

Rabbi Andrea London
Beth Emet The Free Synagogue
In Defense of Liberal Zionism
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I want to share with you a story that I received via email earlier this week from Ron Kronish, an American-born rabbi who has lived in Israel for many years.

“A few days ago,” Rabbi Kronish wrote, “my wife and I took a drive east of Jerusalem to show a friend from Boston some of the complicated geography in areas C and E of the West Bank.

As we were strolling around, we noticed a strange sign on the nearby kiosk. It said in Hebrew: *Am Shalem Doresh Falafel*—“The people demand falafel.” This was a play on a previous slogan from a few years ago: *Dor Shalem Doresh Shalom*—“An entire generation demands peace.” At first I thought it was funny,” Rabbi Kronish continues, “and then I realized what it really meant.

“The people,” apparently, are not interested in peace any more. ‘There is no partner,’ they say (as if we ourselves were a serious partner for peace!). And even if there were a serious partner, it is not achievable.

Instead, the people want falafel! They don't want to worry all the time about issues of war and peace. They just want a ‘normal’ life!”

He goes on: “I explained to my friend some of the background for this feeling. Many Israelis have given up on the ‘Peace Process.’ It is boring. It never really leads anywhere, so why continue to discuss it.”

I wanted to share Rabbi Kronish’s email because this feeling of resignation in Israeli society is pervasive, and understandably so. We, who are living here, cannot fault Israelis for feeling at times that the best they can do is to accept the status quo and get on with their lives.

The question we in the Diaspora *and* in Israel need to ask ourselves is: Can Israel afford to eat falafel, to accept the status quo? Do we believe the status quo is sustainable and, if not, what—if anything—should we be doing about it?”

Last year, the Israeli journalist Ari Shavit published *My Promised Land*, a book-length interpretation of Israeli history that hit the bookstores amid great fanfare. One of the unique things about Shavit’s book is that he published it first in English, not Hebrew, clearly out of an eagerness to tell Israel’s story, as he sees it, to an English-speaking audience—in other words, us.

Shavit takes the reader on his personal journey through Zionist history, beginning with the arrival in Jaffa of his great-grandfather, a prominent British Jew, who first visits Israel

with a group of Jewish pilgrims in 1897. Shavit offers a forthright portrayal of Israel's successes, challenges and faults.

What caught readers' and critics' attention more than anything else, is that Shavit devotes an entire chapter to describing, in an unblinkered way, the massacre of Arabs in the town of Lydda by Jewish forces during the War of Independence and the expulsion of the town's remaining Arab inhabitants. He then lays out Israel's dilemma as he sees it: Israel is the most threatened country in the West, but it is also the only occupying state. He criticizes the Right, which ignores or dismisses the corruption and breakdown of the rule of law wrought by Israel's Occupation, but he also chastises the Left, of which he once considered himself a loyal member, for ignoring or minimizing the existential threats Israel faces.

There's a great deal to praise in *My Promised Land*. For one thing, Shavit's candid discussion of Lydda is groundbreaking. True, the fact that Jewish forces in 1948 expelled Palestinian Arabs by force was largely settled among academics over the past quarter century after Israel opened its government archives and Israeli academics, led by Benny Morris, provided the documentary evidence that expulsions had occurred with official knowledge and complicity. Indeed, the late Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, in his memoir, acknowledged that he gave the order for the expulsion of Lydda's inhabitants, and that there were other expulsions as well.

But Shavit's book stands out as the first aimed at a mass-market English-speaking Jewish audience to "come clean" about the dark side of Israel's War of Independence. *My Promised Land* deserves to be read and discussed and grappled with by people who care about Israel. And I encourage you to read it, as I know many of you already have.

But where *My Promised Land* falls short is in its failure to answer the question I asked a moment ago: "Is Israel's status quo sustainable?" The question is posed best by Shavit himself when he asks, and I quote, "How long can we sustain this lunacy?"

Shavit asks the question, but his response is, well, bizarre.

My Promised Land ends on an utterly romantic, and yet fatalistic, note with Shavit announcing that Israel will not know peace and quiet any time soon, but that Israelis are resilient and full of life and, what's more, according to Shavit, there's something intoxicating about living in such an intense and dangerous place.

"There was hope for peace," says Shavit, "but there will be no peace here. Not soon. There was hope for quiet, but there will not be quiet here. Not in this generation. The foundations of the home we founded are somewhat shaky, and repeating earthquakes rattle it. So what we really have in this land is an ongoing adventure. An odyssey. The Jewish state does not resemble any other nation. What this nation has to offer is not security or well-being or peace of mind. What it has to offer is the intensity of life on the edge. The adrenaline rush of living dangerously, living lustfully, living to the extreme."¹

¹ Ari Shavit, *My Promised Land: The Triumph and Tragedy of Israel*, pp. 418-419.

