



A WASHINGTON INSTITUTE STRATEGIC REPORT



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U.S. Priorities in
Israeli-Palestinian Peacemaking



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Front cover: Palestinian Force 17 security forces under the control of Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas march in the West Bank city of Ramallah in May 2006. (AP Photo/Majdi Mohammed)

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Preface

AS THE INAUGURATION of our new president approaches, policy recommendations for the new administration are pouring in from all quarters. Some of this counsel promotes courses of action that are prudent and cautious; some are high-risk, high-gain; still others are fanciful and dangerous. A good deal of this analysis concerns the Israeli-Palestinian arena, with special focus on ways—both novel and shopworn—to energize diplomacy aimed at final resolution of this longstanding conflict.

This surge of input on presidential peacemaking follows an earlier eruption of diplomacy launched by the United States at the Annapolis peace conference in November 2007. In the year since that conference took place, diplomatic efforts built on the shared interests of Israeli and Palestinian political leaders, as well as a desire by the Bush administration to achieve progress before the expiry of its term of office. With that end date now in sight, it appears that the post-Annapolis round of diplomacy will join a regrettably long list of similarly unsuccessful peace initiatives.

Earlier this year, when Annapolis-related efforts were in high gear, the Bush administration had no less than three U.S. generals operating in the Israeli-Palestinian arena, tasked with supervising the implementation of past commitments, overseeing Palestinian security training, and devising a security concept for future regional peacemaking. This unique initiative prompted The Washington Institute to take a closer look at the security aspect of diplomacy that is attracting such intensive U.S. focus. To that end, we invited three well-respected former U.S. officials—security experts J. D. Crouch II, Walter B. Slocombe, and Gen. Montgomery C. Meigs (Ret.)—to comprise an Israeli-Palestinian security assessment project charged with undertaking an independent analysis of the U.S. role in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process with specific reference to the question of security.

At the time, we believed that their findings would be useful to U.S. officials planning for a possible

breakthrough in negotiations for a final-status agreement between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. Such a breakthrough did not occur, however, and this study has evolved accordingly. Instead of focusing on the appropriate U.S. contribution to the security aspects of an ultimate Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement, the assessment team focused instead on security as a precondition for the achievement of mutual confidence and trust—both of which are required for the parties to resume serious negotiations and later implement an agreement in the event of a breakthrough.

The team reached three main conclusions: (1) the peace process can only succeed once the Palestinian Authority fields security forces willing and able to fight terrorism, giving Israel confidence to draw down its own forces in the West Bank; (2) U.S. efforts to promote peace should therefore include a substantial investment in the training and equipping of such Palestinian forces; and (3) no deployment of third-party troops, including NATO forces, will relieve the Palestinians from the requirement of securing their own territory. The team's specific recommendations for implementing these principles are sober, practical, and born of the political realities of the Middle East.

To facilitate the most accurate findings, the Israeli-Palestinian security assessment team undertook an extensive round of briefings in Washington with U.S., Israeli, Palestinian, Egyptian, and Jordanian officials and analysts. The team also engaged in an exhaustive fact-finding mission to Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinian Authority. Throughout this information-gathering process, the team benefited from the contributions of two Washington Institute analysts: Michael Eisenstadt, senior fellow and director of our Military and Security Studies Program, who served as an advisor to the team; and Ben Fishman, a research associate of the Institute and doctoral student at George Washington University, who served as rapporteur, drafter, and trip organizer. The team extends special thanks to Mr. Fishman, whose intellectual and organizational contributions

to this undertaking were invaluable. In addition, the team thanks the individuals, institutions, and governments—both here and in the Middle East—who contributed to the project with their time, insight, or logistical support.

This report reflects the consensus of the three team members. Although they may disagree on nuance and detail, as signatories of the report they endorse both its analyses and recommendations.

The formation and operation of the Israeli-Palestinian Security Assessment Project was financed through a grant from The Washington Institute. The Institute extends its gratitude to trustees Bill Wolfe and Carolyn Edenbaum of Washington, D.C., whose generosity

made possible the team's travel and research, as well as the drafting and publication of this final report. The report does not necessarily reflect the views of The Washington Institute, its Board of Trustees, or its Board of Advisors.

At this critical juncture in the political life of our nation, when reassessing national and international priorities is the order of the day, we take pride in presenting this important study.

Cordially,
Robert Satloff
Executive Director

Introduction

FOR MUCH OF 2008, U.S. involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process has focused on helping the parties reach a final-status agreement. Driven in large part by the rapport between Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas and their mutual commitment to achieving peace, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice took on Israeli-Palestinian negotiations as one of her priorities for the Bush administration's final year in office. Toward that end, Rice traveled to the region seven times between January and August and hosted Israeli and Palestinian negotiators in Washington on numerous occasions following the November 2007 Annapolis peace conference.

Despite much reported progress by the negotiating teams, reaching a final-status agreement in 2008 proved impossible. In the end, the political turmoil in Israel that led to Olmert's resignation, together with a weakened, fractured, and ineffective Palestinian leadership, frustrated U.S. mediation efforts.

More serious for future prospects, peace negotiations transpired in the context of deep public skepticism on both sides. The success of Hamas—an organization that rejects Israel's right to exist—in the 2006 Palestinian legislative elections reinforced intense doubts among the Israeli public that Palestinians are genuinely committed to peace and will ever abandon the use of terrorism. For Palestinians, the sense of pain and humiliation from the occupation of the West Bank and the ongoing expansion of settlements there fed doubts that Israel is prepared to implement a fair peace settlement. Given this deadlocked reality on the ground, fundamental progress on negotiations was always going to face a steep uphill battle—and that will remain the case, even after new administrations are in place in the United States and in Israel.

The peace process has focused traditionally on the contested and genuinely difficult issues of borders, Jerusalem, and refugees as the key components to an Israeli-Palestinian agreement. We believe this focus is

mistaken, or, at best, seriously incomplete. Assuring that an agreement will produce genuine security in the long term remains the single most essential condition for achieving a durable peace. Only real security can restore the confidence that both sides need to compromise on the core final-status issues—and to implement an agreement in the event negotiations succeed.

Given its experiences in Lebanon and Gaza, Israel must be assured that it will not face terror attacks or rocket fire from Palestinian territory should the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) withdraw from the West Bank. It must be confident that a Palestinian state will be a genuine and durable partner for peace that will not be taken over by Hamas or other rejectionist groups. No Israeli government will be able to accept an agreement involving concessions on borders and Jerusalem if it does not believe it will receive lasting security in return.

But security is not just an Israeli concern. Palestinians must believe that they will have a sovereign, contiguous, and economically viable state that will be free from continued Israeli controls and forcible interventions. The current situation in which Israel—however understandably—maintains a pervasive security presence throughout the Palestinian territories undermines Palestinian confidence that an agreement will produce an independent, sovereign Palestinian state. Together with the presence and expansion of settlements, Israeli security control of the West Bank makes it all but impossible for a Palestinian leadership to accept the terms required for an agreement.

Radicals and extremists clearly benefit from stagnation in the peace process, where failure would embolden Islamists and terror groups internationally. A tilt toward extremism, perhaps in the form of a Palestinian Authority (PA) collapse, could inflame the region and make peace impossible for the foreseeable future. While the United States will have a number of priority issues with which to contend in the Middle East for some time, including Iraq, Iran, and al-Qaeda,

achieving Israeli-Palestinian peace must remain a core objective of U.S. diplomacy.

Because of the centrality of security to the peace process, the Washington Institute for Near East Policy convened this task force to assess what the United States should—and should not—contribute to enhancing security between Israelis and Palestinians and to facilitating an eventual final-status agreement. This report will detail findings drawn from extensive conversations with U.S., Egyptian, Israeli, Jordanian, and Palestinian officials, experts, and analysts in Amman, Jerusalem, Ramallah, Tel Aviv, and Washington from June through September 2008.

