Hanan Ashrawi, Ph.D.

Concept, Context and Process in Peacemaking: The Palestinian-Israeli Experience

JOAN B. KROC INSTITUTE FOR PEACE & JUSTICE

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Hanan Ashrawi, Ph.D.

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Edited by Emiko Noma
CONTENTS

Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice 4

Joan B. Kroc Distinguished Lecture Series 6

Biography of Hanan Ashwari, Ph.D. 8

Interview with Dr. Hanan Ashwari by Dr. Joyce Neu 10

Introduction by Dr. Joyce Neu 22

Lecture - Concept, Context and Process in Peacemaking: The Palestinian-Israeli Experience 25

Questions and Answers 48

Related Resources 60

About the University of San Diego 64
The mission of the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice (IPJ) is to foster peace, cultivate justice and create a safer world. Through education, research and peacemaking activities, the IPJ offers programs that advance scholarship and practice in conflict resolution and human rights. The Institute for Peace & Justice, located at the University of San Diego, draws upon Catholic social teaching that sees peace as inseparable from justice and acts to prevent and resolve conflicts that threaten local, national and international peace. The IPJ was established in 2000 through a generous gift from the late Joan B. Kroc to the University of San Diego to create an institute for the study and practice of peace and justice. Programming began in early 2001 and the building was dedicated in December 2001 with a conference, “Peacemaking with Justice: Policy for the 21st Century.”

The Institute for Peace & Justice strives, in Joan B. Kroc’s words, to “not only talk about peace, but to make peace.” The IPJ offers its services to parties in conflict to provide mediation and facilitation, assessments, training and consultations. It advances peace with justice through work with members of civil society in zones of conflict and has a focus on mainstreaming women in peace processes.

The Women PeaceMakers Program brings into residence at the IPJ women who have been actively engaged in peacemaking in conflict areas around the world to document their stories, share experiences with others working in peacemaking, and allow time for reflection on their work.

A Master’s Program in Peace & Justice Studies trains future leaders in the field and will be expanded into the Joan B. Kroc School of Peace Studies, supported by a $50 million endowment from the estate of Mrs. Kroc.

WorldLink, a year-round educational program for high school students from San Diego and Baja California connects youth to global affairs.

Country programs, such as the Nepal project, offer wide-ranging conflict assessments, mediation and conflict resolution training workshops.

Community outreach includes speakers, films, art and opportunities for discussion between community members, academics and practitioners on issues of peace and social justice, as well as dialogue with national and international leaders in government, non-governmental organizations and the military.
JOAN B. KROC DISTINGUISHED LECTURE SERIES

Endowed in 2003 by a generous gift to the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice from the late Joan Kroc, philanthropist and international peace proponent, the Joan B. Kroc Distinguished Lecture Series is a forum for high-level national and international leaders and policy makers to share their knowledge and perspectives on issues related to peace and justice. The goal of the series is to deepen understanding of how to prevent and resolve conflict and promote peace with justice.

The Distinguished Lecture Series offers the community at large an opportunity to engage with leaders who are working to forge new dialogues with parties in conflict and who seek to answer the question of how to create an enduring peace for tomorrow. The series, which is held at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice at the University of San Diego, examines new developments in the search for effective tools to prevent and resolve conflict while protecting human rights and ensuring social justice.

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Justice of the Constitutional Court of South Africa
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U.S. Department of State
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April 14, 2004  General Anthony C. Zinni
United States Marine Corps (retired)
From the Battlefield to the Negotiating Table: Preventing Deadly Conflict

November 4, 2004  Hanan Ashrawi, Ph.D.
Secretary General – Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy
Concept, Context and Process in Peacemaking: The Palestinian-Israeli Experience
Dr. Ashrawi has served on the advisory boards of several international and local organizations, including the World Bank Middle East and North Africa (MENA), United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), and the International Human Rights Council. She has also received several Honorary Doctorate degrees from universities in the United States, Canada, Europe and the Arab world.

Dr. Hanan Mikhail Ashrawi is married to Emile Ashrawi and has two daughters, Amal and Zeina.
INTERVIEW WITH HANAN ASHRAWI, PH.D.

The following is an edited transcript of an interview with Dr. Hanan Ashrawi conducted by Dr. Joyce Neu, Executive Director of the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice, by phone on December 23, 2004. Dr. Ashrawi spoke at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice at the University of San Diego on November 4, 2004.

HA = Dr. Hanan Ashrawi
JN = Dr. Joyce Neu

JN: Since you were here in San Diego a lot has happened, obviously not the least of which was the death of the Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat. I wonder if you could take a few minutes to talk about the situation today in the Middle East.

HA: Well, it seems to me that we've witnessed an end of an era. As you know, when I was in San Diego, I got a phone call that his health had taken a turn for the worse. He was in Paris, and I thought that I might have to go back. Certainly this signaled the end of an era, the end of the period in which you have not just a one-man show, but a larger-than-life historical figure who represents much more than himself or his functional or executive tasks. In a sense, he left a vacuum that cannot be filled by one person, but has to be filled functionally by different people.

We decided that the only way to proceed was through institution-building, rule of law and, of course, democratic elections, and we're moving ahead with that. We are in the middle of it now. We started municipal elections today. On the ninth of January, we will have presidential elections. In May, we will have legislative parliamentary elections, and in August, Parliament will have its own elections. So, the next six to eight months will witness a real flurry of democratic activity and, hopefully with that, we'll see the institution-building; we will see a serious reform program. Hopefully, we'll see serious attempts at not just separation of powers and rule of law, but also at providing the Palestinian people with all the services and rights and protections that they need.

Unfortunately, the situation is not under our control entirely because we are still under occupation. We are still under siege. We are still subject to incursions, assassinations, home demolitions, the ongoing building of the separation wall, the ongoing land theft, and the building of settlements. So, even though we are working domestically to try to empower ourselves and to build a democracy, the conditions of the occupation continue to be the major impediment and the major social strain providing serious obstacles to our nation-building process. We are expecting or hoping that the international response and all these visitors and the diplomatic guests, prime ministers and so on, will understand that, more than moral support, what the Palestinians need is serious positive intervention to put an end to the occupation and to provide us with the freedom that we need to move ahead.

JN: I don’t know whether you’ve had a chance to see it, but I just saw this morning that the International Crisis Group has issued a report today called After Arafat, Challenges and Prospects. One of the points that they make is the difficulty and the challenge for the new Palestinian leadership to earn its legitimacy with the Palestinian people.

HA: Of course, this new leadership is going to be subject to a very intense scrutiny because they do not have the leeway or the license that Arafat had. Because of his historical and symbolic standing, his charisma, and the fact that he embodied a national identity on all these things, Arafat was given room and license to carry out certain things that people frowned upon, but that they accepted from him. But now, whoever is elected, and of course it looks like Mahmoud Abbas will be elected, and whoever is appointed prime minister, and later on whoever is elected for the PLC [Palestinian Legislative Council], they all will be held accountable immediately by the people in a very intrusive way. They're going to gain their legitimacy through the people, through elections,

1 See Related Resources.
getting a mandate from the people—accepting accountability and accepting
that they have to be transparent.

The old guard is not used to this. They’re not part of a very transparent system
or even a culture that was entirely democratic or professional. But I look upon
this as a period of transition. I look for the old guard to carry us through this
period to ensure that institutionally we can sustain ourselves and proceed and,
at the same time, to render themselves obsolete by handing power over to the
younger generation at the right time and accepting new elections, and so on.

So this is a period of transition, from the returnees, the old guard, the people
who came back from the revolution, to the younger generation (I wouldn’t
say the young generation because it is already middle-aged). They will work
simultaneously on the two processes of nation-building and peacemaking. The
challenges are enormous. As I said, not everything is under our control. We are
not free agents, so to speak. The occupation determines a great deal of what
happens and, of course, the degree of positive intervention determines what
happens. So far, we’ve seen lots of talk and verbal sort of encouragement, but
no action whatsoever. We’ve seen lots of visits and frequent flier mileage by
everybody, but very few really serious initiatives that can give the Palestinians
a new hope.

What amazes me, Joyce, frankly, is that people assume that we are not
democratic or that we are all entirely corrupt. They don’t know that even
before the state of Israel was created we had elections. They don’t know that
we had elections even under the occupation, even when it was illegal. They
don’t know that we had elections in 1996 when we elected the President and
the Legislative Council.

So, in a sense, when I hear Tony Blair and George Bush talk about how the
Palestinians have to learn democracy or have to learn how to exercise democracy
and need to reform themselves, I feel this tells you how much they know about
us. We certainly are not the Taliban. We certainly do not have a lack of
freedom of speech or thought. Our women are not prevented from running for
office or voting or getting educated or working. So, in a sense, by making this a
prerequisite or making this the only issue, they don’t understand that to us the
real issue has always been the occupation. That is what has prevented us from
exercising our democratic rights and building our institutions of state.

JN: I think you’re saying you don’t see any movement by the international
community to intervene in terms of the occupation?

HA: None at all! We’ve seen lots of movement in terms of visits, expressions of
intent, declarations of intent, so to speak. There’s been lots of encouragement.
It’s very fashionable, trendy or sexy to talk about Palestinian elections as
though we’re resisting and they’re telling us they want to support us. Well, we
took the decisions and we’re proceeding with elections without even talking to
anybody because this is part of our constitution and part of our law. This is a
decision we took freely. It’s part of our constitution and we are proceeding.

All we need is intervention in order to prevent Israel from continuing to
put obstacles in our path, including lifting the siege. We need freedom of
movement to be able to have elections. We don’t have that at all. We need
them to stop the incursions, assassinations and home demolitions. We need the
conditions and the climate to be able to have free and fair elections, the results
of which are not tainted by extreme Israeli measures.

