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Interactive Problem Solving in the Israeli-Palestinian Case:

Past Contributions and Present Challenges

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Since the early 1970s, my colleagues and I have been actively engaged in track-two efforts designed to contribute to the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Our work has primarily involved the intensive application to this conflict of the concepts and methods of *interactive problem solving* (Kelman, 1998b, 2002), which is my particular variant of interactive conflict resolution. Interactive problem solving is an unofficial, third-party approach to the resolution of international and intercommunal conflicts, derived from the work of John Burton (1969, 1979, 1984, 1987) and anchored in social-psychological principles (Kelman, 1997a).

Our first problem-solving workshop with Israelis and Palestinians took place in 1971 (Cohen, Kelman, Miller, and Smith, 1977). The work continued with a series of workshops in the 1970s and 1980s (see Kelman, 1979, 1986, 1992a), culminating in a continuing workshop with highly influential Israeli and Palestinian participants that met over a three-year period, between 1990 and 1993 (Rouhana and Kelman, 1994; Kelman, 1998a). The last session of the continuing workshop took place just prior to the announcement of the Oslo agreement in 1993. Our efforts have continued and taken new directions in the years following the Oslo agreement. The focus of the present chapter, however, is on the pre-Oslo period: on the contributions of our work to laying the groundwork for the Oslo agreement—which I still regard as a major breakthrough in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, despite its inherent flaws and despite the failure of the Camp David talks in the summer of 2000, the onset of the second *intifada* later that year, and the breakdown in "the Oslo process" in 2001.

Historical Background[1]

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is now more than a century old (see Tessler, 1994, for a comprehensive account of the history of the conflict, or Mendelsohn, 1989, and Gerner, 1991, for shorter accounts). Its origins go back to the birth of political Zionism at the end of the 19th century (see Halpern, 1969, and Hertzberg, 1975). The early decades of the 20th century brought to Palestine waves of Jewish immigrants who purchased land, built settlements and social institutions, and clearly signaled their intention to establish a Jewish homeland and ultimately a Jewish state in Palestine. The growing Jewish presence was soon perceived as a threat by the Arab population of the land, which was itself influenced by the development of Arab nationalism and the construction of a specifically Palestinian identity (see Muslih, 1988, and Khalidi, 1997). Violence first erupted in the 1920s and has continued to mark the relationship between the two peoples ever since.

During the period of the British mandate, which was established after World War I, various formulas for the political future of Palestine were explored—including partition and establishment of a federal state—but none was found to be acceptable to both the Arab and the Jewish populations (or indeed to either one of them). In November 1947—in the wake of World War II and the decimation of European Jewry—the United Nations General Assembly voted to end the British mandate over Palestine (on May 15, 1948) and to partition the land into a Jewish and an Arab state. The Zionist leadership accepted the partition plan, with reservations. The Arab leadership, both within Palestine and in the neighboring states, rejected it. Fighting between the two sides broke out immediately after adoption of the UN resolution and turned into all-out war after May 15, 1948, when the British forces withdrew, the Jewish leadership in Palestine declared the independent state of Israel, and regular armies from the neighboring Arab states joined the fray. Fighting continued until early 1949.

In July of 1949, Israel and the Arab states signed armistice agreements (though the state of war continued). The armistice lines became the official borders of the State of Israel. These borders included a larger portion of Palestine than the UN partition plan had allotted to the Jewish state. The Arab state envisioned by the partition plan did not come into being. Two parts of mandatory Palestine remained under Arab control: the West Bank, which was eventually annexed by Jordan, and the Gaza Strip, which came under Egyptian administration. The establishment of Israel and the war of 1948-49 also created a massive refugee problem, with the flight or expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian Arabs from their homes in the part of Palestine that became the State of Israel.

The map changed radically as a result of the Arab-Israeli war of June 1967, and along with it, the political atmosphere in the Middle East. By the end

of the Six-Day War, as Israelis called it, Israel occupied the West Bank and the Gaza Strip—thus extending its control over the entire territory of mandatory Palestine. It also occupied the Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights—Egyptian and Syrian territories, respectively. The new geopolitical and strategic situation created by the 1967 War led to the Palestinianization of the Arab-Israeli conflict, bringing it back to its origin as a conflict between two peoples over—and increasingly within—the land they both claimed (Kelman, 1988).

The Palestinianization (or re-Palestinianization) of the conflict has manifested itself in the actions of the Arab states, of the Palestinian community itself, and of Israel. Israel's neighboring Arab states gradually withdrew from the military struggle against Israel—though not before another major war in 1973—leaving it, essentially, to the Palestinians themselves. The disengagement of the Arab states became dramatically clear with the 1977 visit to Jerusalem of President Anwar Sadat of Egypt, the largest and most powerful Arab state, an initiative that led to the Camp David accord of 1978 and the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty of 1979. The Palestinians took repossession of their struggle, which in the years between 1949 and 1967 had been mostly in the hands of the Arab states. Fatah, under the leadership of Yasser Arafat, and other Palestinian guerrilla organizations grew in strength and eventually took over the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which was originally a creature of the Arab League. Between the 1960s and the 1980s, the Palestinian movement gradually shifted its emphasis from the liberation of all of Palestine through armed struggle against Israel to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza through largely political means. The end of the occupation became the immediate goal of the movement and, with the onset of the *intifada*—the uprising in the West Bank and Gaza—in December 1987, the occupied territories became the focal point of its struggle.

On the Israeli side, the *intifada* further underlined the Palestinianization of the conflict in the wake of the 1967 War. What had been largely an interstate conflict between 1948 and 1967 had now been internalized by Israel, that is, transformed into a continuous confrontation with a resentful Palestinian population, living under occupation within Israel's post-1967 borders. Many Israelis were persuaded by the *intifada* that continuing occupation was not tenable and that the Palestinians were indeed a people, whose national movement had to find some political expression if there was to be a peaceful accommodation between the two sides (Kelman, 1997).

By the end of the 1980s, there was a strong interest on all sides in finding a peaceful accommodation and an increasing recognition that some version of a two-state solution would provide the best formula for a broadly acceptable historic compromise. The political obstacles to such a solution, however, remained severe. A number of strategic and micropolitical considerations—traceable, in particular, to the end of the Cold War and the aftermath of the Gulf War—eventually brought the leaderships on both sides to the negotiating table at the Madrid Conference in 1991 and the subsequent talks

in Washington. These talks, however, never developed momentum. It was only after Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin came into power in Israel in 1992, at the head of a government led by the Labor Party, and gradually (and reluctantly) concluded that Israel would have to deal directly with the PLO leadership in order to make progress in the negotiations, that a breakthrough was finally achieved. This breakthrough occurred in the secret Oslo talks, which culminated in the exchange of letters of mutual recognition between the PLO and the State of Israel (which, in my view, was the most significant achievement of the Oslo process) and the Declaration of Principles signed in Washington in September 1993 (see Kelman, 1997b, for further details).

