



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE GENERAL EXTERNAL RELATIONS

DIRECTORATE MIDDLE EAST, SOUTH MEDITERRANEAN
Mashrak and Israel

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NOTE TO THE FILE

Subject: Ad-hoc Selection Committee for People to People/Permanent Status Issues projects in support of the Middle East peace process, budget line B7-4100

Reference: Minutes of the Selection Committee meeting held on 29 September 1999

Background

As part of the Financing Proposal "Middle East Peace Projects" (ME8/B7-4100/IB/98/0417) that was approved by the MED-Committee and adopted by the Commission through written procedure on 29 June 1999, a global allocation of € 5 million has been made available for a number of "People to People" projects supporting co-operation between the civil societies of Arabs and Israelis to consolidate the peace process in the long-term. The "People to People-Permanent Status Issues" (PTP) programme finances activities aiming at fostering civil society co-operation in several sectors, including encounter, dialogue and exchange programmes, as well as research and progress on the issues pertaining to the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations on a permanent settlement.

In accordance with the applicable rules of the Commission's Vade-mecum on Grant Management, the Director of RELEX/F convened an ad-hoc inter-services selection committee on 29 September 1999 to discuss the pre-selected proposals and to decide on the final selection before grant agreements will be prepared (see attached invitation note as Annex I). Services invited were SCR/B2 and the RELEX units F1 and F2.

The following services were present at the meeting:

RELEX/F: P. Zangl, Director (chair of the meeting);
RELEX/F1: M. Dawson, G. Von Buxhoeveden
RELEX/F2: T. Duplá (Head of Unit), D. de Ojeda, N. Karkutli

SCR/B2 had declined the invitation because of the political nature of the projects (see attached note by the Director of SCR/B, Annex II)

Minutes of the meeting

The chairman, Mr Zangl, welcomed the participants to the meeting. Then, Mr Karkutli informed the meeting about the procedures governing the selection committee, namely chapter 5. of the Commission's Vade-mecum on Grant Management (text attached as

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Palestinian commitment to the recommended reform measures. The CFR Task Force will provide the Palestinian Authority with policy guidance and technical assistance in support of the envisaged reforms. He noted that the reform of Palestinian public institutions is a top priority of the EU's assistance to the Middle East peace process. A first meeting of the Task Force with the new Palestinian Committee would take place in Brussels on 3 November hosted by President Prodi. The preparation of the CFR Task Force report had been financed by the EU and Norway, who would also be the donors for the implementation phase. Ms Von Buxhoeveden noted that the earlier support was provided under the MEDA Micro-Actions and that the old contract would have to be closed before a new contract could be signed. The committee then approved the proposal.

3. *The Four Mothers Movement to Leave Lebanon in Peace: Creating A Dialogue for Peace, People to People*, EC contribution € 250,000 (= 100% of total project)

Mr de Ojeda explained the important and unique nature of that project: its purpose is to initiate the first-ever dialogue forum between Israeli and Lebanese women to build the basis for more contact once Israel withdraws from Southern Lebanon. He also noted that this project has the support of Yossi Beilin, Israel's Minister of Justice and a key figure in the peace process. The project's activities would comprise a public education campaign and leadership training seminars for women. It would identify Lebanese women to participate in the dialogue forum, organise several meetings in Europe to initiate a dialogue process and build bridges between Lebanese and Israeli women. It was noted that the EC would be the only donor at the moment but that once the project could start, other donors would be expected to support the project as well. The project was approved by the Committee.

4. Yaari Association, Arab Studies Society: *Youth Institute for Peace, People to People*, EC contribution € 300,000 (= 52% of total project)

Mr de Ojeda outlined the project's objective: to develop a cadre of young leaders trained in managing bi-communal projects, with the aim of fostering positive intercommunal ties. Participants and advisors would come from Israel (Jews and Arabs), Palestine, Cyprus (both parts), Germany (East and West), Ireland (Catholic & Protestant). Activities would include Conflict Resolution Seminars, a CD Project to record songs from all participating communities in their own languages, and joint concerts in Tel Aviv, Rostock and Hanover with a participation at the EXPO 2000 in Hanover. He also noted that the project is a joint Israeli-Palestinian initiative. The Committee approved the proposal.

