



*Proceedings of the Soref Symposium
and 20th Anniversary Celebration*

Charting the Winds of Change: America and the Middle East, 2005

MAY 19–20, 2005





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THE WASHINGTON INSTITUTE FOR NEAR EAST POLICY
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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

May 18, 2005

I send greetings to those celebrating the 20th anniversary of The Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

America believes that all people deserve to live in peace and freedom under democratically elected governments. In the last several months, we have witnessed successful elections in Afghanistan, the Palestinian Territories, and Iraq; peaceful demonstrations in support of democracy on the streets of Beirut; and steps toward democratic reform in Egypt. The desire for freedom, even when repressed for generations, is present in every human heart. Freedom is the birthright of every human soul, and spreading freedom's blessings is the calling of our time.

For two decades, The Washington Institute has answered this call by promoting mutual understanding, security, prosperity, and democracy for the people of the Middle East. Your hard work and commitment to the spread of freedom strengthen our Nation and help make the world a safer and more peaceful place.

Laura and I send our best wishes for a successful event.

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George".

EDITOR'S NOTE

These conference proceedings include summaries of presentations and panel discussions. The summaries should not be cited as actual transcripts of speaker remarks. Presentations made by two keynote speakers—World Bank president Paul Wolfowitz and Egyptian prime minister Ahmed Nazif—are included as edited transcripts and may be cited as such.

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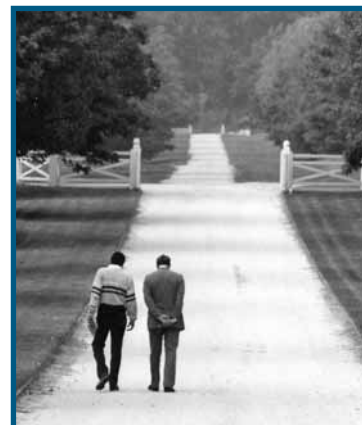
Executive Committee, Advisors & Staff

Preface

TWO DECADES AGO, when The Washington Institute was founded, the Middle East was a critical front in the Cold War, Ayatollah Khomeini was at the vanguard of the Islamic revolution, the Arab-Israeli peace process was stagnant, and America was still reeling from the ignominy of withdrawing its Marine contingent from Lebanon. Much has transpired since then, for good and for ill. Sadly, hundreds of thousands of Middle Eastern women, men, and children died as a result of wars, civil strife, and terrorism. Virtually no part of the region was immune to this scourge of politically motivated violence. Indeed, the region was so plagued by senseless death that one Middle Eastern city—Beirut—became a worldwide synonym for armed chaos; one Middle Eastern state—Algeria—became a codeword for a ruthless showdown between state and opposition; and another Middle Eastern country—Somalia—came to symbolize the total breakdown of sovereign order. Perhaps most ominous of all was the fact that, on September 11, 2001, Middle Easterners who had traveled to the United States inflicted the most insidious and audacious act of terrorism in modern times, opening the eyes of Americans—and the world—to an ideological battle that had in fact already been raging for years.

Despite this violence, the worst did not come to pass. Although cold and sometimes fragile, peace between Israel and Egypt, the most powerful Arab state, held firm and was eventually complemented by peace between Israel and the country sharing its longest border, Jordan. Although Khomeini's revolution used guile, terror, and intimidation to export itself throughout the region, it was only able to establish an outpost among the Shiites of Lebanon and build an uneasy alliance with Alawite-led Syria. Although Saddam Hussein sought regional hegemony by attempting to swallow one neighbor, lobbing missiles at two others, and gassing his own people, he failed so resoundingly that not only were his ambitions unfulfilled, his regime was overturned as well. And nearly a generation after the destruction of his Osiraq reactor, no new nuclear power has yet to enter the regional stage.

The Middle East has even enjoyed some hopeful, inspiring moments: Iraqis braving death threats to cast their first free vote; Lebanese jetti-





“Seared by experience, today’s peacemakers know that building fences may be as important as building bridges.”

soning their sectarianism to demand independence; Israelis streaming to Petra and the pyramids to enjoy the fruits of peace. Regrettably, many such moments—including Oslo, the handshake, and Casablanca—proved ephemeral, leaving resentment and recrimination in their wake.

Today, the Middle East is a more sober, realistic place than it was two decades ago. Seared by experience, today’s peacemakers know that building fences may be as important as building bridges. Those buoyed by the remarkable images of “people power” in Beirut and the daily acts of human courage exhibited by ordinary Iraqis have no illusions about the obstacles to democracy that lie ahead. The frightening combination of Islamist extremism, terrorism, and weapons of mass destruction—which could come together in the hands of the ruling clique in Iran, among other places—is a dark cloud hovering over the entire region.

FOR THE UNITED STATES, the challenge to advance security, peace, and freedom in the Middle East is no less daunting today than it was twenty years ago. What has changed are the stakes. Given the memory of the September 11 attacks, the specter of nuclear terrorism, the ideological challenge of Islamist radicalism, and the palpable yearning for peace, security, and change that one can feel in every corner of the region, the reward for progress is greater than ever before, as is the price of failure.

At this moment of great hopes, high stakes, and deep fears, The Washington Institute convened its special Twentieth Anniversary Soref Symposium. More than just an opportunity to take stock, it was an occasion for Americans and Middle Easterners to assess a wide range of regional issues in order to answer two questions: What is possible? And how can it be achieved? With the participation of visionary leaders, courageous reformers, experienced diplomats, and thoughtful experts from the United States and abroad, the symposium sought to chart the winds of change sweeping the Middle East. Hopefully, these proceedings—which include edited transcripts and summaries of remarks delivered by the various distinguished participants—can help America’s leaders avoid the pitfalls before them while making the most of the opportunities presented to them.

Robert Satloff
Executive Director

The Speakers

HASSAN ABU LIBDEH is the Palestinian Authority (PA) minister of labor and social affairs. Previously, he served as secretary of the PA cabinet and chief of staff to Prime Minister Ahmed Qurei. He has also served as director of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and as a professor at Bir Zeit University.

ROLA DASHTI is chair and chief officer of FARO International, a management consulting firm, and a leader in the campaign for women's rights in Kuwait. An associate professor at Kuwait University with a doctorate in population dynamics from Johns Hopkins University, she has worked as a consultant to the World Bank in the areas of human resource development in Yemen, family planning in Tunisia, and population issues throughout the Middle East.

HISHAM KASSEM is president of the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights, one of the oldest civil rights organizations in Egypt. In addition, he is chief executive officer of the liberal daily *al-Masri al-Yawm*, and vice president for international relations of Hizb al-Ghad (Party of Tomorrow), led by member of parliament Ayman Nour.

DAVID MAKOVSKY is a senior fellow and director of the Project on the Middle East Peace Process at The Washington Institute. He is also an adjunct lecturer in Middle Eastern studies at Johns Hopkins University's Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). His most recent publications include two Institute monographs: *Engagement through Disengagement: Gaza and the Potential for Renewed Israeli-Palestinian Peacemaking* (2005) and *A Defensible Fence: Fighting Terror and Enabling a Two-State Solution* (2004).

