

TWO COMPLEMENTARY VIEWS OF PEACEMAKING: THE PALESTINIAN-ISRAELI CASE

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The Palestinian-Israeli dispute is an archetypical example of an intractable conflict: a protracted, violent, drawn-out struggle in which generation after generation is socially conditioned to continue fighting. The phenomenon perpetuates a destructive evolutionary mechanism: almost every element that benefits the conflict survives, while whatever operates against it becomes extinct. In order to change this progression, a beneficial revolutionary process is required that would bring the peace process to the point of no return, a place where extremists, radicals and “professional” spoilers cannot stop the progression toward resolution of the conflict.

Two critical elements are required for an effective peace process: leadership on both sides and the preparation of the opposing societies. These components are interdependent. Leaders who strive to promote a solution to the conflict need the support of their people; people who are prepared for a reasonable peace process demand substantial progress toward resolution of the conflict and the establishment of a peaceful social order. The

question is, how to create such a circular structure.

This paper presents two models of peacemaking: the political-elite model and the public-assembly model. The chief purpose of the first is to reach a peace agreement, while the second is mainly designed to prepare the opposing societies for a reasonable outcome. I intend to show that their simultaneous implementation is extremely important for the beginning of a revolutionary peace process in the Palestinian-Israeli struggle.

The political-elite model suggests different kinds of interactions between the elites of both sides as the dominant experience in the Palestinian-Israeli peace process. The public-assembly model, which is new in the Palestinian-Israeli case, proposes establishing a public institution for conflict resolution — a multi-party negotiating assembly. This model is based, loosely, upon the mechanisms that helped to stabilize the political situation for quite a long time in two other desperate situations of intractable conflict: Apartheid South Africa and Northern Ireland during the “troubles.”

My central claim is that the implemen-

tation of an effective combination of these two models, the political-elite and the public-assembly, can help adversaries discover, mostly by themselves, the road to ending conflict and establishing peaceful relations.

THE POLITICAL-ELITE MODEL

The political-elite model offers various forms of interactions between political elites from both sides. Its main purpose is to reach a peace agreement and transfer it to the public. In general, there are three main interactions: track II diplomacy, secret diplomacy and track I diplomacy.

Track II diplomacy involves unofficial bargaining and exploration among a wide circle of leaders, policy makers and public figures, usually in preparation for the actual negotiation. Secret diplomacy is a negotiation between representatives of the official leaderships, aimed at sketching principles for the final agreement. Track I diplomacy is the formal negotiation between official representatives of both sides where, generally, agreements are worked out.¹

The political-elite model is made up of combinations of these forms of interactions. The Oslo accord of the 1990s can be viewed as a classic example that demonstrates an efficient synthesis among these three tracks. The progression in this historic peace process seems to be taken from an attractive recipe, written in the handbook for peacemaking diplomacy. Track II diplomacy is turned into secret diplomacy that leads to track I diplomacy. The Oslo process was initiated through secret track II meetings between a small group of Israeli academics and several PLO representatives outside of the stagnant 1991 Madrid talks. It was an unofficial exploration of possibilities for an

agreement. However, almost from the beginning, any progress was reported back to the political leaders from both sides. The political leaders had to authorize almost every progression toward formalization of official documents. As soon as it became clear that the Oslo talks might result in a formal agreement, the Israeli team was expanded to include official negotiators, and track II diplomacy turned into secret diplomacy.

The Oslo accord was formalized with the Declaration of Principles (DOP) in Oslo, Norway, in August 1993. The agreement was a framework for the future relations between the anticipated Palestinian state and Israel. It was officially signed in Washington on September 13, 1993, by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat, leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). After the agreement was signed, track I talks became the main channel for negotiations between the two sides, although back-channeled diplomacy continued to support the process.² The intention was to prepare the ground for the negotiation of a permanent agreement, which was planned to begin no later than May 1996.

From a realist point of view, it looks as if one of the main reasons the political-elite model in the Oslo case worked so effectively was the necessity of Rabin and Arafat to deliver an agreement for their own political survival.³ However, the dependency of the Oslo accord on the political leadership was also the weakness that led to its collapse into violence and despair.

