

Israeli and Palestinian Business Leaders Urge Two-State Solution

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[Arabic](#)

- Nearly 200 Israeli and Palestinian business leaders join to form the Breaking the Impasse Initiative
- Private sector representatives vow to use their economic clout to encourage political progress
- Resolution of the conflict is the single most important factor to create jobs, generate growth and prosperity throughout the greater Middle East
- More information about the World Economic Forum on the Middle East and North Africa is available at <http://wef.ch/mena13>

Dead Sea, Jordan, 26 May 2013 - Nearly 200 leading Israeli and Palestinian business people and executives of some of the largest companies called today for their respective governments to urgently move towards a two-state solution to end the conflict between their two peoples.

Members of the Breaking the Impasse Initiative (BTI), meeting at the World Economic Forum on the Middle East and North Africa at the Dead Sea, Jordan, said they would leverage their collective business experience and influence to convince leaders on both sides to begin serious negotiations with the goal of reaching a peace agreement.

The group called on the Israeli and Palestinian leaderships, with the active support and encouragement of the international community, to take urgent action to renew the political process in order to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In its call to action, the BTI said: "The current situation endangers the economy and the social fabric of both nations, and may render the two-state solution unattainable." The BTI also stated: "Therefore, we call on the political leaders to move forward with boldness, courage and a sense of historic mission – to provide a comprehensive vision necessary to resolving all the final-status issues, ending all claims and securing peaceful and good neighbourly relations between the two states."

The Initiative was launched jointly by Munib R. Masri, Chairman, PADICO Holding, and Yossi Vardi, Chairman, International Technologies Ventures, in May 2012, and has been facilitated by the World Economic Forum. Already, it counts among its members 200 leading Israeli and Palestinian business people, including executives of some of the largest companies and employers on both sides.

Among the Israeli members are: Yehuda Bronicki; Mooly Eden, President, Intel Israel; Shlomi Fogel, Chairman,

Ampa Investments; Yadin Kaufman, Partner, Middle East Venture Fund; Jonathan Kolber, General Partner, Viola Private Equity; Benny Landa, Founder Indigo Group and Landa Group; Moshe Lichtman; Shmuel Meitar, Founder, Aurec Group, Amdocs; Dan Proper; Gad Proper; and Avigdor Vilenz, Founder, Galileo Technology.

Palestinian members include Samir Huleileh, Chief Executive Officer, PADICO Holding; Riad Kamal, founder of Arabtec construction firm; and Zahi Khouri, Chief Executive Officer, Palestinian National Beverage Company.

Munib Masri, Chair of the Palestinian BTI group, said: “ It takes courage, vision and determination to stand together and to demand the breaking of the impasse between our two nations. Palestinians yearn for freedom, dignity and independence from occupation and we see no good coming from the current impasse except the perils of future conflict. The majority of Palestinians want to achieve a two-state solution and to live in peace and security with Israel as our neighbour.

“ We call on the leaders of the two countries to be bold and to move forward with an agreement to end the conflict seizing on the historic Arab Peace Initiative. ” While we represent the major employers of Palestine, we see no merit in interim and economic solutions. Only a true end to the conflict, addressing all the issues of final status, will result in a new era of peace and hope. As business leaders we stand ready to invest in the future as independent neighbours and to support our leaderships while working toward a historic end of the conflict. ”

Yossi Vardi, Chair of the Israeli BTI community, said: “ I am grateful that prominent business leaders from both sides have gathered together in order to encourage their governments to pursue the solution of two states for two peoples. It is time that this region and its people will enjoy peace and security, welfare, growth and economic prosperity.

Klaus Schwab, Founder and Executive Chairman, World Economic Forum, said: “ The World Economic Forum is proud to have nurtured this initiative by prominent business stakeholders from Palestine and Israel. They are deeply troubled by the impasse and are not prepared to sit idly by while the future of their countries and their societies is threatened by further turmoil and uncertainty. The Forum will continue to support the community and will work with other global stakeholders to help ensure that this Initiative is taken further. ”

Notes to Editors

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