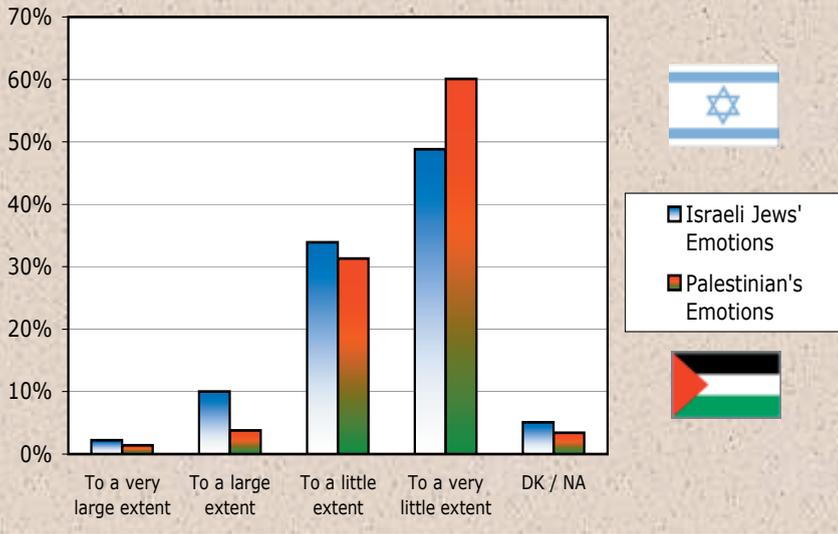
| | Israeli Jews' Emotions | Palestinian's Emotions |
|---|---|---|
| To a very large extent | 2,2% | 1,4% |
| To a large extent | 10,0% | 3,8% |
| To a little extent | 33,9% | 31,3% |
| To a very little extent | 48,8% | 60,1% |
| DK / NA | 5,1% | 3,4% |
| Total | 100,0% | 100,0% |

## Table 12: UNDERSTANDING
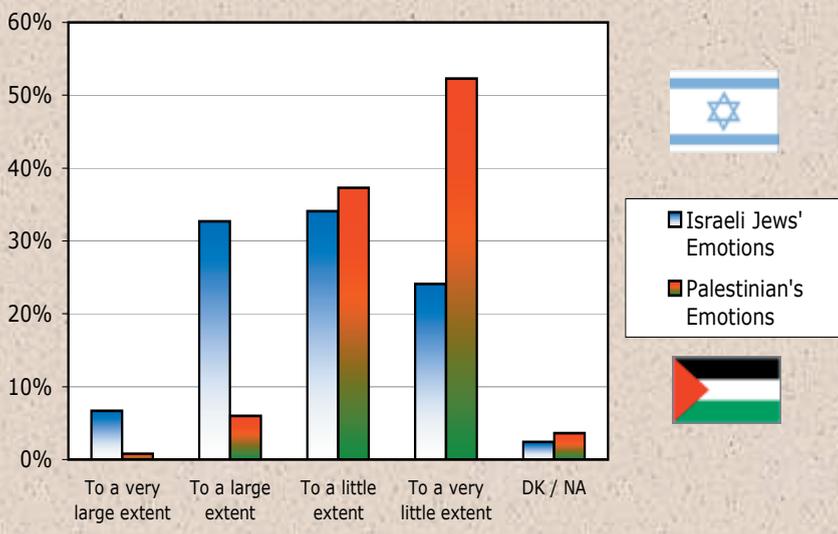
| | Israeli Jews' Emotions | Palestinian's Emotions |
|---|---|---|
| To a very large extent | 6,7% | 0,8% |
| To a large extent | 32,7% | 6,0% |
| To a little extent | 34,1% | 37,3% |
| To a very little extent | 24,1% | 52,3% |
| DK / NA | 2,4% | 3,6% |
| Total | 100,0% | 100,0% |

**Table 13: PITY**
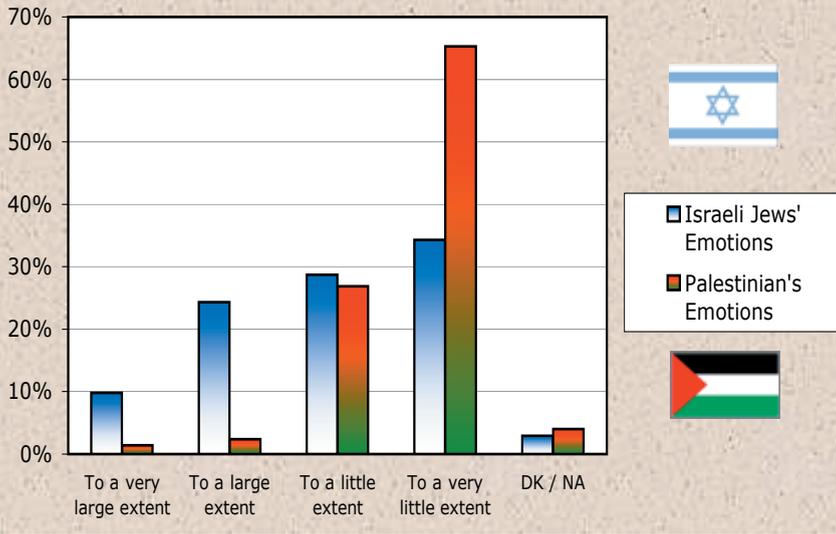


|  | Israeli Jews' Emotions | Palestinian's Emotions |
|---|---|---|
| To a very large extent | 9,8% | 1,4% |
| To a large extent | 24,3% | 2,4% |
| To a little extent | 28,7% | 26,9% |
| To a very little extent | 34,3% | 65,3% |
| DK / NA | 2,9% | 4,0% |
| Total | 100,0% | 100,0% |

