



**Newsletter:
The Two-State Solution Coalition “TSC” Program**

Palestinian Peace Coalition “PPC” & H.L Education for Peace “HLEP”

A Joint Message from the TSC:

Dear friends,

As we write these lines, the world reels from the impact of the COVID-19 crisis. We know that the price of the pandemic will be high, but the day after it ends, we will realize that humans have much more in common than we thought; we will be more determined to prevent human-made disasters; we will face opportunities, and we will do our utmost to seize them.

2020 began with the launching of the long-awaited American plan, which fails to provide realistic solutions that can be acceptable for both parties. The two-state solution, as detailed in the Geneva Initiative model, remains the only detailed plan that can be agreed upon and implemented by both sides.

Since its inception in 2018, the Two-State Solution Coalition (TSC) has worked tirelessly to promote an end-game settlement to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict based on a negotiated two-state solution. With the annexation paradigm emboldened by the release of the US plan, in this context such work has become even more vital. When opinion polls showed trends of growing despair in both societies, we provided an open and free platform for organizations to communicate, as well channels to reach political leaderships, constituencies and communities.

We know that the road to peace may not be short. We will never give up, and we trust that you will not give up on us. Together, we continue to keep hope alive, as we know that eventually, our two peoples will live in dignity, security, and peace. They deserve no less.

Yours,

Nidal Foqaha and Gadi Baltianski

What we stand for

The “TSC” members believe in the need for ending the occupation, settling the conflict and establishing a Palestinian contiguous state with 1967 as its borderline. Our political platform is clearly expressed in a joint [declaration](#) issued by the TSC members indicating that the **only viable solution is the two-state solution based on 1967 border lines with mutual land swaps, E. Jerusalem as the capital for the emerging Palestinian State with an agreed upon solution for the issue of the Palestinian refugees as stipulated in the Arab Peace Initiative**

The TSC closely follows political stances and developments, hence we issued a clear position on the Trump Plan and other relevant developments. On March 30th, members of the TSC sent a [letter](#) to Israeli leaders Benny Gantz and MK Amir Peretz against unilateral moves, urging them to stop any plans of annexation. The letter, which was mentioned in the [media](#), urged them to show their commitment to peace and to the two-state solution by standing against such harmful political moves. Two weeks later, the TSC sent a [letter](#) to various international entities, states and organizations, urging them to prevent Israeli annexation of parts of Palestinian land, and calling upon them to push the leaders to resume peace talks.

The whole is greater than the sum of its parts; as such, we organize our work and coordinate our messaging to both sides in close cooperation with the TSC members and with civil society activists and organizations from both sides. This coalition, its message and its actions are dedicated to highlighting that peace is possible, that there is a partner for peace and for the two-state solution, and that the path to such a goal goes through the negotiation table.

What is the Two-State Solution Coalition “TSC”?

The “TSC” is a joint Palestinian-Israeli initiative that was launched by the two sides of the Geneva Initiative - [PPC](#) and [HLEP](#). The coalition was established with generous support from the European Commission under the EU Peacebuilding Initiative, starting in 2018. The coalition started with a few organizations from both sides, and currently includes 23 Palestinian and Israeli member organizations. [Members](#) of the TSC believe in and work for the two-state solution, an agreeable solution to all sides of the conflict, as envisioned in the Geneva Initiative. Read more about the coalition [here](#). Members of the coalition come from various locations and backgrounds, and work with different target groups and constituencies, which allows them to provide a significant contribution to the coalition’s efforts to promote peace and the two-state solution.

TSC Local Activities

The TSC local activities in 2019 included regular meetings for members of the coalition, capacity building workshops and seminars, field visits and meetings with local authorities and actors, in addition to a number of consultation meetings organized specifically for the secretariat of the TSC. We brought together more than 30 representatives of the member organizations, moderated discussions on the status and future of the two-state solution, and hosted urgent meetings to assess the latest political developments that have direct impact on the parameters of the solution. These meetings have helped us identify, highlight and evaluate the actual impact of the various factors affecting the public's attitude towards peace and the two-state solution. Together with other members of the coalition, we discussed best practices, shared lessons learnt and devised the best strategies and tactics in order to reach a wider audience for peace and stability.



TSC members meet in Ramallah early 2020.