Our inquiry fostered two conclusions:

1. Producing security demands a firm political commitment from Palestinian leaders to suppress security threats to Israel that emanate from Palestinian territory. To deliver on that commitment, Palestinians will

forces requires a reorganization of the effort, a transfer of authority out of the Department of State to the Department of Defense, and a significantly increased commitment of funds and staff from the relevant U.S. agencies. It will also require a parallel effort by the Palestinian Authority to undertake comprehensive security-sector reform, as well as broader reforms of its governing institutions. The organizations trained by the United States should be given the authorities and capabilities to preempt terrorist activities in the West Bank. Palestinian authorities should reduce the influence of and eventually disband existing security agencies that obstruct reform efforts. Finally, as newly trained Palestinian security forces assume greater responsibility, Israel will need to provide them greater operational freedom and allow the transfer of arms and equipment necessary for achieving their mission.

2. Strategically, the sine qua non of a durable peace agreement remains the development of a Palestin-

“The sine qua non of a durable peace agreement remains the development of a Palestinian security system capable of not only enforcing law and order but combating terrorist networks and cells.”

require a comprehensive improvement in the capabilities of their security forces. Therefore, invigorating the mission of professionalizing and equipping Palestinian security forces currently headed by United States Security Coordinator Lt. Gen. Keith Dayton is the most concrete contribution that the United States can provide to advance security between Israelis and Palestinians. Dayton and his team have made considerable progress with the resources they have been provided. All parties recognize this contribution and comment favorably on the effort. But so far achievements have been limited; not enough security units have received training, and, for the most part, the trained units have addressed law-and-order issues rather than terrorism.

Washington has given this mission far too little priority. Successful U.S. assistance to Palestinian security

ian security system capable of not only enforcing law and order in the routine sense but combating terrorist networks and cells and thwarting attacks against both Israel and the PA. Nothing can substitute for a Palestinian force that will provide the basis for an Israeli-Palestinian peace—not an international peace enforcement mission, not the transfer of direct security responsibility to an Arab third party such as Jordan or the Arab League, not even a U.S. force. Leaving aside Israel’s unwillingness to entrust its security to an international body, for such a mission to have even a chance of success would require it to have appropriate combat, intelligence, and civil affairs units. The force commander and his subordinates would have to be provided with complete operational authority to initiate arrests and raids and to conduct investigations and interrogations

of suspected terrorists. They would also need robust rules of engagement that include the use of deadly force against threats to a secure environment and for self-defense. However, given the opposition such a force will surely face from Palestinian spoiler groups, the limited number of international forces capable of implementing such a mission, and the political realities that will bring such a force into direct conflict with Israel and the PA, the third-party option of solving the security problem between Israelis and Palestinians remains unworkable. Once an agreement is reached, there may well be some role for international observers, but the responsibility for counterterrorism will have to be taken on by the Palestinians themselves.

Before addressing these specific issues in depth, the report will examine why security has become

vastly more complex since the last intensive efforts at Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations broke down in January 2001. The bulk of this report will then outline the formula for a successful train-and-equip mission and detail why the requirements of an effective peace enforcement mission and the obstacles it will confront on the ground make such an operation highly problematic. The report assumes that the PA will continue to exist in its current form with a leadership that accepts the premise of a two-state solution, and that future Israeli governments will also continue to favor a two-state solution. Indeed, we believe that pursuing the steps detailed below represents the best chance for ensuring the survival—and even the strengthening—of the PA under a moderate leadership and for achieving durable security for Israel.

The Primacy of Security

EVER SINCE THE EARLY January 2001 breakdown of the peace negotiations led by U.S. president Bill Clinton, the number-one issue that has driven apart Israelis and Palestinians has been security. The second intifada involved the deaths of more than 3,000 Palestinians and 1,000 Israelis. In response, Israel reoccupied much of the West Bank, set up hundreds of checkpoints and roadblocks throughout the territory, and erected a security barrier (which is still under construction) blocking access to Israel and settlement blocs adjacent to

a peace agreement with the PLO. Many Americans, Israelis, Jordanians, and Palestinians agree that without Israel's military presence in the West Bank, Hamas could seize control there as well. Preventing the prospect of another Hamas-controlled territory on Israel's doorstep has become one of Israel's primary justifications for the continued presence of the IDF in the West Bank. Hamas control of the West Bank would place Israel's heartland in striking distance of crude rockets, artillery, and any number of short-range and

“Security issues now constitute some of the thorniest subjects in final-status negotiations.”

the Green Line that house the majority of Israeli settlers. Moreover, the psychological costs of the conflict have instilled deep doubts in both populations that peace will ever be possible, notwithstanding the negotiating efforts of 2008. Four developments in particular have fundamentally altered the security environment and made the prospects for a durable peace increasingly dependent on achieving concrete security measures:

1. The rise of Hamas, its sweeping 2006 legislative election victory, and its violent takeover of Gaza in 2007 have placed in question whether the moderate Palestinian leadership of the PA and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) have the political weight to implement—or even negotiate—a peace agreement. Because Hamas fundamentally opposes Israel's right to exist and remains a terrorist organization despite its official entry into politics, Israel rightly questions whether a politically and geographically divided PA can serve as a partner for peace. More worrisome from Israel's perspective is the prospect of a Hamas takeover of the West Bank in the manner of its rapid seizure of Gaza, particularly if it were to occur after Israel signed

unconventional weapons, and it would make defending against terrorism vastly more difficult. Moreover, Iran would have a third potential proximal vantage point—after Lebanon and Gaza—from which to strike Israel.

2. The prospect that short-range rockets could be introduced into the areas immediately adjacent to Israel's major population centers represents another change in the security realm as well as a reason for the continued Israeli presence in the West Bank. The IDF proved incapable of stopping Hizballah's Katyusha arsenal during the 2006 Lebanon war, and it has been unable to prevent Hamas and other groups in Gaza from launching the cruder Qassam rockets into southern Israel. These experiences make Israel especially concerned about short-range rockets targeting the country's heartland from the West Bank. As a result, the conventional territorial idea of security reflected in the construction of security fences around Gaza and the West Bank has been rendered partially obsolete. The prospect of Hamas control in the West Bank—or even its seizure of pockets of the West Bank—only magnifies the danger of this potential threat. Israeli defense

minister Ehud Barak has remarked that future Israeli withdrawals will be contingent on the deployment of an operational antirocket defense system. However, it remains to be seen whether there is in fact a technological solution to the problem of short-range rocket fire.

3. The complete breakdown in security coordination between the IDF and Palestinian security forces that occurred during the intifada is the third difference in the security environment between Israelis and Palestinians since 2000. The entire construct of the Oslo process stemmed from confidence-building measures both parties would take to develop the trust required for an eventual agreement. Security cooperation in the form of joint patrols, information sharing, and coordination at crossings was vital to that concept. However, the trust that developed gradually in the 1990s between leaders and even junior officers turned into a sense of betrayal during the intifada. Palestinian security forces participated in attacks against the IDF and Israeli civilians, and Israel responded by destroying Palestinian security facilities and headquarters. Today, there is minimal security coordination between Israelis and Palestinians. The personal connections that used to help foster cooperation are mostly gone, and the leaders who forged these relationships are now disillusioned or have left the security arena; in their place exists a palpable sense of distrust and mutual suspicion that only reinforces the general absence of security.

4. In 2000, Palestinian negotiators did not view the security elements of an agreement as critical stumbling blocks in the way of peace. Consequently, Palestinians did not challenge the concepts that the future Palestinian state would be “demilitarized” or that Israel would have control over the airspace, could reenter the West Bank along fixed routes in a national emergency emanating from the east side of the Jordan River, and could maintain a small presence in the Jordan Valley to staff early warning and monitoring stations during a transitional period. For Israel, along with control over the electromagnetic spectrum, these conditions remain fundamental requirements for any peace agreement. However, Palestinian negotiators in 2008 have argued

that each of these Israeli security demands impinges on Palestinian sovereignty and that the future state of Palestine would require an army to contend with external threats. There should be no illusions about the simplicity of resolving these disagreements on security.

The security environment in 2008 is thus much more complicated than it was at the time of the 2000–2001 negotiations. These issues will not simply fall into place once core compromises are reached on Jerusalem, borders, and refugees. Not only do security issues now constitute some of the thorniest subjects in final-status negotiations, the fundamental differences between Israelis and Palestinians over what constitutes security threatens the very prospect of peace.

