
The Atkin Paper Series

The role of women in Israeli – Palestinian Peace Negotiations

Lior Finkel, ICSR Atkin Fellow

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Thanks to the generosity of the *Atkin Foundation*, the *International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence (ICSR)* offers young leaders from Israel and the Arab world the opportunity to come to London for a period of four months. The purpose of the fellowship is to provide young leaders from Israel and the Arab world with an opportunity to develop their ideas on how to further peace and understanding in the Middle East through research, debate and constructive dialogue in a neutral political environment. The end result is a policy paper that will provide a deeper understanding and a new perspective on a specific topic or event.

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Introduction

"In war-torn societies, women often keep societies going... We must ensure that women are enabled to play a full part in peace negotiations, in peace processes and in peace missions."

Kofi Annan, former United Nations Secretary General
24 October 2000

31 October 2000 was an historic date for women worldwide. On this day, the United Nations adopted Security Council Resolution (SCR) 1325 on women, peace and security. It called for the adoption of a gender perspective and addressed the need for women to take a more active role at all levels of decision-making, including in national, regional, and international institutions; in mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict; and in peace negotiations and peace operations.

Eleven years later, in October 2011, the Nobel Peace Prize was jointly awarded to three women in recognition of their struggle for women's rights and security and their fight to promote the full participation of women in peace-building activities and initiatives. The winners were Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Africa's first female elected head of state; Liberian women's rights and peace activist Leymah Gbowee; and Tawakkul Karman, a journalist and pro-democracy activist from Yemen. Nobel judges referred to the winners' long struggle for peace and their 'struggle for women's rights to full participation in peace-building work'. They also noted that SCR 1325 'for the first time [...] underlined the need for women to become participants on an equal footing with men in peace processes and in peace work in general'.¹

Responding to the announcement, Ms. Margot Wallström, the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, spoke of the gender inequality that exists between men and women in conflict resolution and peace-building teams. She noted that more than a decade after the resolution was adopted, less than 10 per cent of all peace agreements are negotiated by women and less than 3 per cent are signed by women. 'Women's participation in peace processes', she said, 'needs to engage peacemakers, peacekeepers, peacebuilders and political leaders – not only women's rights and gender experts'.²

A week later, the UN Security Council held an open debate marking the eleventh anniversary of SCR 1325; the theme was 'Women's Participation and Role in Conflict Resolution and Mediation'. During the debate, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stated that 'women's participation remains low, both in official and observer roles. This has to change'.³

It is clear that there has been minimal improvement in terms of the role of women in peace negotiations during the decade between the adoption of SCR 1325 and the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2011. The reasons are almost

impossible to pinpoint: it may be the distrust of women's agendas, the belief that women have an inferior understanding of warfare, military affairs and conflict resolution, or even the perceived emotional weakness of women. In 'Women Waging Peace: Inclusive Security', Swanee Hunt and Cristina Posa provide us with some explanations:

*There is a psychological barrier that precludes women from sitting in on negotiations: Waging war is still thought of as a 'man's job', and as such, the task of stopping war often is delegated to men...Women are often excluded from negotiating teams because the war leaders are afraid the women will compromise and give away too much...Negotiators sometimes worry that having women participate in the discussion may change the tone of the meeting.*⁴

Perhaps the explanation is much simpler: namely, that women have been excluded from the negotiation tables for so long that it is almost unfathomable for this trend to be reversed in the minds of leading male negotiators.

With regard to the Middle East and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it is clear that in most cases, it is no different. In 'Gender and Peace Work: An Unofficial History of Israeli-Palestinian Peace Negotiations', Dr. Sarai Aharoni deals specifically with the roles women played within the Middle East conflict resolution negotiations. She notes that during the Oslo Process women were very much involved, but restricted to the backstage roles of the formal negotiations. She found that women acted as 'mid-level negotiators and professional and legal advisors, and also served as spokeswomen and secretaries'.⁵