I shall return to a discussion of the conditions that made the Oslo agreement possible—and of our contribution to the wide array of activities that helped bring these conditions about—after a brief description of our problem-solving workshops with influential Israelis and Palestinians and related activities.

Problem-Solving Workshops

The primary (though not the sole) instrument of interactive problem solving is the problem-solving workshop. A workshop is a specially constructed, private space in which politically involved and often politically influential (but generally unofficial) members of conflicting communities can interact in a nonbinding, confidential way. The microprocess of the workshop provides them the opportunity to penetrate each other's perspective; to explore both sides' needs, fears, priorities, and constraints; and to engage in joint thinking about solutions to the conflict that would be responsive to the fundamental concerns of both sides.

Our Israeli-Palestinian workshops prior to the Madrid Conference in 1991 (which opened an official Israeli-Palestinian peace process) clearly took place in the prenegotiation phase of the conflict. Their primary purpose was to help create a political atmosphere that would encourage the parties to move to the negotiating table. Moreover, until 1990, all of our workshops were one-time, self-contained events. Some of the Israelis and Palestinians, as individuals, participated in more than one workshop and the workshops we held over the years had a cumulative effect within the two societies. But, because of financial, political, and logistical constraints, we did not attempt, before 1990, to bring the same group of participants together for more than one occasion.

Workshops take place under academic auspices and are facilitated by a panel of social scientists knowledgeable about international conflict, group process, and the Middle East. A typical one-time workshop would begin with two pre-workshop sessions, about four hours in length, during which the third party meets separately with each of the two parties. The workshop itself typically lasts about two and a half days, often scheduled over an extended

weekend. The participants include three to six Israelis and an equal number of Palestinians, plus a third party of three or more members.

The Israeli and Palestinian participants have included parliamentarians, leaders and activists of political parties or political movements, journalists, editors, directors of think tanks, and politically involved academics, that is, scholars who not only publish academic papers, but who also write for newspapers and appear in the media, who serve as advisors to political leaders, and some of whom move back and forth between government and academia. Some of our participants have been former diplomats, officials, or military officers, and many were later to become negotiators, ambassadors, cabinet ministers, parliamentarians, and leading figures in the media and research organizations. We look for people who are within the mainstream of their societies and close to the center of the political spectrum. At the same time, they have to be people who are at least willing to explore the possibility of a negotiated solution and to sit down as equals with members of the other party.

We are cognizant of the asymmetries between the parties that exist in the real world—asymmetries in power, in moral position, in reputation. These play important roles in the conflict and, clearly, must be taken in to account in the workshop discussions. But the two parties are equals in the workshop setting in the sense that each party has the same right to serious consideration of its needs, fears, and concerns. Within the rules of the workshop, the Israeli participants, for example, cannot dismiss the Palestinian concerns on the grounds that the Palestinians are the weaker party and are therefore in a poor bargaining position; nor can the Palestinian participants dismiss the Israeli concerns on the grounds that the Israelis are the oppressors and are, therefore, not entitled to sympathy. Each side has the right to be heard in the workshop and each side's needs and fears must be given attention in the search for a mutually satisfactory solution. One of the tasks of the third party is to try to empower the party that is less powerful in a given context.

The workshop discussions are completely private and confidential. There is no audience, no publicity, and no formal record, and one of the central ground rules specifies that statements made in the course of a workshop cannot be cited with attribution outside of the workshop setting. In the early days of our work, confidentiality was particularly important for the protection of our participants, because the mere fact that they were meeting with the enemy was controversial and exposed them to political and even physical risks. Confidentiality is equally important, however, for the protection of the process that we are trying to promote in workshops. The third party creates an atmosphere, establishes norms, and makes occasional interventions, all conducive to free and open discussion, in which the parties address each other rather than their own constituencies, the record, or third parties, and in which they listen to each other in order to understand their differing perspectives. We encourage participants to think out loud, to experiment with ideas, to explore different options, without having to worry about how others would react if their

words in the group were quoted outside. We want them to engage in a type of interaction that is generally not feasible among parties engaged in a bitter conflict—a type of interaction that, indeed, deviates from the conflict norms that usually govern their behavior:

?? An interaction that is *analytic* rather than polemical, one in which the parties seek to explore each other's perspective and gain insight into the causes and dynamics of the conflict;

?? An *interaction* that is problem-solving rather than adversarial, one in which the parties sidestep the usual attempt to allocate blame and, instead, take the conflict as a shared problem that requires joint effort to find a mutually satisfactory solution.

The agenda of a problem-solving workshop is designed to allow this kind of interaction to unfold. The core agenda of a one-time workshop has four components. First, each side is asked to discuss its central concerns in the conflict—the fundamental needs that would have to be addressed and the existential fears that would have to be allayed if a solution is to be satisfactory. The parties are asked not to debate the issues raised, although they may ask for clarification of what the other says. The purpose is for each side to gain an adequate understanding of the other's needs, fears, and concerns, from the perspective of the other. Once they have demonstrated that they understand the other's needs to a significant degree, we move to the second phase of the agenda: joint thinking about possible solutions. What participants are asked to do in this phase is to develop, through an interactive process, ideas about the overall shape of a solution for the conflict as a whole, or perhaps, a particular issue in the conflict, that would address the needs and fears of both sides. They are given the difficult assignment of thinking of solutions that would meet not only their own side's needs, but the needs of both sides.

Once the participants have developed some common ground in this process of joint thinking, we turn to the third phase of the workshop: discussion of the political and psychological constraints within the two societies that would create barriers to negotiating and carrying out the ideas for solution that have been developed in the group. We deliberately leave the discussion of constraints to the third phase, so that it does not hamper the creative process of jointly generating new ideas. Finally, depending on how much progress has been made and how much time is left, we ask the parties to engage in another round of joint thinking—this time about ways of overcoming the constraints that have been presented. The participants are asked to come up with ideas about what their governments, their societies, and they themselves might do—separately or jointly—that would help to overcome the barriers to negotiating mutually satisfactory solutions to the conflict. A central feature of this phase of the work is the identification of steps of mutual reassurance—in the form of acknowledgments, symbolic gestures, or confidence-building measures—that

would reduce the parties' fears of engaging in negotiations with an uncertain or risky outcome.