TSC Taking the Lead – Joint Initiatives to Promote the Two-State Solution

To guarantee the messaging reaches a wider audience, the TSC funded 3 joint initiatives proposed by member organizations from both sides. Palestinian and Israeli members of the TSC have jointly developed their own plans to promote the two-state solution through a coordinated message, each to their own constituency. The initiatives bring together potential leaders and influencers from both sides to jointly address issues of significant damage to the peace process and to the two-state solution and to share innovative ideas on peace building and conflict transformation. Palestinian and Israeli members of the TSC contribute to this effort, with particular efforts made by "Peace Now," "[Zimam](#)," "[Ir-Amim](#)," "[EcoPalestine](#)," "Mechazkim," and both sides of the Geneva Initiative; [PPC](#) and [HLEP](#) – GI [joint website](#).

Bringing the Two-State Solution to the Forefront

As part of the TSC's continuous efforts to promote the two-state solution, we organized local seminars for senior political analysts, senior party leaders, actors and representatives of international organizations and diplomatic missions. These meetings address the following issues:

- *What internal processes have a negative/positive impact on the two-state solution?*
- *How can we increase the impact of local organizations on the peace process? What is the best way to approach international players?*
- *What homework should Palestinians and Israelis do on the local and regional levels?*

We also published news on such meetings using [media](#) and [social media](#) platforms.

.... and other questions related to public opinion about peace, internal reconciliation and the two-state solution.



TSC Political Capacity Building Seminar, Ramallah 2019

Joint Meetings: Taking Stock of the Situation

What's happening on the other side, and what's their take on the news? We held a total of eight joint meetings for members of the TSC and members of the TSC secretariat, where we discussed the Palestinian and Israeli political spheres and the latest developments that have direct impact on the prospects of achieving the two-state solution. These meetings also let Palestinian and Israeli CSOs share various challenges facing them, especially the ever-shrinking space of CSOs to operate freely in support of peace and the two-state solution, and to exchange ideas on how best to approach and tackle these challenges.



Mr. Foqaha introducing the TSC to Mrs. Hilde Haraldstad, Representative of Norway to the PA and Mr. Tomas Niklasson, Acting European Union Representative. Jerusalem 2019.

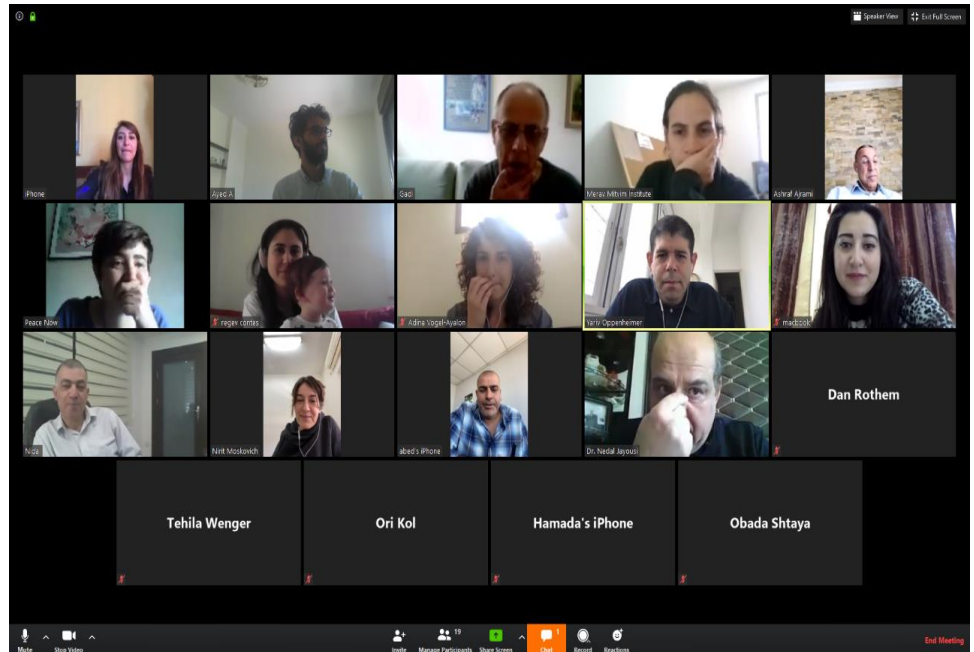
Our efforts to bring the two-state solution into the public discourse included receiving two Israeli delegations in Ramallah, which included Israeli journalists and influencers, political analysts, parliamentary assistants, and leaders of Israeli youth groups. The TSC organized meetings for them with senior PLO and PA leaders, in addition to leaders and representatives of Palestinian youth groups. Some of the Israeli journalists shared their experience in Ramallah with their own audiences; they wrote [articles](#), posted to their [facebook](#) pages and [tweeted](#).



