

JERUSALEM LETTER / VIEWPOINTS

Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs

VP:92 1 Elul 5749 / 1 September 1989

A JCPA
SPECIAL REPORT

JEW AND ARABS IN A "DIALOGUE FOR PEACE" IN TOLEDO

Daniel J. Elazar

Sephardim at a Conference in Spain / The Anguish of the Self-Hating Leftists / The Disciplined Palestinians / History, Myth, and Reality in the Jewish-Arab Dialogue / What are the Prospects for Peace? / List of Participants

On July 3-4, 1989, I attended a conference on "Jews of the Orient and Palestinians: A Dialogue for Arab-Israeli Peace" sponsored by the Foundation for Peace Studies and International Relations (FEPRI), a Spanish academic institute linked to the PSOE, the ruling Spanish Socialist party, and held in Toledo, a famed seat of that special Jewish-Muslim-Christian synthesis which characterized the Golden Age of Spain. (The organizers and most of the participants were under the misapprehension that the Jews' Golden Age in Toledo occurred under Muslim rule. In fact, it came after the Christian reconquest of the city when Jews fled to Toledo to escape the persecutions of the Muslim fundamentalists who had seized power in Andalusia.)

In organizing the conference, FEPRI was assisted by two French Sephardic groups. One, Perspectives Judeo-Arabs, is a left-wing group whose prominent

personality is Simone Bitton, an Israeli of Moroccan background who left Israel twelve years ago to live in Paris. The other, Identite et Dialog, is a more moderate group that seeks dialogue with the Palestinians without in any respect denying the authenticity of Jewish peoplehood, Zionism, and the Jewish claim to Israel. Its president is Andre Azoulay, originally from Morocco. They were assisted in mobilizing an Israeli delegation by Shlomo Elbaz of HaMizrach el HaShalom (East for Peace), a moderate Sephardi peace organization in Israel. On the Arab side, the PLO provided a delegation led by Mahmoud Abbas, a member of the PLO Executive Committee. (See Appendix for a complete list of participants.)

Sephardim at a Conference in Spain

The conference ostensibly was organized to foster an intellectual and cultural dialogue between Jewish and

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Arab, principally Israeli and Palestinian, intellectuals and academics. It was explicitly presented as not being for political discussions. I doubt if any of us who chose to attend had any illusions that matters would not quickly slide into political discussions despite the declared intentions. There never was any doubt that the Palestinians would reflect the views of the PLO, since their delegation consisted principally of politicians and functionaries. The Israeli delegation, consisting principally of activists, intellectuals, academics, and rabbis, contained a range of viewpoints but leaned toward the pro-Palestinian side of the political spectrum. Virtually all were Sephardim, of Indian, Iraqi and Yemenite background as well as North African, Balkan and Eretz Israeli. A majority actually were descended from the Spanish exiles of 1492.

I chose to attend because I had a commitment from the organizers that the delegation would be as balanced as possible and I felt that it was necessary to assure that there would be some participants who would speak out in the name of the Israeli mainstream. As one who has pursued peace in our region since 1967 and believes that a political solution is necessary, I was also curious to see how these dialogues, of which this was one of several, were unfolding. Finally, as a Sephardi, I liked the idea that for a change we would be the spokesmen for the Israeli side rather than the usual spokesmen in such matters, who have always been overwhelmingly Ashkenazi. Indeed, the Israeli delegation that went was probably the broadest and best balanced of any of the meetings to date. Even though it, too, was tilted to the left, in the Sephardic way it sought to be inclusive rather than exclusive.

The Anguish of the Self-Hating Leftists

The Jews from outside Israel who attended were almost all from the left, while the non-Palestinian Arabs were mostly writers and intellectuals from Syria, Egypt, and North Africa living in France. (It seems that it is safer to be an Arab

writer in Paris than back home.) While I cannot say that I was surprised by the results, it is fair to say that I was at least somewhat disappointed, but I did learn something as well. First of all, the conference was a powerful demonstration of how all Jews -- Sephardim and Ashkenazim -- are really alike. Today, a generation after the great migration to Israel, Sephardim also have their own self-hating leftists and "bleeding-hearts" just like the Ashkenazim.