COMPETING VIEWS OF SECURITY

For Israelis, security entails maximum effort by the PA to prevent terror attacks against Israel originating from Palestinian territory. Today, Israeli security officials distinguish between a law-and-order function and a counterterrorism function for Palestinian security forces. For Israelis, providing law and order constitutes police work and is a basic role of government; arresting burglars and controlling traffic are important functions for a Palestinian state to perform but do nothing to improve Israeli security. For the officials responsible for guaranteeing Israel’s safety from terrorism, security means proactively arresting and holding suspected terrorists, conducting trials, carrying out sentences, and breaking up networks of cells and financial support.

Israeli prime ministers, including Binyamin Netanyahu, Ehud Barak, and Ariel Sharon, often referred to 100 percent effort against terrorism as the measure of Palestinian performance rather than 100 percent results, recognizing that not even a powerful state could be expected to halt all terrorism. While defining what would constitute 100 percent effort may be impossible, patterns of concerted action are clearly discernible. Currently, Israeli attitudes reflect virtually no trust in Palestinian security forces to perform even the most basic counterterrorism functions. Rather, the patterns that they report entail Palestinian security forces tipping off suspects to impending Israeli action if arrest

requests are made, employing a revolving-door policy in prisons where suspects are arrested but quickly released, or cravenly purporting to co-opt terror suspects by providing them official positions or weapons. In the areas from which Israel withdrew in 2008 to give Palestinians control over security—Nablus and Jenin—Israeli officials reported significant progress on law and order but minimal if any counterterrorism efforts. Moreover, terror activity and planning, as well as weapons manufacturing, increased when Israel withdrew. Israelis differ on whether the PA's failure to confront terror stems from a lack of will, capability, or both; however, they are nearly unanimous that this failure is palpable.

Palestinians have a very different concept of security

arms, vehicles, and ammunition transfers, and forbids many requested items, citing fears that they could be used against Israel or fall into the hands of Hamas, as occurred in Gaza. Additionally, Palestinians cite the lack of prisons or an established legal system as reasons for releasing prisoners shortly after their arrest. And finally, the continued growth of Israeli settlements in the West Bank, including outposts illegal under Israeli law, contributes to the stalemated political environment and provides Palestinians a further excuse for not acting against terrorist groups.

In sum, the measures that Israel views as essential for preventing suicide bombings in Tel Aviv are precisely the actions Palestinians cite as inhibiting their ability to

“The measures that Israel views as essential for preventing suicide bombings in Tel Aviv are precisely the actions Palestinians cite as inhibiting their ability to take more security responsibility.”

and a very different set of expectations. They equate security with ending Israel's occupation and establishing sovereign control over their land. They believe that Israel cannot expect Palestinian security forces to stop terrorism if they do not have a state, freedom of maneuver and action, or the resources available to conduct operations—or even the infrastructure necessary to incarcerate prisoners. Palestinians complain that Israel weakens their credibility and paints them as collaborators when the IDF withdraws from an area only to reenter at its discretion. Palestinian forces are still obligated under the seemingly outdated practices of the Oslo process to coordinate with Israel any movement from Area A (Palestinian cities where the PA maintains civilian and security control) that involves crossing through Area C (most of the West Bank where Israel maintains full security control and PA forces are prohibited from operating). Further, Palestinian forces argue that they do not have the equipment and arms necessary to conduct operations against better-armed groups, nor do they have barracks where their troops can be housed safely and protected from reprisals. Israel regulates all

take more security responsibility. Israelis are reluctant to alter a security system with a proven track record of success (55 suicide bombings in Israel in 2002, compared to just one in 2007) if there is a chance that bombs could go off in Israel as a result. Palestinians are hesitant to go after serious terror targets until they believe that a state will be forthcoming, that Israeli settlements will be removed from the West Bank, and that the PA has enough political strength to challenge extremists. As these sentiments become more ingrained in both sides, prospects for peace grow increasingly distant.

This task force judges that the most effective way to unlock the puzzle of how to provide Israelis and Palestinians with security in a way that establishes the conditions for peace is to invest heavily in an effort to professionalize the Palestinian security forces, provide them with the resources, training, and capabilities necessary to conduct effective counterterrorism operations, and develop the security leadership. This effort, rather than promoting an international force in the area with U.S. participation, should be the major U.S. contribution on the security front of the peace process.

Prioritizing Palestinian Security Reform and Development

THE PRIMARY WAY in which the United States can assist with advancing security between Israelis and Palestinians is to work directly with the PA to help train, equip, and reorganize Palestinian security forces. Yet there should be no illusions that sustained and focused U.S. support to the Palestinian security forces will guarantee that Palestinians will then act against potential terrorism in a way that meets Israel's primary security concerns. That will require a level of political commitment—and political strength—from the Palestinian leadership that has so far not been forthcoming. However, without highly capable security forces, such a commitment would be meaningless. More important, providing Palestinians with a professional security apparatus will help reformers and moderates such as Palestinian prime minister Salam Fayad build the institutions necessary for statehood and curb the influence of rejectionists who seek to destroy the PA and the peace process in general. An intensive effort to provide Palestinians with the tools necessary to assume independent security responsibilities is thus an essential precondition for progress toward peace.

U.S. support for Palestinian security reform has been under way since early 2005, when Secretary Rice appointed Lt. Gen. William Ward as United States Security Coordinator (USSC). At the announcement of his appointment, Rice noted that General Ward would “provide a focal point for training, equipping, helping the Palestinians build their forces and also for monitoring and, if necessary, to help the parties on security matters.” Ward served in the position throughout 2005, when much of the focus was on managing Israel's disengagement from Gaza. He was replaced by General Dayton in December 2005.

As a result of an initial lack of focus and significant budgetary and organizational constraints, Dayton's train-and-equip mission did not really get under way until the second half of 2007. Moreover, the 2006 election of Hamas, the formation of a Hamas-led technocratic “unity” governments that followed, and the

eventual Hamas seizure of Gaza inhibited the ability of the USSC to develop partners with the PA's political and security leadership. Initially, much of the USSC efforts were focused on improving conditions in Gaza after Israel's withdrawal by developing plans for the operation of the crossing points and working with the Presidential Guard. After Hamas's takeover of Gaza in June 2007 and the collapse of the Palestinian unity government, the United States adopted a “West Bank First” strategy: a diplomatic boycott of Hamas and a freeze on everything but humanitarian relief to Gaza, accompanied by a reinvigorated effort to bring development, reform, and economic prosperity to the West Bank. Using the USSC to help train and equip Palestinian security forces became one component of this strategy to improve life and governance for Palestinians and to advance peace negotiations between the PA and Israel.

To date, the USSC has supported the training of 420 members of the Presidential Guard and a battalion of 640 National Security Forces (NSF)—one of several arms of the Palestinian security apparatus that is intended to serve as an armed national police force in the mold of the French gendarmerie or the Italian carabinieri. The four-month training course takes place at the Jordanian International Police Training Center, which was used to train thousands of Iraqi police. Another NSF battalion of 500 is currently going through the course. Plans exist to eventually train five to seven NSF battalions that would be distributed throughout the West Bank in newly constructed barracks, though funding exists for completing only a small portion of this plan. Additionally, the USSC has helped develop a strategic planning department in the PA's Ministry of Interior to provide better governmental control and planning capacities over the array of Palestinian security bodies.

Elements of the newly trained Presidential Guard and NSF battalion were deployed in May 2008 to the northern West Bank city of Jenin to impose order in a

city long dominated by militias. The effort was coordinated by General Dayton, together with Gen. James Jones (Ret.), Secretary Rice's special envoy for Middle East security, as well as with the PA and the IDF. The idea was to redeploy IDF forces out of the city, replace them with the NSF battalion, and provide a model of Palestinian security autonomy that could ultimately be transferred to other areas in the West Bank.

