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Source: *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 4 (Summer, 1991), pp. 149-150

Published by: [University of California Press](#) on behalf of the [Institute for Palestine Studies](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2537449>

Accessed: 10-03-2015 19:34 UTC

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THE SHAMIR FOUR-POINT PLAN

[The following is the official Israeli foreign ministry formulation of Prime Minister Shamir's peace proposals, as sent to Israeli diplomatic representatives abroad in April 1989 and as reproduced in the Jerusalem Post Weekly on 23 April 1989.

The JPS is publishing the document, despite the fact that it is two years old, because it seems increasingly clear that the Bush administration's Middle East policy, both before and after the Gulf crisis, has been guided by the parameters of the plan.

It will, for example, be noted that Secretary Baker's peace efforts before the Gulf war focused on point four of the plan, the elections scheme, which was refined and elaborated into the May 1989 Shamir Plan. Since the Gulf war, the administration appears to be concentrating on point number two—bilateral negotiations with the Arab states followed by normalization of relations, and including "confidence building measures" and discontinuation of the economic boycott.]

1. The Camp David Partners—Reconfirmation of the Commitment to Peace.

Ten years ago, the peace treaty between Israel and Egypt was concluded on the basis of the Camp David Accords. When the accords were signed, it was expected that more Arab countries would shortly join the circle of peace. This expectation was not realized.

The strength of Israeli-Egyptian relations and the cooperation between the three partners to the accords have a decisive influence on the chances for Middle East peace, and the Israeli-Egyptian treaty is the cornerstone to the building of peace in the region.

Therefore, the prime minister has called on the three countries whose leaders affixed their signature to the Camp David Accords, the U.S., Egypt and Israel, to renew, 10 years later, their commitment to the agreements and to peace.

2. The Arab Countries—From a State of War to a Process of Peace

The prime minister urged the U.S. and Egypt to call on the other Arab countries to desist from hostility towards Israel and to replace belligerency and boycott with negotiation and cooperation. Of all the Arab countries, only Egypt has recognized Israel and its right to exist. Many of these states actively participated in wars against Israel by direct involvement or indirect assistance. To this day, the Arab countries are partners in an economic boycott against Israel, refuse to recognize it and refuse to establish diplomatic relations with it.

The solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and the building of confidence leading to a permanent settlement require a change in the attitude of the Arab countries towards Israel. Israel, therefore, calls on these states to put an end to this historic anomaly and to join direct bilateral negotiations aimed at normalization and peace.

3. A Solution to the Refugee Problem—An International Effort

The prime minister has called for an international effort, led by the U.S., and with the significant participation of Israel, to solve the problem of the Arab refugees. The refugee problem has been perpetuated by the leaders of the Arab countries, while Israel with its meagre resources is absorbing hundreds of thousands of Jewish refugees from Arab countries. Settling the refugees must not wait for a political process or come in its stead.

The matter must be viewed as a humanitarian problem and action must be taken to ease the human distress of the refugees and to ensure for their families appropriate living quarters and self respect.

Some 300,000 people live in refugee camps in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza District. In the 1970s, Israel unilaterally undertook the rehabilitation of residents of refugee camps in Gaza and erected 10 neighbourhoods in which 11,000 families reside. This operation was carried out in partnership with the residents despite PLO objections.

The time has now come to ensure appropriate infrastructure, living quarters and services for the rest of the residents of the camps who, at the same time, are victims of the conflict, hostages to it, and an element which perpetuates its continued existence.

Goodwill and an international effort to allocate the necessary resources will ensure a satisfactory solution to this humanitarian effort and will help improve the political climate in the region.

4. Free Elections in Judea, Samaria and Gaza on the Road to Negotiations.

In order to bring about a process of political negotiations and in order to locate legitimate representatives of the Palestinian population, the prime minister proposes that free elections be held among the Arabs of Judea, Samaria and Gaza—elections that will be free of the intimidation and terror of the PLO.

These elections will permit the development of an authentic representation that is not self-appointed [or] appointed from the outside. This representation will be comprised of people who will be chosen by the population in free elections and who will express, in advance, their willingness to take part in the following diplomatic process:

The aim of the elections is to bring about the establishment of a delegation that will participate in negotiations on an interim settlement, in which a self-governing administration will be set up. The interim period will serve as an essential test of cooperation and coexistence. It will be followed by negotiations on the final settlement, in which Israel will be prepared to discuss any option which will be presented.

The U.S. administration has expressed its support for the idea and following the prime minister's return, his proposals will be discussed here, and the various questions surrounding the holding of elections will be examined.