

Hard Peace

MVZ247 Week9

Background

Since the 1970s, there has been a parallel effort made to find terms upon which peace can be agreed to in both the Arab-Israeli conflict and in the Palestinian–Israeli conflict.

Some countries have signed peace treaties, such as the Egypt (1979) and Jordan (1994) treaties, whereas some have not yet found a mutual basis to do so (Syria).

Sometime in the mid-1970s the term peace process became widely used to describe the American-led efforts to bring about a negotiated peace between Israel and its neighbors. The phrase stuck, and ever since it has been synonymous with the gradual, step-by-step approach to resolving one of the world's most difficult conflicts. In the years since 1967 the emphasis in Washington has shifted from the spelling out of the ingredients of "peace" to the "process" of getting there. ... Much of US constitutional theory focuses on how issues should be resolved – the process – rather than on substance – what should be done. ... The United States has provided both a sense of direction and a mechanism. That, at its best, is what the peace process has been about. At worst, it has been little more than a slogan used to mask the marking of time.

William Quandt (2005) *Peace process: American diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli conflict since 1967*.

Views

For Palestinians: diverse views and perceptions of the peace process. A key starting point for understanding these views is an awareness of the differing objectives sought by advocates of the Palestinian cause. A 'maximalist' view of a destruction of Israel in order to regain Palestinian lands, a view held by Arafat and the PLO initially, has steadily moderated from the late 1960s onwards to a preparedness to negotiate and instead seek a two-state solution.

Slater, J., 2001, What Went Wrong? The Collapse of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process, *Political Science*, Volume 116, Issue 2, pp. 171-199, p. 176.

For Israelis: the official position of the State of Israel is that peace ought to be negotiated on the basis of giving up some control of the 'occupied' territories in return for a stop to the conflict and violence. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas be the negotiating partner in the peace talks, and not Hamas, which has at times engaged with Israel in escalations of the conflict and attacks Israel's civilian population.

The Oslo Accords and the Camp David Summit negotiations revealed the possibility of a two state system being accepted by Israeli leadership as a possible peace solution.

But, the violence of the second intifada, the political success of Hamas have convinced many Israelis that peace and negotiation are not possible and a two state system is not the answer. Israelis view the peace process as hindered and near impossible due to [terrorism](#) on the part of Palestinians and do not trust Palestinian leadership to maintain control. A common theme throughout the peace process has been a feeling that the Palestinians give too little in their peace offers.

Views

The Americans: there are divergent views on the peace process by US officials, citizens and lobbying groups. All recent US Presidents have maintained a policy that Israel must give up some of the land gained in 1967, that the Palestinians must actively prevent terrorism; and that Israel has an unconditional right to exist. Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush publicly supported the creation of a new Palestinian state out of most of the current Palestinian territories, based on the idea of self-determination for the Palestinian people, and President Obama continued that policy. The Trump administration has signaled continuation of this policy.

A common feature of all attempts to create a path which would lead to peace is the fact that more often than not promises to carry out "good will measures" were not carried out by both sides.

Plans and Accords and the Road Map

Clinton's Perimeters and Taba Summit

Beruit (Arab League)

RoadMap (quartet)

AND THEN

Geneva Accords (CD2000/Taba)

Elon Peace Plan (Israeli unilateral control)

Issues

- Borders and division of the land;
- Strong emotions relating to the conflict on both sides;
- Palestinian concerns over Israeli Settlements in the West Bank;
- Status of Jerusalem
- Security concerns over terrorism, safe borders, incitements, violence;
- Right of return of Palestinian refugees living in the Palestinian diaspora