This paper analyses the role of women in the Israeli – Palestinian peace negotiations since the 1991 Madrid Conference, focusing on the role of two leading women negotiators: Dr. Hanan Ashrawi from the Occupied Territories and Mrs. Tzipi Livni from Israel. These two women have managed to emerge from the sidelines and have forced themselves into global, central roles within the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. They were able to overcome a male-dominated environment in order to make their mark on the various attempts throughout the last two decades to find a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

Dr. Hanan Ashrawi is a former professor of English literature and a leader in Palestinian politics and civil society. She is currently the Chairperson of the Executive Committee of MIFTAH (the Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy) a member of the Palestine Liberation Organization's (PLO) Executive Committee and a member of the Palestinian Legislative Council.

Ashrawi served from 1991 to 1993 as the official spokesperson of the Palestinian Delegation to the Middle East peace process, and as a member of the Leadership and Guidance Committee and the Executive Committee of the delegation in the 1991 Madrid Conference.

Mrs. Tzipi Livni is a lawyer and politician. She is currently the leader of Kadima, the largest party in the Knesset, and the Head of the Opposition – the first female

leader of the opposition in Israeli history. Livni was the Foreign Minister of Israel in 2007, and was appointed by Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to lead the Israeli delegation to the negotiations.

The aim of this study is to highlight the critical role these women have played in peace negotiations. Furthermore, I hope that this study can be used as a point of departure for future leaders and activists to use when involved in the delicate and precarious process of peace negotiations. This research brings to attention the problems with excluding women and the benefits associated with ending gender inequality and including more women in peace negotiations.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 *On women, peace and security*

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security was adopted on 31 October 2000. It marked the first time the Security Council stressed the importance of women's equal and full participation as active representatives in peace and security, as well as recognising the contributions women make to conflict prevention, peacekeeping, conflict resolution and peace-building.

This resolution binds all UN member states and its adoption marked an important and historic moment: international recognition that women and gender are relevant to international peace and security.

Its unique importance is driven by the deeper understanding and acknowledgment of women's unique, vital and valuable perspectives. As women are an integral part of decision-making, it is crucial that their views are represented while making decisions regarding the general public, and women in particular. Since its adoption, SCR 1325 has led to change not only on an international level but also in the everyday life of grassroots operations that deal with women's rights – as well as human rights – all over the world. For the first time, the issue of gender-based representation was brought to the public discourse.

The UN has been following the progress of the implementation of SCR 1325 and once a year, every year up until this past October, has dedicated a special discussion specifically on this matter. However, although the will for meaningful change exists, too few steps have been made in order to change the existing status quo – and those that have been made have been insufficient and often half-hearted.

On 28 October 2002, in a meeting marking the two-year anniversary of the adoption of SCR 1325, Secretary-General Kofi Annan addressed the Security Council and pointed out that women generally are not present during peace talks; he called for reversing this trend, including through the appointment of UN mediators. While speaking about the benefits of boosting the role of women, he said, 'Just as your work can promote gender equality, so can gender equality make your work more likely to succeed'.⁶

On 18 July 2005, when mentioning the approaching five-year anniversary of SCR 1325, the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) called on the international community to go beyond a mere awareness of the gender dimensions of war and peace and to encourage women's participation in preventing and resolving national and local conflicts. In its statement it said:

*International awareness of gender in conflict had increased, thanks to Security Council Resolution 1325... but awareness is not enough... what's needed is stronger support for women's participation in all efforts to promote and maintain peace and security... While a few women have been able to take part in peace processes in different capacities over the past decade, it was still rare for women to be involved alongside men at every stage, including the implementation of peace agreements. Where women have gained access to negotiations, they have made valuable contributions... Formal peace negotiations that leave out half the population have limited hope of popular support.*⁷

On 26 October 2006, the Security Council noted the sixth anniversary with a one-day open meeting. The following statement was issued after speeches from almost 50 UN and other officials following up on Secretary-General Kofi Annan's report on 'Women, Peace and Security', which was released earlier that month. The statement said:

*Women are critical to the consolidation of peace. In today's mostly internal conflicts, the socio-economic fabric of a country and its societal dynamics become a key guide to finding entry points into resolving and preventing conflicts... The past year has demonstrated that our collective efforts to ensure equal participation of women in the consolidation of peace so far have generally fallen short of what is required... Women have a key role to play in building peace, in their own right, and not only because they are disproportionately victimized nor seen more naturally as agents of peace. Women's key role must be recognised because societies where women participate fully enjoy more peace, more prosperity and more opportunity.*⁸

On 23 October 2007, the UN marked the seventh anniversary and Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said, 'There is so much left to do – both for the United Nations and for member states to implement the provisions of Resolution 1325'.⁹ He then stressed the need to appoint more women in leadership positions in UN peace operations.

On 29 October 2008, the eighth anniversary, the Security Council called on Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to appoint more women to senior positions, particularly as Special Representatives and Special Envoys. UNIFEM Executive Director Inés Alberdi, said:

*It is our duty and indeed our obligation to millions of women in conflict areas to use the opportunity offered by Security Council Resolution 1325 to set in motion perhaps one of the most promising approaches to conflict resolution of this new century.*¹⁰

In July 2010, the UN announced a newly created organisation called UN Women, whose stated purpose will be to help the world body implement Resolution 1325 through better coordination and enhanced activities in the field. UN Women merged four UN entities: the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues, and the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW). Established by a unanimous vote of the General Assembly, the first UN super-agency on female empowerment oversees all of the world body's programmes aimed at promoting women's rights and their full participation in global affairs.

On 21 October 2010, when celebrating the tenth anniversary, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon repeated his pledge to empower women, underlining the crucial role they play in peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building. He said, 'Whether we are discussing sustainable development, public health or peace, women are at the core... but we have a long way to go'.¹¹

A research paper entitled 'What the Women Say: Participation and UNSCR 1325', by MIT University along with the International Civil Society Action Network, focused on six states that are considered to be international confrontation zones. Among them were Israel and the Palestinian territories. The fundamental conclusion was that states did not implement proactive and effective steps in order to promote women's participation in peace negotiations. Some states have promoted legislation with this general idea; however, in reality nothing was done to implement these steps. It was also highlighted that in the Middle East, women are the first ones to declare their intent to be involved in peace negotiations. Tragically, however, key players in the national and international arena have not taken up any means or committed themselves to any efforts in order to include them. On the contrary, in some cases efforts were made to sideline women completely and restrict their already minimal roles. According to MIT's John Tirman, Project Co-Director and Executive Director of the MIT Center for International Studies:

*The insights these women have brought to the 1325 discourse underscore two related points. The first is that the member states are not fulfilling their obligations, which is a serious failing that should concern everyone who believes in the utility of collective security. The second is this is a Resolution that is both realistic and innovative, covering half the population of the world. It is important, and it is being ignored.*¹²

In his speech at the UN, while celebrating the tenth anniversary, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said:

Today we must admit that we have failed to build sufficiently on these conceptual foundations. Women still face obstacles to engagement at all stages of the peace process. But, on this tenth anniversary of 1325, even as we acknowledge

where we are falling short, let us also recognise where we have moved forward. Advancing the cause of women, peace and security must be integral to our peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building efforts, not an afterthought."¹³

On 28 October 2011, the UN Security Council held an all-day open debate on 'Women's Participation and Role in Conflict Resolution and Mediation'. The theme was particularly appropriate in light of the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to three women peacemakers. In its statement, the Security Council said that it remains concerned about the persistence of gaps and challenges that seriously hinder the implementation of the resolution, including the continued low numbers of women in formal institutions of conflict prevention and resolution, particularly in preventive diplomacy and mediation efforts. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called for the greater involvement of women in conflict prevention and mediation, the essential building blocks in reinforcing democracy, and said:

Women's participation remains low, both in official and observer roles. This has to change. The Department of Political Affairs (DPA) had increased the proportion of female candidates in its roster of senior mediators, team members and thematic experts to 35 per cent. In the field, UN teams are actively supporting women so that they are enabled to engage in peace-building and conflict prevention, management and reconciliation. Proactive steps must be taken to accelerate implementation of key elements of this agenda, such as strengthening women's engagement in conflict resolution and deterring widespread and systematic abuses of women's rights during conflict'.¹⁴