The third party in our model enacts a strictly facilitative role. It does not propose solutions, nor does it participate in the substantive discussions. Its task is to create the conditions that allow ideas for resolving the conflict to emerge out of the interaction between the parties themselves. A basic assumption of our approach is that solutions generated in the interaction between the conflicting parties are most likely to be responsive to their needs and to engender their commitment. The facilitative role of the third party, however, is an important part of the process. The third party sets the ground rules and monitors adherence to them; it helps to keep the discussion moving in constructive directions, tries to stimulate movement, and intervenes as relevant with questions, observations, and even challenges. It also serves as a repository of trust for parties who, by definition, do not trust each other: They feel safe to come to the workshop because they trust the third party to maintain confidentiality and to protect their interests.

A special issue that arises in our work is the ethnic identity of the third party—an issue that I have had to face from the beginning, as a Jew working on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In many respects, my Jewish identity has enhanced my credibility on both sides. It reassures the parties that I am engaged in this work out of genuine personal concern, rather than some ulterior motives; and that I am a third party who is committed and cares about the issues rather than "disinterested" in the sense of standing above the fray. At the same time, my ethnic identity may raise questions about bias on the Palestinian side and loyalty on the Israeli side. I have tried to deal with these issues in part by working with an ethnically balanced team. The third party in my work has always included at least one Arab member. During the 1990s, for example, I worked closely with Nadim Rouhana, a social and political psychologist who is a Palestinian citizen of Israel. We organized and co-chaired an Israeli-Palestinian Continuing Workshop that met between 1990 and 1993, to be described below (see also Rouhana and Kelman, 1994), and a Joint Working Group on Israeli-Palestinian Relations that met between 1994 and 1999 (described briefly in footnote 2; see also Kelman, 1998a). Having a balanced team strengthens our credibility: We daim and try to be, not a "neutral" third party, but an even-handed one—and ethnic balance on our team is an important indicator of that even-handedness. But beyond the image of a balanced team, I have found it extremely valuable in enhancing the third party's sensitivity to the concerns of both sides and ability to grasp readily each party's reactions to new events or to the nuances of what is being said (and felt) around the table.

Workshops have a dual purpose: to produce *changes* in the individual participants and to *transfer* these changes into the political process. Changes in the participants—new learnings—may take the form of more differentiated images of the enemy, a better understanding of the other's perspective and their own priorities, greater insight into the dynamics of the conflict, and new ideas

for resolving the conflict and for overcoming the barriers to a negotiated solution. These changes at the level of individual participants are a vehicle for change at the policy level. Thus, the second purpose of workshops is to maximize the likelihood that the new insights, ideas, and proposals generated in the course of the interaction are fed back into the political debate and the decision-making process in each community.

These two purposes may at times create contradictory requirements, leading to what I have called the dialectics of interactive problem solving (Kelman, 1979). The best example of these dialectics is provided by the selection of participants. To maximize *transfer* into the political process, we should seek out participants who are officials, as close as possible to the decision-making apparatus and thus in a position to apply immediately what they have learned. But to maximize *change*, we should seek out participants who are removed from the decision-making process and therefore less constrained in their interactions and freer to play with ideas and explore hypothetical scenarios. To balance these contradictory requirements, we look for participants who are not officials, but politically influential. They are thus relatively free to engage in the process, but, at the same time, because of their positions and their credibility within their societies, any new ideas they develop in the course of a workshop can have an impact on the thinking of decision makers and the society at large.[2]

Another example of the dialectics of workshops is the degree of cohesiveness that we try to foster among the workshop participants. An adequate level of group cohesiveness is important to the effective interaction among the participants. But if the workshop group becomes too cohesive—if the Israeli and Palestinians participants form too close a coalition across the conflict lines— they may lose credibility and political effectiveness in their own communities (Kelman, 1993). To balance these two contradictory requirements, we aim for the development of working trust—of trust in the participants on the other side, based not on interpersonal closeness, but on the conviction that they are sincerely committed, *out of their own interests*, to the search for a peaceful solution.

Problem-solving workshops, as I pointed out at the beginning of this section, are the primary, but not the sole instrument of interactive problem solving. Other activities, over the years, have been particularly oriented toward maximizing the transfer of ideas generated in interactions between the parties to the wider political process. Thus, on the one hand, in the 1970s and 1980s I organized a series of private, one-to-one meetings between highly influential Israeli and Palestinian political and intellectual figures under conditions of strict confidentiality. There was every reason to expect that what participants learned in these very private encounters would be transmitted to top decision makers. On the other hand, I organized a number of public symposia at Harvard University, within the framework of the Middle East Seminar (which I have chaired or co-chaired since 1977),[3] including a major symposium in 1984 that brought together five members of the Israeli Knesset and five leading figures

from different Palestinian communities, as well as a symposium in 1989 that brought together senior Israeli political and academic figures with PLO representatives and academics from West Bank, Gaza, and American universities. Also, as President of the International Society of Political Psychology, I organized two open events at the Society's 1986 meeting in Amsterdam (the presidential session and a "fishbowl" workshop) that featured interactions between major Israeli and Palestinian intellectuals and political figures.[4] Finally, starting in 1977, my own lectures, op-ed pieces, and articles (e.g., Kelman, 1978, 1982, 1982-83, 1987, 1988, 1992b, 1997, 1998c, 1999, 2000) on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict—presenting policy analyses, embedded in a social-psychological perspective on the nature of international conflict, the role of national identity, and the process of change—have drawn heavily on what I have learned from problem-solving workshops and related activities. Such third-party products contribute in their own way to the transfer of ideas developed in the course of workshops (Chataway, 2002).

In 1990, a major step forward in our workshop program took place when, for the first time in our work, Nadim Rouhana and I organized a continuing workshop. A group of highly influential Israelis and Palestinians—six on each side—agreed to participate in a series of three meetings over the course of a year, and in the end continued to meet (with some changes in personnel) until August 1993 for a total of five meetings (Rouhana and Kelman, 1994). The meetings of this group were punctuated by the Gulf War, the beginning of official negotiations in Madrid and then in Washington, and the election of a Labor Party government in Israel. In 1991, with the onset of official negotiations, four of the six initial Palestinian participants in this group became key members of the Palestinian negotiating team. In 1992, several of our Israeli members were appointed to ambassadorial and cabinet positions in the Rabin government. These were very exciting developments from our point of view, in that they enhanced the political relevance of our unofficial efforts, but they also created conflicts of interest for some of our participants (Kelman, 1998a).