I am handicapped and have some problem walking distances or climbing steps. For many years I have discovered that this handicap is a good litmus test of what people really are like. Almost without exception those people who are so wrapped up in saving the world do not have any time to help individual human beings, while those who have more modest expectations of what they or others can do to transform the human condition usually find the time to be considerate of one of its members. This definitely turned out to be the case in this gathering. The world-savers paid no attention to my problems, even in moments of obvious need. Only those who had more moderate expectations and were not so busy jockeying for position to deliver their message found the time and had the inclination to be attentive to a fellow human being.

My very modest problems were nothing compared to those of Israel among so many members of this group. The most vocal Jewish representatives seemed to be competing with each other, fawning over the PLO delegation and beating their breasts with regard to Israel's past and present. These included people capable of getting up and denying the realities of Jewish history, denouncing Zionism and apologizing profusely to the Palestinians for mistreating them from the beginning of the Zionist enterprise to the present, just as we have come to expect from the predominantly Ashkenazi far left.

Dr. Ella Shohat, an Israeli now teaching cinematography at New York University who nevertheless came as part of the

Israeli delegation, made it clear that to her the Palestinians and Sephardim were in the same boat when it came to Ashkenazi persecution, that the Sephardim were forced by the Zionists from the Arab countries where they lived without any problems, to Israel, no less than the Palestinians were forced by the Zionists from their homes. The Palestinians, of course, had suffered more. Nissim Kalderon, another Israeli lecturer in cinematography from Tel Aviv University (is cinematography the new home of the self-hating Jewish left?) spent his time attacking the Zionist enterprise from day one. They were only exceeded in their vehemence by Simone Bitton (also in film), who called the Israeli government "fascist" in her opening remarks, and Elle Beida, a Syrian/Lebanese Jew now also living in France who blamed all the woes of the world, especially his own, on the evils of Zionism. These were the extremists.

Most of the Jews who spoke at the meeting were simply what Americans call "bleeding-hearts," so uncomfortable over the present situation of the Palestinians that they must attribute all faults to the "mean old Israeli government" and its supporters. They did not reject Zionism or Israel's right to exist, but spent their time criticizing Israeli government policy.

The Disciplined Palestinians

The Palestinians, by contrast, were disciplined and unbending. The same message came forth from their group, sometimes harshly, sometimes forcefully without being harsh, and sometimes in a more conciliatory tone -- that the Palestinian and Jewish experiences have been symmetrical and now is the time for a compromise around a two-state solution and then there will be peace. As one accustomed to Jewish gatherings where every opinion is expressed whether it is appropriate for the time and the place or not, their discipline was overwhelming. Not only did the discipline stand in stark contrast to the Israeli delegation, but the Palestinians never admitted to doing anything wrong or reflected on

whether they might have done or be doing something differently. They never took any responsibility for what had happened to them. In one absurd case, one Palestinian writer stated that the only reason that no Palestinian state had come into existence in 1947 was because the Stern gang of present Israeli Prime Minister Shamir (as he described LEHI) assassinated Count Bernadotte. He seemed to have no notion that the Palestinians had rejected partition and resisted the establishment of a separate Palestinian state and in this were joined by the rest of the Arab world. The discussions of why the Jews in the Arab lands left were similarly self-serving and unbending.

The writers and intellectuals among the Arabs were the worst. Whereas the politicians and functionaries at least pursued a relatively moderate tone, the writers and intellectuals attacked Israel and Zionism as if they were the devil personified. Thus, ironically, the conference was less polarized because the Palestinians did not live up to advance billing in the composition of their delegation.

Despite the impression given by certain of the Israeli and other Jewish speakers, with one or two exceptions, most of the Israeli delegation behaved responsibly. Shlomo Elbaz gave a beautifully balanced opening presentation directed toward the stated goal of the conference and Dr. Maurice Roumani of Ben-Gurion University talked of the relationship of the Jews from Arab lands with Israel and Arabic culture with honesty, sensitivity and balance. Israeli writer Sammy Mikhael was furious with the self-hating Jewish leftists. Many were appalled by the rigidity of the Palestinians and the unseemly statements of their Jewish colleagues.