Now, I have lived in Israel, albeit for a mere three years, all told. And I lived through a few dramatic times, including hearing shells from Lebanon landing at the edge of the kibbutz where I spent several months, and, during my first year of rabbinic school in 1991, donning gas masks, along with Danny, at odd hours of the day and night as Israeli sirens blared and radio alerts warned of incoming Iraqi Scud missiles. And such surreal moments for those who are unharmed can I suppose create an adrenaline-heightened sense of having avoided harm and eluded one's enemies.

Nevertheless, I find Shavit's conclusion baffling. I have to wonder how many people in the south of Israel regarded this past August as thrilling. Or during Israel's war with Lebanon in 2006, as missiles rained down on much of Israel's north. Moreover, Shavit's notion that we should accept Israel as a do-or-die adventure with no end to the hostilities in sight is both morally troubling and, as I will argue in due course, a recipe for disaster.

Let me tell you now about a very different take on Israel. Antony Lerman is a British Jewish intellectual who lived in Israel for a number of years. Lerman is a disenchanted Zionist who rejects Shavit's upbeat conclusions. Indeed, his outlook could not be any more different. Zionism, he argues, is morally bankrupt, and Diaspora support for Israel merely gives cover to a xenophobic, ethno-nationalism that has arisen in the Jewish state. And the alternative, according to Lerman? A binational state.

So, we have two very distinct paths being offered by these two writers. And they reflect two divergent and, in my opinion, equally problematic paths that have developed within the Jewish community here and in Israel as to how to approach the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: on the one hand, a Zionism that is at times xenophobic and quick to dismiss most criticism of Israel as either Western naïveté or anti-Semitism. And, on the other hand, an impassioned anti-Zionism that regards Israel as a problem that can only be fixed by ending it by ushering in a new era of "one-person, one vote" democratic rule from the Jordan to the Sea, which would mean the end of Israel's definition as a Jewish state.

But what is the liberal Zionism that Lerman has given up on? I believe it is the liberal Zionism that has been working to help Israel live up to the ideals of its Declaration of Independence: "complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race, or sex... religion, conscience, language, education, and culture."

It is a Zionism that I, and many of you, have embraced by supporting organizations such as the New Israel Fund, Rabbis for Human Rights, the Reform Movement's Israel Religious Action Center, Americans for Peace Now, and J Street—organizations that have worked to create equality for all Israelis, regardless of religion or ethnic background, to end discrimination, to promote religious pluralism, and to promote peace with the Palestinians.

But this liberal Zionist path has been under assault from both the right and the left.

Another writer, Jonathan Freedland wrote the following in August in *The New York Review of Books*:

“In the toxic environment that characterizes much, if not most, debate on the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, a special poison is reserved for the liberal Zionist. Such a person, who stands by Israel even as he [or she] yearns for it to change, is fated to be hated by both camps: hawkish Zionists despise the liberal for going too far in his criticisms, accusing him of a hand-wringing betrayal of the cause that can only comfort the enemy, while anti-Zionists denounce the liberal for not going far enough, for failing to follow the logic of his position through to its conclusion and for thereby defending the indefensible. The liberal Zionist is branded either a hypocrite or an apologist or both.”²

Yes, Jonathan Freedland is right; it’s difficult today being a liberal Zionist. Yet I urge you this evening to reject both the extreme right and the extreme left positions and to embrace the liberal brand of Zionism that continues to believe that a two-state solution is not only the best hope for peace in the Middle East but one that must be pursued vigorously, rather than resigning ourselves along with those who are exhausted by the peace process, to eating falafel.

The problem with Lerman’s conclusion and that of countless others who are aligned against Israel is that in their eagerness to make things right with the Palestinians they are advocating an unworkable utopian solution. As Israeli journalist and historian Gershom Gorenberg argues in *The Unmaking of Israel*, creating one state merely turns the Israeli-Palestinian conflict into an internal one instead of one between two states, but it doesn’t make it disappear. In a single state, the issue of Jewish settlements and Palestinian claims to the land would still be a source of conflict. Moreover, it is a fantasy to think that two people who have been in conflict for so long could become a thriving unified democracy once 4.4 million Palestinians are granted citizenship and the right to vote. What’s to prevent Israel from becoming another Lebanon, dominated by warring factions?