As our work moved from the prenegotiation to the negotiation phase of the conflict, all three parties agreed that there was still a great need for maintaining an unofficial process alongside of the official one, although the purpose and focus of the work would need to change. When negotiations are in progress, workshops can contribute ideas for overcoming obstacles to staying at the table and negotiating productively, for creating a momentum in the negotiations, for addressing long-term issues that are not yet on the negotiating table, and for beginning the process of peacebuilding that must accompany and follow the process of peacemaking. The meetings of the group after the start of the official negotiations focused on the obstacles confronting the peace process at the negotiating table and on the ground, and also addressed the question of the function and composition of the continuing workshop in the new political environment. The final session of the continuing workshop took place in August

1993, ending just a day or so before the news of the Israeli-Palestinian breakthrough that was achieved in Oslo began to emerge.

Interestingly, the onset of official negotiations increased the receptivity to our unofficial efforts on both sides. The involvement of members of our continuing workshop in the official process, and the awareness that the issues we were discussing may soon be on the negotiating table, increased the felt relevance of our efforts. At the same time, there was a heightened concern about maintaining the distinction between our activities and the negotiations, in order to make sure that our unofficial efforts in no way undermine the official process. Moreover, there was increased attention to the issue of transfer of ideas developed in the course of workshops to the official negotiations. By 1993, participants felt that the time had come to produce and publish joint papers. Accordingly, in the wake of the Oslo accord, we initiated the Joint Working Group on Israeli-Palestinian Relations, with the express purpose of producing joint concept papers on the final-status issues (see footnote 2).

The Oslo Agreement

When the Oslo agreement was announced, various observers credited our work with having laid the groundwork for it. For example, in the wake of the agreement, the then Middle East correspondent for *The Boston Globe*, Ethan Bronner (1993), wrote a piece about my contribution to the process for the newspaper. In it, he quoted Mordechai Virshubsky, a member of the Israeli Knesset at the time who had participated in our 1984 event at Harvard, as saying: "When one day they write the history of how this conflict was solved, they will have to write about Herb Kelman, how he broke ground, how he was one of the initiators." In a similar vein, Sari Nusseibeh, now the president of Al Quds University and one of the Palestinian participants in the 1984 event, told Bronner: "The time will come when people will look back and see things in context. Herb will certainly be regarded as one of the central figures in this process." On the very day the Oslo agreement was signed in Washington (September 13, 1993), I spoke at an "International Conference on Mental Health and the Challenge of Peace" in Gaza. When the late Ibrahim Abu Lughod, a leading Palestinian intellectual and educator and Vice President of Birzeit University, introduced me, he used virtually the same words as Virshubski in predicting my future place in the history of the conflict and its resolution.

I must admit that I found such observations gratifying and confirming, and after a while I persuaded myself that they were indeed true. Of course, I made it clear that my colleagues and I had no *direct* involvement in the prenegotiation and negotiation processes that produced the Oslo agreement. I also stressed that our activities must be seen as:

Within the context of the variety of Israeli-Palestinian meetings and projects that have been organized in recent years—particularly since the onset of the *intifada*—under different auspices and with different purposes, types of participants, formats, and agendas. Different projects have made different contributions to the recent developments. Some helped by opening particular channels of communication; others explored the feasibility of certain security or economic arrangements. The cumulative effect of this range of activities has helped to create a political atmosphere conducive to productive negotiations (Kelman, 1995, p. 20).

I am well aware that it is impossible to disentangle the impact of our own efforts from this array of unofficial activities at the elite and the grassroots levels. At the same time, I was—and continue to be—prepared to take credit for having *contributed* to this larger effort. Moreover, I would point to some of the distinct features of our approach to which its particular contributions can be traced:

?? Our program represents a sustained, systematic effort—spanning some two decades by the time of the Oslo agreement—to bring together politically influential Israelis and Palestinians; it is one of the earliest and most consistent enterprises of this type and has reached deeply into the political elites of both communities.

?? We have been very clear throughout about the political purpose of the enterprise: communication is not viewed as an end in itself, but as a means of developing new ideas and insights that can be fed into the political process.

?? The work is based on close knowledge of the two communities and familiarity with their political landscapes; we visit the region frequently, stay in touch with events and people, and have paid special attention to building and maintaining our networks.

?? The selection process is carefully devised to identity participants who can both engage in the kind of communication that our workshops call for and feed what they learn into the political process in their own communities. Thus, we seek out individuals who are politically involved and influential; are actively interested in finding a negotiated solution; and, at the same time, are part of the mainstream of their communities, are close to the center of the political spectrum, and have credibility and access.

?? The workshops themselves are carefully designed and conducted so as to facilitate the process of sharing perspectives, joint thinking, and creative problem solving; the setting and the ground rules (with their emphasis on privacy and confidentiality), the agenda, the procedures, and the third party's interventions are all geared to making this kind of communication possible.

In sum, I have felt justified in proposing that our work—the sustained, systematic use of an unofficial third-party microprocess as a vehicle for influencing the political debate and official policy at the macro-level—was well-

placed to help lay the groundwork for the Oslo accord. Certainly, in the glow of this breakthrough, I was motivated to accept some of the credit for it. But today, with the breakdown of the Oslo process, it may seem strange to continue claiming my bit of credit for a process that seems to have been so widely discredited. But I have no hesitation in doing so, because I maintain that the Oslo accord, despite its flaws, was and remains a major breakthrough and that the peace process will ultimately have to return to the basic ideas that formed the building stones of the Oslo agreement. Since our work contributed to the evolution of these ideas, I shall review them briefly before turning to the nature of these contributions.

The Building Stones of the Oslo Agreement

The ideas that paved the way for the Oslo agreement evolved over the quarter century or so between the 1967 war and the negotiations in Oslo. They reflect a number of developments, to some of which I alluded briefly in my historical review: changes in the political environment in the Middle East; events on the ground, such as the Israeli settlement project in the occupied territories and the first *intifada*; changes in the long-term interests of the key actors; and domestic-political concerns of the top leaders. These developments persuaded leaders on both sides of the necessity of reaching an agreement – of negotiating a historical compromise that would most likely take the form of a two-state solution. There was thus an increasing readiness for new ideas about resolving the conflict, which were in part shaped and diffused in the face-to-face interactions between the two sides—including our workshops and related activities—that took place over a period of more than two decades.