**Table 14: EMPATHY**
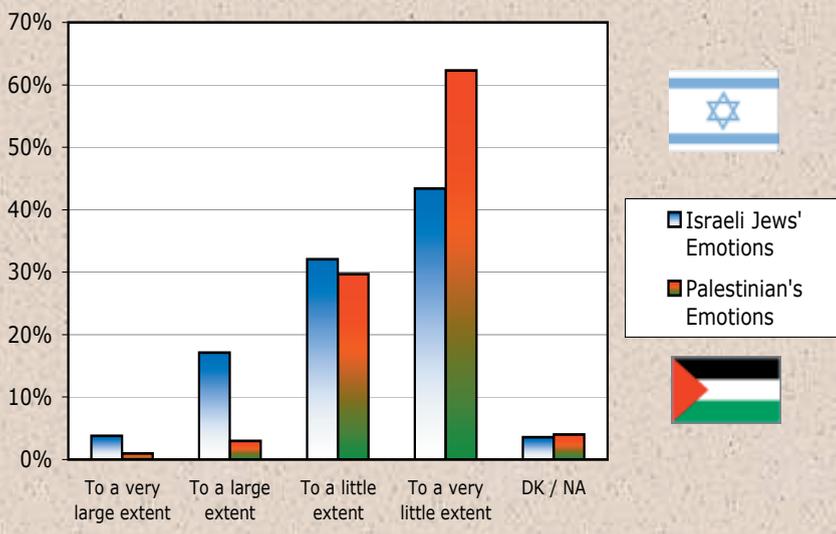


|  | Israeli Jews' Emotions | Palestinian's Emotions |
|---|---|---|
| To a very large extent | 3,8% | 1,0% |
| To a large extent | 17,1% | 3,0% |
| To a little extent | 32,1% | 29,7% |
| To a very little extent | 43,4% | 62,3% |
| DK / NA | 3,6% | 4,0% |
| Total | 100,0% | 100,0% |

## III. Political dimension:

**Table 15: How optimistic or pessimistic are you about reaching a peaceful Arab-Israeli settlement?**
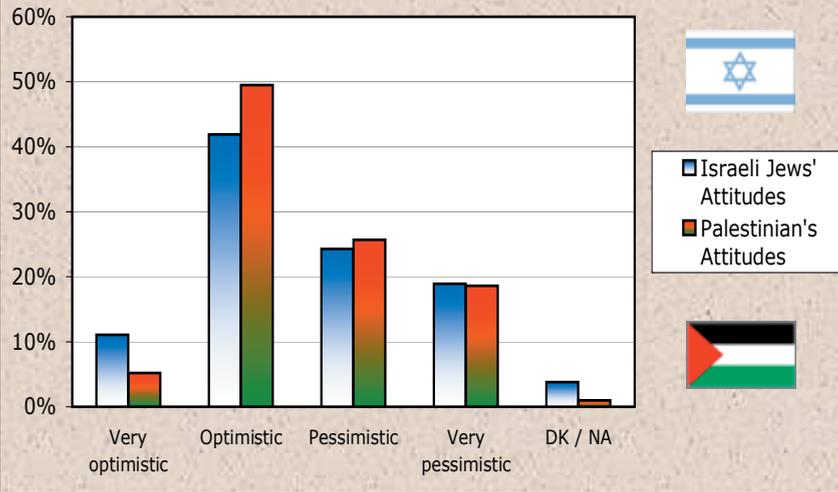
|  | Israeli Jews' Attitudes | Palestinian's Attitudes |
|---|---|---|
| Very optimistic | 11,1% | 5,2% |
| Optimistic | 41,9% | 49,5% |
| Pessimistic | 24,3% | 25,7% |
| Very pessimistic | 18,9% | 18,6% |
| DK / NA | 3,8% | 1,0% |
| Total | 100,0% | 100,0% |

**Table 16: To what extent do you think that reconciliation between Israelis & Palestinians is possible?**
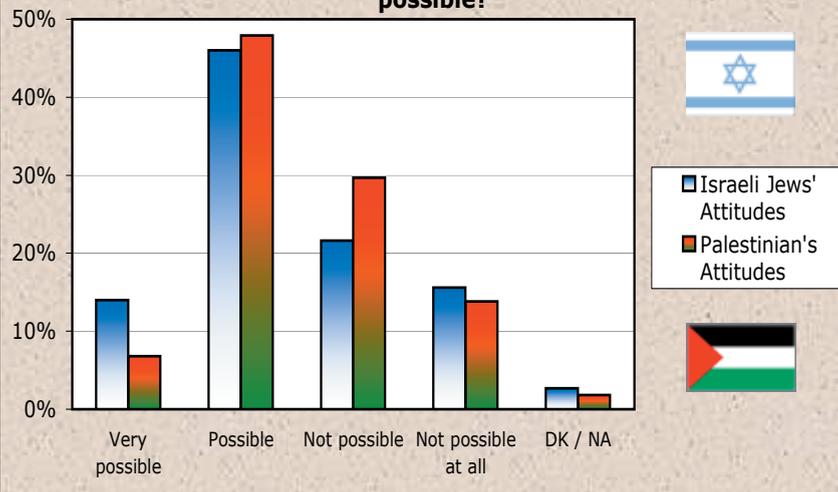
|  | Israeli Jews' Attitudes | Palestinian's Attitudes |
|---|---|---|
| Very possible | 14,0% | 6,8% |
| Possible | 46,0% | 47,9% |
| Not possible | 21,6% | 29,7% |
| Not possible at all | 15,6% | 13,8% |
| DK / NA | 2,7% | 1,8% |
| Total | 100,0% | 100,0% |

**Table 17: To what extent do you think that reconciliation between Israelis & Palestinians is desiderable?**
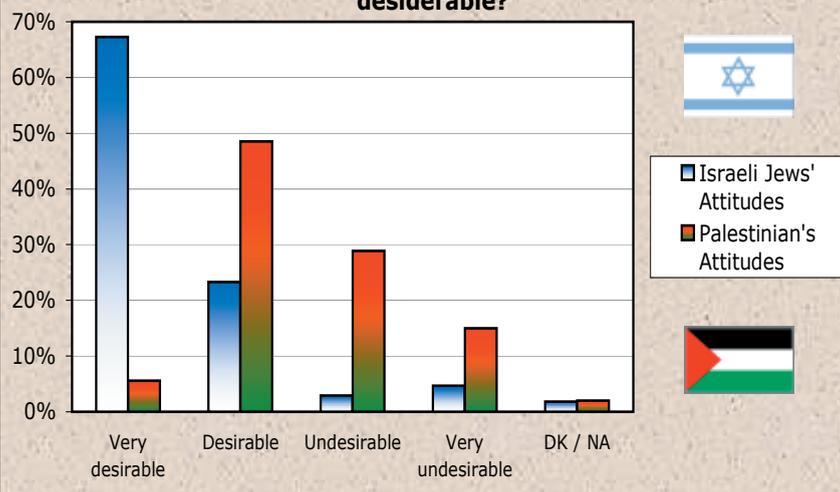


| | Israeli Jews' Attitudes | Palestinian's Attitudes |
|---|---|---|
| Very desirable | 67,3% | 5,6% |
| Desirable | 23,3% | 48,5% |
| Undesirable | 2,9% | 28,9% |
| Very undesirable | 4,7% | 15,0% |
| DK / NA | 1,8% | 2,0% |
| Total | 100,0% | 100,0% |

**Part II:**

**Ordinary Palestinians and Israelis: Mutual Perceptions, Emotions, and Attitudes towards the Idea of Peaceful Coexistence**

Professor Ephraim Yaar

The study of inter-group relations has shown consistently that in the process of developing their own identities, social groups tend to draw tangible and intangible boundaries that set them apart from other groups. One of the means used to this end involves the attribution of certain collective traits – usually positive - to the group's own members. By implication, at least, such traits are absent, or at least much rarer, among members of other groups. However, when groups are engaged in some form of rivalry or hostile relations, they are likely to go further and ascribe stereotypically negative traits and motives to the members of the "out-group", along with the inculcation of negative emotions towards them. Such tendencies become more pronounced under conditions of an intense and prolonged inter-group conflict, particularly when it involves a history of violence and bloodshed between the groups. The extreme case of antagonism is represented by inter-group conflicts that are of existential significance.