History, Myth, and Reality in the Jewish-Arab Dialogue

Much of this came out only after I made my statement in which, while calling for peace, I pointed out Israel need not apologize for being a state, that the experience of Jewish history, including the

experience of the Jews of Spain and Toledo, had demonstrated to us that no matter how harmonious relations between peoples were from time to time, in the end, as a small minority, the Jews had always suffered from being unable to control our own destiny, that the dynamic Jewish culture of the twentieth century owed its character to the impact of Zionism, even when people were unaware of that fact, and that any Israeli-Palestinian dialogue would have to be based upon the Palestinians' recognition of the right of the Jewish people to self-determination, not only the right of Israel to exist as a state. This last point is particularly important since the Palestinian peace offensive has tried to avoid any such acknowledgement, continuing in the belief, as stated by one or two of the more extreme Palestinian representatives at the conference, that Judaism is merely a religion and has no national character. The full text of my remarks follows:

"All of us here share a dream of peace, a peace in which Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs will live side-by-side, shaping their own destinies. But any such peace must be based on truth. I have the difficult task of trying to speak the truth as I see it and as I believe it is understood by the vast majority of Israelis.

We are gathered here in Toledo because of its significance in the history of Arab-Jewish or, more accurately, Christian-Muslim-Jewish relations. Toledo reminds us of the Golden Age in Spain when the three communities lived side-by-side and together constituted a major center of world culture. According to my count, whether our immediate roots are in Eretz Israel, the Balkans or North Africa, most of the Jews here are Sephardim in the original sense, that is to say, descendants of Jews who lived in Spain and were expelled nearly 500 years ago.

Several of us have explicit family connections to Toledo. In my case, one branch of my family was of prominence in the Toledo of which we speak. As you tour

the city you may see two buildings built by my forefather, Shmuel Halevi Abulafia -- the El Transito Synagogue and his home. According to family tradition, the Halevi family, among their other activities, engaged in the practice of medicine and as such were given the Arabic name "Abulafia," which, as you know, means "father of health." Shmuel Halevi Abulafia actually served as finance minister to the King of Castille in Toledo. Hence, Toledo has a special place in my heart.

But here we must face the truth squarely. This conference seems to be laboring under the misapprehension that this flowering took place in the days when Toledo was part of Al Andaluz, under Muslim rule. In fact, Toledo became a center of culture and a haven for Jews under Christian rule after it was reconquered in 1085. Jews fled to Toledo to escape Muslim persecution following the takeover of the government of Muslim Spain by Muslim fundamentalists who instituted the persecution of non-Muslims (and, for that matter, of non-fundamentalist Muslims, some of whom fled to Toledo as well). Then later on, Christians who had welcomed the Jews expelled them. At that time, one branch of the Abulafia family is reputed to have gone from Toledo to Jerusalem, one of the seven families to have settled in Eretz Israel at the time of the expulsion and remained to this day.

We Jews have learned from this and similar historic experiences that we need our own homeland where we are in control of our own destiny, where we can cooperate with other peoples without being subject to their rule and their whims, where we are not a minority and from which we cannot be expelled. We remember the Golden Age of Toledo and Spain with great fondness, but we do not want to return to that condition under any circumstances.

Even when Christians or Castillians, Muslims or Arabs, and Jews lived here, each community had its own autonomy under the overall rule of the king. Toledo actually had three municipal governments side-by-side -- Christian, Muslim and

Jewish. It was understood by all that the Jewish people remained a nation, even in exile. No one thought to deny that reality, even as we remained a world civilization, no matter how small our numbers.

Any dialogue between us must begin with the recognition of Jewish nationhood and civilization. It is not sufficient to recognize the existence of Israel as a state. The Palestinian and other Arabs must explicitly acknowledge the existence of the Jewish people and our right to self-determination, even as they ask us to acknowledge their existence and right to self-determination. We have heard some at this conference repeat the old notion, which seems to continue to exist among the Arabs, that the Jews are only a religion and not a people; hence they are not entitled to self-determination -- indeed that most of us here are "Arab Jews." This simply will not do.