Before being prepared to sign an agreement, however, the parties had to be convinced not only that such an agreement was *necessary*, in light of their changing realities and evolving interests, but also that it was *possible*. In other words, they had to be persuaded that there was a genuine readiness on the other side to make the requisite concessions and that there was a reasonable probability that negotiations would yield an acceptable agreement without jeopardizing their national existence. The Israeli-Palestinian interactions that took place—largely, though not entirely—at the unofficial level were instrumental in the evolution of this sense of possibility.[5]

Table 2.1. Evolving Ideas for Resolving the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (1967 - 1993): The Building Stones of the Oslo Agreement

Focus of the Ideas	Target of the Ideas	
	Negotiation process	*Negotiation outcome*
What is necessary	Negotiations between legitimate national representatives	Mutual recognition of national identity and rights
What is possible	Availability of a negotiating partner	The two-state solution

Table 2.1. summarizes the ideas that, I propose, served as the building stones of the Oslo accord. It sketches out four ideas relating to what is *necessary* and what is *possible* with respect to the *process* and to the *outcome* of Israeli-Palestinian negotiation.

The left-hand column presents the evolving ideas with regard to the negotiation process. The upper box refers to the gradual acceptance of the idea that meaningful negotiations can be carried out only between legitimate representatives of the two national groups. Acceptances of this idea, obvious though it may appear, did not come easy, because seeking out legitimate national representation of the other side as negotiating partners meant to recognize the other as a legitimate national actor—which neither side was prepared to do. Instead, each side searched for interlocutors who were congenial to its point of view. Israelis, over many years, looked for alternatives to the PLO and even tried to create an alternative leadership in the West Bank, the Village Leagues, to represent the Palestinian population. Palestinians, on their part, sought contact with anti-Zionist Israelis or at least (by the time of the 1987 meeting of the Palestine National Council) "with Israeli democratic forces that support the Palestinian people's struggle."

An interesting learning experience relating to the issue of legitimate negotiating partners occurred in one of our workshops in the mid-1980s. The Israeli and Palestinian participants found that they were able to talk to each other, and developed a degree of working trust. There came a point in the course of the workshop when the Israelis told their Palestinian counterparts: "If only we could negotiate with reasonable people like you instead of the PLO, we would be able to find common ground." In response, the Palestinians insisted very strongly: "But we *are* the PLO," meaning that they identified with the PLO. In a

subsequent session, an almost identical exchange took place in reverse, when the Palestinians said, in effect: "If only we could negotiate with reasonable Israelis like you, instead of the Zionists," and the Israelis replied, "But we *are* committed Zionists."

What the workshop participants learned in this conversation—and what Israelis and Palestinians were increasingly coming to understand in other contexts over the years—was that productive negotiations required partners who represent the mainstream of their respective political communities. But, in addition, they learned that identifying such legitimate negotiating partners was not only *necessary*, but also *possible* (as noted in the lower left-hand box of Table 2.1.). They discovered that it was possible to find PLO-identified Palestinians and loyal, committed Zionists, respectively, in whom they could develop a degree of trust and with whom they could talk seriously, find common ground, and move toward negotiation.

What participants learned in the microcosm of our workshop was one manifestation of the idea that slowly, gradually took hold on both sides over the years: the idea that legitimate representatives of the other side may well be available as partners in serious negotiations. In the 1980s, some Israeli peace activists summed up this idea with the slogan, "there is someone to talk to and something to talk about" on the other side. The second half of this slogan brings us to the right-hand column of Table 2.1.: what is necessary and what is possible for the *outcome* of potential Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.

The understanding that resolution of the conflict must be based on mutual recognition of the other's national identity and national rights evolved very slowly and in the face of great resistance on both sides. It ran counter to the pervasive view of the conflict as zero-sum in nature, not only with respect to territory, but also with respect to national existence and national identity. Each side has seen the national identity and indeed the national existence of the other as a threat to its own identity and existence and, accordingly, each has systematically denied the other's identity and rights. Recognition of the other was seen as a dangerous step with irreversible consequences. Not surprisingly, it has taken many years to achieve wide acceptance of the idea that mutual recognition is a necessary outcome of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations if the conflict is to be resolved. This idea finally found expression in the letters of recognition exchanged between Arafat and Rabin, which I have always regarded as the most important feature of the Oslo accord (Kelman, 1997).

In the early 1980s, the idea of mutual recognition came to be phrased as "mutual and simultaneous recognition of both nations' right of self-determination" (see the two side-by-side *New York Times* op-ed articles by Sarid and Khalidi, 1984). This language, though not quite explicit, clearly hinted at a two-state solution. Significant voices on both sides came to advocate such a solution, including Palestinians with impeccable nationalist credentials, such as Walid Khalidi (1978), and Israelis outside of the traditional peace camp, such as former head of military intelligence Yehoshafat Harkabi (1988). In the brief

review of the historical background of the conflict earlier in this chapter, I mentioned that—in the wake of the 1967 war and the Palestinianization of the Arab-Israeli conflict—there was an increasing interest on all sides in settling the conflict and a growing recognition that a two-state solution was the best formula for the necessary historic compromise.

But the question remained whether it would be possible to negotiate a two-state solution that would be acceptable to both sides. The obstacles to acceptance of such a compromise were (and in fact still are) enormous. Significant elements within each society were vehemently opposed to compromise, remaining committed to achieving their maximalist goals. Even those elements that favored compromise were deeply distrustful of the intentions of the other side and were afraid that accepting the other's right to a state would jeopardize their own national existence. Gradually, however, the idea that it is not only *necessary*, but also *possible* to negotiate a two-state solution as the political expression of the national identities of the two peoples and as the fulfillment of their respective rights to national self-determination gained increasing acceptance within the mainstream of both political communities (lower right-hand box of Table 2.1.). Events on the ground and in the region clearly played an essential role in this process, but direct interactions between the two sides—at the unofficial level and eventually at the official level—contributed significantly to persuading each side that formulas for a two-state solution could be negotiated that would meet the needs of the other without threatening their own vital interests.

