

# **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 Yuli Tamir, Yossi Beilin, Member of Knesset (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 is being 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](http://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.



## **Some of the salient points of the Accord are:**

- ★ **An end-of-conflict agreement that replaces all previous agreements and UN resolutions.**
- ★ **Recognition of Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people with a sovereign Palestinian state established alongside Israel. Acceptance of the 1967 borders, with 1:1 adjustments, as the permanent borders of Israel and Palestine. Approximately 2.5% of the West Bank will be annexed to Israel, and an equal amount of Israeli land will be annexed to the new state of Palestine. Seventy-five percent of the Israeli settlers will remain in densely populated settlement blocks close to the '67 border – blocks that will be annexed to Israel. Other settlements are to be evacuated with their infrastructure left intact for Palestinian use. Israeli settlers will be compensated for their lost property.**
- ★ **Jerusalem will be divided according to its already separated neighborhoods, and each state will exercise sovereignty over its holiest site. In the Old City, in which no borders will be erected, the Jewish Quarter will be under Israeli control and the Muslim, Christian, and Armenian Quarters will be under Palestinian control. Each state will control the gates to their respective quarters in the Old City, while the Jaffa Gate will be under international supervision.**
- ★ **Palestine will be demilitarized, and Israel will have special security guarantees. Palestine and Israel will be required to refrain from the use of force against the territorial integrity of the other, and to avoid joining or supporting any coalition of a military character with hostile objectives against the other. Both countries will work to prevent the formation of unauthorized forces.**
- ★ **Palestinian refugees will have the unlimited right to move to the new Palestinian state. They may request to remain in countries in which they currently reside, move to a third country, or move to Israel. Israel, like every other country that agrees to accept Palestinian refugees, will have the right to decide how many refugees it admits. In accordance with UN resolutions 242 and 194, Palestinian refugees are entitled to rehabilitation assistance, compensation for property lost, and for harm incurred due to their refugee status.**