What of the Palestinian Arabs? Over a decade ago a colleague of mine, a professor at the University of Kashmir in India, himself a Muslim who had spent many years teaching in Egypt, in the course of a conversation about ethnicity in the world, made the profound comment that the Arabs have to be understood as a federal nation. What he meant was that Arabs have a common sense of Arab nationhood, yet also a more particularistic sense of Syrian, Egyptian, Iraqi, Moroccan, etc. peoplehood. In the past two decades, the Palestinians have also claimed peoplehood within that special Arab context.

In fact, for the Arabs themselves it is not clear where nationhood lies, though the trend in the twentieth century has been to give greater emphasis to the particularistic, albeit without abandoning the general. The Palestinians are among the last to assert their particularistic peoplehood. Under such conditions, when the Arab nation and its peoples are still struggling for self-definition, it is not surprising that it has taken other peoples, including the Jewish people, a longer time to recognize that a separate Palestinian identity exists. Perhaps we have to be helped to learn and

understand the Arab and Palestinian Arab reality. That will necessarily take time.

When Toledo flourished, Europe was Christendom, a largely Christian continent in which Christians saw themselves as united under a single church (even though that was not exactly accurate even then). Christendom no longer exists, but now, increasingly, Europe does and will even more so after 1992. That is another reality which all of us must confront, which will have its impact on both Jews and Arabs, Israelis and Palestinians.

This brings us back to the Jews' role as a bridge between the Christian and Muslim worlds, between Europe, Asia and Africa and now the new worlds as well. In the past we played that role in a painful way since we lacked statehood. From now on, we will play that role as a people with both a state and a diaspora. We will not do so monolithically since by our very character, Jews express various viewpoints. But we will do so as Jews, secure in our statehood and peoplehood. The Palestinians, too, can be a bridge to achieve peace between Jews and Arabs.

That modern and contemporary Jewish civilization is very dynamic is known to all, proving once again how the Jewish people is a world civilization. It is important to understand that the the very dynamics of the Jewish civilization of our times in all its parts is rooted in Zionism. This is true from the ultra-Orthodox camp to that of the extreme political left. Whether they know it or not, whether they recognize it or not, all Jews have been transformed by Zionism and our civilization entirely informed by the Zionist revolution. Anyone who wishes to understand us must understand that today there can no longer be a separation between Jewishness and Zionism in that sense. The Zionist revolution has had too much of an impact on us all.

Because our civilization is so dynamic, the Jewish people and particularly the State of Israel often seem to be very powerful. In fact, we remain a small people, and our power is inevitably limited by

that fact. I would suggest that we are more vocal than powerful. Hence, we cannot be expected to take risks that larger peoples with greater power may be able to take. Even though we enjoy a stronger position politically and militarily than we have in millennia, in our heart of hearts we know that our power is slender because we are small and vulnerable, and we react cautiously to possible diminutions of that power, requiring clear, unambiguous and convincing reassurance that we are not taking dangerous risks.

All the foregoing suggests that with regard to Jews and Arabs, Israel and the Palestinians, things have changed. We all must recognize the changes and learn how to respond to them. We are not here to apologize for having returned to our land and reestablished an independent Jewish commonwealth within it. Nor are we prepared to accept that the situation of the Israelis and the Palestinians is symmetrical. We are not here to measure the extent of suffering, nor are we here to equate two millennia of exile with that of a generation.

I say to you, my Arab friends, do not be fooled by the voice of the Jewish left or the new revisionist history that is appearing. As a historian, I have always distrusted revisionist history, since it soon turns out that most of it is written either for ideological purposes or to advance the personal interests of the revisionist historians. Talking only to such Jews who come to such dialogues can be misleading. We, in turn, must admire the discipline and solidarity of the Palestinians during the first year and a half of the intifada and in these dialogues, in contrast to the various voices with which Jews speak.

Let me suggest to you that the Shamir plan is a major step for Israel. Prime Minister Shamir speaks for the Israeli people no less than the PLO has been able to establish itself as speaking for the Palestinians. I know there are many aspects of the plan that are objectionable to the Palestinians, but it offers a way to begin, to move from dialogue to negotiation. Both

Jews and Arabs, Israelis and Palestinians, today speak of living together. That is a great step forward and that is what must be fostered, patiently, step-by-step."

