

The Real Barriers to Mideast Peace

by [David Pollock \(/experts/david-pollock\)](/experts/david-pollock)

Oct 30, 2015

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



[David Pollock \(/experts/david-pollock\)](/experts/david-pollock)

David Pollock is the Bernstein Fellow at The Washington Institute, focusing on regional political dynamics and related issues.



Articles & Testimony

Jackson Diehl used [my recent survey research \(http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/half-of-jeruselems-palestinians-would-prefer-israeli-to-palestinian-citizen\)](http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/half-of-jeruselems-palestinians-would-prefer-israeli-to-palestinian-citizen) in his Oct. 26 op-ed column, "Barriers to Peace in Israel." (https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/building-barriers-to-peace-in-israel/2015/10/25/01ee4882-78d1-11e5-a958-d889faf561dc_story.html) I have supported the principle of "land for peace" and an end to occupation since 1967. But the Israeli fear that Hamas or its ilk would then take over the West Bank is reasonable. My surveys show that the majority of West Bank Palestinians today, unlike those in Jerusalem, really are quite uncompromising, with plenty of encouragement from Fatah.

The first key to this tragic puzzle lies not in compromising Israel's security but in convincing more Israeli voters that peace is possible, despite the Palestinian intifada of 2000 to 2005 that followed Israel's offer to withdraw from nearly all the occupied territories and make room for an independent Palestinian state. Peace requires concrete (literally) security.

Clearly, the Israeli settlers are a problem, even with territorial swaps that might leave 80 percent of them inside the security barriers, partly because of the presence of tens of thousands of settlers beyond the barriers and partly because of the settlers' increasing and reliably right-wing votes. Still, millions of Israelis have internalized the lesson that if they withdraw, they may reap only rockets and suicide bombers. For many, that trumps arguments about democracy or anything else. So far, the Palestinian Authority is both unwilling and unable to offer meaningful assurances in this regard. ❖

Washington Post

RECOMMENDED



BRIEF ANALYSIS

Bennett's Bahrain Visit Further Invigorates Israel-Gulf Diplomacy

Feb 14, 2022



Simon Henderson

(/policy-analysis/bennetts-bahrain-visit-further-invigorates-israel-gulf-diplomacy)



BRIEF ANALYSIS

Libya's Renewed Legitimacy Crisis

Feb 14, 2022



Ben Fishman

(/policy-analysis/libyas-renewed-legitimacy-crisis)



BRIEF ANALYSIS

The UAE Formally Ceases to be a Tax-Free Haven

Feb 14, 2022



Sana Quadri,
Hamdullah Baycar

(/policy-analysis/uae-formally-ceases-be-tax-free-haven)

TOPICS

Peace Process (/policy-analysis/peace-process)

REGIONS & COUNTRIES

Israel (/policy-analysis/israel)

Palestinians (/policy-analysis/palestinians)