Ms. Michelle Bachelet, Under Secretary-General and Executive Director, UN Women, said:

If women's participation is essential, not optional, why is it often the missing ingredient in conflict prevention and mediation? As we go forward, we need determined leadership – by all of us: the Security Council, Member States, Civil Society, and the United Nations, to fully engage women in mediation and conflict prevention. This will advance peace and security and deepen democracy around the world.¹⁵

Implementation of SCR 1325 in the Middle East

SCR 1325 has had significant ramifications and relevance for the conflict in the Middle East.

Israel

In November 2004, the Knesset's Research and Information Center published a report regarding SCR 1325 and its implementation in Israel. It was called 'Integration of Women in Peace Processes' and it was assigned to the Knesset's Committee on the Status of Women.

On 20 July 2005, the Knesset passed legislation concerning 'Equality for Women's Rights', thus becoming the first parliament to implement SCR 1325. It declared that an appropriate representation of women from diverse population sectors must be included on every governmental team or committee at the national level. This revolutionary legislation officially recognised women's unique and critical contributions to policy-making and positioned gender status as crucial to all issues.

Also in the legislative arena, various NGOs and women's organisations turned to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on November 2010 and demanded a Knesset hearing about how Israel still needs to advance the role of women in peace negotiations. The discussion was held on 1 November 2010 at a joint hearing of the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee and the Committee for the Advancement of Women (formerly known as the Committee on the Status of Women) and marked the tenth anniversary of SCR 1325.

In the hearing, Head of the Opposition MK Tzipi Livni argued that including women in the peace talks was not merely a gesture toward gender equality, but would be in Israel's national interest:

It is women's right to determine their future and that of their country, and their power is first and foremost political. The struggle is over presence in decision-making chambers – the decisions concerning peace and war and touching upon all of Israel's citizens, men and women... This struggle begins with women's own understanding that we can, and the public understandings that it is not just a matter of women's rights, but is in the best interest of the State of Israel.¹⁶

The Occupied Territories

In an interview conducted on 25 October 2011 with Dr. Hanan Ashrawi, the founder and Chairperson of the Executive Committee of MIFTAH, she spoke of a conversation she had with Abu Mazen, President of the Palestinian Authority, regarding the implementation of SCR 1325 in the Occupied Territories.

*We went to Abu Mazen, got him to accept 1325 and he agreed to incorporate it into the legislative body...we discussed the issue of women in peacemaking, peace-building and post-conflict situations in Palestine... The question now is to ensure that we have an oversight body, which will ensure implementation. My position was that I don't want to see just a ministry of women, I want to see a women's commission that will oversee all the ministries as well as the public and private sector and civil society to ensure that there is no discrimination and there is full participation...If you have an oversight body of a women's commission that has the power and the mandate to hold everybody accountable that's when you begin to see the difference, that's when you see results."*¹⁷

In 2010 MIFTAH, alongside Palestinian women government and civil society leaders, developed a list of recommendations for implementing SCR 1325. The list included some of the following:¹⁸

Parties structuring the Peace Process, especially members of the Quartet, should:

- Reform the structure and approach of any peace process to ensure the general population's knowledge of the status of negotiations; provide women, and civil society in general, a voice in talks; and envision negotiations with an outcome to end the conflict.
- Ensure no less than 30 per cent direct participation by women in all peace processes to guarantee attention to the needs and priorities of women and to increase the transparency of peace-building efforts to the general population

International Civil Society Organisations should:

- Support delegation visits abroad for Palestinian women to increase access to decision-makers in other countries and to elevate women's voices and priorities in international decision-making.
- Create partnerships with local women-led civil society organisations to enhance understanding of the situation on the ground and create opportunities to address women's priorities and needs in efforts to build peace.