The idea of a two-state solution acceptable to both sides as the political outcome of their mutual recognition was left only implicit in the Oslo agreement. Still, both leaders and publics on both sides understood that, at the end of the day, there would be a Palestinian state alongside of Israel, provided the interim arrangements worked out and the final-status negotiations succeeded. This understanding was an essential building stone of the Oslo agreement. The failure to make it explicit has proven to be a major flaw of the agreement—though almost certainly an inevitable one: Rabin was not ready to make a final, explicit commitment to a Palestinian state without an interim period to reassure Israel that such a state would be consistent with Israel's security requirements. Nor was Arafat ready to commit to the finality of an agreement without knowing the precise outcome of the final-status negotiations. Israelis and Palestinians committed to the peace process agree that, now, the resumption of negotiations must be based on explicit commitment from the start to a mutually acceptable formula for a two-state solution.

To sum up, the ideas that paved the way for the Oslo agreement were shaped by political realities in the region and on the ground and their impact on the long-term and short-term interests of the parties. Direct interactions between the two sides—often (particularly in the early stages) at the unofficial level, as in our work—played a significant role in generating, formulating, and diffusing these ideas. At the risk of oversimplification, I propose that the parties' interests

in the light of evolving realities were primarily responsible for persuading the leadership and the public of the *necessity* of negotiating a historic compromise; and the interactions between the two sides were primarily responsible for persuading them of the *possibility* of such a compromise.

Contributions to the Peace Process[6]

There are three ways in which our work has contributed to the evolution and acceptance of the ideas that served as the building stones of the Oslo agreement: 1) through the development of *cadres* experienced in communication with the other side and prepared to carry out productive negotiations; 2) the sharing of information and the formulation of new ideas that provided important *substantive inputs* into the negotiations; 3) and the fostering of a *political atmosphere* that made the parties open to a new relationship.

Development of cadres

Over the years, dozens of Israelis and dozens of Palestinians—all politically involved, some of them "pre-influentials" who later moved into positions of leadership and influence, others already political influentials by virtue of their current and former positions—participated in one or more of the workshops or similar opportunities for direct Israeli-Palestinian communication that we arranged.

Many of these individuals played direct or indirect roles in the discussions and negotiations that led up to the September, 1993 accord. Most of the participants in our continuing workshop played central roles, as negotiators or advisers, in the official peace talks that started in November, 1991. Many "alumni" of our other workshops, meetings, and symposia were also engaged in this process in a variety of roles. Similarly, some of the participants in our projects were involved in the various secret explorations (including the Oslo channel) that took place prior to Oslo—and, I might add, since Oslo. Over the years (including the post-Oslo years), they could be found in the Israeli as well as the Palestinian cabinet, parliament, and foreign ministry, and in leading positions in other official agencies.

In short, we *know* that participants in our activities have been well represented in the various phases of negotiation and implementation of agreements. We can only *surmise* that their earlier participation in our workshops and other activities may have helped to prepare them for these roles—in some sense to train them or even "credential" them for enacting these roles—and may have contributed to the productivity of the process.

Several factors account for the contribution of our program to the development of cadres for negotiation. First, given their sheer numbers, the people involved in the more than thirty workshops and similar activities we conducted in the years prior to Oslo constitute a significant proportion of the political elites of the two communities. Second, our criteria and procedures for selection of participants and composition of workshop groups yielded precisely the kinds of individuals (in terms of their personal characteristics and the political groupings they represented) who were natural candidates for negotiations once there was a political readiness for that step. Third, the workshops increased participants' knowledge about the other side and sensitivity to its concerns, and enhanced their experience and skills in communicating with the other side, as well as their commitment to such communication. As a consequence, workshop participation helped to strengthen their qualifications and effectiveness for the negotiating role.

Substantive Inputs

Workshops produced new knowledge, understanding, and ideas, which gradually found their way into the political thinking and the political debate in the two communities. Thus, Palestinians and Israelis had the opportunity to enter into each other's perspective. Each learned about the other's concerns, priorities, sensitivities, and constraints; about the nature of public opinion and the political divisions on the other side; about changes that have taken place and possibilities for further change; and about the elements on the other side that might be open to accommodation, and the forms that such accommodation could take. Through the process of joint thinking that workshops encourage, participants explored new formulations of issues that would make them amenable to solution, ideas for solutions that would be responsive to the concerns of both parties, shared visions of a desirable future, and steps of mutual reassurance (in the form of acknowledgments, symbolic gestures, and confidence-building measures) that would create an atmosphere conducive to negotiations.

These new understandings and ideas were then fed into the political process in each community by way of workshop participants' political discussions and political work—through their public communications in speeches, articles, and media appearances, and through their private communications to political leaders and political colleagues. Such communications, for example, helped to inject into the Israeli political culture an increasing awareness that the PLO is the indispensable partner for Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, that nothing short of an independent state will satisfy Palestinian aspirations, and that Palestinians are ready to accept a state in the West Bank and Gaza, alongside of Israel, as the *point final* of the conflict. On the Palestinian side, in turn, such communications helped to inject an understanding of the political divisions within Israel, of the elements of Israeli society that can be mobilized in support of an agreement

based on a two-state solution, and of the limits of what even the Israeli peace camp can accept. Ideas that emerged from workshop discussions were also fed into the political debate through the work of third-party members, such as my own publications and lectures on ways of overcoming the barriers to a negotiated solution.

In sum, the information exchanged and the ideas developed in the course of workshop interactions injected into the two political cultures some of the substantive elements on which productive negotiations could be built: shared assumptions, mutual sensitivities, and new conceptions of the process and outcome of negotiations. In the terms of the building stones of the Oslo agreement that I identified, workshop participants learned and helped their societies to learn what was necessary and what was possible for successful negotiations.

Political Atmosphere

Our workshops, along with various other Israeli-Palestinian meetings and projects, helped create a political atmosphere that became increasingly favorable to negotiations. A new relationship between significant segments of the two communities evolved over the years. This relationship accelerated after the onset of the *intifada* and it maintained itself despite many setbacks—particularly during the Gulf crisis and war of 1990-91. The workshops and related activities contributed to a political atmosphere conducive to negotiations and to the gradual evolution of a new relationship between the parties by encouraging— through the interactive problem-solving process—the development of more differentiated images of the enemy; a de-escalatory language that minimizes threat and humiliation; a new political discourse attentive to the concerns and constraints of the other party; a working trust based on the conviction that both parties are genuinely committed, largely out of their own interests, to finding a peaceful solution; and a sense of possibility, based on the belief that a mutually satisfactory resolution of the conflict can ultimately be achieved. The two most important elements of a supportive political environment, to which workshops contributed, are the sense of *mutual reassurance*, which reduces the parties' fear of negotiations as a threat to their existence, and the sense of *possibility*—the perception that there is "a way out" of the conflict (Zartman, 1997), which enhances their belief that negotiations, though difficult and risky, can produce an acceptable agreement.

