



An unprecedented look inside Israel's Secret Service,
featuring interviews with 6 former heads of the Shin Bet.

A Viewer's Guide

By J.J. Goldberg for



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KEY ISSUES OF THE DEBATE

The Gatekeepers makes several principal points that contradict conventional Israeli public posture, are likely to be difficult to hear for Israel's friends and supporters and have stirred controversy in Israel and abroad.

- 1) Israel's occupation regime in the West Bank is oppressive to Palestinians. The Palestinians living under occupation have legitimate grievances vis-a-vis the military occupying authority.
- 2) The Palestine Liberation Organization as currently constituted under Mahmoud Abbas is a viable negotiating partner for Israel.
- 3) The Israeli government has at times shown bad faith in relations with the Palestinian Authority and shares some of the blame for the repeated breakdown and impasse in negotiations.
- 4) Improvements in Israel's security situation in recent years have been the result of security cooperation with the Palestinian security services.
- 5) Israeli settlements in the West Bank are a serious affront to the Palestinian population and a significant obstacle to peace.



THE GATEKEEPERS: An Overview

The Gatekeepers, the 2012 Oscar-nominated Israeli documentary film, describes the work of Israel's domestic security agency, the Shin Bet, which leads the Jewish state's war against terrorism. More than just a history, the film is a deeply personal testimony by the six men who have led that war for the past three decades: the six living former directors of the Shin Bet.

In a series of interwoven, on-camera interviews, the six narrators describe the dangers, the complexities and at times the moral dilemmas of their work. Most memorably, and controversially, they paint a penetrating portrait of Israel's relationship with the Palestinian residents of the territories Israel captured in 1967. They discuss the impact of continuing Israeli-Palestinian tension on the lives of ordinary Palestinians and its implications for the future of Israel. And they discuss Israel's successes and failures in confronting its choices.

The film can occasionally make for difficult watching for friends of Israel. The six narrators express views that are frequently associated in the popular mind with Israel's harshest critics. They shift unexpectedly from matter-of-fact to remorseful and even bitter in discussing sensitive topics that range from peace negotiations to assassinations to torture of suspects. They can be unsparingly critical of Israel's political leadership when they discuss the treatment of Palestinians who live under Israeli military occupation and assign blame for the failures of the peace process. They argue, in effect, that Israel's official pronouncements about the threats it faces and the possibilities of peace with the Palestinians are frequently misguided, or misleading. It can be hard for viewers to remember that these witnesses are not enemies of Israel, but its most senior defenders.

It is important to remember that, however. These six are the men who have commanded Israel's counter-terrorism efforts for most of the past three decades. They have been their government's senior advisers on how to understand the Palestinians. Once out of

office, they are virtually unanimous in their views of the policies they were tasked with enforcing.

Nor are they outliers within Israel's defense establishment. Although *The Gatekeepers* limits its focus to the heads of the Shin Bet, their general views are shared by most of the heads of Israel's other main security branches: the uniformed Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and the foreign intelligence agency known as Mossad. As this readers' guide will show, the views portrayed in the film are the consensus views of Israel's defense establishment. And they are starkly different from the public positions of Israel's government and its main American defenders.

Why Israel's political leaders try so hard to paint a different picture of their country's needs and threats is a separate question that is left to the viewer.

THE NARRATORS

Former Shin Bet Directors, *and the years they served*

Avraham Shalom, *1981-1986*

Yaakov Peri, *1988-1994*

Carmi Gillon, *1994-1996*

Ami Ayalon, *1996-2000*

Avi Dichter, *2000-2005*

Yuval Diskin, *2005-2011*

(Yossef Harmelin, who served 1986-1988, died in 1994.)

THE FILM

The Gatekeepers is divided into seven thematic chapters, tracing a roughly chronological narrative of Israel's presence in the territories, starting in 1967.

The first chapter, *No Strategy, Just Tactics*, begins with the capture of the West Bank in the Six-Day War in June 1967 and the initial efforts of the Shin Bet to develop intelligence sources among the local population. The narrators describe their experiences as young agents mingling with and learning about Palestinians. Gradually, as hostility and terrorism rose, Israeli counter-terrorism measures grew increasingly aggressive. But, the narrators say, the nation's leadership had no long-term vision for Israel's future relationship with the Palestinians — “no strategy, just tactics,” Shalom says.

Chapter two, *Forget About Morality*, focuses on the infamous Bus 300 affair of 1984, in which two Palestinian terrorists captured alive after hijacking a bus were later beaten to death by Shin Bet agents on orders from then-director Shalom. He was eventually forced to resign. In one of the film's most talked-about scenes, Shalom turns from affable to stone-faced as he snarls about “politicians” who duck responsibility for their decisions and “abandon wounded soldiers in the field.” Discussing his own actions, he snaps: “In a war against terror, forget about morality.”

The episode raised a host of explosive issues at the time that are barely hinted at in the film, but would be familiar to an informed Israeli viewer. Among them: revelations of heavy-handed press censorship that turned out to be an attempted cover-up; the role of then-Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir in authorizing the killing, but letting underlings (including Shalom) take the rap; and eventual revelations about Shin Bet use of torture during interrogation, which led to a state inquiry and an Israeli Supreme Court ruling limiting interrogation procedures.