The United Nations should:

- Send UN missions specifically to document and assess implementation of SCR 1325, and to determine the differential impact of the conflict and occupation on women and to make recommendations for better:

- Involving women in peace processes and reflecting women's perspectives.
- Protecting women in the Palestinian Occupied Territory and measuring and reporting on changes in the status of 1325 implementation.

The Madrid Conference and Dr. Hanan Ashrawi

The Madrid Conference convened on 30 October 1991 and lasted for three days. It was hosted by the government of Spain and co-sponsored by the United States and the Soviet Union. It was an attempt to kick-start a peace process involving Israel, her Arab neighbors and the Palestinians.

The Palestinian team that attended was part of a joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation and consisted of Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza without any open PLO associations. However, the delegation was in constant communication with the PLO leadership in Tunis.

The only Palestinian woman present was Hanan Ashrawi.

Ashrawi was born in Nablus and studied at the American University of Beirut. While there she joined the General Union of Palestinian Students (GUPS) and became its spokesperson. At that time she also taught political awareness classes to Palestinians in surrounding refugee camps. In 1970, unable to rejoin her family in the West Bank, Dr. Ashrawi left Beirut to go to the United States to complete her graduate studies at the University of Virginia, where she received her Ph.D. in English and Comparative Literature.

She met Yasser Arafat (Chairman of the PLO, President of the Palestinian Authority and leader of the Fatah political party) for the first time in 1969 while attending a GUPS convention in Amman. She then went on to join Fatah, the largest of the PLO components, and returned to the West Bank in 1973 under the Family Reunification Act. There she became involved in the women's rights movement and began to speak about coexistence with Israel and about a two-state solution for the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Ashrawi's role as a negotiator began, unofficially, before the Madrid conference, as she put it in an interview with me:

I was one of the people that contributed to the Palestinian peace initiative and contributed to the resolution that was adopted by the PLO in 1988 to accept the two-state solution. I was also part of the political committee of the first intifada in which we also formulated the peace initiative and sent it to the leadership.¹⁹

In 1991 she was appointed official spokesperson of the Palestinian delegation at the Middle East Peace Conference in Madrid because as a resident of East Jerusalem, she was denied a role as a negotiator by Israel. She recalls:

President Arafat told me that I had the mandate to speak out without censorship or interference. He was really very understanding and very open and he always

told me 'I trust your judgment' and that is how I was able to make policy decisions as spokesperson.²⁰

Ashrawi also sat on the core team of advisers for the Palestinian delegation, along with Faisal Hussein, the chair of the group.

In my interview, I asked about her different roles during the Conference. Her answer gives a better understanding of the manner in which she conducted her various activities during the conference:

We were meeting as the political committee, on behalf of the Palestinians, and we had a mandate from the PLO to meet them [diplomats and people from outside of Palestine] because at that time, we weren't supposed to. I was one of the two, along with Faisal Hussein, who were designated [by the PLO] to meet with [James] Baker and follow up on the drafting of the documents.

Ashrawi also recalls the system they had set up for the negotiations:

The triple system: the political leadership committee, the strategic committee for the study of options and legal alternatives, and the negotiation delegation... Like all women I multitask. I was in both leadership and strategic committees and so we would meet with each other and then we would meet with the delegation and prepare points together...²¹

On 31 October 1991, Dr Haidar Abdel Shafi, head of the Palestinian delegation, delivered his opening speech at the conference. Dr. Ashrawi was the author of this speech. In an interview by Dr. Bregman on 26 January 2007, Dr. Ashrawi recalls the frenetic and frenzied manner in which she wrote this historic speech:

...up to the moment where we left and got into the plane to go to Madrid, we did not have a speech. So it was in Madrid that the speech was written actually...

The speech was written on Ashrawi's bed, in her hotel room.

My room was also a meeting room, everybody was just walking in and out and people had ideas, people wanted to read the draft as I was writing...I remember I even cried. I have the original papers with my handwriting and some tears on them... but I wanted a speech from the heart. The heart and the mind and, as I express the fullness of our humanity, our narrative and our experience...