5. Truman Institute of Hebrew University & University of Jordan, Amman: *Attitudes of Jordanians and Israelis towards each other*, People to People, EC contribution € 250,000 (= 100% of total project)

Mr de Ojeda emphasised the importance of that proposal: it would be one of the rare occasions where Israelis and Jordanians work together. He recalled the recent difficulties for Jordanian journalists who had participated in a conference in Israel and might now face exclusion from the Jordanian journalist syndicate. Thus, the planned joint Israeli-Jordanian research and seminars on (1) Cross-cultural values, misunderstanding and facilitation of Business Cooperation between Jordanians and Israelis; and (2) the Role of the News Media in the Israeli-Jordan Peace Process would deserve support under the PTP programme. The Committee then endorsed the proposal.

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6. *Peace Now: Israeli-Palestinian Peace Campaign, People to People, EC contribution € 400,000 (= 40% of total project)*

Mr de Ojeda informed the Committee that Peace Now's dialogue programme with Palestinians had been previously supported under MEDA Democracy, with good results. He elaborated on the new activities and sectors of Peace Now's current proposal: the Commitment to Peace and Social Justice Project: outreach and public education campaign for peace in Israel. This activity would focus on a social group that traditionally has anti-peace views and votes Likud. It would be important to acquaint this stratum with the benefits of peace. The other components of the project would be an Outreach to Immigrants from the Former Soviet Union Initiative: outreach and public education campaign for peace; and a continuation of the Israeli-Palestinian Youth Dialogue Programme. The Committee decided to support this proposal.

7. *Institute for Democracy & Leadership Training: IMPACT - Immigrants as Partners in Active Civic Training, People to People, EC contribution € 400,000 (= 40% of total project)*

Mr de Ojeda introduced the project saying that its objective is to bring Russian immigrants in Israel into the peace camp. He explained that there would be no overlap or duplication with Peace Now's Outreach to Immigrants from the Former Soviet Union Initiative (see above): the IMPACT project is led by a Russian immigrant, Member of Knesset Roman Brönfman, a member of the "Russian" mainstream party, Israel Ba'aliya, which is part of Barak's coalition government. This would ensure sufficient political weight and a different approach. The activities would be a peace and democracy public awareness campaign and educational and training seminars within the Russian community. Given that the Russian immigrants voted decisively for Netanyahu in 1996 and shifted to Barak in 1999, it would be important to consolidate this trend in order ensure a continuation of pro-peace politics in Israel. Against this background, Mr Duplá added that EU support for peace education among such a crucial social group in Israel would be a good investment. Eventually, the Committee also voted in favour of this project.

8. *Economic Co-operation Foundation (ECF): Towards a Permanent Status Agreement and Beyond: Policy Planning and People-to-People, Permanent Status Issues and People to People, EC contribution € 400,000 (= 100% of total project)*

Mr Duplá informed the Committee about the background of the applicant: the ECF is a high-level think-tank led by Prof. Yair Hirschfeld who initiated the Oslo talks in 1993. He is a close associate of Yossi Beilin, now Minister of Justice in the new Israeli government and a key figure among the pro-peace politicians in Israel. The ECF had been supported by the Commission in the past, with good results. This project would have the potential to produce concrete proposals for solutions in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian permanent status negotiations. This would be done by establishing an informal dialogue with Israeli, Palestinian, US, European, Jordanian and Egyptian policy makers to develop workable concepts for the permanent status between Israelis and Palestinians; preparation of blueprints on the outstanding issues for peace, such as Jerusalem - focusing on the development of planning, zoning and power-sharing concepts; Refugees - articulating a comprehensive political, economic and legal concept for the final settlement of the refugee problem; Security - conceptualizing an over-arching approach on Israeli-Palestinian security and border issues.

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regional architecture. People to People: develop an intense Israeli-Palestinian 'Jerusalem in Peace' partnership and cooperation.