Chapter three, *One Man's Terrorist Is Another Man's Freedom Fighter*, looks at the sudden, wrenching shift from hostility between Israelis and Palestinians to cooperation after the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993. It also describes the emergence of horrific terrorism by Islamic fundamentalists, led by Hamas and Islamic Jihad, who sought to derail the Oslo agreement. And it discusses the increasingly harsh measures adopted in response by the Shin Bet.

Chapter four, *Our Own Flesh and Blood*, charts the rise of Jewish religious-nationalist extremism, beginning with the start of the settler movement after the Six-Day War and culminating in the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin, which suddenly revealed “the strength of the divisions and hatred among us.” It casts an unforgiving eye on the role of the political right, led by Ariel Sharon and Benjamin Netanyahu, in the incitement that preceded the assassination. In some of the film’s most powerful moments, the narrators in succession describe how the assassination “succeeded.” It “changed history” and “ended hope” by clearing the way for a new Israeli government that was unsympathetic to a two-state peace agreement. Gillon declares flatly that if and when peace negotiators prepare to evacuate settlements, “there will be another political murder. The rabbis have no reason to learn any lessons” from the tragedy of the Rabin murder, he says. “From their point of view, the system worked.”

Chapter five, *Victory Is to See You Suffer*, traces the collapse of Israeli-Palestinian trust, which led to the bloody Second Intifada. After the Rabin assassination the agency shifted resources from operations to intelligence. Security improved dramatically, says Ayalon, who was director at the time. There were “several reasons” for the improvement, but the “most significant” was “cooperation between us and the Palestinians.” He recalls repeated warnings from Palestinian security chiefs that they are interdicting terrorists not for Israel’s sake, but because “our people believe that at the end of the road they will have a state alongside the State of Israel. The moment we don’t believe it, forget about us.” But, says Peri, “after the

murder of Rabin, Israel's desire and intention to reach a peace agreement decreased, to put it mildly.”

Ayalon recalls: “We want security and get terror. They want a state and see more settlements.” From “the beginning of the Oslo process” in late 1993 through the end of 2000, “when the process collapsed,” the number of settlers more than doubled. “So the question isn’t whether there is a partner”—neither side had a partner. And “it was clear that we were going to have a second intifada.” In 2002, at the height of the bloodshed, Ayalon joined a group of Israelis and Palestinians meeting in London to hunt for a solution. He was approached by a Palestinian acquaintance who told him, “We defeated you.”

“I said, ‘How did you defeat us? You killed hundreds and lost thousands. You’re losing the dream of a state. What’s your victory?’ He said, ‘Ami, you still don’t understand us. Our victory is to see you suffer. Finally after 50 years we’ve achieved a balance of power.’”

Chapter six, *Collateral Damage*, discusses the practice of assassinating terrorist leaders, and it offers the one clear instance of disagreement among the six narrators. Describing the 1996 killing via booby-trapped cellphone of Hamas activist Yahya Ayyash, the so-called Engineer who trained and equipped suicide bombers, Gillon says it was “a clean operation. I like operations like that.” Recalling that the killing was quickly followed by a wave of deadly Hamas bus bombings, apparently in retaliation, Ayalon speaks of a “banality of evil. When you start to do this, to the extent that 200 or 300 people die as a result, it becomes a kind of conveyor belt.” Dichter: “To say that an assassination brings attacks—the flip side would be that if you don’t carry out an assassination there won’t be attacks, and that doesn’t work.”

The most controversial assassination remains that Salah Shehadeh, head of Hamas’ military wing, in 2002. He was killed by a one-ton bomb dropped on his Gaza home, which unintentionally killed 14 others, including a neighboring family.

Shalom calls it “overkill” and “military stupidity. ... It doesn’t make sense that to kill one suspect you drop a one-ton bomb when it’s clear it will kill bystanders. It’s immoral, militarily ineffective and certainly not humane. Justified? Also not.”

Chapter seven, *The Old Man at the End of the Corridor*, returns to the opening theme, the lack of strategic vision among Israel’s leaders. The “old man” refers to Ayalon’s comforting childhood image of Israel’s founding Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, as “a wise man who makes all the decisions.” Years later, he discovered “there’s no one thinking for me.”

Dichter: “Peace has to be built on a system of trust. I say as someone who knows the Palestinians well, there shouldn’t be a problem to create a system of trust with them, a real one.” Shalom says that begins with talking, whether it’s with Fatah, Hamas, “Ahmadinejad, whoever. I’m always for it. It’s a trait of a professional intelligence operative—to talk to everyone.”

The film’s most shocking moment is when filmmaker Moreh, off-camera, reads a passage written by radical philosopher Yeshayahu Leibowitz in 1968: “A state that rules over a population of 1 million foreigners will necessarily become a Shin Bet state ... the corruption found in every colonial regime will affix itself to Israel. The administration will have to suppress an Arab uprising on one hand and acquire quislings or Arab traitors on the other hand.”

Diskin: “I agree with every word he said. ... I think it’s an accurate depiction of the reality that emerged from 1968 until today.” Peri and Gillon describe the “difficult moments” of waking a sleeping family in the middle of the night to arrest the father, “making the lives of millions unbearable.” Shalom says Israel’s “future is bleak,” because it leads to “a change in the people’s character” when young people are drafted into “a brutal occupation force. ... We’ve become cruel—to ourselves, but mainly to the occupied population, using the excuse of a war on terrorism.”