And, of course, ultimately what we really need is hope. We need real political
options—a peace process that has substance and integrity and that can give people an
alternative and a way out. That’s what we all need, but that has not been forthcoming.
We hear declarations from the Bush administration that this is a really high priority,
but then they say, “OK, you have your elections, you reform your security; Israel has
to form its own coalition government, then Israel will start its redeployment, then
we will see.” All this procrastination isn’t going to serve anybody well and it seems
to me that so far we haven’t seen any peace plan that is capable of delivering. The
Tony Blair initiative has been undermined. It’s no longer an international conference;
it’s a meeting of some foreign ministers and a few states.
JN: This is the London conference?

HA: Yes. This is the London conference: to “rehabilitate” the Palestinians, to make us fit for negotiations. Forgive my very heavy irony. I find this extremely unacceptable to be told that instead of giving us a political course of action, they need to make sure that we are made fit for negotiations. I mean, OK, we do need reconstruction and development, but this has to be in the context of a political process that gives people a chance to move in a different direction, to know that the occupation will come to an end. But they adopted the Israeli priorities. They adopted the Israeli pre-conditions and, of course, they removed the political dimension of the conference and Israel isn’t attending, so what’s the point?

If they talk about reform, we have our own reform plan; homegrown, authentic and already in action. I just finished a plan for the PLC. I had a committee that worked on legislative reform. We will present it to the Council and will start implementation in January. I’m also a member of the National Reform Committee. We’re working on executive reform as well as other types of reform. So we don’t need one conference after another to test us, to teach us how to negotiate or how to reform.

JN: Let me shift a little bit to your role. A few years ago when you were at the University of California, Berkeley, you did an interview in which you said that you believe that women have a strength and willingness to take risks. You also said that they may tend to look at the interests of people in general rather than just at their own self-interests. Was there a moment when you recognized your own leadership skills?

HA: That’s hard to say. I don’t know whether one goes through life with epiphanies, or whether one just keeps going and keeps working at it, realizing that you are making a difference, however modest. But I think persistence pays, a refusal to be deflected or intimidated. Whether I did recognize that or not, I don’t know. What was encouraging to me was that it is very gratifying and humbling to see people—many women, yes—but also especially young people who come and say, “We look up to you. We expect so much from you.” It’s not even the position; it’s the recognition that what you are saying is being heard, and that you are a role model to many. It’s very encouraging. As I’ve always said, leadership is not necessarily those who agree to be in official positions. We do have quite a few officials, but very few leaders.

JN: That’s a good point [laughter]. When you finished your Ph.D., you became a professor at Birzeit University, and you started off on an academic line, doing quite a bit of publishing on Palestinian literature. But you also became very politically active. Today, the atmosphere in the academic world urges us to keep our political beliefs separate from our professional work. What is your perspective on the best way to mentor and educate young people who are considering professional and political lives?

HA: Politics are not a separate aspect of your life. They’re part of your everyday life. They influence everything you do, everything you think, in some very subtle or insidious ways and, in other places, by very overt and crude means. So you cannot say, “I will not discuss politics,” or, “I will live in my academic ivory tower and enjoy the luxury of having these types of parameters that will not allow reality to intrude,” because reality always intrudes. We are part of it. It seems to me, within the academic world there is a serious problem because, particularly in the U.S. with the likes of Daniel Pipes and others, there’s an attempt at real intimidation and censorship. I mean, it’s a new type of McCarthyism. I think you also have a bill that is being proposed to curtail academic freedoms and so on. Academia is a place where people can take intellectual risks, where people can explore, where people can defy limits, not just in terms of research and esoteric works—the way I did with medieval studies and so on—but where you can increase your skills and add awareness to have a real handle on reality, and be able to effect change. Otherwise, what’s the point? It’s like Milton’s cloistered virtue.

2 Daniel Pipes, director of the Middle East Forum, has written extensively about the “threat of radical Islam,” including the books Militant Islam Reaches America and Minutemen: Views of Islamic and Middle Eastern Politics. See Related Resources.
3 In September 2003, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the “International Studies in Higher Education Act of 2003.” The bill, among other things, creates an international advisory board, the composition of which includes representatives of national security agencies to monitor the activities of international studies programs that receive funding from Title VI, the Higher Education Act. Critics argue that the bill denies freedom of speech in academic institutions. The bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions.
You need to be able to be out there in the world to make a difference. You have a responsibility. You are, after all, dealing with minds. There is a sensitive and valuable trust that you have, so you have to be able to be true to your profession and give people the proper tools and skills: the inquisitive mind; a sense of stretching their limits, defying limits; and refusing imposed structures, imposed forms and norms of thought, which are all obstacles to exploration. This is, of course, the role of education.

So it seems to me that separating that from reality is entirely self-defeating, for it defeats the purpose of bringing out of people all those things that are inherent, that need to be taken out and developed and challenged and nurtured.

JN: Was there anyone during your college days who provided such inspiration to you?

HA: There were many. I’ve always valued academic life and really enjoyed learning. It is such a luxury to be a student. I used that to the hilt, actually. When people ask me if I had a role model or one person that really influenced me, I always say no, I think there were many and in different ways: some in the academic world, some on the outside, women, even the young students. I’ve been fortunate in that I’ve had quite a bit of exposure to different individuals and types of people in different walks of life. There is a definite advantage of learning from so many people, and there were many who were quite open and were quite willing to teach. It seems to me that it is one’s own thirst for knowledge that makes the difference ultimately. It’s not only who is out there to inspire you, but also your own readiness to be inspired and to be challenged.

JN: That’s a good lesson for all of our students. In your book, This Side of Peace, you talk about your family, saying that you grew up in a family of privilege and that you had a very close and warm relationship with your father. He had a very busy schedule as a doctor but, despite that, he took time to discuss your writing and to encourage you to write.

HA: Absolutely.

JN: You mentioned that you kept a notebook of your observations, thoughts, etc. I’m wondering whether you still keep such a notebook, and how these early experiences with writing helped shape you?

HA: Yes, that was very, very important. It gave me not just a valuable tool, but a validation of the use of language, the parts of language, and of observation. I learned the value in having the courage not just to note things, but to note them down and to look at reality and scrutinize it, and be able to examine it. So, it’s very important. Unfortunately, I don’t have my notebooks now. It’s a very lame excuse I know, but I don’t have time to write notes these days, I’m just on the go constantly. I’d love to write longer pieces and things, but the sort of what I call Victorian account book or Victorian notebook, where you just jot down ideas or an idea that you read or heard or thought, this I don’t have time to do. But, the sense of looking at the world with wonder, with fresh sight, not just observing but also knowing that when you are observing, when you write things down or when you intervene in reality, you can change what is, you can be part of the reformulation of life and reality—this is very important. The courage to do that lies in your having to be daring in the pursuit of truth. It’s absolutely essential. It gives you courage and tells you not to accept imposed limits, not to let others define yours, or define your abilities, or put limits on you. This is something I had from my father and from my upbringing on the whole. I hope it’s something I gave to my daughters and to others I work with.

JN: Have you shared these notebooks with your daughters or have you had them write their own?

HA: Well, my daughters always write. Both of them write beautifully, but it’s not just the ability to write that’s important. Language alone is, as you know, not separate from awareness, from a mindset, even from a world view. It’s a mental habit, so language expresses your thoughts, your ideas, and your ability to capture them and record them in ways that are creative, original and moving.

4 See Related Resources.
My daughters do that, both of them, but they write when they need to, not just in a cathartic way, but in a variety of ways. They do both academic and creative writing. I find some of the things that they write quite moving. They’re finding their way, both of them now. I want them to know I’m there for them. I will not decide for them in any way, but I will be there to encourage them and to give them also a safety net whenever they need me.

JN: It sounds like this is a family inheritance.

HA: It looks like that, yes. It’s wonderful. The important thing is the relationship, more even than the language or the writing or the creativity. It’s the type of relationship that is pursued, when you have such trust and love and support and encouragement. It’s a luxury because we take each other’s love for granted, and yet every day we’re amazed by it. So it’s a wonderful relationship between parents and children. It works both ways. I mean my daughters tell me that we are their best friends and they talk to us, and they’re constantly reaching out to each other and getting reinforcement from each other. It is the whole idea of knowing that we’re there for each other. It’s amazing. You always wonder how there can be such unrestricted and undemanding love.

JN: You say that when you grew up, you were able to speak freely within your family, and you knew that you were Palestinian, but you were not publicly able to acknowledge your identity as a Palestinian. What impact did this have on you, and what impact do you think it will have on your soon-to-be grandson that he will be able to grow up acknowledging his identity?

HA: Well, I think we got over the phase of my childhood where we couldn’t talk about national identity or say we were Palestinians. As a result of that, we went through a revolution. You remember the late 1960s and early 1970s, we had the Palestinian revolution, and there was an affirmation. Now, there is a global recognition, but we’re unable to exercise our identity in terms of the right to self-determination or status. My children, for example, are very proud of their identity. Everywhere they feel comfortable in the world. They do feel like they’re citizens of the world, but they still need affirmation of their identity as Palestinians, because we’re still under occupation. If you remember in my book I told them that I’m out there trying to make peace so that I can come home and spend more time with them and so that they will enjoy peace. Unfortunately they still don’t enjoy peace and we’re still striving for it.

Beyond that I think it’s amazing to talk about a grandchild. To have a grandchild is an amazing experience. I am looking forward to it, to this new life. I just hope that the things I have promised my daughters at least will be there for my grandson. I hope that my grandchildren will, first of all, have a childhood because my daughters always missed the fact that they didn’t have a free childhood, a safe childhood. They always say they were robbed of their childhood and I hope, first of all, that he will have one. I also hope that he will have such a comfort in his identity that he won’t have to try to prove it all the time.