HABIB MALIK, a professor of history and cultural studies at Lebanese American University (Byblos campus), is chairman of the Charles Malik Foundation and author of *Between Damascus and Jerusalem: Lebanon and Middle East Peace* (The Washington Institute, 2000).

AHMED NAZIF has served as prime minister of Egypt since July 2004. A computer engineer with a doctorate from McGill University, he served previously as Egypt's first minister for communications and information technology, during which time he was widely credited with establishing Egypt's free internet connectivity plan and improving public access to computers.

TERJE ROED-LARSEN is the UN secretary-general's special representative for Lebanon and president of the International Peace Academy. Previously, he served as UN special coordinator for the Middle East peace process. One of the original architects of the Oslo process, he has worked to advance Arab-Israeli peace negotiations in senior positions in the Norwegian government and in the UN since 1993.

BARHAM SALIH is minister of planning and development in the new Iraqi government. Previously, he served as Iraq's deputy prime minister. An engineer and computer scientist by training, he served as prime minister of the Sulaymaniya-based Kurdistan Regional Government before the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime.

MOHSEN SAZEGARA is one of Iran's foremost democratic activists and a visiting fellow at The Washington Institute. An early supporter of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and a founder of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, he served as the first director of Islamic Republic Radio and as deputy minister of industry and director of Iran's largest industrial organization. Growing increasingly disillusioned with the regime, he left the government in 1989 and began to edit and publish reformist newspapers that were ultimately shut down by the authorities. When his candidacy for president was rejected by the Guardian Council in 2001, he initiated a campaign for a national referendum to replace the Iranian constitution. He was subsequently arrested by the Ministry of Intelligence.

MEIR SHITRIT is the Israeli minister of transportation. A longtime Likud Party representative in the Knesset and former mayor of Yavne, he served previously as minister of justice, as an official in the Ministry of Finance, and as treasurer of the Jewish Agency.

PAUL WOLFOWITZ is president of the World Bank. Previously, he served as U.S. deputy secretary of defense, undersecretary of defense for policy, ambassador to Indonesia, and assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs. Throughout much of the 1990s, he served as dean and professor of international relations at Johns Hopkins University's Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, and as a member of The Washington Institute's Board of Advisors.

EHUD YAARI is chief Middle East correspondent for Israel's Channel Two, associate editor of the *Jerusalem Report*, and an Israel-based associate of The Washington Institute. Author and coauthor of bestselling books on Middle East politics and Arab-Israeli relations, he has won numerous accolades for his reporting and commentary, including the Israeli Press Editors-in-Chief Prize for coverage of the peace process with Egypt, the Sokolov Prize for coverage of the Lebanon war, and the Israel Broadcasting Award for coverage of the 1991 Gulf War.



SOREF SYMPOSIUM AND 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



A Narrow Window of Opportunity in Gaza

A Narrow Window of Opportunity in Gaza

Meir Shitrit

SUMMARY

OVER THE PAST EIGHTEEN YEARS, a major shift has occurred in relations between Israel and the Palestinians. In the wake of the Oslo process, the possibility for peace is real.

Nevertheless, challenging days lie ahead for the Israeli government in its goal of disengaging from Gaza. Due to the shortsightedness of past Israeli governments, the state is now compelled to evacuate its own citizens from homes that they have dwelled in for years. When these law-abiding people settled amid 1.5 million Palestinians, they were aided by governments that dedicated resources to the settlements while neglecting regions in Israel proper, such as the Negev and the Galilee. The current government is now obliged to provide financial compensation in order to alleviate the hardship that evacuation will impose on these settlers. Despite these difficulties, disengagement from Gaza is vital for Israel and for the advancement of peace.

The Israeli government first devised the disengagement plan as a unilateral step during a time when Yasser Arafat still led the Palestinian people. Under his rule, Palestinians regressed to the brink of disaster by resorting to terrorism. Arafat had an opportunity for peace literally in his hands, but rather than act on it, he affirmed the old Abba Eban axiom regarding the Palestinians: “They never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity.”

Arafat’s death opened a new window of opportunity for peace in the Middle East. The new Palestinian leader, Mahmoud Abbas, is sincere in his attempts to end violence and has taken some positive steps in the fight against terrorism. Yet, the underlying infrastructure of terror must still be uprooted. Ultimately, one cannot lead by trying to satisfy everyone; such a leader ends up satisfying no one. The fact remains that militants continue to shell Israeli targets from Gaza, and the Palestinian Authority has no real control over terrorists operating within its jurisdiction. After the disengagement, Palestinian authorities will have no excuse for terrorism emanating from Gaza.

Alongside these security issues, the Israeli evacuation must be accompanied by aid from the international community, particularly the World



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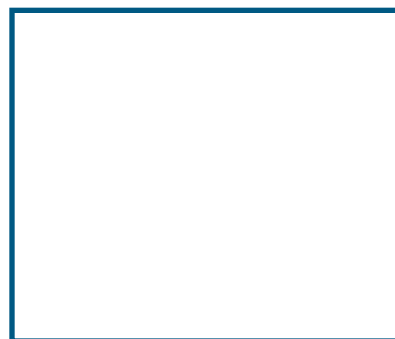
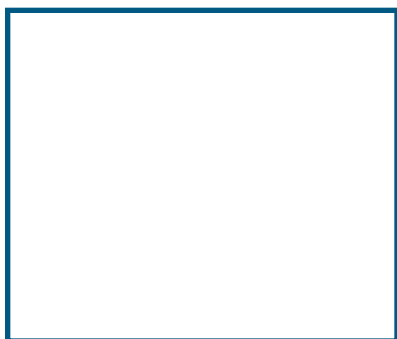
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Bank. In addition to helping with the resettlement of Gaza refugees, such aid could potentially be used to establish rail links between Gaza and the Ashdod port, between the West Bank and the Haifa port, and even between Gaza and the West Bank. In all of these potential endeavors, the international community would need to supply the money and the means, and the Palestinian people would need to offer real cooperation, which to this date has been lacking. Moreover, rather than demolishing all of the settler housing and other facilities (e.g., greenhouses), Israel and outside actors should give the Palestinians a say in the fate of evacuated buildings.

Regarding U.S.-Israeli relations, the partnership between the two countries has long rested on a strong foundation of shared ideals and a common perception of threats and security concerns. These ties have grown even stronger in the post-September 11 era due to Israel's experience in dealing with terrorism. The United States has in turn played a vital role in Israel's relations with its neighbors and in the pursuit of peace. Indeed, now is the time for serious structural and attitudinal changes in the region. Over the years, Middle Eastern states have spent more than \$200 billion on the conflict with Israel. The Arab world must now help the Palestinian people pursue peace.

The Gaza disengagement should provide a good platform from which to move toward a comprehensive peace agreement with the Palestinians. Yet, there will be no further unilateral disengagements after the evacuation of Gaza. Progress will ultimately depend on Abbas's efforts to halt terrorism in fulfillment of his commitments under the first stage of the Quartet Roadmap. Peace is in the hands of people, not God; all parties need to embrace the opportunity created by the coming disengagement and by Abbas's presidency.

