

# Bush, Sharon, and Arafat:

## The Pursuit of Israeli-Palestinian Peace (Part III)

Oct 4, 2002



In-Depth Reports

**N**ote: Mr. Satterfield's remarks represent his own views and not necessarily those of the U.S. government.

I will speak on behalf of the incremental approach, not because we believe that the trusteeship or mandate options are intrinsically wrong or flawed, but because we do not see a reality on the ground -- either in the United States or on the part of the parties themselves -- that would permit a trusteeship or mandate option to be adopted at this time.

We have focused on the goal: a vision of two states, Palestine and Israel. The president's June 24, 2002, remarks provided a road map, in general terms, of the obligations and requirements -- not just for Israel and the Palestinians, but also for the key Arab players, the international community, and the United States -- that would be necessary to make the vision real. How do you translate the general points of the June 24 speech into reality? How does a three-year timeframe actually unfold? How does the vision of two states become realized on the ground?

That is what we are grappling with now. That is what the parties themselves -- Israelis, Palestinians, other regional elements (particularly the Saudis, Jordanians, and Egyptians), and our colleagues in the Quartet (the European Union, the United Nations, and Russia) -- have been trying to work out. Where are we? We now are in the process of considering elements of a road map that details more fully how to achieve the vision that the president outlined on June 24. We have been discussing, with all of the parties, how to translate the president's vision into change on the ground.

Two elements are key in this process. First, there must be sustained calm. There must be a comprehensive end to violence and terror. Without this, everything we discuss is largely academic. As there is progress on the restoration and sustaining of calm, there must be reciprocal steps taken -- a parallel process by Israel in which Palestinian steps are supported, sustained, acknowledged, and encouraged. Israel's steps will be incremental at first, as Palestinian steps are incremental, but as Palestinian measures become more comprehensive, so Israeli measures must match them in scope and in pace.

Beyond this, there must be a political process. I divide the political process into two parts. The Palestinians, as they prepare for statehood, should undertake steps to prepare the institutions and leadership necessary for Palestine to be a democratic, responsible, and prosperous state -- a partner not just for Israel, but for the region, for the United States, and for the world.

There are fundamental reforms that must be undertaken. We are pleased that -- for all of the terrible problems that our speakers have already outlined -- there is a palpable, meaningful reform current within the Palestinian community and elements of the Palestinian leadership, and it is translating into real change. This current has been supported by the region and by the international community. This is a Palestinian agenda. I cannot underscore that more strongly. It is a Palestinian agenda, not an American one. We can support it. We can help sustain it. We can lay out benchmarks that are useful for all sides in measuring progress. But at the end of the day, this is Palestinian action on behalf of Palestinians in preparation for Palestine. It is reform of institutions and it is also reform of

leadership. The president made our judgment as to the failed character of Yasir Arafat's leadership clear. That judgment will not change. And, interestingly enough, it is a judgment that has been broadly accepted in the Arab world and in the international community.

We must keep the focus on the process of leadership transformation, not on the failed leader himself. This is why Israel's actions in laying siege to Arafat's Mukata compound created the reaction it did. It shifted the focus back to Arafat in a manner that was wholly unhelpful and froze the positive currents of reform and direct pressure placed upon him by Palestinian elites. It is essential for that process to get back to where it was and be allowed to proceed.

On the security side, the United States is engaged now -- along with Jordan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia -- in supporting a restructuring of Palestinian security elements, but that is not where the focus should be right now. This is an important process and it will be extremely valuable for the future, but that is not where the game is today. The game is the debate taking place in the Tanzim, in Hamas, and on the street about what to do. In the face of the suffering of the Palestinian people, in the face of the devastating impact of the failed intifada, what do these groups do? What is in their interest? Is it to sustain the violence, which precipitates further suffering for Palestinians, or is it to reach a political decision -- perhaps a set of incremental political decisions -- that bring about an end to the violence and restore calm?

If that process is underway, as we believe it is, on the part of these elements, how does Israel respond? There is a vigorous debate today in Israel about how the Israel Defense Forces, the security services, and the political establishment should respond in a way that pushes this debate forward in a constructive fashion. For our part, the United States and its partners in the Quartet will continue to lay out the goals. We will continue to articulate the responsibilities and obligations of the sides as clearly as we can. We will try to formulate and present a road map that fleshes out the president's June 24 vision so that all sides have before them a sense of phases, a sense of sequencing, a detailed sense of what each must do, and so that the international and regional communities that support this process will have both a sense of where we are going and the shape of the road that will get us there.

At the end of the day, the parties themselves must reach the political decisions necessary to make this process succeed and to make their own desires for peace and security possible, but we can and we will help.

Read remarks by the other participants on this panel: [Martin Indyk \(templateC07.php?CID=126\)](#) [David Makovsky \(templateC07.php?CID=129\)](#) and [Dennis Ross \(templateC07.php?CID=131\)](#) ❖

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