Much ink has been spilt to demonstrate that political leaders should not be trusted. Their intentions are not always benevolent, to say the least, and their ability to bring

salvation to a complex situation of social crisis is very limited.⁴ Nevertheless, almost any attempt to promote a solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict has been mainly dependent on the dubious good will and talent of political leaders.⁵

The Oslo process did not involve the public in any substantial way. It was entirely dependent on political leaders (Rabin and Arafat) who were not fully committed to the peace process that they themselves initiated, approved and blessed.⁶ The facts indicate that both political leaders, very suspicious of each other, prepared the ground for the process not to progress as anticipated. Thus, both sides continued to keep the struggle alive: the Palestinians built up military capacity and did not stop the incitement against Israel, while the Israelis continued to expand and strengthen the settlement project.⁷ In general, the missing element was the preparation of the two societies for a reasonable peace process. True, the political-elite model provides very important channels of communication that enable bold peace enterprises. But without supportive social foundations that motivate the leadership to push the process forward, those enterprises, as sophisticated and creative as they might be, are very fragile and usually doomed to fail.

THE PUBLIC-ASSEMBLY MODEL

The public-assembly model is designed to actively involve the publics of both sides in the peace process in order to bring it to the point of no return. This model proposes to establish a multi-party negotiating assembly, a public institution for conflict resolution. The assembly functions as a parliament in which representatives of the

opposing societies are invited to debate, discuss and negotiate solutions.

Like a democratic parliament, the assembly has to reflect the different opinions in the general public and discourage any effort to achieve political power through violence. Three methods of choosing representatives could give the assembly credibility: (1) holding general elections in the opposing societies, (2) inviting the institutions involved in the conflict to send delegations, and (3) asking various societal sectors (academia, business and clergy) to appoint delegates. A fundamental rule is that the assembly will exclude any party whose members did not agree to end, or at least suspend, the violent struggle.⁸

In general, the main agenda of the multi-party assembly is to find a solution to the conflict or at least to formulate acceptable general principles for a future agreement. Unfortunately, it is likely that the assembly will not be able to achieve this goal. Reaching a peace agreement in a multi-party assembly is extremely difficult, as issues that are perceived as existential are at stake. It is hard to imagine that a public assembly giving a voice to all opposing opinions, including those of radicals and extremists, will succeed in producing an acceptable agreement. The complexity of the struggle indicates that the chance of success is likely to be greater in the more intimate process offered by the various channels of the political-elite model. However, the public assembly's main task is to prepare the opposing societies for a reasonable peace process. Therefore, its establishment is critical for laying the foundations for a peaceful relationship between Palestinians and Israelis.

One of the main objectives of the multi-party assembly is to provoke a public debate over central issues. Public debate and open discussions around “sanctified” controversial matters are necessary for progress. They have the potential to penetrate doubts about positions and to help people find it worthwhile to consider alternatives that previously were not even taken into account.⁹ This is a key element in seeking, searching, understanding and accepting creative solutions.

Public debate is the spirit of any pluralistic mechanism. It is an instrument that gives a stage to different opinions and engages the population in a critical discussion.¹⁰ The negotiations in the assembly will place on the public agenda obstacles to peace that are considered taboo, such as Jerusalem¹¹ and the right of return. Public debate has the potential to change the public’s mindset, even without its conscious attention. For example, it can help people to step outside the conventional wisdom that there is no solution to the conflict, by bringing them to consider, evaluate and debate different potential solutions. In short, a serious public debate helps to connect the people to the peace process and create an atmosphere of hostility toward the continuation of the violence. It is a necessary component in the transformation of an armed struggle into a political contest.

