

INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUES FOUNDATION

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1. FOREWORD

International Dialogues Foundation (IDF) is an independent non-governmental, non-political organisation that strives to enhance the dialogue for the promotion of just international relations. IDF is a network organisation that brings together people who by their position in society and by the force of their ideas can play a constructive role in bringing together various parties. It is doing this by creating a shared responsibility for its activities among the participants, who represent different, often conflicting positions. In its projects IDF is always aiming at conclusions and proposals, which are realistic and workable.

So far IDF has mainly worked on the basis of the organisation of conferences and publication of documents and reports. Recently, IDF has started with the development of an electronic platform, in which it will work together with other organisations. In its projects special attention is paid to educational activities and the promotion of public awareness of the issues it focuses on.

2. INTRODUCTION

In 2009 an important development took place in the structure and the general way of operating: from a network-organisation which organises conference once a year with speakers and an audience, to a network-organisation which organises at least two roundtables with about 50 participants which are expected to participate actively in the discussion or online in the preparation sessions or follow-up discussions of the meeting. Occasionally, a well prepared conference with guests will be organised.

This change has developed gradually in the last few years, which started in 2007 with the conference 'To be on speaking terms', which dealt with the Israeli-Palestinian peace challenges, paying special attention to the impact of the political Islam in the Middle East region. The conference consisted of two loosely connected components: a simulation game by students from five Dutch universities of international negotiations on the one hand and what was already a kind of roundtable with a limited group of participants discussing mainly questions of national identity. In December 2008 IDF organised a roundtable dealing with the question of what could be expected from Obama becoming president of the US for the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. At this meeting, which was chaired by Bertus Hendriks; Menachem Klein, Mouin Rabbani and Geoffrey Aronson gave their view from respectively Israeli, Palestinian and American perspective. It was also at this meeting that the decision was made to formalise the further activities under the title of 'Justice and Peace in Israel and Palestine (For both activities reports can be found on www.internationaldialogues.nl)

3. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

3.1 THE BOARD COMPOSITION

In February 2010 our highly respected and beloved Chairman of the Board Dr Dick de Zeeuw passed away at the age of 84, so to say in armour, on one of his frequent missions for the Worldbank. His place was taken over by Gerben Meihuizen as Chairman a.i.

In 2009 members of the Board (in Dutch: “*Bestuur*”) were:

- Dick de Zeeuw, Chairman (till February)
- Gerben Meihuizen, Chairman a.i. (from February)
- Peter Idenburg, Executive Chairman
- Gerard Giebels, Treasurer (till March)
- Jan Elshout, Treasurer (from March)
- Oscar Kemble (till November)
- Dunya Verwey
- Toke Smolders
- Yousef Ahmed
- Maha Najjar
- Jeroen van Dalen

3.2 INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL

International Council members are occasionally consulted on a personal base. Co-Chairmen are Dries van Agt (former Prime Minister of The Netherlands) and Kamel Abu Jaber (Former Minister of Foreign Affairs). Members are Thabet Taher, Naomi Chazan, Wim Deetman, Anoush Ehteshami, Azza Karam, Jørgen S. Nielsen, Emil Salim, Assad Abdulrahman, Vladimir Petrovski .

3.3 PERSONNEL COMPOSITION

The coordination and the secretarial tasks are taking place at the office of IDF.

In the year 2009 following people were working at the International Dialogues Foundation office:

- Peter Idenburg - Coordinator
- Rick Dennert – Logistic Manager
- Ana Veldhuis – Intern from 1st January until 1st June
- Tatiana Jaques - Intern from 1st January until 1st June
- Madelon Schra - Intern from 1st June until 31st December
- Claudia Diaz – Intern from 1st September until 1st November