Mr Zangl and Mr Dawson asked why the project would receive 100% EU funding without any other donor support. Mr de Ojeda replied that the ECF would be in real need of the funds and that other donors might pledge additional support in the future. The Committee then agreed that EU funding should not exceed 80% of the total budget as a general rule. Also, the current audit of an earlier ECF project funded under the MEDA Micro-actions would have to be completed before signing a new contract. Subject to these conditions being met, the Committee approved the project.

9. The Middle East Center for Legal and Economic Research (MEILER): *Survey of Palestinian Refugee Real Estate Holdings in Israel, Phase II*, Permanent Status Issues, EC contribution € 300,000 (=80% of total project)

Mr Duplá introduced the proposal by noting that this project is very important and would provide the EU with a concrete tool to assist Israelis and Palestinians in finding a solution to the question of the Palestinian refugees. The purpose of the project is to identify and appraise Palestinian refugee real estate holdings in Israel in order to arrive at a fair and feasible formula for compensation. The identification and appraisal of the real estate holdings of Palestinian refugees will serve all the parties involved in the negotiations for a permanent solution of the Middle East conflict; supply the necessary data for arriving at a formula that would enable the fair and feasible compensation of Palestinian refugees for real estate holdings confiscated by Israel; and provide the European Union with a policy-making instrument regarding a crucial aspect of the Middle East political situation. The Committee unanimously endorsed the proposal.

10. Macon Mifne - Religious Women for Peace: *Peace and Democracy programs for Religious and Traditional Communities in Israel*, People to People, EC contribution € 250,000 (=56% of total project)

Mr de Ojeda emphasised the unique nature of the project, namely that it would for the first time spread the "peace message" among the radical Jewish settlers. This project had also received very strong support from the Tel Aviv Delegation. The project is directed mostly at the community of Jewish settlers in the West Bank and the wide right-wing population supporting them in Israel. It aims to change negative attitudes which prevail generally among religious and traditional communities in Israel towards the peace process and towards democracy and the values of civil society. The project will include discussions, encounters, and education in high schools, community centers, inside religious and Rabbinical teacher's colleges, and will establish an "Institute for Peace and Democracy Studies" directed at students from settlements in the West Bank. The Committee eventually voted in favour of that project.

11. The Royal Institute of International Affairs in association with The Jerusalem Media and Communications Centre & The Center for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan: *The Issue of Corruption - A Comparative Analysis in Palestine and Jordan*, Permanent Status Issues, EC contribution € 190,000 (=100% of total project)

Mr Duplá introduced the Royal Institute of International Affairs as the main applicant and noted that the Commission had good experiences with the Institute from projects supported in the past. The results of the proposed study...

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concrete ideas regarding the necessary institutional reforms in the Palestinian Authority. The intention is to establish some definitions of what constitutes corruption, to measure the extent to which problems exist in certain areas, and suggest remedial action where appropriate. The approach will necessarily be comparative. In both theoretical and practical terms, the Palestinian experience needs to be set in some sort of context. It is therefore the intention to undertake a comparative study on the issue of corruption in two Arab societies, Jordan and the Palestinian Autonomous Areas, and to incorporate comparisons with other societies, notably Israel and one or more European states. Mr Zangl added that such projects would be indeed an important contribution to the EU efforts in assisting Palestinian institutional reform as a final status issue. The Committee decided to support this proposal.

12. European Centre for Common Ground: *Promoting Peace through the Media in the Middle East*, People to People, EC contribution € 250,000 (=47% of total project)

Mr de Ojeda explained that this project is intended to assist Arab and Israeli media professionals in initiating co-operative projects that will improve communications across borders, increase regional understanding, and encourage journalists to challenge their own biases and stereotypes. The activities include: a meeting of Editors and Broadcast Executives from the Middle East to further develop projects; Strengthening multilateral communication amongst communication practitioners and their media outlets; Initiating a "week in review" syndicated editorial cartoon feature in Euro-Mediterranean and Middle Eastern newspapers. The project found the Committee's support.