SOREF SYMPOSIUM AND 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



Israeli-Palestinian Relations at a Crossroads

Israeli-Palestinian Relations at a Crossroads

Hassan Abu Libdeh

SUMMARY

IT IS IMPORTANT for Israelis and Palestinians to look forward, not backward. Both peoples could debate for ages the sins they have committed against each other. Indeed, neither party is innocent. Palestinians could list the Israeli military's various inflammatory actions in the West Bank and Gaza, highlighting the manner in which these activities undermine the efforts of Mahmoud Abbas. Instead, we would like to reassure the international community that President Abbas, his government, and his people are committed to a peaceful solution with the state of Israel. Our hands are extended to the Israeli government and the Israeli people to achieve this peace.

From Washington's perspective, it might not seem like President Abbas has accomplished much during his initial months in office. Yet, taking into consideration the Palestinian context—four-and-a-half years of continuous suffering, violence, sieges, and closures—he has been doing a great job leading his people on the path to peace. He has done well in terms of increasing public accountability and reshaping how the government functions. He has also done much to unite the Palestinian security forces, scaling them down from twelve to three.

Indeed, the president has taken every initiative possible in light of his limited resources and the problems on the ground. He is trying to achieve his goals at a time when the Palestinian treasury is empty, 300,000 Palestinians are unemployed, and 64 percent of Palestinian households are living below the poverty line. He has taken these hardships into consideration with each decision he makes, and he deserves every opportunity to continue down the path he has embarked on.

Palestinians and Israelis are now at a crossroads. If President Abbas succeeds in his endeavors over the next few months, both sides will soon be sitting together for final-status negotiations.

The upcoming Gaza disengagement is an important opportunity for significant progress. Unfortunately, the withdrawal plan in its current form does not represent a step forward on the Quartet Roadmap to Israeli-Palestinian peace; rather, it is a recipe for continued Palestin-



■ *Hassan Abu Libdeh is the Palestinian Authority minister of labor and social affairs. Previously, he served as director of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and as a professor at Bir Zeit University.*

ian suffering. There are 1.5 million Palestinians in Gaza who deserve a better life and a concerted effort to achieve peaceful coexistence with Israel. The current disengagement plan—which leaves Gaza’s borders under Israeli control, phases out Palestinian labor in Israel, and calls for little direct investment in Gaza—will only lead to more hardship for the Palestinian people.

Evacuating 2,000 homes and returning 7,000 settlers to Israel is an important and courageous step for Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon to take. Yet, even as 2,000 homes are set to be dismantled in Gaza, 6,500 new settler homes are being built in the West Bank. As much as Palestinians are requested to abide by the first phase of the Roadmap and cease violence against Israelis everywhere, the same first phase requires Israel to halt settlement activity, dismantle outposts, and refrain from violence against Palestinians.

Accordingly, even as the whole world focuses on the Gaza disengagement, there should be equal focus on Israel’s activities in the West Bank. Israel continues to expand West Bank settlements, construct a separation wall deep into Palestinian territory, and take actions that isolate Jerusalem from the West Bank. These activities will not bring us closer to peace; rather, they will create obstacles when it comes time for final-status negotiations.

Given these problems, President Abbas’s upcoming visit to the United States will be a golden opportunity for Washington to empower him. Palestinians have grown weary of official declarations offering more of the same. The United States should enable President Abbas to continue his efforts toward fulfilling Roadmap commitments so that he can bring Israel to the negotiating table as soon as possible. The Palestinian Authority has stated repeatedly that it is willing to begin negotiations with Israel on final-status issues. With the proper sponsorship from Washington and the Quartet, we would be able to reach a conclusion by the end of 2005 and establish a Palestinian state living side by side with Israel. Palestinians are ready to make the concessions necessary for reaching a solution. What we lack is a third party with the requisite will to bring the two sides together to work on these issues.

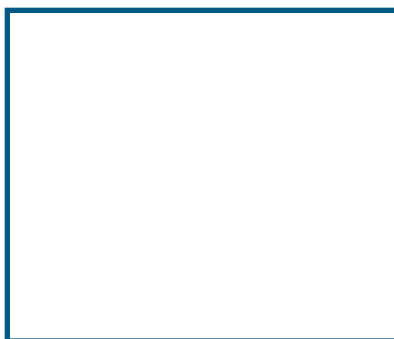
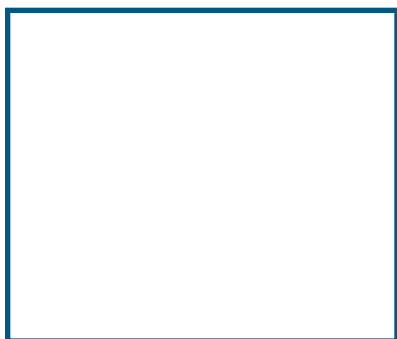
President Abbas is not the weak leader some would make him out to be. Certainly, he is considering the internal dynamics of Palestinian society before taking certain actions. If he is pushed to act prematurely, he will lose all that he has achieved. Instead of characterizing him as a weak president, Israel should work with him and help him produce results. He would welcome any Israeli-Palestinian dialogue that could bring prosperity to the two populations. For example, according to established agreements, the West Bank and Gaza should be linked by a safe passage. This passage could take any form that is satisfactory to

The current disengagement plan will only lead to more hardship for the Palestinian people.

both sides. Whatever the case, all parties must keep the basic parameters of the peace process in sight if they hope to produce an outcome that is just for both the Palestinians and the cause of peace.

Again, the United States should work with Israelis and Palestinians alike. Both sides need a third party that can see the potential dividends of peace. At the moment, neither side can see these dividends clearly; they need a third party to bring them together toward a better future for both nations.

**Both sides need
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Overcoming Challenges in the New Iraq

Overcoming Challenges in the New Iraq

Barham Salih

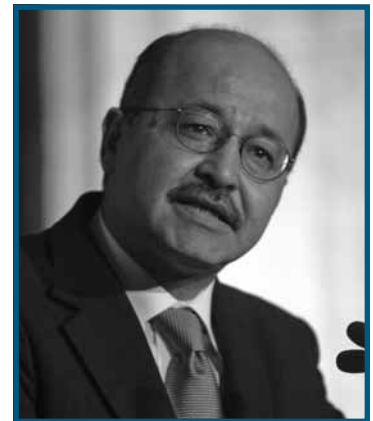
SUMMARY

TRANSFORMING IRAQ from a tyranny to a democracy is a monumental undertaking tantamount to changing the course of history in the Middle East. Despite the many problems it faces, the new Iraq is a drastic improvement over the Iraq of old. The current difficulties pale in comparison to the horrors endured under Saddam Hussein's tyranny. His regime was a uniquely criminal state, comprising all the horrors of twentieth-century totalitarianism: ethnic cleansing, torture, terrorism, devastation of civil society, flouting of international law, use of chemical weapons, and latent regional ambitions waiting to resurge.

