

**Israeli-Palestinian People's Peace Campaign
2002**

I. Background

Less than two years ago the supporters and advocates of peace within each society believed that the hundred years plus war was coming to an end. When the delegations flew to the Camp David negotiations in the United States, hopes were high that progress would be made towards a final status agreement. While it was recognized that huge difficulties remained to be resolved, there was a sense that the progress since the signing of the Oslo agreements would continue.

However, history reversed itself. The violence which erupted after Ariel Sharon's visit to the Al Aqsa Mosque developed into the present intifada. For the past nineteen months blood-letting and vengeance have replaced negotiations and reconciliation. The relations between Palestinians and Israelis, built before and after Oslo, were seriously weakened. Trust, the foundation upon which they were constructed, was seriously eroded.

The tragic events of the past nineteen months have not only resulted in the deaths of hundreds, the wounding of thousands, and widespread physical destruction, but has also led to the weakening and marginalization of the peace camps on both the Israeli and Palestinian sides of the conflict.

In the midst of this terrible situation, groups of Israeli and Palestinian activists have determined to maintain contacts and to speak in a different language and spirit. Efforts are directed to demonstrating that a majority on each side seeks a negotiated agreement as the only way to resolve the conflict and calls for an immediate cease-fire as a condition to enable the resumption of such negotiations.

It has been extremely difficult to maintain these positions in the current reality characterized by a cycle of terrible violence and a growing sense of hopelessness. Yet, the channels have remained open, and several joint activities have occurred throughout this long nineteen month reconciliation have come together to demand an end to the violence on each side, recognizing that joint efforts can affect public opinion and influence the leadership in each society.

II. Time For Peace Initiative

The origin of the current proposal was a suggestion to launch a public diplomacy campaign aimed at mobilizing support for peace between the two peoples. It was decided to formulate a statement of principles that could function as a platform for joint Israeli-Palestinian activities, and to use the occasion of the signing ceremony of this statement as a launching pad for the campaign. The signing ceremony took place on 28th December 2001 at the New Imperial Hotel at the Jaffa Gate, and was attended by hundreds of participants. It was decided to use the premise of the Hotel as the headquarters of the People's Peace Campaign, a forum where pro-peace Israeli and Palestinian activists can

URGENT – FOR IMMEDIATE REVIEW

meet, discuss, and plan joint events for their peace mobilization campaign. The creation of this headquarters, precisely during this difficult period, is itself symbolic of a new energy and determination among those who maintain that civil society projects can support a negotiated peace, which is still possible.

The New Imperial Hotel is located immediately within the Jaffa Gate in Old Jerusalem. It is an easily identifiable and available space, where Israelis, Palestinians, and guests from the international community can meet. Our plan is to convert existing facilities into offices and halls for peace activities.

If we succeed in activating this location on a routine basis, it will be a home not only for activities founded upon co-existence and cooperation for convinced activists, but will also draw Israelis and Palestinians who have previously not been involved in such endeavors. Thus, the New Imperial Hotel will serve as the anchor of a broad-based outreach Campaign for Peace.

The program planned begins in Jerusalem but reaches out throughout Palestine and Israel. The People's Peace Campaign is national in conception and will implement events throughout the area, according to specific conditions.

One of the key activities of this new initiative is the Human Chain, scheduled to take place in June 2002 marking 35 years of Israeli occupation. Emphasizing the principles of non-violence, this chain will link Israelis and Palestinians throughout the West Bank, Gaza and across the checkpoints of the 1967 border with Israel. The purpose of this event is to call for an ending to the Israeli occupation and for the creation of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza with Jerusalem as its capital.

III. Program

1) Dialogue Activities

Bi-weekly cultural discussions will take place. Palestinians and Israelis will come to learn about each other, or together learn about a subject of common interest. They will also enjoy activities that are interesting or enjoyable such as movies, plays, etc. The specific subjects will be chosen by the participants. As part of this activity an Internet site will be operated.

2) Campaign Activity

i) Non-violent actions

First, we intend to mobilize Israelis and Palestinians to join in non-violent activity calling for the end to the occupation, and continued negotiations and reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians. Because such activity is difficult and untried in this region, we will need training and experimental activities. When this aspect of the peace campaign is

URGENT – FOR IMMEDIATE REVIEW

prepared, we will launch a series of small and large actions aimed to demonstrate that non-violent and joint activities have a greater positive impact than their opposites. Second, we will use the same volunteers to work together for peace in dramatic joint activities. We are planning a large action in the summer along the Green Line, in addition to planning a second "Hands-Around-Jerusalem" event.

ii) Petition Campaign (see attachment)

We will distribute this petition as widely as possible through the Internet mail and direct person-to-person contact, thus conducting a signature campaign to gather thousands of signatures from each side.

iii) Lecture Campaign

Guest lecturers will be invited to speak on a variety of topics of mutual interest to the participants. Such opportunities will allow participants to engage in learned debate and discussion on issues of common interest.

