

# Middle East International

## The peace plans compared

by Mark A. Bruzonsky

Saudi Arabia's eight-point "peace plan", unveiled last August by Crown Prince Fahd, has been shelved, not buried, and it may well be brought down at the next Arab summit. The unprecedented Saudi effort to provide an outline for an Arab-Israeli comprehensive settlement was significant because the Saudis abandoned their usual caution by making public these "peace principles", but they orchestrated badly their coordination with the US and with major Arab regimes. This was a major reason for the Fez debacle in November. However, rather than compromise, alter or abandon the set of principles which in their totality do comprise an admittedly ambiguous plan for peace, the Saudis preferred to leave the matter for later consideration.

This period of diplomatic lull — which will certainly con-

tinue until Israel has handed back all Sinai to Egypt at the end of April — seems an opportune moment to compare the Saudi eight points with other historic peace initiatives. Judgments will vary as to how the Saudi points specifically square with UN resolution 242, the Rogers plan and the Brookings report, but it is undebatable that the overall Saudi approach is quite compatible with each of these past attempts to devise an outline for a momentous Arab-Israeli deal. It is most striking that this Arab effort to outline the requirements for peace should have so many parallels with these three earlier and largely American efforts. This basic compatibility explains initial US interest in the Saudi approach; it still could lead later this year to a coordinated Riyadh-Cairo-Washington initiative.

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Saudi Plan	Resolution 242	Rogers Plan	Brookings Report
1. Israeli evacuation of all Arab territories seized during the 1967 war, including the Arab sector of Jerusalem.	"inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war"  "withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied"	"The security council resolution endorses the principle of non-acquisition of territory by war and calls for withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the 1967 war. We support this part of the resolution, including withdrawal . . ."  "We believe that while recognizable political boundaries must be established and agreed upon by the parties, any changes in the pre-existing lines should not reflect the weight of conquest and should be confined to insubstantial alterations required for mutual security."	"Israel undertakes to withdraw in agreed stages to the June 5, 1967 lines with only such modifications as are mutually accepted."  ". . . each national group within the city should . . . have substantial political autonomy within the area where it predominates."
2. Dismantling the settlements set up by Israel on the occupied lands after the 1967 war.	[no settlements at time of resolution]	[few settlements in 1969 and they were not recognised to be a major problem since policy was to call for return to approximately 1967 lines]	[With expectation of Palestinian self-determination and creation of some form of Palestinian entity in West Bank and Gaza, implies that settlements should be removed or minimised.]
3. Guaranteeing freedom of religious practice for all religions in the Jerusalem Holy Shrine.	[Agreed in all plans and by Israel]		

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4. Asserting the rights of the Palestinian people and compensating those Palestinians who do not wish to return to their homeland.	"just settlement of the refugee problem"	"There can be no lasting peace without a just settlement of the problem of those Palestinians whom the wars of 1949 and 1967 have made homeless... We believe its just settlement must take into account the desires and aspirations of the refugees and the legitimate concerns of the governments in the area."	"The Palestinians for the most part believe that they have a right to self-determination. For a peace settlement to be viable, indeed for it even to be negotiated and concluded, this right will have to be recognised in principle and, as part of the settlement, given satisfaction in practice."
5. Commencing a transitional period in the West Bank of Jordan and the Gaza Strip under United Nations supervision for a duration not exceeding a few months.	[no timetable discussed]	"It is our hope that agreement on the key issues of peace, security, withdrawal, and territory will create a climate in which these questions of refugees and of Jerusalem, as well as other aspects of the conflict, can be resolved as part of the overall settlement."	"Withdrawal to agreed borders and the establishment of peaceful relations carried out in stages over a period of years, each stage being undertaken only when the agreed provisions of the previous stage have been faithfully implemented."
6. Setting up a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital.	"just settlement of the refugee problem"	"We believe its just settlement must take account the desires and aspirations of the refugees and the legitimate concerns of the governments in the area."	"There should be provision for Palestinian self-determination, subject to Palestinian acceptance of the sovereignty and integrity of Israel with agreed boundaries. This might take the form either of an independent Palestinian state accepting the obligations and commitments of the peace agreements or of a Palestinian entity voluntarily federated with Jordan but exercising extensive political autonomy."
7. Affirming the right of all countries of the region to live in peace.	"termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for an acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every state in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognised boundaries free from threats or acts of force."	"We support Israel's security and the security of the Arab states as well."	"The Arab parties undertake not only to end such hostile actions against Israel as armed incursions, blockades, boycotts, and propaganda attacks, but also to give evidence of progress toward the development of normal international and regional political and economic relations."
8. Guaranteeing the implementation of these principles by the United Nations or some of its member states.	"For guaranteeing the territorial inviolability and political independence of every state in the area, through measures including the establishment of demilitarised zones."	[refers to Resolution 242]	"It would be desirable that the UN Security Council endorse the peace agreements and take whatever other actions to support them the agreements provide. In addition, there may be need for unilateral or multilateral guarantees to some or all of the parties, substantial economic aid, and military assistance pending the adoption of agreed arms control measures."

Israel's attempts to prevent the Saudi plan from gaining either American or European endorsement are of a pattern with its efforts to discredit both the Rogers plan and the Brookings report and to interpret resolution 242 as not meaning an Israeli withdrawal to approximately the 1967 borders. The Begin government has gone considerably further, most recently using the Camp David agreement as a cloak for discarding resolution 242 by annexing the Golan Heights and gradually incorporating the West Bank into Israel.

American strategists who want to shift US policy back towards seeking a comprehensive Arab-Israeli settlement believe that the proper course for the US now is to allow the Sinai aspect of the Camp David undertakings to reach its conclusion in April, to restrain Israel from taking any provocative actions in Lebanon, to encourage the moderate Arab states to reach a flexible consensus based on the Saudi plan (but called whatever), and to enlist European support for steps

which would transcend the Camp David arrangements. But within the Reagan entourage there are two strong voices which still insist the only way forward is to proceed with the Palestinian autonomy part of the Camp David accords.

Few Middle East experts in Washington believe a comprehensive peace formula can be fashioned in the short term, but many are convinced that the US must not tolerate Israeli efforts to freeze the region into a no-war, no-peace deadlock. This can only be prevented, they feel, by championing ideas that show the way toward an eventual compromise consistent with long-term American policies. If Egypt and Saudi Arabia can coordinate their policies after April and then apply concerted and continual pressure on the Reagan administration, the Saudi eight points could still form the basis of a peace formula. But just as the term "Camp David" has come to have a negative life of its own, so has the term "Saudi peace plan". If it is to live, it will have to be repackaged and renamed.