“The tragedy of Israel’s security debate,” Shalom says at the end, “is that we don’t realize that we face a frustrating situation in which we win every battle but we lose the war.”

THE INSPIRATION FOR THE FILM

The filmmaker, Dror Moreh, has said that he was inspired to make the film after learning about a group interview published in November 2003 in the mass-circulation daily *Yedioth Ahronoth* with four of the present film’s six narrators — that is, the four ex-directors then living, before Dichter and then Diskin retired. The four had been assembled by Ami Ayalon, who was seeking support at the time for a peace platform he had co-authored a year earlier with the Palestinian academic Sari Nusseibeh.

The Ayalon-Nusseibeh plan (see page 22) was similar to the Arab Peace Initiative (see page 20) that had been proposed by Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah and adopted by the Arab League summit in March 2002. The main goal of both was the creation of a Palestinian state alongside Israel with borders based on the pre-1967 armistice line between Israel and the West Bank and its capital in East Jerusalem. Once the Palestinian state was established and a negotiated solution was reached to the continuing problem of the Palestinian refugees, based on certain agreed principles, the Israeli-Palestinian and broader Israeli-Arab conflicts would be considered to be at an end.

The other three ex-directors, Shalom, Peri and Gillon, agreed to lend their support to Ayalon’s initiative. As part of a public outreach effort they met for a group interview with veteran military affairs reporter Alex Fishman and political commentator Sima Kadmon of *Yedioth Ahronoth*, Israel’s largest-circulation daily newspaper. The interview caused a sensation in Israel. Among other things, their sharp critique of the status quo was credited with helping to convince the Prime Minister at the time, Ariel Sharon, to take the radical step of evacuating Israeli settlers and troops from Gaza and a portion of the West Bank.

During the public debate leading up to the Gaza disengagement, Sharon's senior diplomatic adviser, Dov Weisglass, stated that the step was intended to forestall future concessions and put Israeli-Palestinian diplomacy "in formaldehyde." Years afterward, however, he admitted that he had no doubt Sharon would have proceeded, had he not been felled by a stroke, to far broader withdrawal in order to extricate Israel from its role as a ruler of another people. Sharon's deputy prime minister and successor, Ehud Olmert, eventually offered the Palestinians a peace settlement that came close to the terms of the Arab Peace Initiative, including borders based on the 1967 lines, as Ayalon and Nusseibeh had proposed.

Filmmaker Moreh heard about the *Yedioth* interview and its impact from Weisglass while researching what became a 2008 documentary about Sharon. Shortly afterward, while viewing *The Fog of War*, Errol Morris's Oscar-winning 2003 documentary about Robert McNamara and the Vietnam War, he got the idea to make a film about the former Shin Bet directors and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He reached out to Ayalon, who then recruited the others. The four had now grown to six, including Dichter and Diskin. They all agreed to participate and tell their stories in *The Gatekeepers*.

Q&A: RESPONDING TO THE CRITICS

Q: *The director, Dror Moreh, has been quoted saying that the film shows 90 minutes out of about 70 hours of interviews he conducted with the six narrators. How do we know he didn't cherry-pick the quotes that serve his own agenda, as Israel's Ambassador Michael Oren and others have charged?*

A: We know, first, that in the year since *The Gatekeepers* was released, not one of the interviewees has spoken up to dissociate

himself from it or repudiate it. Additionally, shortly after it was released in America, several of the interviewees were asked that question point-blank by the *Jewish Daily Forward*, and their answers were unequivocal.

Yaakov Peri, for example, said: “It completely reflects my views. We discuss these things among ourselves. We all agree.”

Moreover, this isn't the first time that these men have stated these opinions in public. In 2003, the four who were then retired from the service sat for a group interview with the Israeli daily *Yedioth Ahronoth* and expressed many of the same views. Moreh has acknowledged that the *Yedioth* interview helped inspire him to undertake this film.

Q: *It's been suggested that service in the Shin Bet, with its focus on the ground-level nitty-gritty of hunting and capturing terrorists, does not necessarily provide its veterans with a meaningful perspective on Israel's broader strategic challenges of war and peace. Isn't possible that if the film had interviewed heads of the IDF or Mossad, it would have reflected very different viewpoints?*

A: One the central concerns of Israeli strategy is to understand trends in Palestinian thinking: the relative strengths of various factions, the likelihood that leaders will respect agreements and keep the peace, the mood on the street. This is precisely the area where the Shin Bet has the greatest expertise and plays the leading role among Israeli security agencies. For that reason, there's great significance to the unanimity among the Shin Bet's leaders on the possibility of reaching a secure agreement with the Palestinians.

No less important, the views of the six former Shin Bet directors regarding Israel's security needs and relations with the Palestinians are shared as well by nearly all the retired heads of the IDF and Mossad. This is not simply a Shin Bet perspective,

but a consensus view of Israel's defense establishment. One might almost argue that the eccentric viewpoint is the more pessimistic one that's popular among Israeli politicians and pro-Israel pundits.

Q: Isn't it true that the military and security veterans who express these left-wing views are engaged in self-promotion while angling for political careers?

