

Options to Peace in Israeli-Palestinian Conflict



Plus a Catcher of Dreams 6th Option



Supplementing the options first presented by
Dr Albert Fiorino in his book,
©Israeli-Palestinian Conflict
An actual 'never-ending story' (2018)

Crossroads to Peace in the Conflict

Cruc of the conflict pure and simple

In the table on the next page we present some basic key options available to the different parties in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict based upon the earlier monographs we at the Metamode Institute put forward as our contribution to the on-going narrative, and as incorporated in the preceding sections of this book. In the end, we are quite aware that tough choices must be made by the parties involved in the conflict to bring about peace in the region.

Option #1

The social and political integration of the Palestinian and Jewish populations is the ideal solution, which in the long run would reap the most benefits for both peoples. This option requires as a sufficient condition the desire and determination on the part of both parties to co-exist peacefully with a shared vision of a socio-economically vibrant sovereign state. With an abundance of good will, trust, and respect for each other, this option is the most reasonable.

Table 1

	Options	Reasonable	Not Reasonable	Doable	Ideal
1	One-state solution	√		√	√ For author
2	Two-state solution	√		√ With reservation	
3	Three-state solution	√		√	
4	Resettlement of Palestinians	√ For the Jews	√ For Palestinians	√	√ For the Jews
5	Departure of the Jewish people from Palestine	√ For Palestinians	√ For the Jews	√	√ For Palestinians

Option #2

The two-state solution is also reasonable and doable provided that it stems from a genuine desire to co-exist peacefully and co-operatively in the region. Our main reservation to this option relates to the separation of a future state of Palestine into two non-contiguous territories. A major land swap could overcome this difficulty coupled, if necessary, with some significant territorial

concessions on the part of neighbouring Arab countries to either a future state of Palestine and/or to Israel. To date no neighbouring Arab state has made any such offer or demonstrated any desire to do so.

However, in the interest of achieving long-term stability and peace in the region, it is most timely that they seriously revisit their possible concrete contribution to the realization of this goal. A two-state solution with one, clear contiguous border between the newly created State of Palestine and the State of Israel, coupled with some reasonable territorial concessions on the part of neighbouring Arab countries, would approximate an ideal solution for both parties in the conflict.

Option #3

A three-state solution, though not a favourite of mine, could work provided that the conditions noted under Option #2 also prevail. The creation of two separate Palestinian states is very doable: a City State of Gaza including the entire Gaza strip, and a State of Palestine in the West Bank. In this case, we also urge the neighbouring Arab states to seriously consider possible and generous territorial concessions to both of these two proposed political entities.

On an optimistic note, it is not unrealistic to envision an economic union of Israel, the newly created Palestinian states, and neighbouring Arab states similar, though not necessarily in all respects, to the European Union and BRICS (economic association of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa).

Option #4

This is the ideal solution for most Jews. It is both reasonable and doable. As we documented in our last major piece on the conflict, the relocation and resettlement of large populations have been done before. This option would enable the Jews to expand the boundaries of Israel to include both the Gaza strip and the West Bank. Under this option, the neighbouring Arab countries would have to come forward to receive and accept Palestinians as full-fledged members of their respective states. Palestinians could also immigrate to other countries willing to facilitate their resettlement. Israel could also absorb some of the costs involved under this option. Put bluntly, this option involves asking Palestinians to abandon what they consider their homeland. For them, it is and will always remain an unreasonable sacrifice and thus an undoable, unacceptable option.

Option #5

For Palestinians, this option would be a dream-come-true. This option is doable since, though still a hardship, it would not be an unthinkable task for the Jewish population to relocate and resettle in other parts of the world. There would be no scarcity of countries ready and willing to receive and accept them. As with the Palestinians, this option would mean the abandonment of the deeply rooted yearning not only of this generation of Jews but of all Jews since the Great

Diaspora of returning and settling once and for all on the lands of their ancestors, their homeland. Thus, this option would be most unreasonable and undoable for the Jewish people.

Last word

It is quite apparent that neither Options #4 and #5 will ever be found reasonable or doable by either party. Under prevailing norms of warfare even a clear victory of one side over the other would result in the expulsion of the vanquished party from its presently occupied territories. The world community would not tolerate the retention of any conquered lands since neither party would be able to enforce its claim with impunity, as Russia has been able to do thus far in the case of its annexation of Crimea.

The ultimate solution for the Palestinians and this must be stated plainly, is Option #5. They want the Jews to leave Palestine once and for all. This solution is neither reasonable nor realistic. Their leadership and the extremists among them should know this fact by now. Unfortunately, they do know it, but cannot find the necessary spiritual strength and resources to accept this reality and to move forward on a path of reconciliation with the Jewish people. Until that happens, it will be next to impossible to pursue any other options in earnest and with hope.

