

Preface

This report constitutes a record of the presentations and discussions at the open symposium “Conflict and Peacebuilding in the Middle East: Palestine, Israel, Iraq” hosted by the Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA) in Plaza Hall, Kasumigaseki Building, on November 3, 2010 with support from the Japan International Cooperation Foundation (JICF).

The Middle East is a prosperous region with a long history, an exceptional cultural heritage and a diverse population and, as a major energy supplier, is an extremely important region for global stability. Unfortunately, the Middle East is also a region plagued with numerous conflicts. What are the circumstances and backgrounds of these conflicts in the Middle East and what measures might be considered to resolve these conflicts and build peace?

This symposium organized panels covering three topics: the intransigent Palestine-Israel conflict, the still-tense situation in Iraq, and conflict resolution and peacebuilding in the Middle East as a whole. Presentations were made by leading Japanese researchers who have studied these issues over many long years and by leading foreign researchers from the Middle East who have endeavored as interested parties to resolve these issues. These presentations were followed by comments from younger researchers who in future will be endeavoring to resolve the Middle East’s conflicts and by discussions based on questions from the floor. The vigorous discussions on various issues currently confronting the Middle East among leading and up-and-coming researchers from Middle Eastern countries and from Japan as well as among general audience members not only contributed to strengthening ties between these Middle Eastern countries and Japan but also helped deepen awareness of the Middle East in Japan.

Systemic changes driven by large-scale popular movements have been underway since January of this year in the Arab countries of the Middle East, and the presentations and discussions at this symposium undoubtedly provided valuable knowledge for understanding these rapid developments in the Middle East.

It should be noted that the views documented herein are solely those of the individuals expressing them, and do not necessarily reflect the views of JIIA.

Let me close by once again conveying my sincerest gratitude to the presenters and discussants who actively participated in this symposium and offered extremely meaningful presentations and comments, and to everyone who assisted us in organizing and holding this symposium.

March 2011

Yoshiji NOGAMI
President
The Japan Institute of International Affairs

Open Symposium on “Conflicts and Peacebuilding in the Middle East: Palestine, Israel and Iraq”

Organized by: The Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA)
Supported by: by the Japan International Cooperation Foundation
Date: Wednesday, November 3rd, 2010
Venue : The Tokai University Club, Tokyo

Program

10:15-10:30

Opening Address

Amb. Yoshiji NOGAMI, President, The Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA)

10:30-12:30

1st Panel: “Present Situation and Prospect of the Palestine-Israel Peace Process: Mutual Understanding and Efforts toward Progress

Moderator:

Prof Akifumi IKEDA, Vice-President, Toyo Eiwa University

Presenters:

Brigadier General (retired) Shlomo Brom, Senior Research Fellow, The Institute for National Security Studies (INSS), “Present Situation and Prospect of the Palestine-Israel Peace Process”

Dr Omar DAJANI, Professor, McGeorge School of Law, University of the Pacific, “The Myth of Defensible Borders: Toward a Redefinition of Security in Palestinian-Israeli Peacemaking”

Panelists:

Mr Assaf David, Post-Doctoral Fellow, The Truman Institute for the Advancement of Peace, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Mr Amjad al-DAJANI, PhD Candidate, Kings College London

Ms Chie EZAKI, Research Fellow, The Middle East Research Institute of Japan

14:00-16:00

2nd Panel: “The Way to Harmony among Sectarian and Ethnic Groups in Iraq”

Moderator:

Prof Keiko SAKAI, Professor, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies

Presenters:

Dr Faleh Abduljabar, President, Iraq Institute for Strategic Studies, “Artificial and

Prof Keiko SAKAI, Professor, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies

Panelists:

Dr Nabil al-TIKRITI, Associate Professor, University of Mary Washington

Dr Dai YAMAOKA, Lecturer, Kyushu University

16:00-16:30

Break

16:30-18:00

3rd Panel: "General Discussion: Peace Making in the Region"

Moderator:

Prof Ryoji TATEYAMA, Professor, National Defense Academy

Presenters:

Dr Hasan AlMomeni, Director, Regional Centre on Conflict Prevention, Jordan Institute of Diplomacy, "Evaluating Peace Agreements: The Jordanian-Israeli Peace Treaty of 1994, 16 Years Later"

Dr. Emad Gad Badras BADROUS, Head of Israeli Study Program, Al Ahram Center for Political & Strategic Studies, "Evaluating Peace Process in the Middle East: Three decades after Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty"

Panelists:

Prof Keiko SAKAI, Professor, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies

Prof Akifumi IKEDA, Vice-President, Toyo Eiwa University

18:00-18:30

Closing Remarks

Amb Yoshiji NOGAMI, President, JIIA

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Summary

Open Symposium on “Conflicts and Peacebuilding in the Middle East: Palestine, Israel and Iraq”

Organized by the Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA)
with support from the Japan International Cooperation Foundation (JICF)
November 3, 2010, Plaza Hall, 1F, Kasumigaseki Building

This Symposium discussed three topics: the intransigent Palestine-Israel conflict, the still-tense situation in Iraq, and conflict resolution and peacebuilding in the Middle East as a whole. Panels were organized for each topic, and presentations were made by leading Japanese researchers who have studied these issues for many long years and by leading researchers from the region who have endeavored as interested parties to resolve these issues. These presentations by leading researchers were followed by comments from younger researchers from Japan and abroad and by discussions conducted based on questions from the floor. The following is a synopsis of the Symposium, centered on summaries of the presentations for each panel.

Panel Moderators, Presenters, and Commentators

Opening/closing addresses: Amb. Yoshiji NOGAMI
President, The Japan Institute of International Affairs

1st Panel:

“Present Situation and Prospects of the Palestine-Israel Peace Process: Mutual Understanding and Efforts toward Progress”

Moderator:

Prof.. Akifumi Ikeda (Vice-President, Toyo Eiwa University)

Presenters:

Brigadier General (retired) Shlomo Brom (Senior Research Fellow, The Institute for National Security Studies (INSS))

Dr. Omar Dajani (Professor, University of the Pacific)

Commentators:

Mr. Assaf David (Post-Doctoral Fellow, The Truman Institute for the Advancement of Peace,
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

Mr. Amjad al-Dajani (PhD Candidate, Kings College, London)

Ms. Chie Ezaki (Research Fellow, The Middle East Research Institute of Japan)

2nd Panel:

“The Way to Harmony among Sectarian and Ethnic Groups in Iraq”

Moderator:

Prof. Prof. Keiko Sakai (Professor, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies)

Presenters:

Dr. Faleh Abduljabar (President, Iraq Institute for Strategic Studies)

Prof. Keiko Sakai (Professor, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies)

Commentators:

Dr. Nabil al-Tikriti (Associate Professor, University of Mary Washington)

Dr. Dai Yamao (Lecturer, Kyushu University)

3rd Panel:

“General Discussion: Peace Making in the Region”

Moderator:

Prof Ryoji Tateyama (Professor, National Defense Academy)

Presenters:

Dr. Hasan AlMomani (Director, Regional Centre on Conflict Prevention, Jordan Institute
of Diplomacy)

Dr. Emad Gad Badras Badrous (Head of Israeli Study Program, Al Ahram Center for
Political & Strategic Studies [ACPSS])

Commentators:

Prof. Akifumi Ikeda (Vice-President, Toyo Eiwa University)

Prof. Keiko Sakai (Professor, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies)

1st Panel:
Present Situation and Prospect of the Palestine-Israel Peace Process: Mutual Understanding and Efforts toward Progress

Moderated by Dr. Akifumi Ikeda (Vice-President, Toyo Eiwa University), this panel examined the Palestine-Israel conflict. Both Israeli and Palestinian researchers made presentations from their respective standpoints on the present status of the conflict and the prospects for its resolution.

1st Presentation:
Brigadier General (retired) Shlomo Brom
(Senior Research Fellow, The Institute for National Securities Studies [INSS])

Mr. Brom discussed the present status of, and prospects for, peace in terms of an apparent contradiction in public opinion. Opinion surveys conducted in both Israel and Palestine reveal the contradiction that, while a “two-state solution” by which the conflict would be resolved through Israel and Palestine recognizing each other as independent states and enjoying peaceful coexistence has strong support, there is also harsh pessimism about the feasibility of such a solution.

According to Mr. Brom, the failure of the Oslo Accord peace process and the eruption of a second Intifada underlie this contradictory public opinion. From the Israeli perspective, the Palestinians have not adequately responded to Israel’s road map to end the occupation and its incipient efforts to resolve the conflict and, indeed, they betrayed the negotiations with the bloodshed caused by the Intifada. Contrarily, the Palestinian view is that Israel from the outset had no intention of ending the occupation and that it is cleverly plotting to continue the occupation by other means even as it superficially declares the withdrawal of its occupying forces. The Intifada is thus seen as an unavoidable effort to resist Israel’s continued employment of excessive military force. As a consequence, the two peoples regard each other with deep distrust and seek to blame the other side for the failure to achieve a peace settlement.

In addition to this mutual distrust, the political circumstances on both sides have also become a major hindrance to the pursuit of peace. The problem on the Israeli side is that its political arena features numerous small political parties, none of which is able to secure a majority on its own. Thus any government must by necessity be a coalition government that encompasses a range of varying opinions

within the administration. The prime minister must devote a great deal of effort to holding the coalition together, and therefore cannot spare sufficient effort to achieving a peace settlement with Palestine. He/she cannot risk his/her political career on peace negotiations that might fail, so he/she cannot undertake efforts toward peace unless success is certain.

The political situation in Palestine is similar. Not only is its administration internally fragmented, but Palestinian territory is divided into the West Bank ruled by Fatah and Gaza governed by Hamas. These two parties have not adopted a unified posture toward Israel; Hamas refuses to recognize Israel, while Fatah supports a “two-state solution.” From Israel’s standpoint, Hamas is a powerful administration but cannot be seen as one offering hope for peace. Fatah desires peace negotiations, but its ability to implement an accord is questionable as it must always be wary of moves by Hamas and critical public opinion from within the Palestinian community.

To escape these predicaments and move toward peace, a more comprehensive process must be formulated. This process must enable changes to the status quo concurrent with negotiations toward a final status agreement. To alter the status quo, the Israelis must transfer greater governing authority and sovereign responsibility to the Fayyad administration in the West Bank, and must back the West Bank government’s efforts to form a Palestinian state. Furthermore, the atmosphere in the Middle East as a whole must be modified. It will likely be necessary to constrain the influence of Iran and Syria, who are critical of a peace accord, and in certain instances to reopen talks between Syria and Israel.

2nd Presentation

Dr. Omar Dajani (Professor, University of the Pacific)

Following the 1st Presentation made by Mr. Brom of Israel, Dr. Omar Dajani discussed the present state and prospects of the Palestine-Israel conflict from the standpoint of the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank. Dr. Dajani declared security to be the core problem of the conflict. Israel and Palestine agree that security is essential in their negotiations, but they do not agree on the definition of security. In other words, they do not see eye-to-eye of the questions of security for whom and for what.

For Israel, security entails preventing cross-border incursions by terrorists to attack Israeli citizens as well as halting rocket attacks across its borders. Security also includes deterring attacks by the military forces of surrounding countries, though the likelihood of such attacks is seen as relatively low.

For the Palestinians, on the other hand, security means preservation of their sovereignty and territory. Other major security problems include protecting their livelihoods from economic constrictions imposed by Israel, maintaining access to Jerusalem, and bringing corridors to the outside world (airports, national borders, etc.) under their own sovereignty. The reality, however, is that Israel continues to control the airports and seaports, and Israel's security logic of preventing intrusions from outside raises concerns about restrictions on ordinary traffic. Palestinians also fear attacks and harassment by Israeli militia, and this fear has also prompted anxieties about the number of militia members in the settlements increasing under the protection of the Israeli military and stealing Palestinian land.

To achieve a breakthrough and make effective progress toward peace, the security concerns of both Israel and Palestine must be alleviated and their threat perceptions lowered. There is a major obstacle to this: Israel's essentially irrational conviction that its Middle Eastern neighbors would continue to regard it with hostility even if peace were established. Indeed, the prevailing view among Israeli security officials is that peace would not lead to security and that Israel cannot rely in times of crisis on international institutions or on allies. Accordingly, Israel considers it important to maintain military control over the Jordan Valley and all of the surrounding area to ensure its own safety.

Were Israel to deploy its military forces in the Jordan Valley and the West Bank to prevent rocket and terrorist attacks in line with this thinking, Israelis would perceive less of a threat in the short term. Such an action would constitute an infringement on Palestinian territory and sovereignty, however, and increase the sense of threat felt by Palestinians. Put another way, Israel's approaches thus far to ensure security have lowered threat perceptions among Israelis but heightened those among Palestinians and have therefore not been effective for the attainment of peace.

Consequently, a different approach comprising four pillars is required to achieve a permanent peace and guarantee the safety of both Palestine and Israel. The first pillar is creating a security mechanism for the entire Middle East. The peace proposal put forth by the Arab nations (the Arab Initiative) calls for Israel to withdraw from all occupied territories, in exchange for which the Arab countries would cease their hostile actions and conclude a peace agreement. With this peace agreement as a starting point, the safety of the entire Middle East could be guaranteed if a security infrastructure comprising a missile defense network and an early-warning network including the US and Turkey were to be established and disarmament negotiations and information sharing pursued. Such a regional security framework would more robustly guarantee Israel's safety than its efforts to control the Jordan Valley by unilateral military force.

The second pillar is preventing terrorist/rocket attacks against Israel by deploying a multinational force in Palestine. The lack of a clear-cut framework and a mutual Palestine-Israel agreement has foiled such attempts thus far, and a clearly defined agreement-based framework is required to guarantee a permanent peace and mutual safety through a multinational force.

The third pillar is incorporating Hamas and Hezbollah, non-state actors hostile to Israel, into the security and political systems of Palestine and the Arab countries. This will enable Israel to leave dealings with these non-state actors to the Arab countries and the Palestinian Authority and to concentrate its efforts on negotiations with governments and states.

Supporting these three pillars is the fourth: a complete Israeli withdrawal from the Occupied Territories in Palestine so that the safety of both Israel and Palestine can be guaranteed permanently and effectively.

Comments/discussions

The younger researchers from Israel, Palestine and Japan offered comments on the preceding two presentations, after which a discussion ensued that included questions from the floor. One young Israeli researcher, Mr. Assaf David (Post-Doctoral Fellow, The Truman Institute for the Advancement of Peace, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem) was amenable to the inclusion of non-state actors in the peace process, even while noting the difficulty of forecasting the impact of such a step. He also asserted that the principal factor in the inverse proportionality of the threat perceptions of Israel and Palestine/Arab countries is not so much Israeli policy as the Arab conviction that what is good for Israel is bad for the Arabs.

A young Palestinian researcher, Mr. Amjad al-Dajani (PhD Candidate, Kings College, London), then remarked that it is Israel's unjust occupation measures that are heightening the sense of distrust of Israel among Palestinians. Israel has built numerous settlements in the West Bank, fragmenting the territory under the Palestinian Authority's control, and set up checkpoints on West Bank roads that impede the free flow of traffic. According to Mr. al-Dajani, Israel has forcibly commandeered Palestinian land on the pretext of security and set up checkpoints there, later allocating this land as state-owned land to Jewish settlers for the increase of settlements. He also mentioned that the irresolvability of the Hamas-Fatah dispute can be attributed in part to the lack of interest in this problem in the US and Israel, both of which have overwhelming military power and influence.

Commenting last, Ms. Chie Ezaki (Research Fellow, The Middle East Research Institute of Japan) began by asking Mr. Brom how much effort Prime Minister Fayyad was prepared to make in building a state, assuming US mediation in the reopening of direct peace negotiations, and how effective third-party mediation would be in the peace process. She then asked Mr. al-Dajani about specific means of incorporating non-state actors into the peace process.

The presenters' responses to the above comments/questions from the younger researchers kicked off discussions among the presenters, the commentators and questioners from the floor regarding possible methods for realizing peace, the impact of extreme Islamic fundamentalists such as Al Qaeda, the mediation efforts of neighboring countries and the US, contributions by Japan, etc.

2nd Panel :

The Way to Harmony among Sectarian and Ethnic Groups in Iraq

This panel, mediated by Prof. Keiko Sakai (Professor, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies), discussed the ongoing tensions in Iraq, the underlying causes of these tensions, and the prospects for resolution. The disputes among various factions in Iraq are frequently framed as sectarian or ethnic conflicts, and this panel looked at the actual circumstances and background as well as available methods for overcoming these disputes and building a stable society.

1st Presentation

Dr. Faleh Abduljabar

(President, Iraq Institute for Strategic Studies)

Dr. Abduljabar started his talk by describing the process whereby Iraq was formed as a modern nation-state. His premise was that no state arises naturally, that they are all created by people in a certain era and a certain locale, and that they can be recreated. Consequently, states are not a priori the equivalents of linguistic or ethnic groups.

States of diverse formats have been formed from a mixture of elements. Of these, the industrialized nation-states established in the pre-modern and modern eras have three fundamental elements. The first is networks physically connecting the various regions of the territory comprising the state, e.g., railway networks, telecommunications networks, broadcast networks and the Internet. The second is a system of cultural communication comprising language, educational systems, songs and literature, while the third is a political structure and political organizations that tie all these together.

Iraq is a new nation-state formed after World War I. The territory now constituting Iraq was previously a province of the Ottoman Empire. The UK seized this province from the Ottoman Empire during World War I, and in 1921 created the state of Iraq and placed King Faisal I at its head. Accordingly, Iraq at its founding had only a centralized political system and was lacking in physical networks linking its various regions and in systems for cultural communication that foster a sense of unity among the citizenry.

Among the various territorial residents, the Kurds and Turkmens opposed the creation of the state of Iraq.

It was the Arabs that under these circumstances created physical networks and cultural communication and played the key role in forming a national identity for Iraq. The Arabs were divided religiously between Shiites and Sunnis, but in 1920 they formed an alliance in Baghdad to resist the British occupation. Herein lies the wellspring of Iraqi nationalism. The creation of the nation of Iraq could be called a form of ex post facto nationalism. British colonialism modified an Ottoman province into a state, and resistance to this colonialism created a nation.

As a ruler, Faisal I promoted and encouraged Iraqi nationalism. This policy was an open one, and land – the source of Iraqi wealth as an agricultural country – was allocated to various social groups through tribal leaders. The sectarian and ethnic distribution of landowners formed in this way reflected the respective percentages of religious and ethnic groups in Iraqi society as a whole. This landowner class served as the support base for the monarchy and was the pool from which representatives were sent to the parliament. Under the monarchy, economic and political participation as well as cultural autonomy were guaranteed to all sectarian and ethnic groups. The monarchy ended in 1940, but the latter period of this reign might well be considered the best period in Iraq's history. The interests of the nation as a whole were given precedence over sectarian and ethnic interests and, though there were political parties divided along sectarian and ethnic lines, they did not garner great support.

The liberal and open monarchy was overthrown by a military dictatorship. Although this military dictatorship did enact a number of farmland reforms, it failed both in managing the agricultural economy and in achieving industrialization. The state and the economy thus became dependent on petroleum and, by controlling petroleum assets, the government assumed control over the economy and society. Instead of people paying taxes to the government and then holding it accountable, the government purchased loyalty by distributing oil revenues to various groups. Because Iraq's political structure was a military dictatorship, economic assets were controlled by a handful of military officers and the market economy ceased to exist. The government also imposed its cultural views on the people, who were no longer able to engage freely in cultural activities.

With the dictatorship distributing assets arbitrarily to selected people, Iraqi society became fragmented and the cracks deepened. Economic and regional disparities were tied to ethnic and sectarian differences under Saddam Hussein's dictatorial rule, with the focus of political dispute shifting from one between communism and other ideologies to one involving sectarian and ethnic identities. The 1991 Gulf War took place during this period. To counter the US threat, Hussein distributed funds in an attempt to revitalize tribes. At the same time, religious forces enjoyed the support of the public at large and gained

in strength.

When the Hussein regime was toppled in 2003, tribal power reliant on the government for funds diminished, and the religious forces receiving funding from the general public picked up further strength. Politics thus became increasingly sectarian. Naturally, these religious forces were not monoliths, but rather featured a mixture of elements and ideologies. As in conflicts the world over, this confrontation was not so much over religious precepts as over economic interests. The facts that sectarian political forces held considerable sway and that sectarian strife grew more intense between 2003 and 2005 stem from the increasing politicization of religion groups as politics became more sectarian in the course of the historical developments described above.

2nd Presentation

Prof. Keiko Sakai (Professor, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies)

Following up on the presentation by Dr. Abduljabar on the historical context of Iraq's sectarian groups and sectarian politics, Prof. Sakai, the second presenter, pointed out that individual sectarian groups did not arise spontaneously of their own accord but were formed through mutual interaction under specific political and social conditions; she also noted the problematic nature of the conflation of Iraq's sectarianism with geography in discussions in Europe, the US and Japan. In other words, the use of expressions connecting specific regions with religious factions/ethnic groups – e.g., describing northern Iraq as the Kurdish region, central and western Iraq as the Sunni region and southern Iraq as the Shiite region – reflects a shortsighted view that these regions have been consolidated by sectarian and ethnic factors.

In the March 2010 elections, a coalition of two major Shiite political parties – the National Iraqi Alliance and the State of Law Coalition – acquired many parliamentary seats in the south of the country, while al-Iraqiyya, a non-sectarian political union, won many seats in central and northern Iraq. These results led the media and others to claim that the National Iraqi Alliance and the State of Law Coalition had established a voting bloc in the south because they are Shiite parties, and that al-Iraqiyya won seats in the central and northern regions as a de facto representative of the Sunnis.

In rebutting this explanation, Prof. Sakai conceded that it could be said that voting behavior in the south did to a certain degree reflect a Shiite mobilization network matching the regional character, but noted that voting behavior based on Sunni sectarian consciousness was nowhere apparent in the center and north of the country. Support for political parties differed considerably by province in central and northern Iraq.

Tracking political behavior in Sunni areas from 2003 onward, a three-stage transformation can be seen. In the first stage, from 2003 to January 2005, the Sunnis boycotted political participation. Sunni politicians and political parties boycotted the 1st national government elections in January 2005, and Sunni representation was lacking at this stage.

Entering the second stage during 2005, Sunni political parties participated for the first time in the elections held in December of that year. The core Iraqi Islamic Party sought to win seats by strongly asserting its claim to represent the Sunnis. Nevertheless, the Iraqi Islamic Party could not win as many votes as the Shiite parties in the south. The Iraqi Islamic Party was unable to obtain enough support to consolidate the entire Sunni regions and, indeed, it was criticized as a political party unable to realize the wishes of the Sunni regions.

At last entering the third stage from about 2008, local political parties emerged in the northern province of Ninawa and the western province of Anbar. The circumstances that arose therefrom was a sectarian consolidation of Sunnis, but with local political parties having electoral power bases in these provinces attracting more support than the Iraqi Islamic Party that stressed action along sectarian lines.

Against the backdrop of the aforementioned changes, it can be seen that the al-Iraqiyya candidates winning seats in the Sunni regions of central and northern Iraq in the March 2010 elections comprise a mixture of people with varying positions and support bases. The support gained by central government politicians representing the sectarian interests of Sunnis can certainly be regarded as one factor that helped al-Iraqiyya win so many seats in Sunni areas as a whole. What should be noted here, however, is that the high number of supporting votes can be attributed to the fact that politicians closely tied to local parties and local communities who emerged during the aforementioned third stage were brought in.

Interestingly enough, al-Iraqiyya's support base differs considerably between the northern provinces of Ninawa and Anbar and the eastern provinces of Salah ad Din and Diyala. Simply put, the candidates elected in the provinces of Ninawa and Anbar were people of a tribal background, people renowned in their communities as attorneys or doctors, and people who had served as local leaders of regional political parties. On the other hand, the regional political parties were extremely weak in the provinces of Diyala and Salah ad Din, lumped in as part of the same Sunni region, and candidates did not utilize tribal networks to fight their election campaigns. While it is generally said that al-Iraqiyya received votes primarily from Sunnis, its voting base in fact differs greatly by province. Consequently, looking at the five central and

northern provinces in which al-Iraqiyya won many seats, it cannot be said that al-Iraqiyya did well here just because these provinces are “Sunni regions.”

The tendency for regional characteristics to merge with sectarianism as a consequence of economic, social and political inhibitors in particular regions, as Dr. Abduljabar alluded, is readily apparent in the Shiite areas but not in the Sunni areas. Some parts of the Sunni regions emphasize tribal affiliations, and others hold to the tradition of the former Ba’athist Party. To understand current politics in Iraq, one needs to go beyond looking at disputes through the lens of rough sectarian divisions and examine in detail the political directions determined by political and social circumstances in individual provinces/regions.

Comments/discussions

This panel’s two commentators were Dr. Nabil al-Tikriti (Associate Professor, University of Mary Washington) and Dr. Dai Yamao (Lecturer, Kyushu University). Dr. al-Tikriti commented first, pointing out that, from the perspective of historical research on Iraq under Ottoman rule, Iraq was at the time divided into three provinces – Mosul in the north, Baghdad in the center, and Basra in the south – but this division was not based on a demographic distribution of ethnic groups and religious affiliations. The current state of Iraq is one artificially created by the UK on the basis of the aforementioned three provinces, and the suggestion of dividing up the country among the Kurds, the Sunnis and the Shiites into a northern Kurdish area, a central Sunni area and a southern Shiite area is grounded on mistaken US assertions from 2003 onward deriving from intellectual laziness. The actual ethnic and sectarian distribution is quite complex, and multiple ethnic and sectarian groups cohabitate in the same regions. While internal disputes did exist, ethnic and sectarian disputes were not apparent prior to 2003. Disputes prior to the US invasion sprang from differing attitudes on the ruling Ba’athist Party and ideological differences among proponents of Arab nationalism, Iraq nationalism, and communism.