Bringing down a tyranny that enslaved 25 million people is no small matter, but creating a functional democracy in its place is an even greater challenge. The liberation of Iraq has been vindicated not only by the discovery of mass graves, but also by two landmark political developments: the drafting through consensus of an interim constitution, and the success of democratic elections in which more than 8 million Iraqis participated despite intimidation and violence. The Iraqi government now faces three major challenges: delivering internal security, fostering economic growth, and establishing a viable political structure.

Training and equipping indigenous security forces is the top priority. By May 2005, Iraqi police and army personnel outnumbered coalition forces. Enhancing their capabilities so that they can assume full responsibility for defending the country is the best weapon against terrorism. The Iraqi Security Forces are already doing an admirable job; much of Iraq is stable and secure despite images of carnage emanating from more violent locales. Nevertheless, Iraq will need the support of multinational forces until its own personnel are capable of delivering security independently. Despite protracted public debate regarding the withdrawal of foreign troops, the Iraqi government and the coalition agree that such redeployments should not be based on an artificially imposed timetable.

Enduring partnerships between free nations will be necessary to combat global terrorism in the long term. The United States is leading the way in helping Iraqis establish internal security; the British role has been



■ *Barham Salih is minister of planning and development in the new Iraqi government. Before the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime, he served as prime minister of the Sulaymaniya-based Kurdistan Regional Government.*

Enduring partnerships between free nations will be necessary to combat global terrorism in the long term.

admirable as well. Other NATO countries are helping, but they can and should do more. Fostering a stable and successful Iraq is in the broader international interest.

On the economic front, the international community should help the Iraqi government demonstrate that democracy can defeat terrorism, provide material needs, and inspire debate and ideas. Even as they yearned for freedom under Saddam, Iraqis also hungered for basic economic development and equitable distribution of natural resources. Over the course of his twenty-year reign, Saddam dragged Iraq back into the nineteenth century. The country now has one of the highest rates of unemployment in the Middle East and a shockingly high rate of child malnutrition, while public services and infrastructure are in shambles. Indeed, compared to twenty-five years ago, Iraq is a tragedy. Compared to just two years ago, however, Iraq is doing better. Spending on health and education are up, along with immunization rates; refugees are returning home; family incomes are on the rise; and the economy is growing.

At the same time, corruption and inefficiency continue to plague Iraqi political institutions, sustained by state revenues. Iraq must therefore move away from a command economy and empower the private sector by developing a legal and administrative environment that encourages investment. International assistance is essential in this respect. Debt relief, while important, is insufficient; a stable, federal, democratic Iraq is worth more extensive investment.

On the political front, the January 30 parliamentary elections and the subsequent creation of a new government were important successes. Regarding the former, the interim authorities opted for a proportional national list system to bring as many Iraqis as possible into the political system. Regarding the latter, the interim constitution—the Transitional Administrative Law (TAL)—imposed a steep hurdle on the formation of a new cabinet, requiring the approval of a two-thirds majority in the national assembly. Nevertheless, Iraqis met these requirements through discussion and compromise.

The next challenge for the Iraqi government is to ensure that the Arab Sunni community is included in the political process. The current government is the third since the establishment of the Iraqi Governing Council nearly two years ago, and each transfer of power has been peaceful and constitutional. The drafting of a permanent constitution to replace the TAL is the next critical juncture in this process. Although the debate will be lively, it will remain within the parameters of democracy. The drafters will work hard to meet the demanding timetable and ratification requirements imposed by the TAL.

If these three principal elements—security, economics, and politics—are addressed, Iraq will be a state at peace. In order for this transition to be successful, however, regional actors must play a more constructive role. Iraq's neighbors are clearly interested in the fate of Iraq. But this inter-

est often leads them to unacceptable and unwarranted interference. For example, some of these neighbors have violated their international obligations by permitting illegal access to Iraq across their borders and by harboring former Baath regime figures. Such dangerous and shortsighted tactical decisions will come back to haunt these countries. Iraq's neighbors must realize that the Iraq of Saddam is no longer. In its place is being built a federal, democratic state that has renounced aggression and the pursuit of nonconventional weapons.

Despite being afflicted by daily terrorism, the new Iraq has a population of immense courage and politicians who are dedicated to compromise and consensus. Through their success, Iraq can transform itself from a land of aggression and mass graves to a land of peace and democracy. More important, it can become the cornerstone of a peaceful and prosperous Middle East. Iraqis would then have an opportunity to complete the daunting but necessary mission of changing the perverted course of political history in the region.

**Iraq's
neighbors must
realize that the
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SOREF SYMPOSIUM AND 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



Democratic Transformation in the Middle East

Democratic Transformation in the Middle East

Paul Wolfowitz

EDITED TRANSCRIPT

ON JANUARY 30, 2005, 8.5 million Iraqis demonstrated profound courage. Soon after that landmark election day, two stories came to me from Brig. Gen. Carter Ham, who was the U.S. commander in Mosul at the time. Both stories took place in Sunni Arab neighborhoods in that northern Iraqi city.

In one instance, voters had gathered outside a polling place, but nobody had dared to enter for more than two hours. Finally, one old woman stepped forward and said, “I have waited all my life for this opportunity. I am not going to miss it.” She went in and voted, and several hundred people eventually followed her.

In another Sunni Arab neighborhood, the situation was worse. When people were lined up to vote, someone took a shot at the line and wounded one of the voters. I cannot imagine what I or most of my fellow Americans would do in those circumstances. What amazes me is what these Sunni Iraqis did. They stayed in line. They moved the line to protect the wounded voter and they stayed to vote.

Under those circumstances, what amazes me is not that the Sunni Arab turnout was small, but that people voted at all. That says an enormous amount.

Those stories provide a good framework for taking a broader look at the world, particularly in the context of President Bush’s remarkable second inaugural address. He said, among other things, that the survival of liberty in our land depends on the success of liberty in other lands, that the best hope for peace in our world is the expansion of freedom in all the world. It is a speech that has been widely misunderstood.

There are two common misinterpretations, each almost the opposite of the other. Self-styled foreign-policy realists interpreted the speech as Wilsonian or, in their words, utopian. That is to say, it supposedly had no grounding in reality and was slated for the same sort of failure that President Wilson’s vision encountered one hundred years ago. The speech has also been interpreted from the other direction as ruthlessly realistic, as a signal that the United States is planning to use its military



■ *Paul Wolfowitz is president of the World Bank and former U.S. deputy secretary of defense. Previously, he served as dean and professor of international relations at Johns Hopkins University's Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies.*

“Democratic transformation is most successful, and most peaceful, when it occurs through the natural growth of institutions that can support democracy.”

to invade other countries and install democratic regimes friendly to our interests.

Both of these are fundamental misreadings of the president’s words, which fit solidly within our real-world experience of the past half-century. In the 1970s, we began to see signs of what has become a truly historic expansion of the realm of freedom and self-government, starting with the peaceful transformation to democracy in Franco’s Spain.

I had the privilege of working with a great American at the State Department, Vernon “Dick” Walters, who was sent on many secret missions by many presidents. Dick was a great raconteur. One story he told was particularly good. He told it to me several times, more colorfully in person than in his memoirs.