The utilization of stereotypes that depict the members of the out-group in derogatory terms should not be regarded as an entirely "irrational" phenomenon. Indeed, social-psychological research has shown repeatedly that the inculcation of prejudice and resentment against members of antagonistic out-groups may be highly instrumental for the enhancement of cohesion and solidarity within the in-group, as well as for mobilizing its members against the threat – whether real or imagined - of the out-group. In the case of very large groups, such as nation-states, the stigmatization of the out-group is typically nourished by a complex system of formal and informal institutions, notably governmental agencies (e.g., the educational system), public opinion leaders, and the mass media. As might be expected, the effectiveness of such an effort is related inversely to the degree to which the political culture of the group is democratic and pluralistic. Thus, under authoritarian conditions, where the political rulers guide and control the agencies of socialization and information, and where the "civil society" is ineffective or non-existent, the indoctrination of the group members is more likely to be effective. Correspondingly, indoctrination is more successful when the structure of the group is highly homogeneous, particularly in terms of the composition and ideology of its major political, social, and cultural elites.

Applying these general principles to the case of the Israeli-Palestinian relations, it seems reasonable to venture two major hypotheses:

First, granted that these relations represent an extreme case of a protracted and violent conflict, both ordinary Israelis and Palestinians are strongly inclined to attribute mostly derogatory traits to the members of the other side, and to maintain negative feelings and emotions towards them. Second, working from the hypothesis that the Israeli

political culture is mostly more democratic, and that its major political groups and elites are ideologically more divergent, particularly with respect to the issue of the Israeli occupation, it seems reasonable to expect that the manifestation of stereotyping and animosity is less pronounced among Israelis than among their Palestinians counterparts. This is not to say that the Palestinian society is uniform in its attitudes toward the resolution of the conflict, as indicated by the differences between Hamas, Fatah, and Islamic Jihad. Nevertheless, all three organizations, as well as the entire Palestinian society, share the ultimate goal of ending the Israeli occupation. In contrast, the Israeli society is deeply divided on the question of whether the occupied Palestinian territories should be evacuated, and under what conditions.

Still another factor that may affect the mutual perceptions and emotions of the two peoples is their experience with each other. Accordingly, it may be argued that the detrimental effects of the Israeli occupation have provided fertile terrain for the development of intense anti-Israeli sentiments among the Palestinians. Such sentiments have been reinforced by the means often used by Israel's security forces against the Palestinian civilian population, such as the imposition of closure, road-blocks, and other forms of harassment. In other words, for the last forty years the Israeli society has been represented to the Palestinian society mainly through the presence and behavior of its soldiers. On the other hand, Palestinian society has also been perceived by Israel's citizens in ugly ways. In particular, the sights of innocent Israeli civilians who were victims of suicide attacks, as well as of other forms of Palestinian terror, have profoundly affected the image of the Palestinians in the eyes of the Israeli public. In this respect, the filtering effect of the military Palestinian organizations was probably similar to that of Israel's security forces.

Notwithstanding these considerations, it still remains to be seen if the negative perceptions and emotions that the two peoples have developed presumably toward each other are reflected in their political attitudes. Specifically, to what extent they constitute a barrier to the resolution of the conflict and the realisation of a vision of peaceful coexistence. This question is not trivial since the socio-psychological literature indicates that the interrelationships among different types of attitudes are often mediated by a variety of factors, including leadership influence and situational exigencies. Of course, deep-rooted hostility between groups in conflict may hinder efforts to achieve peace between them. Nevertheless, under certain conditions, the aspirations for peace and the realization of its necessity may overcome the negative image of the enemy and the prevailing enmity towards him.

With this discussion in mind, we now turn to present and discuss a series of empirical findings which shed some light on the questions raised by it. The findings are based on two national polls representing the adult Palestinian and Israeli populations. The Palestinian poll was done by the Jerusalem Media and Communication Center (JMCC) of East Jerusalem. The B. I. Cohen Institute of Public Opinion Research of Tel-Aviv

University was responsible for the Israeli poll. Both surveys were done in March 2005, and each was based on a representative sample of approximately 500 interviewees. The margin of error for these samples is about 4.5%.

**Main Findings**

The first series of findings reveals the extent to which the Palestinians and Israelis tend to perceive each other in a stereotypical manner. For this purpose, respondents were asked to rate the members of the other group with respect to eight traits, with the results presented in Part I, Tables 1-7. Notice that the first two traits - intelligence and education - pertain to cognitive skills, whereas the remaining five traits (dishonest-honest, bad-good, coward-brave, violent-non-violent, cruel-merciful) refer to human character.

An examination of Tables 1 & 2 reveals that the mutual perceptions of the Israelis and Palestinians with respect to levels of intelligence and education tend to be relatively widespread. That is, neither group perceives the members of the out-group in a clearly stereotypical manner, although the Palestinians rate the Israelis on these two traits more favourably than the rating they receive by the Israelis. Thus, 51.7% of the Palestinians consider the Israelis as intelligent (scores 4&5), where only 25.6% of the Israelis evaluate the Palestinians in the same way. Similarly, 54.2% of the Palestinians rate the Israelis highly in terms of education, whereas only 10.4% of the Israelis think likewise about the Palestinians. The mutual perceptions about intelligence and education might be, however, partly due to the universal view of Jews as being intelligent and educated and to the less favourable image of Arabs that exists in western societies with regard to these characteristics.

A different pattern of results is obtained with respect to the attribution of character traits, as can be seen from Tables 3-8. Looking first at the results obtained for the Palestinians, it appears that their perceptions of the Israelis are consistently and uniformly negative. Thus 81.4% of the Palestinians believe most Israelis are dishonest, which is again a Jewish stereotype very widespread throughout the Arab world. Only 9.2% of the Palestinian sample saw the Israeli as honest. The same pattern of negative images pertains to the remaining traits: 83.0% of the Israelis are "bad" vs. 5.8% who are "good", 75.8% "coward" vs. 9.0% "brave", 82.8% "violent" vs. 5.6% "non-violent", and 86.4% "cruel" vs. 4.2% "merciful".