On the role expected of Japan, Dr. al-Tikriti stated that an effective approach would be to work toward the stabilization of Iraq in collaboration with Turkey. Turkey has been rapidly strengthening its ties with Iraq and Syria in recent years. He stated that Japan could assist constructive involvement by Turkey in contributing greatly to arrangements for joint control of the water resources of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers with the river basin countries (Turkey, Syria, Iraq) and in building stability and peace.

Next came the comments of Dr. Yamao, who spoke on the causes of the sectarian conflict seen during the 2005 elections and on the reasons this sectarian conflict had not been systemically cemented into a

sectarian structure similar to Lebanon's. First, in identifying the factors behind the outbreak of sectarian conflict, he pointed out that none of the forces in the 2005 election had any means of gathering the support of eligible voters other than their sectarian networks. Because the Shiite parties had been in exile overseas during the Hussein regime, they did not have a sufficient base of support within the country and thus had no choice but to rely on sectarian networks. The forces that had remained in Iraq and seen their political activities suppressed by the Hussein regime had no experience in organized political mobilization and naturally came to depend on sectarian networks. These circumstances seem to indicate that the burgeoning of sectarian political mobilization may have been a direct cause of the sectarian conflict.

Nevertheless, the intensification of the sectarian conflict and its escalation into a civil war made both politicians and the general public aware of the need for national reconciliation, and support could no longer be attracted with sectarian platforms. The Shiite ruling parties built up a base of support within Iraqi society through control of the government, while the political parties that remained in Iraq during the Hussein regime also gained experience in organized political activities. There thus emerged a diversity of opinions among political parties of the same sectarian affiliation. Means for political mobilization other than sectarian networks were developed due to the three changes above, and it became no longer possible to push a unified platform for a particular sectarian affiliation or to attract voters with a sectarian platform. As a consequence, the focus of political platforms shifted to national reconciliation and the sectarian conflict died down.

In summary, it is a mistake to look at present-day politics in Iraq through the lens of sectarian conflict; instead we must examine the process of mergers between political parties based on actual policies and practical power struggles. More specifically, attention must be paid to the various policies aimed at national reconciliation and to post-election power struggles to form a parliamentary majority.

Following these remarks by the commentators, a question-and-answer session with the presenters ensued. Audience members posed questions on the influence in Iraq of the concerned parties Iran and the US, changes in the views of the Iraqi people, approaches to problems concerning national reconciliation, and the future of Iraq as a country. The topics raised in the presentations, the comments and the questions were then discussed utilizing the results of public opinion surveys and the latest research findings.

3rd Panel:
General Discussion: Peace Making in the Region

This panel served as a wrap-up of the symposium as a whole, touching on the Palestine-Israel conflict and the present state and prospects of Iraq discussed in the 1st and 2nd panels and addressing the key issue of building peace in the Middle East, a region fraught with flashpoints for a variety of disputes. With Prof. Ryoji Tateyama (Professor, National Defense Academy) serving as moderator, presentations were offered by researchers from Egypt and Jordan, both of which have overcome difficulties to conclude and maintain peace treaties with Israel.

1st Presentation

Dr. Hasan Al-Momani

(Director, Regional Centre on Conflict Prevention, Jordan Institute of Diplomacy)

Dr. Al-Momani spoke on the mutual relations established between the governments and peoples of Jordan and Israel and assessed the peace in place since Jordan and Israel signed a peace treaty in 1994.

When the peace treaty was concluded in 1994, both Jordan and Israel held out optimistic hopes for implementing and maintaining the peace and deriving mutual benefits therefrom, as this treaty resolved all the principal issues between Jordan and Israel – Israeli occupation of the east bank of the Jordan River, security issues, and the reversion of Jerusalem. Although the fate of Palestinian refugees and other issues remained unresolved, these were not bilateral matters between Jordan and Israel but rather matters involving multiple parties and thus transcending the peace between Jordan and Israel.

From the conclusion of the peace treaty until 1996, relations and cooperation between the two countries made steady progress, marked by the mutual opening of embassies and the establishment of normal diplomatic relations. In 1996, though, diplomatic relations between Jordan and Israel and the sentiments of their peoples toward each other deteriorated when the Netanyahu administration took power in Israel. This was, of course, due to the Netanyahu government's high-handed policies toward the Palestinians. Worsening relations between Israel and Palestine led to a deterioration in relations between Jordan and Israel in the context of the Israeli-Arab conflict.

Nevertheless, official diplomatic relations were maintained. Public opinion in Jordan still leaned increasingly against peace with Israel. Jordan has accommodated numerous Palestinian refugees within its borders, and the Jordanian people have an affinity for the Palestinians. Jordan is the closest Arab country to Palestine, and thus is significantly impacted by developments in the Palestine-Israel conflict.

That impact also extended to foreign policy, as diplomatic relations with Israel under the Netanyahu government chilled. Diplomatic relations with Jordan later improved to a certain degree when the Labor Party took power in Israel. Regarded as “the second Rabin,” Prime Minister Barak was expected to actively push for peace with the Arabs and the Palestinians. With the failure of the Camp David negotiations and the outbreak of the Second Intifada, though, relations between Jordan and Israel worsened considerably from 2000 onward.

King Hussein, who concluded the peace treaty, as well as his successor King Abdullah have taken a consistent stand in favor of peace between Jordan and Israel and between the Arabs and the Israelis. Relations with Israel over the past 16 years have not always been smooth, but diplomatic relations have been maintained throughout. Jordan’s leaders have worked hard to facilitate progress in the Palestine-Israel talks in the recognition that peace with Israel will continue to be rejected by many Jordanians, and that close cooperation and co-existence with Israel cannot be achieved, until a comprehensive peace is realized between Palestine and Israel.

In other words, relations between Jordan and Israel constitute part of the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict that has caught up the entire Middle East, and these relations are quite sensitive to developments in Palestine-Israel relations. Consequently, achieving a comprehensive accord and peace within the Arab-Israeli and Palestine-Israel construct is essential for stabilizing Jordan-Israel relations and making them constructive.

The Jordanian government has long regarded improved relations with Israel and a comprehensive resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict as key issues. In line with this view, it has overcome many crises to maintain diplomatic relations with Israel. Since 2002 Jordan has played a leading role in peace negotiations between Arabs and Israelis, and it is committed to continued efforts to establish a comprehensive peace for the Middle East as a whole.

2nd Presentation

Dr. Emad Gad Badras Badrous

(Head of Israeli Study Program, Al Ahram Center for Political & Strategic Studies [ACPSS])

In 1979 Egypt became the first Arab country to recognize and conclude a peace treaty with Israel. Dr. Badrous, head of the Israeli Study Program at the Al Ahram Center for Political & Strategic Studies, a research institute affiliated with the Egyptian government, focused on the Arab-Israeli conflict and discussed how the parties involved can reach a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

Unlike conflicts over specific territory or resources, protracted large-scale conflicts such as those in Northern Ireland and the Balkans and the Arab-Israeli conflict draw in all the residents in the area of conflict and surrounding areas, becoming embedded in the lifestyles and sentiments of the residents of both sides. Three requirements must be met to resolve such deeply-rooted conflicts.

The first is that both sides must recognize that the conflict cannot be resolved by military force; Egypt and Israel reached this recognition after the Fourth Arab-Israeli War (1973). The second is that there must be political leaders who believe no military resolution is possible; in the peace between Egypt and Israel, Egypt's President Sadat and Israel's Prime Minister Begin were such political leaders. The third is that there must be mediation by a superpower; it was the US that mediated between Egypt and Israel. It also proved beneficial that the peace between Egypt and Israel was concluded when Likud and other right-wing political parties were in power in Israel.

However, peace accords do not resolve all problems. To completely resolve a conflict and achieve a true peace, many problems must be addressed even after the peace treaty has been signed and both parties have abandoned military resolutions. There is presently an Israeli embassy in Egypt and an Egyptian embassy in Israel, but building and maintaining normal diplomatic relations took various twists and turns following ratification of the peace treaty.

Relations between Egypt and Israel between the 1979 ratification of the peace treaty and 1993 were known as a "cold peace." Bilateral relations grew closer with the emergence of Prime Minister Rabin in Israel, but relations became cool once again after Prime Minister Rabin was assassinated and Prime Minister Netanyahu took power in 1996. Relations at the moment are steadily growing closer, moving in the direction of a "warm peace."

The key point arising from developments in Egyptian-Israeli relations after the conclusion of the peace treaty is that Egypt's policy towards Israel focused not just on Egypt-Israel relations but also on Israel's relations with the other Arab countries of Palestine and Syria. Egypt has always been supportive of the idea of other Arab countries concluding peace settlements with Israel.

Nevertheless, Egypt has not considered helping non-state actors reach a peace with Israel because Hamas and Hezbollah as non-state actors do not sufficiently understand Egypt's national character, its domestic circumstances or its foreign policy. Despite their attempts at negotiations with the Egyptian government, neither Hamas nor Hezbollah understand diplomacy between states.

Hezbollah has failed in its efforts to influence the Egyptian people, and Hamas, too, was unsuccessful in seeking to win over the Egyptian people during the Gaza War. Relations between Egypt and non-state actors are heading into a critical period. The weapons being smuggled by Hezbollah's network and Hamas through tunnels built between Gaza and Egypt's Sinai Peninsula pose a threat to Egypt's safety.

Egypt will endeavor to maintain and improve its peaceful relations with Israel as it works for the conclusion of a peace treaty between Palestine and Israel. Palestinian Authority Chairman Abbas does not now believe that there can be any military solution to the conflict with Israel so, if the three aforementioned requirements for conflict resolution apply, a peace treaty could be concluded between Israel and Palestine in the near future.

Comments/discussions

Comments on the preceding two presentations were added by Prof. Akifumi Ikeda, who moderated the first panel, and Prof. Keiko Sakai, who moderated the second. As the first commentator, Prof. Sakai noted three points concerning circumstances in Iraq connected with the two presentations focusing on peaceful resolutions of conflicts with Israel.

The first point was that Arab countries regard the present Iraqi government as a Shiite-dominated administration and view Iraq's current situation within the framework of a sectarian conflict, discouraging efforts by Arab countries to address this conflict and making resolution of the conflict more difficult. The next point was that the preeminence of the Arab countries in the Middle East is giving way to that of Iran and Turkey. The third point was that the Arab governments of Egypt and Jordan have not sufficiently addressed virtual popular sentiment that has transcended state and ethnic frameworks and been cultivated

via the Internet and satellite broadcasts. Examples of this last point include the considerable support gained by Hezbollah among the people of Sunni Arab countries in resisting the 2006 Israeli invasion of Lebanon and the rise in Turkey's popularity among Arab populaces when Israel attacked an international humanitarian aid flotilla sailing from Turkey to Gaza and killed many Turks.

The final commentator, Prof. Akifumi Ikeda, compared the peace accords between Israel and Egypt/Jordan with the attempted peace accords between Israel and Palestine, and stipulated one reason for the lack of progress in the Israel-Palestine peace process: the absence of a buffer zone between Israelis and Palestinians such as those separating Israel and Egypt/Jordan. The Sinai Peninsula lies between Israel and Egypt, and Palestinian territory (the West Bank) lies between Jordan and Israel. This geographical distance separates Egyptians and Jordanians from Israelis. This facilitated the acceptance of a peace accord among political leaders. On the other hand, there is no such buffer zone or geographical distance between Palestine and Israel, as Palestinians and Israelis live in the same land, and this proximity has given rise to repeated disputes. Even if political leaders were to propose a peace accord, the hostility and animosity rooted in the lives and sentiments of both sides would not be easily eliminated, and this is believed to have become a major hindrance to progress in the peace process.

Prof. Ikeda also noted that threat perceptions and frameworks for negotiation are also more complex now than when Egypt and Jordan concluded their peace accords with Israel. Political and military groups such as Hezbollah, Hamas and Al Qaeda have garnered a certain level of support during the first decade of this century, making it difficult to resolve issues through conventional negotiations between nation-states.

Following the above presentations and comments, questions were taken from the floor and the full symposium concluded with discussions of problems that must be resolved in order to stabilize the entire Middle East and build peace: understanding Hamas and other non-state actors and incorporating them into negotiations, ascertaining the actual effectiveness of making the parties to the conflict invisible to each other or separating them via walls of separation/segregation, assessing the involvement of Turkey and Iran, determining equitable allocations of water resources, etc.

Open Symposium
on
**Conflicts and Peacebuilding in the Middle
East: Palestine, Israel and Iraq**

Date: 3 November 2010
Venue: The Tokai University Club, Tokyo

Opening Remarks

Amb. Yoshiji Nogami

President, The Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA) :

Amb. Yoshiji Nogami, President, JIIA: Since the time has come, we would like to begin the opening symposium. I have the pleasure of serving as your moderator. I am Nogami, president of the Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA). It is a fine day outside and it is a holiday. I would like to thank you for coming here in spite of such conditions. The title for our symposium today is “Conflicts and Peacebuilding in the Middle East: Palestine, Israel and Iraq.” We will be discussing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and also the situation in Iraq which still remains far from normal. We shall also be discussing conflict resolution and peacebuilding in the Middle East in general, so we will be discussing these three general themes.

As you all know, with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, for years that conflict has been going on. More recently, at long last direct talks resumed between the Israelis and Palestinians, but the talks in Washington have been suspended, partly due to the midterm elections as well, I believe. But at least it has not gone back to square one and yet we do not have a clear outlook ahead either. As far as Iraq is concerned, there still remain domestic confrontations and eight months have passed since the elections, and yet the government has not been formed. As you read in the press, there still are numerous suicide bombings, although the situation differs from region to region. So taking all these into consideration we have experts from Palestine, Israel, Jordan and Egypt for this program. When we read Japanese newspapers these days the world map as seen from Japan is shrinking. It is pretty much limited to the Asia-Pacific, and press reports covering areas beyond the Asia-Pacific are now limited. Visits by Japanese dignitaries to the Middle East have also declined in frequency, so the major question for us is how to engage ourselves in the issues of the region.

Unfortunately our radar screen, shall I say the Middle East region is beginning, I am afraid, to fall off our radar screen. That is to say, interest in Japan vis-à-vis the Middle East is actually waning, so we have to... I think this is the time for us to ask our questions. What role should Japan play in relation to the situation in the Middle East and that is something I would like to discuss toward the end of the day. As JIIA, of course we have to deal with questions of the Asia-Pacific, but we would like to take as broad as possible perspectives and look at Israel, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and we do in fact engage in regular exchange of views with our colleagues in those countries. Also we invite experts from those countries and organize these opportunities to exchange views in front of audience. This is going to be a rather long day, but in the morning we shall discuss the Palestine-Israel conflict. In the afternoon we will discuss Iraq sectarian

conflicts. And then in the last session we will have a general discussion regarding peacemaking in the Middle East.

I am sure you are busy, but this is a valuable opportunity and I hope you will take part actively in our deliberations. So with that, I would like to conclude my opening remarks and move on right away to the first panel which is on the so-called Middle East conflict or Palestine-Israel conflict. And Professor Akifumi Ikeda, vice president of Toyo Eiwa University, will be the moderator for this panel. Professor Ikeda, please.

1st Panel :

“Present Situation and Prospects of the Palestine-Israel Peace Process: Mutual Understanding and Efforts toward Progress”

Professor Akifumi Ikeda, Vice President, Toyo Eiwa University: Well, good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I am Ikeda of Toyo Eiwa University. I have the pleasure of serving as your moderator for the morning session. The major role for me, I believe, is to serve as your timekeeper. Ahead of this open symposium, yesterday we had a closed session and we had very intense exchange of views. We had a lot to learn. That said, within the limited time we engaged in very, shall I say, heated debate. Naturally we ran out of time. In fact, we ran over time, so today I shall be rather strict with regard to timekeeping for the presenters and panelists. We will hear two presentations and then we shall hear from three panelists. We will hear their comments with regard to reports or presentations, 15 minutes each. Three minutes before the time, we will ring this bell and I hope you will try to wrap up in the remaining three minutes.

First I would like to ask Mr. Shlomo Brom from Israel to give his presentation. Mr. Shlomo is a retired brigadier general of the Israeli Air Force. He will be discussing from the standpoint of a practitioner, but also as senior research fellow of the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) at university. From the standpoint of national security as well he has been looking at the Middle East situation. So, Mr. Brom, please.

1st Presentation

Brigadier General (retired) Shlomo Brom

Senior Research Fellow

The Institute for National Securities Studies [INSS]

Thanks, Professor Ikeda and good morning. In public opinion polls that are carried out quite frequently on both sides of the divide – the Israeli side and the Palestinian side – they show ups and downs on different subjects such as support for violence. But there is one very consistent trend, and that is the fact that there is very broad support for a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, based on the two-state solution, on both sides and that does not change. It did not change, by the way, during the very difficult years of the Second Intifada as well. There is very wide support for conclusion of a peace agreement between the two sides on this basis that will enable the two states to live peacefully, side by side.

There is also wide support on the two sides for making the necessary concessions to each dissent. But on the other side, since the new Israeli government headed by Mr. Netanyahu was established almost two years ago, the two sides failed in having real negotiations, meaningful negotiations. They discussed endlessly the subject of a total freeze of settlement, and when an agreement on freeze of settlement was reached and it enabled so-called “indirect talks,” they were not real negotiations. They were talks about talks, namely on preconditions for having real negotiations, and when the two sides moved to direct negotiations, it took place for only one month and then reached the end of the period of total freezing of negotiations. Again we are in what seems as a total stalemate. Of course the question is what is the reason for this discrepancy between what public opinion polls show us, namely public opinion on both sides, and the total stalemate in the negotiation process between Israelis and Palestinians.

In my opinion, the reasons for that is some combination of basic reasons, fundamental reasons and mistakes that were done by those that are supposed to manage the negotiation process, namely the US facilitator and mediator. What are the basic reasons for these failures of the two parties to negotiate and conclude an agreement? I think that the first failure is the effect of the collapse of the Oslo Process and the Second Intifada. These two events had a very dramatic impact on the psychological mood and the psyche on the two sides. They created a situation of deep mutual mistrust between the two sides. The Israeli narrative is

that Israel has demonstrated its will to end the occupation and to implement the two-state solution in 2000 at the Camp David Summit when Prime Minister Barak offered his terms for the resolution of conflict. And Israelis feel disappointment and betrayed by the Palestinian reaction which was first – and I am talking about the Israeli narrative – not to react at all to the Israeli suggestions, stop the negotiation, and start a very ugly and bloody intifada that was aimed mostly at innocent civilians. That is the Israeli narrative.

The Palestinian narrative is that the Israelis did not intend to end the occupation; the only intention is to prolong their occupation by other means. And from the point of view of the Palestinian narrative, also the nature of the intifada, the bloody and ugly nature of the intifada is a result of disproportionate responses by Israel. That created very deep mutual mistrust between the two sides and in a situation of deep mutual mistrust, neither of the sides are willing to take sides because they believe that they will not lead to an agreement between the two sides anyway. That is one reason. I was telling you about the result of public opinion polls. In the same public opinion polls the same people, when they are asked, they say on one end that they support the two-state solution. They support negotiations. But on the other end, when they are asked “Do you believe that the two sides will succeed in achieving an agreement?” Their answer is usually negative. No, there are not going to be effective negotiations. The two sides will not succeed in concluding an agreement and when they are asked why it is that, they say it is because of the other party. Israelis are saying it is because of the Palestinians, and Palestinians are saying it is because of the Israelis. That is one reason for that.

The other is then the domestic political situation in the two parties. I will start with the Israeli side. It is always better to talk about your own problems before you are pointing at the problems of the other party. I think the two parties have dysfunctional political systems. The problems in the Israeli party should be very much understood by Japanese because I believe that you are in a very similar situation. We have an election system that produces a very fragmented political system. Because of a completely proportional election system, many small parties are elected. Nobody of this party has a majority. You know, we are talking in Israel about the ruling party, the Likud Party. The Likud Party is having 27 members of Knesset out of 120. It means that every government is a coalition government and it means that it is a combination of relatively large number of small parties. Each party is pulling in another direction and usually an Israeli prime minister has to invest more time in maintaining his coalition and his government than in dealing with the state affairs. We saw very important subjects such as concluding peace with the Palestinians and resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

So if you take the combination of the two things, for an Israeli prime minister – and it does not matter whether it is Netanyahu or another person – it is very difficult for him to decide to take the risks that are linked with a real attempt to negotiate peace, to conclude an agreement, until he is very certain that he will achieve it because it may end in his political demise. That is on the Israeli side. On the Palestinian side, they have a very similar problem – a very fragmented political system. In the case of the Palestinians, they are fragmented not only politically but geographically. Actually we have two Palestinian areas: West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The Gaza Strip is controlled by Hamas, a radical Islamic movement that its basic policy is non-recognition of Israel, no negotiations with Israel, but it is controlling quite strongly the Gaza Strip. On the other end, the West Bank is controlled by Fatah government. Fatah is... what I can describe as the national secular party.

The two governments have a problem of legitimacy because in the last elections, the last elections were won by Hamas, so the government in the West Bank is not an elected government actually. And the government in Gaza is also not an elected government because time has passed, they should have new elections, but nobody of the party is interested in new elections because none of them are confident that they are going to win these elections. So we have a strong government in Gaza, but a government that does not want negotiations on peace, and a weak government in the West Bank that wants negotiations on peace, but then there is the question on the Israeli side, are they capable of implementing any agreement that they will reach? Are they capable of concluding an agreement in a situation in which they have to look over their shoulders and ask themselves what will be the reaction of Hamas and of Palestinian public opinion? In what way can our public use it against us?

So in this situation, it is very difficult to envisage that the two parties will succeed in reaching an agreement within a year. Does it mean that there is no possibility to make progress? I believe that it is possible to make progress, but by devising a more comprehensive process, a process that will include negotiation to a permanent status agreement. But in parallel with this negotiation, a process of changing reality on the ground that will be combined with the state-building process that is taking place on the Palestinian side, under the leadership of the Palestinian prime minister, Salam Fayyad, and also Israeli steps that will enable changing the situation on the ground. And these steps can be in the shape, for example, of transferring responsibility and control of additional areas in the West Bank to the Palestinian side, coupled also with

steps that will be taken on the regional level. I do not have enough time to speak about the influence of the regional environment on what is happening in the Israeli-Palestinian track, but I believe that one of the ways of ensuring progress is by neutralizing potential spoiling elements, such as the Iranian influence, the influence of Syria, and that can be achieved by, for example, resumption of negotiations with Syria. Thank you.

Professor Ikeda: Thank you very much. You finished just on time. We had a very good start. Now the next speaker is Dr. Omar Dajani. Right now he is a professor at the University of the Pacific in the US, but as his name will show, he is from a famous family of Palestine and his expertise is security and international relations. He is going to look at the Middle East peace from those perspectives. He is well known for his analysis and comments. Now, please.

2nd Presentation

Dr. Omar Dajani

Professor, University of the Pacific

Ohayo. It is a pleasure to be here. Thank you, Ambassador Nogami. Thank you, Professor Ikeda and everyone else who has been involved in organizing this wonderful two-day event. I think that Brigadier General Brom has presented a thoughtful and concise analysis of the challenges that we face moving forward toward political reconciliation. You may be shocked or simply pleased to hear that there is very little that I disagree with in his assessment. I would like to turn to looking forward with respect to potential policy responses to one of the issues that is most central to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and that would be at the same time a critical part of any peace agreement moving forward. That is the issue of security.

Since 1993, security has been on the agenda of Palestinian and Israeli peace talks, and has been recognized to be one of the core permanent status issues, as they are called, along with issues like borders, Jerusalem, refugees and water. And both sides agree that security will be the lynchpin of any future arrangements concluded between Palestinians and Israelis. But there is a definitional challenge: security for whom and security against what? Over the last number of years, attention within the context of negotiations has tended to focus on security threats facing Israel and Israelis have identified a range of threats, some of which were of greater importance in 1999-2000 when permanent status negotiations began and some of which have emerged to loom larger over the last decade. The nature of the threats includes fears of cross-border infiltration by terrorists bent on attacks on civilian areas within Israel; the possibility of rocket fire being launched from within the West Bank or Gaza Strip or from the south of Lebanon against Israeli civilian areas and also Israel's transportation infrastructure which runs along the spine of the country in the eastern part of the coastal plain.

In addition to that, Israelis cite concerns about long-range missile threats potentially carrying weapons of mass destruction (WMD) whereas in the round of negotiations that I was a part of as legal advisor to the Palestinian team from 1999 until 2001, the concern articulated was Iraq. As you all know well that concerns a focus more recently on the threat presented by Iran, but Israelis are quick to point out that in the context of a changing and sometimes unstable region, risks of regime change can blossom into threats to Israeli security at the strategic level down the line. And finally, along the same lines, Israelis point to the more remote possibility of a threat of ground invasion or harassment by neighbors also in the event of regime change within Jordan or Egypt or one of the other states within Israel's inner circle.