Bernard Avishai writes in response to Lerman, “... if ‘unquestioning solidarity’ with Israel’s travails is a shallow, merely vicarious Jewish identity, so is entertaining the Jewish state’s demise in the name of ‘humanism.’”³

As Voltaire said, “the perfect is the enemy of the good.” And as Rav Kook, the first chief rabbi of Israel taught, “Peace can never exist when we insist on perfection.”

And thus, I am still in favor of the two-state solution, despite the fact that, with 341,000 settlers and counting in the West Bank, implementing it grows increasingly difficult. It’s still the only solution that will allow Palestinians to control their own destiny and Israel to extract itself from being an occupier, a status that has had a corrosive effect on Israel,

² Jonathan Freedland, *New York Review of Books*, 8/14/14, <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2014/aug/14/liberal-zionists/>

³ Bernard Avishai, “Is Liberal Zionism Impossible?”, *The New Yorker*, 9/5/14, <http://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/liberal-zionist>

on the Israelis who have had to maintain the occupation by force, and on Palestinians who have suffered gravely under the occupation.

Journalist Michelle Goldberg wrote recently: “The problem here is that however quixotic a two-state solution might be, a binational state is, at least right now, even more so. The binational model is barely workable in Belgium, which went 589 days without a government from 2010–11 because the Flemish and the Walloons were unable to transcend their disagreements and form a governing coalition. There is certainly no reason to assume that the Israelis and the Palestinians can coexist in a single state more peacefully than the various peoples of the former Yugoslavia.

Meanwhile, the majority of Palestinians still want a Palestinian state alongside Israel. In a poll earlier this year, ‘about a third of all Palestinians expressed interest in the one-state alternative.’”⁴

I’m not saying anything radical here; my contention that the two-state solution is still the best one is accepted by AIPAC and by a majority of Israelis and Palestinians.

Where I part ways with much of the American Jewish establishment is with regard to the urgency with which this solution needs to be pursued by Israel, by the Palestinians, by our government in Washington and, not least of all, by you and me.

Halting settlement activity now and negotiating in good faith with the Palestinians is in Israel’s best interest more than ever before. The forces aligned against Israel are gaining strength on college campuses and around the world. To satisfy ourselves by merely declaring them anti-Semites (or self-hating Jews) without offering an alternative is self-defeating. American Jewish groups have exhausted countless resources fighting the forces calling for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (or BDS). But it’s not enough to be against BDS; we have to be for something.

And merely giving lip service to that something is not enough either. Most of us have advocated a two-state solution for at least the past 20 years, during which time the number of settlers in the West Bank has more than tripled. Settlement activity has continued unabated, even during the extended periods when the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank has been in full security cooperation with Israel while seeking, in fits and starts, to develop the Palestinian economy and governing institutions. For successive Israeli governments to claim that they favor a two-state solution while continuing to build settlements on land expropriated from Palestinians is disingenuous.

But the best that most pro-Israel critics of Israel’s settlement policy have been able to muster in terms of criticism is that the settlements are “not constructive.” The U.S. has urged Israel not to continue to expand the settlements, but successive administrations and

⁴ Michelle Goldberg, “Liberal Zionism is Dying: The Two-State Solution Shouldn’t Go With It,” *The Nation*, 8/26/14, <http://www.thenation.com/blog/181364/liberal-zionism-dying-two-state-solution-shouldnt-go-it#>

Congresses have been unwilling to place any consequences on Israel for continuing to do so.

So, yes, it's tough being a liberal Zionist, who wants to speak out against the evils and dangers of the Occupation while being an ardent supporter of Israel and believer in Israel at the same time.

Voices from Israel's left have provided some encouragement: the writer David Grossman, Amos Oz, Rabbi Michael Melchior, the leaders of Shalom Achshav (Peace Now).

But I was particularly heartened by Israeli filmmaker Dror Moreh's 2012 documentary, *The Gatekeepers*.

The Gatekeepers features six former heads of the Shin Bet, or Shabak (שירות הביטחון הכללי) in Hebrew, Israel's internal security service whose primary role has been counterterrorism and intelligence-gathering in the West Bank and Gaza. These security hawks recall some of the Shin-Bet's triumphs in preventing attacks on Israelis or "taking out" the leadership of certain terror cells.

But this is not a nostalgic film; it's a portrayal of Israel's security establishment by the people who know it best, and it is jarring in revealing the profound skepticism that each of these men has about the potential to defeat terrorism or end Israel's conflict by force. Each one of them states in the film that there is no military solution to the conflict and, as A.O. Scott writes in his review of the movie, "their shared professional ethos of ruthless, unsentimental pragmatism is precisely what gives such force to their worries about the current state of Israeli politics."⁵ The film's conclusion is much less sanguine than Ari Shavit's. And unlike Shavit, these six war-hardened spymasters don't believe Israel's current situation is viable or sustainable.