A: It is true that some retired commanders are in politics and others have been or are likely to be in the future. What's noteworthy is that, in line with their security views, nearly all of those who have entered politics joined what are known as parties of the center-left—Labor, Kadima, Yesh Atid and Tzipi Livni's Hatnuah. If they were thinking mainly in terms of career advancement, they'd be more likely to join the party that has dominated politics for the past 35 years, the Likud. Joining the opposition is hardly the mark of a careerist or opportunist.

However, of all the generals and security chiefs who have entered politics in Israel from the beginning of the state up to the present, only a tiny handful have joined the Likud or other parties on the right. In the early years it could be argued that a process of internal selection promoted commanders who agreed with the then-dominant labor movement. But the left has been out of power for most of the past generation, and since the current crop of generals were entering the ranks as privates. And yet they continue to shun the right and join the center-left in overwhelming numbers. Asked why, they generally answer that the parties on the center-left take a pragmatic, non-ideological approach to security matters.

The 120 members of the current (Nineteenth) Knesset include twelve who previously held the rank of general in the IDF or head or deputy head of the Shin Bet or the national police. Of those twelve, two are in Likud; the other ten are members of the four main center-left parties: Labor, Kadima, Yesh Atid and Tzipi Livni's Hatnuah.

Of the six former Shin Bet directors featured in *The Gatekeepers*, one, Peri, serves in the current Knesset as a member of Yesh Atid, while two others, Ayalon and Dichter, served one term each in the past. Ayalon entered Knesset with the Labor Party, narrowly lost a bid for party chairman and later retired from politics. Dichter was elected to Knesset as a member of Kadima but crossed over to Likud near the end of his term to take a post in Netanyahu's Cabinet. He failed to win a spot in the Likud primaries for the current Knesset.

Q: *Why should Israel keep offering concessions when the Palestinians have rejected every compromise offer Israel has made in the past?*

A: There is no guarantee that the differences between Israel and the Palestinians over the terms of a permanent settlement can be bridged at this point. But that does not make the current state of affairs acceptable. Israel's decades-long effort to impose its will on the Palestinians of the West Bank is, as the film's narrators argue repeatedly, corrosive for Israeli society, oppressive for Palestinian society and unsustainable. It also has a ruinous effect on Israel's international standing.

Israel has enjoyed seven years almost entirely free of terrorism from the West Bank, in large part thanks to cooperation between Israeli and Palestinian security forces. But, as the film notes, Palestinian cooperation is motivated by an expectation that security for Israelis will lead to independence for Palestinians. If there is no sign of progress toward independence, the security will not endure. Palestinians from the highest ranks of leadership to ordinary workers warn that they will not let themselves become subcontractors for Israel's occupation. Israel's leadership has consistently ignored those warnings. This is one of the main motivating factors behind the Shin Bet directors' decision to speak out.

Moreover, while it is true that repeated rounds of negotiations have not resulted in a completed peace agreement, the popular notion that Palestinians have simply rejected each Israeli offer and

walked away is not true. Israeli Prime Ministers Ehud Barak at Camp David in 2000 and Ehud Olmert in Jerusalem in 2008 both presented Palestinian leaders with what they themselves described as take-it-or-leave-it offers. Neither one was accepted as is.

Yasser Arafat walked out of Camp David to dramatize his rejection of the Barak offer, but negotiations resumed informally in Jerusalem several weeks later and then more formally in Washington in December and at Taba in January 2001. The Taba sessions came close to an agreement, but then the process was cut short when the Barak governing coalition collapsed—due partly to internal political dynamics and partly to the wave of Palestinian terrorism of the Second Intifada, which made Israeli participation impossible.

When Olmert presented his take-it-or-leave-it offer to Mahmoud Abbas in September 2008, he was already a lame duck, having resigned his office due to a criminal investigation. Both men have stated since then that the remaining gaps between them—mainly border details and refugee issues—could have been closed in several more weeks of negotiating.

Olmert argues that Abbas could have closed a deal with him, even as a lame duck, and thus guaranteed Olmert's reelection as a peacemaker. But Abbas, after consulting with aides, decided not to come back with a counter-offer because he was uncertain that Olmert would remain in office long enough to close the deal. He feared that a new government might pocket Palestinian concessions, withdraw Israeli concessions and insist on starting negotiations again from zero. Indeed, that is what happened when Benjamin Netanyahu took office in 2009 and offered to negotiate "without preconditions."

Q: *How can Israel trade the security of its current territorial depth for paper promises from neighbors who refuse to recognize its right to exist—and who might be swept away afterwards by even more extreme enemies that reject the agreements?*

A: Experience has shown that carefully negotiated, signed peace agreements are the surest guarantee of a quiet border. Egypt, once Israel's most powerful enemy, has kept its peace with Israel for more than thirty years despite assassinations, internal turmoil, international tensions and even the rise of the fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood. On the northern front, Syria has kept to the terms of its 1975 cease-fire and disengagement agreement.

All available intelligence indicates that the Palestinians under Fatah have made a strategic decision for coexistence alongside Israel and intend to keep to it—so long as an agreement is reached that meets their needs. Whether an agreement can be reached that meets the minimum needs of both Palestinians and Israelis remains to be seen, but it would be a historic error not to make every effort to try.