Both Israelis and Palestinians acknowledge that the NSF succeeded in restoring general order to the streets of Jenin, prohibiting the public display of weapons, arresting criminals, and controlling traffic. As Amos Harel and Avi Issacharoff reported in *Haaretz* in mid-September, "There is no mistaking the fact that this is a different Jenin. Visiting the city..., it was markedly apparent that there were no armed gangs prowling the streets. Instead, one could sense the overwhelming presence of the Palestinian security forces." However, Israeli security officials remain largely skeptical about the overall mission of the NSF in Jenin. Terrorist cells remain in the city and Israel continues to conduct nighttime raids. The IDF maintains that efforts to get the NSF to take action do not produce results, either because the NSF ignores the requests or because the action taken is, perhaps deliberately, ineffective. On balance, the Jenin initiative has had a positive impact, but it has not altered the fundamental problem of Israeli-Palestinian security. Israel continues to believe that the IDF—and not PA security forces—is critical for preventing terrorism from the West Bank while Palestinians believe that they have not been given the tools, authority, or flexibility to take on terrorist activity.

The limitations of the Jenin initiative should not be viewed as a reason for abandoning the U.S. role in assisting with the training and equipping of Palestinian security forces. Rather, its lessons should be incorporated into a reinvigorated effort to provide the PA with the tools necessary to impose security. Unfortunately, the role of the USSC has been hamstrung significantly because of U.S.-imposed organizational and budgetary limitations, including:

1. CHAIN OF COMMAND. Perhaps the most significant limitation of the USSC is that it operates

under the Department of State instead of the Department of Defense (DOD). This structure impacts everything from provisioning to movement restrictions. The USSC is headquartered in the U.S. consulate in Jerusalem and must abide by all of the same movement rules imposed on consular staff. These restrictions seriously impede the contact that USSC staff can have with their Palestinian counterparts, limiting their ability to cultivate relationships and monitor performance and operations. As a result, the USSC must rely largely on its Canadian and British members, who can travel freely in the West Bank to serve as the principal liaisons with Palestinians. Moreover, because the USSC operates outside of the DOD system, it has no access to military equipment and hardware that could be used for its own transportation and support, as well as to provide Palestinian forces with badly needed vehicles and materiel.

2. STAFFING LIMITATIONS. The American contribution to the USSC consists of just sixteen military personnel, a restriction imposed by the Pentagon at the time of the USSC's creation. The team has only one Arab linguist and one Special Forces-qualified officer. Currently, it is not even fully staffed to authorization. Air Force and Navy officers fill a number of positions that require peacekeeping and civil affairs experience that is more often found among Army or Marine officers. Nine Canadians and eight British military officers supplement the USSC, as well as contractors working in Jordan at the training facility. General Dayton has Canadian and British deputies who lead small teams of security experts headquartered in the West Bank. This level of staffing is grossly inadequate, given the scale of the task and the importance of the mission.

3. BUDGET. To date, the USSC has struggled to gain sufficient financial resources to accomplish its mission. After the USSC operated for two years without any independent funding, Congress eventually appropriated \$86 million that could be used for nonlethal security assistance to the PA. Those funds will have been spent with the training of the first NSF Jordanian-trained battalion. An additional \$75 million has been secured, primarily to train and equip two additional

battalions. Intermittent funding not only inhibits planning and operations but undermines credibility with partners and prohibits an expansion of the effort.

4. CONFLICTING AND OVERLAPPING MISSIONS. With the appointments of General Jones to serve as Middle East security special envoy and then Gen. William Fraser to monitor performance on obligations contained in the 2003 Roadmap peace initiative put forward by the Quartet (the UN, European Union, United States, and Russia), the United States has three high-ranking and high-profile active duty or retired military officers assigned to work in the same area of operational responsibility. This tri-

Advancing Palestinian security reform represents an essential American contribution to the peace process. Currently, the PA has neither the will nor the capability to consistently and aggressively counter Palestinian terrorist groups. Providing the PA with the appropriate means to do so—together with a political effort to help lead the way to eventual independence and statehood—offers the best chance for Palestinians to begin to act on their own to thwart terrorism. A trained and equipped Palestinian force will be able to utilize local knowledge and influence in a way that no outside force—including an Israeli one—can take advantage of to uproot cells and dismantle networks. Moreover, assuming more inde-

“The lessons [of the Jenin initiative] should be incorporated into a reinvigorated effort to provide the PA with the tools necessary to impose security.”

partite structure that guides the U.S. approach to Israeli-Palestinian security issues creates confusion (and sometimes competition) within the staffs of these different operations. Although each general was assigned a discrete task in principle, the missions have significant overlap because all security aspects of the peace process are linked. This arrangement also adds unneeded complexity to the relationship between the United States and its Israeli and Palestinian partners.

5. COORDINATION WITH ISRAEL. Because everything from troop deployment to weapons, ammunition, and equipment transfers requires Israeli approval and coordination, a close and productive relationship between the USSC and the IDF and Ministry of Defense (MOD) is essential. However, because the USSC lacked a regular high-level channel to the IDF and MOD for some time, it operated with its hands tied. Any future effort to strengthen Palestinian security requires regular, close, and high-level coordination with senior Israeli defense officials.

pendent security responsibility will build confidence among Palestinians and their international supporters that a Palestinian government can act authoritatively and operate without ongoing international support and prodding.

Effective security assistance requires the following changes to the current structure, organization, funding, and focus of the USSC mission. Some of these measures could be implemented immediately, while more fundamental adjustments to the USSC mission can be carried out by the next U.S. administration.

In the short term:

- Movement restrictions on USSC personnel should be lifted immediately. It is incomprehensible why seasoned U.S. soldiers who have fought in Afghanistan and Iraq should be required to follow restrictive security rules designed for civilian personnel and receive close protection from Diplomatic Security and contractors—let alone need permission and coordination with the U.S. consulate for every visit

to the West Bank. The team must be able to move independently in order to conduct its mission credibly. Toward that end, the USSC must include veteran officers experienced in this kind of work and rely on its own security personnel that will ensure freedom of movement.

- The USSC should be staffed to capacity immediately and augmented beyond its current unsatisfactory level now that it has developed a concrete mission and demonstrated success. Assigned personnel should have Arabic-language skills and military experience and qualifications appropriate to the assignments they will be performing.
- The U.S. government should establish a high-level mechanism for regularized coordination with the IDF and MOD. Particular emphasis should be placed on managing arms and equipment transfers to the PA forces so that the process can flow quickly. The United States should press Israel to allow greater amounts of small arms, body armor, and light armored vehicles for use by trained Palestinian forces. It should also help establish secure armories and mechanisms for safeguarding arms and equipment from potential theft or seizure by Hamas.

More fundamental changes to the USSC should include:

- The lines of authority by which the USSC operates should be restructured. Rather than working directly under State Department authority and having to report to the secretary of state and the consul-general in Jerusalem, the USSC should take operational direction from U.S. European Command and the Department of Defense. The State Department should work in close partnership with the USSC to help determine the overall strategic direction and priorities of the operation, but day-to-day responsibility should be in the hands of the military. A senior National Security Council official—or an overall Middle East coordinator should one be appointed in the next U.S. administration—should be responsible

for managing interagency aspects of the operation in Washington. Such a model would replicate the overall operational relationship between the State Department and the military in Iraq as exemplified by the collaboration between Gen. David Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan Crocker. Similarly, the chief of mission (the consul-general in Jerusalem) and the force commander (the USSC) should work closely as a team. The consul-general must recognize the need to support the USSC mission and be an appointment of the highest quality, with both experience in managing conflict environments and influence in Washington. This model command structure would also allow the military to allocate its own equipment and specialized funds, as well as intelligence assets, to the effort. The headquarters of the USSC should be moved outside of the consulate in west Jerusalem to an appropriate facility in east Jerusalem or Ramallah.

- The budget for the USSC should be augmented, from Department of Defense sources if necessary, in order to support a more active training program, specialized training activities for officers in the United States or Europe, an increased staff, and the construction and equipping of regional barracks and headquarters for the NSF battalions. Legislative prohibitions that would inhibit the ability of the USSC to accomplish its mission, particularly restrictions that prevent U.S. military personnel from working directly with foreign police, should be waived or eliminated.
- Despite the good reputation of the Jordanian International Police Training Center (where the NSF personnel are being trained), the USSC should conduct a comprehensive review of the training program in order to assess the effectiveness of the program and its applicability to the NSF mission. In addition, such a review should examine whether four months is a sufficient training period and whether the curriculum includes counterterrorism tactics and techniques or just routine police activities. Dedicated development and specialized training programs should be created for officers and senior noncommissioned

officers with courses offered in Europe and the United States.

