

Panel: The Future of the Middle East Peace Process (Lilac/Tulip)

Date/Time: April 26, 2012 / 14:30-15:45

Organizing Institution: Moshe Dayan Center

Talking Points for: Rami Ginat
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My paper is comprised of two sections: the first examines the causes for the labyrinth in the Syrian-Israeli "peace process," and analyses the present state of affairs. The second examines the factors which may revitalize the stalemate and evaluates the prospects for a substantial breakthrough which may lead to peace. More specifically, it concentrates on two major factors. The first is the issue of the 'Alawi elite's ramshackle foundation of legitimacy, particularly since March 2011 following the ongoing bloodbath against Sunni Syrians orchestrated by the Asad regime and its "praetorian army." The elite lost the final vestiges of its legitimacy to rule domestically and externally (although there are very few external anchors the regime still holds on to, e.g., Iran, Russia). The legitimacy factor, I argue, has always played a crucial role in the elite's inability and moreover, unwillingness, to strike a peace deal with Israel. The second factor is the political division in Israel between those who favor a withdrawal to the pre-1967 international border and those against (the political right). The present Israeli government represents the latter. My conclusion is therefore, that a regime-change in Syria and an overhaul policy change by Israel's government are essential requisite in order to move towards a peaceful solution.

* The views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of the Asan Institute for Policy Studies.