3.4 EXPERTS

One of the major developments as described in the ‘Introduction’ was the shift into the direction an active involvement of the Network by the participation of the speakers/experts in the process of formulation of the themes and proposals in the preparatory discussions and the follow up

discussions. In fact the process started with online discussions especially with Menachem Klein and Mouin Rabbani, after the conference of 2007. These discussions had their follow-up after the roundtable of December 2008, which included also Geoffrey Aronson, director of the Middle East Peace Program in Washington DC and Anoush Ehteshami professor International Relations at the University of Durham in the UK. They played a valuable role in the preparation of the Roundtable in June on Security in Israel and Palestine from a regional perspective. The participation of Ziad Abu Zayyad, Hillel Schenker, Moshe Ma'oz and Walid Salem as Israeli and Palestinian experts proved to be a decisive step into the direction of the central role of the expertise 'on the ground' for the further activities, according to the formulation 'It is not up to us who have say what has to happen, up to them', coined by the Board member Oscar Kemble.

3.5 ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Early 2008 it was decided to invite some personalities with a great experience and a trustworthy reputation to become member of an Advisory Committee for the programme of Justice and Peace in Israel and Palestine. Members that were invited included: Wim Deetman (chair), Jan Pronk, Laurens Jan Brinkhorst, Hedy d'Ancona, Wim van Eekelen, Jan Donner, Jaap de Zwaan and Alexander Burgers van den Bogaert. Several of them played an important role as chairs or speakers in the Roundtables that followed.

3.6 STUDENTS

International Dialogues Foundation places a special attention on the role of students in the activities organised by the organisation. International Student Coordination Group (ISCG) and students from the Locomotive were involved in the preparation of the June 2009 Roundtable.

3.7 PARTNERS

Important roles in the development of the various activities are partner organisations, which are the following:

1. Palestine-Israel Journal (a well known quarterly magazine that encourages dialogue between civil societies on both sides for the purpose of broadening the base of support for the peace process);
2. Dick de Zeeuw Foundation (an organisation in formation, to deal with the issues focusing on agriculture, environment and dialogue);
3. Locomotive (an organisation that was established by three students of The Hague University, to create consciousness among people, in order to raise respect for the environment and the diversity of the world).

3.8 HOUSING

During the whole year 2009, the office was situated on Willem Witsenplein 6, 2596BK in The Hague (The Netherlands), thanks to the hospitality of the Ministry of Agriculture.

4. ACTIVITIES

In year 2009 there were two roundtables organised by International Dialogues Foundation. The themes of the meetings were decided upon by the Board in consultation with advisory committee.

All of the activities were organised under the final responsibility of the Board of IDF (Chairman a.i. Gerben Meihuizen; Executive Chairman and coordinator of projects Peter Idenburg and Treasurer and manager of project Jan Elshout).

4.1 JUNE CONFERENCE

In June 2009 a two day roundtable was organised on the 23rd and 24th June in Christus Triumfatorkerk on Laan van Nieuw Oost- Indie 143 in The Hague.

The Theme of the conference was “Security in Israel and Palestine from a Regional Perspective”. The conference was chaired by Wim van Eekelen, former Minister of Defence and former Secretary General of the Western European Union (WEU). On the first day there were four sessions;

1. Shifting Regional Power Relations, Chaired by Fred Grunfeld (NL) and introduced by Anoush Ehteshami (UK). Panel members included Walid Salem (Pal), Avi Primor (Isr), Samir Mutawi (Jordan), Bertus Hendriks (NL).
2. Negotiating with Political Islam, Chaired by Paul Aarts (NL) and introduced by Mouin Rabbani (Pa). Panel members included Moshe Ma'oz (Isr), Ziad Abu Zayyad (Pal), Geoffrey Aronson (US) and Asef Bayat (Iran).
3. Beyond Annapolis, Chaired by Hedy d'Ancona (NL) and introduced by Menachem Klein (Isr). Panel members included Ziad Abu Zayyad (Pal), Samir Mutawi (Jordan), Walid Salem (Pal) and Avi Primor (Isr)
4. Challenges for Transatlantic Cooperation Chaired by Peter van Ham (NL) and introduced by Geoffrey Aronson (US). Panel members included Paul de Waart (NL), Wim van Eekelen (NL), Menachem Klein (Isr) and Mouin Rabbani (Pal).