In 1972, President Nixon sent him to Spain to ask Generalissimo Franco about his plans for the succession. As Walters put it, you could not really look an eighty-two-year-old man in the eye and say, “President Nixon has sent me here to ask you what will happen after you are dead.” Instead, he said, “President Nixon is not only the leader of the United States, but he is the leader of the entire free world, and so he sent me here to Spain to ask your views about the future of southern Europe.” Franco looked him straight in the eye, with a rather cold gaze, and said, “What President Nixon needs to know is what will happen in Spain when I die.”

Things got more remarkable from there. Franco said, “Spain will have a system not too different from what you have in the United States or in Great Britain,” apparently unwilling to use the word democracy. He said, “It will be different because we are Spanish, but it will succeed because of three things: the Spanish monarchy and two institutions I created, the Spanish army and the Spanish middle class. So you can tell President Nixon that he does not have to worry about what happens in Spain after me.”

It was a remarkable statement. A good friend of mine who served shortly after that conversation as President Adolfo Suarez’s first diplomatic advisor told me, “I am no lover of Franco, but what he said is basically true.” Those sentiments are also a powerful statement about what works best when it comes to democratic transformation. That is, such transformation is most successful, and most peaceful, when it occurs through the natural growth of institutions that can support democracy.

It has been a remarkable thirty years since then, beginning with changes in Spain, Greece, and Portugal in Europe. The past thirty years have seen the force of freedom sweep through entire continents.

These changes became quite personal for me some ten years after Franco’s death, when I was appointed assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs. It should be remembered that as recently as twenty years ago, Japan was the only democracy in all of East Asia. Somewhat to my surprise, the Philippines became my major preoccupation in that post. In 1986, a peaceful revolution took place in the Philippines in which

the people came out on the streets by the hundreds of thousands to force President Ferdinand Marcos to leave and bring about the peaceful transition to democracy. It took place through the courage, energy, and drive of the Philippine people, with a great deal of support from their friends outside, including the United States.

Just one year after Marcos left Manila, South Korea went through a democratic transition that has proved to be durable and extremely successful. In the early 1990s, we saw something that none of us thought we would see in our lifetimes: the peaceful demise of the Soviet Union. We saw democracy come to Latin America and to other countries in East Asia, to Taiwan, Thailand, even Indonesia.

It has been a remarkable thirty years, and the transformation has not stopped. In just the past few months we have seen that advance continue in such places as Georgia and Ukraine. Perhaps most encouragingly, we have seen extraordinary expressions of the democratic spirit in the Muslim world—most dramatically in Afghanistan and Iraq, where more than 16 million voters risked their lives to cast their ballots.

It does not end with those countries, however. In September 2004, Indonesia—a country dear to my heart, the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, but one that recognizes multiple religions—successfully held a free and fair presidential election. That is often considered a landmark on the road to democracy. In January 2005, the Palestinian Authority held a historic election, producing new leadership that may finally give the Palestinian people the state they have long deserved. I look forward to the opportunity as president of the World Bank to support people like Palestinian labor minister Hassan Abu Libdeh, with whom I met earlier today to advance that effort.

In Lebanon, it was amazing to see tens of thousands of people come out to demonstrate in the wake of the assassination of the late prime minister Rafiq Hariri. The Syrian-backed government in Lebanon resigned under pressure, and the Syrian army withdrew. Although difficult challenges still lie ahead, there is new hope as the Lebanese approach elections.

In short, the human desire to choose one's own leaders and to live in freedom is one of the most powerful forces in the world today. It would be the height of unrealism to ignore the great power of that force. Rather, we should support and channel it, using it to help us all live better, safer, and more peaceful lives.

At the same time, it would be a mistake to assume that this force requires frequent assistance from American or any other combat troops. President Bush's goal of ending tyranny in the world is not primarily a task of arms. In fact, it is rarely a task of arms. For the most part, those truly revolutionary changes described above took place peacefully and required no combat troops from any nation.

I would leave you with three still-relevant observations on those changes. First, great transformations can be accomplished peacefully; in

“The human desire to choose one's own leaders and to live in freedom is one of the most powerful forces in the world today.”

“The longer evolutionary change is postponed, the greater the chance that some kind of catastrophic collapse will take place.”

fact, it is much better when they can be. Afghanistan and Iraq were exceptions—necessary exceptions, but hopefully unique exceptions. Indeed, I would go beyond the idea of peaceful change and say that evolutionary change is generally preferable to catastrophic or revolutionary change. The longer evolutionary change is postponed, the greater the chance that some kind of catastrophic collapse will take place. Indonesia is living through the aftermath of exactly such a catastrophic collapse in 1998, one that could have been avoided if former president Suharto had adapted gradually rather than resisting.

Second, and particularly important to me in my new responsibilities, economic development tends to support political development and change, in no small measure because it leads inevitably to the growth of the middle class. As Franco observed in Spain, the middle class is both the key engine and the key supporter of democratic change. We saw that later in Korea and Taiwan.

Third, to be successful, political transformations must be accompanied and supported by economic success. As we look at struggling democracies from Iraq to Afghanistan, from Ukraine to Indonesia, we should recall that no country makes the transition to democracy in a single smooth step. Our own history was marked by significant challenges even long after independence. Today we see the challenges of reconstruction in Afghanistan and Iraq, in Rwanda and a number of other African countries. We see the challenges of economic development and reform in countries as diverse as Ukraine and Indonesia.

Those are just a few examples in which the success of representative government and free institutions is integrally linked to economic success, as seen in the peace process between Israelis and Palestinians. Building free institutions is challenging; it takes time and sacrifice, and it requires the support of all of us who are fortunate enough to live in successful societies.



SOREF SYMPOSIUM AND 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



Assessing the Winds of Change

Assessing the Winds of Change

Rola Dashti, Hisham Kassem, Habib Malik, and Mohsen Sazegara

SUMMARY

ROLA DASHTI

ON MAY 16, 2005, Kuwaiti women were given the right to vote and the right to run for political office. Previously, many had doubted the likelihood of such change, but Kuwaiti women were able to take the first step toward deepening democracy and reversing backwardness.

Those who fought for suffrage were accused of ruining the social fabric of Kuwait, of being anti-religious and anti-nationalist. They were called traitors, agents of the West, and advocates of divorce. Despite such criticism, the women's movement prevailed. When 1,300 women staged a peaceful march recently, it was indicative of their refusal to allow extremists to control their lives.

A key factor in this change is the media, which allows individuals to reach out and create a broad-based group of supporters. Support from outside powers also has a tremendous influence on efforts to change the Middle East. These powers—including the United States—should act as partners in reform, fulfilling their promises and supporting promising trends in the Arab world such as grassroots activity and civil society. Embracing liberal reformers would help foster economic openness, which would in turn contribute to a higher standard of living, foster a more vibrant society, and deter citizens from supporting despotic regimes. Moreover, enhanced cultural exchange with the West would encourage reform and help Arab societies to further modernize.