Whether the Palestinians will sincerely recognize Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state within the borders of historic Palestine is not an essential question. It may well be that no Muslim believer can honestly concede that Jews or anyone else has a genuine right to sovereignty within that space. But Israel has never asked any other country to recognize its right to be a Jewish state. It merely demands recognition as a sovereign state. Nations do not customarily ask other nations to recognize them as any particular type of state, but merely that they be recognized as sovereign and entitled to define themselves as they choose. The Palestinian leadership has repeatedly, consistently offered to offer recognition.

What is important is that an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement contain finality—a commitment to end the conflict between the two peoples and give up all further claims against each other. It is encouraging that this provision, promising an end to the conflict, is contained in the Arab Peace Initiative (see page 20), which has been endorsed by all twenty-two Arab states, including the Palestinians, as well as the fifty-seven members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

In the final analysis, the surest guarantee of Israel's security is, of course, its own ability to defend itself, the strength of its military and intelligence services, the resilience of its economy and the morale and spirit of its people. From the perspective of *The Gatekeepers*, all of the guarantees are tragically weakened by the continued occupation.



DOCUMENTS AND ADDENDA

A. STATEMENTS BY ISRAEL'S OTHER SECURITY CHEIFS ON WAR, PEACE, PALESTINIANS AND POLITICS

Former Chiefs of Staff, Israel Defense Forces, and years served

Ehud Barak, 1991-95

From an interview with the Los Angeles Times / Global Viewpoint Network, 5/20/11

“It’s clear to me that Israel at this junction should act and not be paralyzed by the uncertainties ... We need to put [something] on the table, whether behind closed doors to the president or in public...”

“The other side has changed. Abu Mazen and Fayyad say loud and clear, if there is an agreement that meets their minimum demands, they are ready to sign an end of conflict and claims. That’s exactly what Arafat rejected. They are willing to consider more moderate ideas than Arafat. I think this leadership is more ripe. We won’t know until we try...”

<http://news.yahoo.com/ehud-barak-netanyahu-must-daring-steps-toward-peace-125859386.html>

Amnon Lipkin-Shahak, 1995-98 (died 2013)

From an interview with the National Journal, 2/11/04

“We are trying to prove ... that there are Palestinians with whom we can reach agreement, and that together we can find fair answers to the most difficult questions standing in the way of a peace settlement...”

“[The present stalemate] will bring us nowhere. Each side will just get better at killing the other. For their part, the Palestinians are afraid that Israel will annex more of their land, make their lives even more difficult, and eventually force them out of the territories. Young Israelis, on the other hand, are also very unhappy with the situation. ...”

<http://newlive.nationaljournal.com/members/news/2004/02/0225insider.htm>

Shaul Mofaz, 1998-2002

From a press conference describing his peace plan, 2/2/11

“Because of the strategic change in our region, we have to move forward with the Palestinians. We have to do our best to restart negotiations with the Palestinians and with Syria as well. ...”

“We have to move to an interim agreement whereby we have a Palestinian state in the West Bank on 65 percent of the land ... with full continuity from north to south, with an international guarantee that the size of the land in a permanent agreement will be in the 1967 borders.”

http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5j2_5vEfLiDy51qytA1AQ1VKeosFw

Moshe Yaalon, 2002-05

From an address to Lincoln Square Synagogue, New York, 05/06

“From the dawn of Zionism until this day, the source of all terrorist attacks has been the refusal of the Arab world to recognize Israel’s existence. Until this changes, we will remain the target of violent terrorist activity. The ’67 borders are not a solution to rocket attacks, suicide bombs or more conventional forms of warfare. The two-state solution has failed and to my mind is now irrelevant.”

(He is the sole outlier among his security chief colleagues to oppose compromise with the Palestinians.)

Dan Halutz, 2005-07

From a press conference 12/2/10

“The Kadima party is suited to my political views. I believe that Kadima is the party that will lead the State of Israel in making the right decisions.”

<http://www.ipost.com/Diplomacy-and-Politics/Dan-Halutz-formally-joins-Kadima-party-as-expected>

From an Israeli television interview, quoted in Reuters, 5/29/11

“Any border the political echelon sets as the State of Israel’s border is a border that the Israel Defense Forces would be capable of defending.”

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/05/29/us-palestinians-israel-border-analysis-idUSTRE7450VR20110529>

Gabi Ashkenazi, 2007-11

In testimony to Knesset Foreign Affairs & Defense Committee, 9/21/10

“The Palestinians have very sober expectations regarding progress, whereas in Israel, tensions exist among the Jewish population...”

From an address to Israeli Business Conference, Tel Aviv, quoted in Times of Israel, 12/9/12

“Israel should reduce the extent of the conflict with the Palestinians. The separation is in Israel’s interests. Israel must recognize the limits of its power and cooperate with forces that support Israeli interests. ...”

“Let’s put a proposal on the table — an outline that 80 percent of Israelis agree on today, in my opinion — and start working toward it. We should take the initiative.”

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/05/29/us-palestinians-israel-border-analysis-idUSTRE74S0VR20110529>

Former Mossad Directors, and years served

Zvi Zamir, 1968-73

From an interview on Army Radio, 6/9/11

“Dagan is smart enough to know that this is a risky way to try to change things. I was in a similar position on Yom Kippur [1973]. We in the Mossad believed we were headed toward war, but I couldn’t pierce the blindness afflicting the defense minister, the head of Military Intelligence and the chief of staff. It was just impossible.”