At one point in the movie, the director, Dror Moreh in an interview with the most recent Shin Bet head, Yuval Diskin (2005-2011) reads a 1968 statement by Israeli scientist and philosopher Yeshayahu Leibowitz, who said:

"A state ruling over a hostile population of 1 million foreigners will necessarily become a Shin Bet state, with all that this implies for education, freedom of speech and thought, and democracy. The corruption found in every colonial regime will affix itself to the State of Israel."

Diskin nods as the quote is read to him and states, "I agree with every word he wrote. I wouldn't say that it became a Shin Bet state, but no doubt, our current situation with the Palestinians undoubtedly created a reality that is very similar to what Leibowitz wrote."

⁵ A.O. Scott, "Six Israeli Spymasters on a Shadowy Past and a Dark Future," *The New York Times*, 11/25/12, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/26/movies/the-gatekeepers-documentary-by-israeli-director-dror-moreh.html>.

And we saw evidence of this during the war with Gaza. Anti-war protesters, who were carrying signs that read, “Jews and Arabs refuse to be enemies,” were beat up in Tel Aviv (July 12) by a group of extremist Israeli Jews. Chanting “Death to Arabs” and “Death to leftists,” they attacked protesters with clubs. Although several demonstrators were beaten and required medical attention, the police looked on and made no arrests.

On July 10, the veteran Israeli actress Gila Almagor did not show up to perform at Tel Aviv’s Habima Theater; she had received threats that she would be murdered on stage. Her sin: expressing feelings of shame after a 16-year old Palestinian, Muhammad Abu Khdeir, was kidnapped and burned alive by Jewish extremists.⁶

The past several years have also seen the rise of so-called *tag machir*—price tag incidents—incidents of violence and property destruction committed by Jews against Palestinian cars, homes, mosques, and olive trees and against outspoken Jewish members of the Israeli left and even against Israeli soldiers.

I think we’d all agree that acts of vigilante violence are anathema, yet we are quick to defend Israel’s military response to the Palestinians even when it’s not clear how these actions will protect Israel in the long run.

We’ve all heard the argument (and maybe have even made it), “Yes, but what should Israel do when it’s being attacked? Any government would do the same.” But the implication is that Israel has no other choices, and countless numbers of Israelis have rejected this argument over the decades, maintaining that Israel has, indeed, had other choices, including in relation to Hamas.

Israel has the right and a responsibility to defend itself, but can we be certain that every military engagement by Israel was a vital act of self-defense as opposed to a response to political pressure to respond forcefully?

Rabbi Arik Ascherman presents the three tests for using military force as laid out in the Talmud: Sanhedrin (72a-74a)

1. Will it achieve the intended legitimate goals?
2. Was there a less harmful way of achieving the goals?
3. Were innocent people harmed?

In the war with Gaza, more than 2,000 people (71 Israelis and the rest Palestinians) lost their lives. It might be easy to lay the blame for this at Hamas’ feet, but the Talmud doesn’t let us off so easily; it demands that we ask ourselves, “Was there another way of protecting Israel without so much loss of life?” Rabbi Daniel Landes, the director of the Pardes yeshiva in Jerusalem challenges us that although Hamas may indiscriminately launch missiles from civilian areas and terrorize its own population, it’s too facile for Israel not to take any responsibility for Palestinian deaths. Says Rabbi Landes: “Was it

⁶ Mairav Zonszein, “How Israel Silences Dissent,” *The New York Times*, 9/26/14, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/27/opinion/how-israel-silences-dissent.html?_r=0

not the fault of Hamas who put children directly in the line of fire? I have no trouble blaming Hamas. But we have a demanding religion, and an “Old Testament” God who expects us to search our actions, especially at this time of year, no matter what.”

Rabbi Landes continues: “In the Yom Kippur confessional we seek atonement for deeds that we sinned both “through coercion (ones) and willingly.” The prayer book of the Vilna Gaon (d. 1797, the “Maimonides” of early modernity) explains this disjuncture—that even in an ostensibly coerced case we are indicted if we do the act eagerly, unblinkingly; or if perhaps we could have avoided the whole situation to begin with, utilizing forethought, and finally that through *rav tachbolot* (much shrewdness), we could have extracted ourselves from the situation. These tough criteria for guilt or complete innocent make us pause as we consider Gaza.”⁷

And so, after three military conflicts with Gaza in six years, Israel must ask itself if engaging Hamas militarily, leaving behind hundreds of thousands of distraught, mourning and homeless families and a seething anger toward Israel, is morally acceptable and if it serves the interests of Israelis. As Rabbi Ascherman teaches: “...violence doesn’t serve our interests. Neither does injustice.” In Pirke Avot (5:11) we learn, “The sword comes into the world because of justice delayed and justice denied.”⁸

“What can Israel do?” you may ask.