Now while Palestinian interests have tended more often to be characterized as concerns related to sovereignty or to retention of territory, Palestinian concerns may also be understood through the lens of security. And indeed many of these security concerns, like Israel's, are driven by the unhappy experience of the last several decades. What is the nature of Palestinian threat perceptions going into a peace negotiation? The first born particularly of the experience during the Oslo Process is concerns of economic strangulation through Israeli control over movement of persons and goods through the Palestinian territory, control that might be achieved through retention of territory in the Jordan Valley, through control over Palestine's borders, through control over the Jerusalem area, and control over other forms of access to the external world such as airports and sea ports. And Palestinians are unwilling to return to a situation in which their ability to move is subordinated to Israeli security concerns on a daily basis.

Secondly, Palestinians fear the possibility of attack or harassment by Israeli militants, particularly in circumstances where they might be operating under the cover of the Israel Defense Forces. They fear that Israeli retention of territory in the Jordan Valley creates risks for Palestinians in the hinterland there and that substantial territorial annexation around settlement areas might lead to the same result. They are also concerned, based on past experience, about the possibility of attacks on civilian areas by Israel's armed forces, either unprovoked or in retaliation for attacks by Palestinian militants. And finally, there is concern among Palestinians turning away from Israel and toward the region about intervention or subversion by other neighboring governments or by non-state actors. And while I have the president of Iran and the spiritual leaders of Hezbollah depicted here, Palestinians identify threats in a range of different directions.

Now in order for a peace agreement to work, it is necessary for it to reduce both Israeli threat perceptions and Palestinian threat perceptions. But the Israeli security concept that has been articulated over the last 10 years in the context of negotiations and in public diplomacy outside of negotiations has rested on three premises that I will submit to you form a very unstable foundation for reducing both sides' threat perceptions. The first of those premises is that the hostility within the region is inexorable, that it will never end regardless of a peace agreement and irrational. Major General Shlomo Yanai, a member of the Israeli team in negotiations in 1999-2001 said in one of the first sessions about this issue that in recognizing the contribution of peace to security, peace cannot be a substitute for security. I think that Yanai was expressing conventional wisdom within the Israeli security establishment that peace is not the same as security.

A second premise – and I am happy to elaborate on each of these during our discussion later on if that is useful – is that Israel cannot rely on international institutions or allies as means of protecting itself against threats of this kind. Menachem Begin said to President Jimmy Carter at the Camp David peace talks back

in 1979 “In the whole world there is no guarantee that can guarantee a guarantee.” And what Prime Minister Begin was expressing was the view that international institutions are likely to prove unreliable at critical moments and Begin may have been thinking of the UN enforcement force in the Sinai. Subsequent Israeli leaders also point to UNIFIL (United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon) or the EU BAM (EU Border Assistance to Moldova and Ukraine). They say this is an unsteady basis for our security. And Israelis take these two premises and regard them as yielding a third which is that the retention of territory or control over territory is necessary for security. Retired Major General Giora Eiland, who has played an important role in Israeli planning circles, just released a paper around a month ago arguing that only effective Israeli control of the Jordan Valley along the border with Jordan can prevent the smuggling of anti-aircraft and anti-tank missiles.

Eiland was expressing a view that is linked to that of the Netanyahu government and a view that regards not just the Jordan Valley, but also parts of the western West Bank, and also airspace. Now what I would submit to you is that the problem with the security concept I have just articulated is that while implementing it reduces Israeli threat perceptions in the short run, it raises Palestinian threat perceptions, particularly insofar as Palestinian threat perceptions are linked up with continued Israeli presence on Palestinian territory. What I want to suggest is that a different approach is necessary, one built upon four pillars, and one that is responsive to both sides’ needs that involves elements that are mutually reinforcing, that is capable of being durable, and that also involves redundant responses to the threats that I have outlined. Let me talk about each of the four pillars briefly. The first is the creation of a regional security apparatus. Now I think you are all familiar with the Arab Peace Initiative which has promised normalization with Israel or at least an end of hostilities in return for Israeli withdrawal from Arab territory.

What I want to suggest is that in addition to that kind of paper security, security on paper, there is the opportunity because of the deployment by the US already of infrastructure for missile defense and early warning in the Persian Gulf, negotiations for infrastructure of that kind between the US and Turkey, in Turkey’s east, and the possibility that could be created in the context of Israeli-Arab peace for much broader establishment of security relationships for both missile defense and early warning, and then also for intelligence sharing, and perhaps later, arms control negotiations. Israel’s defense against the strategic threats I have articulated earlier could be much more robust than the mere retention of the Jordan Valley could ever hope to achieve. Secondly, and again I would be happy to elaborate on any of these later during our discussion, the deployment of a multinational peace mission within Palestine could do much to address concerns about both infiltration into Israel by terrorists, and short-range rocket fire. But whereas previous international missions have faltered because of an unclear framework of consent and because of

deployment in the context of conflict, what would distinguish this mission is that it would only end...
[break in recording] Israeli-Palestinian cooperation. Yes, exactly.

A mission of this kind would only end upon the consent of both of the parties, rather than merely one of them. And in addition, it would be deployed in the context of the implementation of a peace agreement, rather than in an effort to end a conflict still raging on the ground. A third element is the integration of non-state actors – and here I mean Hamas in the Palestinian context and Hezbollah in the Lebanese context – into the security and political institutions of the countries where they are operating. I think that there is more of an appetite for reconciliation on the part of both Hamas and Fatah at present than there has been in a good amount of time. I think that reconciliation serves not only Palestinian interests, but also Israeli interests, in part for the reasons that Shlomo outlined, and in part because integration of non-state actors into government bolsters Israel's deterrent capacity by allowing Israel to focus on state actors rather than more difficult to pin down non-state actors in constructing its deterrent.

I think all of these pursued in tandem with full withdrawal which Palestinians would understand to represent an end of occupation have the possibility of yielding a much more durable and effective response both to Palestinian and Israeli threat perceptions than the retention of territory. And since my time is up, perhaps during our discussion I can discuss how we begin along that path.

Comments/discussions

Professor Ikeda: Thank you very much, Dr. Dajani. Well we are on time but we have listened to two distinguished speakers. Now from Israel and Palestine and from Japan, I would like to listen to the opinions of the up and coming researchers as panelists. Therefore, I would like to ask each of the panelists to give their views, each five minutes or so. If you could share with us your view, I would appreciate it. The first panelist is Mr. Assaf David. He is a post-doctoral fellow at The Truman Institute for the Advancement of Peace, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Just recently he wrote a dissertation on the Jordan Army. Mr. Assaf David, please.

Mr. Assaf David, Post-Doctoral Fellow, The Truman Institute for the Advancement of Peace, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to pose a few questions and comments on the insightful and illuminating presentations that we heard. First I want to link two perceptions or two notions that were discussed by Brigadier General Brom and Dr. Dajani about the weak leadership and the integration of non-state actors. I believe and we discussed it yesterday that the fact that both the Palestinians and the Israelis have weak leadership is a byproduct of the very deep problems and disagreements inside each of the societies about the national narrative, about the way to move forward, about the possibility of separation of the communities - the Jew community and the Arab community - and it goes as well for Jordan, the same thing. The disagreements about national narratives run deep along the ethnic and communal sections of the society.

Now I do agree with Dr. Dajani's suggestion that the integration of non-state actors inside the security establishment and the political establishment, if I may add, of the countries - and I include Jordan in this respect because Jordan has a very large and important community of Palestinians that would be, and should be, part of the final status agreement as Jordan asserts on - I would suggest that the integration of non-state actors as good and desired as it may be, may radicalize the political and security establishment of both Israel and the Palestinians and the Jordanians. Now the thing is - and I am for it. I am ready to take this risk because I think that the, if you will, the democratization of the states is important and necessary for a true and real peace between Israel and the Palestinians, Israel and the Arabs. Now the question I pose to you and to the audience is: are you willing to take the risk that it will distance the peace from us rather than get us closer to the desired peace?

Second thing about the premises that you raise, Dr. Dajani, about the peace and security, and Israel cannot

rely on others. As an Israeli I have to admit I do ask myself whether I can rely on others for my security needs. I remember that when we withdrew from Lebanon to the satisfaction of the UN and confirmed that the withdrawal was to the blue line, when we suffered attacks from Hezbollah, the housekeeping battalion there just looked the other way. So as an Israeli, I ask myself, can I rely on others for my security needs after I did what I supposed I needed to do by the international community? About the peace and security, this is something that we discussed yesterday, and I want to share and pose the discussion from the audience, if we know, if we know that many Arabs define their own interests by – and we discussed this – by what is good for Israelis is necessarily bad for the Arabs, can we really assume that peace and security are not mutually exclusive? Thank you.

Professor Ikeda: Thank you very much. Now, Mr. Amjad al-Dajani. Mr. al-Dajani is a distant relative of Dr. Dajani and it is coincidence that they meet in Tokyo. He is a historian. Right now “The Origin of Islam Fundamentalists and Fundamentalism,” I think that is the title of the dissertation he is writing for his doctorate. Now, al-Dajani.

Mr. Amjad al-Dajani, PhD Candidate, Kings College London: Good morning, ohayo. I will make it brief, quick and painless like my dentist tells me. Just I want to... regarding the Barak offer, the supposedly generous Barak offer. It was not that generous because it would create an unviable Palestinian canton, basically, because Israel retains a lot of control over the Palestinians and their security and their economic and social aspects and life. So I am not going to go deep into that. Regarding the trust issue, yes, I agree with Brigadier Shlomo: there has been a serious hit to the trust issue, but there are reasons for that. I mean, one Israeli proposal regarding resolving the issue of Jerusalem was as follows. There is a small village near Jerusalem called Abu Dis. So one Israeli proposal was to change the name of Abu Dis to Jerusalem and say you took Jerusalem (Al Kutz). Now you have the capital, Al Kutz, for Palestine.

Such proposals would definitely bring doubt to the seriousness on the Israeli side regarding resolving the peace process. Jerusalem-Abu Dis. As for the settlements and the checkpoints, you have to understand from the Palestinian perspective, the issue of settlements enlargement is extremely important because it is built on... inside the West Bank it is occupied Palestinian territories. The issue with the checkpoints is not just inability to movement. Israel has used the checkpoints to actually take more land. In a B’Tselem report, 51 settlements are built on privately-owned Palestinian land. Here we are not talking about public lands. We are not talking about government Palestinian lands; we are talking about privately-owned lands, families that had the deeds for hundreds of years. The way the Israelis do this is first they establish a checkpoint saying we just want to use the land for security reasons. Step two is they declare the land state land, but

they never inform the owners of that land, so they cannot go to the court and contest this. Then after 45 days are over, the Israeli military, when they want to move the checkpoint, they donate the land to the Jewish Fund and the Jewish Fund gives it to the settlement to enlarge it. So basically they have taken more privately-owned Palestinian land.

This is according to the B'Tselem reports on the settlements. You can download it. It is in PDF file. It is an Israeli human rights agency. As for Hamas versus Fatah, why they are not able to unite? Because it is not the decision of Fatah. We say the one who pays the bills calls the shots. The US is paying the bills. The US is not interested in resolving the issue between Fatah and Hamas. Therefore, there will not be, no matter how deep Hamas and Fatah go into negotiations, Fatah cannot break the will of the US and resolve the issue with Hamas until the US decides it is time to resolve the issue, and that depends on Israel because they have a strong influence and they have a long history of being close allies to the US. As for what my colleague asked about can we trust Hamas and Fatah as non-state actors and come and agree, I want to say only one thing: for every saint, there is a past. For every sinner, there is a future. So try to say that Hamas has no opportunity to change its ideology/mentality regarding Israel, the peace process, etc. I would not say you have to rule things out. You have to keep in mind that you are dealing, at the end of the day, with human beings.

As human beings, we tend to wear many hats per day. You can be a father, a son, a brother, etc. so we have the ability to adapt and change continuously. So I would not rule Hamas out of the game because you cannot rely on just having a peace process with Fatah because in the Palestinian view, Fatah is just a party. The Palestinians, even Palestinian Christians voted for Hamas in order to punish Fatah for the corruption. So you need to figure out that you should not rule out that you are willing to deal with Hamas and Fatah together. You cannot choose who you are partnering up with. And the notion that there is no partner for peace is just not very accurate because you have a conflict with someone, okay? The other side does want peace, but they are not going to play by your rules and your directives on how the peace outcome should be. We have legitimate claims, we understand you have legitimate claims, but there is a partner for peace, but you are not willing to take the initiative.

But remember, in this conflict, Israel is the stronger party. And the fact that Israel is the stronger party, Israel has a lot of influence on how things go. It is like the relationship between a big brother and a young brother. There is a lot of influence there, so thank you very much.

Professor Ikeda: Thank you very much. Last, but not least, from Japan we have research fellow from the

Middle East Research Institute of Japan, Ms. Chie Ezaki. I would like to ask her to make her comments.

Ms. Chie Ezaki, Research Fellow, The Middle East Research Institute of Japan: I am Ezaki of the Middle East Research Institute. I listened with great interest to the two presentations. First, with regard to the presentation by General Brom, I have a couple of questions. General Brom in his presentation said that there is mistrust between the two or misgivings between the two parties and that the leaders on both side are faced with domestic problems. These are having a major impact on the stagnation of the peace talks. I have been able to understand a lot of things thanks to that reasoning. And General Brom said that changes in the situation on the ground may have an impact on the future course of events or the Middle East peace talks. That might open up the prospects for progress in the peace talks, and I listened to that with encouragement. So now Prime Minister Fayyad who is leading the state-building and he referred to infrastructure-building and the infrastructure as part of state-building, I think the deadline I think is set as August 2011.

And yet the direct talks between the two parties as initiated by the US which started on 2 September I think is the timeline of one year. I think this one year will be important, with this deadline of August 2011. In the US mediating between the two sides for the resumption of talks, I wonder to what extent Americans had in their mind or had taken into consideration this infrastructure or state-building efforts by Prime Minister Fayyad. Question two is effectiveness of intervention by third party in the Middle East peace process. How effective should we consider that? For example, on the Palestinian side, there is this political confrontation between Fatah and Hamas. With regard to this confrontation between Fatah and Hamas, I believe the Egyptians have been playing a major role, and yet still the two parties are far from reconciliation. So not only Americans but Egyptians and Arab countries are playing roles and also in terms of Quartet, the EU, the Russians and the UN, various parties are involved in the Middle East peace process. I do think that the two parties can reach the reconciliation without intervention or intermediation by such third parties.

And my third question is how are you to bring Hamas into the peace process or involve them? I think this is a question that both the Israelis and Palestinians are faced with, and I very much would appreciate if you have some thoughts on this as well. A question with regard to the presentation by Dr. Omar Dajani. If I may share my personal impressions, with regard to security I believe in the Middle East process there is a tendency to discuss Israel's security and therefore not much attention has been paid to the threat perception on the Palestinian side. I was quite enlightened by the presentation. Another point as Mr. Assaf David said, how do we create a situation where the political leaders will be able to control non-state actors and to that extent, how far can you integrate them into the political institution? I think that will be a very interesting

point.

For example, by integrating Hamas into government, the point was made that Israel's deterrence may improve. But how do you regard this improved deterrence for Israelis? Israelis have greater military force than the Palestinians and do you regard that as Israel having deterrence? In terms of domestic politics, I believe Hamas will need to be integrated into government and you need cooperation of Fatah. So I would like to ask your views on this question of how you regard deterrence and power balance between Israel, Fatah and the Palestinians.

Professor Ikeda: Well we are proceeding pretty much as planned and so we would like to hear responses from the two presenters to the comments made by the panelists, and then we would like to proceed with free exchange of views amongst the presenters and panelists. I am sure that the audience might also have questions having listened to the presentations and comments so far, so if you do, then please write those questions down on the question sheet that has been handed out. Specify to whom you wish to direct your question and please raise your hand and the staff will collect your questions and I shall take up those questions of course taking into consideration the time available. So if you do have comments or questions, please write them down. Now I would like to ask the two presenters to respond to the points raised by the three panelists. First, Brigadier General Shlomo Brom, please.

Brigadier General Brom: Thanks. I think that the reactions of the three young researchers, to a large extent, validated my analysis that the real problem is the combination of competing narratives and mistrust that was created because of that, and the problems in the two political systems. Because what Dr. Dajani actually did in response to my analysis is simply presented the Palestinian narrative, but most only. So I do not argue with him. That is the Palestinian narrative. But there is another narrative that is the Israeli narrative. And by the way, as it is always the nature of national narrative, both of them are partially right and partially wrong – that is the problem – and they do not meet. That is the reason that I am giving so much importance to changes on the ground because you cannot solve a problem of mutual mistrust by talking, by saying nice things, and even by signing on papers, namely concluding agreements. You can do it only by deeds, only by actions. That is the reason that I think that what Salam Fayyad is doing is extremely important and he is doing fantastic work.

It is having an effect. You know, because of my background and because of what I am doing as a research associate in INSS I am in contact with our security community. The perception of the security community on the Palestinians, let's say four years ago, is completely different than the current perception. Gradually

trust is built on the capabilities of the Palestinian security apparatuses through what these security apparatuses are doing and through cooperation between Israeli security services and the Palestinian security services. But the problem, the way I see it, is that what Salam Fayyad is doing is not sufficient. It has to be complemented by Israeli steps and Israel started taking these steps by removing checkpoints, easing freedom of movement in the West Bank, but it is not sufficient. So I am talking about something that is much more dramatic and ambitious. I am talking about a process of gradually broadening Palestinian control over more and more territories in the West Bank because I do not think that the real problem is the gaps in the positions of the two sides. They can be bridged.

I think everyone that is following the negotiations since the beginning – and I am doing that because I was there. I am following it for the last 15 years – can see what is the long way that the two sides have done in bridging these gaps. When you look at the situation of the negotiations at the end of the Olmert term of office, the gaps were tremendously diminished. That is not the real problem. The real problem is to change the state of mind of the two sides. Well, I can accept that the dysfunctionality of the political systems in the two sides is a product of their society. But I do not like to look at it in a deterministic way as if because it is linked with the nature of the societies, it cannot be changed. Political systems can be changed. We can look at the story of different states. We can look, for example, at France during the 1950s. It was in complete political disarray. They changed their political system and created a stable one. So change can be made. We are not doomed to have only weak leaders. We are not doomed to have only weak leaders, even in this dysfunctional political system. We can have more effective leaders and we had once. Mr. Sharon was an effective leader in the same dysfunctional system.

Now concerning the timetable, I think that the probability that the two parties will reach an agreement within one year is very low based on my analysis. I hope that I am wrong. Did the US decide on this timetable because of the Fayyad two-year plan? I do not know. I think that they did it mostly because of some naïve analysis based on one hand on a similar assumption to my assumption that the problem is not the gaps in position – they can be bridged – but without a real understanding of what are the real obstacles. And because of that, actually the US wasted two years, two years in which nothing was done. So on what they can base their belief that in a year's time they will achieve full agreement? I do not know.

Can the negotiation process be an effective one in a situation in which there is no reconciliation between Fatah and Hamas? Well, I think that the parties can start an effective negotiation process. I have doubts whether they can conclude it successfully and implement an agreement and reach real peace without Hamas at a certain stage being included in some way. Is it possible to reach a kind of reconciliation? That I want to

connect with a question to Dr. Dajani concerning non-state actors. I think the term “non-state actors” is very problematic. It is problematic because it is too wide. It encompasses different players. I think that a player like Al Qaeda, which is a real non-state actor, has no connection to state, has no ambitions within a state, is different from an actor like Hamas which operates within a certain national community, with ambitions and aspirations that are connected to what is happening inside this national community, inside its future state. And because of that, an actor like Hamas or Hezbollah is not a real non-state actor.

How can you call the party that is governing the Gaza Strip, is the government a non-state actor? It is absurd. How can you call a party, Hezbollah, a political movement that is part of the Lebanese government and its military arm that according to the position of the Lebanese government is a legitimate arm of the state a non-state actor? It is not a non-state actor. It is a different actor within the state. And as such, I think that in principle, it can be at a certain future stage, integrated into the process. Maybe for that to happen we have to start the negotiation process, and have certain achievements in this negotiation process, and create a situation in which Hamas will feel that they are going to lose if they do not join the process... [break in recording]

Professor Ikeda: The microphone seems to be dysfunctional, so if you could use a working microphone... Again, I would like to ask Dr. Dajani again for about 10 minutes, make your response to the questions and comments from the panelists.

Dr. Dajani: Thank you, Professor. I will try to respond to the questions in the order that they were asked, beginning with your questions, Assaf. You asked whether Palestinians or me in particular, whether we are taking the risk that integrating actors like Hamas or Hezbollah would distance peace from us. I think that to the extent that I had the conviction that Hamas and Fatah, at the current moment, have fundamentally different attitudes with respect to how to manage the next 30 years, I would say, ah, that is a very great risk and a very worrisome one. My sense is that there are semantic differences in the ways in which they characterize their approaches, and I am talking about the big permanent status issues rather than some of the tactical problems that come up routinely in the relationship between Israel and the Palestinians. I do not think that those differences are great and I think that Hamas has adopted a stance of increasing pragmatism, even if its communications to the Palestinian public have not always reflected that pragmatism. So I am not very worried about those risks, but perhaps I will be proved wrong on that front.

You raised the question can Israel really rely on others and you point to the withdrawal from Lebanon and say, “Look, we did what was asked of us by the international community. Why didn’t it work that time?” I

guess I would make two points in response. I think part of the difficulty with the way in which the withdrawal proceeded in the year 2000 was that it was a piecemeal approach to a regional problem. Israel continued to remain in the Shaba Farms and whether one understands that to be a part of Syria or as a part of Lebanon, both Syria and Hezbollah were able each to say the occupation continues. I think what I would like to urge is an end to piecemeal approaches because I think that they undermine the security of all of the players. I think undertaking, as Shlomo suggested during his presentation, to bring Syria into the negotiations process and as I suggested in my presentation, to bring some of these other actors into it as well, would help on that front.

But the second point I would make is that we should not fail to note how successful the Egyptian and Jordanian withdrawals have been in the context of peace agreements. Now to be sure, the agreement with Egypt has not been implemented in a warm fashion or with quite the warmth that some Israelis would have hoped for, and I think that that will take time to develop once a regional solution is undertaken. But from a security perspective, the two agreements have been exceptionally good for Israel and you only need to look at those two borders for testament to that. So I think, I understand the hesitance to rely on others, but I think that there are better solutions to it than failing to take the leap toward peace.

Your last question was whether in view of the prevailing or what seems to be the prevailing sentiment that what is good for Israel is bad for the Arabs, how do you reach an accommodation that the Arab street embraces? I think that here the Arab street will be able to decipher the difference between good agreements and bad agreements. I think that there is a sensibility about where the real benefits lie for the Arab world. But putting that aside – and maybe that confidence I have is misplaced – I think that the regimes understand very clearly what is good for them. And to take one issue, the US has over the last couple of years deployed in a fairly substantial way in the Persian Gulf to deal with early warning, and it has also made steps toward investing in missile defense in the Gulf. Now the states in the Persian Gulf understand that the early warning capacity that the US is investing in is not just going to benefit them. But they embrace it all the same because they understand that whatever the public communications are around this, the US is part of their security picture, just as surely as it is a part of Israel's.

I think for that reason the regimes and their citizens will ultimately look at what is good for them independently of what is good or bad for Israel. One point with respect to a question that you raised, Amjad, which is whether Fatah and Hamas reconciliation can proceed without an American stamp of approval, my sense is that it is proceeding. I think that the negotiations that are in progress right now, as difficult as they are, are proceeding without reference to what the American wishes are. In fact I was alarmed when I was in

Ramallah last month to talk to a senior Fatah official about the talks which he was optimistic about. And I said “Well, what is your communications strategy for dealing with Congress, for dealing with the White House?” Sure Patraeus has said or has perhaps endorsed a report that says isolating these organizations is not a good idea, so I do not know where the Pentagon stands, but you still have an administration and a congress that has expressed reservations in the past and imposed sanctions in the past.

I was alarmed to find that they had not developed a communications strategy yet and I think there is an interest at present to try to convince the Americans and they are just beginning those efforts. But I do not think that their efforts are contingent upon an American green light. What I very much hope though is that the US will see this to be in both Israel’s interest and in the US interest. And that brings me to the question that you raised, Chie, about deterrence. I think perhaps I was a little bit brief on this front and so let me try to explain. Giora Eiland, whom I referred to earlier, published an article that has been quite controversial entitled “The Third Lebanon War” in which he suggested – this was in the fall of 2008 before the Gaza campaign – in which he suggested that in order for Israel to respond effectively to the threat presented by Hezbollah, it was necessary for it to deter Hezbollah’s actions. But he suggested that deterring an actor like Hezbollah is difficult because it does not possess the same kinds of security assets that a state possesses, and I think that this is the kind of distinction that I was speaking to, Shlomo.

For that reason, when Israel responds to Hezbollah, it engages in what he called a “cat and mouse game.” His solution was instead to target Lebanese infrastructure, the idea being that Lebanon would then place pressure on Hezbollah. When I say that integrating these actors into the states where they reside would bolster Israel’s deterrent, what I mean is that if Israel is concerned about actions like actors like Hezbollah and Hamas, better that they be part of an army so that you can respond to the army which you can deter more easily than simply trying to respond to an individual rocket launcher. One last point and I think my time is just about up, and this is a reaction to a point that Shlomo made in his remarks just now. Shlomo, you said that you think it is important for us to change the state of mind on both sides which I think is absolutely right. And you noted that some of the changes that the Palestinian security services have undertaken over the last couple of years have transformed opinion within the Israeli security establishment.