On the 24th of June a Students' day was organised. The meeting was organised by Tatiana de Jacques, the chairperson of the International Student Coordinating Group.

In the morning session, discussion took place on Changing Generations. Second session was a roundtable discussion on the basis of the 'Avram Burg Formula'. Avram Burg was the former speaker of the Israeli Knesset. Preceding this discussion there was a direct telephone conversation between Tatiana de Jacques and Avram Burg.

The students played a simulation game of consultations between Israel, Palestine (representing both Fatah and Hamas), US, Arab and European Countries. The third session was on the Role of Civil Society, chaired by Jan Pronk and with introduction by Walid Salem and Hillel Schenker. The final panel session was chaired by Wim van Eekelen with comments by members of advisory committee, Jan Pronk and L.J. Brinkhorst.

As a preparation of the conference, in cooperation of Paul Aarts from University of Amsterdam, a special meeting was organised with a group of Iranian students. The discussion was organised in corporation with the youth department of the Labour Party (Partij van de Arbeid Den Haag).

Further information on the June Conference can be found in the Appendix 1 and also on International Dialogues Foundation Website under 'Projects' on <http://www.internationaldialogues.nl/?page=projects>

4.2 NOVEMBER CONFERENCE

On Friday 20 November and Saturday 21 November International Dialogues Foundation organised a conference on 'Obstacles and Chances for an Enduring Israeli-Palestinian Peace'. This conference took place in Pax Christi Kerk on Vlamburg 2 in Den Haag 2591AS.

The themes discussed during the conference included the Amnesty International paper on the water problem, the Goldstone Report and the Policy Paper from the Palestine-Israel Journal on 'Freezing the settlements'.

The originally scheduled title of this roundtable was 'Obstacles and Chances for an Enduring Israeli-Palestinian Peace'. As a matter of fact, a week before this conference took place, there was a crisis in the position of the Palestinians. The chairman of the Palestinian Authority Mahmoud Abbas had declared that he wanted to withdraw from his position because of the lack of support he felt to receive from the side of the United States. In fact, the whole idea of 'Two State solution' was brought into discussion. These developments made the Board of IDF decide to focus the discussion on the relevance of the 'Two State solution'. At the same time, it was decided to bring together the originally planned discussion on the main themes to a one day discussion meeting on the first day.

On the second day a special meeting took place for an open discussion on the content and character of the follow up activities, chaired by Wim Deetman, chairman of the Advisory Committee.

On the first day, the following sessions took place;

The morning session of the first day, was chaired by Hedy d'Ancona. Menachem Klein presented an analysis of the present perspectives for the Palestinian State. Comments were given by Ziad AbyZayyad, Moshe Ma'oz and Hillel Schenker paying special attention to the question of 'Two State solution'. During the afternoon, which was chaired by Sylvia Borren, Hillel Schenker introduced the recent report of Palestine Israel Journal on 'Freezing the settlements'. The second part was dealing with the water issue. Ziad Abu Zayyad introduced the subject. During the discussion a suggestion was made to promote desalination as a long term structural solution of the water problem.

On the second day, a special attention was paid on the role of European Union. This subject was introduced by L. J. Brinkhorst. According to Brinkhorst, the Netherlands should support the US, but have more courage in stating the unacceptability of the behaviour of Israel and should try to foster on this an EU position. Several participants among them Hillel Schenker and Mouin Rabbani, supported this view. Schenker paid a special attention to the position of the JStreet Lobby in the US. Peter Idenburg introduced the idea of a special programme based on the use of

internet, called ‘creating awareness’, among specific target groups like students, retired people and representatives of Palestinians and Jewish community in the Netherlands. In his conclusion, Wim Deetman emphasised the possibility of constructive Israeli Palestinian cooperation in the sphere of infrastructural initiatives.

