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**An American Peace Initiative:  
Is there a nice way of saying  
“an imposed solution”?**

**Gershon Baskin**

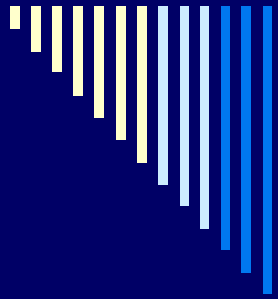


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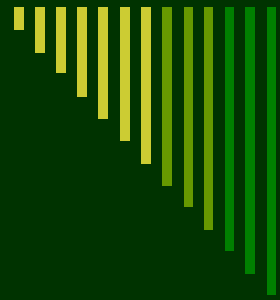


## Assumptions:

- There is close to zero chance of a bilateral negotiated Israeli-Palestinian agreement at this time given the political constellations both in Israel and in Palestine. It is a waste of time and even dangerous to try to resume a negotiated process that will lead to open-ended negotiations with no real progress.**
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- The territories are ripe for real movement forward on the peace agenda.
- At the same time, they are also ripe for a new explosion.



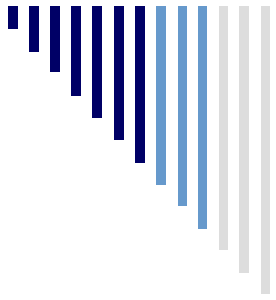
- The last intifada brought thousands of casualties and no political achievements. It destroyed the dwindling Israeli peace camp and led to the complete reoccupation of the West Bank and Gaza.
- Reverting back to violence is a real possibility, even though it seems that everyone here is tired of this conflict.
- All too often, rationality and knowing what is good have too little to do with what actually happens.



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# Obama Administration Policy

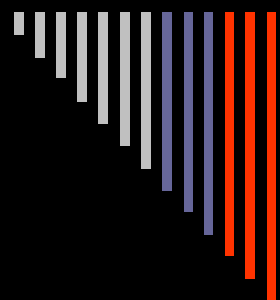
- The only way to move forward is by bring the parties back to negotiations
  - Mitchell will be a mediator at the table
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## But Obama also said:

- US will work with the international community in tandem
  - The resolution of the Arab Israeli conflict is a US national strategic interest
  - I add – the resolution of the Arab Israeli conflict is an international strategic interest
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## This means:

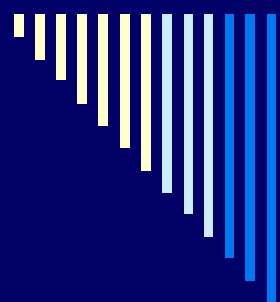
- The parties no longer have a veto on the resolution of the conflict
- This conflict must be brought to an end, it must not continue to endanger the security and the stability of the region and the world.



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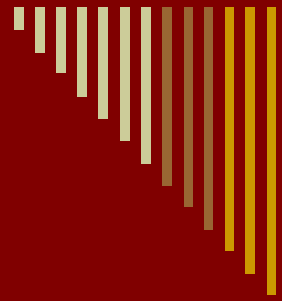
But.....

- Settlement freeze as a demand to begin negotiations was a mistake
  - 1. It is not achievable
  - 2. It is tactical not strategic - nothing on the ground changes
  - 3. Netanyahu trapped Obama with Jerusalem
  - 4. Negotiating about negotiations
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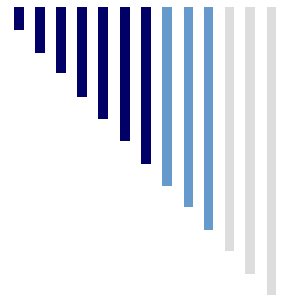


# Frustration in Washington

- The NY summit of Obama-Netanyahu-Abbas was a failure
- Hillary's folly
- Uncoordinated Palestinian unilateralism



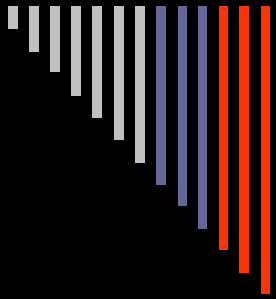
- The parameters of agreements are more or less known.
- The needs, interests, threat perceptions and the means to answer them are known on both tracks by experts but have not yet been detailed and no international commitments have been made to provide for them.
- But the distance between now and reaching the possible agreed outcomes of negotiations are light years away if left to the standard classical negotiating process (the kind of process that Senator Mitchell believes in).