I think continuing along that path is a good one. I also think that your suggestion of expanding Palestinians’ jurisdiction within the West Bank is also a good one, but whereas I think incremental changes on the ground may be good for restoring Israeli confidence in Palestinians, I do not think it is good for restoring Palestinian confidence in Israel because what Palestinians are concerned about is not reestablishing the jurisdictional regime that existed under Oslo or some improvement, but instead on achieving withdrawal

from the West Bank or at least all of the areas of the West Bank that are to the east of the border that will be agreed. And I think for that reason, what Palestinians need for their confidence to be built is an indication that these incremental changes are not the end of the path. This is where countries in the international community have an important role to play. It is my own sense, and I hope that I am proved wrong, that the current Government of Israel is not prepared to make assurances with respect to withdrawal from the West Bank.

But I think the international community, led by the US, but not exclusively the US, is in a strong position in the coming 12 months to say this is what we understand peace will look like. Palestinians work with us. Continue along the path that you have started along. This is the endpoint that we envisage. I think that that has not been done yet and I think that if it were done, it would bolster unity efforts and it would also do a great deal to make the growing security calm grow further.

Professor Ikeda: Now we would like to have free discussion among panelists. Anybody can make a comment on anybody's presentation or comments. Mr. al-Dajani?

Mr. al-Dajani: Brigadier General Shlomo asked me a question. I totally agree with the General. Any party that works for the aspirations of its people cannot be considered a non-state party, but there is only one thing that the General forgot: the Palestinians do not have a state. That is why I said Hamas is a non-state actor. I do not even consider Fatah a state actor. I consider Fatah a non-state actor because the Palestinians do not have a state yet. I call them an ethnic actor. They are working for the people. They do not have a state yet. So this is where I am coming from, but I absolutely agree with the General.

Professor Ikeda: Assaf-san?

Mr. David: I want to mention or to agree with two things and then ask one thing. First thing, as per your suggestion, Omar, about the Arab Peace Initiative which you mentioned in your presentation, I totally agree. I think that Israel should embrace the Arab Peace Initiative, even if with reservations. But as a stance, a declaration, that Israel is for and with the Arab Peace Initiative as an historical declaration made by the Arabs and the Arab Peace Summit and the Arab Summit. So I think it is very important for the continuation of peace efforts, not just on the Palestinian track, but also on other tracks. Also about the non-state actors and their integration, again, I totally agree with you. I think that if Israel stands not against the Government of Lebanon but in front of an army which includes Hezbollah, as well as an army or Palestinian Security Forces that includes Hamas, I think it does bolster the stance of Israel. I also think that we, again, this is

where I reach the third point which is more of a question or open for discussion, which is linked to what you raised, Amjad, about if we include Hamas, if you include Hamas in the Palestinian Security Forces, my assumption is that the common denominator that the Palestinian will reach vis-à-vis Israel would be a hudna.

Are we willing to sign a peace agreement which includes a hudna? Maybe this is the only possible agreement. I concur to that, but we should be well aware of the fact that including Hamas in Palestinian Security Forces, and including Hezbollah in Lebanese Security Forces will only make the peace be a hudna agreement, and this is something that we should take into account.

Professor Ikeda: The comment and the question, and there is one question from the floor. This is about confrontation between Fatah and Hamas, so I would like to now introduce this question.

Between Hamas and Fatah, what is the fundamental point of confrontation? Is it because Hamas does not recognize the survival of Israel? Is that the reason that the two, Fatah and Hamas, are confronting each other or is there any other reason that there is a conflict between the two? Mr. Omar?

Dr. Dajani: Thank you very much for your question. The question is probably best answered in two parts. Historically of course Hamas and Fatah have taken different positions with respect to the Oslo Peace Process and their differences in view were something that shaped the original relationship between them as it developed through the 1990s. Over the course of that period, I think as a reaction to those differences and as a reaction to Hamas' efforts to sabotage the Oslo Process during that time, Fatah or the Palestinian Authority led by Fatah, took an array of actions against Hamas from wide scale imprisonment and detention to torture in some circumstances that led over time to increasing distrust between the parties and fear of what a return to Fatah hegemony with Palestinian government would mean. So there is some historical enmity that has its roots in two different approaches to the peace process.

At present, however, the negotiations that have been undertaken by Hamas and Fatah have not focused on how to deal with the peace process, although that is something in the background which I will return to in a moment. What they have focused on instead is how government would be structured in a situation of Palestinian unity. There are a bunch of different issues, issues including how the Palestine Liberation Organization would be reformed, restructured; what Hamas' role in the cabinet would be; which ministries would be Hamas ministries and which ministries would be Fatah ministries. But perhaps the most difficult issue and the issue they have had the most challenge in resolving and as yet have not resolved is the issue

of security and that has a few different parts to it. One of those parts is what do you do about the fact that in addition to the thousands of security officers who are loyal to Fatah at to the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank, and the thousands of former security officers that were loyal to the Palestinian Authority in the Gaza Strip?

In addition to them, what do you do with the thousands of Hamas officers in the various Hamas military organizations and police organizations? Incorporating all of them, integrating all of them and deciding who plays what role and who will make decisions in moments about a whole array of issues is a formidable issue. Then the second related issue is what the terms of reference of the security forces will be. That is something that is very closely linked to the relationship with Israel. Now my sense is that Fatah and Hamas could find it possible, particularly if the international community has presented the parties with some kind of parameter, some kind of plan, I think Fatah and Hamas could create an arrangement in which a Palestinian government would sign on to a robust peace agreement, including a peace agreement that involved recognition of Israel or that reiterated recognition of Israel – the Palestinians having already recognized Israel of course – an agreement that made a number of commitments that are framed as permanent, around borders, for example, without Hamas bolting.

I think that the way in which that could be achieved is through the machinery of party politics. There are, after all, parties in Israel that have played a substantial role in government at various points in time who have objected to the course of peace negotiations with Palestine, and who have never come close to recognizing the validity of Oslo, for example, and were nevertheless a part of government, and who a part of government when Barak was negotiating. Actually I cannot say that all of the parties that were part of the Barak government did not recognize Oslo; I do not know the answer to that. But they certainly were not supporters of Oslo. So I think it is possible within the framework of government to accommodate difference with respect to the end run. But my sense is that for many within the Hamas leadership, the hudna language is a useful way of saying la a'ref (I do not know). We are going to deal with the immediate term. We are going to create a system that will work for the immediate term. We are going to frame it in a language that makes sense in terms of Islamic tradition and we will deal with the bigger philosophical or theological issues later.

Professor Ikeda: Regarding the security issue, Hamas and Fatah, security apparatus, for example, police or army will be integrating one or if there is a movement to integrate Fatah and Hamas into army or police, then there is the Israeli issue because from the Israeli point of view, in Gaza it is okay that Fatah will be involved in the security arrangement of Hamas. But if Hamas will try to be involved in the West Bank

security arrangement with Fatah, then of course Israel will not condone it. Shlomo, will you make a comment on it?

Brigadier General Brom: I think the approach to the issue of Hamas-Fatah reconciliation is dependent to a large extent on the way you look at Hamas. What is Hamas? There are two basic paradigms. There is a very fierce debate inside the Israelis between these two paradigms. First paradigm is the one that says Hamas is an ideological, radical Islamic movement. The source of authority, according to their perception, is God. If God says it is fixed, you cannot change it. So you cannot expect Hamas to change its policies. That is one paradigm. The other paradigm is still Hamas is an Islamic movement, but Hamas is first of all a political movement. And as a political movement every political movement shapes its policies according to a variety of considerations. One of the most important considerations is what its constituency thinks because political movement cannot exist without public support.

If you ask me what is the answer to this question, which paradigm is right, I would say that both of them are right. I would say that there is conflict within Hamas on the identity of Hamas. Quite recently an important Hamas person published an article in a Western newspaper. And in the article it said that the question that we Hamas people have to ask ourselves is what we would like to be: Al Qaeda or AKP (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi)? AKP is the ruling party in Turkey. And he of course preached Hamas to be under AKP but I think that Hamas did not decide yet what their identity is. Thank you.

Dr. Dajani: I also saw that piece. It was framed very colorfully as “Erdogan or Taliban?” I think that the circumstances that we create on the ground will do much to shape the discourse within Hamas. I think that the circumstances on the ground will be affected both by Palestinian policy and Israeli policy. I think that the international community again has carrots and sticks at its disposal to shape the preferences of the parties. Egypt, for better and worse, has strongly affected Hamas’ preferences over the last couple of months from things from the way it has run its border with Rafah, to the arrest of Hamas security personnel. And while I cannot stand by all of the things that Egypt has done in those circumstances, it is a reflection of the fact that we affect one another. I think we can create a climate for moving forward. At some point before we end, I would like to talk a little bit about how to move forward from this point, but perhaps others would like to speak first.

Mr. al-Dajani: Just a quick comment about how Hamas will consider itself. In my opinion, it is very clear. Religious figures in Hamas will consider themselves God’s representation on Earth. Political figures in Hamas will consider themselves a political party. So you have to figure out who to talk to.

Professor Ikeda: Thank you very much. Earlier Dr. Dajani made a presentation and from the perspectives of the involvement of the international community we have several questions from the audience. One is like this: the international presence, as Dr. Dajani refers to, multinational peace, peace mission, what will be the conditions or preconditions for such mission to become a reality in Gaza and the West Bank, for example? So that is the question for Omar. To what extent would it likely be for Israel to accept that? In case Israel does accept this multinational peace mission, what will be the preconditions for that? That is the question for Shlomo.

There were also other questions. There is direct commitment by the international community in regard to this peace process. A fence is being built in the West Bank and would it be possible through international cooperation or international commitment to pull down these fences? So to what extent can the... I think that ties into the question to what extent a multinational peace mission will actually be able to exercise its clout. For the peace negotiations to resume and as a true peace process not just talks, what will be the preconditions to make that happen? There were the conditions at the time of Taba process and the time of Taba Talks. Do you think these conditions would provide the starting point for a true peace process or do we have to think of different situation, totally different conditions? Perhaps Shlomo could lead off this time?

Brigadier General Brom: Concerning a peacekeeping force, when you look historically, you see that a peacekeeping force is quite a common element of agreements between Israel and its neighbors, whether they are peace agreements or interim agreements. So we have a peacekeeping force in Sinai as part of the Israeli-Egyptian treaty, that is, the MFO (Multinational Force and Observer). We have a peacekeeping force on the Golan Heights as part of an interim agreement that we concluded with Syria on separation of forces after the 1973 war. So in many cases, peacekeeping forces are a very useful element of the security arrangements that are a part of the agreement. I think that it is true also for a future Israeli-Palestinian agreement. But I would make to it two reservations. The first reservation is that the Israeli attitude toward the deployment of a peacekeeping force is a mixture of an understanding that it may be useful, that it is an important element and I can mention only recently that Israel was the one that supported a strong peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon as part of the arrangements that will end the fighting in 2006. Israel made the agreement on the deployment of EU BAM in Rafah as part of an arrangement that will make the situation stable after the withdrawal from the Gaza Strip.

But on the other end, Israel is also suspicious toward peacekeeping forces because it had a number of

disappointments, starting from the UN Security general decision to withdraw the UN force from Sinai in 1967 that actually was one of the main reasons for the 1967 war. That is a paradox that the organization that was supposed to care about peace, the way that it managed its own decisions led to a war. But that is an historical fact. So one has to think very carefully about the mission of this peacekeeping force and its mandate. And when doing it, one can find a number of useful missions for a peacekeeping force, starting with some ideas that Omar Dajani raised of replacing the Israeli presence with a multinational presence in several cases as a solution to some security problems. And I can give other examples. There is no doubt that the arrangements in Jerusalem will be very complicated because of the way that the population is distributed in Jerusalem, Israelis and Palestinians.

So any arrangements that will be agreed on will need an international element in it to make it work. Now concerning the fence or the barrier as we call it because there are different names that are used for it – wall, fence, etc. – that are not accurate. The most accurate name is barrier because it is a system that is supposed to delay and prevent movement of terrorists. There is nothing wrong with the idea of the use of fences as a security means. There is an old English saying, “High fences make good neighbors.” The problem with the current barrier is its location. The fact that there is no agreement between the two parties on the border between the two sides, and because of that, the location of the barrier is not agreed. The meaning of it is that once the parties agree on a border, if Israel will decide that it still needs a barrier for its security and most probably that will be the case because right after the conclusion of an agreement, there will not be enough trust in the fact that the agreement will work, then the barrier will be moved to the new border.

Actually I do not know if you are aware of it, but different parts of the barrier were already moved because of different reasons. It is not something fixed that cannot be moved. As to the conditions of an agreement between Israel and the Palestinians, well, 10 years have passed since Taba, and much work was done on a possible agreement in the negotiations between the two parties, and I mentioned the negotiations between Mr. Olmert, the former prime minister, and Mr. Abbas, which in my opinion, achieved a lot, although they were not able to conclude an agreement. Also non-governmental initiatives such as the Geneva Initiative to which I was a party. Actually I am the person that wrote most of the security arrangements in the so-called Geneva Accord, so I am not objective. What I can say to you is for me the Geneva Accord is the optimal solution. But even if you are not a supporter of the Geneva Accord, I think that the Geneva Accord is not far away from what is called the Clinton Bridging Proposals, Taba and the status of the negotiation process at the end of the Olmert government. Thank you.

Professor Ikeda: Thank you very much. Starting from Dr. Ezaki.

Ms. Ezaki: Resumption of the peace process, starting point, every time the resumption takes place, what would be the prerequisites become the problem. Before the negotiation starts both sides start fighting about the prerequisites. That is what we have witnessed. As General Brom says, for the last 20 years, since the Oslo Accord, to a large extent the peace options have been almost exhausted. Therefore, Israel and Palestine, both sides try to pursue the practical solutions, at least in terms of the specific measures they are trying to achieve the specific measures. But in my view, there have been points. They came so close to the solution. The first final status negotiation started back in 2000 at Camp David – that was one point – and after that, then president Mr. Clinton presented the Clinton Parameters, and based on the parameters, Taba negotiations started in January 2001. Those were informal papers from Taba, but then EU's, Mr. Martinez, the equivalent of the foreign minister of the EU compiled this Taba Agreement. This was the result of very in-depth negotiations.

If both sides can go back to the Taba Accord, that would be a big step toward the solution of the peace negotiations. Now Hamas' positions before the start of the international negotiations, my personal view, well this was my personal interest. If Hamas becomes more and more realistic, the divisions inside Hamas would emerge. From 2008 Israel started to attack Gaza. Concerning the unilateral stop of the attack, the leadership of Hamas in Gaza and the Hamas leadership in Damascus started to show a divergence of views. The Gaza leadership are living in Gaza and they were very close to the people there. Therefore they had to become more realistic. On the other hand, those leadership in Damascus tried to stick to the basic principles. For Hamas after the victory in the elections in 2006 from the Quartet they were asked to show clearly their positions for peace negotiation. Within Hamas, of course in relation with Fatah too, if they can come to the agreement with Fatah, then in parallel maybe the peace policy must be presented by Hamas. They have come to the stage of presenting this. So power balance within Hamas is something I closely watch.

Professor Ikeda: Thank you very much. Let me just turn to Mr. Assaf. Please be brief in your comment. Thank you.

Mr. David: I only have one comment on one thing that I did not talk about which is the Israeli politics and the inclusion of people who oppose the Oslo Agreement in the government. One very important distinction that we have to remember between the Israeli and the Palestinian politics is that Israel has a central government. Opponents to the Oslo Agreement do not have an army and do not have a military wing, so as far as the Israeli politics are concerned, you do not feel the opponents' to the Oslo Agreement influence in the army or the military because at the end the army and the military impose or execute the orders coming

from the government. This is not the case for the Palestinian political sphere or political environment. This is the main problem that Israel has with the Palestinian as well as Lebanese politics. Thank you.

Professor Ikeda: Thank you very much. Mr. al-Dajani.

Mr. al-Dajani: I will add one more thing about Hamas. I think it was 2008 or 2009, I am not sure which year, in Gaza there was a new radical group that emerged called Ansar al-Islam. In 2009? This group held Al Qaeda ideology. You can imagine what happened between Hamas and Ansar al-Islam. Hamas – this is very important to try to understand where Hamas is coming from and where it is going – Hamas basically went into direct conflict with Ansar al-Islam. They actually exterminated them, okay, to the last man because in Hamas' point of view, they do not hold the ideology of pan-Islamism. They do not hold the ideology of Al Qaeda. But the ideology they are concerned with is Palestinian statehood, Palestinian nationhood. So this is a very important indicator to what is the nature of Hamas. When you put... they are both Islamic. Ansar al-Islam is an Islamic group. Hamas is an Islamic group, but with this ferocious conflict that erupted between both parties, indicates one is a nationalist party, a religious nationalist party simply like the Al-Ikhwān in Egypt.

The other one is a pan-Islamist. They cannot live together. They cannot survive. So this indicates that we cannot think of Hamas in terms of Al Qaeda because we will not understand what Hamas is doing. If we look at Hamas in the context of Palestinian nationhood, self-determination, etc. – this is their only concern – then there is an opportunity there to reach out properly to Hamas because now we understand where they are coming from. So please remember, Ansar al-Islam-Hamas conflict erupted which clearly indicates the nature of Hamas. Thank you.

Professor Ikeda: Thank you very much, Dr. Omar Dajani, would you talk about the role of the international community?

Dr. Dajani: I will address the issue of the international community's role in the context of a couple of other comments. I think Amjad is right to point out the example that you just cited and a point that was emphasized by Mahmoud al-Zahar just this week in saying that he would understand continuing attacks on Israel as rebellion against Hamas. I think that there has been an intention on their part to discipline those under their jurisdiction internally. Now that said, I think Assaf, you are absolutely right that in the way in which things have been structured so far, the existence of parties with military wings that are separate from the regular forces of the Palestinian Authority has been a source of insecurity, and I would submit to you

that that is so not just for Israelis, but also for Palestinians. And so I think a necessary element has to be integration of them within a single command structure.

But having said that, I think Chie, you are correct to point out that Fatah-Hamas reconciliation will produce schisms within Hamas. We should anticipate that. There will be people within Hamas who say no. We have seen that in other contexts. We see the real IRA (Irish Republican Army) in Ireland having opposed Good Friday and entered into confrontation both with the UK and with Sinn Féin. I think that what becomes possible in those circumstances however is the isolation of actors of those kind which is very difficult to do when you are talking about an actor with the influence that Hamas, as it is currently constituted, possesses. I want to address the question of the preconditions for a multinational peace mission in the context of talking just briefly about how to proceed from here. I think this is maybe, to be very candid, a little advocacy to our Japanese friends, especially those of you in government.

I think that while the vision that I set up on the screen may seem ambitious in view of the incredibly difficult circumstances that all of the panelists have pointed to, I think it is also something that can be pursued in pieces and built over time. I think there are a number of steps the international community can begin to take today that will make a peaceful Middle East a more reasonable prospect a year or two from now. Number one, I think it is critical for the international community to end its support for Palestinian disunity. Or to put it positively, I think the US, Japan, the European Union and others should signal, whether it is explicitly in public domain or implicitly through private diplomacy, that there would not be opposition to unity, that there is a recognition of the benefits that it presents. That is a signal that could be given only to Fatah or to both Fatah and Hamas, and there are benefits and liabilities with taking each kind of approach there.

Secondly, with respect to creating a regional apparatus for security, I think that the US has taken very strong position with respect to the need for normalization efforts to begin right now and the US has encouraged Arab states to open up channels for diplomatic and economic ties to be established. My sense is that a much more productive avenue for US efforts, as well as the efforts of other countries, would be to seek from the Arab world declarations that following the conclusion of a peace agreement, the Arab world would be prepared to engage in very substantial security cooperation. Then I think behind the scenes there is a lot of room for strategic planning. I think those countries that have the most experience in dealing with strategic threats, particularly in the context of regional organizations – and of course NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) comes to mind – have a lot to contribute in envisaging what a Middle East security apparatus might look like, how it could be built over time and what kinds of rules should guide it.

Third, and this relates to the question that was asked, I think that Japan, because of your long experience in peacekeeping, knows, as many other states have come to realize, that international missions require a great deal of planning and require a lot of advance planning which is something that there was not nearly enough of in the 1990s and over the last decade, a factor that contributed to the failure of some important international missions. I think that it is critical to begin establishing a planning mission right now. I think you do not have to have all of the elements on the ground in order to begin evaluating how to develop a multinational peace implementation mission on the ground when a peace agreement is signed. That said, I think that there are assumptions that will have to guide such a planning guide: an assumption of a peace agreement actually being signed between the parties.

I think an assumption of Fatah-Hamas reconciliation, something that will be critical from the perspective of any third states that will be concerned about deploying their forces in the West Bank and/or Gaza Strip, knowing that there are not going to be other actors taking aim at them, at least not major actors. So I think moving toward a planning mission of that kind is an urgent priority. Finally, I think that the international community will need, over the coming year, to do more than it has been willing to do so far in articulating a framework for Palestinian-Israeli peace and perhaps a broader framework for Arab-Israeli peace. But speaking just about Palestinian-Israeli peace, my own sense is that we have gone past the point where bilateral negotiations are going to yield a happy result. I think as Shlomo pointed out, bilateral negotiations will ultimately be a necessary part of this process, but I think that they will be guided and enhanced by an international articulation of parameters.

And perhaps that should not happen in the next month, but I think it has to happen in the coming six to 12 months, otherwise the security gains of the last two years will be lost. I think an element of that, as I have described earlier, should be full withdrawal from the territory of the state of Palestine, rather than, as the Obama administration seems to have signaled, some substantial Israeli presence in the Jordan Valley or elsewhere in the West Bank which I think would be counterproductive rather than serve the interests of Israelis and Palestinians.

Mr. al-Dajani: Just to add one more statement about Hamas, Hamas is to the Palestinians as what the Likud Party is to the Israelis. It is what the Republican Party is to the American people. It is where all the religious extreme nationalists, Tea Partiers join. Fatah is to the Palestinian people, the liberals, the Democrats in the US, the Labor Party in Israel. So this is how the Palestinians look at Hamas. Thank you.

Professor Ikeda: So with that final remark, I would like to conclude this session. I think it was very interesting and stimulating panel. Thank you very much. This concludes the morning session.

2nd Panel :
The Way to Harmony
among Sectarian and Ethnic Groups in Iraq

Professor Keiko Sakai, Professor, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies: Since it is time, we would like to begin the afternoon session. We are having this open symposium on “Conflicts and Peacebuilding in the Middle East: Palestine, Israel and Iraq” organized by JIIA and in the morning we had very intense discussions on the Palestine-Israel conflict and the peace process. In the afternoon, we shall discuss the way to harmony among sectarian and ethnic groups in Iraq. And we have presentations and then discussions for the coming two hours. I have the pleasure of serving as your moderator. I am Keiko Sakai, professor at Tokyo University of Foreign Studies.

Before starting the panel discussion, one apology. One of the presenters, Dr. Reidar Visser who is a research fellow of the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs was taken ill very suddenly last weekend and he regrets very much that he cannot participate in the program. Therefore, I, myself shall have the pleasure of filling in for him and give a brief presentation. Dr. Visser is a prolific writer about the sudden Iraq situation about Shiite areas and he is foremost an authority on that subject matter today, but suddenly because of health reasons he cannot come, so our apology for that. But as I said, the theme for the afternoon is “The Way to Harmony among Sectarian and Ethnic Groups in Iraq” and I would like to introduce to you the first speaker, Dr. Faleh Abduljabar, President, Iraq Institute for Strategic Studies located in Beirut.

Now Dr. Faleh Abduljabar from early on since the 1980s has been writing many dissertations and he originally hails from Iraq. But back in those days he was teaching at London University in the UK and around the time of the outbreak of the Iraq War, he attended numerous academic gatherings and policymaking-related gathering in the US, UK and other areas, providing very valuable analyses. Following the Iraq War he himself established in Beirut this Iraq Institute for Strategic Studies and has been engaged in very active research endeavors. He has written very detailed analyses of Iraqi Shiites, and then from a publisher in Britain called Saqi he has also published many books. So as I see it, I believe he is the foremost and well versed... He provides the best analysis with regard to Iraqi affairs. So first I would like to ask Dr. Faleh Abduljabar to speak for about 20 minutes, please.

1st Presentation

Dr. Faleh Abduljabar

President, Iraq Institute for Strategic Studies

President, Iraq Institute for Strategic Studies: Thank you very much for your kind introduction. I have to live up to it. You cannot hear me? It is a distraction. I will focus in my talk on nation-building in Iraq. I will give some background, but I will focus on the present. Before I do the background, I would like to clarify a few concepts. One, nations do not grow on trees. They are not natural things. There are no natural nations and artificial nations. Nations are constructed and reconstructed time and time again. Some nations emerged earlier than others and because of the long period of their emergence, they look at themselves as natural. And all new nations in the world are artificial. I do not subscribe to this division. All nations are constructed by human beings at a certain stage of the development of society and this stage is the industrial stage. Before the industrial stage, we had no nations. We had empires segmented into feudal principalities, organized in tribes, in clans, city states, etc. There were no nations.

Of course languages are there – Kurdish language, Arabic language, Turkish language, Japanese – but language is not nation states. Language is a culture medium. Anyhow, two, for every nation to be constructed, it requires three basic elements. One is a material network connecting all segments of society – railways, telegraph lines, radio, now television, we have the Internet – but at the time, at least since we started the telegraph lines and the railways, we started to connect disconnected regions together. This is what I call the material fabric of nationhood. It cuts through commerce, economy. Second, you have a cultural cohesive network and fabric as well – language, educational systems, songs, literature, newspapers, what have you. On top of that, you have to have a political system to hold all these ingredients together. Any missing component of these three elements will result in a kind of weak structuring of that nation-ness or that nation.

