

Hope Renewed: The Spirit of the Geneva Accord

There is someone to negotiate with and there is something to negotiate about. The Geneva Accord provides new hope and new energy for a peaceful solution to the Middle East conflict.

For more than two years, moderate Israeli and Palestinian politicians, security experts, grassroots leaders, and intellectuals met under the sponsorship of the Swiss government to negotiate a draft final status agreement that would satisfy the needs and conditions of each side. Continuing where previous negotiations left off, the negotiators created a draft agreement that specifies every last detail with accompanying maps for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and lasting peace.

While this extra-governmental agreement has no international legal standing, those who negotiated and signed the Geneva Accord include many recognized political and security leaders from both societies. On the Palestinian side, these include former ministers Yasir Abed Rabbo and Nabil Qassis; Palestinian Legislative Council members associated with the Fatah/Tanzim Qadoura Fares and Mohamed Horani; member of the Prisoners Committee Ghadi Jarei; and former Governor of Jenin and head of Preventative Security on the West Bank General Zoheir Manasra. On the Israeli side, the negotiators include former members of the Israel Defense Forces high command Amnon Lipkin-Shahak, Giora Inbar, and Gideon Sheffer; former government ministers Member of Knesset (MK) Yuli Tamir, Yossi Beilin, MK Yossi Sarid, and Haim Oron; former Speaker of the Knesset MK Avraham Burg; and recent Labor candidate for Prime Minister MK Amram Mitzna.

The Geneva Accord has been mailed to every address in Israel and printed in Arabic in large-circulation daily newspapers read by Palestinians. (The full text of the Geneva Accord can be found at www.heskem.org.il/heskem_en.asp) As Israelis and Palestinians are reflecting on the possible final resolution of their conflict, Brit Tzedek v'Shalom encourages Americans to do the same.