- The United States should assess whether the NSF should be the principal target of U.S. assistance. Our visit to NSF headquarters did not instill much confidence about the organization's professional expertise or its relative priority and prestige within the PA security system—an impression unfortunately confirmed by other sources. The civil police, especially their mid-level leaders, appeared to be more serious and dedicated to their work, but the police are not charged with counterterrorism functions. More fundamentally, it is critical that an invigorated U.S. security assistance role be accompanied by a serious effort at security sector reform as part of the broader

sector. It does no good to have a newly trained and equipped force if investigations cannot be conducted, and if arrests are not followed by detention, prosecution, and incarceration. The Europeans have taken the lead in advancing legal, police, and judicial sector reforms in the PA through training programs for lawyers and judges and the European Union Police Coordinating Office for Palestinian Police Support, which was launched in 2005. Despite the convening of a ministerial-level meeting in Berlin in June 2008 to promote reform of the police and the rule of law in the PA, these training efforts have not proceeded with anything approaching the necessary urgency. The European Union's most recent allocation of €5 million to fund vehicles, uniforms, and communications equipment for the Palestinian

“The USSC should be the focal point for rebuilding Israeli-Palestinian security coordination.”

institutional reform of the PA initiated under Prime Minister Fayad. The United States should make clear to the Palestinian government that the organizations competing with the NSF, particularly General Intelligence and Preventive Security, are impeding rather than facilitating its work. Consequently, the United States should condition additional security assistance to the PA on the fulfillment of concrete security reform measures, including the replacement of corrupt and ineffective commanders, increased coordination through the Ministry of Interior, and the continued consolidation of redundant organizations and functions under competent and loyal leadership. President Abbas's October 2008 announcement of the replacement of the leadership of General Intelligence is an important first step, but it must be accompanied by a comprehensive effort to professionalize the Palestinian intelligence apparatus.

- The legal, judicial, penal, and police sectors require investment commensurate with that of the security

Civil Police represents just 6 percent of the \$134 million request from the police and Ministry of Interior. According to Chief of Police Hazim Attallah, few of the 78 police stations across the West Bank meet basic health and safety standards, and there are only 30 computers for the entire force of 7,000. Thirty-one stations do not have access to vehicles. Thus it is incumbent on the EU to place a far greater priority on advancing Palestinian legal and police sector reform.

- The USSC should be the focal point for rebuilding Israeli-Palestinian security coordination. It should work out a plan in advance with the IDF and MOD about what equipment and arms will be allowed to be transferred to the PA, which should include body armor, small arms, and armored transport capabilities. In addition to establishing mechanisms to transfer and safeguard weapons and equipment to the PA, the USSC should work with Israel, the PA, and Jordan to ease the movement of Palestinian personnel

in training and to facilitate the entry of Jordanian trainers to the West Bank so they can monitor and evaluate the impact of their courses. In addition, the USSC should take on the added role of monitoring and facilitating security coordination between Israelis and Palestinians. It should work with the parties to establish clear criteria and expectations for Palestinian action, advanced warning of Israeli operations, and intelligence sharing. Because these security measures are closely connected to Israel's control of movement in the West Bank, the USSC should also absorb what has been General Fraser's mission of monitoring the performance of both sides regarding their obligations in Phase 1 of the Roadmap, as well as monitoring the performance of the Palestinian security forces and Israel's cooperation with them. If the USSC can point to demonstrable progress on security reform, such an integrated U.S. security team will have greater influence over Israel and the IDF on movement restrictions for Palestinians. At a minimum, a U.S. monitoring function would help clarify actual developments on the ground in a security environment that is constructed largely of differing accounts of the situation by both sides.

A professional, nonpolitical Palestinian security force operating as part of a broader reformed and revitalized Palestinian Authority is a key condition for achieving mutual security for Israelis and Palestinians—security that will minimize the threat of terrorism to Israel and limit the need for Israeli control of Palestinian territory. Thus the most vital contribution the United States can make to this process is to undertake an intensive effort to professionalize

Palestinian security forces as outlined above. This effort should proceed apace but without illusions that success can be achieved quickly—or that success is inevitable. The PA remains fragile, and even though bolstering its security sector is intended to strengthen Palestinian governance, the possibility exists that the PA could collapse or that failure in the peace process could provoke Israeli-Palestinian mass violence. In order to limit the prospect—however unlikely—that trained and equipped Palestinian security forces could participate in renewed violence with Israel, as they did during the second intifada, the USSC should continually evaluate its work based on clear benchmarks identifying progress in the professionalization, transparency, and leadership of PA forces. The USSC should calibrate its assistance based on progress in these areas and should coordinate closely with the IDF and MOD throughout this process and report on the findings of its evaluations.

Only when Palestinians themselves are willing and able to assume complete security responsibility over their territory will statehood and peace be possible. And only when Israeli defense and intelligence officials and their political leaders are confident in the PA's ability to enforce the internal security aspects of any peace will a lasting two-state solution be possible. For these reasons, alternative concepts that advocate deploying a third party to assume security responsibilities in place of Palestinians themselves pose numerous operational problems and limit the prospect of Palestinians ever assuming full independence. As detailed in the following section, substituting international troops in the West Bank for Palestinian security forces presents many more problems than solutions.

Realities of a Third-Party West Bank Peacekeeping Force

THE MODEL FOR ADVANCING Israeli and Palestinian security presented above is based on the principle that peace can be achieved only when Palestinians are able to assume independent and effective security responsibility for their territory—and Israelis have sufficient confidence in Palestinian capability to let them do the job. A very different approach to forging security between Israelis and Palestinians would center not on strengthening and empowering Palestinian forces, but replacing them entirely with an international force—or one comprising the Jordanian army (or, theoretically, other regional militaries). There are a variety of possible forms such an initiative could take, which will be outlined below. However, all of them would face significant obstacles that could undermine the long-term prospects for peace; even under the best of circumstances, they offer only limited Palestinian sovereignty and therefore an imperfect peace.

PEACEKEEPING FORCE

A more limited international troop presence in the West Bank—one that did not assume direct security missions—might assume responsibility for:

- monitoring the international border crossings of a Palestinian state;
- monitoring and verifying compliance with security agreements, including potential force limitation zones;
- facilitating security cooperation between Israeli and Palestinian forces in trilateral security committees; and
- mediating disputes over the use of airspace, water resources, and the electromagnetic spectrum.

While we do not rule out any of these potential functions for an international force, these roles serve mostly

limited purposes after the conditions for a peace agreement have been established. They do not in themselves contribute to establishing those conditions because they do not involve protecting Israel and the PA from terrorism. These peacekeeping functions require the existence of a Palestinian security force that would have primary security responsibility for the area. Unless these functions are accompanied by the development of such effective PA security forces, an international peacekeeping force will not ultimately supplant the current security regime based on IDF control over the West Bank. Rather, these international peacekeeping functions represent mechanisms that can be deployed at the time of a peace agreement to facilitate its implementation.

PEACE ENFORCEMENT MISSION

A far more ambitious approach to internationalizing security responsibility for the PA would involve the deployment of a peace enforcement force (PEF) to the West Bank to undertake the challenging task of combating and uprooting terrorist cells and networks—precisely the job that the IDF has undertaken since Operation Defensive Shield in 2002. Such a force would replace the IDF presence in the West Bank and would presumably be willing to significantly attenuate the system of roadblocks and movement restrictions that have inhibited ordinary Palestinian life by removing closures not deemed essential for security purposes. In theory, such a force with the appropriate capabilities and rules of engagement would ensure the security of the PA and Israel by disrupting activities by Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), potential al-Qaeda affiliates, and other radicals in the area. In such an environment, it is conceivable that both sides would be more forthcoming in negotiating and implementing a final agreement.

However, the obstacles facing a robust and effective PEF would be significant and likely prohibitive. These challenges would come from Palestinian and Israeli

sources, as well as from a number of organizational factors.