Being a Palestinian is such a challenge, and sometimes a burden, and sometimes a responsibility. It is not like being anything else. It is an identity that invokes extreme responses, whether of support and solidarity, or resentment and anger, or hostility, or even racism or denial. But as I said, we need to reach the point where we can utter the term “Palestine” or “Palestinian” in normal tones. We need to normalize ourselves as an identity like any other. We don’t want to be tragic characters again. We need to be normal, boring people even. I hope they will have the safety and the comfort of knowing that they do have the validation of their identity and of their right to live in peace and freedom and dignity on their own land. That’s what they need—something that other people have and that other people take for granted.

JN: Yes, it is a luxury, and most people don’t recognize it as such.

HA: They don’t know what it means to have that comfort, that security.

JN: From what you’ve just said, it sounds like there is no option of going back to academia and just writing.
HA: No, I’m going to write. I have to write; that’s something that is with me. I write more politics now, but I have to continue this type of piece. It seems to me there’s a need to have a sequel. I’ve been doing some on political ideas and so on. But I will continue to write. Politically, we’re preparing for elections and many people come and ask me to write. I’ve written on presidential elections; maybe I would put together a list for the legislative parliamentary elections. That’s very important. And I will continue to work on my reform movement and women’s empowerment, and working for change, for democracy and institution-building. And, of course, trying to make a difference internationally because of my international relations, contacts and networking. That’s very important. But as far as taking official positions, I still haven’t decided yet. This is under discussion. It all depends on the team, it depends on the agenda, and it depends on where I can be most effective.

JN: It sounds as though whatever role you take you’re going to be very much at the heart of what happens.

HA: I can guarantee you this—I will try to make a difference.

JN: That’s clear. And, it’s clear that you already have made such a difference. Your role as kind of a facilitator of understanding for the West of the Palestinian issues has been so critically important.

HA: Thank you. That’s quite encouraging.

JN: Well, I think you’ve put a face to a people who are often misunderstood. So I wish you all the best.

HA: Thank you. It’s very important to work with like-minded people, people who know the importance of taking risks for peace and people who understand women’s roles in peacemaking.

JN: It must be a difficult period right now.
INTRODUCTION BY DR. JOYCE NEU, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE JOAN B. KROC INSTITUTE FOR PEACE & JUSTICE

Tonight’s talk by Dr. Hanan Ashrawi occurs at a momentous time. George W. Bush has been reelected U.S. President as another leader, Yasser Arafat, lies gravely ill in a hospital in Paris. There are discussions that are going on in major capitals of the world tonight as we sit here debating the future of peace in the Middle East. Dr. Ashrawi arrived late last night from Tel Aviv, just as Chairman Arafat took a turn for the worse, and I know that she’s had a very rough day today, deciding whether to stay here and be with us this evening or to fly home. We are very grateful to her for staying with us, and she will be leaving first thing in the morning.

When Joan Kroec endowed the Distinguished Lecture Series, she said she wanted the Institute to have speakers at the forefront of discussions on national and international peace policy, and she recognized that not all of the people we would invite would be without controversy. We have invited Dr. Ashrawi here to speak because of her direct role in peacemaking attempts in the Middle East over the last decade and more. The Institute strives to bring in speakers who are directly engaged in peacemaking and who represent voices of peace and human rights in the midst of conflict.

Hanan Ashrawi was born in 1946, two years before Israel became a country, and she grew up in the West Bank town of Ramallah outside of Jerusalem. When the Six Day War broke out in 1967, Dr. Ashrawi was 22 years old and a student of English literature at the American University of Beirut in Lebanon. By the end of the war, Israel had control over the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem and the West Bank, including Dr. Ashrawi’s hometown. The Israeli government passed a law that labeled anyone who was not in the country an absentee, thus, Dr. Ashrawi, who was outside the country studying, had no legal status and was not allowed to return to Israel at that time. For the next six years, she traveled and continued her studies overseas. Studying for her Ph.D. in English Literature at the University of Virginia, Dr. Ashrawi attributes part of her education, dissent and activism to the growing women’s movement here in the United States. In September 1973, she was granted permission to return home. Only a month later, Egypt and Syria attacked the Israeli-occupied territories, marking the beginning of what is called the Yom Kippur War.

That same year, Dr. Ashrawi became a professor at Birzeit University, an Anglican teacher’s college. In 1974, while the University was suffering intermittent closures by the Israeli military, she founded the Birzeit University Legal Aid Committee/Human Rights Action Project. In 1988, during the Intifada uprising, she joined the Intifada Political Committee, serving as well on its Diplomatic Committee until 1993. In 1991, Yasser Arafat appointed her official spokesperson of the Palestinian delegation to the Middle East peace process. In 1993, she was one of the founders of the Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens’ Rights. With the signing of the Oslo Declaration by Arafat and [Yitzhak] Rabin that year, Palestinian self-rule was established. Dr. Ashrawi headed the preparatory committee of the Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens’ Rights in Jerusalem and was the founder and Commissioner General of that committee until 1995. From 1996 to 1998, she served as Minister of Higher Education and Research.

In 1998, however, Dr. Ashrawi resigned from the government in protest against political corruption, specifically Yasser Arafat’s handling of the peace
In talks. Later that year, she founded the Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy, known as MIFTAH, and has served as MIFTAH’s Secretary General ever since. MIFTAH’s mission is to foster the principles of democracy and effective dialogue based on the free and candid exchange of information and ideas. Dr. Ashrawi has also served, since 1996, as an elected member of the Palestinian Legislative Council, Jerusalem District. Dr. Ashrawi remained a professor at Birzeit University until 1995, working there for 22 years, serving first as Chair of the Department of English and later as Dean of the Faculty of Arts. She has published numerous poems, short stories, papers and articles on Palestinian culture, literature and politics. She edited the *Anthology of Palestinian Literature*, and has written *The Modern Palestinian Short Story: An Introduction to Practical Criticism, Contemporary Palestinian Literature under Occupation, Contemporary Palestinian Poetry and Fiction, and Literary Translation, Theory and Practice*. Her most recent writings include *From Intifada to Independence* and her autobiography, which is called *This Side of Peace: A Personal Account*. Dr. Ashrawi served on the Independent International Commission on Kosovo and serves on numerous international advisory boards, including the Council on Foreign Relations, the World Bank Middle East and North Africa region, and the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development.

Less than a week ago when I was in New York, I had lunch with a member of the Institute’s International Council, Justice Richard Goldstone, who some of you may remember was here a year ago last October. He worked very closely with Dr. Ashrawi on the Commission on Kosovo as he was the Chair of that commission. When he heard that she was coming to speak at the Institute, he was delighted and said that hers was a perspective that needed to be heard. Please join me in welcoming Dr. Hanan Ashrawi.

**Hanan Ashrawi, Ph.D.**
Thank you. Thank you very much. It's a pleasure to be here. Let me start by thanking Joyce Neu for her invitation and for her friendship. I would also like to thank Diana Kutlow and Shelley Lyford, the women who are the dynamic, high-powered source of energy behind the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice. And I would like to thank my two assistants, Rana Malki, who stayed at home holding the fort, so to speak, and Margo Sabella, who has been with me putting up with all sorts of unpredictable developments. I'm very happy to be here and it is indeed an honor and a privilege to be with you, despite the fact that I'm torn between staying here and engaging in a candid dialogue with you, and going back home and doing the necessary things that need to be done. It is all to make sure that we all hope together at these difficult times.

We feel that for a long time the absence of an American role that is evenhanded and decisive has been detrimental for peacemaking in our part of the world.

Before I begin, I was also asked to make a few statements or give you my comments on how I see the developments pertaining to two major issues. One is the election of President Bush and the Republicans to four more years, and then indications about the election. Also, there is the issue of the peace process in our part of the world and, of course, the ailing heath of President Arafat and the significance of that or the repercussions on the Palestinian realities and on peacemaking in our region. So I will try to be brief because I have prepared notes that go beyond that. But they are quite relevant, actually, in the sense that even though we do not take sides in terms of party politics in the U.S., we take sides on issues, rather than individuals or parties. And we feel that for a long time the absence of an American role that is evenhanded and decisive has been detrimental for peacemaking in our part of the world. We felt that the U.S. should be involved, should launch a peace process, but should maintain the legality and the humanity and the substance of peace as something that has its own integrity and can change reality.

Instead, we ended up with a process for its own sake and with the administration keeping its distance and, of course, any vacuum is immediately filled in a situation of occupation: filled by violence and power, power politics. Even the road map that was designed in order to embody or translate the vision of President Bush into a process that can bring about the end of the occupation and the establishment of the Palestinian state, that road map was hijacked, so to speak, by Sharon with his 14 reservations and with the pre-conditions. And we didn't see much implementation or momentum on the road map. Instead, now we are seeing a unilateral disengagement plan which has very little to do with the road map, if anything. That's why we feel that perhaps with a second-term president, all ideology aside, there might be a chance that there is no need to cater to special interest groups, so there might be an energy or a will to be able to make peace. I told the press this evening that the U.S. has demonstrated that it can go to war. It can use weapons, it can kill and bomb and destroy and even destabilize the whole region. The real test—the real test—is whether the U.S. can make peace. And it seems to me it takes greater courage, greater integrity and greater moral fiber to embark on a peacemaking process rather than to continue on the course of war and further militarization and conflict.