My statement was received about as I expected it would be. Any number of Israelis and some of the other Jews there as well came over to thank me, indicating that they were with me. In that respect, what we might call ordinary Sephardic militants in Israel are also Jews like all other Jews and were appalled by what some of their colleagues were doing. The Jewish extremists ceased talking with me.

The worst offenders in all of this were the diaspora extreme leftists, particularly those who had once lived in Israel. You could palpably feel their perceived personal histories being reinterpreted in grand historical terms. With no anchor in Israel, they needed to show no responsibility toward their people, much less the state. They, along with the Arab intellectuals, consistently falsified history, not necessarily cynically, but with the passion of true believers for whom only their theories of Palestinian nationhood mattered.

In falsifying history, the two Spanish professors who spoke were the worst, more pro-PLO than the PLO representatives themselves. One not only denied the legitimacy of any Jewish claim to the land (although he recognized that Israel was now a reality), but lauded the rediscovery of Palestinian nationhood. For him the Palestinians had been a nation from time immemorial, but had lost their national consciousness until recently.

In most cases Palestinian nationalism was treated as a relatively new phenomenon, even when an effort was made to treat the name Palestine as the original name of the land. (For example, because my family has long lived in Jerusalem I was listed as being from a Palestinian background and all those born in Eretz Israel before 1948 were listed as having been born in Palestine or "Mandatory Palestine.") A reading of the transcript of the Palestinians' historical analysis and

that of their friends would lead to a whole new mythic history. Two people even presented it as such, arguing that the Palestinians needed that myth.

What are the Prospects for Peace?

Given the picture of this encounter which, from the reports I have received was not really different from any of the other so-called dialogues that Jews and Arabs, Israelis and Palestinians, have engaged in over the past months, even years, what are the prospect for peace? I am still hopeful that prospects exist. The Palestinians were careful not to reject the Shamir plan as a step toward that goal (though of course they did not endorse it). I did come away with the feeling that the PLO has moved in the direction of peace -- for its own purposes, of course, but for the first time it might be possible to negotiate a peace with the Palestinians.

All the fawning and breast-beating of certain members of the Israeli left does not do us any service in the cause of peace. But the Palestinians themselves understand that these are not the people who will make peace. They exploit them as part of their peace offensive. Indeed this whole meeting and the way it was structured had much of this exploitation about it. These Jews are used as "shills" to attract media attention to the presentation of the latest PLO peace initiative.

The problem is that the PLO is becoming more demanding as our leftists become more accommodating, often giving them more than they have dared to ask for. We all know that foreign relations in a democracy is difficult because negotiations have to be public and the divisions within the democratic negotiating party are visible to the party on the other side. If the latter is able to maintain a united front by less than democratic means, this gives them an advantage.

Things are even more difficult when Jews are involved since we have yet to learn the minimum of self-restraint and self-discipline that goes with statesmanship. After seeing Toledo I have even less

wonder at the fact that Prime Minister Shamir often takes such a hardline position when it is his task to counteract the false impressions given by a tiny but very vocal minority with regard to Israel's intentions. In essence he has to remind the world and the Palestinians over and over again that whatever intellectuals of the peripheral left may say at these kinds of international gatherings, the government sits in Jerusalem and that is where the real center of power is and will remain and it is the government with whom peace must be made.

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Appendix:

List of Participants

(Note: Designations and biographical data are presented as provided by the conference organizers.)

Israeli Delegation:

Meir Amor - Sociologist. Assistant Professor, Tel Aviv University. Founding member of the "Oriental Front." Conscientious objector (member of the movement "Yesh Gvul," imprisoned in 1988 for refusing to serve in the occupied territories). Born in Israel, of Moroccan origin.

Angelo Aydan - Worker. Conscientious objector. Member of the "Yesh Gvul" movement. Imprisoned three times for refusing to serve in the occupied territories. Born in Libya.

Dr. Shimon Ballas - Writer. Professor of Modern Arabic Literature, Haifa University. Member of the "Committee of Israeli and Palestinian Artists." Born in Iraq.