At the time the speech was written it was not supposed to mention the PLO in any way. Despite the fact that it was illegal, Ashrawi says that she knew that 'for that speech to be genuine and to be representative we had to have the PLO in there'. She decided to consult with Secretary of State James Baker on the matter.

I called Baker. He was already in the meeting room, in the conference in the Palace of Justice in Madrid...and I said we have to have a mention of the PLO and I put in a sentence about the PLO. He said, 'No, you can't. Shamir [Israel's Prime Minister] will walk out, you will destroy everything. There will no longer be a conference'. And I said, 'Without the PLO there will be no Palestinian speech'.

Eventually, she put in a statement at the end of the speech: 'President Arafat had addressed the UN with an olive branch in his hand... don't let the olive branch fall from my hand'.

After the speech was given, she was told that Israel's Prime Minister, Yitzhak Shamir, was ready to walk out because of the mention of the PLO and Arafat and the whole conference could have collapsed. 'But at the same time', she says, 'we couldn't be dishonest with ourselves or with our history, and so fortunately we maintained both'.²²

Dr. Hanan Ashrawi remains a highly influential woman within Palestinian society and when asked in my interview if she feels that as a woman she had a different contribution or perspectives to bring the peace process, she replied:

As a woman I certainly brought my gender approach and awareness to the talks...women deal with the issues...I believe I was more daring and standing up to saying things than men. Not that I was confrontational, but things that I could not approve of or had to condemn, I said so. We tried to get collective work, I worked with people, with teams, collectively, and the decisions we've arrived at also collectively...we tried to build consensus on issues. We used persuasion without using intimidation, we never ask what is in it for me, we ask how we can serve the cause...²³

The Annapolis Conference and Tzipi Livni

The Annapolis Conference was another Middle East peace conference held on 27 November 2007 at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice organised and hosted the conference. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and US President George W. Bush attended the meeting. The objective was to produce a substantive document on resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict along the lines of President George W. Bush's Roadmap for Peace with the eventual establishment of a Palestinian state. The Roadmap required the Palestinian Authority to make democratic reforms and abandon the use of violence against Israel in exchange for statehood. Israel, for its part, was asked to support and accept the emergence of a reformed Palestinian government and end settlement activity in the Gaza Strip and West Bank.

The conference marked the first time a two-state solution was articulated as the mutually agreed-upon outline for addressing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

President Abbas and Prime Minister Olmert had been meeting repeatedly since June 2007, in the run-up to the conference, to try and agree on some of the central and definitive issues. Also prior to the conference, President Bush met with both of them at the White House.

The conference ended with the issuing of a joint statement from all parties, supporting a two-state solution. President Bush read from that statement:

*We agreed to immediately launch good-faith, bilateral negotiations in order to conclude a peace treaty resolving all outstanding issues, including core issues, without exception... The final peace settlement will establish Palestine as a homeland for the Palestinian people just as Israel is the homeland for the Jewish people.*²⁴

The statement called for the two sides to 'engage in vigorous, ongoing and continuous negotiations' and stated that they should 'make every effort to conclude an agreement before the end of 2008'. It even went on to create a committee: 'For this purpose, a steering committee, led jointly by the head of the delegation of each party, will meet continuously, as agreed'.²⁵

After the Annapolis Conference, Olmert appointed Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni to lead the Israeli delegation to the negotiations.

Tzipi Livni was born in Israel. She served as an officer in the IDF, and later in the Mossad (the national intelligence agency of Israel). A lawyer by profession, Livni

received her law degree from Bar-Ilan University and practiced law in a private firm for ten years before entering public life.

She was first elected to the Knesset as a member of the Likud party in 1999 and served as the chairperson of the subcommittee responsible for legislation on the Prevention of Money Laundering Law. In 2001, the 29th Government was formed; Likud leader Ariel Sharon became prime minister and appointed Livni to be the Minister of Regional Cooperation and Agriculture and Rural Development.

