

# Palestine Peace Movement (PPM)

## Creating One State for Palestinians and Jews in Palestine

### Mohamed Rabie

Due to the failure of all efforts to reach a political settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict, a new vision and a new approach is needed to address this century old conflict and achieve lasting peace. After negotiating for 25 years, no progress was made, and the “peace process” ended in complete failure. Meanwhile, Jewish settlement activities started in 1967 in the West Bank and Gaza have made a solution based on the two-state idea an impossibility; no Israeli leader dares to evacuate the more than 700,000 Israeli settlers living on Palestinian land occupied in 1967; and no Palestinian leader dares to abandon the Palestinian refugees’ right of return. The failure of negotiations, while causing many Jews and Arabs to lose hope, has given the radical forces on both sides of the conflict a golden opportunity to gain more power and influence, putting the future of the entire Middle East region at risk. Since negotiations are incapable of achieving peace, a new vision and a new approach are needed to achieve peace and security for all.

The Palestine Peace Movement (PPM) is a political organization whose purpose is to facilitate the creation of a unified state on the entire land of Palestine where Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs live side by side in peace as equal citizens. To promote this goal, PPM intends to participate in the Israeli and Palestinian politics, nominate candidates for parliament and promote the establishment of one state in Palestine. However, despite being an active political movement, PPM shall refrain from making proposals to deal with social or economic issues; it shall work instead to change public perceptions on both sides to support the one state solution.

Being an open political movement, PPM gives all individuals and groups, regardless of their views, affiliations and nationalities, the right to become members, provided they commit themselves to supporting Arab-Jewish peaceful coexistence in Palestine as equal citizens of one state. This simply means that every Israeli and Palestinian committed to the one state solution is able to run for office under the umbrella of PPM, regardless of his/her social views. The new

state that PPM seeks to create shall be democratic, secular and demilitarized. To felicitate the creation of such a state, PPM plans to lobby Arab, Jewish, European and American politicians, participate in Israeli and Palestinian politics, and seek the support of world leaders, renowned intellectuals, as well as national and international civil society organizations.

Since the major lines dividing world societies today have become more sociocultural and less socioeconomic, the one-man one-vote democratic formula has lost its ability to function properly. It, as a result, has become a scheme to empower a tiny minority in every democracy to monopolize political and economic power and dominate and exploit the overwhelming majority of each 'democratic' society. The democratic formula envisioned by PPM calls for the sharing of political power by Israeli Jews and Palestinians and major civil society organizations in Palestine. As a consequence, Palestine will be transformed into a shared homeland for two peoples living side by side in peace; setting an example for other peoples to solve their conflicts and live in peace as well.

The Palestine Peace Movement is a membership organization having two membership types: one regular; the other sustaining. Nevertheless, all members are entitled to participate in group discussions, serve on all committees, and represent PPM in international forums. But due to the role PPM intends to play in the Palestinian and Israeli politics, sustaining members would not be able to run for office or vote. PPM members are required to pay membership dues; such dues are paid one time only, and membership is for life. Every member is free to determine his and her membership dues; the minimum, however, is 100 US dollars. The following are the main principles and objectives that guide the work of PPM:

1. The creation of a bi-national state in Palestine where Israeli Jews and Palestinian live side by side as equal citizens, sharing the same land, resources and political power;
2. The proposed name of the new state is: "*Holy Land State of Palestine*:"
3. The drafting of a visionary constitution that guarantees the sharing of powers by Jews and Palestinians, and the division of executive powers between the president and the prime minister of the future state;

4. Giving the public the power to elect the state's president and parliament, while giving parliament the power to elect the state's prime minister from outside its ranks;
5. In view of the power sharing principle, if the elected president happens to be Jewish; the parliament would be required by law to elect a Palestinian prime minister; and if the elected president happens to be a Palestinian, the parliament would be required by law to elect a Jewish prime minister;
6. The allocation of 25% of the parliament seats to the major civil society organizations, divided equally between the Palestinian and Jewish organizations;
7. After allocating 25% of the parliament seats to the civil society organization, every political party will get its share of the remaining seats according to the votes it gets.
8. All people holding an Israeli citizenship at the time of forming the Holy Land State of Palestine shall have the right to live in the new state as full citizens;
9. All other people holding the Palestinian citizenship at the time of forming the Holy Land State of Palestine shall have the right to live in the new state as full citizens;
10. Every man and woman born in Palestine or one of his/her parents or grandparents shall have the "right of return" that entitles him/her to live in Palestine and gain the right to full citizenship after living there permanently for one year; such people need not be Arabs and Jews only; all people who meet this condition shall have the same right, regardless of their nationality, religion or origin;
11. All Palestinians who lost property in Palestine since 1947 shall have the right to regain ownership of their properties, and be free to develop it, rent it or sell it to whomever they wish without outside interference; however, there will be no forced evacuation of people living in Palestine.

The one state solution outlined above is the only formula capable of overcoming the five major obstacles hindering the two-state solution at once: the issue of Jerusalem, the borders of an assumed Palestinian state, Israeli security requirements, Israeli settlements in Jerusalem and the West Bank, and the Palestinian right of return to Palestine; and well as the division of Palestinians between the West Bank and Gaza.

Declaring Palestine a shared homeland for both Israeli Jews and Palestinian ends conflict over Jerusalem as it becomes the capital of the new state. And since the borders of historic Palestine will become the borders of the *Holy Land State of Palestine*, both issues of borders and security would be solved to the satisfaction of both Israelis and Palestinians. Giving the Palestinian refugees the right to regain ownership of lost property, while having the freedom to rent or sell such property, serves to indirectly facilitate the solving of the complicated issues of the right of return and Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Jerusalem.

Declaring Palestine a shared homeland for Jews and Palestinians who claim a right to that land is the only practical and humane solution to the conflict; no other solution is possible or workable. Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs and Arabs had lived together in peace in the past; they can live together in peace again; they also have two of the world's richest pools of human talent, experience, money and world-wide connections to build a very dynamic economy and a rich, diversified culture.

In fact, the creation of one state in Palestine is the only way for both Palestinians and Israelis to reclaim their humanity, free themselves from hatred and enmity, and save their children and grandchildren from the Tsunami of radicalism that continues to gain strength on both sides of the conflict. Ideological radicalism is the most malicious cancer humanity has ever known; it dies only when it kills the body it inhibits. Therefore, we must work together to foster the immunity of the Palestinian-Jewish body so that it can resist radicalism, overcome decades of war and enmity, and establish an ever lasting peace in the land of peace.

*Mohamed Rabie is an author and former distinguished professor of international political economy. In 1988 he conceived the idea of the US-PLO dialogue, drafted the document that guided negotiations, and coordinated the secret contacts between the US and the PLO that led the US government to recognize the PLO and launch the peace process; and in 1989 he articulated the shared homeland model of conflict resolution. Dr. Rabie published over 43 books in English and Arabic; his writings, interests, and activities reflect a strong commitment to peace, freedom, social justice, as well as to dialogue among different peoples and cultures.*

[www.yazour.com](http://www.yazour.com)