Given the mostly negative image of the Israelis in terms of personality traits, it should be of little surprise that the large majority of the Palestinians have developed negative feelings toward them (see Tables 8-14 in Part I). For example, 83.0% of the Palestinians express large or very large degrees of "hatred" toward the Israelis, 83.4% "fear", 82.2% "anger" and. 91.4% "dislike". Correspondingly, 92.2% have little or very little "pity" for the Israelis and only 4% have feelings of "empathy" for them.

Taken together, these findings portray a gloomy stereotypical picture with respect to the image of the Israelis and the emotions that prevail toward them among the Palestinians. Does the same picture emerge with respect to the perceptions and emotions of the Israelis? Beginning with the personality characteristics, the findings presented in Tables 3-8 reveal that the perception of the Palestinians by the Israelis is much less uniform than the depiction of the Israelis by the Palestinians. To be sure, Israelis too tend to ascribe negative traits to the members of the out-group, like their Palestinian counterparts. However, this tendency is not as uniform and salient, and quite a significant number of Israelis avoid the use of the extreme categories of negative traits in their depiction of the Palestinians. For example, much fewer Israelis (44.6%) perceive the Palestinians as "dishonest", compared with 81.4% of the Palestinians who perceive the Israelis in the same way. Similarly, while 36.3% of the Israelis believe that the Palestinians are "bad", the corresponding figure for the Palestinians is 83.0%. The same pattern reappears with respect to the remaining traits.

Turning to the emotional dimension, it can be seen from Tables 8-15 that the range of feelings that the Israelis have about the Palestinians is more widespread and less one-sided in comparison to the parallel feelings among the Palestinians. For example, the proportion of Israelis who say they hate the Palestinians to a little or very little extent (67.7%) exceeds by a wide margin the percentage of those who "hate" the Palestinians to a large or very large extent (28.3%). Keeping in mind that the corresponding figures for the Palestinians were 16.0% and 83.0%, the gap between the feelings of hate that the two groups have for each other is very wide indeed. A similar gap can be observed for the feelings of "fear": 61.5% of the Israelis have a little or very little degree of "fear" of the Palestinians, compared with 28.3% who have a large or very degree of such "fear". Again, the parallel percentages among the Palestinians were 15.6% and 83.4%. As to the rest of the list, the Israelis having negative emotions outnumber those having positive feelings for the Palestinians. Nevertheless, even in these cases, the gaps between the proportions of negative and positive emotions are not as wide as the comparable proportions among the Palestinians. For example, 63.3% of the Israelis have a little or very little degree of "pity" for the Palestinians, compared with 34.0% who have a large or very large degree of "pity". However, the gap between these figures is much smaller than the comparable gap (92.2% and 3.8%) among the Palestinians.

Taken together, the results presented so far indicate that the prevalence of negative stereotypes and emotions with respect to the other side is much more pronounced among the Palestinians than among their Israeli counterparts. These results lead us to the next, and last question to be examined:, namely whether the differences that exist between the Israelis and Palestinian in this regard are reflected in the attitudes of the two groups towards the resolution of the conflict between them. In order to address this question, we compare the responses given by the Palestinians and Israelis to three related questions, as shown in Tables 15- 17.

As can be seen from Table 15, both groups are practically identical in terms of their degree of optimism about reaching a peaceful Arab-Israeli settlement, with 53.0% of the Israelis and 54.7% of the Palestinians being either optimistic or very optimistic, compared with 43.1% and 44.3%, respectively, who are either pessimistic or very pessimistic. Furthermore, when asked if reconciliation between the two peoples is possible (see Table 16), the percentages of positive evaluations increase in both groups, though not to the same degree, as follows: Among the Israelis, 60.0% think that reconciliation is possible or very possible, while 37.2% believe that it is impossible or not possible at all. The comparable figures for the Palestinians are 54.7% and 43.5%, respectively. In other words, the Israelis are somewhat more optimistic about the possibility of reconciliation than the Palestinians, although the optimists outnumber the pessimists in both groups.

However, a much wider gap between the two groups emerges with respect to the desirability of reconciliation, as can be seen from the results presented in Table 17. Thus, among the Israelis 93.6% view reconciliation as desirable or very desirable, compared with only 7.4% for whom it is undesirable or very undesirable. Among the Palestinians, the corresponding figures are 54.1% and 44.0%. In other words, unlike the wide consensus that exists among the Israelis about the appeal of reconciliation, the Palestinians are divided in this regard into two nearly equal camps, with a small advantage to the supporters of reconciliation. We suggest that this noticeable difference between the two peoples reflects the socio-psychological effects of stereotyping and hostility that are more common and entrenched among Palestinians than Israelis, as shown above. Interestingly, these differences have little or no effect on how the two groups evaluate the prospects for a political solution of the conflict between them. Yet, when it comes to the possibility of reconciliation, which involves peoples more than just governments, the Israelis seem riper to reach this goal than the Palestinians. Notwithstanding this finding, one can still argue that given the prevalence of anti-Israeli perceptions and sentiments among the Palestinians, the observation that reconciliation is an attractive idea for over 50% of this public is perhaps an unexpected but certainly encouraging finding.

## Part III:

## Political environment

Professor Shlomo Ben-Ami

Does the Middle East enjoy now, in the wake of the Iraq War and President Bush's War on Terror, a new "window of opportunities" for an Arab-Israeli peace? As the launching of the Arab-Israeli peace process in the 1991 Madrid International Peace Conference has shown, the prospects of peace in the Middle East always depended on a synchrony between global changes and regional conditions. With the election of George W. Bush to a second term in the White House, the prospects for a solution of the 125-year old Arab-Israeli conflict look somewhat brighter. Notwithstanding America's difficulties in Iraq, the brutal determination of the US President in pursuing his policies in the region, the threats to the stability of the Arab regimes emanating from Islamic fundamentalism, and their fear that the persistence of the Palestinian problem might end up dissolving their home front and undermining their regimes, have all helped create more favourable conditions for an all-Arab accommodation with Israel. The endorsement in the spring of 2002, by the Arab League of the Saudi initiative for peace with Israel was the Arab response to America's war on terror.