The public-assembly model was used quite successfully in the 1990s in the talks that helped to end Apartheid in South Africa and to stop the “troubles” in Northern Ireland. In South Africa in 1991, the government and 18 political parties came together to form the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA), which was designed to negotiate binding principles for the future constitutional assembly. In Northern Ireland, the Forum

for Peace and Reconciliation was created in 1994; the Northern Ireland Forum followed in 1996; and the Belfast Assembly was established by the Good Friday agreement of 1998.¹²

In South Africa and Northern Ireland, the multi-party assemblies failed repeatedly. The CODESA talks collapsed and were re-established, only to collapse again (CODESA 2). The Belfast Assembly was suspended for several years due to disagreements between the various parties, particularly over the de-commission of armed militias. In South Africa and Northern Ireland, violence continued alongside the negotiations even after they had begun, threatening to crush the whole process. Nevertheless, and beyond any expectation, the peace process continued and survived.

It is important to remember that the main function of the multi-party assembly is to involve the public in the peace process and to create an atmosphere of peacemaking. Therefore, the successes of multi-party negotiating assemblies are not necessarily measured by the length of their tenure or their ability to come up with a peace pact. As already stated, an agreement is likely to be finalized in the channels that the political-elite model proposes. Successful multi-party negotiating assemblies are those that prepare the opposing societies for a reasonable peace, neutralize the damaging influence of “professional” spoilers and push the leadership to achieve an effective and acceptable compromise. It is the formation and collapse of these assemblies that can lead the peace process to the point of no return.

TWO COMPLEMENTARY VIEWS

My central claim in this paper is that an effective peace process requires a

combination, or a set of combinations, of the political-elite model and the public-assembly model. In general, the first is needed to begin and finalize a peace process, and the second is designed to prepare the opposing societies for a peaceful relationship. The two models, which seem to be in competition (and in some respects are), have to work in harmony.

Multi-party negotiating assemblies usually do not spring up spontaneously. Their establishment requires the application of sophisticated political moves, creative tactics and crafty maneuvers through the various channels the political-elite model provides. In Northern Ireland, it was external players, the English and Irish governments, who pulled the strings in order to convene the Belfast Assembly.¹³ In South Africa, it was the intimate relationship between Frederik Willem De Klerk, the last president of the Apartheid era, and Nelson Mandela, the leader of the black majority, that enabled the publicly formalized multi-party negotiating assembly (CODESA) and pushed the peace process forward.¹⁴ These diplomatic connections helped bypass impediments.

In Northern Ireland, one of the main obstacles to establishing the public assembly was the Irish Republican Army (IRA), which refused to decommission itself and stop the violent struggle. In order to bypass this barrier, the British and Irish governments insisted on democratic elections to a multi-party assembly.¹⁵ However, democratic elections to a multi-party congress were the nightmare of the whites in South Africa. The people in the Apartheid government were convinced that democratic elections to a constitutional assembly that would determine the fate of the new South Africa, would lead to a substantial black

majority. They preferred a constitutional convention composed of representatives from all existing political institutions. However, this kind of convention would never be able to reflect the diversity of the South African population (20 million blacks versus 5 million whites). The non-white parties saw in this proposal a cheap trick, a way to maintain a softer version of Apartheid. Only diplomatic contacts between leaders from both sides at the highest level could formulate a sophisticated solution — a multi-party assembly or combination of assemblies — to the satisfaction of both sides.¹⁶

In the Palestinian-Israeli case, the establishment of an effective multi-party negotiating assembly is not going to be easy. It will require inspiration, creativity, strong leadership, mediation by a third party, and even pressure from every angle. The extreme difficulties of establishing such an assembly in this case raise a very basic and fundamental question: Is the very idea of a Palestinian-Israeli multi-party negotiating assembly only a wild fantasy?

THE MIRROR IMAGE

As strange as it may sound, public-opinion surveys show large majorities in the Palestinian and Israeli societies prefer to end the conflict by peaceful means. These findings, as far as they concern the Israeli population, are not surprising. The majority of the public in Israel already demonstrated, over and over again, its aspiration for a serious peace process. For example, Yitzhak Rabin, prime minister during the Oslo period, was elected on the belief that he was the only leader who could bring peace.¹⁷ The apex of Ariel Sharon's popularity was reached after his historical unilateral withdrawal from Gaza.