In the 30th Government, established in 2003, she held the following portfolios: Immigrant Absorption, Housing and Construction, Justice and Foreign Affairs. In Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's Cabinet, Livni was generally considered to be among the more moderate members of the Likud party. She often mediated between various elements inside the party, and made efforts to achieve a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

On 20 November 2005, Livni alongside Ariel Sharon and Ehud Olmert formed a new party, called Kadima. Ahead of the elections, she was appointed to be the new Foreign Minister, while continuing to serve as Justice Minister.

In May 2006, with the swearing-in of the 31st Government, Tzipi Livni was appointed Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs. She continued to serve as Minister of Justice from November 2006 until February 2007. Livni is the second woman in Israel to hold the post of Foreign Minister, after the late Prime Minister Golda Meir.

On 12 March 2008, while addressing the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, Tzipi Livni discussed the negotiation process itself, as chief negotiator on the Israeli side:

We decided that until everything is concluded, nothing is concluded...I can assure you that we meet about twice a week, Abu Ala and myself, and some experts are beginning to work on other issues which are not the core issues. Abu Ala and myself are talking about the core issues, but we have other issues that are related to the core issues: water and other things that need to be addressed in any kind of agreement. The experts have started to work on these issues, and basically this is what we are doing quietly.²⁶

In an interview to *The Jerusalem Post*, on 31 December 2010, Livni gave a more profound understanding of the process:

I was authorized by Olmert to conduct negotiations with the Palestinians. The principles on which I ran those talks for nine months, in accordance with the Annapolis framework, were to negotiate with the Palestinian national movement, represented by Ahmed Qurei [Abu Alaa], to reach an agreement on all the core issues – a detailed agreement, an agreement that could be implemented, with a stated commitment that this marked the end of the conflict via two national states, in which each state constitutes a solution for its people.

In November 2008, Livni met with Abu Mazen, and representatives of the Quartet and the Arab League in Sharm el-Sheikh.

We agreed that we hadn't exhausted the process and that we wanted to continue. We hadn't talked about Jerusalem and we hadn't yet reached final decisions on all the issues. The negotiations weren't finished. They hadn't reached a dead end. We hadn't yet put everything on the table.

During that time, she recalls, Olmert decided to propose an offer and put it on the negotiation table. Livni disapproved of this move.

Olmert, outside of that framework, decided at some stage toward the end of his time in office to place a certain proposal on the table. To the best of my knowledge, Abu Mazen did not even respond to it – for various reasons connected to the situation at the time: Operation Cast Lead, the end of the prime minister's term, and other factors. I disagreed with him on some of the terms. I also think this idea, which also played out at Camp David, of saying 'we're issuing a proposal, take it or leave it', is less good than proceeding through negotiations...²⁷

On 15 April 2011, in an interview with *The Financial Times*, Livni was asked about the peace process and shared how her frustrations turned into the realisation that peace is reachable through negotiations:

Peace cannot turn on a choice of competing narratives; the endless competition of unspeakable calamities, such as the Holocaust and Nakba, was a ball and chain that would hobble the lives of children yet to be born. Enough already! We began by talking about rights...and then decided to stop doing that and talk instead about possibilities. We made lists, for example, of the kind of weapons they would need to defend themselves and the weapons we couldn't let them have, and we found we could do those lists!²⁸

On 18 November 2007, Livni addressed an International Conference on Women's Leadership in Jerusalem and shared her inspiration for entering politics as well her hopes to play an influential part of the peace process.

Women leaders reached positions of leadership for various reasons. I myself entered politics in order to promote the peace process. I know that women leaders promote the welfare of all and not only women's interests, but nevertheless we have an additional responsibility as well.²⁹

In *Haaretz Newspaper* Tzipi Livni also spoke about this gender-biased, male-dominated environment from an Israeli perspective:

There's a twisted logic, which says that defense issues belong to men. But decision-making is connected to one's ability to analyze the existing situation, to look ahead, to ask the chief of staff what needs to be done, to hear more opinions, to get the support of the world and to then make the decision. No man, including any general, has an advantage over me in this process... I went into politics, because of my involvement in diplomacy and regional issues. Women's rights were not my driving force, having said that, I did act to increase the level of representation of women on the boards of financial companies and to gain equal pay for female government employees.³⁰