Now almost all the nations in the Middle East are young. Some of them are a half century old, 30 years old, or like Iraqis, I think we need 10 years more to celebrate a century. Kurds have no state of their own, I mean apart from... contrary to all Arab peoples in the region. Now Iraq belongs to this category of new nations emerging after the first World War. It did not have any material network apart from what the Ottomans had built. Some networks... It did not have the cultural cohesiveness. These were created in time.

We had only a political order, a very centralized one, tailored along the lines of the Westminster system, British system, a central unitary state. But it contained... Iraq was an administrative unit under the Ottomans, but it was not a nation state and that was to be created. One of the problems, if one would read the memoirs of King Faysal I who was the first monarch to be incepted in 1921, he looked at Iraq society and said they do not know anything of the national idea.

The only ingredients of nationhood were the administrative realities created by the Ottomans, and this applies, by the way, to so many countries. It is not peculiar to Iraq. It is not an Iraqi peculiarity. It is across developing countries worldwide. When Iraq was created, it had first a political order and it had to create the material network and the cultural network. I think to some extent, although with some difficulties, the monarchy managed to do just that, despite the fact that we had the Kurds and the Turkmen who objected to the creation of Iraq. Their objection was the Kurds had their own nationalist movement although it was detached from the tribal part of what became Iraqi Kurdistan. The Shiites and the Sunnis created what we can call Iraqi nationalism which was a responsive nationalism, meaning that nationalism was not there before the British occupation. It was a response to them.

You have nationalism that grew to demand the creation of statehood, but in this case, nationalism came after the British occupation. It was a responsive kind of nationalism. And the British made arrangements so as to secure that all segments within this territorial state, to be included into the system. In Iraq, the Shiite-Sunni alliance is the basis of Iraqi nationalism among the Arabs, not all the inhabitants of the territorial state, but only among the Arabs. If we try to understand this, if we look at Iran, for example, Shi'ism in Iran is the cultural fabric that you know is Azerbaijanis, Persians, Arabs among others, as their cultural marker, and as an ingredient of Iranian nationalism. Iranian is not Persian nationalism. It is not Azerbaijani nationalism. It is all that. In Iraq, it is the so-called Sunni-Shiite alliance forged in Baghdad in 1920 throughout the 1920 revolution against the British. It was forged by a group of Sunni and Shiite merchants in Baghdad .

This alliance is the basis of what I call Iraqi nationalism among the Arabs. At the same time, according to the British-Iraqi Treaty, the Kurds would have the cultural rights within this period, the Iraqi nation-state. The Jews and Christians were also recognized. We had the millet system under the Ottomans which recognized and allowed these communities to have their deputies. In the first Iraqi Constitution, we had two seats outside of I think 90, two seats to the Jews, and two seats to the Christians. So this new creation was built with the political system ahead of anything and there was nothing below it to hold the ingredients of this nation-state together. But I think the monarchy managed to build a nation-state, and to promote Iraqi

nationalism. This was thanks to the liberal nature of that system, not to anything else. And to the fact that the state as the owner of all land started to distribute land to tribal sheiks, to different social groups to create the modern system of land ownership that did not exist before. We did not have land ownership. Land ownership by the way was created for the first time in history after the French Revolution.

These were feudal titles inherited or confiscated by the state and given to families in return for their military services, so by creating this, they created also a new class of land lords. I studied the structure of this class. It was made from... You would marvel how it resembles Iraq society. In the landlord class we had 48% Shiite landlords; 20% Kurdish landlords; 18% Arab Sunni landlords; 6%, I think, Christian and Assyrian landlords; and a fragment of even Turkmen landlords. This was the social class that supported the monarchy and it was represented in the political system. It had a share in the economic assets which was land at that time because Iraq was an agrarian society, it was not an industrial society yet. It was not yet a state with oil. Economic participation, political participation, cultural autonomy of these groups – all this was secured under the monarchy, at least as of the 1940s down to the downfall of that region.

I think the second half of the monarchy was the best period of nation-building in the whole width and breadth of Iraq's history. It is in this period if we examine the political literature, we will see that some Shiites at that time created a party which demanded that since Shiites as a common group or a sect are the majority, and since democracy means a majority rule – and we will see this idea is still working even now – then the Shiites should rule Iraq. Another political trend among the Shiites that was led by Jafar argued differently. We are all Iraqis and he established the nationalist party, literally the Patriotic Party. It is the Patriotic Party that won the day and the other party, the sectarian one, lost miserably. The question now is why this argument, the sectarian argument in the 1930s, in the 1940s and in the 1950s failed and why is it successful now? And why the nationalist patriotic discourse among the Shiites succeeded at that time and is not as strong as it is desired to be at the moment? This is a big question.

I am leaving of course the Kurdish question aside without in the least saying that it is not important. I will talk about that later in the discussion. So what happened? The successive military regimes that came afterward first closed the system. The parliament was abolished, the parliament had two chambers – the upper chamber contained tribal sheiks, noble people, religious clerics and so on and so forth. And the lower chamber, the parliament, was mainly dominated by landlords, but it reflected Iraq society. Half of it was rural, half of it was urban and all districts were represented. In Iraq system we had so many elections under the monarchy it was really amazing to see Kurdish MPs (members of parliament) nominated and elected in non-Kurdish regions. Or Shiite MPs elected in Sunni areas, and Sunni MPs nominated and elected in Shiite

areas and so on.

So the idea of patriotism, of Iraq as a unity or as a system open for all these groups, this idea was accepted and practice proves it. Under the monarchy we had a different story. The military historically was organized by the so-called Ottoman officers who joined King Faysal I. They were most Sunnis because the Ottomans did not open the administration and the military for Shiites. And Shiites were predominantly in the mercantile sector or in the landlord sector. And you know, people, leaders, tend when they do not have a representative system, they tend to create actually around them. And this creates, as a rule, drawn from your family network, tribal networks, your residential area, your friends, your colleagues, to protect yourself. That is what Saddam Hussein did. Closed the system and the system of representation, you destroy the modus operandi of nationhood in Iraq. You destroy the system of political representation and participation. That is number one.

Number two, Iraq's economy, after many agrarian reforms, did not develop into an agrarian economy nor an industrial one; it relied heavily on oil. It became an oil-oriented state and oriented state is a concept to indicate that oil is the major economic asset and that the government controls this asset. And this economic power is not controlled by the society but by the government. And rather than people pay to the government taxes and hold this government accountable, it is the other way around. The government gives handouts to social classes, to groups, to buy loyalty and when the political system is closed, it is confined to a small group of military people. Economic assets are also controlled by this group. We do not have a market economy. So in addition to political monopoly, we have an economic monopoly. And this adds new cracks to the various segments of society. This is the problem of the Iraqi state. This is the problem that we are now dealing with in roundabout way.

Let me add to this, also the state not only controlled the political field or the economic field, but it also controlled the cultural field, the educational system, writing history, deciding what language should be taught in the universities, what sort of theories are to be allowed or not allowed, etc. Under the Baath, for example, we had this habit of teaching history along the lines imagined by the president. We had esthetics, which is part of philosophy, we have Baathi esthetics, not as a science to study literature and all sort of production of art, but the way Baathis conceive esthetics in universities. And this hegemony actually deepened the cracks within the nation. There is a saying that – and we all know that – inequality between classes would lead to a class war. This is natural. When you have poverty, when you have working class, when you have middle class, when you have upper classes and when differences in wealth, education, health, etc., you have class war. Substitute classes for regions. Inequalities between regions, I think, based

on the examination of European history, Iraq history and some of our neighbor's history, are more dangerous than class divisions.

If these districts or provinces have a certain, say, ethnic or religious or communal nature, then the inequalities between provinces and regions will produce inequalities or be seen as inequalities between ethnic groups, religious groups and communal groups. And this has been accumulating. Now in the past, in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, these equalities developed and became stronger under the military rule that started in 1958, the republican era, down to the end of Saddam's era in 2003. But in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, we had ideological politics as our political culture, class against class. Most of the Shiites subscribed to Communism in the 1950s and they fought against feudal lords. Now in the 1970s we had the rise of Islam. Islam is, by definition, based on identity politics, not ideological politics, one. And two, it is sectarian by definition. Across the Muslim world it is sectarian by definition, despite all pretensions otherwise. And these two factors cause the fact that a shift from ideological to identity politics on the eve of the American invasion.

This started in the 1990s and when the Americans invaded Iraq, they did not know what they were going to see. To understand... How many minutes do I have? Okay, we can talk about Iraq later on, I mean the present situation. Identity politics means two things. First, you have a group identified by sect or by religion or by ethnicity. And politics means it seeks political power. This kind of identity politics is not an Iraqi phenomenon by the way; it has become a global phenomenon. If you look to understand it better in Iraq, you look at the Soviet Union. When the official Marxist-Leninist so-called ideology declined, the ruling elite embraced nationalism in Czechoslovakia and Soviet Union. When this elite collapsed and with it the command economy which distributed economic assets, we had a horrible ethnic identity-based war across that region – Nagorno-Karabakh is one thing. You name it: Chechnya, ex-Yugoslavia and so many wars and so on.

In Iraq the decline of the Arab socialist ideology was substituted by two things: tribalism and religion. Saddam started faith campaigns and started to reorganize tribes. So when the system collapsed after the invasion, these two forces emerged. And now it is these two forces that are active in a way. But in the first phase, tribes relied heavy on money from the government. Religion was denied any money from the government. On the contrary it relied heavily on contributions from the public. And it was so controlled by the government it could not collect money, so by the removal of Saddam's regime, we had two things. Tribes went down, and religion went up. With identity politics and Islamization, that changed the political culture in the region. Put that all together and the end result is Islamism equals identity politics and identity

politics means either sect or religion or ethnicity.

The war between regions and between groups is over, like all wars in the world are over, levers of power and economic assets. It is as simple as that. But as I will argue later on, neither Arabs nor Sunnis nor Turkmen nor Shiites nor Kurds are a monolithic entity. This is a society. We have different social groups. We have different ideologies. You have different family-based kind of organization and this applies to the sectarian viewpoint to depict the Shiites as one monolithic bloc and the Sunnis as one monolithic bloc is not only a myth, but a miserable one. I will talk about why identity politics gained momentum in the years 2003 and 2005 as a political tool, and I am talking about political sectarianism, not sectarianism as such because there is social sectarianism, cultural... all forms. I am talking about political sectarianism. It gained momentum in 2003, 2005 and thereafter all the cleavages within these identities – and this applies to all groups by the way – all the fracture lines were reactivated once the political order was reorganized.

I will stop just there. I am sorry really for not focusing on the moment, but we will have a discussion about that later. Thank you very much.

2nd Presentation

Prof. Keiko Sakai

Professor, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies

Professor Sakai: Thank you very much, Dr. Faleh. It was a very comprehensive, all-encompassing... In discussing the current sectarianism, we tend to look at that, but we have to look at the historical background to that. And as he was stressing at the end, various religious sects and communal groups, they do not exist as such, but the question is how they are politicized, how they go into identity politics. So it is really a matter of political environment and I think that is a point that we who are seated here would broadly share. He has discussed in a very comprehensive manner. As I suggested earlier, I am sitting in on behalf of Dr. Reidar Visser. To be honest, I think Dr. Faleh Abduljabar has really covered all the major important points. In the interest of time, he said he will discuss the current situation more later on and perhaps I might complement what he said or add some words from a somewhat different angle and provide some food for discussion. I will speak for about 15 minutes.

Sectarian confrontations or when we speak of ethnic confrontations in Iraq and Dr. Abduljabar also discussed this, from past to today these sectarian confrontations have not really existed through and through, as I have pointed out on various occasions. The issue I would like to raise is we have these sectarian groups existing side by side, but actually they are not totally separated. In Europe, the US or Japan we tend to confuse this with geographic notion. As often said, this map is something you see a lot. Northern three governorates where Kurds live and then the central, Sunnis, and then south, Shiites, so people tend to think that going to sects, Iraq consists of these three different regions and they are in confrontation with each other. Therefore, unity amongst these different sects would be very difficult. I think that is the general argument.

Shiites in the south would be in the south. Sunnis mostly live in the center. Therefore, you get the impression that the south is really dominated by Shiites and they move in the Shiite direction and that the central region is really unified under a Sunni identity and Sunni views. Therefore, to totally integrate Iraq when there is discussion about totally integrating Iraq, then the south would be represented by the Shiites, center by Sunnis and the north by Kurds and try to work our reconciliation. Now this sort of framework of mind would debate. I believe it is a very short-circuited view. To identify specific regions with the specific

religious sect I think is dangerous. Now having said that, if you look at the actual political situation, people often refute and say what about the actual situation? These are the March 2010 elections results and as you may know, in Iraq, including Kurds there are four major electoral blocs virtually competing against each other on more or less equal footing. Therefore, coalition organizing is very difficult and therefore, even after seven and a half months since the elections, a government has not been organized.

But Kurds and three political parties, where did they win votes and seats? These are the results of that analysis. Baghdad, most sects and most religions actually exist, so it is a huge area. Purple is Baghdad and shows seats. All political parties won seats in Baghdad, but National Alliance, Hakim group, centered Shiite political coalition. This is al-Maliki's SLC (State of Law Coalition) and as you can see, the yellow part in the south, it has won many seats. And Iraqiya, which is former Prime Minister Allawi's cross-sectarian coalition, and won largest seats, but as the number one party has not managed to organize a coalition. This party won many seats in north and center of Iraq. So people look at this and often the media would argue that INA (Iraqi National Alliance) and SLC are Shiites, therefore, they will win votes in the south. And Iraqiya, the cross-sectarian party, which actually is more in substance Sunnis, would therefore win more votes in the center and north. Thus in terms of the political situation, the southern Shiites are represented by the INA and SLC, and the Sunnis in the center/north will find their representation in Iraqiya. That is in fact the established political behavior in Iraq. So you see a lot of that sort of argument in the media.

What I would like to argue against that is that true, in the Shiite region or in the south, to some extent there is the Shiite mobilization network and there is the Shiite identification, so there is a voting pattern. You could claim that. But in the Sunni region that is center and north governorates, in those regions, we do not see a voting pattern that is much based on Sunni sectarianism, at least until very recent times of 2010. In 2010, perhaps you might have found some common voting pattern in the center and north. But if you look at it more in detail, then actually the pattern is rather disparate and depending on the region or governorate, support tendencies actually differ. Perhaps those seated in the back of the room may not be able to see this much, but 2005, well Iraq has held three elections so far: January 2005, December 2005 and then March this year. So there have been three nationwide elections.

What this describes is the different governorates in the south. It shows the votes. No time for detailed explanation, but how similar results have been shown in different governorates. These nine governorates are the southern governorates. And these results are January 2005 results. For the same nine governorates, December 2005 election results. And these are the results for March 2010. So as you see from this, in most governorates you see a more or less similar distribution. In the south, since the introduction of the electoral

system, the voters in the selection of political parties they support, they have shown a similar pattern. Now in the center and north of the country, so-called Sunni regions, and obviously five governorates, and of course population composition differs to a great extent. It is virtually 100% Sunnis in Anbar and Salah ad-Din. Kurds and Shiites in Diyala and Ninawa where there is conflict going on with the Kurds. These governorates are included as well.

But in these five governorates of so-called Sunni regions, if you look at the results of voting pattern as the January 2005 results, December 2005 results here, as you see the color composition differs significantly from governorate to governorate. In March 2010 for the first time this light blue color, this is Iraqiya. So for the first time, in March 2010, for the first time Iraqiya won a majority in all five governorates. So people argue that the Sunnis are represented by Iraqiya. As I said earlier, in March of 2010, did the Sunnis really come united under one roof called Iraqiya? Before Iraqiya came into being, if you look at Sunni political behavior in the Sunni regions since 2003, the Sunnis actually boycotted initially and there was the first nationwide election in January 2005. The Sunni politicians and political parties boycotted that election, so there was no representation of Sunni Iraqis in the results of the election.

However, when it comes to the December 2005 elections, for the first time Sunni-affiliated political parties participated in the elections, and Iraq Islam Party, and this Iraqi Islamic Party clearly stated or advocated Islam as a political party, claiming that they are the Islamic party and advocated very strongly Sunni Islamism and won part seats in the parliament. But as I said, this Iraqi Islamic Party, in the south the Shiite political parties won seats, but this Islamic Party did not win as many seats as the Shiite parties did in the south. Central and north regions, if you look at the election results, in the December 2005 elections these are the results in different governorates here in December 2005. The Iraqi Islamic Party is represented by this yellow part. It is true, there were several governorates where they won a majority, but there is a lot of disparity from governorate to governorate. So while they claimed Sunni party, they did not really win support that would unify all the Sunni governorates.

The Iraqi Islamic Party was criticized for failing to provide social services in the Sunni governorates. In fact they were regarded as a party that failed to provide such social services in the Sunni regions. Since around 2008-2009 in northern governorates like Ninawa or Anbar in the center, more centrist parties began to make inroads. In Ninawa, the Al-Hadba, a political party began to rise and in Anbar where US provided support to the Awakening alliance. Different political parties having their support base in different governorates really made headway and these are the results of the Iraqi Islamic Party's vote counts. So building on those results, here these are different regional parties with a support base in different

governorates. It may not really be easy to read. The results of January 2009 regional or provincial elections in Ninawa, the majority won by Al-Hadba. And in Anbar, Iraq National Priming, a political party that virtually won no votes in other governorates.

Building on these results – time is running out, so I am going to proceed crisply – if we look at the results of March 2010 elections, these are the center and northern region vote results. As I said earlier, the blue, Iraqiya seats, why did Iraqiya win so many seats in the so-called Sunni region? From now I hope you will take a look at the graphs in the handout. Page three of the handout, who actually won in the elections? I have picked out only major names. As you can see from this table, they represent disparate forces, representing temporary combination of different forces. I believe that is Iraqiya. Now Tariq al-Hashimi, a well established Sunni politician who has had an established presence in the central government, but I would rather focus on regional parties that made headway in the January 2009 provincial elections. And also the regional or provincial politicians, Iraqiya took them on board, as a result of which they won seats.

So they are Al-Hadba, the party that I referred to, or the tribal forces in Anbar. Parties that have a support base in the regions or provinces. So they have won some measure of Sunni support votes, but their support base is in the north in Ninawa, Anbar, and eastern Salah ad Din and Diyala. The support bases are very different amongst these regions. In Ninawa and Anbar, who won the elections? People with tribal backgrounds or people who have been active as lawyers or physicians in the different regions or, as in the case of Al-Hadba, people who had supported local politicians. These are people who won in the north and east, whereas even in the Sunni provinces in Diyala and Salah ad Din, the local people have not really made much headway. Even in terms of tribal networks, these people have not really been politicians or candidates who fought their campaigns relying on their local support base.

So if you look at the Iraqiya list, generally it is said that they won on the basis of the Sunni support base, but in the west and north local tribes and other local support forces were the foundation. But in the east the support base was totally different. So you cannot group them all in one and say therefore the Iraqiya list is thanks to the Sunni support base. So the point I want to get at is – and this would overlap with what Dr. Abduljabar was saying – in certain areas, perhaps people might be economically alienated or politically alienated. Therefore, when discriminated politically or economically and that situation overlapped with the sectarianism and that was notable in the Shiite areas. But that sort of inclination is not really seen in the Sunni regions. In the Sunni regions, in some areas there is great emphasis on tribalism, but then there are other regions with a stronger tradition of the Baathist Party. So you have a mixture of different types of region.

So rather than look at the political confrontation from this sort of sectarianism, you have to look a little more detailed in the different regions and look at the political situations in different regions to arrive at a conclusion. Well, it is already time for me to conclude, so let me stop here and I hope I can add more during discussion later on. Thank you. I go back to wearing another hat as a moderator. We have two panelists who will make comments. First one is Dr. Nabil al-Tikriti, Associate Professor, University of Mary Washington, US. Dr. al-Tikriti is an expert of Iraq and Ottoman Empire and he made a presentation yesterday. I referred to regionalism and the regional characteristics and the concept of governorate or borders between and among governorates and how they have changed from the Ottoman Empire period to present. Also how they are closely linked to the identity of each region. He has very interesting studies on those points. But he will speak for five or 10 minutes. Nabil, please.

Comments/discussions

Dr. Nabil al-Tikriti, Associate Professor, University of Mary Washington: First of all I would like to thank JIA for the generous invitation to come address you today. Secondly, I will just play off some of what has been said previously and add my own glosses. In some sense, Professor Sakai actually stole a lot of my thunder about the tripartite Iraq being Sunni, Shiite and Kurdish, but I am going to expand on what she said in different ways. So first of all, let me just address a couple of comments that Professor Abduljabar pointed out. One is the idea that there are no natural nations; they are all creations at various times in history. While I think that is quite accurate for most of the world, I find this may be the one place in the world where geographic determinism seems to make sense, namely the island nation of Japan. So I wonder if it applies here, but it would seem to apply everywhere else. But I just throw that out there.

The other thing that was said is that Iraq was an administrative unit under the Ottomans, but not a nation-state. This is not so much a disagreement as just sort of a clarification. Sometimes Iraq was a constructed unit under the Ottomans and sometimes it was not, but I think in the Ottoman geographic imagination, Iraq was a region, and I think that is fairly well argued by Reidar Visser in one article and I actually argued it as well in a different article. You can kind of see it in the Ottoman administrative orders whereby Baghdad is the primary province of the three major provinces and other provinces at different times in history and actually things go through Baghdad. The other comment that was made by Professor Abduljabar that I wonder about is that the second half of the monarchy may have been the most effective state-building time. I wonder whether you could say that it goes even further under Abdul Karim Qasim's brief five-year era, but that is quibbling about modern Iraqi history. I am not sure that I disagree, I just wonder.

So now onto the tripartite Iraq idea. This is something that I have argued against in Washington quite a bit and I was surprised to be informed by a Japanese colleague that the idea is quite prevalent here as well and I did not expect that. I sort of expected Japanese diplomats to be better informed than American diplomats and was somewhat unpleasantly surprised to hear otherwise. So I think that is a very useful topic to broach and that is the one I think I am going to concentrate with my 10 minutes. The conventional idea is that Iraq is an artificial creation by Britain that was composed of three provinces – Mosul, Basra and Baghdad – and that these three provinces correspond to Sunni, Shiite and Kurd. That is the conventional wisdom of Washington that Reidar Visser actually argued very effectively against five years ago when it was all the

rage in Washington.

I am just going to reiterate his argument for those who are not familiar with it. That is basically what I am going to do now. First of all, I would argue that Iraq has always existed somehow as a geographic unit and there has always been sort of a south and north aspect to it, so whether it is Babel and Mesopotamia or Al Jazair in the north and Al Seoud in the south for a later period in history. Or in the post-Mongol era (the 13th century and onward) where it becomes known as Iraqi Arab in distinction from Iraqi Ajam... Sorry, so there is Iranian Iraq and Arab Iraq. And the Arab Iraq is basically the predecessor to today's Iraq, but it is also what came after Mesopotamia, what came after Al Jazair. There is an old geographic determinism there at some level. And as I have already argued, under the Ottomans, Iraq was also somehow an administrative region. There was a coherence to it and you can see it in the Ottoman bureaucratic machinery and how it dealt with the region.

Thirdly though, the three provinces – Mosul, Basra and Baghdad – were only the final structure of the Ottoman era. In other words, it was only a late-19th century administrative definition and it was maybe in operation for some 30 years before World War I. So it is only the last iteration that the Ottomans left the British. And those three provinces did not correspond to Sunni, Shiite and Kurd. This is where, not this map, but the map that you had had up earlier would be very useful. I do not know if you can still get that, but the map of Iraq... The first one she used. The reason it does not is that Basra was really only the very southern of the districts and it was actually governed by Sunnis and dominated by either Sunnis or Christians in Basra City as a province. Baghdad, on the other hand, stretched from the middle of the south to the middle of the north and was a majority Shiite district province. And Mosul was a very mixed province with everyone involved and was not majority Kurdish as a province at that time. So it does not correspond with Sunni-Shiite-Kurdish at all in many different ways.

Now another argument I would like to make – and this coincides with what Professor Abduljabar was saying – pre-2003, Iraqis were not thinking in a sectarian fashion, but they were thinking in terms of divisions. There were divisions in Iraq, but they were different divisions, and I am going to give you a set of classifications that were relevant before 2003, before effectively the Americans put out this idea of Sunni-Shiite-Kurds and it is not just the Americans and I am not sure it was intentional. I actually think it was accidental and intellectual laziness as much as anything else. In any case, before that, before 2003, here are some divisions that mattered more. Baathist versus non-Baathist or even anti-Baathist. Kurdish-Arab was a much more important distinction pre-2003 than after 2003. It was a very sort of ethnic division and linguistic. Baghdad versus the provinces. If you lived in Baghdad, you were a capital city person, you were

cosmopolitan, you did not see things in any way the same way that you did out in the provinces.

State versus non-state. In other words, those who were members of the state structure – bureaucrats, politicians, military, anyone connected to the state – versus people who were not connected to the state. That was a very important distinction. Tribal units were much more important pre-2003 than during the sectarian years following the invasion. Politically you have all kinds of constructs that are in the age of ideology that Professor Abduljabar was pointing at in the earlier era. You have Arab nationalists, you have Iraqi nationalists, you have Shiite communitarians (pan-Shiites), you have Communists, and then you can think of several other smaller groups if you put your mind to it in a study of history. Then finally, Sunnis, I would argue, did not see themselves as Sunni, in the same way that white Americans, shall we say, do not see themselves as being constructed white. To use sort of an American... this is sort of an insider reference, so it may not hold. But there is this comedian Stephen Colbert who you might have heard of who frequently makes the joke about “I do not see race” because he is a white American. He does not see race at all, he just sees himself as being default.