Ironically, without any connection to

the ongoing debate over the success or failure of Sharon's drastic move, his unilateral withdrawal has contributed substantially to the growing understanding among the Israeli population that promoting a reasonable solution to the conflict is essential for Israel's continued existence.¹⁸ However, public opinion during an ongoing conflict can shift quite easily, as it depends on the behavior of the other side.

The ongoing terrorist attacks since the Oslo agreement have contributed to the Israeli view that it is impossible, or at least very dangerous, to make peace with the Palestinians. For example, Israel's security problems contributed to the astonishing defeat of Shimon Peres, a peacemaking visionary, by Benjamin Netanyahu, a right-wing hardliner, in the 1996 elections. Even in the Israeli academic circle, intellectuals began to develop a strategy to cope with a situation of ongoing conflict. The conflict-management strategy, which was developed by scholars from the Bar-Ilan and Hebrew universities, intends to help Israel survive in a situation of an unsolved violent conflict.¹⁹ Again, the motivation is the perception that the Palestinian Authority is a failed state that can produce only terror. It is very hard for Israelis to accept the idea that the Palestinians wish to resolve the conflict by peaceful means.

It is not easy to reconcile a referendum showing that the Palestinians prefer peace with the fact that the majority support a radical party such as Hamas. Part of the explanation of this contradiction is that a majority of Palestinians believe that most Israelis are not interested in peace. In their view, the Jewish-Israeli project equals Zionist Imperialism.²⁰

The phenomenon in which each side is convinced that its rival is not interested in

peace is labeled the "mirror image."²¹ This well-known symptom appears in many similar conflicts. This entrenched idea that there are no human beings on the other side helps to escalate the violent cycle. Moreover, it prepares the ground for extremists and professional spoilers to shape a policy that is destructive to both sides.

The root of the mirror image, at least in the moderate majority, is ignorance of the other side's difficulties and aspirations. Each side is entrenched in his position without realizing that its strategy for coping with the difficulties only worsens the situation. Any act of violence, even for self-defense, is understood by the other side as additional proof of the inhumanity of its rival. Senator Mitchell describes this tragic situation in his report of the 2001 Sharm el-Sheikh Fact-Finding Committee:

Despite their long history and close proximity, some Israelis and Palestinians seem not to fully appreciate each other's problems and concerns. Some Israelis appear not to comprehend the humiliation and frustration that Palestinians must endure every day as a result of living with the continuing effects of occupation, sustained by the presence of Israeli military forces and settlements in their midst, or the determination of the Palestinians to achieve independence and genuine self-determination. Some Palestinians appear not to comprehend the extent to which terrorism creates fear among the Israeli people and undermines their belief in the possibility of co-existence. . . . Fear, hate, anger and frustration have risen on both sides. The greatest danger of all is that the culture of peace, nurtured over the previous decade, is being shattered. In

its place there is a growing sense of futility and despair, and a growing resort to violence.²²

Unfortunately, the mirror-image effect prepares the ground for a tragic situation wherein the strategy of violence replaces the culture of peace. This conviction — the entrenched idea that there are no human beings who wish to live in peace, happiness and prosperity on the other side — has to be broken. People on both sides have to learn about the culture, mentality and phobias of the rival. This kind of learning process has to be conducted on two levels — that of the leadership and that of the public — using the mechanisms provided by the political-elite and the public-assembly models.

PEACE MAKING AS A LEARNING PROCESS

Unfortunately, protracted violent struggles like the Palestinian-Israeli conflict affect almost every aspect of life in the opposing societies. The situation of continued instability endangers the political survival of almost any political leader, at least in the long run. Therefore, the logic behind the implementation of the political-elite model is that leaders understand the overlap between their political survival and promoting some kind of solution to the conflict. The motivation for involving the public in the peace process (the public-assembly model) is the broad understanding in each society that it is impossible to defeat the opponent. The Palestinians understand that they cannot defeat Israel, while the Israelis recognize that it will be almost impossible to stop Palestinian insurgency (terrorism and guerrilla war).