(Discussing ex-Mossad director Meir Dagan’s broadside against the Netanyahu government days earlier for its “stupid” threats against Iran and its dismissal of the Saudi peace initiative)

<http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4079836,00.html>

<http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/news/idf-s-purity-of-arms-being-eroded-former-mossad-chief-zvi-zamir-warns-1.366856>

Yitzhak Hofi, 1973-82

(Not known to have commented on these issues in public. However, his intimates have said that he agrees with the majority of his colleagues.)

Nahum Admoni, 1982-89

(Believed to have supervised the preparation of February 1989 annual intelligence estimate, which reported to the government that the PLO had become part of the moderate Arab camp and was Israel’s inevitable Palestinian negotiating partner.)

<http://www.pij.org/details.php?id=446>

<http://www.wrmea.org/archives/115-washington-report-archives-1988-1993/may-1989/1207-new-mossad-chief-takes-charge-in-a-new-era.html>

Shabtai Shavit, 1989-96

From his comments at 10th World Summit on Counter-Terrorism, Inter-Disciplinary Center, Herzliya, 9/15/10

“When the world is against you, stop being right and start being smart. Adopt different methods to fight our enemies. ...”

“Given a majority in Israel in favor of a two-state solution, we need to change the coalition —Shas out, Kadima in. ... A new coalition will strengthen the center bloc in Israel. It will restore the rule of law, draw a distinction between fringe elements and the majority. It will appeal to moderate Arab states.”

<http://israeltheviewfromhere.blogspot.com/2010/09/world-summit-on-counter-terrorism.html>

Danny Yatom, 1996-98

From an op-ed article, Walla.co.il, 4/6/11

“A diplomatic initiative can influence the public in neighboring countries that are undergoing change to choose moderate leaders who see the benefits of peace with Israel for their own countries. ...”

“The peace process has the potential to unite the moderate forces in the Middle East and present an effective barrier to the Iranian-Shiite aim of regional hegemony.”

<http://news.walla.co.il/?w=//1812952>

Efraim Halevy, 1998-2002

From a press conference, 3/10/11

“There are signs of the Green Line beginning to fade into the distance, and this a threat to an Israeli Jewish democratic state.”

<http://www.jpost.com/Diplomacy-and-Politics/Halevy-doubts-chance-of-final-deal-with-Palestinians>

From “The Very Quiet Peace Talks Between Israel and Hamas: The Middle East’s storm clouds have a silver lining” The New Republic, 3/6/13

[T]he quiet service that Egypt is rendering in brokering between Hamas and Israel may prove to be more important for the cause of peace than anything that President Mubarak did in bygone days.

“Saudi Arabia, too, has been canny in its use of ambiguity. ... the current Crown Prince felt compelled to remind a recent high-level meeting of Arab regional officials that the peace deal once offered by King Abdullah is still very much alive. That deal would be a game-changer, leading to the recognition of Israel by over fifty Muslim states.

Indeed, in many ways, the Saudis are the greatest pragmatists of the Middle East. ...

“As for Palestine, there is an ever-greater hope for some sort of reconciliation between Hamas and Fatah. ...”

“Thus, contrary to appearances, this is a very promising moment to forge durable agreements between Israel and Palestine. ...”

<http://www.newrepublic.com/article/112593/very-quiet-peace-talks-between-israel-and-hamas#>

Meir Dagan, 2002-11

From dialogue with journalist Ari Shavit at Tel Aviv University, 6/1/11

“We must adopt the Saudi initiative. We have no other way, and not because [the Palestinians] are my top priority, but because I am concerned about Israel’s wellbeing and I want to do what I can to ensure Israel’s existence. If we don’t make proposals and if we don’t take the initiative, we will eventually find ourselves in a corner.”

http://www.smh.com.au/world/former-mossad-head-advocates-saudi-peace-plan-20110602-1fivf.html?from=smh_sb

A. THE ARAB PEACE INITIATIVE

Proposed by Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz, Riyadh, February 2002

Approved by Arab League (League of Arab States), Beirut Summit, March 27, 2002

Re-ratified by Arab League, Riyadh Summit, March 28, 2007

<http://www.mideastweb.org/saudipeace.htm>

(Translation by Reuters)

The Council of Arab States at the Summit Level at its 14th Ordinary Session, reaffirming the resolution taken in June 1996 at the Cairo Extra-Ordinary Arab Summit that a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East is the strategic option of the Arab countries, to be achieved in accordance with international legality, and which would require a comparable commitment on the part of the Israeli government.

Having listened to the statement made by his royal highness Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz, crown prince of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia, in which his highness presented his initiative calling for full Israeli withdrawal from all the Arab territories occupied since June 1967, in implementation of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, reaffirmed by the Madrid Conference of 1991 and the land-for-peace principle, and Israel's acceptance of an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, in return for the establishment of normal relations in the context of a comprehensive peace with Israel.

Emanating from the conviction of the Arab countries that a military solution to the conflict will not achieve peace or provide security for the parties, the council:

1. Requests Israel to reconsider its policies and declare that a just peace is its strategic option as well.

2. Further calls upon Israel to affirm:

I- Full Israeli withdrawal from all the territories occupied since 1967, including the Syrian Golan Heights, to the June 4, 1967 lines as well as the remaining occupied Lebanese territories in the south of Lebanon.