Hosting a delegation of Israeli journalists and analysts in Ramallah, 2019.

TSC Meetings during COVID-19 outbreak

Discussions, brain-storming sessions and strategic planning meetings didn't stop in spite of the spread of COVID-19 Virus. We met online using video-conference applications and platforms, we assessed the situation on both sides, and exchanged views on the role of civil society organizations in such cases. So far, we have organized 7 online meetings and brought together more than 85 Palestinian and Israeli activists.



TSC members keep in touch during COVID-19 crisis. March 2020

Advocacy with Influencers

In a joint Palestinian-Israeli effort, members of the TSC have met with various local and international stakeholders to amplify our message and to garner more support for the two-state solution. We jointly called for more involvement of these influential actors and tirelessly explained the pressing need for a genuine peace process to save the two-state solution. During 2019, we met with decision-makers, international and regional diplomats, senior journalists, local community leaders or figures, members of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), and members of the Israeli Knesset.



TSC meets with local leaders, influencers and journalists. Ramallah 2019

Enriching Our Members' Skillset

How can we reach more people? What tools should we use? Which platforms? And how can we assess our actual impact on the constituencies, and, equally importantly, how can we increase and improve our ability to advocate for the two-state solution? These are the main questions we addressed throughout this year's capacity building seminars and workshops. We believe that for the TSC to have more influence on the public on both sides, members must have the needed tools/skills to be able to influence their own constituencies.



A capacity building workshop for the TSC members on online advocacy. Ramallah 2019

International Advocacy Visits

Given the important role played by the international community in this conflict, and their significant leverage on both sides, the TSC organized meetings with key international actors and influencers to advocate for the two-state solution, and to highlight the need for returning to the negotiation table. Our message stressed that regional conflicts can either be ended, or deescalated if all players focus on a genuine peace process between Palestinians and Israelis. We argued that the two-state solution – once achieved – guarantees full diplomatic, political, economic and security coordination/ties with Israel – as stipulated for in the Arab Peace Initiative. We sent a message that the peace camps on both sides still have the opportunity to make this work, provided that the international key players step in and put pressure on the leaderships to return to negotiations.

This year, we met with the Russia's FM [Sergey Lavrov](#) in Moscow. This [meeting](#) was covered by various news outlets in Palestine and in Israel, as well as in [Russian](#), in addition to [social media](#) networks.



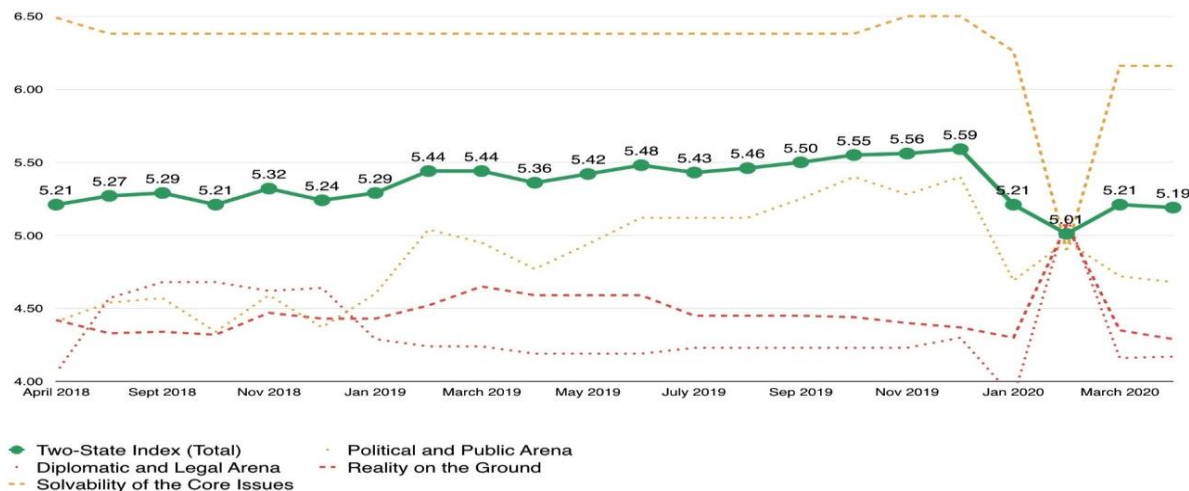
Meeting with Mr. Lavrov and his team. Moscow, 2019

In another trip to Brussels and The Hague, the TSC met with Mr. Thomas Seiler, Deputy Head of Division, Mrs. Susanna Terstal, EU Special Representative for the MEPP and Mr. Michael Miller, Head of the EU Division Middle East. Our visit to The Hague included meeting with groups of experts at the Clingendael Institute of International Relations and with representatives of the Dutch Foreign Ministry.