HISHAM KASSEM

AS RECENTLY AS 2003, Egyptian politics seemed on the verge of dying. Previously, Egypt had been plagued by years of political turbulence. Incidents such as the 1952 coup (which involved the destruction of parliament) and the 1968 massacre of the judiciary destabilized the country and provided little room for reform efforts. One of the first individuals who attempted to reintroduce a multiparty system, President Anwar Sadat, was assassinated in 1981. Later, President Hosni Mubarak, a military man by training who began his career as a reformer, was unable to let go of his



■ *Rola Dashti, chair and chief officer of FARO International, is a leader in the campaign for women's rights in Kuwait. An associate professor at Kuwait University, she has worked as a consultant to the World Bank on development and public health issues throughout the Middle East.*



■ *Hisham Kassem is president of the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights, chief executive officer of the liberal daily al-Masri al-Yawm, and vice president for international relations of Hizb al-Ghad (Party of Tomorrow).*



■ *Habib Malik, a professor of history and cultural studies at Lebanese American University, is chairman of the Charles Malik Foundation and author of *Between Damascus and Jerusalem: Lebanon and Middle East Peace* (The Washington Institute, 2000).*

stern military beliefs and was therefore not successful at reform. By the late 1980s, the Egyptian government had stopped paying its debts and eventually went bankrupt. Although the 1991 Gulf War halved Egypt's debts, economic stagnation continued.

Throughout most of this political and economic turmoil, the government faced little domestic criticism. Murmurs of dissent began to be heard in 2003, however, and criticism intensified in 2004 when the judiciary refused to monitor elections if they were likely to be rigged. At the same time, Egyptian universities began to voice their frustrations after years of government interference in their affairs.

U.S. foreign policy helped catalyze these changes. After the September 11 attacks, regimes that the international community had once deemed stable were no longer given *carte blanche* to forcibly suppress internal opposition. By supporting civil society and reformers within Egypt, the United States provided a means of challenging the old order. The citizens of Egypt were tired of violence and felt as though they were being left behind by their neighbors with regard to democratization. Many individuals came to realize that democracy could fulfill their interests more effectively than the existing government.

HABIB MALIK

ON MARCH 14, 2005, one-third of the Lebanese population, or one million individuals, cut across the religious and security lines of two countries by marching peacefully for an end to Syrian domination. This Cedar Revolution came about due to several factors, including the assassination of former prime minister Rafiq Hariri; the twenty-nine-year duration of Syria's occupation; the manipulated election of a parliament that looked much like the previous, pro-Syrian legislature; several other provocative Syrian policy decisions; and international involvement led by the United States.

The climate of change within Lebanon also resulted from civil society activities and the effectiveness of popular pressure. Unlike many of its neighbors, Lebanon boasts a tangible track record of freedom and a strong, well-educated base of elites.

In the post-September 11 world, outside actors such as the United States no longer wholeheartedly support authoritarian regimes, in part because such support has yielded little benefit in the past. In order to protect the gains made in the wake of the Syrian pullout, the Lebanese believe that the United States must continue its involvement.

Even so, the old regime has lost a significant amount of power despite remaining largely intact after the withdrawal. The former approach of terrorizing opposition through the use of violence has proven ineffective in recent months.

MOHSEN SAZEGARA

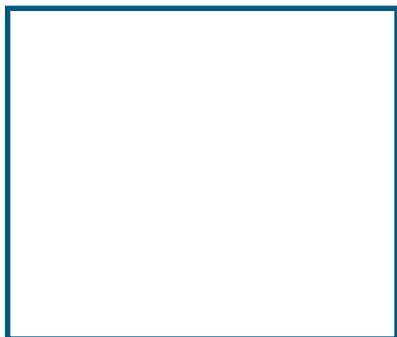
THROUGHOUT MUHAMMAD KHATAMI'S eight-year presidency, his reformist followers have been unsuccessful in their attempts to join the global community, advance democracy, and support human rights and civil society. Nevertheless, there are flickers of hope for progress in Iran.

The makeup of Iranian society has changed as a result of significant growth in a number of variables, including literacy rates, urbanization, connectedness to global communications, women in the workforce, and, most important, the urban middle class. All of these factors have fostered more progressive thinking by young Iranians. The government itself has not been reformed; in fact, it has regressed significantly. Its ideals, which remain grounded in a particular vision of Islamic jurisprudence, do not match those of a transforming Iranian society.

In an effort to hearten the people, Iranian reformers often encourage outside powers to ignore the results of questionable Iranian elections, to support human rights efforts within Iran, and to back the international investigation of terrorist links within the government. International support is imperative to giving hope to Iranians, especially the younger generation.



■ *Mohsen Sazegara, a visiting fellow at The Washington Institute, is one of Iran's foremost democratic activists. An early supporter of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, he grew disillusioned with the regime and left the government in 1989. He was eventually imprisoned for his activism, which included publishing reformist newspapers and campaigning for a national referendum to replace the Iranian constitution.*



From the Beirut Spring to the Gaza Summer

From the Beirut Spring to the Gaza Summer: The Future of Arab-Israeli Relations

Hassan Abu Libdeh, David Makovsky, Terje Roed-Larsen, and Ehud Yaari

SUMMARY

HASSAN ABU LIBDEH

AS THE CURRENT WINDOW of opportunity on the Palestinian-Israeli front opens, actions taken by both parties will lead to either a resumption of the peace process or an escalation of the violence that has plagued them for four years. If the former scenario is to unfold, Israel's planned disengagement from Gaza and parts of the northern West Bank must be tied to the Quartet Roadmap and followed up with increased Palestinian-Israeli coordination. The alternative—Israel using the disengagement as an excuse to postpone final-status talks and enlarge its West Bank settlements—is impermissible and should be prevented by a third party. If Israel is in fact serious about withdrawing from the northern West Bank, it should disengage from an additional four settlements there and hand Jenin over to the Palestinian Authority, which could seize control of the city from the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades within twenty-four hours.

A third party is also necessary to remind Arab states of their commitments to the Palestinian people dating to the 2002 Arab League summit in Beirut. By funding crucial labor-intensive construction projects, Arab states could show Palestinians that they will be able to flourish economically following Israeli disengagement. If Palestinians lack the ability to succeed financially, support for Hamas will continue to grow.

Despite Hamas's recent electoral successes and the difficult elections to come, Fatah remains on the playing field. The ceasefire has strengthened Palestinian centrists, and sustaining it will renew hope for resuming the peace process and improving daily life. Democracy is not sufficient to ensure security and calm; statehood and independence are also necessary. To further these goals, the social safety net must be significantly strengthened in order to shore up support for the peace process.

DAVID MAKOVSKY

THE INTIFADA SHATTERED TRUST between Israelis and Palestinians and radicalized the center. This broad center must be reconstituted if future negotiations are to succeed. The Gaza disengagement can be



■ Hassan Abu Libdeh is the Palestinian Authority minister of labor and social affairs. Previously, he served as director of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and as a professor at Bir Zeit University.