I'll be talking probably more in detail about the proposal I worked out for how to reenergize the peace process. As far as President Arafat is concerned, there is, of course, the human angle. I always begin by giving every individual a human consideration. Every human life is valuable, and it's very difficult to see the passing of a man who has had such an impact on our lives and on our history. He is, after all, a historical figure. He does embody the Palestinian struggle and Palestinian national identity. Even those who disagree with him and who argue with him, like I did for a long time, see in him a person who dedicated his life to the cause of his people and, therefore, it's not easy to see him being dehumanized, being demonized and being blamed for everything. He was a very convenient scapegoat for Sharon, who blamed him even for Sharon's own actions or misdeeds. Sharon didn't want a peace process and he went ahead,
pressed ahead with this policy of assassinations, of land acquisitions, and even of building the “Apartheid Wall,” and he blamed Arafat for that— Arafat, who was imprisoned in his bomb headquarters in two rooms, living in extremely unhealthy conditions, constantly being blamed while he’s being held hostage, incapable of moving. And, of course, that conveniently helped Sharon evade any peace process and avoid implementing the requirements imperative for peace, particularly the road map and the requirement to stop all settlement activities. And, of course, there was the ICJ [International Court of Justice] ruling on the illegality of the wall.\(^5\)

But Arafat will not be easy to replace. I must say he is in a difficult situation as his health is critical and he’s moving from consciousness to unconsciousness, back and forth. He is weak, he is frail, and I talked with people who were with him this afternoon and his condition is critical. But, should he pass away at any time, it’s very clear that he won’t be replaced easily, because there’s no person of his stature or status historically in Palestine. I think it will be the end of an era, which is the end of an era globally probably, where you see a larger-than-life person who embodied a nation. You saw that in Mandela probably. Maybe Arafat had a very difficult time making the transition from the revolutionary to the statesman, or to a nation-building leader. Still, that doesn’t diminish his role and the fact that the Palestinian people feel they owe him loyalty. So that would be the end of the larger-than-life historical figure.

But, at the same time, Arafat functionally occupied different positions. He is the head of the Executive Committee of the PLO [Palestinian Liberation Organization]. He is the Chairman or the head of the Palestinian National Authority. He’s the President of Palestine and he also heads the Fatah movement, which is the largest political party in Palestine. I doubt we will have one person who will occupy all these positions. I think you will see somebody like Abu Mazen [Mahmoud Abbas], who is second in line because he’s Secretary General of the PLO Executive Committee. We have a prime minister who, in accordance with the basic law, is undertaking executive duties along with the cabinet. Abu Allah [Ahmed Qureia]. Should anything happen to President Arafat, then there will be elections within 60 days. But, in the meantime, for 60 days the Speaker of the Legislative Council, Rawhi Fattuh, will take over until we elect a new president. Fatah, of course, also has its own system, whether it’s the Revolutionary Council or whether it’s the Central Committee, but they will elect their own leader. So there is in place a legal system, a structural institutional system, and the Palestinians are determined not to fall apart. And there is a sort of rallying going on, a pulling together, to show that we can create institutions, we can legislate laws, and we can abide by them, regardless of the status of Arafat and his standing, and the fact that he has been a forceful cohesion among the Palestinian community. We will be united and we will put the national good, the public good, above any type of political rivalry or personal self-interest. I would like to assure you of that. So far, things have been working and, hopefully, in the long run, they will work. The only way in which to have new leadership is through elections. And we would like to have the conditions and the climate to have free and fair general elections at all levels: local government, legislative and presidential. That’s the real source of legitimacy for any leadership.

So I will go back to my notes. First of all, I would like to congratulate you on your upcoming conference on “Women, Peace and Security” in accordance with U.N. Resolution 1325.\(^6\) Actually, I was in New York when I saw that 1325 was adopted. I was having discussions with Noeleen Heyzer [Executive Director of UNIFEM, the United Nations Development Fund for Women], so I’m very glad that it has been adopted, but like any resolution and any law, the real test is in the implementation. They have been given lots of lip service and lots of verbal commitments and the real test is whether these are translated into action. Of course, the topic is close to my heart, particularly as I believe that there has been a serious flaw in peacemaking throughout the world—the absence of women and the absence of women’s councils and women’s organizations as decision-makers, because we bring to negotiations not

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\(^5\) For a copy of the International Court of Justice’s ruling on the building of a wall in the occupied territories, see [http://www.icj-cij.org/scwww/idocket/imwp/imwpframe.htm](http://www.icj-cij.org/scwww/idocket/imwp/imwpframe.htm).

\(^6\) See Related Resources.
just the human component, but a consensus building and a sense of substance that goes beyond self-interest.

The theme of this year’s lecture series is also quite timely and equally relevant and urgent. I understood it was “Human Rights under Pressure.” I would say “human rights under siege,” as well. We are facing global difficulty in maintaining the integrity of the very simple statement, the universality of human rights, and the fact that all rights emanate from this, that peace, as I always claim, is the most basic of human rights. All people have the right to live in peace and security and dignity. So that is the essence of human rights. It hasn’t been that long, actually. The close of the 20th century, which seems like a century ago, ended on a note of optimism. You remember when we talked about the universality of human rights as a given, that we had the responsibility of conflict prevention and positive intervention to eliminate the causes of conflict. We discussed the responsibility of power as having a type of moral value that has to be exercised positively to alleviate pain, injustice and global issues and problems. We talked about human security rather than military security, with human security involving the individual as having inherent rights that cut across national boundaries and narrow issues of sovereignty. We talked about a global rule of law, and we defined our enemies and allies on the basis of this shared humanity and our common good.

However, sadly, contemporary realities have witnessed a real paradigm shift, a tangential departure, if you will, with serious implications for global peace and security as well as for the human, legal and moral substance of domestic and international politics. This is, of course, especially true in the post-September 11 universe and the emergent “war on terrorism.” By the way, there still isn’t a universal definition of the term “terrorism.” There are lots of subjective definitions. This has unleashed forces that are associated with power politics rather than with the politics of empowerment. Power politics’ main features, as we all know, include unilateralism and, of course, the only people who use unilateralism are the strong and the people who have power to exercise it. Particularly, it has the characteristic of resorting to militarism. And, of course, we’ve seen the emergence of something that’s not very new but resuscitated, which is called “the strategic doctrine of preemptive strikes.” We’ve seen the simplistic polarization of our world, the good and evil, and devils and angels, and the re-emergence of extremist, absolutist ideologies. We’ve also seen the deliberate tainting of the concept of security and self-defense. And all these have led to negative and destructive interventionism.

We’ve seen how even democracy was seen to be imposed by force of arms. You can wage wars to impose democracy. This is part of Donald Rumsfeld’s wars. I’m sure you’ve heard of Rumsfeld’s wars: carrying out a war, an all-pervasive war, in order to pound people into democratic submission. It is Ladeen [Michael Ladeen of the American Enterprise Institute], of course, who coined the phrase “exporting the democratic revolution.” I don’t know whether the U.S. is still in the midst of a democratic revolution, but you export it by respecting and exercising democracy, not by waging war or by refusing to recognize the democratically-elected leaders of another country, or by choosing non-democratic countries to be your allies because they do your bidding more easily.

So it is not surprising that we are witnessing the degradation of human rights and the distortion of the global peace agenda. We’re seeing a systematic devaluation of human lives and the vital values of inclusion and tolerance. When one lays claim to absolute truth, absolute knowledge and absolute unaccountable power, then there is no tolerance or inclusion. We’ve seen that with the divine right of kings some time ago, haven’t we? And we’ve seen the resuscitation now of such simplistic notions as the clash of civilizations, Islam against Christianity, the Judeo-Christian tradition as opposed to Eastern Islam, and the re-emergence of extremist, absolutist ideologies. We’ve also seen the deliberate tainting of the concept of security and self-defense. And all these have led to negative and destructive interventionism.
These theories in many ways have been used and abused repeatedly, exploited in order to justify further conflict, blatant aggression and exclusion, and a very exclusive view of the world. Remember, civilizations are interactive. There is no isolated civilization that emerges in a hermetically-sealed environment. All civilizations interact, evolve, develop, and learn and benefit from each other; therefore, there is an interactive process. I don’t believe that Christianity emerged alone. After all, I come from a place where it emerged from. Many people tend to forget that. So it’s not an exclusive monopoly of the West, for example, right? Here you have examples of people who have the longest-standing Christian tradition; they come from Palestine. Islam didn’t emerge fully blown with a totally fundamentalist label posted on it. On the contrary, Islam also is responsible for the Renaissance in Europe, in the West, remember? Who translated all these documents that brought the Renaissance to the West? So all civilizations benefit from each other, and Judaism also, of course. But whenever any religion or civilization decides that it has the monopoly or becomes totally exclusive and isolated, then this begins the internal decline. And I think then it becomes destructive, whether it’s Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, whatever, even if atheism becomes a religion.

A genuine resolution of any conflict requires addressing its causes—the underlying injustices, the long standing grievances that give rise to this conflict. It therefore requires a collective effort based on legality and justice. In other words, all conflicts must be resolved in context. This contextualization is absolutely important for the understanding of the conflict and for the emergence of the organic tools of its resolution. In addition, of course, there are the universal tools, but there is not a one-size-fits-all conflict resolution approach. Joyce and I discussed this earlier when we were in The Hague and I still believe that each conflict produces its own means of resolution, because it has its own causes. You have to understand the underlying causes, the deep-seated grievances, and you have to deal with them in ways that would prevent its re-emergence and that would resolve the reasons for its emergence. And, of course, when we talk about contextualization, it’s not just contemporary, but historical. We’re talking about the nemesis of the “neocons.” They would like nothing better than to de-contextualize the world. You’ve heard Richard Perle, of course, talk about de-contextualization: let’s take situations as they are and impose on them our own view and dictate how the outcome should be. Now contextualization is very important; it’s a sign of responsibility, maturity, and an understanding of the (I don’t want to say organic), but the interrelatedness of humanity as a whole, regardless of cultures and regardless of geographical boundaries and territorial limits.