Yamini Ben-Dror - Journalist (Yedioth Aharonoth, and Yated Neeman). Member of the "Forum for Social Justice and Peace." Born in Israel, of Yeminite origin.

Dr. Gabriel Ben-Simhon - Playwriter and movie teacher in Tel Aviv University. Born in Morocco.

Avraham Berdugo - Lawyer. Member of "East for Peace." Native of Israel of Moroccan origin.

Erez Bitton - Poet. Editor in chief of the literary magazine Apirion. Member of the Executive Committee of the Union of Hebrew Writers. Publishes a weekly column in Maariv. Born in Morocco.

Ofer Bronshtein - Businessman. Member of the "Forum for Social Justice and Peace." Born in Israel, Egyptian-Tunisian origin.

Dr. Yossi Dahan - Professor of Philosophy, Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Member of the "Forum for Justice and Peace." Contributes regularly to Al-Hamishmar. Born in Morocco.

Latif Dori - Founder of "Committee for Palestinian-Israeli Dialogue." Former editor in chief of the Arabic language newspaper of the Mapam party. Born in Iraq.

Prof. Daniel Elazar - Professor of Political Science, Bar-Ilan University. "Born in U.S.A., of Salonician Palestinian origin."

Dr. Shlomo Elbaz - Lecturer in French Literature, Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Founding leader of "East for Peace." Born in Morocco.

Naim Giladi - Founder of the "World Organization of Jews from Islamic Countries." Veteran of the Zionist movement in Iraq. Ex-editor in chief of the Arabic edition of Haolam Haze. Born in Iraq.

Yitzhak Gormezano-Goren - Playwrite and novelist. Co-founder of the association "Bimat Kedem" (Oriental stage). Born in Egypt.

David Hamou - Sociologist, editor in chief of the magazine Iton Aher. Born in Morocco.

Haim Hanegbi-Bajaio - Spokesman of the Progressive List for Peace. Born in Mandatory Palestine.

Tsion Hayoun - Professor, leader of "Dai" association (Musrara district). Member of "East for Peace." Born in Morocco.

Nissim Kalderon - Professor of Hebrew Literature and cinematographic studies in Tel Aviv University. Member of "Peace Now" movement and "Year 21." Born in Israel of Bulgarian origin.

Zvi Kesse - Economist. International consultant. Member of the Executive of "The International Center of Peace in the Middle East." Born in Mandatory Palestine.

Tiqva Levy - Student of Literature. Founding member of the "Oriental Front" and of the "Alternative Popular Institute." Born in Israel.

Rabbi Mordechai Malka - Rabbi of the community of Moshav Hatsav. Born in Israel of Moroccan origin.

Zehava Mehajer - Press attache. Member of the "Ohalim" movement. Born in Israel of Iraqi origin.

Yamin Messika - Film maker. Founder of the association "Alternative Media." Born in Israel of Libyan origin.

Sammy Mikhael - Novelist. Born in Iraq.

Dr. Maurice Romani - Lecturer in Beer-sheva University (International Relations and Middle East). Director of the Center of Studies on the Oriental Jewish Heritage at Ben-Gurion University. Born in Libya.

Anat Saragosti - Journalist and photographer. Correspondent in the occupied territories for the weekly Haolam Haze. Born in Israel.

Kokhavi Shemesh - Restaurant owner. Founding member of the "Israeli Black Panthers." Born in Iraq.

Yossef Shiloah - Movie and theater actor. Founding member of the "Oriental Front." Member of the "Committee of Israeli and Palestinian Artists." Born in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Dr. Ella Shohat - Professor of cinematographic studies in New York City University. Author of Israeli Cinema: East/West and the Politics of Representation. Born in Israel of Iraqi origin.

Dr. Mordechai Shoushan - Doctor in Political Science. Israeli radio journalist. Born in Morocco.

Ilana Sougbeker - Teacher in the "School for Peace" of the Jewish-Arab village Neve Shalom. Founding member of the "Oriental Front." Born in Israel of Indian origin.

Rabbi Moshe Suissa - Rabbi and teacher in Beit Shemesh. Representative of the Ratz (Civil Rights Movement) party in the Histadrut. Born in Morocco.

