

Holy Land Peace Movement (HLPM)

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Followers of the three monotheistic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) believe that God created all people from one man (Adam) and one woman (Eve). This means that all human beings are one race. On the other hand, believers in evolution also believe that all humans originated from one animal that looks like an ape. This means that all of us belong to the same race. In fact, when we speak of humanity, we unconsciously say the human race, thus acknowledging that all of us are one race, not many races. Therefore, if our humanity is the result of actions taken by forces we could not control; our destiny should be a project we must shape together. Yes; we have cultural and religious diversity, but we have no racial diversity.

Due to the failure of all attempts to reach a political settlement to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, a new vision and a new approach is needed to address this century old conflict, end the suffering of people on both sides, and achieve lasting peace. The failure of negotiations, while causing many Jews and Arabs to loose hope, has given the radical forces on both sides more power to influence change in their favor and place the future of the entire Middle East region and its peoples at a great risk.

The Holy Land Peace Movement (HLPM) is an international organization whose sole purpose is to facilitate the creation of one state on the entire land of Palestine, where Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs live side by side in peace as equal citizens. In order to achieve this goal, HLPM intends to participate in the Israeli and Palestinian politics, nominate candidates for parliament and promote the establishment of one state in Palestine. However, despite being an active political movement, HLPM shall refrain from dealing with social and economic issues; it shall focus instead on changing Jewish and Arab perceptions to support the one state solution.

Being an open political movement, HLPM gives all individuals and groups, regardless of their views, religious and political affiliations and nationalities, the right to become members, provided they commit themselves to supporting Arab-Jewish peaceful coexistence in Palestine as equal citizens of one state. The state that HLPM seeks to create in Palestine is a democratic,

secular and demilitarized state. To felicitate the creation of such a state, HLPM plans to lobby Arab, Israeli, European and American politicians, try to change public perceptions and views at all national and international levels, participate in Israeli and Palestinian politics, and seek the support of world leaders, renowned intellectuals, and civil society organizations worldwide.

Since the major lines dividing world societies today have become more sociocultural and less socioeconomic, the one-man, one-vote democratic system has lost its ability to function as intended. It was transformed into a scheme that empowers a tiny minority of each state to monopolize political and economic power and dominate and exploit the overwhelming majority of each 'democratic' society. The formula envisioned by HLPM calls for the sharing of political power by Israelis and Palestinians and all major civil society organizations in Palestine. As a consequence, Palestine will be transformed into a shared homeland for two peoples living side by side in peace; setting an example for peoples of the world to solve their conflicts and live in peace as well.

The Holy Land Peace Movement is a membership organization having two membership types: one regular; the other sustaining. Nevertheless, all members are entitled to participate in group discussions, serve on committees, and represent HLPM in international forums. But due to the role HLPM intends to play in the Palestinian and Israeli politics, sustaining members would not be able to run for office or vote. HLPM members are required to pay membership dues; such dues are paid one time only, making membership for life. Every member is free to determine his and her membership dues; the minimum, however, is 150 US dollars. The following are the main principles and objectives that guide the work of HLPM:

1. The creation of a bi-national state in Palestine where Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs live together as equal citizens, sharing the same land, resources and political power;
2. The proposed name of the new state is: "*The Holly Land State of Palestine*:"
3. The drafting of a visionary constitution that guarantees the sharing of political power by Arabs and Jews, and the division of executive powers between the president and the prime minister of the future state;

4. Giving the public the power to elect the state's president and parliament, while giving parliament the power to elect the state's prime minister from outside its ranks;
5. In view of the power sharing principle, if the elected president happens to be Jewish; the parliament would be required by law to choose an Arab prime minister; and if the elected president happens to be an Arab, the parliament would be required by law to choose a Jewish prime minister;
6. The allocation of 25% of the parliament seats to the major civil society organizations, divided equally between the Arab and Jewish organizations;
7. All people holding an Israeli citizenship at the time of forming the Holy Land State of Palestine shall have the right to live in the new state as full citizens;
8. All Arabs holding the Palestinian citizenship at the time of forming the Holy Land State of Palestine shall have the right to live in the new state as full citizens;
9. Every man and woman born in Palestine or one of his/her parents or grandparents were born in Palestine shall have the "right of return" that entitles him/her to live in Palestine and gain full citizenship after living there permanently for three years; such people need not be Arabs and Jews only; all people who meet this condition shall have the same right, regardless of their nationality and origin;
10. All Palestinians who lost property in Palestine since 1947 shall have the right to regain ownership of their properties, and be free to rent it or sell it to whomever they wish without outside interference.

The one state solution outlined above is the only formula capable of overcoming the five major obstacles hindering the two-state solution at once: the issue of Jerusalem, the borders of an assumed Palestinian state, Israeli security guarantees, Israeli settlements in Jerusalem and the West Bank, and the Palestinian right of return. It is also the only practical and humane solution to the conflict; no other solution is feasible. Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs had lived together in peace for centuries in the past; they can live together in peace again; they also have two of the world's richest pools of human talent, experience, money and connections to build a dynamic economy and a rich, diversified culture.

Declaring Palestine a shared homeland for both Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs ends conflict over Jerusalem as it becomes the capital of the new state. And since the borders of historic Palestine will become the borders of the *Holy Land State of Palestine*, both issues of borders and security would be solved to the satisfaction of Israelis and Palestinians. Giving the Palestinian refugees the right to regain ownership of lost property, while giving them the freedom to rent or sell such property to whomever they choose, serves to indirectly facilitate the solving of the complicated issues of the right of return and Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Jerusalem.

In fact, the creation of one state in Palestine is the only way for Palestinians and Israelis to reclaim their humanity, free themselves from hatred and enmity, and save their children and grandchildren from the Tsunami of radicalism that continues to gain strength on both sides. Ideological radicalism is the most malicious cancer humanity has ever known; it dies only when it kills the body it inhibits. Therefore, lovers of peace everywhere must work together to foster the immunity of the Arab-Jewish body in Palestine so it can resist radicalism, overcome decades of conflict and enmity, and establish an ever-lasting peace in the land of peace.

Mohamed Rabie is an author and former distinguished professor of international political economy. In 1988 he conceived the idea of the US-PLO dialogue, drafted the document that guided negotiations, and coordinated the secret contacts between the US and the PLO that led the US government to recognize the PLO, open a dialogue with it, and launch the peace process. In 1989, he articulated the "shared homeland" model of conflict resolution in his booklet; "A Vision for the Transformation of the Middle East." Prof. Rabie has so far published 43 books in English and Arabic; his writings, interests, and activities reflect a strong commitment to peace, freedom, social justice and human development, as well as to dialogue among different peoples and cultures.

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