Any one of Options #1-3 can work if it is accompanied by the conditions described above. However, if either party views the other with enmity and hatred, there is little hope for any progress in the peace process. As long as the socio-economic interests of one party totally or partially exclude the long-term well-being of the other party, there is little hope of a successful conclusion to the conflict.

Catcher of Dreams 6th Option

“Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity! It is like the precious oil upon the head, running down over the beard, the beard of Aaron, running down on the collar of his robes! It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion! For there, the Lord has commanded the blessing, life for evermore.” Psalm 133

Borrowing the theme “catching the dream” of Carla Jennings (1940-2020), a friend and former member our Institute Council, which she weaved through her book entitled *Dream Catcher* (2002) and the story of the dream catcher, a talisman, found in Ojibwa culture, I do a little weaving of my own to formulate a sixth option in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In the Ojibwa legend, the dream catcher is used to protect children in their sleep. The talisman catches bad and horrific dreams in its web and lets good and happy dreams through. In my weaving of this sixth option I also borrow key strands from Jean Monnet’s ‘grand design’ of the European Union and his principles of shared privilege and shared value.

With signs of the imminent collapse of the Ottoman Empire everywhere in the late 18th century, local Arab Palestinians’ nationalist sentiments began to intensify, while Zionists’ desires and interests for the possible setup of a Jewish homeland in their ancestral lands in Palestine began to peak in Europe. Palestine was at this time merely a geographical region which was rapidly being transformed into a highly contested terrain. This Zionist dream was totally rejected from the outset by the predominantly Muslim population of Palestine. Their objections came to naught and were laid to rest for good with the British occupation of the area in 1917 and the British Government’s immediate publication of the Balfour Declaration, which assured the establishment “of a national home for the Jewish people”.

The last one hundred years since the Balfour Declaration have been nightmarish for both the Jewish people and Palestinians. They have been living a truly, seemingly ‘never-ending story’ of conflicts and wars. Both sides have suffered losses in the thousands and there are no tangible signs of an imminent end to the conflict.

As a starter both sides need to acquire their very own dream catchers so as to trap all frightening dreams, whose content is filled with horrific memories of violence, ceaseless struggles, and permit positive, hopeful, and happy dreams to go through the mesh. Next the catchers of dreams among the leadership of both sides need to come together and seriously consider ways by which to achieve a sustainable peace between their peoples. Old worlds built on hatred must yield to future worlds of promise and hope for all the peoples living in the region.

The one dream both sides must let through is the one that envisions an organizational setup in which all Israelis, Palestinians and peoples in the neighbouring regions would be living together in a political association named New Levant, ‘lands of a new sunrise’. Unlike the European Union (EU), this new association would not be treaty-based. It would use a corporate model to bring together the peoples of an expanded and thus greater State of Israel (integrating the Golan

Heights, Gaza strip and the West Bank), Lebanon, and a reconstituted Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan into a new State of Palestine.

In the spirit of the notions of corporation and association—a body of people and a union of companions having shared values and purpose—New Levant would constitute a loosely coupled corporate entity governed not by by-laws which would make it a legal offspring of the states forming it, but by meta-laws consisting of a mission statement (capturing the vision of union), a set of guiding principles and a short list of realistically obtainable, simple and amendable goals, and their associated targets and benchmarks. Thus, this new association would be self-chartered.

The proposed association would be administered by a small secretariat that would report directly to a board of directors comprising of individuals representing the states forming it. Its twofold mission would be the promotion of the economic life of members states and the co-ordination of strategies and activities aimed at achieving this end. The principles of solidarity, subsidiarity, shared privilege, and shared value would be the hallmark principles of this entity with the latter two constituting the ends of the former, whose purpose would be ensuring the joint actualization of the twofold mission of the association.

The New Levant design would require the existence of fully functioning parliamentary democracies in all the states concerned, especially in Jordan where, as indicated above, in the interest of peace, the monarchy would relinquish its present chief executive function, assume a titular role, or remove itself completely from government to facilitate the creation of the State of Palestine.



Palestinians presently living and working in Gaza and the West Bank would have the choice either of remaining and becoming citizens of the greater State of Israel or of relocating and resettling in the newly created State of Palestine in the Transjordan region, where the majority of the population is of Palestinian descent. If the former, all Arab Palestinians and members of other ethnic groups living in Israel would be accorded the same rights and freedoms presently enjoyed by Israelis under the law. If the choice is to relocate and resettle in the Transjordan, the individuals concerned would be fully compensated for the property and/or business they would be leaving behind and for any relocation and resettlement expenses they would incur by the newly formed greater State of Israel.

The time has come to turn the Middle East into “lands of a new sunrise,” the New Levant for all the peoples in the region, for their children and for countless generations to come. We ask all leaders in the region to put on their dream catchers before going to sleep from now on so that they will be able to catch only dreams of peace and long-term bounteous prosperity for their peoples. It is the only way to transform the region into a New Levant for all.

“Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers [and sisters] dwell in unity!”