In a similar way, I would argue that Sunni Iraqis and Shiite Iraqis did not see it pre-2003 in the same way, unless they chose to. Some did. For example, the pan-Shiites might have saw themselves that way, but most did not. So I actually think it is something of an American creation. Just a couple more minutes. Now I will shift to the end of the discussion. By the way, one of the proofs, I think, of it not being a pre-2003 creation is when the sectarian war started, they used 16th century references to insult each other. So it suddenly became a world of the Safavids versus the Takfiris. These are 16th century arguments which is basically the last time there was a sectarian conflict. It had been 400 years earlier. And then today Iraqi nationalism has somehow come back and is muddling along quite well and I think is actually winning.

Now for a closing point, I just want to speak briefly to Japan’s potential role and what is going on in the region. This will only take a couple of minutes. First of all, I think one should keep a close eye on Turkey because Turkey’s role in the region is coming on like gang busters very, very quickly. And they are getting along quite well with Iran on many different levels. They have effectively opened their borders with Syria which is a huge change. And they completely dominate Iraqi Kurdistan’s economy. They have absolute control over the Kurdish economy at least. What their aspiration is, is to gradually recreate a new Ottoman space and some of the Turkish diplomats have openly said this, although it is not usually openly said. And they are making progress on this slowly. So that is one thing I think that Japanese diplomats should keep an eye on: the change in Turkey’s role in the region.

Other points? What are some things that Japan could consider doing for the region? One is they could concentrate on river negotiations: the Tigris-Euphrates River region. And by the way, someone informed me that that was actually tried recently, so there is some precedent there as well, but there still needs to be a complete agreement for the Tigris-Euphrates River which brings in Iran, Turkey, Syria, and Iraq and perhaps others. That is something that Japan could try to get involved in. There are also niche levels of assistance, technical transfer, but that is pretty standard. And then joining with some of Turkey's initiatives in the region when they see Turkey's role as being a positive one from the Japanese perspective. And in a sense you are creating a subtle counterweight, I would argue, to Chinese influence in a region where American domination is, I think, about to fade, for reasons having to do with the American economy and the American political system as much as anything else. And the last point is peace mediation and conflict resolution is something where I think Japanese diplomacy could play a very positive role. I will stop there. I am sorry if I went over.

Professor Sakai: Thank you very much. I forgot to mention this earlier, but following comments by the panelists, we would like to also entertain questions from the floor. You should find in the package a sheet of paper to write down your questions. If you have not gotten that sheet of paper, please raise your hand. A staff member will give you one. So please jot down your questions and then following the comments by the next panelist, Dr. Yamao, we hope you will hand in your questions. Sorry for that late notice about questions from the floor. But following the comments by the next panelist, we would like to collect those questions. So the last panelist is Dr. Dai Yamao of Kyushu University. He submitted his doctorate paper dissertation in March of this year and won his doctorate degree. He is an up and coming young scholar and he has been specializing in the Islam Shiite movement in Iraq, so he has been looking at the Dawa Party and Hakim's ISCI (Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq) Party, how these parties emerged and what their ideologies are. He has been using a lot of literature in Arabic, English and other languages to write his dissertation, so among Japanese scholars I believe he has the most detailed knowledge about the current Iraqi situation. So again, I would like to invite Dr. Yamao to deliver his comments for 5-10 minutes.

Dr. Dai Yamao, Lecturer, Kyushu University: I am Yamao, Kyushu University. Dr. Abduljabar and Dr. Sakai are scholars that I have respected the most and have been trying to follow in their footsteps. So for me they are like father and mother. And I feel too presumptuous to make a comment on what they have said, so let me make some additional remarks which I discussed at yesterday's closed session. As for Dr. Abduljabar and also Dr. al-Tikriti discussed this, they discussed from both perspectives. Dr. Sakai discussed the different regions, the different characteristics of regions and governorates are more important than religious sects. I probably would take up something that is in between the two perspectives and focus on the

period of 2003-2010, between these elections. And from sectarian confrontation to policy confrontation for nation-state.

There are two points I would like to make. The first is that at the time of 2005 when elections were started, sectarian confrontation emerged and I would like to first discuss why that confrontation emerged. The second point is after 2005 this sectarian confrontation heated up and yet the sort of institutional embedding that sectarian confrontation has seen in Lebanon did not happen in Iraq. Why? The first point, as Dr. Abduljabar discussed and others said as well, historically there was a cultural sectarianism so to speak, but there was no political sectarianism. In other words masses were mobilized in accordance with the lines of sectarian confrontation whereas they started to emerge since 2005. I might sound rather rough shot, but I would like to make two points.

Shiite politicians like al-Maliki and Hakim's people, many of these people were exiled overseas for many years and they did not have a political support base within Iraq. Therefore, when mobilizing a support base, they had no option but to rely on religious network in order to fight elections. Also, paradoxically those people had been domestically in Iraq were prohibited to organize as a political force because of Saddam Hussein's proscription. They did not have the resources and because they did not have the resources to mobilize politically, they had to rely on a religious network. So as a result of these two points, the sectarian line mobilization occurred because there were no other resources to rely on. So I believe that is the direct cause for the emergence of sectarian confrontation in 2005.

And Dr. Abduljabar said there was the emergence of identity politics. Now as you know in February 2006 there was a major suicide bombing in Shiite... in Samarra, a holy city, and about 3,500 civilians were killed per month at a certain point in time. So there was sort of a civil war situation. And in the midst of that sort of civil war situation politicians had to manage newly-created political parties, so they had to just engage in political debate while the civil war situation continued. Now as provincial elections were conducted in January 2009, the mobilization of support base at that time was not in line with sectarian divides, but instead of allocating posts along sectarian lines which was seen in Lebanon and also social institutions were not created along the sectarian lines as seen in Lebanon for three reasons I believe. One is, as I mentioned earlier, because the civil war situation continued as a result of sectarian confrontation and more victims emerged and therefore political elite, people in general, really felt there was a need for national reconciliation.

As a result, sectarian-based mobilization became impossible. Rather, they shifted toward policy

confrontation on the platform of national reconciliation. The second point is, as I said with the emergence of the sectarian confrontation in 2005, Shiite political parties gradually built up their support base in Iraqi society. Those politicians who had been in Iraq, even during the Saddam period, gradually managed to build their support base domestically. In other words, at the time of 2005 they had to rely on the religious networks, but this time they were also able to rely on a support base other than religious network which was national reconciliation. The third point which I think is most important is even within the same sects, policy confrontations heated up among political parties within the same sect. The best example is where al-Maliki's Dawa-centered SLC and Hakim's INA (Iraqi National Alliance) while they belong to the Shiite sect, they began to confront each other on policy terms. So even within the same sect, there were political parties with disparate policy lines. Therefore, it became impossible to mobilize support in accordance with the sectarian line.

So put all of these together. When you look at the political situation in Iraq today, it will be misleading to look at the situation through the glasses of sectarian confrontation. Rather, you should look at the coming together or falling apart among political parties according to policy lines. And of course depending on the situation, the combination differs, but right now power struggle is along the line of national reconciliation, so how do you organize the majority after the elections? So that is the point of the power struggle today. So the important thing is there is not sectarian confrontation, but the fight today is on how to build the nation, and with that, I would like to conclude my remarks. Thank you.

Professor Sakai: Thank you. As I said earlier, now I would like to open the discussion to the floor and have an open discussion. If you have any questions, we want to collect the question forms. Then the staff will collect the sheet for the questions. Staff will come to pick up your questionnaire. Thank you very much. These are the question sheets that you wrote in. We are in the process of collecting the question sheets. Those who have not finished writing the questions, while we look at these questions, I would like to ask Dr. Abduljabar, after listening to Dr. al-Tikriti and Dr. Yamao, since I interrupted you earlier, if you would like to add anything or if you would like to respond to Dr. al-Tikriti or Dr. Yamao, I would appreciate it very much.

Dr. Abduljabar: I think about Ottoman Iraq, Iraq was an administrative unit in the way Latin America had so many administrative units that became states or nation-states in their own right. And you know, nationalism, nation-states are modern, just like mobile phones. One guy asked me why Salah ad-Din did not create a Kurdish nation-state. I said, "That would have been wonderful. We would not have that problem and the Kurds would have enjoyed their right to self-determination which I support." But asking

this question is just asking why Salah ad-Din did not use tanks or mobile phones or Internet. That was like five centuries ago and there were no connections between people. The social organization was either city-states, small city-states or tribes and clans and so forth. That applies even to Japan, you know, before the railway stations. You had a central dynasty on paper, not in reality, as an effective system of governance.

Nation-building under Qasim, I think under Qasim the first foundations for the destruction of Iraqi nation-state was laid down. The abolishment of the parliament, the abolishment of the constitution and constitutional court, the war against the Kurds (1961, 1962 and 1963), so these were the seeds of destruction, institutional and policy wise. Now I want to say a few words about the rise and decline of identity politics. As I said, identity politics were born out of exclusion, political exclusion, economic exclusion, cultural exclusion, and on top of that, we have other ingredients – the rise of political Islam – which is a very important ingredient because political Islam is by definition embedded on some sort of identity politics rather than seemingly ideological politics. That was the case in the 1950s and 1940s, but not in the 1970s and 1980s. Of course the success of the Iranian Revolution had a great impact on Iraqi Shiites.

To say the sectarianism was born after 2003, I think this does not hold. I am sorry. I mean, if you examine the documents, you are a historian. If you examine the document of these parties, the institutions they built, the themes they put forward, the education they had between 1964 – and this is the year when the first Shiite sectarian agitation against a conceived sectarian government under Abdel Salem Aref. It started just there and developed and took on wider forms. What happened after 2003 is that in the Diaspora we had 2.5 million Iraqis in 2003. Identity politics or political sectarianism among Shiites was widespread, but not inside Iraq; it was not always. The removal of Saddam Hussein allowed the Diaspora people to return and that allowed to make or to transform sectarian politics into mass politics. The other thing is the removal of the old state. He did not have any control system in place, any security, so identity politics or sectarian politics were militarized.

It was made mass politics and then it was militarized. What happened after 2006 is the demilitarization of sectarian politics and the process of disintegration or better still, erosion of identity politics is there. Why is that? First, identities are fluid structures. They are not fixed. They are not monolithic. Shiites or Sunnis or Kurds or Arabs or Turks or Iranians, they are not unified. They are divided by class, by region, by ideology, by political preferences, by this, by that, and what applies to Shiites applies also to the Sunnis. The construction of identity politics was geared to secure power on the basis of this concept: that Shiites are the

majority, yet they are not ruling. And democracy is demography. Democracy is the majority rule, right? But once... and that driving force was the basic dynamic that helped the construction and the success of Shiite identity politics between 2003 and 2005. It helped also cover, momentarily, all the schisms and divisions within that identity politics, between natives and the Diaspora people, between Khomeinī and moderates, and between rural or urban lower classes.

Once you secure power, once you open the system and there is no obstacle to the presentation of the Shiites or the Sunnis or anybody, the idea of being deprived of power, the idea of being deprived of economic resources, loses its meaning. You cannot mobilize now for Shiite rule because it is there. It loses its meaning. And instead, a new dynamic steps in and that is who represents the Shiites, who represents the Sunnis, who represents Basra, who represents, I do not know what. And there starts the competition within blocs created on the basis of identity politics and that is what happened. That is exactly what happened after 2005 and we saw its results, empirical results, on the ground in the elections of 2009 and 2010. I will give you some examples.

In 2004, the United Iraqi Alliance – this is the Shiite bloc – was organized by Sistani. It was meant as a universal Iraqi front and he invited some of the Sunnis, but many politicians boycotted. It received four million votes. The centrist trends of Iraqiya at that time, they received 1.4 million votes. A year on, at the beginning of 2005 when we had the first elections for the constituent assembly, the assembly that wrote the constitution, a year after that at the end of 2005 we had another election. The United Iraqi Alliance got plus five million votes, so it increased by one million votes. And the voters were in the region of 11 million. Go to 2010. First, we do not have an Iraqi Alliance. Second, all of them together, all the groups that made the Iraqi Alliance in 2005, all of them, all together they got three million votes while the number of the voters registered increased from 11 to 15 million. This is a massive downturn in absolute and relative terms.

In 2005 only nationwide 360,000 voters did not vote for the Islamic parties. They voted for tribal chiefs, for businessmen, for intellectuals. In 2010 more than two million such votes were cast. This is a trend, an anti-sectarian trend that is not organized, it is not represented by one body – this is one of its failures – but as a social trend, it is there to see. And what applies to this section, the Shiite section, applies also to the Sunni section. The rise of tribes, Al-bu Issa and others. There are so many groups that are secular. They do not subscribe to the sectarian discourse. Let me add one thing. In 2003 up to 2005 the Shiite world in Iraq hinged on two giants: the Sadr Movement on the one hand and the Hakim ISCI on the other. And when Maliki was chosen, he was chosen as being the weakest link. His party was very weak. He himself was a mediocre person – he still is, in a sense – his party had only 15 members in the parliament so they thought

he was nothing and they brought him just to be a toy to be manipulated.

But once you are a prime minister, you are in a position to control US\$80 billion. That is a lot of money and a lot of power involved. And the dwarf became a giant and both were dwarfed. They challenged him by the way. He came with the votes from Sadr people against the candidate of Hakim, Adel Abdel-Mahdi at that time. It was thanks to the votes of Sadr that he became prime minister and for two years he was hesitant as should he impose law and order or should he not? Because if he did that at that time, it meant that he would have a quarrel with Sadr, his benefactor. In the end, he did. And he changed course from the discourse from sectarianism – we are the Shiites, we are the deprived, which was true in the past in a sense, but does not sell anymore. You are in power. You have a lot of money. You are distributing benefits to your people. So he started the law and order discourse, and as we know, the law and order discourse, based on the monopoly of the state to the means of violence, which is not the creation of Ayatollah Sistani, it is the creation of Ayatollah Max Weber, and they know that.

This is a rationalist, modernist, Western idea embraced by a local Islamic party. Then he started to promote also Iraqi patriotic discourse as well and that sold well because all the middle classes and those who went up the ladder in the new social mobility, they wanted law and order. That was the basic condition for just staying alive, not for any governance. This is his political capital which he is wasting at the moment, by the way, be reengaging Sadr in this bizarre alliance. Thank you.

Professor Sakai: Thank you very much, Dr. Abduljabar. We have received many questions and we have somewhat less than 30 minutes. Probably we will not be able to answer all these questions, but I think I can divide these questions into four categories and we think it will not be possible for all the speakers to respond to these four questions, but I would like to ask the colleagues here to answer these questions. The first group of questions is on relations with the neighboring countries. As Iraq strengthens its nationalism, it may wreak havoc on neighboring countries. I believe the question actually anticipates several specific cases, but also many questions on Iran's response. Iran's sectarianism, there is discussion that sectarianism may dissipate in Iraq. Would that mean less Iranian influence in Iraq? Also questions about American influence. For example, Iraq today is stable or stabilizing because of US surge in Iraq. So what do you think of American influence on the Iraqi situation? This is the first group of questions involving neighboring countries or foreign countries.

The second set of questions is on the perception of the Iraqi people or the tendency of the media reports, the perception of history that Iraqis today have or the feelings of Iraqi people regarding national reconciliation.

So essentially the questions are about the perception of Iraqi people, people on the street. And the third set of questions... well, the second set of questions was more about perception of the people vis-à-vis national reconciliation, but the third set of questions really is how institutional responses are being made with regard to political reform. There was also discussion that sectarian confrontation is not the main to date. If then, what is the bone of contention in Iraq today and what does national reconciliation try to overcome? Fourth set of questions, I believe this is a very major issue and that is about the shape of Iraq in the future as a nation. Especially economically, what will be the shape of the country? What will happen to the oil and gas law and also what will happen to the allocation of oil and gas income? What will happen to the federal system of Iraq? Time is limited and therefore I am sure we can only get down to detailed discussion of the federalism in Iraq.

Then non-religious... is it that the non-religious identity failed and would that explain the strengthening or rise of Islamic identity or Islamic sectarian identity? So what is the likely trend for Iraqi Islam identity and Arab identity or secular Arab identity? Time is limited but I would like to invite each to touch on these questions. About seven minutes each perhaps, please. Let's start with Dr. Abduljabar or should we go in the opposite order? Probably I am the moderator, so I will ask Dr. Yamao to lead off.

Dr. Yamao: Thank you very much. I will take up questions that I can answer, but there are questions I think it is better for Dr. Abduljabar to respond to. With regard to the first set of questions about relations with neighboring countries, it really gets down to details. It is possible to cite a lot of data, but roughly speaking, I believe Iran's influence has been declining and will decline. Iran had a strong influence over ISCI or had control over ISCI, but to cite a simple example today, the Iraqis are trying to organize a cabinet and Tehran is losing its control over ISCI in many respects. Whilst the Saudi-proposed process of organizing the cabinet is attracting ISCI and Iraqiya, whereas Maliki's Dawa and Kurds which are more inclined toward the Syria and Tehran influence. So Iran is losing its influence.

With regard to Iraqi people's perception, I want to use PowerPoint material, but I will get the data later on while others are speaking. With regard to the third set of questions, I think this is really where I have to be more responsible in giving an answer. So what is national reconciliation about? A simple example, the former Baathist members, to what extent should they be taken into the political process, especially people in the security sector and former military leaders? To what extent should they be allowed to return to the political process? I think that is the point. With regard to oil and gas income and distribution of that income, the fourth set of questions, I do not really have much to say. Now Islam strengthen... Well, true. Until the elections of 2005 that was a trend, but if we look at the provincial elections in 2009, political parties with

religious ideologies lost votes to a great extent. So I do not think that Islam ideology has any significant impact or influence in Iraqi society today.

Professor Sakai: Now I would like to ask Dr. al-Tikriti and then Dr. Abduljabar to respond to these four sets of questions.

Dr. al-Tikriti: First of all, perhaps I overstated my case when I said that sectarianism is a US legacy, solely and purely. That would be overstating the case and I do not mean to give you that impression. But I am arguing against a very lazy Washington view that simply says it is all Saddam's fault and that is it, full stop. It is the same kind of thing they used to say about Tito's Yugoslavia. In other words, it is all Tito's fault, which I think is a gross simplification of what happened in the 1990s. So I will concede the point basically on that one. What about all these questions? First of all, I was in Iraq last in May for a very brief visit as part of a small delegation with the Stimson Center. And we met with a lot of the primary players and from that I got certain impressions. And the last time I had lived in Iraq was 1991-1992, and so I compare a lot of what I saw in May and what I saw in 2003, and what I saw in 2000 and all these visits since 1991 to what I originally saw while living there in 1991 and that is the following.

There has been zero infrastructural investment that you can point to, at least in the obvious sense, in the Iraq that I saw south of Kurdistan. Mind you, Kurdistan is completely different. Since really the 1980s... everything is from the 1980s and the only thing that has been constructed since the 1980s that you can easily point at is the US Embassy, which is huge. It is the size of a university campus. It is quite a massive structure really. That is one observation, so there is nothing happening economically that you can point to as a healthy outcome. Also T-WALLS which are these sort of little barriers that are very similar to highway barriers or sound barriers are all over the city. So the city is segmented in an ethno-sectarian sense, neighborhood by neighborhood. And the politicians that we were meeting with were trying to, as we say in the US "put lipstick on a pig." There is this expression where you try and portray everything is going really well, everything is fantastic, but then when we were driving around, we see nothing but T-WALLS and nothing new since the 1980s. I knew this...

Kurdistan is a completely different story. Kurdistan is booming. Absolutely booming and quite stable in recent years as well. But that is a different case. You are absolutely right about that. So that was my impression and that is what I see. I also see that the US role is declining very quickly. We met with embassy officials and they were... not at a loss as to what to do because they did not have ideas about what to do vis-à-vis the political process, but they were at a loss because they had nothing to play with. They felt as

though if they got involved, there would be a backlash from the Iraqi public, which I think is correct, and if they stayed out completely, they would have no say in the process and they chose the latter. I think that is a sign of something else that is happening that is as the US withdraws its troops – they are already down to some, I believe, 50,000 now. They are going to be down even further in the future – their influence is going down with them. And Iran is filling some of that void, Turkey is filling other aspects of that void and Baghdad itself is becoming a stronger player in its own right.

The politicians that we were meeting with were all very optimistic about Iraq someday pumping, and within as little as five years, a number that I thought was just incredible – 12 million barrels per day – when they currently pump, I think 1.5-2 million barrels per day. So they are basically saying that they are going to pump six times as much oil in the next 5-10 years. And I was just like, “Really?” I thought this was absolutely impossible considering that I had not seen any effective investment anywhere in Baghdad at least, and they were arguing that they were going to have 12 million barrels per day in the next decade. Well, if that actually does happen, what you would then see is the return of the rentier state which is what Professor Abduljabar was actually trying to describe whereby you have all this money to spend, it all goes through the prime minister’s office and it separates the government from the population. If you are not collecting income tax, then basically the government is an independent player and can do anything it wants because it has no connection to public opinion. That is what was the case in the 1970s and the 1980s and that is what could return. Basically you would have a rentier state return.

The other thing that seems to be happening is there are all kinds of speculation that as the US leaves, the next thing that might come about is a coup. And there will be many, many attempts at coups. And what may happen there is you are going to have one attempt after another and there are two ways to look at the possibility of a success of the coup. One possibility says the army is so fractured, the military is so fractured, nobody can command enough of a following to actually takeover the mechanism of government and that is one view and I think that view holds a lot of water. In other words, it is not a very unified military structure at this point at all.

The opposite view though is that all you would have to do is control the exits and the entrances to the Green Zone and presto, you have the entire government. So the counterview is that it is very easy to take over the Iraqi government, so what you may see once the US draws down is a series of coup attempts. Whether they succeed or not is another matter. One thing I would say about Iraqi public opinion as I understand it right now is that democracy has gained something of a bad name, for many at least, because it has become associated with sectarian voting blocs, corruption and paralysis of government so that such a

coup, if it succeeds, might actually be popular, at least at first. Is that actually going to happen? I have no idea and Professor Abduljabar might have a completely different perspective. Actually I would respect his perspective greatly because he is a lot closer to the situation than I am, sitting in Virginia. So I will just close with that and turn it over to you.

Dr. Abduljabar: We have to volunteer the army first.

Professor Sakai: Please wait, Faleh. Before we hear from Dr. Faleh Abduljabar, there was one other big question. Democratization of Iraq, will it be successful? An attempt to democratize Iraq, will it be successful or not? This is a major broad issue. But since there was a reference to democratization, maybe Dr. Faleh, you can also include the answer to that question as well.

Dr. Abduljabar: There is a contradiction intention between nation-building and democracy in non-homogenous societies, in binational societies like Iraq, in multicultural, multireligious, multiethnic societies like Iraq. In homogenous societies democracy is simple: majority rule, rule by consent. These are the basic definitions since John Locke which is working everywhere, but not where you have multicultural, multireligious, multiethnic societies and where we have these differences politicized. Majority rule will lead to ethnocracy, not democracy and this is a big problem. To go beyond that problem, many countries invented the following. First, federalism. Although it was invented in the US for other reasons – huge country, strong liberal tendencies to prevent concentration of power – we had before that division of power, the classical division of power: executive, legislative and judiciary. So federalism was added as one way of tackling or preventing ethnocracy.

Another mechanism is consociationalism. I know many of you may not have heard of this. In Iraq they call it [Arabic]. This is the Arabic translation. Actually it started in the 1950s in Europe in Holland and Belgium and other countries there. There is a theory about it that says there should be a ruling coalition, that all majorities should be included and that big minorities should have veto power in power arrangements. This is roughly consociationalism. We have these three elements in the political order. We have federalism for the Kurdish region, but it suffers from the existence of Turkmen, Assyrians and others who demand, as the Kurds did before them, cultural rights and other demands. We have consociationalism in the sense that we have a three-member presidential council that the council has veto powers, one. Two, we have a voting quorum that prevents any simple majority to do whatever it wants, not even absolute majority. In certain cases, you need two-thirds of voting in the parliament which cripples any simple majority from monopolizing power.

These three mechanisms, I think, if they are well established, in place, we can go beyond that point to democratization, but thus far we have not. And this is a big danger. Let me explain. There is a strong majoritarian tendency among the Shiites as a mentality – we are the majority; we should rule. Of course Shiites are a majority, definitely. A demographic majority. But demographic majorities are not necessarily translated into parliamentary majorities. They have different parties, different trends – liberals, Communists, Marxists, Socialists, you name it, Islamists, moderate Islamists, fundamentalists, all sorts of trends. And demographic majorities do not necessarily, sometimes they do, but not necessarily translate into parliamentary majority group. Yet when Maliki assumed prime ministership, he controlled the army directly. You know the chain of command is not the prime minister, the defense minister, the chief of staff as is usual in all democracies. It is the prime minister and even lower than divisional commanders. He runs the show even on the level of battalions and sub-battalions from his office.

He has at his disposal US\$1.4 million for various security operations. He is using it at will and that created a backlash from the Kurds – not all of them – from Iraqiya group and from Sadr and from Hakim because they suffered from that. And a process of personalization of power has begun. That is because we have a rentier economy. We do not have a market economy. We are not taxing people. We are giving people state money from the public purse into private purse. The relation is inverted and the government is not the product of power relations in society. It is creating it and it is manipulating it and it can do that. This happened at the moment when the Dawa Party had only 15 members in the parliament. It did not have a majority at all. And the parliament was totally dysfunctional. And it did that at a moment when the presidential council had a veto power. In this term, we will have only one president, not a presidential council, without veto power. And second, we have parliament with 89 members out of the Dawa Party. With an elite that has been manipulating resources for the last four-plus years.