II- Achievement of a just solution to the Palestinian refugee problem to be agreed upon in accordance with UN General Assembly Resolution 194.

III- The acceptance of the establishment of a sovereign independent Palestinian state on the Palestinian territories occupied since June 4, 1967 in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

3. Consequently, the Arab countries affirm the following:

I- Consider the Arab-Israeli conflict ended, and enter into a peace agreement with Israel, and provide security for all the states of the region

II- Establish normal relations with Israel in the context of this comprehensive peace.

4. Assures the rejection of all forms of Palestinian patriation which conflict with the special circumstances of the Arab host countries

5. Calls upon the government of Israel and all Israelis to accept this initiative in order to safeguard the prospects for peace and stop the further shedding of blood, enabling the Arab countries and Israel to live in peace and good neighbourliness and provide future generations with security, stability and prosperity

6. Invites the international community and all countries and organisations to support this initiative.

7. Requests the chairman of the summit to form a special committee composed of some of its concerned member states and the secretary general of the League of Arab States to pursue the necessary contacts to gain support for this initiative at all levels, particularly from the United Nations, the Security Council, the United States of America, the Russian Federation, the Muslim states and the European Union.

B. THE AYALON-NUSSEIBEH PLAN **(“THE PEOPLE’S CHOICE”)**

Drafted and signed by Ami Ayalon and Sari Nusseibeh, Jerusalem, July 27, 2002

Publicly launched, Tel Aviv, June 25, 2003

Signers: 251,000 Israelis, 160,000 Palestinians as of October 2008
(*Superseded by Israel Peace Initiative, 2011, and Blue-White Future, 2012*)

Signers include Avraham Shalom, Yaakov Peri, Carmi Gillon

<http://www.heskem.org.il/sources-view.asp?id=715&meid=43>

1. **Two states for two peoples:** Both sides will declare that Palestine is the only state of the Palestinian people and Israel is the only state of the Jewish people.
2. **Borders:** Permanent borders between the two states will be agreed upon on the basis of the June 4, 1967 lines, UN resolutions, and the Arab peace initiative (known as the Saudi initiative).

- Border modifications will be based on an equitable and agreed-upon territorial exchange (1:1) in accordance with the vital needs of both sides, including security, territorial contiguity, and demographic considerations.
 - The Palestinian State will have a connection between its two geographic areas, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.
 - After establishment of the agreed borders, no settlers will remain in the Palestinian State.
3. **Jerusalem:** Jerusalem will be an open city, the capital of two states. Freedom of religion and full access to holy sites will be guaranteed to all.
- Arab neighborhoods in Jerusalem will come under Palestinian sovereignty, Jewish neighborhoods under Israeli sovereignty.
 - Neither side will exercise sovereignty over the holy places. The State of Palestine will be designated Guardian of al-Haram al-Sharif for the benefit of Muslims. Israel will be the Guardian of the Western Wall for the benefit of the Jewish people. The status quo on Christian holy site will be maintained. No excavation will take place in or underneath the holy sites without mutual consent.
4. **Right of return:** Recognizing the suffering and the plight of the Palestinian refugees, the international community, Israel, and the Palestinian State will initiate and contribute to an international fund to compensate them.
- Palestinian refugees will return only to the State of Palestine; Jews will return only to the State of Israel.
 - The international community will offer to compensate toward bettering the lot of those refugees willing to remain in their present country of residence, or who wish to immigrate to third-party countries.
5. The Palestinian State will be demilitarized and the international community will guarantee its security and independence.
6. **End of conflict:** Upon the full implementation of these principles, all claims on both sides and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will end.

C. THE ISRAELI PEACE INITIATIVE

Announced by Yaakov Peri, Yuval Rabin, Kobi Huberman, Tel Aviv, April 6, 2011

Signers: 96 as of September 2013

Signers include Amnon Lipkin-Shahak, Danny Yatom, Ami Ayalon, <http://israelipeaceinitiative.com/israeli-peace-initiative-english/the-israeli-peace-initiative-english/>

The State of Israel,

Reaffirming that Israel's strategic objective is to reach a historic compromise and permanent status agreements that shall determine the finality of all claims and the end of the Israeli Arab conflict, in order to achieve permanent and lasting peace

- lasting and guaranteed security, regional economic prosperity and normal ties with all Arab and Islamic states,
- Recognizing the suffering of the Palestinian refugees since the 1948 war as well as of the Jewish refugees from the Arab countries, and realizing the need to resolve the Palestinian refugees problem through realistic and mutually agreed-upon solutions,
- Realizing that wide-scale multilateral economic cooperation is essential in order to ensure the prosperity of the Middle East, its environmental sustainability and the future of its peoples,
- Recognizing the Arab Peace Initiative of March 2002 (API) as a historic effort made by the Arab states to reach a breakthrough and achieve progress on a regional basis, and sharing the API statement *“that a military solution to the conflict will not achieve peace or provide security for the parties,”*

Therefore Israel accepts the API as a framework for regional peace negotiations and presents the IPI as an integrated response to the API, and as a vision of the regional final-status agreements to be negotiated and signed between the Arab states, the Palestinians and Israel, based on the following proposed principles:

1) CONFLICT RESOLUTION PRINCIPLES

The key principle of all regional peace agreements shall be Israeli withdrawals, guaranteed security, normal relations and end of all conflicts, while recognizing the security needs of all parties, the water resources challenges, the demographic realities on the ground, and the interests and needs of the followers of the three monotheistic faiths; Furthermore, the Israeli Palestinian conflict shall be resolved on the principle of two states for two nations: Palestine as a nation state for the Palestinians and Israel as a nation state for the Jews (in which the Arab minority will have equal and full civil rights as articulated in Israel's Declaration of Independence). On this basis, the following parameters are proposed:

1A) ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT RESOLUTION PARAMETERS

1. **Statehood and Security** – A sovereign independent Palestinian state shall be formed in the West Bank and Gaza Strip on territories from which Israel withdrew. The state shall be demilitarized, exercising full authority over its internal security forces. The International community shall play an active role in providing border security and curbing terrorist threats.
2. **Borders** – The borders shall be based on the June 4, 1967, lines, with agreed modifications subject to the following principles: the creation of territorial contiguity between the Palestinian territories; land swaps (not to exceed 7% of the West Bank) based on a 1:1 ratio, including the provision of a safe corridor between the West Bank and Gaza, under de facto Palestinian control.
3. **Jerusalem** – The greater Jerusalem area shall include the two capitals of the two states. The line shall be drawn so that: Jewish neighborhoods shall be under Israeli sovereignty; the Arab neighborhoods shall be under Palestinian sovereignty; special arrangements shall be implemented in the Old City, ensuring that the Jewish Quarter and the Western Wall shall be under Israeli sovereignty; the Temple Mount shall remain under a special no-sovereignty regime (“God Sovereignty”), with special

agreed-upon arrangements, ensuring that Islamic holy places shall be administered by the Moslem Waqf, and Jewish holy sites and interests shall be administered by Israel. The implementation of these arrangements will be supervised by an Israeli-International committee.

4. **Refugees** – The solutions for the Palestinian refugees shall be agreed upon between Israel, the Palestinians and all regional parties in accordance with the following principles: Financial compensation shall be offered to the refugees and the host countries by the international community and Israel; the Palestinian refugees wishing to return (as mentioned in UNGAR 194) may do so only to the Palestinian state, with mutually agreed-upon symbolic exceptions.

1B) ISRAELI-SYRIAN CONFLICT RESOLUTION PARAMETERS

1. **Borders** – Israel shall withdraw from the Golan to a border-line to be designed based on the June 4, 1967 status, with agreed minor modifications and land swaps based on a 1:1 ratio, reflecting the 1923 international border. The agreement shall be mutually implemented in stages, based on the Sinai model, over a period not to exceed 5 years.
2. **Security Arrangements** – A comprehensive security package shall be mutually agreed, defining, inter alia, the scope of demilitarized zones on both sides of the border and the deployment of peace keeping international forces.

1C) ISRAELI-LEBANESE CONFLICT RESOLUTION PARAMETERS

1. **Borders** – Israel and Lebanon shall establish permanent peace based on UNSCR 1701, subject to which Israel concluded its withdrawal to the international border.
2. **Lebanese Sovereignty** – In addition to the full implementation of UNSCR 1701, Lebanon shall exercise full sovereignty over its territory through the Lebanese army.

1D) STATE OF PEACE

In each of the Israeli-Palestinian, Israeli-Syrian and the Israeli-Lebanese peace agreements the respective parties agree to apply between them the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law governing relations among states in time of peace; to settle all disputes between them by peaceful means; to develop good neighborly relations of cooperation between them to ensure lasting security; to refrain from the threat or use of force against each other and from forming any coalition, organization or alliance with a third party, the objectives or activities of which include launching aggression or hostility against the other party.

2) REGIONAL SECURITY PRINCIPLES

1. The parties will create regional security mechanisms, addressing shared threats and risks arising from states, terrorist organizations, marine pirate groups, and guerrilla organizations to ensure the safety and security of the peoples of the region.
2. The parties shall build regional frameworks to jointly fight against crime and environmental threats.

3) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

Based on significant economic support by the international community, the parties shall implement wide-scale regional cooperation projects in order to ensure the stabilization, viability and prosperity of the region, and to achieve optimal utilization of energy and water resources for the benefit of all parties. Such projects will improve transportation infrastructure, agriculture, industry and regional tourism, thus addressing the rising danger of unemployment in the region. In the future, the parties shall create the “Middle East Economic Development Bloc” (inviting all Middle Eastern countries to join), aiming at reaching a special status in the EU, the US and the International Community.

4) STEPS TOWARDS NORMAL RELATIONS **PRINCIPLES**

Israel, the Arab States and the Islamic States commit to implement gradual steps towards establishing normal relations between them, in the spirit of the Arab Peace Initiative, which shall commence upon the launching of peace negotiations and shall be gradually upgraded to full normal relations (including diplomatic relations, open borders and economic ties) upon the signing of the permanent status agreements and throughout their implementation.



MISSION STATEMENT

Ameinu, Hebrew for “Our People”, is a national, multi-generational community of progressive North American Jews. Recognizing the unbreakable bond between the Jewish people and Israel, as well as the commitment to make our own country better, we mobilize American Jews who seek opportunities to foster social and economic justice both in Israel and the United States. As Zionists, we understand that a secure peace between Israel and its neighbors is essential to the survival of a democratic Jewish state. With this in mind, we build support within the American Jewish community for a negotiated two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

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