■ *David Makovsky is a senior fellow and director of the Project on the Middle East Peace Process at The Washington Institute. His most recent publications include the Institute monograph *Engagement through Disengagement: Gaza and the Potential for Renewed Israeli-Palestinian Peacemaking* (2005).*



■ *Terje Roed-Larsen is the UN secretary-general's special representative for Lebanon. Previously, he served as UN special coordinator for the Middle East peace process, becoming one of the original architects of the Oslo process.*

viewed as a step in that direction, as Prime Minister Ariel Sharon—one of the fathers of the settlement movement—takes concrete actions that will undo previous Israeli policy. The Israeli political scene may be reconfigured in a manner that reinforces a broad center if Sharon and his allies break away from the Likud Party to form a new faction with Labor Party leaders.

In the wake of the Gaza disengagement, any such centrist faction would face the challenge of determining the West Bank's future. Israeli political debate regarding the territory has already undergone significant moderation, with various factions calling for Israel to retain far smaller proportions of West Bank land than they had in the past.

On the Palestinian side, President Mahmoud Abbas is a far better peace partner than his predecessor, Yasser Arafat. Recent polling has demonstrated that the Palestinians understand this. Accordingly, a third party should help Abbas on the security front, which would in turn facilitate international efforts to help him on the economic front. Both of these efforts would help the Palestinian Authority displace Hamas as the principal provider of social services in the territories.

Following disengagement, three options for the peace process will present themselves. First, Israelis and Palestinians could decide that unilateralism is acceptable and move forward on their own. Second, they could choose to return to the framework of the Quartet Roadmap. In that case, Sharon would insist that Palestinians implement the first-phase requirement of dismantling terrorist infrastructure. Third, the parties could opt for a new internationally sponsored peace blueprint that lays out final-status details. One example would be an Arab “roadmap” in which Arab states make successive moves toward recognizing Israel based on its progress with the Palestinians.

TERJE ROED-LARSEN

THE MAIN CHALLENGE in Lebanon and the West Bank–Gaza is the same: the need to stabilize a single, independent government. In Lebanon, elections must be carried out on time and in a fair manner. Meeting the former requirement became much less difficult once the Syrian military withdrew. Syria was also asked to withdraw its intelligence services, and by and large it seems to have acceded to this request. As for Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, they were never officially in Lebanon. A UN military verification team is currently working on the ground to ensure that all remaining foreign troops have left. Now the challenge is to disarm the remaining forces within Lebanon.

In the West Bank and Gaza, the Palestinians must streamline their security services and relegitimize the prospect of negotiations. Following a coordinated Israeli disengagement from Gaza, the only viable option is to quickly reactivate the peace process. Ariel Sharon has taken radical steps that go farther than any of his predecessors. His next step must be

to initiate permanent-status negotiations. Awareness of the dire consequences of failure should keep all of the players actively involved in sustaining such negotiations.

The peace process would also benefit from an end to Israeli occupation and the quick creation of a Palestinian state with provisional borders. A state with such borders is not impracticable; after all, Israel has lived without firm borders for decades.

EHUD YAARI

NEITHER THE PALESTINIANS nor the Israelis want to implement the Quartet Roadmap as it is currently written. Mahmoud Abbas wants to bypass the first two phases of the plan and move directly to phase three. For his part, Ariel Sharon hopes to skip phase one in order to establish a long-term interim arrangement that includes the creation of a Palestinian ministate centered in Gaza.

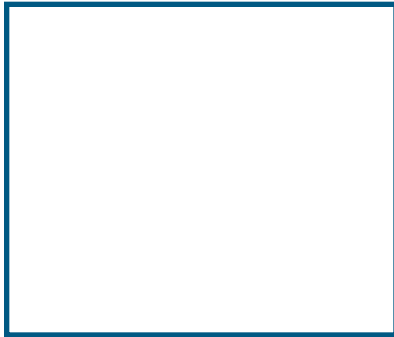
Yet, the period following disengagement will bring mixed results for both parties. Sharon will learn that he cannot hold on to the entire West Bank, while the Palestinians will have their hands full trying to govern their new mini-state. Unwilling to accept blame for any deterioration in Gaza, Israel may even open one of the territory's borders—a major departure from the intentions of former prime minister Yitzhak Rabin. As a result of its unilateralism, Israel is ceding land for nothing and has already permitted the remilitarization of Gaza. This lesson will not be lost on the Palestinians.

Moreover, the Israeli elite remain divided on how they should approach Abbas and Fatah. This fissure became particularly noticeable with the dismissal of Israel Defense Forces chief of staff Moshe Yaalon. Meanwhile, Palestinians face the prospect of a two-headed state, with the Palestinian Authority disavowing armed resistance and Hamas perpetuating it. Hamas scored several key victories during the recent municipal elections and will likely capture 30 to 40 percent of the seats in the upcoming legislative elections.

All of these factors point to the same solution: the creation of a Palestinian state with provisional borders, as outlined in the second phase of the Roadmap. Israel's main priority is obtaining security guarantees. By agreeing to a Palestinian state with conditional borders relatively soon—that is, before this option becomes impossible—Israel can also realize its own goals.



■ Ehud Yaari, an Israel-based associate of *The Washington Institute*, is chief Middle East correspondent for Israel's *Channel Two* and associate editor of *the Jerusalem Report*.



Michael Stein Address on Middle East Policy

Peace, Prosperity, and Counterterrorism: Egypt's Role in Regional Developments

Ahmed Nazif

EDITED TRANSCRIPT

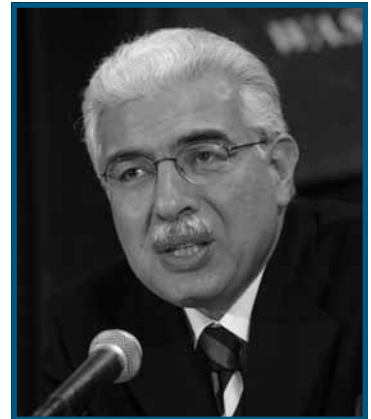
ONGOING DEVELOPMENTS IN EGYPT can help us understand what is happening in both the Middle East and the U.S.-Egyptian relationship. Egypt has been passing through phases of change. We began our economic reform program more than twenty years ago. Political reform was initiated during Anwar Sadat's time. And, of course, the peace process began many years ago.

Why, then, is change becoming so important now? Why is reform becoming so evident? Because we are living in a different world. Egyptians are subject to many external factors that are affecting their lives. The war on terrorism is real and has now come to the stage of confrontation.

Egypt is not new to this situation. We began our war on terrorism much earlier than the rest of the world, and we thought we had won. Between 1997 and 2004, we did not experience a single incident of terrorism inside Egypt. Unfortunately, a bombing occurred in Taba a few months ago. And just a couple months ago, we had an incident in downtown Cairo. So the threat of terrorism still exists in Egypt. Maybe in a different form, but it still exists. If we do not work together, we will not win that war.

Egypt is growing stronger, economically and politically. In July 2004, President Hosni Mubarak asked the current government to accelerate economic reform, and we set out to do so. One important goal we wanted to achieve is to change the mood and mindset of the country. Egyptians were growing weary of their living conditions. They wanted jobs. They wanted to be able to afford better things. They wanted better government services. They were asking for change, and I believe they saw the government and President Mubarak's initiative as an effort toward change.