The battle of representation now is exactly about how to put institutional checks and balances on the power of the prime minister. This is the real battle. And we have to be conscious of this. The Kurds know it. Iraqiya knows it. al-Hakim knows it. They know it... I have direct dialogue with them and conversation with many of their leaders. They worry about this. This is an obstacle to the functioning of federalism in the future, not now, but in the future. At one point a prime minister can just shut down the pipe of the 17% that is given to the KRG (Kurdistan Regional Government), at any moment, in the way that the Republicans shut down the Clinton administration. They did not pay salaries and go to the wall. This is a big problem. This is the crisis. You will hear all sort of things. Of course there are misgivings between different groups. They do not like each other. They hate each other in fact. They do not trust each other. They say things in

public that they do not say in private. You know most of the politicians, not all of them, but most of them hail from underground politics which is the most miserable kind of activity you can ever come across and it has destroyed the political culture in the Middle East, this mentality of underground politics.

I know it firsthand. So many friends... they need to be taken to a mental hospital, most of them. You know all sort of suspicions, hatred, xenophobia, kind of paranoid attitudes, all sort of... and you can see it there. So let me put it straight. The urgent task is to have checks and balances, institutional, not personal. Institutions that can put checks and balances on the prime minister, whoever he is – Alawi, Maliki, Jafaria. It is not the person. It is the office we are talking about. People say, “Oh, he is very nice. He smiles at you.” Oh gosh. Some of the Kurdish leaders, they are my friends, I like them very much. They say, “He is very soft. We like them.” I say politicians, strong politicians can be weak if they have weak institutions. And weak politicians, if they have big armies and a lot of money, they become very strong. It is not a personal thing. Look at the institutions for God sake. It is not the person, it is the institution. It is the office, not the person.

Unless this is solved, this will make or break Iraq as a nation-state and as a democratic process at the moment. If we go beyond that with checks and balances on the prime minister, that would safeguard federalism, safeguard consociationalism and safeguard the decentralization structure, and the non-personalization of power structures. We can speak of the beginning of democratization, genuine democratization. Thus far, we have chaos. And beyond that, we need veto power to the president and nobody is talking about that, neither the Kurds, nor Alawi, nor anybody. A ceremonial president, if a veto presidential council vetoed power... presidential council could do nothing to stop Maliki. How can a single ceremonial person do that? I mean, are we cheating ourselves here? It will not work. It will be nothing. Just a façade of a kind of agreement. Solve this problem, you solve Iraq’s crisis and you move beyond. Thank you.

Professor Sakai: Thank you very much. Professor Yamao, you wanted to show some data? Perception and awareness of the people in Iraq.

Dr. Yamao: I thought I had more data, but I could not find much. In February 2009, national reconciliation, 79% of people think they need reconciliation. South, center and north, there should be three different divisions and 17% said, yes, they should be divided into three regions. About regionalism and so on, this is better data. Unified central Iraq has to be created. In 2009, less than 60% said yes, but in February 2009, 70% said, yes, a unified Iraq is called for. So most of them said a centralized, unified nation has to be built.

That we can see from the public poll.

Professor Sakai: Thank you very much indeed. We are behind schedule and there is so much more to discuss, but we would like to close this session. Dr. Faleh Abduljabar, Dr. Nabil al-Tikriti were invited to discuss the present and future of Iraq. It is rare that in Japan we have this sort of opportunity. I stayed in the Middle East or I often go to London and what I envy most is Chatham House in London when I visit those places. Almost every day there is a presentation by Dr. Faleh or leader in exile from Dawa Party will be a panelist. Almost every day that sort of meeting is held and students, bureaucrats and NGOs discuss what is going on inside Iraq and what is going to happen in Iraq is discussed as if it were their problem. So in the UK and Europe there are so many opportunities and venues to do so, but in the US there is not much opportunity. But in Europe there is a very solid network to discuss those points. Unfortunately Japan is far away from the Middle East, but we were very happy that we could organize this sort of meeting, so if we really wanted to, we can.

I hope there will be more intense discussion on the Middle East like today in the future in Japan. Thank you very much once again. I would like to thank all the panelists and presenters.

3rd Panel :
General Discussion: Peace Making in the Region

Professor Ryoji Tateyama, Professor, National Defense Academy: Time has come, so we would like to start the last session, the third panel. My name is Ryoji Tateyama, professor of the National Defense Academy. I serve as moderator for this third panel. Since this is the sum-up one, “General Discussion: Peace Making in the Region” a very broad title is given. There are two presenters. First, about the peace treaty between Israel and Jordan, and another one is Israel and Egypt. In 1979 there was a peace treaty signed between Egypt and Israel. This was the first between Israel and an Arab country. Second peace treaty between Israel and Arab countries is 1994 between Israel and Jordan. This morning’s session we also touched upon this issue of Middle East peace. We might not be close to a solution and there are various views of Israel and Palestine issues and we might not be able to call this negotiation as successful. But at least two peace treaties, Israel-Egypt for 30 years, and Israel-Jordan for 16 years. These bilateral peace treaties have been signed and the peace has been maintained.

And in the past 30 years or past 15 years they have had major influence on the overall Middle East architecture. First, about Israel and Jordan – this is the second peace treaty after Egypt and Israel – but how to think about this peace treaty, we have Dr. Hasan Al Momani, Director, Regional Centre on Conflict Prevention, Jordan Institute of Diplomacy who will talk about this and how he evaluates peace agreements. Fifteen minutes each and we will ring this bell three minutes before the time expires. There will be two panelists who make comments after the two presentations as discussants. Of course you have sheets to jot down your questions. If you do not have any paper, please let one of our staff know. You can ask questions to two speakers or the two discussants or you can also make comments. First, Dr. Hasan Al Momani.

1st Presentation

Dr. Hasan Al-Momani

Director,

Regional Centre on Conflict Prevention, Jordan Institute of Diplomacy

Thank you very much. At the beginning I would like to thank JIIA and thank you, Professor Tateyama. However, I think evaluating and doing an assessment for any peace agreement is somehow problematic, problematic in the sense what might be a success for someone could be a failure to others in this respect. However, within literature on conflict resolution, particularly negotiation, there are different approaches to assess and evaluate peace agreements, particularly when we speak of 16 years later like Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty in this respect. However, I would not use what you can call a normative approach which is mainly with focus on fairness and justice. That is problematic also: how to define fairness and how to define justice in this aspect. So I would use a behavioral approach that would judge the peace agreements in the sense of what are the peace agreements for the interests of both parties as well as solving their disputed issues. This is mainly at the short term.

However, at the long term it would be the issue of compliance and the subsequent nature of the relations right after the negotiations. Of course I would focus on a Jordanian perspective in this respect. At the short term, going back to 1994 when Jordan and Israel signed the peace treaty, if I want to judge that peace treaty and look at the clauses and items of the treaty and the way the parties solved their disputed issues, I would say it was successful in the sense it solved the disputed issues, for instance, the water issue, Jordan-occupied land east of Jordan River in this respect, security, and of course Jordan rule in Jerusalem in this respect. However, as far as the refugee issue and other issues, those issues are of multiparty nature where Jordan cannot negotiate with Israel alone over the issue regarding the refugees. Now the parties signed the peace treaty in 1994. Subsequently they have exchanged diplomatic missions and everything. Since the signing up until, I would say 1996, things were going good at that time. Parties were optimistic that, you know, prosperity would prevail as a result of peace.

Of course if you would examine the motives of the parties before the signing and after the signing, we would come to the conclusion that both Jordan and Israel were highly motivated to sign a peace treaty, and of course those motives reflect their interests, basically whether political, security or economic interests in this sense. So if I would describe the treaty until 1996, it was very successful and it made a difference in the

relations between Jordan and Israel in this respect at the official level. At the public level, I would say, by that time the treaty received the approval of the majority of the Jordanian parliament as well as the majority of the Knesset in this respect. However, I would not claim that the treaty received the approval of all Jordanians, but at least received majority of the Jordanians approved the treaty and that is reflected in the voting in the parliament in this respect. However, after 1996, I would say, I would easily claim that relations with Israel had ups and downs in this respect. Of course after 1996, at the time when the Netanyahu government took over, between 1996-1999 relations went up and down. There were times when the relations went down and there were times and efforts to restore relations up to their level in this respect.

This is partly because of the impact of the regional contest of the Arab-Israeli conflict, particularly developments within the Israeli-Palestinian track in this respect. I mean, throughout 1996-1999 so many incidents took place that negatively impacted the Jordanian-Israeli relations starting from when the Mossad tried to assassinate Khaled Mashal who was the Hamas leader at that time, the wall tunnel in Jerusalem when the Israelis tried to dig a tunnel in that respect, and so on and so forth. So those incidents impacted negatively the Jordanian-Israeli treaty. However, at the official level, contacts remained. But those incidents and lack of peace at the Palestinian-Israeli track influenced the public opinion where forces of anti-normalization started to gain popularity in this respect simply because I would say the key issue was progress in the Israeli-Palestinian issue. And when we speak of Jordan, we speak of the party that is closest to the Palestinian question in terms of geopolitical proximity as well as demographical proximity.

So whatever would happen at the Palestinian-Israeli track would impact the Jordanian position in this respect. And simply the Palestinian question is a domestic as well as foreign policy issue to Jordan. So during Netanyahu government I would believe relations were characterized with coldness in this respect, despite the fact that Jordan, represented by late King Hussein, maintained an active involvement in the peace process and of course until the last days of King Hussein where he actively participated in this wherever in this respect. However, with the arrival of the labor-led government in 1999 and after, a sort of improvement took place in the relations between Jordan and Israel and people were optimistic that things could kick again. People were hoping that Obama... Sorry Ehud Barak would be another hope in that sense and in the sense of striking a deal.

However, after the failure of Camp David II and the subsequent Second Intifada in that respect, I would say 2000 and after, also developments within the Palestinian-Israeli track have impacted negatively the Jordanian-Israeli relations in this respect and ups and downs continued. The Second Intifada, from a Jordanian perspective, Israel provoked it with the invasion of Palestinian cities and those sort of things

actually inflamed the anger of the people in Jordan which enhanced and increased the ability of the anti-normalization groups in this respect. Of course King Hussein's death also... King Abdullah II, the new king, also, I think, followed the footsteps of King Hussein in the sense of commitment to peace. Let me say one thing: if you would analyze Jordanian political discourse toward the Arab-Israeli conflict, you would come to the conclusion that from the very beginning, Jordan's position has been always characterized or believed in a notion that peace has been always a state of mind for the Jordanian decision makers. Since the eruption of the conflict from 1940... even before 1948 there were attempts on the part of Jordan, King Abdullah I, to solve the Palestinian question. So King Abdullah who inherited King Hussein also continued the path of commitment toward the peace in this respect.

Throughout, I would say the last decades, mostly relations went up and down in this respect. Also there were efforts from Jordanians to engage both Palestinians and Israelis in fruitful negotiations. Jordan participated in every effort, every summit that has been held to host the peace process in this respect. At the official level, I would say contacts continued, but one thing I would say at the public level, strong anti-normalization sentiments prevail and that is simply because of course lack of peace between the Palestinians and Israelis. If I want to reach a conclusion over the state of affairs between Israel and Jordan now, I would say that peace is working between Jordan and Israel. However, how much it is working, it is debatable whether it is a cold or warm peace, in this respect. But relations have survived a number of crises, a number of incidents that were supposed to disrupt or even to put the treaty on a question in this respect, yet the treaty survived, relations survived.

There was a level of economic interactions between both Israel and Jordan. Probably right after the treaty we have seen a sort of active interaction in this respect, but of course later decline. They were supposed to do joint project in this respect. At the political level contacts never ended and they continued at the public level. Of course the public level is so much connected with the issue of Palestinian-Israeli in this respect, so I would say that relations are working. However, the changes in the regional context of the Arab-Israeli conflict, particularly Palestinian-Israeli is negatively impacting and playing a detrimental factor actually in determining the shape and nature of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty and peace relations in this respect. Therefore – and this advocacy has been always advocated by Jordan – therefore, a comprehensive settlement would positively impact the Jordanian-Israeli relations in this respect. And simply why the Palestinian-Israeli track is impacting Jordan's position or Jordanian-Israeli relations, simply, as I said, Jordan is the party that is closest to the Palestinian question.

If you would speak of geographical, political proximity, if you would speak of social, family proximity in

this respect, so whatever would happen, any progress would impact positively. Why the relations were combining? We are good 1995, 1994 because peace was working between the Palestinians and Israelis by that time and of course probably by that time we had a visionary leadership when it comes to King Hussein and when it comes to Rabin whom both developed a personal acquaintance that helped greatly in fostering and forging relations between the two sides in this respect. How many minutes do I have? Two or three minutes? So the conclusion I would come up with simply going to do that, despite the ups and downs, relations between Jordan and Israel survived serious crises. Contacts at the official level continued and officials in both countries have been convinced that peace is necessary and that it is the geopolitical rationale of their bilateral relations. However, at the public level, particularly Jordanian public, peace and normalization with Israel remained a debatable and contentious issue. The Jordanian public debated the meaning of peace with Tel Aviv, its impact on the Jordanian identity, as well as a centrist where a consensus was produced against the peace agreement. This is mainly because of the changes in the Israeli behavior toward peace, particularly with the Palestinians, and the economic dimensions of the peace failed to materialize.

Although the balance sheet is not wholly negative, economic and commercial ties between Jordan and Israel have been a mixture of achievements, failures and unrealized dreams. Most of the high expectations that were generated right after the signing of the peace treaty would bring large-scale foreign investment and joint projects which have in time faded away. This study of course arrived at the conclusion that although Jordan-Israel have been highly motivated to forge peaceful and functional relations, developments within the regional context of the Arab-Israeli conflict, particularly the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, have been playing a detrimental role in shaping between Jordan and Israel in this respect. Therefore, a comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace process is essential and necessary for, I would say, creating normal and warm relations between Israel and Jordan in this respect. And I think the issue of comprehensive peace has been always advocated by Jordan and Jordan has always considered its peace with Israel as part of a comprehensive settlement, and that is why we have seen an active Jordanian role during the articulation of the Arab Peace Plan in 2002. Thank you very much.

Professor Tateyama: Thank you very much. You have ended just in time. The first peace treaty in 1979, Egypt and Israel signed a peace treaty that was the first one between Israel and Arab. Thirty-one years have passed since then. How do you assess the relationship? From Egypt, Dr. Emad Gad Badras Badrous, Head of Israeli Study Program, Al Ahram Center for Political & Strategic Studies from Egypt, please.

2nd Presentation

Dr. Emad Gad Badras Badrous

Head of Israeli Study Program

Al Ahrum Center for Political & Strategic Studies [ACPSS]

Thank you, Mr. Tateyama. Let me first of all thank the JIIA and Ambassador Nogami. Let me first concentrate on the nature of the Arab-Israeli conflict, in order to understand how we can reach a peace settlement between each country and Israel. First of all, we use the term of protracted social conflict. We describe the Arab-Israeli conflict as a protracted social conflict. Protracted social conflict means the population is part of this conflict. It is not conflict over borders or over resources, but the population is part of this type of conflict, like the conflict in Ireland, the conflict in Balkan. We have to know very well when this type of conflict can be ready to settle, when can we reach a peaceful settlement for this type of conflict.

We have three prerequisites in order to reach a settlement for this type of conflict. First of all, the belief that there is no military solution for this type of conflict. This type of conflict cannot be solved through military machinery. I think in Egypt we reached to that after the Six Day War. And Israel reached the same conclusion after the October 6 War. So first of all, both sides must reach to a belief that there is no military solution for this type of conflict. Second, we have to have political leaders that believe there is no military solution for this type of conflict. Third, we have to have an active role from the superpowers, all the superpowers, concerning the Arab-Israeli conflict we are speaking about, the US especially. Concerning the first one, I said that we reached in Egypt after the Six Day War, that we cannot solve this or our conflict with Israel or the Arab-Israeli conflict through military machinery. And in this period between 1967 until October 1973 the Israeli side did not believe in a peaceful settlement for this type of conflict. But after the October 6 War, I think they reached that they can solve this type of conflict with Egypt especially and the rest of Arab countries through negotiation.

In Egypt we Sadat and also on the Israeli side we have Menachem Begin, the head of Likud Party at that time and the experience of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty tells us that if you want to sign a peace treaty with the Israeli partner, you have to sign with the right wing government, led by right wing, especially the Likud Party. And we saw in that time that the US tried to convince the Egyptian side, the Israeli side in order to reach a peace treaty. We saw the role of Henry Kissinger and after that the role of ex-President Carter. That is why the First Camp David was fostered. After that, I refer to first of all that the protracted social conflict allows the population to play an active role. That is why we differentiate between settlement

and peace, concerning this type of conflict. Settlement means settle the problem or the conflict between two sides. You cannot reach peace unless you solve the rest of the issues.

So we can understand some kind of terminology used in the Middle East. You will listen or you will hear the term “normalization.” So in Egypt we have a peace treaty with Israel and we have an Israeli embassy and we have formal good relations between Israel and Egypt. Ups and downs between... according to the Israeli newspaper definitions between Cold War to war and peace. Cold War and then cold peace and then warming up peace, especially from 2003. In order to reach to a situation which allows for you to start negotiation in order to settle this type of conflict you have to, as I said before, believe that there is no military solution and also you have to forget the zero-sum game. That means that you have to believe that the relation must be through non-zero-sum game. We can describe the Egyptian-Israeli relations. We can divide the last 30 years from signing this treaty from 1979 until 1993. They called it “cold peace” because there is no negotiation between Israel and the Palestinians.

After that we can describe the relation as cold peace and warming up peace from 1993 to the assassination of Rabin in 1995. And after that, under the first Netanyahu government, we can call it “Cold War.” And starting from 2003 we describe – and also the Israeli media and the Israeli research centers describe the Egyptian-Israeli relations as warming up peace. And I want to refer to a very important issue concerning the current situation. We have to understand the Egyptian foreign policy toward the other tracks of Arab-Israeli tracks – the Palestinian track, the Syrian track and also the Lebanese track – from what I call protracted social conflict. And Egypt is trying to help the other Arab tracks to reach to peace treaty through negotiation only. That is why Egypt cannot deal easily with non-state actors. Concerning what we said yesterday the relations between some countries and non-state actors, I think Egypt cannot deal with non-state actors because non-state actors, especially Hamas and Hezbollah, each of them do not understand the nature of the Egyptian state and also the Egyptian foreign policy and the Egyptian internal affairs. That is why each of them tried many times to talk to Egyptian public opinion in order to take some actions against the formal foreign policy.

Hezbollah tried to ask the Egyptian people to go through demonstrations against the Egyptian foreign policy and he failed. Also Hamas, through the Muslim Brothers in Egypt during the Israeli war on Gaza Strip. And the relations between Egypt and non-state actors now is in a very critical situation. We know that the Egyptian security arrested a network for Hezbollah and also Egypt is suffering from the smuggling of arms through tunnels between Gaza and Sinai Peninsula. I think we will continue speaking about normalization, about peace, about war in the region unless we reach a peace treaty between the Palestinian

side and the Israeli side in my opinion, according to Clinton Parameters. And I think there is a chance today to reach that, but if the Israeli government is ready to deal with Abu Mazen and forget the story of Gaza Strip. Today I think Fatah and the Palestinian National Authority are ready to sign this treaty. Especially Abu Mazen, he does not believe in military solution. He is against, totally against, any armed intifada. So if I will not apply these three prerequisites concerning solving this type of conflict, so if try to apply the three prerequisites, perhaps we can reach a conclusion that the Palestinian-Israeli track is not ready to see a solution in the near future. Thank you.

Comments/discussions

Professor Tateyama: Thank you very much. Israel-Jordan and Israel-Egypt discussed the peace process and while they look similar to some extent, they are different. These were pointed out by the two gentlemen, especially with regard to the engagement with the Palestinian issue, Jordan's relation to the Palestinian issue and Egypt's relationship to the Palestinian issue. I think these differences were reflected in the presentations by the two gentlemen. We would now like to invite comments by the two panelists. As I mentioned earlier, if you have questions or comments to be made with regard to the two presentations, please write them down on a sheet of paper and hand them in to a staff member. So first, Professor Keiko Sakai, professor of Tokyo University of Foreign Studies who served as the moderator for session two will be presenting her questions and comments.

This session is about a very broad theme, "General Discussion: Peacemaking in the Region," so you do not have to limit yourself to Jordan-Israel or Egypt-Israel. We could have comments on broader possibilities of peacemaking in the Middle East. Sorry to have a five-minute cap.

Professor Sakai: I moderated the earlier panel discussion, therefore I thought I would be forgiven and excused from making a comment as a panelist. But I found out that I am still not off the hook. We heard from Dr. Emad and Dr. Al Momani. Essentially on the Middle East peace talks involving Jordan and Egypt, in other words the involvement in the conflict involving Israel at the center. Now we are looking at Egypt or Jordan or in discussing the Arab countries. In general, I believe the Iraqi situation and the conflict situation and involvement in Iraq I believe should be taken up also as a major factor. So my comment will not take up all five minutes, but I will discuss three points or questions to the two doctors. First, Arab countries, especially Egypt, Jordan and perhaps Saudi Arabia and Gulf states as well I think will be involved as well, the response to Iraq especially after the war in 2003, how would these Arab countries think of their response to Iraq? As was mentioned, since 2005 and I really do not want to center on the Shiites, but the Shiite-centered administration emerged in Iraq and people tend to say there was a strong Iranian influence which conversely means lower or weaker influence of Arab countries. I think that sort of perception prevailed. And King Abdullah II of Jordan I believe mentioned the Shiite threat.

Overall there has been this perception that the government in Iraq was a Shiite government and Arab countries refrained from stronger engagement in Iraq or Arab countries in general were rather hesitant

about engaging themselves in the Iraqi situation. And so what is the current stance of Arab countries in general vis-à-vis Iraq? And in connection with this, what does sectarian confrontation mean, especially for Egypt and Jordan? Well, I lived there for three years in Iraq during the Saddam Hussein days. And in daily life, sectarian differences really were not much of an issue in Iraq. It may have been used by the military, but in terms of normal everyday life of citizens, Shiite and Sunni differences were not much of an issue in Iraq. That is my own experience of the 1980s in Iraq. I believe this is because from the past, Sunnis and Shiites lived together, intermingled and people of different sects lived next door and that was a commonplace thing.

Whereas in Egypt, in Jordan which in terms of sect are more homogenous and of course you cannot say Jordan is a homogenous country because there are Christians, etc. So there is heterogeneity between Christianity and Muslim, but within Muslim, I think these countries have experienced coexistence of different sects. Perhaps there is a somewhat different perception of different sects living next door compared to Iraq. So outside Iraq I believe this sectarian confrontation type of perception is created outside Iraq and that has made the resolution of the sectarian confrontations within Iraq more difficult. That is my view. And I would like to invite the two doctors' views on this. I said I would be within five minutes, but I am taking longer. The second point and I will make it simpler, I believe in many cases Arab countries try to stay away from... were perceived to be Shiite government because I think many Arab countries feel that Iran is behind this Shiite government in Iraq. But since the Middle East war, I think as main actors Turkey now is attracting more attention whereas the general presence of Arab countries seems to be waning.

And Iran increased its political voice as well as military presence. The second point I would like to know is what the Arab countries in general regard such Iran. The third point is that Turkey now is gaining greater presence in the Middle East. In regard to this third point recently there was this Turkish flotilla for assistance to Gaza which was attacked by Israel and in the Arab street Turkish behavior drew support. Similarly in Lebanon, Israelis and Hezbollah fought against each other in 2006. But that does not necessarily mean there is greater Muslim solidarity going over the differences of Arabs and Turkish. This does not mean increased solidarity beyond sectarian divide.

But because of Internet influence and so on possibly until recently the Israel-related issues or response to Israel was pretty much within the framework of the Arabs based on Arab solidarity. I believe there is now a spread of support, shall I say virtual network-based support. I believe none of the Arab countries including Egypt really has been successful in taking up this more popular support. Internet and satellite broadcast has been sharing information and sharing support, so there is a new cross-border spread or connection of the

perceptions and I wonder how Egypt and Jordan are trying to respond to these new trends?

Professor Tateyama: Thank you very much. Quite a plateful of comments and I am rather surprised, but I believe they were very useful in terms of encouraging debate. Next I would like to ask Professor Akifumi Ikeda, Vice-President of Toyo Eiwa University for his comments in five minutes.

Professor Ikeda: Well, it is difficult to make comments at the very end because all the main points have already been covered by the previous speaker. Therefore, for me, after listening to two distinguished speakers about Israeli-Jordanian, Israeli-Egyptian peace treaties let me just share with you what crossed my mind when I was listening to the speakers. Students and the general public, if I talk to them about the Middle East conflicts they say Israel and Egypt already built peace. Israel and Jordan concluded a peace treaty. Why doesn't it work between Israel and Palestine? That is a natural question they come up with and I am asked often this question from the students. In the morning panel discussion we also discussed that the lack of leadership is one of the reasons and there are certain people who try to spoil the process. But the fundamental structural factor to me seems for one thing is the lack of buffer zones, be it geographical buffer zone or functional buffer zone. There is a lack between Israel and Palestine.