The PEF would face its most significant challenges from Palestinian sources:

- The PEF will become a target for the most capable elements of Palestinian rejectionist groups, including Hamas, PIJ, and possible al-Qaeda affiliates. Their special operators would test the PEF early and often to measure whether it responds to confrontation or retreats to secure bases and limited patrols. These attackers would try to ruin the credibility and sus-

tainability of the PEF with well-executed, lethal, and repetitive tactics. Consequently, the PEF would require appropriate combat, special operations, and intelligence elements capable of defeating Palestinian terrorist operations. Moreover, it would need clear—and robust—rules of engagement, including the ability and authority to use deadly force proactively against threats to a secure environment and for self-defense, and a capacity to detain, interrogate, try, and imprison individuals engaged in terrorist activities. The force commander would require final authority in determining when lethal force can be employed. Inevitably, PEF units would have to take actions against Palestinian terrorists that will undermine the nascent authority of the PA, anger local Palestinian populations, and bolster radical propaganda efforts of terrorist groups.

the PEF would tend to oppose its mission. For the PEF to work effectively, however, would require the active cooperation of, and a clear division of labor with, the Palestinian security forces. The PEF would need to develop effective partnerships with reliable elements of the Palestinian security forces, which in turn requires progress on the types of security sector reforms outlined above. However, advancing security reforms in the PA would become even more difficult with the deployment of a PEF that assumed the responsibilities of a Palestinian force, because such a force would reduce incentives for Palestinian forces to confront terror groups on their own.

“Countering Hamas in the West Bank will require a comprehensive effort against not only Hamas’s military apparatus but also its extensive social service network.”

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- In addition to contending with hostile actors, the PEF may also find that elements of the Palestinian security forces (more than 60,000 strong) may themselves become disruptive to the mission. Given the fractured nature of the Palestinian security forces, those groups that feel most threatened by the role of

- Rather than providing space for the PA to become more emboldened in pursuing reforms and improved governance, the PEF could be used as a justification for inaction and avoiding difficult political decisions.

- Palestinians may view the PEF as replacing Israel’s occupation with an international, U.S.-led, or NATO-led occupation. Palestinian opponents of the PEF would exploit aggressive actions taken by the force against Palestinian targets in order to play victims to local and international audiences. Such activity could spark a public backlash against the United States among Palestinians and throughout the Arab world—and, among the public and political circles in the PEF’s troop-contributing nations, undermining support for the mission.

- Countering Hamas in the West Bank will require a comprehensive effort against not only Hamas’s military apparatus but also its extensive social service network. Because Hamas funnels money and garners popular support through operating schools, healthcare

facilities, and other job-creating operations, it is essential that a comprehensive campaign against Hamas co-opt or replace these institutions. Not only will such efforts require significant intelligence, they will also create enormous hostility within the populace, even among Palestinians who may not support Hamas as a political much less a terrorist force, but who utilize its schools or clinics. It is possible that a PEF could minimize such a backlash if it included a robust civil affairs capability and coordinated closely with the PA to replace Hamas institutions with public services. However, such development efforts require significant time and preparation, and it is hard to believe they could be deployed early enough to correspond with intensive PEF counterterrorism efforts. Even so, such civil affairs activities are better left to PA authorities (with international support), as their success will strengthen the confidence of ordinary Palestinians in their leaders' capacity to govern.

With respect to Israel:

- A PEF would have to overcome tremendous skepticism from Israel, particularly from the IDF and the Shin Bet, in placing trust in international forces. Outsourcing Israeli security responsibility challenges the very core of Israel's basic security concept and the Zionist ethos of self-reliance. Even in a relatively stable environment, the IDF and security establishment would be extremely reluctant to delegate responsibility for protecting Israel. Given the stream of attacks during the second intifada that rattled the Israeli homeland, the unending threats of Palestinian terrorism today, and the proximate threats of Hamas and Hizballah, Israel is highly unlikely to accept an international force in the West Bank that would replace IDF control of the area. The PEF could even come into direct conflict with the IDF and settlers if it is perceived to be failing to act against potential terrorists, and if Israel feels compelled to take independent action. Potential confrontation would be increasingly probable as a PEF tries to rebut inevitable claims by Palestinians that it is merely an arm of the IDF by taking a "neutral" position between Israeli and Palestinian

claims. Moreover, Israel's experiences with other international peacekeeping efforts, particularly the latest role of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), have convinced the country's security officials that international peacekeepers are ineffectual.

- Even after a PEF deployed and took control of the West Bank, the IDF might attempt to intervene in the West Bank if faced with what it perceived as a serious and proximate threat. If by mandate the PEF were charged as the guarantor of a safe and secure environment, it would have to preempt these actions in a way that would likely place elements of the IDF and the PEF at gunpoint. These unpalatable scenarios would have an immediate political impact in Israel and back home in the capitals of the PEF's troop-contributing nations.
- The PEF would depend on Israel for its lines of communications and resupply, unless it deployed in the context of Israel ceding control of the border between Jordan and the West Bank. Depending on the requirements of future status-of-forces agreements, all materiel coming through Israel may have to adhere to Israeli laws and regulations—from quality of food, to technical standards, to ammunition security. Meeting these requirements would cost time and money and almost inevitably produce disputes and irritations.
- The more radical Israeli settlers and fundamentalists would likely target the PEF and act to provoke it, particularly in sensitive areas such as Hebron, where they periodically challenge the IDF and attack local Palestinians.

Internally, the PEF would face considerable organizational and political challenges, including questions of force composition, leadership requirements, will, intelligence capabilities, and legitimacy:

- **FORCE COMPOSITION.** Given the likelihood that an international coalition, most likely comprising NATO countries, would make up the PEF, it is

important to recognize that only a select minority of NATO members have the political fortitude and the quality and type of forces needed to succeed in this kind of peace-enforcement operation. Most of these countries are already overtasked with their commitments in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere. The PEF would have to consist of thousands of high-quality troops, including special operations forces, civil affairs, and intelligence units. By way of comparison, the international community struggled greatly to come up with 15,000 soldiers for UNIFIL, and that mission did not require active counterterrorism operations against Hizballah. One could also expect the normal frictions associated with the varying capabilities of contingents, difficulties in intelligence sharing, and overly complex logistics. Differing interpretations of the rules of engagement (ROE) or “caveats” normally limit the effectiveness of various national contingents in international forces. Moreover, legal restrictions in certain potential troop-contributing countries may prohibit some contingents from using deadly force or inhibit the autonomy of the force commander over all of his units. Nations that cannot provide the quality of troops needed or that cannot support robust ROE could not be accepted in the force, further limiting the potential pool of troop-contributing countries from which to draw in the formation of the PEF coalition. All of these technical issues would be exacerbated by the fact that different European countries have different political attitudes toward the Israel-Palestinian conflict and may object to the participation of their national contingents in activities that could result in confrontations with the IDF, Palestinian security forces, or civilians.

- **LEADERSHIP.** Deciding who will have ultimate authority over the international force would likely create tension between the United States and its NATO allies. If the PEF were a U.S.-led force, the United States will want the commander to have sole operational authority for the mission and to be responsible to the regional Combatant Commander. European participants, however, would likely want a civilian leader to be responsible for political and

diplomatic aspects of the mission and to serve in tandem with the force commander. This question of chain-of-command could impact everything from potential force contributions to the efficiency and cohesiveness of the force. In the event that a deployment proceeds, the force commander and his leadership cadre must be experienced in multilateral peace-enforcement operations and in coalition command. The commander must be mandated to deal with senior Israeli, Palestinian, and Arab officials, as well as with senior officials of the international mandating organization. The commander must also have the appropriate level of access to a White House-based coordinator and capable U.S. and NATO political advisors as part of the PEF’s headquarters staff.