…every peace process must be a redemptive process.

The problem is that we have had long-standing recurrent or repetitive shortcomings of all attempts at making peace in our part of the world because of the failure to address the substantive issues. Most of them have been postponed. There’s also the failure to define the objective or the outcome, and quite often to articulate a legal framework or tackle historical roots and causes. As far as we’re concerned, every peace process must be a redemptive process.
...the solution, therefore, requires, as far as we’re concerned, a recognition of our identity, our culture, our history of national rights, and our right to self-determination.

To the Palestinians, the injustice of 1948 is the myth of the land without the people. We were a people slated for national obliteration and to be cast outside the course of history. We were subject to dual injustices of either dispossession, expulsion and exile, or living under the oppression of occupation and total loss of freedom. This negation, denial and exclusion form the basis of the Palestinian fear of totally being excluded from legality, from human consideration, from humanity. And the solution, therefore, requires, as far as we’re concerned, recognition of our identity, our culture, our history of national rights, our right to self-determination and, of course, the land. Our identity is closely linked to the land, as the people have lived there for thousands of years and, therefore, we need a viable state. We are not willing to live in “bantustanized” or isolated little populations totally cut off from each other. And legality—U.N. resolutions, international humanitarian law, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention, this fusion of these three factors—would lead to peace with justice. Again, with that logic, we need our historical and human narrative to be recognized. Validation and recognition are the beginning of the solution, particularly when there is a recognition of the historical injustice and an admission of culpability and guilt at the establishment of the state of Israel and the cost the Palestinians paid. We’re not saying de-establish or deconstruct Israel; no, we’re saying, “OK, Israel is there. We recognize it. We’ve accepted the two-state solution.” We’ve made a major compromise—22 percent of historical Palestine—but at least recognize our narrative and recognize Israel’s responsibility for what happened. Because once you begin that recognition, you begin the steps for rectification and you acknowledge the rights of the Palestinians, then you take concrete action and produce effective solutions.

This is particularly applicable to the refugee question. There’s no way you can begin to resolve the refugee problem (and we have the largest refugee population and the longest-standing refugee issue in the world) by using the starting point, “OK, you’re all excluded. You have no rights, you will relinquish your rights, and we will deny you the protection of the law and we will negate all U.N. resolutions, and then let’s talk about a solution.” That’s not going to work. Affirmation is the beginning, and then we will move ahead. Then we will discuss permutations and possibilities. But you cannot exclude them and deny them and then say, “OK, we will have a just solution.”

In context, as well, one must recognize the enormity of the historical compromise made by the Palestinians. When we accepted 22 percent of historical Palestine and we accepted to recognize Israel in 78 percent, that didn’t take place easily. That took place after a lot of painstaking and painful discussion and debates, political and human, in order to do that. We made that transition from claiming our national homeland, all of it, to accepting a state on 22 percent of it. So we cannot be told, “Well, you ungrateful wretches, you were given this very generous offer in Camp David, while we were willing to give you about 80-some percent of the 22 percent, i.e. 12 percent or 15 percent of your own, and you refused it.” Anyway, that’s why that recognition is significant in order to place in context the evolution of the conflict and, therefore, the keys to its solution. We are, after all, the last remaining colonial situation, with the exception of Iraq [laughter]. But Iraq is unique in that it is—I invented this word for it—the “post-neo-colonial colonialism.” Ours is a subtler colonial situation. That’s why, to the Palestinians, the expanding settlement activities represent a real horror—a land grab, a theft, a loss of the basis of the two-state solution, and therefore, the loss of the substance and the essence of these.

The same thing applies to the wall that Sharon is building on our land as an embodiment of the worst of the occupation—land theft, resource theft, isolation and so on. It explains in context also what Baruch Kimmerling called
We describe this as back to basics, the Nakbar of 1948 where there would be an ongoing effort to empty Palestine, to claim as much geography with as little demography as possible. This again takes us back to a sense of uprootedness: the uprooting of Palestinians, the razing in 1948 of over 500 villages, total destruction, and then there was the “bantustanization” of Palestinian populations. They were entirely vulnerable. People are worried that there would be what is called invisible or silent transfer, or ethnic cleansing, where life would become so difficult for Palestinians that they would leave voluntarily. This was Shamir’s [Yitzhak Shamir, former Prime Minister of Israel] plan. And he said, “We don’t have to put them on trucks and kick them out because we cannot do that, but what we can do is make life as difficult for them as possible so that they will leave.”

Now Palestinians are living in a state of collective trauma and pain and, therefore, people caught in the grip of pain act viscerally and emotionally, rather than maintaining a critical distance or a dispassionate and rational response to the cause of their victimization. They are motivated sometimes by events, sometimes by anger and, therefore, we are seeing the emergence of this situation of mutual infliction of pain targeting civilians on both sides. This is unacceptable, entirely unacceptable. The innocents are paying the price. If Palestinian men, women and children are targeted, that doesn’t mean that gives us license to do the same to Israeli men, women and children. The innocents should be left out of this. I believe that the more powerful certainly have the onus, have the burden to demonstrate that they will not use violence against civilians. But, at the same time, even under occupation, we have to maintain our moral fiber and our commitment not to target Israeli civilians, no matter what the provocation. This kind of “doing unto others what was done unto us” feeds extremism and generates even more violence, more hostility, more disgust, and undermines the chances of peace.

Now, as you know, fear and insecurity are exploited by extremists and extreme hard-line governments to maintain themselves in power. This is what happened with Sharon, for example. He kept talking about how “you cannot trust the Palestinians, you cannot trust the Arabs, because they really want to destroy us.” He knows our motives better than we do. We accepted the two-state

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7 See Related Resources.
or enforceability of the Fourth Geneva Convention. It was entirely politicized. They discussed whether it was applicable and they came out once again saying the Fourth Geneva Convention is applicable to the Palestinian territories and they hoped that Israel would implement it. But we knew it was applicable; we had resolutions about it before. What we needed was the enforcement of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Twice we had the high contracting parties meet and twice they came out with a lack of will to discuss enforcement, but just gave us more verbal assurances that it does apply and, therefore, Israel has to comply. How? Nobody knows.

When we talk again about recourse, we talk about the ICJ ruling on the wall. Again, that came out of the United for Peace request to the General Assembly. Even though it is advisory, it becomes binding on the individual members who asked for it. The wall itself is illegal and yet nobody is discussing the illegality of the wall that Israel is building on Palestinian land. And, actually, we had the veto from the U.S. when this was discussed in the Security Council. That's why we also support the establishment of the International Criminal Court. The ICC is absolutely essential to ensure that the weak, the disenfranchised, and the excluded can have access and recourse to some sort of legal protection.

This brings me to the importance of third party intervention, which I will discuss later. The Palestinian and Israeli peace process of course has suffered a lot because of the absence of third party involvement and multilateralism and the addressing of the issues. Bilateralism does not work in our case because there is an asymmetry of power. There's a situation of occupied and occupier, so you cannot say, “OK, all of you people under occupation, negotiate yourself out of your bondage with your occupied.” It doesn't work. We need third-party involvement and we need terms of reference. And we cannot allow the asymmetry of power to prevail when you are discussing peacemaking. And you cannot have unilateral peace. There is no way because unilateralism is the imposition of the will of the strong on the weak. That's why, when Sharon came out with his unilateral disengagement, we said the only way it can work is if it self-destructs, if it becomes multilateral. If it is unilateral disengagement, we all know then what it means. It means, first of all, negation of the other.

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8 If a resolution is vetoed in the Security Council, a United for Peace motion allows the General Assembly to continue considering the issue. General Assembly Resolution ES-10/6, adopted on 9 February 1999, was a result of a United for Peace motion. It called on the parties to meet in Geneva to discuss the Fourth Geneva Convention and its implementation in the occupied territories. The meeting was held on 15 July 1999.
Sharon stood up and said, “There is no partner,” and he didn't mean Arafat by the way. When they told him, “Well, Arafat may be out of the picture, so you have a partner in other leaders,” he said, “No, no, no, they all think the same. I know, and I’m going to press ahead with my unilateral disengagement now.” Unilateralism is based on the total negation of the other, thereby giving oneself the license to dictate and to impose a one-sided solution based on power.

That's why we feel it won't work. Unilateralism isn't going to work. If Sharon decides that he wants to drop what he calls the demographic threat of Gaza, 1.3 million Palestinians in Gaza, and the security threat of Gaza, not by withdrawing from Gaza and removing all the settlements, but by besieging Gaza and turning it into a prison, therefore, the Gazans will have no access to the rest of the world: no seaports, no airports, they cannot control the territorial waters. They cannot control the airspace and they cannot control the land crossing points. So what is Gaza? It's still legally occupied territory because Israel also will give itself the right to carry out incursions and to enter and to arrest and to assassinate at will. So it's just a redefinition of the occupation. Gaza will be occupied and will become a real pressure-cooker and will blow up and will become a greater security liability in that case.

So we need the linkage between Gaza and the West Bank: territorial, legal and political. We need this withdrawal to become full, this disengagement to become full withdrawal. There's no way the occupier can disengage from the occupied. You have to withdraw, but you have to withdraw giving them freedom. We need, again, assurances and guarantees that there would be no payback in the West Bank. We cannot have this April 14th love fest. I don't know how many of you remember it, when President Bush declared that the Palestinians have to become realistic. We have to accept population changes that were carried out by Israel. So in any solution, we must accommodate the fact that there have been population moves. In other words, we must violate international law (the Fourth Geneva Convention) and legalize the settlements. Also, we must bestow retroactive legitimacy on illegal settlements that violate the law because we have to be realistic. We also have to be realistic as far as the refugees are concerned. How can we expect them to return? Well, if Israel expects to bring in Jewish communities from all over the world and call it “the law of return,” we have a right of return and find it in the U.N. and U.N. resolutions. How come some people have rights and others don't have any? How come there are precedents dealing with refugees that are inapplicable?