The misery that Palestinian-Israeli strife has created in both societies indicates

that it should be in the interest of both sides to stop the destruction and begin seriously considering how to end it. Unfortunately, the tragic circumstances of intractable conflict, in which emotions overcome logic and rational thinking, cause people to behave in ways subversive to their own interests. Moreover, spoilers and extremists are able to dictate conditions for the rest of the society. The political-elite model and the public-assembly model provide two complementary methods for learning to promote self-interest.

In general, Track II diplomacy, the informal channel of the political-elite model, is a sort of joint research and exploration between political elites. It is a set of interactions through which the participants share creative ideas, explore unpopular proposals and learn about each other's problems and difficulties through developing close and even intimate relationships. Therefore, secrecy is a necessary condition for such an exploration.²³

The secret and the informal settings at the beginning of the Oslo accord paved the way to a historic milestone: the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles. But secrecy, which is usually required to achieve such an agreement in times of crisis, makes its implementation extremely difficult. This is because under the stress of an ongoing conflict, social conditions in the opposing societies are usually not ripe for accepting a peace agreement. For example, there is a fundamental mistrust between the two peoples; the majority of neither population is ready to make the compromises that a reasonable agreement requires.

The people in both societies have to learn the meaning of building peaceful relationships with the “unfriendly” neigh-

bors that they are destined to live with. The instrument for this is the multi-party public assembly. It functions like a parliament for conflict resolution. The various delegations, representing different parts of each population, are invited to introduce and promote their ideologies, interests and worldviews. The assembly will exclude anyone who wishes to continue the violent struggle.²⁵ Therefore, the representatives are compelled to learn how to debate the most important and sensitive issues by peaceful means. This competitive pluralism²⁶ is a powerful mechanism that helps the opposing factions learn about the culture and mentality of the other side and maneuver them to search for new knowledge and explore creative ideas. The public assembly is designed to replace the current destructive competition, the violent struggle, by peaceful negotiation.²⁷

The vitality of the public assembly, in contrast to the secret exploration of back channel diplomacy, depends upon extensive publicity. The public becomes informed about the intention to establish such an institution, and this creates an atmosphere that "something new" is happening. This momentum has the potential to create a positive chain reaction. Every party involved in the conflict is stimulated to influence the process and not be excluded from the center of events.²⁸ As the experiences in South Africa and Northern Ireland show, over time the level of violence is reduced, and aggression becomes ineffective and unprofitable. The massacres in the South African towns of Boipatong and Bisho in 1992, the assassination of South African Communist Party leader Chris Hanu in 1993, and the Omega bombing in Northern Ireland in 1998 threatened to end the multi-party talks. But ultimately they

could not stop the peace train from accelerating. At the end of the day, they encouraged the major parties to renew their effort to achieve a negotiated settlement.²⁹

It is important to remember that the public-assembly model cannot operate by itself. It is mainly the interactions between elites, through the various channels that the political-elite model offers, that pave the way toward establishing the multi-party public assembly, support its activities and ensure that, in times of crisis, the violent struggle will not be renewed. The public-assembly is designed to build the social foundations for an agreement that can be achieved by political elites in a more intimate forum. Together these processes can animate a stalled peace process and bring it to the point of no return.

CONCLUSION

The state of the Palestinians and Israelis is intertwined. Their close contact under high pressure encompasses almost every dimension of social life, economically, geographically and even emotionally. An effective peacemaking process has to be a learning process. It is a joint journey, a difficult and a painful one, through which the two societies must learn how to accept each other and establish peaceful relations. This process has to be conducted on two levels that complete and support one another: that of the leadership (the political-elite model) and that of the people (the political-assembly model).

The political-elite model has been applied in almost infinite ways throughout the history of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Unfortunately, the focus was mostly directed toward searching for a solution to the conflict instead of building a comprehensive multi-dimensional process

that would involve the public. Therefore any progression toward a peace agreement lacked the necessary social foundations for its implementation. Predictably almost every bold and creative peace enterprise has collapsed into violence.