- **INTELLIGENCE.** The PEF would require excellent intelligence capabilities to be proactive against terror groups and to defend against likely threats to its own personnel and assets. However, developing an intelligence capability with local knowledge is extremely difficult and would take significant time, while terrorists would be acting immediately to disrupt PEF activities. Relying on the PA for intelligence places enormous power in the hands of the PA’s notoriously corrupt and partisan General Intelligence. Comprehensive reform of that organization must occur before Palestinian intelligence can be trusted as a reliable partner. Nor could Israeli intelligence capabilities be counted on to fill the gaps. Relying on Israel to supply the PEF with its intelligence would limit the PEF’s ability to play an impartial role. A dependent intelligence relationship would likely increase friction between the PEF and Israel, particularly if there were different expectations about how the intelligence will be used. Moreover, Israel would be reluctant to share information that might jeopardize sources and methods.
- **WILL.** Troop-contributing countries must accept having the PEF remain in place for decades. Even the peacekeeping operations in the Sinai, the Golan Heights, and the Balkans—whose missions focused mainly on separating conventional militaries rather than undertaking extensive counterterrorism

operations—have required open-ended time commitments. The networks of Islamic insurgents in the Middle East have demonstrated tremendous patience and resilience, and political Islam has established itself as part of the region’s sociopolitical landscape. Consequently, the United States and other troop-contributing countries must have the political will to persist in their investment of first-class peace-enforcement capabilities, or the mission would fail. We doubt the American people, much less the populations of many potential NATO PEF contributors, would have the will to undertake and sustain over time the necessary counterterrorism operations in this dangerous and politically charged security environment.

- **LEGITIMACY.** The visibility of the PEF would be instantaneous and complete; there would be mistakes and acts that initially look like or are repre-

forces, intelligence, and civil affairs specialists necessary to accomplish the mission, especially given the ongoing mission in Iraq and the growing challenges in Afghanistan. Moreover, a U.S.-led mission could lead to frequent confrontations with the IDF, the PA, and the Palestinian public, which would threaten the foundations of the U.S.-Israeli relationship and America’s already fragile standing in the Arab world. For these reasons, the deployment of a U.S.- or NATO-led PEF to the West Bank is inadvisable—and, more important, not a substitute for a competent Palestinian security capability.

A JORDANIAN ALTERNATIVE

Another way of securing the West Bank (and perhaps an alternative to the very concept of a two-state solution with an independent Palestinian state) involves the potential extension of Jordanian security control

“Integrating the PA in some form with Jordan and involving Jordanian military and security personnel in the project could prove to be one way out of the current security deadlock.”

sented as ROE violations, use of excessive force, or human rights abuses. Such incidents would lead to animosity toward the force on the ground and more broadly in the region, and would also cause political controversy in the capitals of troop-contributing countries, where the performance of the PEF would face even greater scrutiny. For Israel, perceptions of the PEF’s ineffectiveness and failure to prevent terrorism would lead to a similar loss of legitimacy and potential friction with the IDF, the security establishment, and the public at large.

In sum, a PEF deployed to the West Bank would face severe challenges in terms of both the opposition to its mission and the political and materiel costs of its operation. It is extremely unlikely that the international community could even assemble a force with the appropriate quality and level of troops, special

from the East Bank to the West Bank. Usually this idea is mentioned casually by Israelis when pressed on what alternatives they would accept to continued Israeli control of the West Bank. A more formal elaboration of the Jordanian option, proposed by people like former Jordanian prime minister Abdul Salam al-Majali, calls for establishing a political confederation between the Palestinian territories and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan that would be headed by the king and governed by a parliamentary arrangement in which Jordanians and Palestinians would alternate in the positions of prime minister and speaker of parliament. Regardless of the political shape of a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation, an augmented Jordanian role in the security arena could: (1) lead to the Jordanian military’s assuming primary security responsibility for Palestinian territories; (2) provide a formula for integrating the Palestinian security forces into the Jordanian security structure; and (3) give

Jordan overarching responsibility for the training mission of Palestinian security forces outlined above.

For those in Israel and Jordan who have little faith that Palestinian security forces will ever be capable of combating terrorism, integrating the PA in some form with Jordan and involving Jordanian military and security personnel in the project could prove to be one way out of the current security deadlock. From this perspective, a Jordanian military role would be more palatable than an international force deployment, particularly if it occurred in the context of political agreements that established peace between Israelis and Palestinians and a confederated state of Jordanians and Palestinians. For Jordanians, the primary advantage of becoming more directly involved in Palestinian governance would be to prevent the prospect of an even worse option: a Hamas-led Palestinian state on its borders. They could also increase their prestige in the region if recognized as the key contributors to bringing about a durable peace.

Although the Jordanian option may appear to offer many benefits, particularly to those disenchanted with both the peace process and the prospect of indefinite Israeli occupation of the West Bank, it poses many challenges as well—even assuming international funding for the very considerable direct costs of such an effort:

- Jordanian security now has limited knowledge of the West Bank's populace, geography, and operational conditions. Developing an accurate and comprehensive profile of the area would require a significant investment in intelligence, resources, and time.
- Jordanian security responsibility could lead to potential tensions and even confrontations with the IDF that would threaten the basis of the Jordanian-Israeli relationship.
- Jordanian security personnel would become targets of Palestinian terrorist organizations, in both the West Bank and, potentially, Jordan.
- A perceived Jordanian "occupation" in the West Bank could lead to domestic unrest in Jordan, particularly between those of Transjordanian and Palestinian

descent. Confrontation between a Jordanian force and Hamas in the West Bank could lead to widespread tensions with Islamists in Jordan—and throughout the Middle East. Indeed, the greatest fear among Jordanian opponents to any level of involvement in the West Bank is its destabilizing effect on the Hashemite Kingdom, and they frequently cite this factor in rejecting the prospects for a confederation.

- It is not clear that Jordanian security forces would have the will, capability, or incentive to conduct counterterrorism operations in the West Bank sufficient to protect Israel's security. The operation would require a significant Jordanian deployment, and it is unclear whether Jordan could devote sufficient forces to the job without jeopardizing its own internal security.

None of these drawbacks precludes a potential Jordanian role, but Jordanian security responsibility would be ill advised without close cooperation with the PA to give the operation legitimacy—and with Israel to minimize potential friction with the IDF. Absent these conditions and the careful assessment of a Jordanian deployment on Jordanian domestic politics, it should not be pursued.

Very few Jordanians, and virtually none of the current Jordanian political and security elite, see a Jordanian-led PEF or a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation as helpful to the current situation or a desirable end state, much less as an acceptable situation for Jordan's own interests. To be sure, were the Palestinians, Jordanians, and Israelis to agree on an augmented Jordanian security role in the West Bank, as unlikely as this seems, the United States should be prepared to assist the effort financially and to provide additional military and economic assistance to Jordan that would make the mission more feasible. The United States could also chair trilateral security committees between Israel and the Jordanian/Palestinian security forces in order to help adjudicate disputes and conduct performance reviews. But it would be counterproductive for the United States to push Jordan, Israel, and the PA toward a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation.

Conclusions: Promoting the Prospects of a Two-State Solution

THE 2008 PEACE NEGOTIATIONS led by Secretary Rice ran into political obstacles that proved to be insurmountable. The challenges of a weak and faltering Israeli governing coalition and a Palestinian leadership fractured between a dysfunctional Fatah and a rejectionist Hamas, and between the West Bank and Gaza, are unlikely to change in the foreseeable future. The “West Bank First” strategy adopted in the wake of Hamas’s seizure of Gaza offers the best prospects for unseating Hamas in Gaza and from its majority in the Palestinian Legislative Council. Yet this strategy is a long-term approach that has only begun to show initial signs of success. The economy in the West Bank has begun to grow, and law and order have been imposed in Nablus and Jenin (with additional security efforts starting in Hebron). Progress, however, remains extremely tenuous and could be upended with a major security breakdown, terrorist attacks in Israel, increased IDF activity in the West Bank, or the financial insolvency of the PA, which continues to struggle to pay monthly salaries of public employees. Not enough development assistance has arrived in the West Bank to make a noticeable improvement in daily life, settlement construction has not stopped, and the occupation remains a constant irritant to ordinary Palestinian life. In short, the weak security milieu for both sides remains the number one obstacle to fundamental progress toward peace. The “West Bank First” strategy will rise or fall based on whether security improves for both sides.