Renewing the Peace Process

By contributing to the development of cadres experienced in communication with each other, of substantive ideas for resolving the conflict, and of a political atmosphere conducive to negotiation, Israeli-Palestinian interactions over the years—including our problem-solving workshops and related activities—have laid the groundwork for the Oslo accord. When the convergence of long-term and short-term interests on the two sides created the necessity and the political readiness for negotiations—in other words, the ripe moment—the people, the ideas, and the habits to take advantage of this opportunity were at hand.

The Oslo accord materialized because certain key lessons had been learned in the two communities—a learning process to which our activities, among others, made substantial contributions. Sadly, these lessons have been unlearned, particularly since the failure of the Camp David conference in the summer of 2000 and the onset of the second *intifada*. In my view, these lessons must now be relearned, particularly the underlying assumptions of the Oslo agreement that there is a credible negotiating partner and that the best formula for ending the conflict remains a two-state solution. I believe that this relearning process will take less time than the original learning process, but it calls for a new framework for pursuing peace. Revival of the peace process at this stage will require moving beyond a series of concessions dctated by pragmatic considerations and outside pressures (although pragmatism and active involvement of outside powers remain essential features of the process). What is needed now is a commitment by the parties to a *principled peace*, one that they can embrace with enthusiasm and commend to their publics as a peace that addresses the basic needs of both societies and conforms to their sense of attainable justice. The challenge to our work is to contribute creatively to the parties' relearning of the lessons that made the Oslo agreement possible and shaping them into a new framework for a principled peace.

The relearning process made significant headway in 2003, with the appearance of two initiatives—quite different from each other, but each the product of unofficial, joint Israeli-Palestinian efforts—that have effectively challenged the claims of both sides' dominant narratives of recent years that there is no negotiating partner on the other side willing to agree to a mutually acceptable two-state solution. The first is the "People's Voice" initiative, launched in June by Ami Ayalon, former commander of the Israeli navy and former head of the Shin Bet security services, and Sari Nusseibeh, President of Al Quds University and former representative of the Palestinian Authority in Jerusalem.[7] They formulated a statement of principles for a two-state solution (see Ayalon-Nusseibeh Statement of Principles, 2003) for which they have so far gathered tens of thousands of Israeli and Palestinian signatures. The purpose of their campaign is to mobilize enough public support for an agreement embodying the principles they have outlined to create both the legitimacy and the pressure for decision makers to negotiate such an agreement. The campaign is also designed to gain international support for these principles, encouraging the relevant outside powers to put their weight behind them.

The second initiative, the "Geneva Accord" (for the full text, see Geneva Accord, 2004) was first made public in October of 2003 and formally launched in Geneva at the beginning of December. It was spearheaded by Yasser Abed Rabbo, former minister of information and Culture in the Palestinian Authority, and Yossi Beilin, minister of justice in the Barak administration—both leading figures in the negotiations that ended in Taba, Egypt, in January 2001. The Geneva Accord takes the form of a draft of a permanent status agreement, embodying principles very similar to those outlined in the Ayalon-Nusseibeh initiative. The Geneva Accord, however, actually spells out the terms of the agreement on most of the key issues—including borders, Jerusalem, refugees, security, and monitoring arrangements—in great detail, as they might be found in an official treaty. The text was "negotiated" over a period of nearly three years, with facilitation by Swiss governmental and non-governmental agencies (in a process similar in many respects to the Norwegian facilitation of the Oslo agreement). A diverse group of Israelis and Palestinians—including Israeli military, political, academic, and literary figures, and Palestinian political figures, community activists, and civil society leaders— participated in negotiating and promoting this document and thus added to its credibility. The agreement has no official status, nor do its authors make such a claim. However, the detailed provisions and the list of sponsors provide an impressive, concrete demonstration that a mutually acceptable formula for a two-state solution can be devised by mainstream Israelis and Palestinians, including individuals who were in the past and may again be in the future negotiating on behalf of their governments.

Opinion polls suggest that majorities of the two populations still favor a two-state solution and are willing to make the compromises it would require— although they do not trust the other side's readiness or ability to come to an agreement. Even among the pro-negotiation segments of the population, there is concern abut some of the provisions of the Geneva Accord, such as those regarding the resolution of the Palestinian refugee problem or the allocation of sovereignty in Jerusalem. These concerns may be exacerbated by the way in which proponents of the accord present it to their respective populations. For understandable reasons, each side may emphasize to its own constituencies how favorable the accord is to their own interests and how much the other side has conceded. These are important messages to convey to their own population but, when they are heard on the other side, they may well reinforce the prevailing distrust. For example, when Palestinians hear Israelis stress that Palestinians have in effect given up the right of return of refugees, and Israelis hear Palestinians deny that they have given up the right of return, both may come to feel that this is a bad deal or that there is enough ambiguity to allow the other side to exploit the agreement to their own side's disadvantage.

To build on the enormous achievement represented by the Geneva Accord and the People's Voice initiative, it is now essential to garner widespread support for these proposals in the two communities by capturing the

public's imagination and generating trust and hope. To this end, as I have proposed above, the initiatives need to be framed in terms of a *principled peace* that represents not just the best available deal, but a historic compromise that meets the basic needs of both societies, validates the national identity of each people, and conforms to the requirements of attainable justice. Common messages along these lines need to be jointly constructed and brought to both populations to ensure that proponents of peace initiatives avoid working at cross-purposes as they seek to mobilize their own constituencies.

I envisage three central elements in a jointly constructed framework for a principled peace:

?? *Acknowledgment of the other's nationhood and humanity.* Acknowledging the other's nationhood requires explicit recognition of each people's right to national self-determination in a state of it own, acceptance of each other's authentic links to the land, and rejection of language that denies the other people's political legitimacy and historic authenticity. Acknowledging the other's humanity requires words and actions demonstrating that the other side's lives, welfare, and dignity are considered to be as valuable as one's own. In this spirit, it is necessary to reject acts of violence, especially against civilian populations; all forms of humiliation, harassment, destruction of property, confiscation of land, violation of rights, and dehumanizing treatment; and language of hate, denigration, and dehumanization. A corollary of such acknowledgments is willingness to take responsibility and express regret for harm done to the other over the course of the conflict.