More recently, Syria's international isolation and the pressure exerted on the Baath regime by the United States and its European allies brought President Assad to publicly plead for peace with Israel. Free of the chaotic style of governance of Yasser Arafat and of his macabre flirtation with terrorism, the Palestinian Authority, defeated and pulverized by Ariel Sharon's ruthless methods of repression, is more ready now to move back to a pragmatic course of action. Even the serial producers of suicide squads, Hamas and Islamic Jihad, exhausted and decapitated of their historical leaders by Israel's merciless campaign of targeted assassinations are now pleading for a truce ("hudna"), and are even ready to contemplate an accommodation, albeit limited in time, with Israel on the basis of the 1967 borders. And, as to Abu-Mazen, he knows only too well that the Palestinians might have the upper hand only if they shift the scene of the struggle from Israel's marketplaces and kindergartens to the negotiating table. It is there that Mr. Sharon lacks answers, not in the military field, and it is there that the Palestinians run a chance to call his bluff.

Another key to the reactivation of the peace process is Egypt. Ariel Sharon, who, unlike most of his predecessors, especially those of Labour, never courted the friendship of President Mubarak and never thought of making the traditional pilgrimage of Israeli leaders to Cairo to plead for Egypt's mediation with the Palestinians, succeeded nevertheless to warm up Israel's relations with the "rais". The latter even advised recently the Palestinians that "only with Sharon do you run a chance of having peace". Israel's planned pullout from Gaza, and the alarming prospects that this might create for Egypt an unstable common border with an anarchic Palestinian entity in Gaza, is a major reason for Mubarak's sudden infatuation with Sharon. Sharon's determination

to use force mercilessly and unscrupulously, and his success in maintaining his intimate alliance with an American president who has just been re-elected for a second term, brought home to President Mubarak an unequivocal message: warming up relations with Israel, contributing to making possible its Gaza plan and exerting pressure on the Palestinians in favour of more pragmatic policies are all vital Egyptian interests. Not peace, but the continuity of his regime is President Mubarak's priority, and this requires that he adapt his policies to the changing conditions.

A note of caution would not be misplaced, however, in assessing the chances that these improved conditions would necessarily usher in a permanent Arab-Israeli settlement. The Arab-Israeli peace process has known more than one moment of euphoria in the past; nor is this the first time that regional and global conditions looked so extremely favourable to the chances for peace, and indeed, the parties were more than once on the brink of peace. The Middle East is a cemetery of missed opportunities and promising peace plans. Today, the forces that might still derail the chances of peace have anything but laid down their arms. Iran's nuclear ambitions and its hostility to the Arab-Israeli peace process are major destabilizing factors. Iran's Hizballah clients have already started to strike roots among radical Palestinian organizations in the occupied Palestinian territories in order to undermine the chances for a ceasefire or for a smooth execution of Sharon's Gaza plan.

Three times in their history were the Palestinian offered statehood- in 1937, in 1947 and through the Clinton Parameters in 2000 – and three times they rejected it. Arafat was known for always being more conscious of what he was denied than of what he had obtained. Will Abu Mazen be able to supersede the obsession with the unobtainable and build a positive ethos of democratic governance and human development around a pragmatic peace with Israel? Abu Mazen is leading the post-Arafat transition with admirable wisdom and a commendable display of diplomatic skills. It is an irony of history that the only Arabs in the world that were allowed the sovereign right to elect their leader in fully democratic elections are those living under Israeli occupation. It is no less true, of course, that the Palestinians have shown the world a commendable sense of democratic maturity. But, it nevertheless still remains to be seen how the non-charismatic Mahmoud Abbas would fill the void of revolutionary legitimacy created by Arafat's departure, and consolidate his leadership by controlling the plethora of anarchic grassroots militias which, if not disarmed, would only serve as a pretext for the hard-liners in Israel to stick to a military course of action.

Despite some promising signals from Hamas both with regard to their eagerness for a ceasefire and to their readiness to move to a more constructive political phase, a radical shift in Hamas' strategy cannot yet be taken for granted. Their predicament is extremely tough. For them to go to elections and be defeated can be a serious embarrassment. But, nor would a victory be so welcome either, for this would force them to make a choice of recognizing Israel and joining the peace process, a choice they seem at present utterly incapable of making. In one way or another, Hamas would have to

keep alive its military option, its terrorist capabilities, and its political purity if it wants to survive. Moreover, a PA under Abu Mazen would probably follow Arafat's legacy and avoid a frontal clash, let alone an all-out civil war, against Hamas so long as the Israelis and the Americans do not offer the ultimate bait, that is, the contours of a final settlement that can be acceptable to the Palestinians.

Both the PA and the members of the Quartet can however consolidate the new political trends in Hamas. The London terror attack is one more reminder of the urgent need to work out new policies that would help assuage the turmoil in Arab societies. The West needs to realize that none of the major problems of the Arab world are susceptible to military solutions. These, as the war in Iraq has made tragically clear, are only likely to exacerbate the conflict. Engaging political Islam needs to be a central component in a new reform and peace strategy in the Middle East. This is also true of the Israeli-Palestinian situation.

It is therefore lamentable that Hamas's proposal to form a national committee of all the political forces in the Gaza Strip to oversee Israel's withdrawal and secure the governability of the area was turned down by Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian Authority president, and received such slight attention from the "Quartet" in charge of implementing the road map for an Israeli-Palestinian peace.

True, Hamas had turned down Abbas's offer to join a national unity government. But while inevitably keen to maintain its distinct identity, Hamas is clearly in the middle of a momentous shift in its strategy from jihadism to political participation that needs to be encouraged. If Hamas dismissed Abbas's offer, it was because they had every reason to suspect that this was a ploy to avoid quick parliamentary elections, where Hamas was poised to mount a serious challenge to Abbas's Fatah party. Abbas has already arbitrarily postponed the elections from fear of a Hamas victory.

The stakes for the West and for Israel are too high for them to refrain from exploring new avenues to peace by engaging the Islamic political forces that are not dependent on the traditional rulers. Categorical perspectives are not good advisers for the understanding of the complex fabric of Islamic movements throughout the Arab world. The world of religious imagery and symbols as well as the social interests of many of these movements are almost invariably located within a political context. This is clearly the case with Hamas.

Hamas has of course conducted a most vicious terrorist campaign that has claimed a horrifying toll in its war against Israel. But Hamas is essentially a social movement with a wide community network that has never been indifferent to political realities. More than once in the past it has been ready to depart from religious dogma or rigid doctrinal principles and adopt pragmatic political strategies.

In the 1990's, Hamas accepted the concept of a "temporary settlement" with Israel,

for which it was even ready to acquiesce in the Oslo process, abandon - even if just tactically - maximalist positions and support a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza. As with other mainstream Islamic movements, Hamas is most likely to behave as a reformist rather than revolutionary group if it is allowed to operate within a legitimate political space.

Hamas's concept of a Palestinian Transitional Authority ( PTA ) in Gaza consisting of the major political forces there, Hamas and Fatah included, is not an altogether new idea. It was first conceived by a joint Israeli-Palestinian working group that was put together by the Toledo Peace Center in Spain. Its "Proposal for the Governance of Gaza in the Context of the Israeli Withdrawal" made the commitment to the two-state solution a condition for membership in the PTA.