Yamin Suissa - Leader of the "Ohalim" movement. Member of the Central Committee of the Israeli Labor party. Born in Morocco.

Dr. Shlomo Svirski - Sociologist, publisher, author of sociological studies and children's books. Born in Argentina.

Prof. David Tsemah - Professor of Arabic Literature in Haifa University. Author of studies on the literature on the Andalusian Golden Age. Born in Iraq.

Edna Toledano-Zaretzki - Sociologist and educator. Member of the movement "Women in Black." Born in Mandatory Palestine.

Avraham Valentin - Writer. Journalist in the daily Haaretz. Born in Israel.

Dr. Yossi Yona - Professor of Philosophy, Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Member of the "Forum for Social Justice and Peace." Born in Israel of Iraqi origin.

Diaspora Jews:

Amiel Alkalai - Researcher and translator. Author of a study on the Oriental Jewish movements in Israel. United States.

Elie Belda - Economist. Syria/Lebanon/France.

Serge Berdugo - Chairman of secretariat of the Jewish community of Morocco. Vice-president of the World Assembly of Moroccan Jews. Morocco.

Naim Kattan - Writer. Chairman, Royal Academy of Social Science in Canada. Iraq/Canada.

Simon Levy - Professor of Spanish literature, University Mohammed V, Rabat. Member of Central Committee of the Parti du Progres et du Socialisme.

Sapho - Singer. Novelist. Morocco/France.

Rabin Claude Sultan - Rabbi of the city of Kuneitra. Member of the secretariat of the Jewish community of Morocco. Morocco.

Abraham Udovitch - Orientalist. Director, Department of Middle East Studies, University of Princeton. U.S.A.

Lucette Valensi - Historian. Professor at the "Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes." Paris. Tunisia/France.

Raymond Benhaim - International consultant. Morocco/France.

Simone Bitton - Film maker. Morocco/Israel/France.

Robin Eddi - Economist. Lebanon/France.

Bracha Goor - Documentalist. Iraq/Israel/France.

Andre Azoulay - Banker. Morocco/France.

Perle Scemla - Marketing. Morocco/France.

Robert Scemla - Businessman. Morocco/France.

Delegation of the Palestine Liberation Organization:

Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) - Head of Delegation, PLO Executive Committee member.

Mahmoud Darwish - Poet. PLO Executive Committee member.

Hassan Asfour - PLO Department of International Relations.

Adnan Mustafa Chrouf - PLO Department of International Relations.

Hani Faydi - Counsellor, Delegation of Palestine in Spain.

Ilan Halevi - PLO Representative to the Socialist International.

Abderraman Mara'i - PLO Department of International Relations.

Hisham Mustafa - PLO Department of International Relations.

Vera Nofal - PLO Department of International Relations.

Mahjoub Omar - PLO Planning Center.

Elias Sanbar - Editor-in-chief, Revue d'Etudes Palestiniennes.

Layla Shahid - Journalist.

Imad Shakour - Adviser to President Yasser Arafat.

Abbas Shibliak - Writer.

Fouad Yassine - PLO Ambassador in Spain.

Other Arabs:

Serge Adda - Economist. Vice-president of Tunisian League of Human Rights. Tunisia.

Bahjat Al-Nahdi (Mahmud Hussein) - Researcher, author. Egyptian editor, Courrier of UNESCO.

Edmond Amran el-Maleh - Writer. Morocco.

Hamadi Essid - Director of Arab League Office, Paris. Tunisia.

Borhan Ghaloune - Writer. Chairman, Arab Organization for Human Rights, French section. Syrian.

Paula Jacques - Writer. Journalist. Egypt/France.

Fayez Malas - Economist. Syria.

Abdelwahab Meddeb - Writer. Tunisia.

Lotfallah Soliman - Writer. Egypt/France.

Dr. Daniel Timsit - Physician. Ex-Undersecretary of State of Algeria. Algeria. France.

Selim Turquie - Journalist (Liberation). Lebanon. France.

Spanish Participants:

Prof. Robert Messa

Prof. Pedro Martinez Monsalvo

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Daniel J. Elazar is President of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs. His most recent book is People and Polity: The Organizational Dynamics of World Jewry (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989).