Anyway, so we ended up accused of not being realistic. We do not accept the facts created on the ground that would contribute to greater land theft in Palestine. Israel wants, of course, to annex the three major settlement clusters—Ariel, Ma'ale Adumim and Gush Etzion—and fragment the West Bank. And, of course, it wants to exclude all Palestinian refugees from any solution and it wants to annex Jerusalem as a whole. What's happening now with the wall is total annexation of Jerusalem. So you ended up with the U.S. not only preempting final status talks by taking sides, but violating international law and giving Sharon room and power to carry out these actions on the ground.

This way the two-state solution is being undermined, being entirely removed, and you end up with the two other options which would not work: the one-state solution or the no-state solution. The one-state solution, of course, depends on demography, and anything based on demography I find absolutely racist. I do not determine rights on the basis of either religion or ethnic origin or whatever. I do not think that the way we have to get our independence is by having more and more children in order to enter into a race of demography with the Israelis. No, I believe Palestine should be pluralistic. We should have a state that has Christians, Muslims, Jews, non-believers, Buddhists, whatever you want, openly. That should be our Palestinian state. Now what the Israelis want is their problem, their business, but exclusivity shouldn't take place at my expense. The one-state solution means that we condemn the Palestinians to living under occupation without rights, with a loss of land, until demography becomes the determining factor. And, of course, the Israeli army and Sharon are not innocent bystanders. They are taking steps to exclude Palestinians. Look at Gaza now. Why do they want to get rid of Gaza? Because of the demographics there. Because of the so-called “ult nate ticking bomb” which is the Palestinian woman’s womb. This I find extremely demeaning as a woman and as a Palestinian.
So we moved from two extremes, where the peace process was the end-all and the be-all and the objective rather than the means. Remember the days when we were told you have to have a peace process, people have to talk to each other, so we need a strong one-man show to deliver security to Israel? We complained that this violates our human rights and our democratic rights. There were requirements of the peace process that had two lines as part of one paragraph discussing human rights, and pages and pages and pages of appendices discussing security and military operations and so on. So when we said, “What happened to human rights, democracy, good government and rule of law?” they said, “Don’t upset the apple cart. We need a strong one-man show.” That being said, fortunately Arafat doesn’t have a high court of justice. That’s why I established the Commission for Citizens’ Rights, and that’s why when even a Democrat like Al Gore was in Gaza, he hails the state security court, which violates the political rights of Palestinians, but he said that means that Arafat is serious about peace. Why? Because he imprisons the opposition. There is no due process.

So the peace process and the nation-building process were completely divorced, and the peace process became a distorting factor in nation-building. That’s why it didn’t work, and it won’t work. You need to marry the two processes. You need to have a nation-building process that recognizes the importance of rule of law, of institution-building, of good governance, of real empowerment and empowerment from within. The women’s movement is a Palestinian women’s movement. We didn’t import it. We didn’t wait for people to send us, or for a deus ex machina to tell us what women’s rights are. We know, and we have to work on them. We have to work on many issues, but we need to empower the Palestinian people because only the confident make peace. We also need to give them hope that there is a peace process so they won’t succumb to despair and act out of despair or desperation. Desperate deeds are self-destructive. We don’t just destroy the other. So we need to get rid of these two extremes and deal with them as one organic process, with a human rights component and with a rule of law imperative, and certainly with security as a human form of security. It’s imperative that people own the agenda of peace.

The no-state solution (if Sharon is allowed to continue stealing land and depriving us of the territorial viability of the state) means there will be eventual conflict for both sides. There’s an opportunity to have a two-state solution. We mustn’t squander it. And we mustn’t allow the forces that are anti-peace—forces that have the grand design of greater Israel or of all of Palestine—to destroy the chances of peace for both peoples and for the region as a whole.

Now, at present, we don’t see these chances. We see the road map scuttled with conditionality, sequentialism, and I talked about these 14 reservations. We have no assurance of compliance or commitment to pursue a political course of action. On the contrary, reform among the Palestinians (or reform of the Palestinian) became a prerequisite and a panacea. Now we have a reform plan. We have a reform movement and it is authentic, it is homegrown. It’s not something that suddenly the Israelis or Americans discovered, that there is some corruption among the Palestinian leadership and they need reform. We discovered that and we’re working on it. We’re holding our people accountable and, actually, we have the most active and vocal reform movement. I had three: I had the PLC Reform Committee, and I had the sub-committee of the National Committee for Reform, and we do have a civil society coalition for accountability and integrity and we’re working on all these three.

The thing is, suddenly the totally non-corrupt Israeli system, where every single prime minister was indicted and accused of corruption, decides, as Dov Weisglass [an advisor to Ariel Sharon] said, that the Palestinians have to become perfect Finns. We could become Swedes or Swiss, if you want, as a prerequisite to even starting a negotiating process. We are under occupation where we’re being traumatized and killed and our economy and lives destroyed, yet we have to come up with the perfect democratic system that’s entirely pluralistic and reformed and non-corrupt, while the occupation is the epitome of high moral values? The corruption in Israel is excused, but it’s up to us to demonstrate under occupation that we can be perfect creatures? Now we understand their concern for our well-being [laughter], but I would like them to leave this to us. It’s our business the same way as their corruption is their business to deal with.

So the peace process and the nation-building process were completely divorced, and the peace process became a distorting factor in nation–building. That’s why it didn’t work, and it won’t work. You need to marry the two processes. You need to have a nation-building process that recognizes the importance of rule of law, of institution-building, of good governance, of real empowerment and empowerment from within. The women’s movement is a Palestinian women’s movement. We didn’t import it. We didn’t wait for people to send us, or for a deus ex machina to tell us what women’s rights are. We know, and we have to work on them. We have to work on many issues, but we need to empower the Palestinian people because only the confident make peace.
We need to redefine security as human, comprehensive, multi-faceted, transnational and cultural—beyond sovereignty.

We need to undertake a series of redefinitions. I’ve discussed those, but I’ll go quickly. Process, not for its own sake, but as an active, dynamic mechanism for change, sustained and effective, with substance, with the ability to change reality. It has to be rapid. It has to lead to permanent status without any transitions and without allowing people to create facts. Negative facts on the ground mustn’t be hostage to extremism and violence on both sides. And we need third-party intervention. Intervention must be redefined. It must be redefined to mean positive intervention, constructive intervention, intervention for nation-building, to solve causes of conflicts and grievances, and to empower the weak, for reconstruction and development, for cessation of hostilities on both sides, prevention of violence, and so on. And to prevent, of course, unilateralism, which should be redefined, and pre-emption, which should be redefined. We need to redefine security as human, comprehensive, multi-faceted, transnational and cultural—beyond sovereignty. We need to redefine self-defense not as a vague excuse for aggression by anticipating or defining unilaterally your enemy or potential enemy, and therefore, attacking and calling it self-defense. It’s not license to kill or destroy. We need to redefine terrorism, actually. It’s not just non-state actors, but there are state actors who are involved in terrorism. Any act of violence against civilians, whether physical or mental violence, is terrorism. Nobody has the exclusive right to post labels on people as to who is a terrorist and who is not.

And we, as Palestinians, have to redefine resistance. Resistance is a right for all people under occupation, but it doesn’t have to be violent resistance. I believe we’re trying to redefine resistance as a popular, massive act of human collective will and spirit that refuses to succumb. It’s an active form of peaceful resistance.

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And just a footnote to end, as you’ve read about in the U.N. Human Development Report, it talks about a knowledge deficit and a freedom deficit in the Arab world, and these were used as a means to launch the Broader Middle East Initiative. But let me say that sometimes the knowledge deficit is also among developed countries who do not understand the causes and the context of violence. There is another freedom deficit that they don’t understand. They define freedom deficit as the lack of internal freedoms in the Arab systems. That’s true, we do have it, and we’re struggling and there has to be a peaceful transition to democracy, otherwise it becomes violent. But the one lack of freedom that is the most blatant and glaring is the Palestinians’ under occupation. Enslaved under occupation. Nobody mentions that freedom deficit. That’s what we need. But most importantly, we have to learn from the mistakes of the past that it’s not too late. There is a chance. We have to act as an act of will, of determination and of courage. I believe it is an individual as well as a collective responsibility. The engagement must be sustained and effective, not sporadic or subject to the domestic agenda and individual self-interest.
There are regional and global implications for war-making in our part of the world, as well as peacemaking in our part of the world. Now, as Palestine is being reconstructed, Iraq is being fragmented in a way, disintegrated. It has become a magnet for all sorts of extremists and violence and acts of horror that are taking place. So you don’t deal with a problem by creating a greater problem. The key to the Middle East, the key to the Arab world, the key to the Islamic world—if there is such a thing—is the just solution of the Palestinian question. You cannot reach it by skirting the issue and going all over the place and deciding that if women are free in Saudi Arabia, then the Arab world would be happy and they would have no grievances. No, the real issue, the heart of the instability, the heart of the lack of development in the Arab world, the cause of all the deficits we talked about, is the fact that the Palestinian question has been allowed to continue and to fester, and that Israel has been allowed to continue with its occupation without any restraints, constraints or accountability. It is time we solve this and then we will see a new momentum and new dynamic emerge, and it will have an impact on the Palestinians, on the Israelis, on the region as a whole, but also, globally, as the real test for peace with justice. Thank you very much.
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The audience submitted questions which were read by Dr. Joyce Neu.

JN: Thank you. I’m sure we have a lot of questions coming our way from that very interesting and important talk. The first question for you: what is the outlook for Christians in Palestine and Israel?

