

Mobilizing Arab and Jewish Diasporas for a Just Peace

Background: Studies have shown that more often than not that the many among the active elements within Diasporas have been exacerbating conflict back home rather than its resolution. Not necessarily reflecting the opinions of the silent majority, support for more radical groups and extreme policies have been felt more than appeals for moderation. This is not only the case for Jewish and Arab Diasporas but also other cases such as the Irish or Armenians in the United States and elsewhere.

While a major worldwide effort for bringing to a just Palestinian/ Israeli peace is building up it may be important to assess more thoroughly how to make their brethren out of the homeland not to continue to be part of the problem but rather to contribute to such drive. Already some seeds have been planted that need to be nourished and grow into a more powerful movement. Understanding the roots of such attitudes and suggesting concrete steps for a constructive involvement in the economic, cultural and political sphere can be done if inspired by those who have been involved in peacebuilding back home as well as the endorsement of global governmental and non-governmental organizations

Concrete proposal: It is hereby suggested that the United Nations through its relevant divisions and sectors convenes a sequential number of regional conference of experts and diplomats from Israel and Palestine as well as a wide spectrum of active members of the Arab and Jewish Diaspora communities to focus on the issue at stake, promoting an open dialogue and eventually seeking to build a constructive consensus among the participants, leading to an action plan. The papers prepared for the meetings and the contents of its deliberation could be brought together in a book.

Perhaps starting in Latin America (a concrete suggestion to focus on the subject has been mentioned during the UN December 2008 meeting for a Palestinian/Israel Peace that took place in Santiago de Chile), learning from the outcome of this meeting, additional regional gatherings could take place in North America and Europe.

Timetable:

Month 1 -3 Discussion of the concept with experts on Diasporas, Arab and Jewish community leaders, UN officials and ambassadors of relevant Latin American countries

Month 4 -9 Fundraising in the hosting communities and government as well as international organizations.

Month 10 -12 Preparations for the Conference and commissioning of papers

Month 13 -18 Completion of papers and delivery of invitations to participants

Month 19 -24 Holding of first Regional Conference (Brazil, Peru, Argentina?)

Month 25- 48 Action Plan implementation and preparations for second Regional Conference – Revision and publication of papers

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