Further information on the November Conference can be found in the Appendix 2 and also on International Dialogues Foundation Website under ‘Projects’ with the report made by Sarita Kemble on <http://www.internationaldialogues.nl/?page=projects>

APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1 - JUNE CONFERENCE SUMMARY

The conference took place during the days of the worst repression in Iran. The consequence of this might be that the Iranian opposition should be involved in any serious endeavour to come on speaking terms with the Iranian regime, a construction with a certain similarity to the necessity of coming on speaking terms with the two major Palestinian parties. As on this aspect the June roundtable was inconclusive. On the other hand the meeting was successful because of the obvious homogeneity of the Palestinian and Israeli participants. If there were disagreements to be noticed it was not between Israelis and Palestinians on each side but between policy-conceptions.

The discussions of the conference resulted in a programme of roundtables for the coming year;

1. Roundtable 'Agenda for the coming negotiations on Israel and Palestine'. Menachem Klein and Mouin Rabbani are expected to play an important role in the setting up of these discussions. They will do so on the basis of their previous experiences. Menachem Klein for example, was special advisor to the Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak at the Dayton negotiations and Mouin Rabbani was for years the one who wrote the analysis for the International Crisis Group. It must be clear that decisions on the agenda play a crucial role in this type of international negotiations. It deals with the question which subjects should be put on the table and especially in which order this has to be done.

A basic assumption of this project is the recognition of the leading role the US administration under Obama has indicated that it wants to play. An essential aspect of this policy is the idea that there should be a close cooperation between the US and the EU-countries. It is for that reason that the European countries should follow as much as possible the priorities put by the US. It will be clear that in the present situation the first priority lies with the ending of the settlements on the West Bank.

The question of the order in which subjects like Security and Economy are to be discussed appear to be crucial in practice. On the one hand, this means that in an early stage one should think about the final outcomes and how these should be realized; on the other hand on the short term, one should look for interim solutions. If only because it could function as a model of how in future parties should deal with each other.

It must be clear that both in case of the economy and the security, one can't keep on waiting forever. Thinking about form and content of an agenda for the international negotiations seems to be very instructive for students as well. As a next step, for the preparation for the following programme, such a roundtable on an 'Agenda for negotiations' seems to make sense.

2. Roundtable 'The formation of a truly independent Palestinian state: a model'. Starting point for the discussion will be a model based on the realities of today, of a structure of a state formation consisting of five levels which provides a limited degree of autonomy in certain sectors

like the economy, education and health, while simultaneously the structure is being kept under Israeli control via the levels of transportation and security.

In order to achieve a truly independent state it will be necessary that this structure is to be pulled down in order to be able to build an alternative structure that will be no longer under Israeli control. Menachem Klein, who has presented this model, and Mouin Rabbani have been invited to draw a proposal for the working out in consultation with the coordinator of International Dialogues Foundation a plan. In our opinion such a plan should provide indications of how others, experts and the institutions they represent, which were mentioned above in the description of background of this program, somehow could be involved. This plan should provide proposals for the research and communication that are needed for the preparation of the discussion papers to be presented on the roundtable to be held in June 2010.

APPENDIX 2 - NOVEMBER CONFERENCE SUMMARY

‘Obstacles and Chances for an Enduring Israeli-Palestinian Peace’

On Friday 20 November and Saturday 21 November International Dialogues Foundation organised a conference on ‘Obstacles and Chances for an Enduring Israeli-Palestinian Peace’.

Friday 20 November

The morning session on the first day started with a welcome speech of the chairwoman Hedy D’Ancona, followed by an opening speech by IDF’s chairman Gerben Meihuizen. Three reports were being taken into account during the discussions of that day: the Amnesty International paper on the water problem, the Goldstone Report, and the Policy paper from the Palestine-Israel Journal. Important speakers that were taking part in the discussions are among others Ziad Abu Zayyad , Menachem Klein, Mouin Rabbani and Hillel Schenker. Ziad Abu Zayyad started the first discussion with the ‘two-state solution’. The speakers were discussing all different options, sizes etc. how to make this solution work, and also a question was raised on the refugee issue. The key note speakers concluded that the Israelis want to maintain the status-quo, and that this will not change without outside pressure. Otherwise the status-quo could be more or less sustained indefinitely. They also concluded that this two-state solution is at its demise, so the question was asked what Holland or the EU could do, and whether or not there is still room for creative thinking.