To further assuage the outlandish fear that this might unleash a secessionist process in Gaza, the Israeli-Palestinian Toledo document stipulated that the PTA would require a special Security Council resolution to define the unbreakable boundaries of its mandate.

A reasonably peaceful Israeli disengagement from Gaza and a stable governance once Israel has withdrawn are crucial for the future of the road map to peace. But Abbas's Palestinian Authority is clearly incapable of subduing the violent groups even within Fatah itself. The hesitant and still far from complete reform of the security apparatus and the collapse of the chain of command within Fatah combine to raise serious doubts about the capacity of the Palestinian Authority to secure the stability of Gaza after disengagement without the full cooperation of Hamas.

Instead of resisting Hamas's political rise, Abbas needs to see its readiness to join forces with Fatah in securing the governability of Gaza as a vital step on the way to full Palestinian statehood in both Gaza and the West Bank. Hamas's willingness to abandon its violent opposition and to assume the responsibility that comes with political power needs to be seen as a most welcome shift on the way to a fuller political cooptation of the most important revolutionary force in the Palestinian territories.

It is of course possible that everybody would now look for a diplomatic space by resuscitating the Road Map. It would have to be a reformed Road Map, however. I do not believe that the bizarre idea, reserved for the second stage of the Road Map, of a Palestinian state with "temporary borders" can be seen as especially enticing by the Palestinians. They already had such a "state" in the form of the Palestinian Authority. It is inconceivable that the Palestinians will agree to repeat the experience if the parameters of the final settlement are not agreed upon in advance. They will probably see it as a trap, or as the introduction to a long interim agreement whose end would depend on whether or not they finally "turn into Finns", as Sharon's aid Dov Weissglass remarked sarcastically in a recent interview. Any attempt by Israel to trivialize the Palestinian problem by turning it into a banal unresolved border dispute will fail with

Abu Mazen just as it would have failed with Arafat. For, even if such a temporary state is eventually created, it will follow in the footsteps of the Palestinian Authority and revert to a revolutionary strategy the moment it realizes that its minimal requirements for a final settlement are not met.

Arafat was a difficult partner indeed. But, at the same time he was the ultimate defender of the two-state solution. Without him, the task of stemming the threat of a decline into a one-state paradigm can be a much more formidable task. Many are those in the Palestinian leadership who are troubled today by the difficulty of pursuing the two-state course without the backing of Arafat's authority and the legitimacy that only he could provide. The Palestinian factions that are openly opposed to, or simply sceptical of, the principle of a second partition of Palestine have gained much power and moral ground during the Intifada. They now include not only Hamas, which is especially dominant in the Gaza Strip, but also grassroots militias within Fatah itself, such as the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades. In other words, Arafat's passing does not necessarily eliminate the threat of the demise of the idea of two states for two peoples, and of the mutual recognition of the PLO and Israel. In fact, it removes from the scene the ultimate legitimizer of these two historic shifts in the Palestinian strategy. His successors might be far less capable of defending the Oslo legacy in conditions of conflict and persistent war with Israel. Oslo is the most vilified term in the Palestinian political discourse. Abu Mazen was chosen as the heir not because he was the architect of Oslo, but in spite of it.

And, even if an entirely new and promising chapter in the Egypt-Israel-Palestinian Authority triangle does indeed unfold, and the Gaza withdrawal turns out to be the most successful and peaceful undertaking, when the moment of truth arrives and the parties sit down to explore the parameters for a final settlement, for after all this is the objective of it all, the Israelis will find that the Palestinians did change their tactics and leadership, but not the price of peace. The Israeli government would then once again realize that it is a prohibitive price it cannot, or is politically incapable to, pay.

The Israeli left is bound to admit that its policy of fighting terrorism and negotiating peace at the same time was a resounding failure, and that it was Ariel Sharon's ruthless crackdown on Palestinian terrorism that brought the Palestinians to their knees and forced even Hamas to plead for a truce ("hudna"). But, the right was, and continues to be, equally wrong in its far-fetched assumptions about the price of peace, and in its capacity to impose it on the Palestinians.

Abu Mazen's conditions for a peace deal with Israel are not different in any way than those that prevented an agreement with Arafat. In fact, he had already spelled them out: a Palestinian state within the 1967 borders with its capital in Jerusalem, and a just solution of the refugee problem in accordance with UN Resolution 194. Arafat's positions were not the child of his whims, and what Abu Mazen did was only to reiterate what have been the undeviating, official Palestinian positions since 1988. The Palestinians do not think at all that these are overly radical positions. On the contrary, to them they

represent the most moderate deal they can offer to Israel. Before he was being dubbed "engineer of the Intifada", Marwan Barghouti used to proclaim that these positions were exactly what made Fatah the equivalent of a Palestinian "Peace Now" movement.

A change of leadership among the Palestinians does not change, then, the conditions for peace or its price. Peace will not be cheaper because of Arafat's disappearance. The tragedy of this conflict is that the only man whose signature on an agreement of compromise and reconciliation, which would include giving up unattainable dreams, could have been legitimate in the eyes of his people was incapable of bringing himself to sign. He took this legitimacy with him to the grave, and left his heirs with the same positions and the same ethos on which compromise will be beyond their reach and their capacity. That is his terrible legacy. And, as if this were not enough, it is also possible that in his heirs' eagerness to fill the vacuum of revolutionary legitimacy that the founding father left behind him, they will be compelled not only to stick to his well-known positions, but perhaps even to be more radical, if they wish to survive.

The fact that Sharon's intentions with regard to the post-Gaza process are not exactly those of "Peace Now", to use Barghouti's metaphor, does not make the chances of a negotiated Israeli-Palestinian settlement any easier. Mr. Sharon has recently given sufficient indications of his intention to turn the struggle for a greater Jewish Jerusalem into the main effort of his policy after the completion of the Gaza disengagement. He has already started to put into practice the scheme to link Jerusalem with Maale Adumim in a way that can by no means allow for a contiguous Palestinian state. Was, for example, Mr. Sharon's readiness to allow the Palestinians in Jerusalem to participate in the elections for the successor of Arafat really an indication that he has finally assumed that there would be no solution unless the Palestinians have their capital in Arab Jerusalem? The possibility is not entirely implausible that what he has in mind is in reality to establish a precedent whereby a functional, rather than a territorial, division of at least part of the West Bank would be the essence of the future peace deal. "Palestinians living in Israel's capital can vote in the Palestinian elections just as American citizens living in Israel are entitled to vote for the president of the United States", this is how Mr. Sharon's entourage explained his surprisingly forthcoming attitude to the voting rights of the Palestinian Jerusalemites. The Arabs of Jerusalem, and maybe even those of the State of Israel proper, might be asked in a future final settlement to vote in the Palestinian state without the territories they live in being part of the State of Palestine, just as the settlers throughout the West Bank could remain in their settlements, be citizens of the State of Israel and vote in the elections for the Israeli parliament. Sharon, who, is so surprisingly sanguine in allowing the Palestinians of Jerusalem to vote, might think that this is the best way he has to reconcile his demographic worries with his territorial ambitions.