On 12 March 2008, when addressing the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, she elaborated:

Israel doesn't have peace with its neighbors. I entered Israeli politics in order to change this. This was my decision to leave my profession, I practice law. But my drive, my decision, my aspiration was to try and change the situation and to leave something that maybe can bring not only hope for us but also can create a better future, not only for my own children but for generations to come in Israel...³¹

Conclusion

After analysing various reports, submissions and contributions associated with SCR 1325, the conclusion is self-evident and abundantly clear. As was highlighted on every anniversary of SCR 1325 since its adoption in 2000, there simply are not enough women involved in peace negotiations.

Former US President Bill Clinton summarised in one simple remark the consequences of the lack of women in peace negotiations generally and in the Middle East specifically: 'If we'd had women at Camp David, we'd have an agreement'.³²

Dr. Hanan Ashrawi was once asked if she could connect with Tzipi Livni because although they represent opposite sides of the conflict, they are both female politicians working in gender-biased, male-dominated environments. She replied:

I understand that she has an added burden, she has more challenges. I know what it means to be a female in an exclusively male club where the attacks can be very vicious, where attempts happen at de-legitimisation or exclusion or undermining the standing of a woman...I know what she is facing. But I also know that to succeed you must not adopt the current or prevailing male ethos, or attitude, or politics of power and intimidation. If a woman is to succeed in politics she has to bring her gender with her. Attempting to be a watered-down version of the male politician won't get you anywhere...She must be true to her gender.³³

Swanee Hunt found that social research has demonstrated that women are generally more collaborative and less aggressive than men and thus more inclined toward consensus and compromise. These attributes are critical to the negotiation process.

When discussing the role of men and women in conflict resolution, it is important to consider whether gender affects approaches to conflict resolution. There exists a stereotype that women are more peace loving than men, and can bring a calmer, more compromising voice to the negotiation table. It has been argued that women are more effective and more efficient than men in negotiations and that there is a need for 'peace promoters, not just warriors at the table'.³⁴



31st May 2007 Women's leadership conference in Vienna, for peace and security in the Middle East. Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni with Palestinian Legislative Council Hanan Ashrawi and Austrian Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik

In a conversation I had with Tzipi she strengthened this very argument by adding her own experience:

*Even if gender does not necessarily constitute a structured role in negotiations, from my personal experience I have found that women are more inclined to be purposeful and practical, and they strive towards finding solutions to problems. Even if I didn't think that gender is a relevant necessity in peace talks, reality has proven that it is women who are clearly behaving in the manner that is required.*³⁵

Throughout modern history and across the world, women have generally played minor roles in conflict resolution and peace negotiations. This unfortunate and insidious trend continues to fester in the Middle East conflict. Having said that, Dr. Ashrawi and Mrs. Livni have achieved remarkable success. While the conflict has not been resolved, and a final negotiated status between the Israelis and the Palestinians is not apparent yet, it is clear that Dr. Ashrawi and Mrs. Livni have done as much, if not more, than any other two male leaders from their respective sides. In many ways, these two women represent all Israeli and Palestinian women who care for peace and want to achieve it yet have to battle through the additional burden of gender inequality and an extraordinarily patriarchal society dominated by militant men.

Following a conflict that has lasted decades and that shows no sign of being resolved in the near future, perhaps what is needed to make real and substantial progress in peace negotiations is a greater female influence and an increased number of women in leading roles. Current leaders within the Israeli and Palestinian societies should note the contributions made by Dr. Ashrawi and Mrs. Livni and realise the massive potential in combining both women and men in leading negotiation and conflict resolution roles.

An example of all-male negotiators

1 September 2010. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, President Barack Obama, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and Jordan's King Abdullah II in the White House on their way to making statements on the Middle East peace negotiations.



1 September 2010 Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, President Barack Obama, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and Jordan's King Abdullah II in the White House on their way to making statements on the Middle East peace negotiations.

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