The essential starting point for rebuilding Israeli confidence in Palestinian initiatives to prevent terrorism is a reinvigorated effort to professionalize the Palestinian security forces by implementing a robust train-and-equip mission. The most effective way to convince Israel to allow increased Palestinian autonomy and thus to ease its occupation of the West Bank is for Palestinian security forces to begin functioning effectively. And the best way to convince Palestinians to act against terrorist threats is to begin to ease the

occupation by removing unnecessary roadblocks at key junctions, streamlining the screening process at remaining checkpoints, increasing the mobility and armed strength of Palestinian security forces, and improving coordination between them and the IDF. Moreover, as security improves, initiating a process of withdrawing settlements in areas that will be part of an eventual Palestinian state and providing a “political horizon” that will outline the contours of eventual statehood will also improve the prospects that Palestinians will realize the benefits of becoming stakeholders in an independent, sovereign, and stable state in their future.

It should be noted that the above approach to advancing security focuses on investing in Palestinian security forces with the objective of creating a capable force that acts to prevent terrorism. Developing a professional security apparatus will become the cornerstone of a legitimate and capable Palestinian state—an essential component to achieving peace. Improving the security conditions for Israelis and Palestinians collectively thus represents the most important step toward creating an environment where durable peace can be realized.

Difficult as creating a Palestinian security capability will be, it is our conclusion that the alternative approach of forging security by substituting international forces for Palestinian security personnel is not viable. The requirements in terms of personnel, resources, operational conditions, and robust rules of engagement make it extremely unlikely that the international community can even assemble such a force. The force would encounter fierce rejectionist groups on the ground and would inevitably create political problems with Israel, the PA, and the broader Arab world. Moreover, the very concept of internationalizing Palestinian security undermines the objective of state building by perpetuating Palestinian dependence on outside assistance and limiting nascent state capacity and responsibility. All of these factors make such a mission ill advised. A concerted investment to professionalize Palestinian security forces and enhance their

operational capabilities is far preferable to risking the complete disruption of the area by introducing an international force with an active security mission. To do so with the aim of “alleviating” the security problems so that diplomacy can move quickly on final-status issues is shortsighted at best and would likely raise Palestinian and Israeli expectations, end in a failed peace-enforcement mission, and result in increased violence and disruption of the peace process.

For the security reform program to succeed will require adding resources and restructuring the current U.S. Security Coordinator mission. Moreover, a concentrated effort at security reform of the PA must occur in the context of a broader institutional reform of the PA, significant economic development and investment in the PA, a process for easing movement restrictions and curbing settlement expansion in the West Bank, and the continuation of some kind of broader negotiation effort that will help formulate the eventual conditions of a durable peace and Palestinian statehood.

First, comprehensive reform of the PA and the professionalization of its civilian and security ministries is critical for demonstrating to Palestinians that their government can provide basic services to the population efficiently and free of corruption—a crucial component of nascent state capacity. Absent broader confidence in the capabilities of the PA, an investment in security sector reform alone is unlikely to inspire public confidence in governance. Second, improving the economy and creating jobs is central to restoring public faith that a Palestinian state can be viable and prosperous. So long as the PA is constantly struggling to meet monthly fiscal obligations, it cannot concentrate sufficiently on implementing needed development projects. Consequently, the international donor community must adopt a long-term solution to the ongoing PA budget crisis while also reinvigorating its commitment to funding job-creating and revenue-generating development projects. Western donors should work closely with potential partners in the Persian Gulf to ensure their active contributions as well. Finally, a concentration on PA institutional reforms and capacity building also requires a parallel diplomatic track to keep the parties talking about the ultimate objective of

achieving a two-state solution. It is beyond the scope of this report to prescribe an agenda and framework for future final-status negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians, but it is clear that these negotiations must continue to create the context in which both sides can take concrete steps toward a durable peace. It is impossible to envision a PA crackdown on terror cells or an Israeli moratorium on settlement construction occurring in the absence of active peace negotiations.

As long as security sector reform and the political development and reform of the PA remain the focus of U.S. efforts, the policy of isolating Hamas should remain in place. Engaging Hamas would undercut the efforts of Palestinian moderates to improve daily life and bring about peace, because it would indicate that the West no longer believed in the abilities or political strength of its current partners. Moreover, recognizing Hamas as a political actor without changes to its core beliefs and practices would signal to Islamists that terrorism produces concessions and legitimacy while negotiations yield only continued occupation. If Hamas can demonstrate that it can outlast Western isolation in just a few years, it will never have any reason to move away from its objectives of destroying Israel and establishing an Islamic state in Palestine. However, the United States should be attuned to developments within Hamas that could signal a genuine commitment to moderating its positions and abandoning terrorism (in effect, the Quartet’s conditions). While we do not expect such a development to occur in the near future—if ever—the United States should still be prepared to engage a transformed Hamas in the event that it demonstrates its commitment to the Quartet’s conditions. Such a development would indicate the success of the West Bank First strategy.

There are also several issues that fall under the security umbrella of a final-status agreement:

- The types of forces allowed to operate in a Palestinian state
- Israel’s right of reentry in the event of external emergencies

- Utilization and control of the airspace and the electromagnetic spectrum
- The deployment of early warning stations in the Jordan Valley and a potential Israeli presence to staff such stations
- Water-use agreements

It is up to the parties to negotiate these issues directly. If it would be helpful to the process, the United States

can offer bridging proposals where possible, as well as its own assets, to resolve potential conflicts over the security agenda. Insofar as it is possible to provide technological solutions to some of these problems, the United States should take the lead in organizing funding for such efforts. Moreover, if there is advanced military equipment that Israel believes will help it adjust to the new security realities after the implementation of a peace agreement with the Palestinians, the United States should be as forthcoming as possible to provide access to this equipment.

Biographies

J. D. CROUCH II, currently a senior scholar at the National Institute for Public Policy, served as assistant to the president and deputy national security advisor from 2005 to 2007. Additionally, he was ambassador to Romania from 2004 to 2005 and assistant secretary of defense for international security policy from 2001 to 2003. Prior to joining the George W. Bush administration, he was associate professor of defense and strategic studies at Southwest Missouri State University and served as principal deputy assistant secretary of defense for international security policy from 1990 to 1992.

GEN. MONTGOMERY C. MEIGS retired from the U.S. Army in January 2003 after thirty-five years of active duty. He served two tours in Bosnia enforcing the Dayton Peace Treaty, was commander of the Stabilization Force (SFOR) from 1998 to 1999, and was commander of SFOR's Multinational Division North from 1996 to 1997. He also led the Iron Brigade of 1st Armored Division in Operation Desert Storm. In December 2005, he was recalled from retirement, and until December 2007 served as director of the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. He is now visiting professor of strategy and military operations in the Security Studies Program at Georgetown University's Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service.

WALTER B. SLOCOMBE served as undersecretary of defense for policy from 1994 to 2001 and was senior advisor for national defense in Iraq's Coalition

Provisional Authority in 2003. Previously, he held a number of positions in the Department of Defense, including principal deputy undersecretary for policy, deputy undersecretary for policy planning, and principal deputy assistant secretary for international security affairs. In 2004, President Bush appointed him to the Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States regarding weapons of mass destruction. Mr. Slocombe is an attorney at Caplin & Drysdale.

BEN FISHMAN is a research associate at the Washington Institute and a PhD Candidate in political science at the George Washington University. For nearly five years, he was a researcher and special assistant to Ambassador Dennis Ross at the Institute.

MICHAEL EISENSTADT is a senior fellow and director of The Washington Institute's Military and Security Studies Program. A specialist in Arab-Israeli and Persian Gulf security affairs, he publishes extensively on the armed forces of the region, irregular and conventional warfare and nuclear weapons proliferation in the Middle East, and U.S. policy toward the region. Prior to joining the Institute, Mr. Eisenstadt was a civilian military analyst with the U.S. Army and worked on the U.S. Air Force Gulf War Air Power Survey. He has also served as an advisor to the State Department's Future of Iraq defense policy working group and in 2006 was an advisor to the congressionally mandated Iraq Study Group (the Baker-Hamilton Commission).

“The sine qua non of a durable peace agreement remains the development of a Palestinian security system capable of not only enforcing law and order but combating terrorist networks and cells.”

