

The Beilin Plan, September 2006

Non-paper

Mapping the Road from Realignment to Permanent Status

Among the most salient repercussions of the recent war in Lebanon has been the unofficial shelving of Prime Minister Olmert's plan for a significant unilateral withdrawal from the West Bank. Responding to widespread feelings in the Israeli public that the war has taught Israel the price of unilateral withdrawals does and should mean not withdrawing. Withdrawing from the West Bank remains in Israel's long-term strategic interest, and the question for Olmert is how to transform a plan that was originally conceived as unilateral into one that can be agreed to by the Palestinian side. Palestinian agreement to any plan would require that it meet basic Palestinian demands, chief among them is perhaps an assurance that the plan would bring the parties closer to a resolution of the conflict rather than create new conditions for further paralysis, if only under terms more convenient for Israel.

The following four-step plan is suggested as a way to bridge between Olmert's willingness to withdraw from significant areas in the West Bank and Abu Mazen's need of a credible political horizon for a final-status agreement. The plan reflects the existence of broad public support on both sides for putting an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on the basis of well-known and familiar parameters, including the Clinton Ideas, the Arab Peace Initiative, the Bush vision, and the Geneva Initiative; and it assumes that, should final-status negotiations conclude successfully, each side would bring the agreement to approval and, if necessary, ratification as required by its political and legal system.

Step I: Ceasefire

1. Both parties would agree to a cease-fire. Within the framework of the ceasefire, Israel would withdraw from the Gaza Strip, stop all operations of lethal nature inside the Gaza Strip, release all the Hamas representatives arrested on 29 June as well as a certain number of prisoners. The Palestinians would cease all rocket attacks into Israel as well as all other forms of violence, and release Gilead Shalit.

Step II: Withdrawal

2. Both parties would act to achieve and maintain the quiet, commit themselves to ending all forms of violence, and end all forms of incitement to hatred.
3. The Palestinians would welcome Israel's strategic decision to carry out a significant withdrawal in the West Bank by 2008. The withdrawal would be coordinated between Israel and the PLO and the PA. Coordination would cover security, civil, economic, and environmental issues, among others, and where possible, would aim to reach agreement that could be effective also under a permanent-status agreement.
4. The parties would view the withdrawal as fulfillment of Israel's obligations to the Palestinians, in line with Israel's commitment to implement the Third Further Redeployment (FRD) under the Interim Agreement of 1995 and/or Israel's commitments under Phase II of the Roadmap.
5. Israeli settlers. The value of both public and private assets left behind in connection with the withdrawal would be assessed and later taken into account in the context of

the resolution of the Palestinian refugee problem as part of the negotiations on permanent status.

6. Palestinian prisoners. Israel would free a significant number of Palestinian prisoners currently held in its custody.

Step III: Exercising the Palestinian Options

7. Upon completion of Israel's withdrawal, the Palestinians would extend their rule over the evacuated territories under one of the following options:

Option A: Declaring the State of Palestine

- i. Israel would recognize the State of Palestine and its sovereignty over the entire area which Israel no longer occupies.
- ii. Israel would recognize that all the common borders between the two states are provisional and subject to future agreement.
- iii. The State of Palestine would be a non-militarized state.

Option B: Extending the rule of the Palestinian Authority

Should the Palestinians choose to extend the rule of the existing Palestinian Authority as stipulated under the Interim Agreement of 1995, both sides would agree that:

- i. All areas that had been previously designated as Area B would become Area A. (Hence the total size of Area A will be 42 percent of the West Bank (18% [previous A] + 24% [previous B])).
- ii. Israel would determine which of the areas it evacuated in the context of its withdrawal would be considered Area B; the rest would be A.

Step IV: Negotiations on Permanent Status

8. **Negotiations on Permanent Status.** Negotiations between the two sides on permanent status would start parallel to Israel's withdrawal and no later than upon completion of Israel's withdrawal. They would lead to the establishment of the State of Palestine, living alongside Israel, and be based on the following parameters:
 - a. *Border / territorial* – The final border between the two sides would be based on the 1967 line. Any adjustments reflecting security and demographic realities must be agreed upon by both sides.
 - b. *Jerusalem* – The Jewish areas of Jerusalem will be under Israeli sovereignty; the Arab areas under Palestinian sovereignty. Special arrangements will be found for the Old City and the Holy Basin in order to ensure free access of worship to all religions.
 - c. *Palestinian refugees* – A just and agreed-upon solution to the problem of the Palestinian refugees would be found, and no Palestinian refugee would be denied the option of returning to the Palestinian state. Both sides would consider the agreed-upon solution as fulfilment of all relevant international resolutions.
 - d. *Security arrangements* – Mutually agreed-upon security arrangements would be a vital component designed to ensure that Israel and Palestine would live side by side in peace and security. Palestine would be a non-militarized state.
 - e. *The Arab World* – In line with the historic statement contained in the Arab Peace Plan as adopted by the Arab League in Beirut in March 2002, upon the signing of

a permanent-status agreement between Israel and the Palestinians the Arab countries would "consider the Arab-Israeli conflict ended, and enter into a peace agreement with Israel, and provide security for all the states of the region." They would "establish normal relations with Israel in the context of this comprehensive peace."

- f. *A timeline for the permanent status* – Both sides would reach an agreement within two years of the completion of Israel's withdrawal from the West Bank. The international community would do its utmost to ensure that the parties meet the deadline.

Other

9. **The Roadmap.** In parallel to Israel's withdrawal and the negotiations on permanent status, both parties would fulfill their obligations under Phase I of the Roadmap. The international community, represented by the U.S. -led Quartet, would monitor the implementation of all Phase I obligations and certify their fulfillment.

10. **International Community.** The international community would view Israel's withdrawal as a major step in a process leading to peace and stability in the region. In the immediate term, the international community, led by the Quartet, will commit significant resources toward the success of the withdrawal, focusing, among other issues, on facilitating the movement and access for the Palestinians inside the West Bank, between the West Bank and Gaza, and between the West Bank and Jordan.