The public-assembly model can prepare the opposing societies for a reasonable peace process. The mechanism, a multi-party negotiating assembly, provokes a public debate and a critical discussion within the opposing societies. This kind of public participation has the potential to create an atmosphere of peacemaking, to marginalize the impact of

violent episodes (such as terrorist attacks), to motivate “professional” spoilers to join the process and to push the leadership to reach a peace agreement. However, it is the interactions between elites, through the various channels proposed by the political-elite model, which enable the establishment of the multi-party public assembly, support its existence and reestablish it after its repeated collapses.

These models are interdependent. Together they have the potential to animate a continuing process that can stop the destructive progression of conflict.

¹ See H. Agha, S. Feldman, A. Khalidi and Z. Schiff (2004), *Track-II Diplomacy: Lessons from the Middle East* (MIT Press, 2004), pp. 1-3.

² U. Savir, *The Process: 1,100 Days That Changed the Middle East*, (Random House, 2004).

³ H.C. Kelman, “Some Determinants of the Oslo Breakthrough,” *International Negotiation*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (1997), p. 188.

⁴ This is especially relevant to the twentieth century, when the best minds were occupied in demonstrating again and again the limitations of political leadership; see F.A. Hayek, *Studies in Philosophy, Politics and Economics* (University of Chicago Press, 1967), pp. 22-42; and F.A. Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom*, (University of Chicago Press, 1976 [1944]). It is also worth remembering that even Machiavelli, who saw in authoritarianism an unavoidable transitional period toward republicanism, did not trust his prince to bring salvation; see N. Machiavelli, *The Discourses*, in P. Bondanella and M. Musa (eds.), *The Portable Machiavelli* (Penguin, 1979 [1531]). See also S. Handelman, “Between Machiavellian Leaders and the Arab-Israeli Conflict: Toward an Indirect Approach to Conflict Resolution in the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict,” *Orient*, Vol. 47, No. 4 (2006), pp. 554-567.

⁵ This includes Sharon’s unilateral withdrawal in 2005 and the Annapolis summit in 2007.

⁶ H.C. Kelman, “The Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process and Its Vicissitudes: Insights from Attitude Theory,” *American Psychologist*, Vol. 63, No. 4 (2007), p. 292.

⁷ *Ibid.* There are many pieces of research that provide an almost infinite set of explanations for the collapse of the Oslo accord. My central claim here is that, in general, the political-elite model cannot sustain a peace process by itself.

⁸ S. Handelman and J. Pollak, “Interactive Models of Peacemaking: The Palestinian-Israeli Case,” (2008), pp. 11-12. From <http://portal.idc.ac.il/he/schools/Government/Staff/Documents/Sapir%20Hendelman%20-%20Interactive%20Models%20of%20Peacemaking.pdf>.

⁹ K.R. Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, Vol. 2 (Routledge, 1996 [1944]).

¹⁰ J. Agassi, *Technology: Philosophical and Social Aspect* (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1995).

¹¹ Ironically, it was Benjamin Netanyahu’s elections slogan in 1996, “Peres will divide Jerusalem,” that brought the issue of Jerusalem to the forefront of public discussion.

¹² D. McKittrick and D. McVea, *Making Sense of the Troubles: The Story of the Conflict in Northern Ireland* (New Amsterdam Books, 2002).

¹³ J. Courtney, E. Lust-Okar and I. Shapiro, “Problems and Prospects for Democratic Settlements: South Africa as a Model for the Middle East and Northern Ireland?” *Politics and Society*, Vol. 33, No.2 (2005), p. 302; and P. Dixon, “Political Skills or Lying and Manipulation? The Choreography of the Northern Ireland

Peace Process,” *Political Studies*, Vol. 50, No. 3 (2002), pp. 725-741.

¹⁴ A. Spark, *Tomorrow Is Another Country: The Inside Story of South Africa's Negotiated Revolution* (Sandton, South Africa : Struik Book Distributors, 1994), p. 156.