3) Human Chain Across the Territories

In view of the very difficult circumstances that have befallen all Palestinians nationwide as a result of the unjust war that was waged upon our nation, and all the sacrifices, we are forced to regroup our resources to enable our citizens to rise again like the phoenix. Guidance as to how to hone struggle efforts away from being a mere undirected reaction is vital. There is a dire need to activate a nationwide united public movement, which calls for an end to the occupation and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital.

It is in this context, and coinciding with the 35th anniversary of the 1967 war, we call for the launching of an outcry for justice, in the shape of the formation of a Human Chain, on the 27th of June 2002. Such a chain would link all the Palestinian governorates together, stretching from Jenin to Rafah in the Gaza strip, in an organized and orderly fashion, as shown in the maps. It would traverse Israeli barriers (check points) accompanied by diplomats, foreign dignitaries and Israeli peace activists - all of whom would call for an end to the occupation and the evacuation of the settlements, with international support.

Aims of the Human Chain

The main aim of the Chain is to generate the maximum possible international recognition of the Palestinians' just cause, using extensive media coverage to solicit support by way of:

URGENT – FOR IMMEDIATE REVIEW

- Maintaining linkage between all sectors of the Palestinian territories which the Sharon Government is trying to sever.
- Voicing rejection of Palestinians and the international community, of the siege and blockades
- Reaffirming the Palestinian resolve to protect its sovereignty within geographical ties.
- Reassuring the international community and the Israeli people that the Palestinians are not terrorists as being depicted, but rather a nation struggling for its just independence.
- Reaffirming the Palestinian demands calling for an end to the occupation, evacuation of the settlements and the establishment of a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Activities

27 June 2002:

Achieve actual physical linkage, of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, standing hand in hand, stretching from the centre of Jenin to the Gaza Strip, and along the Green line where possible.

28 June 2002:

The formation of a Human Chain stretching all around the wall of the "Old City" in Jerusalem, culminating in festivities at Jaffa Gate, attended by HE the Mayor of Campagna (Italy) and other foreign dignitaries. HE the Mayor, launched the People's Peace Campaign in December 2001, (declaration attached).

Other Activities:

Other activities such as student camps, music concerts, plays, seminars, etc will be taking place, with the participation of the international support organizations present for the event.

Organizational Structure

Higher Organizational Committees: To achieve success for such a monumental event in all aspects, a higher organizational committee will be formed in every governorate and it will be responsible for its district.

Field Committees: Every Higher Committee will form a field committee responsible for all activities in its district.

Coordinating Committee: The Jerusalem coordinating committee will provide support, information, and coordination between the various higher committees, as well as communication with foreign and Israeli participating bodies. It will also arrange media coverage and logistics.

URGENT – FOR IMMEDIATE REVIEW

The following sub-committees will support the main coordinating committee:

- Logistics
- Media
- International outreach
- Israeli
- National

All of the activities of the People's Peace Campaign will be prepared as peaceful joint actions, designed to demonstrate that there is a partner with whom one can work to mobilize the forces for peace in each society. There is a new need today to develop dialogue in the shadow of violence and hatred. We believe that the People's Peace Campaign will pioneer this work.

The foundation document of the People's Peace Campaign was a joint statement prepared for the 28th December, 2001 launching of the New Imperial Hotel Center.

Time for Peace

Israeli-Palestinian Campaign – December 2001

We, the people, Palestinians and Israelis who seek peace and regret the deterioration in the situation that has led to a terrible loss of human life, grave suffering and an ongoing disregard for human rights.

We support a cessation of violence between the two peoples, a lifting of restrictions on Palestinian movement, and a return to negotiations which will lead to the end of the occupation on the basis on UN Resolution 242. We call for the immediate initiation of negotiation on the permanent status agreement, which should be based on the following principles:

- 1) *The adoption of a two state solution which guarantees the Israeli and Palestinian peoples the right to live in human dignity and security in their own independent states along the 1967 boundaries. Israeli settlements will be removed from the Palestinian State.*
- 2) *The city of Jerusalem will contain two capitals for two states.*
- 3) *A just and equitable resolution to the Palestinian refugee issue will be reached.*

We call on all Israelis and Palestinians who accept these principles to join in a campaign that will translate them into reality.

We invite the international community to support this campaign launched by the Israeli-Palestinian Coalition for Peace.

URGENT – FOR IMMEDIATE REVIEW

IV) Human Chain Expenses (in US dollars)

I. Logistics

Pinpointing and Facilitating Locations	1,000
T-Shirts	3,000
Hats	3,000
Transportation	5,000
First Aid	3,000
Food and Beverages	4,000
Communications	3,000
Accommodations for foreigners	5,000

Sub total 27,000

II. Media

Advertisements	10,000
Banners	3,000
Flyers	3,000
Brochures	3,000
Flags	2,000

Sub total 21,000

GRAND TOTAL 48,000