

The Offer Hamas and the PLO Should Make to Israel

**Jerome M. Segal
University of Maryland**

As appeared in Al Quds (Arabic) February 25, 2006

Hamas has long held the position that it will never stand in opposition to the will of the Palestinian people. Hamas has also held the position that it is Abu Mazen, whether as chairman of the PLO or as President of the Palestinian Authority who is responsible for negotiations with Israel. Taken together, these two positions, open the way towards a resolution of the current crisis, and possibly the way towards resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

With or without a unity government that brings Fatah and Hamas together, it is possible for both parties to support the following peace initiative which could be put to both Israel and the United States as a test:

- 1. It is agreed that negotiations with Israel will be under the authority of Abu Mazen.**
- 2. Let the Quartet put on the table a fully detailed peace treaty which would address all of the key issues to the conflict, and which brings into existence an independent Palestinian State. So long as it details the final boundaries, this treaty could include gradual implementation, which starts with a Palestinian State with provisional boundaries as discussed in the Roadmap.**

- 3. Let Israel and the Palestinians, (led by Abu Mazen), negotiate for 90 days, any mutually agreeable improvements in the treaty draft submitted by the Quartet.**
- 4. After 90 days, whether in its original form or its amended form, the treaty will be put to a referendum in both societies.**
- 5. Neither Israel nor the PLO, nor Hamas is committed in advance to supporting the treaty in the referendum, but all agree to facilitate the referendum and to abide by its results.**
- 6. If the referendum passes in both societies then it shall be signed by the Israeli Prime Minister and the Palestinian President.**
- 7. When the State of Palestinian comes into being, there will be new Palestinian elections, under a new Constitution.**
- 8. If Hamas wins those elections, or if at some subsequent time, it forms the Government of the State of Palestine, it agrees to abide by the terms of any such treaty approved by the Palestinian people. This includes conducting normal state-to-state relations between Israel and the State of Palestine, and respecting the right of all states to exist in peace and security as provided in the Charter of the United Nations.**
- 9. Upon the establishment of the State of Palestine, the State shall exercise a monopoly of force. No armed militias will be allowed to exist, and their operation will be vigorously opposed by the State of Palestine. Hamas and Fatah agree that all arms under their control will be placed under the authority of the State of Palestine.**
- 10. During this entire process, all Palestinian factions will take part in a mutual cease fire with Israel. Both Hamas and Fatah are committed to using all of their powers to see that this is maintained, provided that Israel does so as well.**

Jerome M. Segal is a Senior Research Scholar at the University of Maryland's Center for International and Security Studies. He is the author of *Creating the Palestinian State: A Strategy for Peace* (1989).