HA: I think the Palestinian Christians are diminishing in number for a variety of reasons. Part of it is low birth rate, part of it has to do with immigration. We used to be about 20 percent of Palestine, now we’re down in Palestine to three percent or even less. The fact is, when you have very few support systems, when you feel targeted quite often, and when you have ties outside, family ties particularly, you tend to emigrate more easily. So the Palestinian Christians tend to be two kinds: those who study in the West, and those who have families in the West—Ramallah, for example, where I come from, has about 40,000 Palestinians, 40,000 real Ramallah people who are members of the Southern Clans or the Eight Clans, and only 2,000 are left in Ramallah. So that explains one reason. There is low birth rate as I said.

The laws of marriage also contribute because when you marry, the children have to follow the father’s religion. This is something that is legal rather than by choice. Therefore, a Christian man has to become a Muslim to marry a Muslim girl. A Christian woman can stay a Christian if she marries a Muslim man, but her children become Muslim. So, in a sense, the legal system also contributes to that; and the emigration, the occupation, the low birth rate and so on.

As far as the future, I think we are part and parcel of the Palestinian people, so we don’t see ourselves as being different or having a different future. In that sense we feel that it is very important that the Christian identity of the Palestinians continues because it is part of our authenticity, of our culture, of our history. We don’t want to lose that deep-rootedness, and Palestine is after all the birth place of Christianity.

JN: Dr. Ashrawi, will there be an orderly succession to power when President Arafat dies?

HA: There will be if we are allowed to have free and fair elections, because the succession is guaranteed in the basic law. The presidency of the Palestinian Authority as I said, the Speaker of the House, will take over for a maximum period of 60 days, during which we will have elections for the president. That will take place, as we are adamant and quite insistent that we will maintain order and we will continue to act in accordance with the law. We will respect the basic law, and even the opposition has openly pledged that they will not carry out any actions that would be divisive or that would have negative repercussions on the Palestinian people as a whole. So the will is there. The determination is there to have an orderly succession in the event of Arafat’s passing. The will is there to press ahead with institution-building, nation-building, and to press ahead with the peace agenda, by the way.

We had the meeting on Thursday; all day we were at the headquarters and everybody was there from the PLC, the Executive Committee, the Cabinet and so on. Actually there were members and heads of the security systems. These were the same heads that we were criticizing for abusing rights and so on. They all commented that they’re going to work together. They all said that they are committed to maintaining the system and law and order without being abusive in any way. They are bound by the political decision-making, so you will see an orderly transition.

However, should we not be allowed to carry out elections, then that would be difficult. We need to lift the siege. We need to lift the fragmentation of Palestinian towns and cities. We need to be able to exercise our democratic rights. You can’t do it when you have no freedom of movement whatsoever. So that’s why we need intervention. We need third-party intervention and the
prepared. First of all, there has to be a conviction that there is no military solution on all sides. Remove that to first of all bring about a cessation of hostilities on both sides, what is called a ceasefire. You cannot ask the Palestinians to constantly stop the violence, stop the violence while they’re being bashed, or stop being terrorists while the Israeli army has full license to shell and to bomb and to destroy homes. That violence has to stop as well. So once you bring about the cessation of hostilities on both sides, then you can create conditions to move.

We need also simultaneously to respect the elected leadership of both sides, lift the siege on fragmentation, and for the Israeli army to return temporarily until it withdraws to the September 2000 lines. We need to provide conditions and a climate for free and fair elections in Palestine for all three kinds of elections. We need to provide active support for massive reform and a development plan. Egypt, of course, is dealing with the security partially in Gaza only. We need to deal with security as a whole, but not security alone. It has to be integrated as I said. It needs to be economic and political to rebuild the human security together, simultaneously. There needs to be a process of reform and development and an integrated approach with a political framework that the Quartet\textsuperscript{9} can supply consistent with the road map and with assurances and guarantees of the outcome.

We need also an immediate cessation of all Israeli settlement activities, expansion and land expropriation while removing the outpost. All settlements are illegal. There should be no pay back in the West Bank for removal of Gaza settlements. Bring Gaza to the West Bank: politically, legally, economically and territorially. Dismantle the wall, or remove it to within Israel on the green line, if you think that separation rather than integration is a desired outcome. Convene an international conference with the Quartet and the Arab countries, and launch negotiations immediately on permanent status issues with the two-state solution outcome as the desired objective. Activate the Arab initiative. We do not need any more transitions, we do not need any unilateral actions

\textsuperscript{9} The Quartet refers to four third-party players in the peace process: the U.S., the UN, the European Union and Russia.
and we need rapid progress with a binding time frame. Have third-party participation (I’m finishing my plan) through mediation, participation and negotiations providing means of arbitration and averting or solving crisis, conflict or disagreements along the way. Also, third-party participation will provide creative compromises and alternatives, plus assurances and guarantees they will fund development reconstruction and peacebuilding.

And finally, we need peace forces on the ground for human separation, monitoring and verification mechanisms, training and capacity-building. Ensuring quiet could be the role of international or multinational organizations, even NATO. We said we will accept a coalition of the willing, but this time it must be willing to make peace. Then we need to designate empowered envoys at the highest level in order to ensure that there is ongoing engagement and interest, that it is not sporadic, and that your attention span is not limited to your own self-interests even there.

We must clearly articulate the legal foundations of this process, including terms of reference and guiding principles. It must be comprehensive and committed to international human rights and law with regional and global cooperation and investment in peace. And, of course, the parties who are involved, the international sponsors, must be willing to use sanctions for non-compliance. As an example, some from Europe could revisit the association agreement or could suspend joining the E.U. Neighborhood Agreement and so on. But most importantly, whatever the U.S. wants to do, and these are concrete steps that can work, it must be even-handed and it must deal with both sides as having equal rights; it cannot be complicit in the occupation.

JN: In keeping with that theme, is peace possible as long as Sharon and Arafat are still around?

HA: Peace is possible and has been possible for a long time, but to be Aristotelian, it hasn’t been probable. Left to our own devices, Palestinians and Israelis alone cannot make peace. We’ve tried. And there is an imbalance in power so we do need third party involvement; we keep saying that. The one factor that has changed was not Arafat. He didn’t change his mind about peace. Contrary to everything you hear in the mainstream media and so on, and contrary to Sharon’s statements, it was Sharon who from day one said, “No negotiations.” He stopped all negotiations, all political meetings, and he escalated the military assaults. So I believe that Sharon was the obstacle, not Arafat, even though Arafat was imprisoned and held hostage and blamed for everything. He was very conveniently blamed. He is still being blamed even on his death bed.

But I think we need to work on public opinions on both side. If you look at public opinion polls, both people want peace. The Palestinians remain committed to a negotiated settlement; close to 80 percent, down from, let’s say, anywhere between 60 to 80 percent still want a negotiated settlement. Actually before we came it was 70-some percent. The Israelis all say that they want peace, but they still haven’t decided, or the majority I think is 60-, 50-some percent. They haven’t decided how to get there because they were promised by Sharon that they can keep the settlements, they can annex land, they can control the Palestinians, and they can have peace at the same time. So this is an oxymoron. You cannot steal people’s land and then say you can have peace. So it’s not a question of individuals, even though they make a difference. You have to build a groundswell. You have to build public opinion. You have to get rid of the fears and insecurity and you have to get rid of the anger and revenge and all the negative motivations that are really now holding the minds and hearts of peoples on both sides. We have to generate a different momentum and a different discourse and a public language that is different. And they will be able then to defy their leaderships if their leaderships are anti-peace.

Maybe it’s time that they have the vote in Israel. At the same time in Israel, you need to have an opposition that has an agenda for peace; so far it’s still in tatters. Hopefully they will emerge with a peace agenda that will capture the imagination of the Israeli people. But we are committed to peace. We do have the road map. We are committed to the road map. It’s just that the people who designed and invented the road map, with all its flaws, have suddenly lost their interest or the will to implement it. That’s a problem.
The women’s dialogue was a political dialogue that was different, but now I’m afraid that that kind of spontaneous, sincere, authentic dialogue is very difficult to carry out. First of all, Israelis aren’t allowed to come to the West Bank. It’s illegal. They have restrictions and we have so many checkpoints. We have now still 360-some checkpoints that are stationary, in addition to about an equal number of what they call mobile or flying checkpoints. So they tend to arrest the Israelis who come to see us. Palestinians, of course, can’t go to Israel; Israelis can’t come to Palestine. We try using electronic means, information technology and the technology revolution to be able to carry out our own dialogue, but it’s very difficult. Those who meet outside quite often are now limited and selective. There are no longer people who can carry their constituency with them and go outside and meet their special people. So the real dialogue that can penetrate into people’s minds and hearts is not taking place. We try through the media, for example. We try addressing the media and having exposure to them in our media. But the immediacy, the human immediacy, is lacking. Once we had Uri Avnery’s group, Gush Shalom, come to Palestine; 200 or 300 Israelis came to Ramallah and they defied the checkpoint. Then we had a few hundred Palestinians come and meet with them and we held an invigorating meeting in Ramallah, and you never heard anything about it in the press, did you? It was because it wasn’t dramatic. There wasn’t blood and gore and so on; it was people just acting in defiance of the military coup to assert their common humanity and agenda. But I think we must continue and we must take risks, otherwise there will be no dialogue, and the less dialogue you have, the more aggravated the conflict is.

JN: Thank you. What responsibility do other Arab countries have for fostering the peace process?