Meeting with international stakeholders, Brussels, 2019

Palestinian and Israeli Attitudes towards the Two-State Solution¹



Recent Palestinian Public Opinion Poll

Our latest poll on the Palestinian side showed that the largest relative percentage, 42% of Palestinians, showed support for the two-state solution, while 19% opted for a democratic one-state solution, and 12% for one state in which Palestinians would have the same status as Israeli Arabs, while 27% answered "don't know." For more interesting findings, please see the full report [here](#).

Recent Israeli Public Opinion poll

A public opinion poll sponsored by the Geneva Initiative in November, 2019 indicated that a staunch majority of Israelis oppose the continuation of the status quo, believing it to be harmful for Israel. When asked what they would prefer to see happen in the conflict over the next ten years, the option of reaching a permanent agreement with the Palestinians had more than twice the support of any other option, including continued status quo, unilateral withdrawal, or annexation. For more results, read [here](#).

¹ From the [Two-State Solution Index](#) Program – a 3-year program also funded by the EU.

Public Statements in Support of the Two-State Solution

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, during a meeting with foreign reporters on June 2019 presented the two-state solution as a precondition to returning to the table:

"We are ready to return to the negotiating table with Israel, but with two preconditions: the recognition of Israeli occupation of East Jerusalem and the vision of a two-state solution."

Israeli MK Benny Gantz, Leader of the Blue and White Party (October 2019) during a [speech](#) laid out his future government goals with the headline "a government that strives for peace."

He presented a list of elements including open, direct negotiations with Palestinians based on the two-state solution; strengthening of the Palestinian Authority, and more.

Palestinian Prime Minister Dr. Mohammed Shtayyeh stressed the importance of and need for the two-state solution during the annual conference of Socialist International on June 2019 in Ramallah:

"Israel stands today before a big challenge ... either the two-state solution or a racist regime in practice and law; either the two-state solution or no peace."

Palestinian chief negotiator and PLO's Secretary General, Saeb Erekat: "The only way towards achieving peace in Palestine, Israel, and the entire Middle East is with the freedom and independence of the State of Palestine on the 1967 border with East Jerusalem as its capital."

More on the Two-State Solution

Nidal Foqaha, PPC Director General speaking to the i24News on the American Peace Initiative, the Bahrain Workshop and the future of the two-state solution:

https://video.i24news.tv/details/_6052166706001

“The Trump plan's legacy is the failure of the Right”; Tehila Wenger, Geneva Initiative coordinator, writes in Jpost about the US Administration's peace plan, annexation and the future of the two-state solution:

<https://www.jpost.com/Opinion/The-Trump-plans-legacy-is-the-failure-of-the-Right-617901>

Palestinian chief negotiator and PLO's Secretary General, Saeb Erekat speaking at the pro-peace J-Street National Conference in Washington:

<https://aawsat.com/english/home/article/1968776/erekat-jerusalem-can-be-open-city-day-after-peace>

In a meeting with Hatnua Party head Tzipi Livni, MK Amir Peretz, Leader of the Labor Party said, “I want a Palestinian state to bring peace to Israel.”

<https://www.jpost.com/Israel-Elections/Amir-Peretz-I-want-a-Palestinian-state-to-bring-peace-595532>

Former Prime Minister Ehud Olmert in column for [Maariv newspaper](#) and the [Jerusalem Post](#) wrote about the urgency of the two-state solution. “Evading serious discussions regarding the Palestinian issue, fearing to take an unequivocal stance on the two-state solution or withdrawing from settlements in Judea and Samaria, are a mistake; one day Israel will pay a dear price for these policies,” he said.

“Tibi and Odeh affirmed the Joint List's support for a real diplomatic process that leads to the end of the occupation and the establishment of a Palestinian state in the framework of a two-state solution,” the spokesman added.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/arab-mks-meet-with-gantz-call-for-real-diplomatic-process-with-palestinians/>