¹⁵ Courtney, Lust-Okar, and Shapiro, pp. 301-302.

¹⁶ Spark, pp. 128-129.

¹⁷ Kelman, “Some Determinants of the Oslo Breakthrough,” p. 188.

¹⁸ Handelman, “Between Machiavellian Leaders and the Arab-Israeli Conflict: Toward an Indirect Approach to Conflict Resolution in the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict.”

¹⁹ E. Inbar, “Israel’s Palestinian Challenge,” *Israel Affairs*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (2006), pp. 823-842; and S.F.

Landau, “Settings, Factors and Phenomena of Conflict in Israeli Society,” in Albrecht, Simon, Rezaei, Rohne and Kiza (eds.), *Conflicts and Conflict Resolution in Middle Eastern Societies — Between Tradition and Modernity* (Berlin: Duncker and Humblot), pp. 239-240.

²⁰ For example, a Palestinian public opinion poll from March 13-15, 2008, shows that “66 percent support and 32 percent oppose the Saudi initiative, which calls for Arab recognition of and normalization of relations with Israel after it ends its occupation to Palestinian territories occupied in 1967 and after the establishment of a Palestinian state... But the findings show total lack of confidence in diplomacy with 80 percent saying that negotiations launched by the Annapolis conference will fail while only 14 percent believe it will succeed... Pessimism about diplomacy also leads people to search for alternative means to end the occupation with findings showing about two-thirds (64 percent) supporting the continued launching of rockets from the Gaza Strip against Israeli towns and cities such as Sderot and Ashkelon.” See <http://www.pcpsr.org/survey/polls/2008/p27e1.html>.

²¹ The term was coined by Urie Bronfenbrenner; see U. Bronfenbrenner, “The Mirror Image in Soviet-American Relations: A Social Psychologist’s Report,” *Journal of Social Issues*, Vol. 17 (1961), pp. 45-56.

²² Report of the Sharm el-Sheikh Fact-Finding Committee. See also the Mitchell report 2001 and <http://www.al-bab.com/arab/docs/pal/mitchell1.htm>.

²³ Agha, Feldman, Khalidi and Schiff, pp. 3-4; and Kelman, “Some Determinants of the Oslo Breakthrough,” pp. 187-190.

²⁴ Kelman, op. cit., pp. 189-192.

²⁵ In a keynote speech Tony Blair expressed his commitment to solve the Northern Ireland conflict and called on the largest nationalist political party, Sinn Fein, to end the violence and join the process: “The settlement train is leaving. I want you on that train. But it is leaving anyway, and I will not allow it to wait for you. You cannot hold the process to ransom any longer. So end the violence now.” G.J. Mitchell, *Making Peace* (Alfred Knopf, 1999), p. 101.

²⁶ I have borrowed the term “competitive pluralism” from J. Raz, *The Morality of Freedom* (Oxford University Press, 1986).

²⁷ It is well known that competition can be a powerful vehicle to progress. Moreover, as free-market economists emphasize, in a competitive environment the self-interest of individuals is channeled spontaneously for the benefit of society; see F.A. Hayek, *The Constitution of Liberty* (University of Chicago Press, 1960). However, competition also can be destructive. Constitutional economists argue that constructive competition can emerge only in a framework of rules and institutions; see Vanberg, V., “Market and State: The Perspective of Constitutional Political Economy,” *Journal of Institutional Economics*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (2005), pp. 23-49. In this respect, the public assembly is an institution that encourages the emergence of constructive competition.

²⁸ For example, the Downing Street Declaration had an instant impact on the “troubles.” “The Downing Street Declaration stated that negotiations would be limited to those parties not engaged in paramilitary violence. In response, the IRA announced a complete cessation of all military activity in August 1994, forcing Loyalists to parry with a ceasefire.” See also Courtney, Lust-Okar and Shapiro, p. 291.

²⁹ J. Courtney, and I. Shapiro, “South Africa’s Negotiated Transition: Democracy, Opposition, and the New Constitutional Order,” *Politics and Society*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (September 1995), pp. 269-308.