## Going beyond/around negotiations

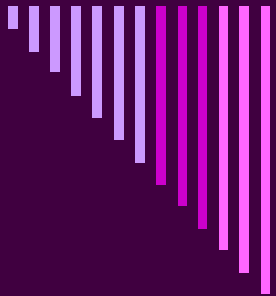
**There needs to be an immediate course change, before it is too late.**

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## The need for the course change is based on:

- The parameters of the Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement are well known.
- There is global consensus on the parameters of that agreement.
- A majority of Israelis and Palestinians would be willing to make the concessions necessary to reach peace if they believed that there was a credible partner, willing and able to meet their obligations (and if backed by international guarantees).
- The resolution of this conflict is a US national strategic interest (and an international strategic interest as well) which means that **the old formula stating that “the parties have to want it more than us” is no longer true. The parties no longer have the right to veto peace and to allow the conflict to continue to endanger the security of the region and the whole world.**
- The US and the Quartet must not be held hostage by domestic politics either in the US, Israel or the PA.

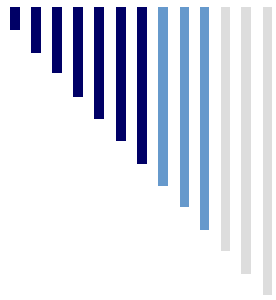


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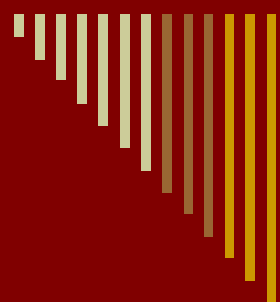
## The following is what I propose for the Israeli-Palestinian track:

The Quartet requests from the parties to provide answers to the following questions within three months:

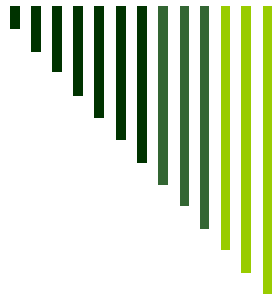
- What are the difficulties and obstacles that you face in implementing a “two-states for two peoples” solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
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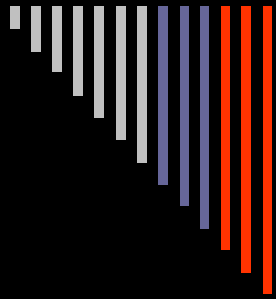
- What are the primary concerns that you would face (including domestic, but not limited to domestic concerns) in implementing this solution?
  - What are the primary threats that you will face as a result of implementing the solution?
  - What mechanism/means would you propose to monitor, verify and ensure the compliance of obligations undertaken within a peace agreement **by the other side?**
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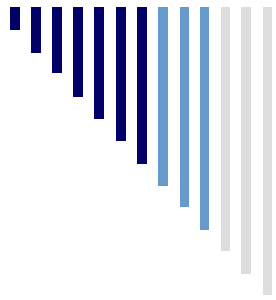
- If one or both parties fail to respond to the request, the US and the Quartet will inform the parties that their part of the exercise will be undertaken by a group of private experts.
- Non-cooperation will not be awarded and will not prevent the process from advancing.
- It is important that the US and the Quartet plan in advance their response for non-cooperation in this exercise.



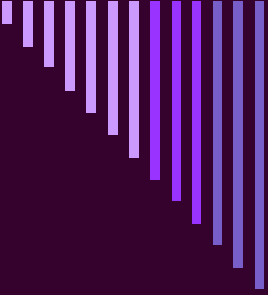
- The objective of this exercise is for the parties to detail the specific difficulties they would face within the parameters of the well known solutions to the conflict without them having an opportunity to put their maximalist positions on the table.
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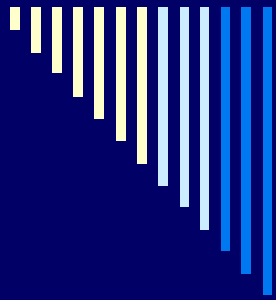


- After receiving the answers from the parties, the Quartet (led by the US) would spend the following three months developing the detailed answers for the threats and difficulties spelled out by the parties.
- A major emphasis within the Quartet plans would have to be on the role of credible third parties and third party multi-national forces (military, police and civilian – led by the US but without US soldiers on the ground) and not solely the reliance on the parties themselves to deal with those threats unilaterally or even bi-laterally (which they have proven over the years incapable for doing).