The afternoon session was chaired by Sylvia Borren. The first part was about ‘Freezing the settlements’. Hillel Schenker was introducing the subject with the executive summary and recommendations of the PIJ Policy Paper ‘Israeli settlements and the two-state solution’. The second part was dealing with the Water Issue and Ziad Abu Zayyad introduced this subject by explaining how big the issues are around the water and how important it is to take those problems away. It seems to be fundamentally a political problem with a technical aspect, since the positioning of the Israeli wall is decided by the location of water sources. Moshe Ma’oz was the more optimistic when looking at the near future, saying that there is no problem without a solution. He thinks the main problem is Jerusalem, so if they could have a dual capital then the rest will also fall into place. Israel can integrate into the Arab world, and this could fall out to be a win-win situation.

An interesting suggestion was made on the promotion of desalinization of the seawater. The Dick de Zeeuw Foundation, with as chairman Jan Pronk, will be invited to organise its yearly ‘De Zeeuw Lecture’ on this subject, from the perspective of the cooperation between Arab countries and Israel with the support by international sponsors like the World Bank and the EU.

Second day Roundtable on 21 November 2009

Menachem Klein opened the meeting and suggested to ‘sum up the debate and use this as a base for following meetings’. He mentioned the importance of the two state solutions and he gave his arguments against ‘one state solution’. During this meeting it was agreed that the ‘two state solution should be taken into consideration.

Mouin Rabbani pointed out the role of the EU should be greater, as ‘the EU is a much larger economic partner of Israel than the US’. Hillel Schenker agreed and said that The Netherlands and the civil society should also play an important role. L. J. Brinkhorst stated that EU, US, UN and Russia still are a good quartet and could still play a significant role. However, the problem

lies on EU's side with often the changing of the president and the foreign policy chief, which complicates the cooperation. Rabbani reminded that the EU already has a policy, which should have already been implemented. This is still not done in order to stay on the same line with the US. According to Brinkhorst, The Netherlands should support US, but should have more courage in stating the unacceptable behaviour of Israel and should also try to foster a EU position.

Ziad Abu Zayyad reminded the participants that 'Israel does not want anyone to share the state with them' and whether it is possible to remove the settlements and turn the situation into a border conflict'. In his opinion not bringing up the 'two-state' solution can mean that the conflict is unsolvable and the situation will never change. He also strongly pointed out that a confederation is not possible from the Israelis side.

Peter Idenburg suggested bringing up the involvement of the Arab countries, independent experts from both Egypt and Jordan. However, as Deetman pointed out, there should not be put too much on Israel, as this will definitely lead to diplomatic problems between Israel and Arab countries. Schenker supported the idea of Mr Idenburg, by bringing up a case of 'Camp David'. He also added that Palestinians would see more involvement from Arab countries by posing sanctions on Israel.

It was also said during the meeting that Obama's policy and his speech in Cairo is welcomed with enthusiasm. However it was also mentioned by Abu Zayyad that Obama is not really following his promises and that he should be reminded about them.

Schenker agreed to contact J Street, which slogan is 'pro-Israel, pro-Palestinian and pro-peace'. It was agreed to be an important move, as initiatives by J Street can stimulate positive publicity on the topic.

As last the idea of Peter Idenburg was mentioned to organise a set of lectures for a specific target groups including students and retired people. N.B. After consultations that followed it was decided to organize instead of lectures special discussion meetings with representatives of these target groups about the involvement of Palestine Israel Journal website as a source for information. Mr. Klein added that it is essential to have a face to face interaction between students.

General conclusions of the conference were:

1. Greater emphasis should be put on the role of the EU, with the Netherlands playing a stimulating role in it. As a follow-up of this meeting, a conference will be organized in cooperation with Israeli and Palestinian partners on Jerusalem. A central place will be given to the EU-proposal to recognize East-Jerusalem as a capital for the Palestinians.
2. The Dick de Zeeuw Foundation has been approached to organize the above mentioned 'Dick de Zeeuw Lecture' on the subject of desalination of seawater.