

**“Palestinian Alternatives in the framework of the Palestinian application to full membership in the UN”**

*A round table discussion with Professor Jerome M. Segal, the Director of the Peace Consultancy project at the University of Maryland.*

**Attendees (without distinction):**

**University of Maryland:** Professor Jerome M. Segal, Max Segal.

**Palestinian civil society:** Rami Mahdawi, Binaz Batrawi, Nader Saed, Jamil Rabah, Rabe’a Hantuoli, Johara Baker, Samer Saed, Fajer Harb, Haitham Arar.

**MIFTAH Team:** Lily Feidy, Julie Granurud, Bisan Mousa, Abeer Zaghari, Ruham Nimri, Ala’ Karajeh.

**Background:**

The Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy, MIFTAH, organized a round table discussion with Professor Jerome M. Segal, the Director of the Peace Consultancy project at the University of Maryland.

The meeting, which mainly targeted representatives from Palestinian civil society and youth activists, focused on the question of the Palestinian

strategy and alternatives in the framework of the UN Bid and full membership application.

**Opening remarks by Professor Segal:**

There is no clear Palestinian Strategy, approaching the UN through the Security Council for recognition and waiting to reach 9 votes then be blocked by an American Veto is not a strategy. What Palestinians need to have is a clear Strategy that will lead to renewing negotiations with a different Israeli government, that is why Palestinians need to be sure that what they do in the meantime will not do harm in the Israeli society if they want the Israelis to change their government.

Re establishing UNSCOP (United Nations Special Committee on Palestine) is one of the alternatives that I think might help the Palestinians to have a clear Strategy on the one hand, and on the other hand it will be the needed process to fill the gap. This process will be a General Assembly process where the Palestinians are much stronger than Israel. This process is a good way to prevent an American cut of funds, since it will be a process that will lead not to a new meaningless resolution at the General Assembly, but rather it will lead to suggesting a full fledged draft treaty between Israel and the PLO that will be the basis for the coming negotiations.

**Discussion:**

Participants were not satisfied with Professor Segal's "do no harm on the Israeli Society level" principle, although Professor Segal elaborated more on this by saying that this should not be viewed from a humanitarian

perspective but rather from a strategic one, mainly one should make sure this is one of the main tactics when deciding what is the strategy.

Palestinian had enough from processes and they need a change, and UNSCOP might be viewed by Palestinians as another long process that will not lead to any change.

UNSCOP is viewed by some participants as a tactical move that might help, but not as a strategy. What is considered more and more as a Palestinian strategy is BDS that will hopefully lead to an imposed solution by international community.

PLO will not agree to UNSCOP because of representation issue, who will be represented in the committee, and for reference issue, what would be the reference. There might be some fears of what UNSCOP will come up with at the end of the process.