Between Israel and Egypt there is Sinai Peninsula, a geographical buffer. Between Israel and Jordan there is West Bank and the Palestine people living in the West Bank, serving as the buffer zone. That kind of initiative is possible because it is not that both sides directly face each other to increase the tension because of the existence of the buffer between Jordan and Israel. However, compared to this, as Professor Sakai talked about, the mixture of Shiites and Sunnis in Iraq, but if something goes wrong, in that situation things can go very bad. The reasons for not going well or going bad is that even if there is an agreement, there have been agreements like Oslo Agreement, Oslo II, Wye River or Hebron Accord. These accords have already been made, but they have not been implemented. It is the matter of implementation at the time or stage of implementation the commitments were not honored. Therefore, between the two sides the mistrust and distrust developed. As a result the agreements or accords themselves collapsed and this has been repeated over and over again.

This is the difference against Israeli-Jordan, Israeli-Egyptian agreements. The lack of buffer is another reason for the following. Let's say even after concluding the peace agreement there are unresolved issues. When these unresolved issues emerge, then a certain tacit understanding on both sides to solve these unresolved issues should be there. Because of the lack of the buffer zones these kinds of tools were not there. Because of the lack of buffer, seeing each other face to face, let's say the settlement is built in front

of you, the bus exploded in front of you – these things happen every day. Maybe on the leaders' level they try to conclude peace, but you look at the people who lost family members or friends because of the attacks. These grassroots-level people will not be satisfied, even if the leaders come to an agreement on peace. Between Israel and Egypt and Israel and Jordan, I do not say they did not have any problems, but overall they had less of a problem in these two relations. That is one way to explain why the process has not progressed between Israel and Palestine.

Perhaps more or less the national reconciliation within Iraq has the same tenor. Another structural lack of buffer, in addition to this lack of buffer, another problem is that, let's say after 9/11 in 2001, the concept of threat has become more and more complicated. Be it nation-state or on the way to nation-state, the reconciliation between nations, well the threat has gone beyond that kind of framework. In the morning session we talked about Hamas. How do you characterize Hamas? Is it going to be AKP or is it going to be Taliban or Al Qaeda? These kinds of discussion are taking place because the characterization of the threat has become more complex. At the time of the Israeli-Egyptian peace agreement or Israeli-Jordan peace treaty, the situation changed over time since then. That is how I answer to the questions raised by my students. This is not a question, but rather my comments that I just share with you.

Professor Tateyama: Thank you very much Professor Sakai and Professor Ikeda. There were questions and comments, but I would like the two speakers to briefly answer the questions and comments. And there are several questions from the floor to each of the speakers, so we will ask those questions later. In relation to Professor Sakai's question about Iran, there is a question about Iran. I would like the speakers to give their answers. Normalization of Iran and Israel must be a necessity for the Middle East peace. And if that is the case, what should be done to achieve peace between Iran and Israel? So when you give answer to Professor Sakai's question and comment, I hope you will touch upon the Iran issue. Five minutes each. Dr. Emad first.

Dr. Badrous: I will try to answer the question first of all why we do not reach to peace settlement on the Palestinian track. Frankly speaking, if we try to apply these three prerequisites concerning the belief that there is no military solution, and the second concerning the leadership and the third, I think concerning the first one, I think both sides still the Camp David II in July 2000 when these negotiations failed, after returning to the region, each party took the decision to go through military clashes or to go through confrontation. That is why we saw the Second Intifada – the visit of Sharon to the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the reply from the Palestinian side and the role of late Chairman Arafat. The second... I think the first one now is available on the Palestinian side because we have Abu Mazen. Abu Mazen refused to or he believes that

there is no military solution for this type of conflict and he is trying to reach a peaceful settlement.

The second, I think in my opinion the Likud or the current Israeli government is not really under Netanyahu to reach peace settlement with the Palestinian side. Also concerning the role of the American administration, Obama, in my opinion, I think he is acting like the leaders of the Middle East. He talks a lot, but he did nothing. Concerning the situation of Hamas, I think it is very difficult to take a decision concerning what Hamas will be. I think there is a debate inside Hamas and we have hard liners and we have moderates. Do not forget that Hamas is just a branch of Muslim Brotherhood. They have their own agenda: to have an Islamic regime, to liberate the land of Palestine from the river to the sea. So at the same time Hamas is trying to be a pragmatic political actor. I can say that on Meshaal's speech, I think one month after Obama's speech in Cairo University, he said that he is ready to accept a Palestinian national state on the 1967 borders, but we can go back to the role of Iran and the role of Turkey. I think Turkey and Iran now they are convinced that there is a lack of leadership in the Arab region. So each of them, both of them, is trying to be the leader to talk to the ordinary people, not to work with the government.

I think the role of the Arab countries in Iraq is very complicated because we cannot ask Egypt to play the same role of Saudi Arabia or Syria. I mean the neighbor states. But now we are seeing some sort of competition between two projects – the Iranian project in order to play an active role in the region, minimizing the role of “moderate countries” like Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. That is why they are ready to cross the sectarian bases and deal with Hamas and also with Muslim Brothers. I think the Egyptian-Iranian relations are still in a very critical situation. I think in near future we cannot see normalization or resuming diplomatic relations between Egypt and Iran. Also, frankly speaking we are trying to understand the new role of Turkey in the region. Turkey's dream is to be a member in the European Union. And in my opinion I think Turkey is trying to play an active role in the region in order to hit again the European doors that I am a big country and if I cannot play an active role in solving the crisis in the region, it is better for you to accept Turkey as a member.

At the same time, I believe that Turkey will not be a member in the EU so the crisis of Turkey or the crisis of Turkish identity will continue. And we can see some alliances or coalitions between Turkey-Iran, Turkey-Syria, but in the same time, I think we will see some kind of Turkish role. Thank you.

Dr. Al Momani: Thank you very much. Responding to Dr. Sakai's question regarding Jordan's position to Iraq, regarding Iran and Turkey, however, I think the issue of Hamas has been debated a lot since yesterday, but I will comment on that. However, when it comes to Iraq, you know, Iraq is our neighbor and it is also a

geopolitical issue for Jordan in this respect. With a long history of relations between Jordan and Iraq to the point where now Jordan is being described as the “land of Iraq” in this respect. And when it comes to the political process in Iraq, Jordan adopted an open position to all the parties. Jordan maintained contacts with the Kurds, with the Arab Shiites and with the Arab Sunnis in this respect. I would believe, if you analyze Arab position toward Iraq, you would find Jordan’s position enjoys what you can call a unique position in the sense that Jordan maintained active, I would say, positive involvement when it comes to the Iraqi issue in the sense of providing Iraq with help. I would say thousands of Iraqi police personnel have been trained in Jordan. Jordan offered technical and economic help to Iraq and of course we have concluded a number of agreements with successive Iraqi governments.

From my perspective I do not think Jordan considers Iraqi governments as sectarian governments from this perspective. We have received Maliki, we have received Jafari, we have received even a Sadr, an imam, we have received the Kurds’ leaders and that sort of thing. So this is, I would say, a pragmatic visionary point of view because at the end of the day, Iraq also is a domestic and foreign policy issue to Jordan. We do not speak about Iraq living in a remote area far from Jordan. Our position is dictated by our interest, geopolitical rationale, so Jordan has always maintained an open position when it comes to Iraq. So we cannot do otherwise in this respect. Of course probably Jordan is, from the very beginning, you know opened its embassy despite the security threat and that sort of thing. And because of our interest, you know what happened in Iraq would automatically impact our internal security, our security in this sense, and we have seen the 2005 bombing in Amman. The bombers came from Iraq so we have a vest interested in creating a stable Iraq in this respect and probably you can call the Jordanian position a unique position in comparison with the other countries in this respect.

As far as Iran is concerned, although Jordan and Iran enjoy diplomatic relations, our relations with Iran have somehow been characterized with coldness. That is simply because of the intersection of interests. We are not happy, for instance, with some of the policies being practiced by Iran and Iraq or elsewhere. Even when it comes to the peace process, peace for Jordan is an interest. It is in the interest of Jordan to see a successful peace process in the Middle East and sabotaging the peace process in the Middle East would go against Jordan. So we have our differences with Iran, but that does not mean we cannot have good relations with Iran. Once Jordan would reach an understanding with Iran over a number of issues, probably things would work in this respect and if, and of course it is conditional, if we would have a sort of regional settlement that Iran would be part of it, then of course we would not have sort of cold relations with Iran in this respect.

As far as Turkey is concerned, I think Jordan, from my perspective, is happy with the reengagement of Turkey in the Middle East. Jordan has always enjoyed fruitful cooperative relations with Turkey regardless of who was in power in this respect. From my reading, Turkish reengagement would balance the situation of the Middle East, particularly when it comes to Iran and others, and Turkey as a player probably also would help in fostering and bringing forward the issue of peace settlement in this respect. So Jordan perceives the Turkish role as a constructive role in this respect. As far as Hamas is concerned, I think Jordan probably knows better who is Hamas in this respect. Jordan has always dealt with Hamas. However, since 1999 things were not working in this respect and simply I would say it is because of the peace process and Jordan's internal security in this respect. That is why, you know, sort of divorce, temporary probably divorce took place between Jordan and Hamas in that respect. I mean in 1997 we have seen how angry King Hussein was when the Israeli Mossad tried to assassinate Khaled Mashal by that time.

But I think Hamas should be included and for those who fear the risk, whenever you want to make peace, you need to take this risk. I mean, you need to take the risk of including Hamas in this respect to check whether things are working or not. I would go back to the 1980s and early 1990s. Who would believe that Rabin and Arafat would shake hands at the White House? This is my perception to the issue of Hamas. Thank you very much.

Professor Tateyama: Thank you very much. There are questions from the floor to the two speakers. First of all, to Dr. Hasan Al Momani, in your presentation you said there is an anti-normalization feeling and anti-Israel feelings of the public. But the Jordanian government or parliament, do they have anti-normalization feelings and what is the assessment of the government and parliament about this feeling? There is an overall anti-normalization feeling in the Arab world, so how are you going to cope with this? The Jordanian-Israeli relationship, there are economic exchanges and movement of... was there any major change in the movement of people and money between the two countries? In the future, this is a technical aspect, but if Israel and Palestine final peace agreement will be reached, most of the Palestinian refugees will settle and remain in Jordan. Will they be given rights as full-fledged citizens of Jordan or will they just remain rights as residents, but they will not have political rights and their political rights will be only exercised in the new Palestinian state?

The second issue is about water. Between Israel and Jordan in the peace agreement, water development was a very important element. Joint use of water resources, does it have any influence on the bilateral relationship? And Dr. Emad Gad, while you have already answered the relationship with Hamas, there is a specific question on this point. That is, Egypt, about the tunnel between Gaza and Egypt, can it have full

control over the tunnel or is it condoning the smuggling using the tunnel? And the major question is Egypt in the past was the center of Arab nationalism, but when there is a rise in Islam feelings, what is the role that Egypt will play in the future when Islam is gaining momentum? What sort of influence will it have on the bilateral relationship between Israel and Egypt? Another question, this is also a major question, when Sadat signed peace treaty with Israel, did it contribute to the Arabs and Palestinians? I think maybe Sadat should have aimed at signing a comprehensive Middle East peace treaty. One other question which I did not understand well, but recognition of the survival of Israel has to be a premise for the final peace treaty, but I would like to change the question because I did not understand.

Actually recognition of Israel and Israel's survival, what does it mean in the Arab world? Of course Jordan and Egypt have accepted this, but what sort of conditions have to be met for other Arab countries to recognize the survival of Israel? These are major questions and it might not be able to give answers, but please limit your statement to five minutes, please. First, Dr. Hasan Al Momani.

Dr. Al Momani: Thank you very much. Well, regarding the anti-normalization and if you want to examine Jordanian-Israeli relations on two levels, at the official level of course as I said, contacts never ended in this respect. However the warmth of such contact of course varied from time to time according to the developments within the region and within, as I said, particularly because of I would say the lack of progress on the Palestinian-Israeli side. There were times when King Hussein visited Israel, visited the Palestinian territories or there were times when even King Hussein visited Israeli families after the shooting incidents by that time. Ambassadors were there at the official level. Even at the worst scenario, contacts continued in this respect. However, when it comes to the parliament, as I said the treaty was ratified by the majority of the MPs in this respect. But of course there were certain voices who kept opposing the peace treaty and those voices would be loudly heard whenever there is lack of progress, whenever there were certain steps taken by Israel – this was from their perspective – as provocative and so on and so forth.

Of course when we speak of those voices, mainly the opposition, I would say the professionals in the case and that sort of thing. But at the same time many of the MPs remain and continue to support the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty in this respect. At the public level, I would say also the anti-normalization kept fluctuating in a sense. At the time when things were working, you would have a number of them still would speak in this respect, but the majority I would say accept the issue. And when you speak of anti-normalization activists, we would speak of the opposition, we would speak of the professionals on the case, and of course mainly the Islamists in this respect. In 1995-1996 there were voices, but they were not loud or high to the point where they would disrupt the peace between Israel and Jordan. But later on as

those developments took place and of course from a Jordanian perspective Israeli steps, provocative measures, I mean from a brotherhood feeling of the Palestinians and those sort of things, such issue enhanced the role of the anti-normalization, but the relations continued. And as I said, despite these crises, the relations survived in this respect.

As far as the refugee issue is concerned, you know, the refugee issue is of multi-party nature. It is not a Jordanian-Israeli issue, it is not Palestinian-Israeli. However, why Jordan is concerned with the refugee issue, Jordan is the largest hosting country when it comes to refugees. There are over one billion plus refugees according to the United Nations in Jordan. It was clearly stated, even in the Jordanian-Israeli treaty that Jordan and the parties need to work to find a just and fair solution to the refugee issue, including the right of return, including compensation and so on and so forth. So Jordan has an interest in that issue and if the problem would be solved since negotiation is a political process, where, for instance if I would imagine a scenario where the issue would be fragmented in the sense of compensation, right of return, settlement in the hosting countries, if Jordan accepted that solution and allowed some of the refugees to settle in Jordan, of course automatically they would be Jordanian citizens in this respect. This is if it would be acceptable in this respect.

I mean since 1948 Jordan, I would say, is holding the burden of hosting those refugees in this respect and that is why whatever Palestinian-Israeli negotiations, Jordan needs to be there because we have a vested interest there. And if the parties... It is not an issue of Jordan and Israel – it is the issue of Jordan, Israel, Palestinians, Syrians, Lebanese, even the international community. Whatever the outcome of such solution, you have two scenarios: either a legal solution where you need to go back to the UN Resolution which states clearly the right of return or a political solution. From my perspective, what is feasible is a political solution where you need to of course to come up with an integrated plan that would end the issue. And if Jordan accepted such a plan, for instance, and a number of them would settle in Jordan, of course they would automatically be a Jordanian in this respect.

As far as the water is concerned, water was a disputed issue with Israel. It had been solved at the time of the treaty according to the Johnston Plan. The terms of reference was Johnston Plan where Jordan got its water right from Jordan River, from Yarmouk River. However, we have been promised with a number of joint projects in this respect and instead of buffer zones we need actually prosperous zones rather than buffer zones. I mean one of those projects that now Jordan is now keen to materialize is the Red Sea-Dead Sea water conveyor where Jordan, Israel and the Palestinians... And Jordan is so much keen to carry out this plan because Jordan is a small country with limited resources, particularly when it comes to water and

energy in this respect. And the water issue, I think Jordan has also expressed a cooperative nature. As far as I know, they have already done the feasibility study and everything, and probably they are about to carry out or looking for financiers or the international community to help us in this respect. This is the issue of water.

But again, Jordan is also keen to have an eye on the Palestinian-Israeli track because also it has a water element, you know. When you speak of Israel and Palestinians, we speak the water of the Jordan River in this respect and other water resources. So when I say it is the party closest, it is the party closest to the Palestinian-Israeli, apart from the Israelis and the Palestinians. These are the questions that I am supposed to answer. Thank you very much.

Professor Tateyama: Thank you very much.

Dr. Badrous: It is very difficult to give a clear answer for these questions but I will try. Concerning the issue of tunnels, not tunnel, but tunnels – it is tens or hundreds of tunnels – I think you know that according to peace treaty between Egypt and Israel, it is not allowed for Egypt to deploy only 450 and now 750 soldiers on borders. So Egypt does not have the capacity to control the borders with Gaza Strip totally 100%. And the main victim for smuggling arms through tunnels is Egyptian security. We had many terrorist attacks using arms through tunnels. So I am asking why Israel refuses to reach an agreement in order to increase the number of Egyptian soldiers on borders. They match to reach... Sorry? They reached it, but they want to change to raise... Is it 5,000 means it is right for Israel? I am just asking. If you want Egypt to play an active role to stop smuggling, you have to give Egypt the capacity to play this role.

You are speaking about 220km and you are speaking about 750 soldiers. According to military schedule, we are speaking about one-third of this figure or one-fourth of this figure. You are speaking about less than 200 along more than 200km. Concerning the military capabilities, it is a very complicated issue. If Israel refuses, let us suffer together. Concerning that Egypt was the heart of Arab nationalism, I think there is no place for Arab nationalism today. Concerning the role of Islam, I think Egypt and the Egyptians are trying to reach, and I know it is very difficult, to reach to semi-civic society, semi-civic regime. It is difficult to reach to civic or secular, but semi and we are fighting. We are trying. I do not think that Egypt can have in one day or can live under an Islamic regime. It means disaster for Egypt and disaster for Egyptians. It is not allowed. I can easily say that it is unbelievable that Egypt can live under an Islamic regime. It will split the Egyptian society. It will split not between Christians and Muslims only, but between Muslims and Muslims. We have intellectuals, we have liberals, we have democrats and I cannot imagine that Egypt one day can

live under an Islamic regime.

Why Sadat did not reach a comprehensive peace treaty? I said yesterday that Sadat went to the late Syrian president Hafez al-Assad and told him that I am going to visit Jerusalem. According to... We know that Mustafa Tlas was the minister of defense of Syria at that time who advised al-Assad to arrest Sadat to prevent him from visiting Jerusalem. What is the direct result of signing the peace treaty of Egypt and Israel? By cutting the Arab countries take a decision... by cut Egypt including Jordan and also transfers the Arab League from Cairo to Tunisia. So how can Sadat reach to a comprehensive peace? I think Sadat from the first moment tried to reach comprehensive peace and we had the Mena House Conference and Sadat both in the front of the Egyptian and Israeli delegation the Palestinian flag. But the Palestinian delegation did not come. So I think he did what he could, but I think the atmosphere in the Arab world at that time did not allow for Sadat to reach a comprehensive peace.

According to the issue of recognizing and accepting Israel in the region, I think you have to stop asking about accepting Israel and recognizing Israel. Frankly speaking Israel is a nuclear state and when any country reach to nuclear capabilities that means you cannot go through war or I am asking go through war with Israel for what? Concerning the Egyptian side, I think Egypt reached to a peace treaty with Israel, and recognized Israel and we have an Israeli embassy in Cairo. Egypt today is trying to play an active role in reaching to Palestinian-Israeli peace treaty. I think we, and also I want to refer to a very important issue in this field that the main concern of the ordinary people in Egypt now is internal affairs, the economic situation, the political situation. I remember that during the war, the Israeli aggression on Gaza, the Muslim Brothers tried many times to launch demonstrations in Egyptian streets against this campaign. I think they succeeded to launch two or three demonstrations and the participants were less than hundreds. So the main concern of the Egyptian ordinary people is internal affairs and in my opinion, the issue of recognizing Israel or accepting Israel is nonsense. I mean, it is finished. We have a peace treaty and I think President Mubarak said many times that we will not use our army or we can use it only to defend our territories.

And you have to... so the situation in Arab countries, we are suffering from many troubles between Egypt and Syria, Egypt and Yemen, Egypt and Sudan, and you have to see the agenda or Arabian map. Yemen is suffering from the presence of Al Qaeda and war in the north with the Shiite militants, with the leftists in the south and with Al Qaeda in the east. So Sudan will be divided in two months I think if they go to the referendum on 9 January. We will see another independent state in southern Sudan. So I think the issue of recognizing Israel is finished and we are trying to normalize the relations after reaching a peace treaty between the Palestinians and Israelis and to live in stability or to build stability in the region. So I am not

able to deal with the issue or question concerning the recognizing or accepting Israel and I can refer to the Arab initiative. It is issued by Arab League, but originally by the current king of Saudi Arabia. So total normalization after signing or after the Israeli withdrawal from the Arab... Thank you.

Professor Tateyama: Thank you very much. The time has run up on us, but if Dr. Sakai or Dr. Ikeda want to add anything quite briefly, I would like to ask Professor Ikeda first. Would you like to add anything?

Professor Ikeda: Well, not particularly. However, as I said earlier Israel-Egypt and Israel-Jordan relationships and peace, compared to that, Israeli-Palestinian peace would be far more difficult. Between Palestine and Israel, peace between these two, compared to the Egyptian-Israeli treaty back in the 1970s and Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty in the 1990s, the distance between both sides is becoming narrower and narrower. In the morning session Brigadier General Brom discussed this. How much time... how long shall we allow this to happen, to close the gap? Structure itself may be difficult, but the possibility of bridging the gap is getting better and better in my opinion.

Professor Sakai: Let me just share my final thoughts. Professor Ikeda talked about the lack of a buffer. Maybe because of so many contact points this sense of confrontation once established would be difficult to be dissolved. After reconciliation and negotiations, at the grassroots level people would not forget the loss of their family members or relatives. When they share the same space, there is a difficulty arising from the proximity. Also when the reconciliation is made, living closer together would be a better element as well and this applies to Iraq as well. In that sense, Palestine and post-war Iraq share certain common elements and challenges. The existence of the others there both exist in Iraq and Palestine. Putting a fence between them, making the others invisible, would it be the way for solution? Iraq, when the confrontation of Shiites declining, there is a forceful building of fences in a fragmented manner and the two groups in a sect were separated, led by the US initiative and that worked to a certain extent.

On the one hand, living together with accumulated grudges and enemies, if there is a number of people there and if you think that you have to eliminate everyone for you to live, that would be a very difficult world for you to live. You cannot eradicate this group of people, so somehow you need to coexist with them. The necessity is a vital force. In which direction shall we go? I think on both sides this is a very difficult challenge. The sectarian conflict in Iraq, for two years starting in 2006 intensified. I am sorry, I am finishing. Will it take root? The sense of confrontation, will it take root or do they go back to the old days of peaceful coexistence before the confrontation? Well, both cases present a very interesting picture, if I may use the word "interesting." Thank you.

Dr. Al Momani: Thank you very much. A quick comment over the buffer zones. I would question that, particularly in the case of Jordan. Jordan has the longest border with Israel and I would not consider the West Bank as a buffer zone. I mean on a daily basis we deal with the Israelis. Our security abroad is everything to deal with the Israelis. Beside, since 1967 Jordan adopted open bridge policy with the people in the West Bank and with the Israelis in this respect. So I do not think peace is working between Jordan and Israel because there is a buffer zone in this respect. To the contrary. From the north up to the south, Jordan has the longest border with Israel. However, when it comes to the West Bank even in the practical sense you do not have a sort of buffer. Who controls the border? Who controls the bridges? Who controls the other side? The Israelis in that respect. The open bridge policy has been always pursued by Jordan since 1967 in which on a daily basis thousands of Palestinians are moving between Jordan and the Palestinian territories. This is just a comment...

Dr. Badrous: I do not want to reply on the answer of buffer zone because I think speaking about buffer zone is minimizing the real reasons for this type of conflict. In the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations they are speaking about disarming the Palestinian independent state. So who can attack Israel? The West Bank or Gaza Strip? So the issue is there are many, many vital interests on both sides and as I said before, this is some sort of protracted social conflict. There is a demographic concern and also there is a geographic concern. Thank you.

Professor Tateyama: Sorry for the mismanagement of the moderator. If you try to conduct democratically, it takes time. So perhaps when it comes to Middle East issues, you have to try to be a dictator. But anyway we have been able to have a very intensive discussion. In any case, we have had very intensive discussion. I am not sure very much befitting the title of "Peacemaking in the Region" but we have been able to discuss Palestine, Iran, Turkey and I believe we have been able to have discussion on very broad perspectives. So I would like to give a very warm hand to the two presenters and the two panelists.

Closing Remarks

Amb. Yoshiji Nogami,

President of The Japan Institute of International Affairs

Thank you very much to all the presenters and panelists and moderators. I would like to thank all of you for participating in this symposium on this very intractable issue. No easy subject matters to deal with. I myself, on a personal note, since the first Gulf War have been involved in the issue all the way. My first contact with the Middle East was Iraq. So in that respect, as you may remember, Japanese were taken hostage and my first contact with the Middle East was getting involved in the negotiations for their release. My counterparts in those negotiations are no longer in this world. Perhaps just one person is still alive and that is Tariq Aziz, former foreign minister, and Saddam Hussein. So personally, also this is a matter that is close to my heart, but regrettably, as I stated at the very beginning, Japan's world map is shrinking, so as seen from Japan the intellectual exposure to this Middle East issue is declining or waning, and I feel a sense of crisis in that respect.

The Middle East issue, the Iraq issue, I hope that this symposium has played some role in getting you interested in the Middle East issue, the Iraq issue and so on. Since it has been a long day, I shall be brief. We have had the pleasure of welcoming experts from the region itself and we have had Japanese experts help us with this program, and I would like to once again express my gratitude to all of them. I would also like to express my deep gratitude to the foundation, the international foundation that has made possible. Financially these days we face difficulties and we would like to thank for the kind cooperation of everyone, including the support given by the Japan International Cooperation Foundation (JICF). So once again, thank you for your kind attention throughout this long day.