A formidable hurdle on the way to a final settlement is clearly also the political culture prevailing throughout the region. The Middle East remains a region in flux, the legitimacy and stability of its political regimes remains as questionable as ever. It was

throughout easier for an Arab leader to reach popularity with the masses when he confronted the enemy on the battlefield, even if he was defeated and humiliated, rather than gain legitimacy for a peace with Israel that is based on compromise and concessions. Left to their own devices, the countries of the region do not possess the necessary culture of conflict resolution in order to solve their differences.

The dysfunctionality of Israel's political system is no less an impediment to an agreement with the Palestinians than are Abu Mazen's difficulties in consolidating an orderly polity, and a hierarchical system of decision-making in the Palestinian territories. Moreover, if the Palestinians have understandably lost their trust in the Israelis as partners for peace, so has the devastating effect of the Intifada on the Israeli public been anything but conducive to enhancing trust in the Palestinian partner. Oslo was made possible when an almost post-Zionist clamour for "normalcy" and peace invaded the embattled Israeli society. The Israelis' "Tel Avivian" drive for a secular and hedonistic existence has always been vying for supremacy in a constant Kulturkampf with the other Israel, a "Jerusalemite" traditionalist and xenophobic Israel that has always been sceptical of modernity, and suspicious of peace with the Arabs. This internal struggle was never conducted in a bubble; its outcome always depended on the perception that the Israelis had of their Arab neighbours, particularly the Palestinians. Arafat's rejection of the peace deal that was offered to him in December 2000, and his endorsement of the Intifada did not only set on fire all the mechanisms of peace-making, but also dealt an almost mortal blow to the peace camp in Israel, and allowed the "Jerusalemite" Israel to once again recover its relevance in Israel's politico-cultural civil war.

Its relevance yes, but not its hegemony. Against the ominous predictions of those who saw the specter of civil war looming over Israel if a massive dismantling of settlements was carried out, the Gaza disengagement proved to be an anti-climax. It showed that Israel is a society mature enough to face the formidable challenge of defining its permanent borders without cataclysmic upheavals. The task remains of course ridden with difficulties and painfully intricate, for it would be wrong to draw an automatic analogy between the Gaza experience and the case of the more sensitive lands of Eretz-Israel, not to speak of Jerusalem. But the precedent has been established and, for the first time since 1967, the State of Israel challenged Eretz-Israel and survived.

This does not mean at all that a viable peace process is around the corner. Israel's politicians, with the overwhelming support of public opinion, are now engaged in a drive to define Israel's permanent borders wholly unilaterally. Only the desperately diminishing fringes of the very extreme left still believe in negotiations.

The loss of the credibility of the Palestinian Authority, unable as it continues to be to control the plethora of radical militias bent on "Lebanonizing" the territories, is not only due to its poor performance. Admittedly, it has much to do also with the fact that, notwithstanding the implacable punishment that the Palestinians were dealt by Ariel Sharon's ruthless repression of the Intifada, their conditions for a negotiated

settlement remained unchanged since the days that Arafat turned down a deal that included the division of Jerusalem, Palestinian sovereignty on Temple Mount, an Israeli withdrawal from 97% of the West Bank, and the concession of a "safe passage" that would link Gaza with the West Bank. Ariel Sharon, the new embodiment of Israel's national consensus, believes that negotiations under such conditions are an invitation into a black hole leading to national suicide.

If Gaza is to be the first step to a permanent settlement, the Quartet's peace diplomacy needs to trim the expectations of both parties. The Israelis cannot have their blocks of settlements in the West Bank without a compensation for the Palestinians in terms of land swaps, and the Palestinians will be engaging in political utopia if they expect Israel to go beyond the Clinton peace plan of December 2000, let alone accept a solution to the refugees problem that entails assuming the "right of return".

The entire Gaza project was made possible in the first place by an American commitment to Prime Minister Sharon on the contours of a final settlement, the key principles of which- blocks of settlements, and the stipulation that the right of return should only apply to the future Palestinian state, not to Israel- are entirely based on the Clinton peace plan. But, unlike Mr.Bush's letter to Ariel Sharon, the Clinton ideas were not conceived as a life belt to an Israeli prime minister in political distress, and they therefore addressed the needs of the Palestinians, not only those of Israel. Clinton's peace outline stipulated a compensation to the Palestinians in the form of land swaps, and it also addressed the vital question of Jerusalem (to be divided in two capitals along ethnic lines) without which no durable peace is possible.

Unless qualified with a commitment to Palestinian needs along the lines of the Clinton plan, Mr.Bush's letter is bound to be extremely counterproductive for the cause of an Israeli-Palestinian peace settlement. The political crisis in Israel, with Sharon's main challenge coming from the extreme right, is already leading the prime minister to take the president's letter at its face value, that is as a green light to beef up the blocks of settlements , the contours of which are not supposed to be unilaterally defined by Israel.

If a credible peace process does not follow the Gaza disengagement, then Israel's unilateral drive in the West Bank, combined with the perception by the Palestinians of Gaza as a disgraceful capitulation by the Israeli occupier, is likely to decline into yet another Intifada. A direct line is already being drawn in the Palestinian mind between what they perceive as Israel's shameful flight from Lebanon and its runaway from Gaza in a way that is firing the imagination of the young conscripts of the more radical Palestinian militias.

It is the mission of the Quartet, the international sponsors of the Road-Map, to stem the tide leading to yet another ferocious stage in the Palestinians' war of independence by advancing a reasonable platform for a final settlement. The diametrically opposed views that the parties have with regard to the Road-Map's provisions, and especially to its

final destination, would soon lead them into a blind alley. It is also necessary to establish the revised stages and time table leading to the end-game as well as the package of incentives that should help convince the Israelis to abandon the politics of unilateralism, and teach the Palestinians to leave behind the culture of death and martyrdom by making the dream of a viable Palestinian state a goal that is attainable by diplomatic means.