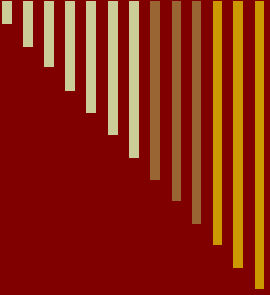


- The Quartet's answers would be the expansion of its "diplomatic tool box" which would contain a large amount of "carrots and sticks".
- The "carrots" are the specific answers that the Quartet would provide to deal with as many as possible of the threats and obstacles detailed by the parties.
- The Quartet must be willing to provide detailed answers including their own commitments for meeting the real needs of both parties, as presented by the parties and not by the Quartet. In other words, the Quartet should not suggest that any one of the threats or obstacles presented by the parties is not real. All threats must be treated with the upmost of sincerity and the answers provided must be based on real commitments.
- Likewise, the diplomatic toolbox must contain the "sticks" – those consequences backed by commitments that the Quartet is willing to use if the parties fail to cooperate.

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- Once the Quartet has designed the package aimed at providing answers and solutions to the obstacles, difficulties and threat perceptions presented by the parties including the mechanisms that they propose to confront the issues concerning monitoring, verification and enforcement of implementation of treaty obligations, the Quartet would place on the table for the parties the draft of the full peace agreement (in a format of a Declaration of Principles) including all of the permanent status issues:



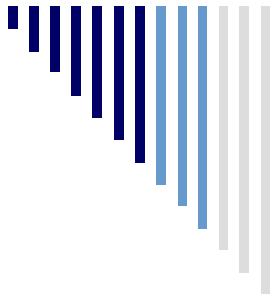
- Palestinian statehood and sovereignty
- Delineation of borders
- Security regimes and cooperation
- Jerusalem
- Refugees
- The link between West Bank and Gaza
- Economic relations
- Water and environmental issues
- International regimes/forces etc.
- End of conflict, end of claims
- UN Security Council Resolution



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The DOP would state that the agreement relates to all of the area, including Gaza which will be included in the implementation of the treaty once the political situation there would enable it. The DOP would contain the following elements:

- “Two states for two peoples” based on the June 4, 1967 lines with agreed territorial exchanges. The territorial dimension is the 22%-78% formula (of land between the Jordan River and the Sea)
  - The majority of settlers would find themselves in the areas annexed to Israel, others would be repatriated to Israel proper or to the annexed areas, and others could remain in the Palestinian state as law abiding Palestinian citizens.
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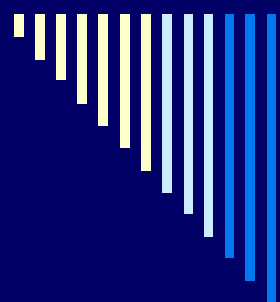
- Jerusalem will be the capitals of both States (based on the Clinton parameters). In the Old City there would either be an international regime or the Jewish quarter would be under Israeli sovereignty and the other quarters under Palestinian sovereignty.
- Israel would have control over the Kotel and the Palestinians over the Temple Mount/Haram al Sharif and both sides would agree not to excavate, tunnel, build or damage the Holy compound without mutual agreement. Jerusalem would be an open city.
- Palestinian refugees wishing to return will return to the Palestinian state receiving financial compensation and Israeli acknowledgement of its part of the responsibility for the refugee problem.



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# Security Guarantees and assurance of implementation

- ❑ Changing the security discourse – from Israeli security to mutual security
  - ❑ International forces led by the US (with no US troops on the ground)
  - ❑ Military, policing and civilian components
  - ❑ Monitoring, verification, dispute resolution and;
  - ❑ Implementation assurance mechanisms
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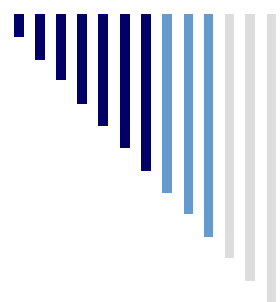
## All threats would have to be met

- Threats are real
- The continuation of the occupation does not answer Israel's security threats
- A real international presence would answer the security needs of both States



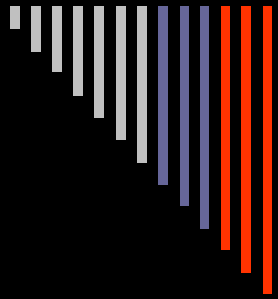
## What if the parties do not cooperate or even oppose this plan?

- An effective and realistic international plan backed by the United States and the Quartet would enable the civil societies on both sides to rebuild public support for peace.
- Realistic and definitive solutions for Israel's security dilemmas proposed by the US in this initiative would enable Israeli civil society to convince the public that Israel's welfare and security would be better served by cooperating with the US than by continuing the occupation, which does not relieve Israel's real security needs, it only compounds them.



## Peace camps re-emerge in both societies

- All supporters of peace would have a new plan to rally around
  - Peace would not be dependent on mutual trust but on external guarantees and assurances
  - Confidence will be built through implementation
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THE END

THANK YOU!

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