13. Centro Italiano per la pace in Medio Oriente: *Israelis, Palestinians, Jerusalem, Permanent Status Issues*, EC contribution € 250,000 (= 80% of total project)

Mr Duplá and Mr de Ojeda informed the Committee about the previous achievements of the applicant. The centre had already brought Egyptian MPs and Members of the right-wing Israeli Likud party together. The topic of the new project, Jerusalem, was considered very important and also received financial support from the Italian Foreign Ministry. The project aims at developing a solution for the negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians on the final status concerning Jerusalem through meetings and discussions with Israeli and Palestinian Ministers involved in the issue. Activities include restricted seminars in Italy with Israeli and Palestinian representatives of the Government, research by Israelis and Palestinians on political, religious, municipal and demographic aspects, and a final report for the negotiators. The Committee agreed that such project could make an invaluable contribution to the final status talks and approved the proposal.

14. The Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions: *Coalition Against House Demolition*, People to People, EC contribution € 250,000 (= 65% of total project)

Mr de Ojeda introduced the proposal, which foresees a joint Israeli-Palestinian public awareness campaign and concrete action against the practice of land expropriation and house demolitions by the Israeli army in the West Bank. It would help altering Israelis' Perspectives of Palestinians and the Peace Process through Peace Education, Dialogue and Grassroots Involvement. Mr de Ojeda added that this proposal had been strongly recommended by the Representative Office in Jerusalem. The Committee voted in favour of the project.

15. Ir Shalem, Jerusalem: *Advocating Just and Equitable Solutions for Jerusalem Permanent Status Issues*, EC contribution € 250,000 (= 100% of total project)

Mr de Ojeda reiterated the good results achieved from past projects supporting Ir Shalem. The centre's director, Dany Seidemann, together with a team of experts, is among the most respected and successful legal activists on issues relating to Jerusalem. In May 1999, he obtained the interim injunction from the Israeli Supreme Court that declared the Netanjahu government's eviction order for the Orient House in East Jerusalem null and void, thus defusing a dangerous crisis, which could have resulted in violent clashes between Israelis and Palestinians. The new proposal consists of the following elements: Research and Analysis: survey of the existing state of knowledge surrounding all aspects of Jerusalem: demography, sociology, geography, planning, international status, economy, regionalism, security, holy sites, political structures and culture, Public Education Coordinating media relations, providing briefings to the press, educational activities for specific sectors of the broader public including briefings and tours for visiting diplomats as well as consular and Embassy staff, class trips for Israeli high school students, informational tours for international youth groups, and other comparable activities; Legal Services: writing and filing of petitions, and preparation of papers and analyses to propose workable solutions to some of the difficult problems that make their way to the courts - including Har Homa, Ras El Amud, Silwan, Jewish development of sites in the Moslem Quarter of the Old City, and Orient House. The Committee shared the positive assessment and approved the project.

16. Foundation for Middle East Peace: *Palestinian Refugees - Official Arab and Israeli views of the modalities for a final settlement*, Permanent Status Issues, EC contribution € 310,000 (= 100% of total project)

Mr Karkutli briefly outlined the proposal: the purpose of this project is to examine the prospects and the methods for resolving the Palestinian refugee problem as envisioned by the governments of Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and the Palestinian Authority. Focus will be on Arab and Israeli perceptions of key issues: security, settlement, repatriation, compensation, programs that would enhance self-sufficiency, disbursement of loans for income generation purposes, conventional relief, international assistance, UNRWA's role, and regional development plans, with special focus on individual government's views. This project is intended to provide negotiators with a better understanding of how Arab governments and Israel perceive the refugee problem and how they perceive their role in contributing to its solution. An additional activity will be a high-level seminar in Paris with Israeli and Palestinian historians to provide more qualified input into the project. Mr Duplá noted that he was not convinced by the project and asked for further information before he could endorse the proposal. Thus, the Committee decided to make an approval subject to Mr Duplá's final opinion. After a meeting in Jerusalem in early October, where the proposal was further explained to him, Mr Duplá eventually decided to support the project.

17. The Middle East Media: *Media campaign for People to People activities*, People to People, EC contribution € 150,000 (= 100% of total project)

Mr de Ojeda informed the Committee about the background of this proposal. The visibility of the EU support to People to People activities needs to be substantially increased. Thus, this project intends to familiarize, inform and engage the Palestinian and Israeli Public with the various People to People projects. On the Palestinian side, it is proposed to produce 12 People to People seminars over a period of 18 months to be