For the Israelis, however, it is vital to assume that no change in the international system, however radical this may be, will spare them the hard and painful choices. They will also hopefully draw the lesson from their agonizing attempt to quell the Intifada, that they are not the first in history to learn that states, however strong, do not really have a deterrent power against national uprisings. Internationally legitimized borders will offer Israel more deterrence power than F-16 raids on terrorist targets that end up killing innocent civilians as well, without really deterring the terrorists. It is by no means the case that force and the capacity to intimidate one's enemies has become unnecessary, especially in a region whose value system does not allow for such luxury. But, as the United States has learnt the hard way in Iraq, this is an era where power without legitimacy only breeds chaos, and military supremacy without legitimate international consent for the use of force does not offer security. Israel's respect for its international border with Lebanon has given more security to its northern villages than did 20 years of military occupation of that country. Only when a free and independent Palestinian state assumes a vested interest in respecting the regional order and a civilized system of governance, can peace prevail. This will sooner or later have to be complemented with a peace agreement between Israel and Syria, whose parameters are only too well known. Only then might the conditions be created for an accommodation between Israel and the Arab and Muslim world, and a regional system of security can perhaps be made possible. Any attempt to develop such a regional system before the Arab-Israeli conflict has been solved is doomed to failure.

# ABOUT THE TOLEDO INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR PEACE
([www.toledopax.org](www.toledopax.org))

The Toledo International Centre for Peace (CITpax) seeks to contribute to the prevention and resolution of violent or potentially violent international or intra-national conflicts and to the consolidation of peace, within a framework of respect and promotion of Human Rights and democratic values. Thus, the CITpax contributes to the establishment of cooperation pathways and communication channels between the parties involved, governments, NGO's and representatives of all sectors in the civil society.

## ACTION PATHWAYS

In order to achieve its objectives, the CITpax employs various tools specially designed for each particular situation, including the following:

• **Second Track Diplomacy,** through the direct facilitation in negotiation processes between relevant political and economic actors, in conflicts where a dialogue pathway becomes necessary to complement or break the deadlock in the official track.

• **Multi-Track Diplomacy and Dialogue Facilitation,** through the creation of dialogue platforms among scholars, experts, activists, local authorities and governing bodies, as well as assisting the development of peace-building capacities in conflict areas.

• **Field Projects,** aimed at improving the capacities for conflict prevention and resolution through confidence-building, research and advocacy of feasible peace policies.

• **Research and Policy Development** of peace-related issues.

• **Professional Development and Training,** seeking to enhance the capacities of practitioners from different institutions working on peace-related issues.

• **Public Awareness and Advocacy,** through information dissemination, policy-oriented publishing and participation in the public debate.

## PROGRAMMES

Notwithstanding a progressive extension of its working field to other areas, such as Southeast Europe, the CITpax current activities and projects are divided into three main programmes: two geographical programmes, one centred on Africa and the Middle East, and the other on Latin America, and the Conflict Prevention and Resolution Programme, which thematically complements and supports the regional programmes.

### Africa and the Middle East Programme

CITpax is involved in the following activities in Africa and the Middle East. In the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, CITpax is exploring Track II diplomatic tools to enhance ongoing negotiations and the status of the peace process. The Programme also intends to progressively address some of the core challenges of the region such as peace perspectives between Syria and Israel and the conditions for the establishment of a cooperation and security system in the Middle East. Addressing regional conflicts, discreet efforts are being made to bring regional parties to explore venues for strengthening local peaceful resolutions. Focusing on the reconstruction of post-war Iraq and the enhancement of civil society in several countries in the Middle East, CITpax is also engaged in the North Africa context, with an emphasis on the Western Sahara conflict and the future of economic integration in the Maghreb.

Areas of the Programme:

• Regional Stability in the Middle East
• Emphasis on the Palestinian Israeli conflict
• Economic Integration of the Maghreb
• Transition to democracy

### Latin America Programme

CITpax activities in this area include second track diplomacy aimed at bringing together conflicting parties; the promotion of dialogue to build up consensus; field missions for the identification of problematic issues in tense areas and political research on questions that could have a negative effect on democracy in Latin America. In particular, the programme focuses on the Andean Region with an initial emphasis on Colombia. It promotes confidence building initiatives and facilitates better understanding of the main issues related to the conflict in Colombia. Moreover, the CITpax examines past regional experiences in order to draw practical lessons to promote initiatives that pursue political dialogue and conflict prevention.

Areas of the Programme:

• Political regional dialogue
• Institutional stability in the Andean Region
• Alternatives to the Colombian conflict
• Promotion of "benign borders"

### Conflict Prevention and Resolution Programme

The programme concentrates on the study and support of negotiation processes and peace agreements, as well as on the facilitation and elaboration of recommendations to those countries going through post-conflict situations. CITpax's activities, which are based on the idea of human security, fall within a long-term global perspective. Thus, the projects designed within this programme intend to contribute to building and consolidating peace in those contexts where violence has been formally overcome.

It also aims at formulating strategies that may prevent potential conflicts by trying to address the causes and by proposing solutions for their symptoms. The programme will also study and analyse multinational peacekeeping interventions and work to improve the tools for training those professionals that participate in peace operations. This includes UN Peacekeeping Operations as well as other multilateral interventions that result in regime change and/or post-conflict reconstruction focusing on both civil-military relations and the civil roles conducted by military personnel.

Areas of the Programme:

• International civil administration
• Rule of law, institution-building and strengthening of democracy
• Transitional justice
• Humanitarian assistance
• Electoral processes
• Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR)
• Strengthening of civil society and support for the most vulnerable sectors
• Early responses to crisis situations
• Socioeconomic dimension of conflicts
• Regional dimension of conflicts
• Development Cooperation as an instrument for conflict prevention and peace-building

## STAFF

**Director-General:** Emilio Cassinello, Ambassador of Spain.

Blanca Antonini, Director, Latin America Programme.
George E. Irani, Director, Africa and the Middle East Programme.
Claudia Medina, Director of Projects and Operations - Researcher.
Juan Garrigues, Desk Officer, Latin America Programme.
Stuart Reigeluth, Desk Officer, Africa and the Middle East Programme.
Gabriel Reyes, Desk Officer, Conflict Prevention and Resolution Programme.

## ADVISORY COUNCIL

Emma Bonino, Member of the European Parliament.
Kim Campbell, Secretary-General of the Club of Madrid, former Prime Minister of Canada.
Baltasar Garzón, Judge of the National Audience, Spain.
Marrack Goulding, Dean, St. Anthony's College, Oxford University.
Rosario Green, former Mexican Minister of Foreign Affairs.
Bernard Kouchner, former Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Kosovo.
Juan Manuel Santos, former Minister of Finance and Public Credit, Colombia.
Pierre Schori, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Cote d'Ivoire.
Francesc Vendrell, Special Representative of the UE for Afghanistan.
Federico Mayor Zaragoza, former Director-General of the UNESCO.