

# Foundation for Middle East Peace

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### The Nusseibeh-Ayalon Agreement

In early September, Sari Nusseibeh, president of Al Quds University and the PLO's senior representative in Jerusalem, and Ami Ayalon, the former head of Israel's Shin Bet security service as well as the former admiral of the navy, released the final draft of a joint peace initiative to end the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis. It is to be presented to both sides in the form of a petition (with the goal of gaining 1 million signatures) to push their governments to end the current violence and resume peace talks.

### Cover Letter

The Palestinian people and the Jewish people each recognize the other's historic rights with respect to the same land.

The Jewish people have for generations wanted to establish the Jewish state in the land of Israel, while the Palestinian people have similarly wanted to establish a state in Palestine.

The two sides hereby agree to accept a historic compromise based on the principle of two sovereign and viable states existing side by side. The following Statement of Intentions is an expression of the will of the majority of the people. Both sides believe that through this initiative they can influence their leaders and thereby open a new chapter in the region's history. This new chapter will be realized by calling on the international community to guarantee security in the region and to help in rehabilitating and developing the region's economy.

### The People Vote - Statement of Intentions

1. Two states for two peoples: Both sides will declare that Palestine is the only state of the Palestinian people and Israel is the only state of the Jewish people.

2. Borders: Permanent borders between the two states will be agreed to on the basis of the June 4, 1967 lines, UN resolutions and the Arab peace initiative (known as the Saudi initiative).

Border modifications will be based on an equal territorial exchanged (1:1) in accordance with the vital needs of both sides, including security, territorial contiguity, and demographic considerations.

The Palestinian state will have a connection between its two geographic areas, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

After establishment of the agreed border, no settler will remain in the Palestinian state.

3. Jerusalem: Jerusalem will be an open city, the capital of two states. Freedom of religion and full access to holy sites will be guaranteed to all.

Arab neighborhoods in Jerusalem will come under Palestinian sovereignty; Jewish neighborhoods under Israeli sovereignty.

Neither side will exercise sovereignty over the holy places. The state of Palestine will be designated 'Guardian of the Temple Mount' for the benefit of Muslims. Israel will be the 'Guardian of the Western Wall' for the benefit of the Jewish people. The status quo on Christian holy sites will be maintained. No excavation will take place in or underneath the holy sites.

4. Right of return: Recognizing the suffering and the plight of the Palestinian refugees, the international community, Israel, and the Palestinian state will initiate and contribute to an international fund to compensate them.

Palestinian refugees will return only to the state of Palestine; Jews will return only to the state of Israel.

5. The Palestinian state will be demilitarized and the international community will guarantee its security and independence.

6. End of conflict: Upon the full implementation of these principles, all claims on both sides and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will end.

Source: *Ha'aretz*, September 3, 2002.

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