Indeed, we undertook several bold actions. I was blessed with an excellent economic team led by Minister of Finance Yousef Boutros-Ghali. They put together a plan and began implementing it immediately. In September, we introduced Egypt's first major customs reform package, which overhauled the customs system completely and made it simpler and much cheaper to bring things into the country. We introduced a major new tax



■ *Ahmed Nazif has served as prime minister of Egypt since July 2004. A computer engineer with a doctorate from McGill University, he served previously as Egypt's first minister for communications and information technology.*

“Large-scale reform can only happen if peace prevails.”

bill. We cut our corporate taxes from 42 percent to 20 percent. We cut personal income taxes to 20 percent; previously, they reached figures as high as 40 percent. We even raised the exemption threshold for taxes. So we are keeping more of the tax money in the pockets of private business and of the people.

In order to get the economy moving, we felt we had to restore confidence and present people with a better business environment. Given what has happened since then, I can confidently claim that we are well underway to achieving those two objectives. The business community is reacting in a fine manner. Investments are pouring back into the country. Over a nine-month period, foreign direct investment—not counting oil—exceeded a billion dollars. In the whole of the previous year the total was about \$400 million.

Indeed, everything is improving. Tourism has been doing well; barring the aforementioned terrorist incidents, which hopefully will not affect us, we are experiencing a surge in tourism. Oil and gas are doing well, and other sectors are picking up quickly. Overall, then, things are turning around on the economic front. Such progress gives hope to the people. Inflation is down from 14 percent to 6.5 percent—again, something the man on the street can feel. The challenge of creating more jobs remains, but the economy is beginning to respond. One million additional tourists in Egypt means 200,000 new jobs, and we are getting about that many every year.

Yet, large-scale reform can only happen if peace prevails and if we move not only on the economic front, but also on the social and political fronts. President Mubarak’s initiative to change the constitution—a proposal that will go to national referendum in a matter of days—is a huge step toward deepening democracy in Egypt. For the first time, Egyptians will be electing the president through a process of choice rather than approval. This change will set an example for the rest of the region regarding how to advance democracy.

Egypt continues to face numerous challenges on the social front. We are rethinking our entire social agenda, shifting from the socialist concept to a framework more in line with a free-market economy. Egypt has a widespread subsidy that covers almost all aspects of life, and we intend to change that into a form of social contract that would still support the poor, but also give them the responsibility of improving themselves.

That is the Egypt of today, an Egypt set for a better tomorrow. That Egypt has been a stout ally of the United States in working together to set three key objectives: peace, prosperity, and an end to terrorism. We will continue to work together on these objectives in the future.

Recently, Egypt has also been instrumental in the Palestinian-Israeli issue. The February 2005 Sharm al-Sheikh meeting was the first such summit in four years. Thanks to President Mubarak’s personal efforts to bring both Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Chairman or President

Mahmoud Abbas to Sharm al-Sheikh, we now have a better environment and a better chance for peace.

With a decrease in violence—I would say the total cessation of violence, but that will not happen; what will happen is the calming down process that we have already seen—and with the presence of a Palestinian political process that is more accepted and probably more respected by all parties, we have a real chance for peace. Prime Minister Sharon’s plans to withdraw from Gaza and dismantle the settlements improve that chance. Yet, we must keep these developments in perspective. We have to make sure that this is the start of a process, not the end.

The Palestinians remain skeptical about the Gaza withdrawal. They view it as a payoff, a way of forestalling them from asking for the dismantlement of West Bank settlements—which is, I know, a more difficult task. Starting with the less difficult task is understandable, but it should be clear that this initial step will not solve the problem on its own; this is a long process. Nevertheless, the confidence-building measures that have been taken and still must be taken are a good step along the way. Egypt will continue to work with the United States, Israel, and the Palestinians to make sure that we do not lose sight of that way.

We should focus on three main issues with regard to the Gaza withdrawal. The first is security. We cannot have a change as significant as the withdrawal occur without establishing the necessary security measures. We cannot have a withdrawal that leaves Gaza in chaos. We need to make sure that the Palestinians can and will keep the peace there. Egypt will help them. We are already helping them by training police forces, securing the border, and other activities, all of which are being negotiated and worked on continuously.

The second issue is inclusion. None of the Palestinian factions should be left out of the process. Once we define a process, we should ask them to join in that process on their terms. That is how Egypt was able to get thirteen Palestinian factions to sit together and agree to a process. Anybody we leave out now will cause problems later.

The third issue is the economy. What happens in Gaza after the withdrawal is as important as the withdrawal itself. The people will need jobs and infrastructure, and it is up to the United States, Egypt, Israel, and the rest of the world to make sure that there are sufficient capital injections and investments there, especially those that would create jobs. Public works projects—roads, infrastructure, an airport, whatever it takes—would double the benefits, creating jobs while improving Palestinians’ standard of living. Indeed, the people would feel the difference; such projects would give them hope for a better future.

More than any other party, Israelis would like to see these efforts take place, and I hope they can work together with the Palestinians. Egypt is not a rich country. We cannot inject our own money into Gaza, but we can help in many other ways. We have been improving our own country and

“What happens in Gaza after the withdrawal is as important as the withdrawal itself.”

“We should not grow weary with those who do not agree with us. We have to have an open mind and permit inclusion.”

our own infrastructure, so we have the necessary expertise. Many Egyptian companies have worked in Gaza before. We built the first airport in Gaza, and we can build it again. The process has to go on.

The three principles that I outlined for Gaza apply to Iraq as well. The primary issue is, again, security. We must move quickly to help the Iraqis become capable of securing their own country so that U.S. soldiers can return home. This is a very important priority that will help all parties in many ways; U.S. families would certainly like to see their loved ones back home. Yet, we cannot afford such a withdrawal unless we are sure that the country will remain intact; otherwise, we will lose it all. Egypt is serious about facilitating this process. We have offered to train Iraqi police forces in larger numbers than we already are.

Inclusion is important in Iraq as well. Those who boycotted the January election should not be penalized; the Sunnis should be given a second and third chance. Again, even as we stick to a process, we should not grow weary with those who do not agree with us. We have to have an open mind and permit inclusion; otherwise, we will not reach the kind of uniform Iraqi society that we would like to see.

Finally, Iraq will need a great deal of economic aid in order to rebuild itself. Unemployment is currently around 50 percent, and that will not allow for a peaceful existence. We have to show Iraqis that there is hope of improving their lives.

These principles are applicable to most any context, of course, and we should all work together toward fulfilling them. I am an optimist by nature. Given the kinds of efforts currently being undertaken in the region—given that the United States, the world leader; Egypt, a regional leader and powerhouse; and others are focusing on winning this war on terrorism and bringing peace and prosperity to the Middle East—I believe that we shall overcome.

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DEVELOPMENT

Director of Development

Laura Milstein

Development Assistant

Joanna Campione

ADMINISTRATION

Events Coordinator

Rebecca Saxton

FINANCE

Chief Financial Officer

Laura Hannah

Financial Assistant

Dawn Joseph

Financial Intern

Leah Joseph

EXECUTIVE

Executive Assistant

Marguerite Hellwich

PUBLICATIONS/WEBSITE

Director of Publications

Alicia Gansz

Publications Associate

George Lopez



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