?? *Affirmation of the meaning and logic of a historic compromise.* The agreement needs to be clearly framed as a commitment to ending the conflict by sharing the land that both sides claim, through the establishment and peaceful coexistence of two states, in which the two peoples can fulfill their respective rights to national self-determination, give political expression to their national identities, and pursue independent, secure, and prosperous national lives. The implications of such a commitment must be clearly spelled out in terms of the costs and benefits that it entails. On the one hand, the logic of the historic compromise imposes significant costs on each side—such as the removal of Israel settlements from the Palestinian state and limitations on the return of Palestinian refugees to Israel—in order to safeguard the identity, independence, and viability of both states. On the other hand, the historic compromise establishes a principled peace that allows each people— through its independent state—to fulfill its national identity, to satisfy its fundamental needs, and to achieve a measure of justice.

?? *A positive vision of a common future.* A peace agreement needs to be framed in positive, visionary terms, as an opportunity for the two peoples to create a common future in the land they share, enhancing peace, justice and the welfare of both populations, rather than an arrangement that is being forced on them by outside pressure and the unending cycle of violence. Such framing is consistent with the high degree of

interdependence that characterizes the two societies and the emotional attachment that both peoples have to the entire land even though each can establish its national state in only part of the land. Thus, the agreement should be presented to the two populations as the foundation of "a future relationship based on mutually beneficial cooperation in many spheres, conducive to stable peace, sustainable development, and ultimate reconciliation," with the understanding that "the scope and speed of expanding and institutionalizing cooperative activities must be determined by experience—by the extent to which such activities meet the needs of both parties, enhance mutual trust, and reduce inequalities between the parties" (Joint Working Group, 1999, abstract).

I have proposed that peace initiatives, such as the very impressive Geneva Accord, need to be brought to the Israeli and Palestinian publics within a framework of a principled peace, featuring the three elements that I have outlined. To be maximally effective, this framework should be captured in common messages, jointly constructed by thoughtful, credible representatives of the two sides. Joint construction is essential in order to make sure that these formulations are responsive to the concerns and sensitivities of each side without unduly threatening the other side. I believe that the methods of interactive problem solving are especially suited to facilitating such a joint effort of creating a new framework for the peace process and developing common formulations of a principled peace.[8]

In particular, problem-solving workshops can provide an arena for the "negotiation of identity" (Kelman, 1992b, 2001), which is precisely what the current stage of the peace process calls for. Negotiating identity means finding ways, through an interactive process, whereby conflicting parties can accommodate their collective identities, and the associated national narratives, to one another—at least to the extent of eliminating from their own identities the negation of the other and the claim of exclusivity. Such identity changes are possible only if "they leave the core of each group's identity and national narrative—its sense of peoplehood, its attachment to the land, its commitment to the national language, welfare, and way of life—intact" (Kelman, 2001, p. 210). Thus, the key to effective negotiation of identity is to find ways of accommodating the two groups' conflicting identities without jeopardizing the *core* of their separate identities. This can best be accomplished in a context of reciprocity, in which acceptance *of* the other occurs simultaneously with acceptance *by* the other. Change in a more peripheral element of identity thus becomes a vehicle for affirmation of the core of the identity.

In sum, the challenge to our work at the current stage of the peace process is to contribute to the development of a new framework for a two-state solution whose parameters are by now widely known and accepted—a framework that would persuade the two publics that such a solution is not only necessary, but that it is possible, that it is safe, that it is fair, and that it promises a better future. The methods of interactive problem solving have been used

effectively at the prenegotiation and paranegotiation stages of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. I propose that they can now contribute, with emphasis on the negotiation of identity, to the revival of a peace process that has broken down.

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Notes

1. This and the next section draw extensively on pp. 188-190 and pp. 198-200 of my chapter in *Social Identity, Intergroup Conflict, and Conflict Resolution*, edited by Richard D. Ashmore, Lee Jussim, and David Wilder, and published by Oxford University Press (Kelman, 2001).

2. In our work up to 1993, transfer was left to the individual participants. Depending on their positions in the society, it may have been effected through their writings, their political leadership, or their advice to decision makers. There was no effort in these workshops to create joint products, although on some occasions the participants themselves decided to do so (cf. Sarid and Khalidi, 1984; Ma'oz, 2000). In 1994, for the first time in our work, Nadim Rouhana and I organized a Joint Working Group on Israeli-Palestinian Relations with the express purpose of producing joint concept papers on the final-status issues in the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations (Kelman, 1998a, pp. 21-24). This group (and working sub-groups) met on a regular basis until 1999 and produced four papers, three of which have been published (Alpher, Shikaki, et al., 1998; Joint Working Group, 1998, 1999).

3. The Middle East Seminar, now co-sponsored by the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs and the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at Harvard University, covers a wide range of topics relating to Middle East politics and society, but it has devoted many sessions to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Speakers have included Israeli, Palestinian, and other Arab diplomats, political leaders, academics, and writers. Perhaps the most dramatic event in the history of the seminar was a presentation in 1979 by Shafiq Al-Hout, head of the PLO office in Beirut—probably the first time that a senior PLO official spoke at a semi-public event (the seminar is open, but off-the-record) in the United States.

4. For example, the speakers at the presidential session (in addition to myself) were the late Edward Said, the renowned Palestinian intellectual and Columbia University Professor, and Mordechai Bar-On, an Israeli historian, peace movement leader, and, at the time, member of the Knesset.

5. In a similar vein, Pruitt (1997) speaks of the motivation to de-escalate the conflict (motivational ripeness) and optimism about reaching an acceptable agreement as the two

broad determinants of readiness for conflict resolution. He proposes that optimism grew incrementally over the course of the parties' interactions at Oslo.

6. This section draws extensively on pp. 21-23 of an article published in the *Negotiation Journal* (Kelman, 1995).

7. Sari Nusseibeh, as noted earlier, participated in a major Israeli-Palestinian event at Harvard University that I organized in 1984. Ami Ayalon, as a mid-career student at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government in 1991-92, took my seminar on International Conflict, which included a full-scale Israeli-Palestinian problem-solving workshop, in which the seminar students participated as apprentice members of the third party. They illustrate the extent to which our work reached into the political elites in both communities. Unfortunately, in adherence with our promise of confidentiality, the names of many other participants in our workshops and related meetings cannot be mentioned at this time.

8. I am very grateful to Harvard University and to the U.S. Institute of Peace for their financial support of my current work, and to the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, for continuing to provide logistical support and a most hospitable environment for this work.