HA: Well, the Arab countries certainly have a responsibility. They have adopted what they call peace as a specific option, but they didn’t adopt a strategy for peace. I said at one point at the Arab summit that I didn’t see a single woman. And with the Arabs, there were all these men sitting there and most of them were not elected. So no, they have not all made the commitment to peace.
Now, remember when Tom Friedman went and pontificated, as usual, and told Prince Abdullah [of Saudi Arabia] that if you come up with an Arab initiative saying you will normalize relationships with Israel, then the whole world would recognize you and Israel would be made to withdraw? There would be instant peace? Were these sweeping generalizations and simplistic notions? Of course. The Arab world and Prince Abdullah came up with the Saudi Initiative. You’ve heard of this? It was presented to the Arab summit and the Arabs adopted it and they committed to it. But they wouldn’t negotiate with Israel. They wouldn’t make peace with Israel. But they wanted Israel to go back to the 1967 boundaries; it had a mutually-agreed solution to the Palestinian refugee problem. Israel would rise from occupied territory (Arab-occupied territory), they would all make peace with it, and they would all normalize. And instead of the whole world seeing how wonderful it would be, you know with instant peace and so on, Israel thumbed its nose at the Arab Initiative and the Americans totally ignored it and it was just sitting at the table. So they do have a responsibility, but they’re on the defensive.

The Arab world has been placed on notice, haven’t you noticed? They’re all worried. They started thinking perhaps that their social legitimacy is not in their people but in staying on the good side of the U.S. because otherwise they tend to get invaded if they do the wrong thing. It is true because for a long time during the Cold War, who supported the Taliban? Who trained them? Who gave them weapons? And who looked the other way when they killed after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan? When they killed Arabs or fellow Muslims nobody cared. Hundreds of thousands of Arabs and Muslims were being killed by what was called by them the Arab Afghani, who were trained and given arms by the Americans. Nobody cared. So, in a sense, the issue is the Arab responsibility. The issue is that the Arabs drew wrong conclusions and felt that if you stay on the good side of the Americans, you’re safe. It doesn’t matter if you oppress your own people because, after all, civil rights are being suspended even in the U.S. and you can always use that. It is seen in having your own PATRIOT Act and other acts. We have them. At one point I said we’ve taught the Americans quite a few things. We taught them about having Ministries of Interior in our Homeland Security and so on. But instead of serving the cause of democracy and the peaceful transition to democracy, the regimes that want to serve their own interests and longevity now do not listen to their own people as a source of legitimacy. They listen to Washington as a source of security and longevity.

This broad Middle East Initiative, many people tended to throw out the baby with the bathwater because the messenger was suspect and the motives were suspect. They decided to attack the substance. They said, “Ah ha. Democracy, women’s rights reforms and so on, these are an American agenda and, therefore, the Arab people should be suspect of the agenda itself.” Because of the source of that agenda, the broader Middle East used it to justify the suspension of human rights, democracy, women’s rights, rule of law and good government. It’s amazing.

So everybody now is on notice in the Arab world. They’re all in a defensive reactive mode and survival is the name of the game. They do have the responsibility for peace, but quite often they’re looking more inwards at their own survival or at the survival of the regime, rather than collective peace as a whole. And they’ve discovered the U.S. can give them the protection that they need, however temporary. But at least that’s how they can survive. We need to get them to know that their source of legitimacy is their people and their source of development comes from having peaceful conditions and regional cooperation.

JN: You know, a little over three years ago we had the dedication of this Institute, and during the dedication, I don’t remember if it was President Carter or Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah of the U.N., who said that in response to some of the curtailment of civil liberties with Guantanamo and the military tribunals that, in fact, the champagne corks were popping in Beijing. That was because of the abrogation of human rights by the United States in that case. That was over three years ago that that comment was made. As for the next question, please explain your view of the Geneva Accords and the feasibility of implementing them in the near future.

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10 In February of 2002, Friedman reported in the New York Times that Crown Prince Abdullah told him the Arab world would normalize relations with Israel if it withdrew to the pre-1967 boundaries and signed a peace accord with the Palestinians. Friedman had written a similar proposal earlier that month. See Related Resources.
HA: Well, the Geneva Accords are virtual accords. They’re not real accords as you know. We applaud all the initiatives that were made, although they’re not complete. There are several accords, whether it’s the People’s Voice, or OneVoice, or the people’s initiative, or Yossi Beilin’s, or any other accords—or even the Woman’s Agreement or the Good Shalom Agreements, the actions of the Palestinian and Israeli action groups for peace—those are all initiatives that are not official and not binding. They are not complete unto themselves. They are ways of breaking the monopoly on the discourse, particularly Sharon’s monopoly and saying that no, there are constituencies for peace on both sides. There are different plans for peace and different possibilities and they should be explored. So I do not single out the Geneva Accords, although they were given great attention throughout the world and adopted throughout the world. They still need to be explored further. Most of the appendices and annexes are not finished. And this is based on the two-state solution after all.

However, there are serious flaws with all of the proposals made. I don’t discuss the flaws because I believe that it’s important that you re-legitimize, you reinvigorate the peace initiative without mistaking them for real agreements and then starting to discuss the details and talking about whether they have applicability or not. I think that they serve a purpose collectively, all of these initiatives, and they do give hope to people on both sides that a different course of action and a different discourse are possible, and that people can talk to each other and produce virtual or real initiatives. They should continue.

JN: This is going to be the second to the last question. Do you believe that something like the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa can work as a model for resolution between Israelis and Palestinians?

HA: Wow. I think the one thing you have noticed is that Palestinians and Israelis have the competition on victimization. It happens in all states of conflict, doesn’t it? The problem is the Israelis feel that they can justify their actions because they are descendents of the victims. As many people said, the Palestinians are victims of victims, so that makes it very difficult. The Holocaust has been one of the horrors of human history, and unfortunately, we as Palestinians are being made to bear the brunt of it, although we had nothing to do with it. We believe it should be clear that such horror should not happen to anybody. And actually international humanitarian law came into being in order to protect people who were not safe, who were vulnerable populations, and therefore, to give them global legal protection. So with us, truth and reconciliation may come in ways like that—after we start signing agreements, not before. It’s very difficult. You are caught in the grip of revenge and pain and in conditions that are extremely hostile.

These are not two people in one state; these are two nations that are living in very abnormal conditions. It is a state of occupation, so to come to terms with your occupier or for the occupier to come to terms with its victims, you need first of all not to wait until every single last Palestinian trusts every single Israeli, and every last Israeli trusts every Palestinian. Change their conditions. Sign the agreements. Bring about changes on the ground and work on trust. Work on evolving new dynamics in terms of interrelations. Truth and reconciliation can work, but I’m afraid the cathartic effects that we saw in South Africa may not be applicable now. What you need is to have peace agreements. You need to have involvement. You need to have third parties there, and then you can start. But I’m afraid without that it will be a process of mutual recrimination. Who can get more than the other? Who gets more than that? And it will bring out even more a sense of grievance and victimization and might not be the healing process that we think of. So I would say it is essential, but at a later phase, not as a starting point.

JN: Thank you. If Hanan Ashrawi were called upon to replace Yasser Arafat, would she?

HA: Well, I was asked by the press. My answer is that the only way you can have credible and legitimate leadership is through elections, so let’s first have elections, then I’ll tell you if I decide to run. Thank you.
RELATED RESOURCES

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WEBSITES:


The International Crisis Group. The International Crisis Group is an independent, non-profit, multinational organization, with over 100 staff members on five continents, working through field-based analysis and high-level advocacy to prevent and resolve deadly conflict. Retrieved January 2006, from http://www.crisisgroup.org


The Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens’ Rights (PICCR). PICCR was the first National Human Rights Institution in the Arab World. Established in September 1993, the organization promotes respect for citizens’ rights throughout Palestine. They are also focused on upholding human rights, good governance and democracy. Hanan Ashrawi serves as a member of the PICCR’s Board of Commissioners. Retrieved January 2006, from http://www.piccr.org

The Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy (MIFTAH). MIFTAH is a non-governmental non-partisan Jerusalem-based institution dedicated to fostering democracy and good governance within Palestinian society through promoting public accountability, transparency, the free flow of information and ideas, and the challenging of stereotyping at home and abroad. Established in December 1998, with Hanan Ashrawi as its Secretary-General, MIFTAH’s aim is to serve as a Palestinian platform for global dialogue and cooperation guided by the principles of democracy, human rights, gender equity and participatory governance. Retrieved January 2006, from http://www.miftah.org

Palestine Liberation Organization. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) has been the embodiment of the Palestinian national movement. It is a broad national front, or an umbrella organization, comprised of numerous organizations of the resistance movement, political parties, popular organizations, and independent personalities and figures from all sectors of life. The Arab Summit in 1974 recognized the PLO as the “sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people,” and since then the PLO has represented Palestine at the United Nations, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM), the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), and in many other fora. Retrieved January 2006, from http://www.palestine-un.org/plo/frindex.html

United Nations Resolution 1325. Measure reaffirming the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and urging the Secretary General and Member States to take specific actions to implement their point of view into any peacemaking process. Retrieved January 2006, from http://www.un.org/events/res_1325e.pdf

Women for Palestine. A network of Australian women standing for nonviolence and human rights in Palestine. As women, they believe that their inherent inclination for healing and nurturing can indeed have a powerful effect on the attitudes and actions of all people who are caught in a spiral of hurt, anger and retribution. They believe that peace is the only solution to conflict and that even small beginnings can make a difference. Retrieved January 2006, from http://www.womenforpalestine.com

The World Bank. The World Bank Group’s mission is to fight poverty and improve the living standards of people in the developing world. It is a development bank which provides loans, policy advice, technical assistance and knowledge sharing services to low and middle income countries to reduce poverty. The Bank promotes growth to create jobs and to empower poor people to take advantage of these opportunities. Retrieved January 2006, from http://www.worldbank.org

BOOKS AND ARTICLES:


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