When peace talks broke down last April, countless commentators in Israel and abroad warned that violence would erupt. Meanwhile, Hamas was nearly bankrupt because of the closure of Israel’s and Egypt’s Gaza border crossings. Recognizing the Palestinian unity government would have been an ideal way for Israel to neutralize Hamas, and at seemingly little cost, since no Hamas officials were even given cabinet positions in the unity government. The only thing that could have strengthened a beleaguered Hamas last summer was a military conflict with Israel, which is exactly what happened. Over 2,000 Palestinians were killed. Gaza was devastated. But Hamas looked heroic in the eyes of the Palestinians.

How many more Israelis and Palestinians need to die before Israel takes control of its destiny in order to protect its citizens and preserve its soul?

After President Abbas’s “genocide” speech last week at the U.N., David Horovitz, former editor of the *Jerusalem Post*, and no left-winger, wrote:

“For Netanyahu to bitterly point out that Abbas’s rhetoric is inflammatory is insufficient.”

⁷ Daniel Landes, “Why as Jews, as Israelis, We Must Repent for Gaza’s dead,” *Haaretz*, 9/10/14, <http://www.haaretz.com/opinion/.premium-1.614989>

⁸ Arik Ascherman, “Israel in Gaza: Violence and Injustice are not Jewish Values,” *Ha'aretz*, 9/12/14, <http://www.haaretz.com/opinion/.premium-1.615476>

If Israel's government declares that Abbas is no partner, he said, "Israel should at least try to do what it can to help create a climate in which a partner could emerge and flourish."

Horovitz continues: "Netanyahu's critics, overseas and here at home, assert that his rhetorical support for a two-state solution is contradicted by his policies, especially ongoing support for the expansion of settlements. A speech in which the prime minister sets out territorial red lines — broadly delineating those areas he believes Israel must retain, and beyond which he will not seek to expand settlements — could begin to address those concerns."⁹

And Nahum Barnea, one of the most prominent Israeli journalists wrote: "...what we have left is a battleground between an Israeli government that wishes to perpetuate the status quo and a despairing Palestinian Authority that is fighting it, with mounting support from the world. That is a recipe for an explosion."¹⁰

What can we, as Americans, do?

Michael Gross, who is the head of the school of Political Science at the University of Haifa urges: "Like it or not, the two-state solution will never come to pass without the active support of the U.S. government. 'Active' support means pressure, pressure that the U.S. government is reluctant to apply for reasons of its own politics."¹¹

Yet much of the American Jewish establishment has its head in the sand, insisting that our only job is to defend Israel's every action no matter what.

Instead, I say we would do well to heed the advice of young, college-aged Jews who care about Israel.

Benjy Cannon, National Student Board president of J Street U, and a student at the University of Maryland, offers this critique of established Jewish organizations. He wrote recently: "You do a great job of addressing some things that we're concerned about, like anti-Semitism and defending Israel's right to exist, but you don't show much leadership on other issues that affect Israel's future, like settlements. Most Jews (especially young Jews) think that the continued building of settlements is detrimental to Israel's security interests. Many of us feel ashamed of Israel's actions, which is hardly surprising given the occupation and its injustices. For many of my peers and me, it is a moral blight on a country we love."¹² Last year's PEW study on American Jewish life found that 25% of Jews aged 18-29 vs. 5% of Jews over 60 think that the U.S. is too supportive of Israel.

⁹ David Horovitz, "Since Abbas is No Partner, Israel Should Help Try to Produce One," *Times of Israel*, 9/28/14, <http://www.timesofisrael.com/since-abbas-is-no-partner-israel-should-help-try-to-produce-one/>

¹⁰ Nahum Barnea, *Yedioth Ahronoth*, 9/28/14.

¹¹ Michael Gross, "Not the End of Liberal Zionism," *Haaretz*, 8/25/14, <http://www.haaretz.com/opinion/.premium-1.612421>

¹² Benjy Cannon, "Five Things American-Jewish Leaders Must Know About College Students," *Haaretz*, 9/18/14, <http://www.haaretz.com/jewish-world/the-jewish-thinker/.premium-1.616608>

This young man was critical of the American Jewish establishment's failure to criticize Israel's recent announcement that it was going to annex another 1,000 acres of the West Bank. Young American Jews don't want to see the major Jewish organizations "blame the Palestinians and console the conservative pro-Israel echo chamber; we want you to hold Israel's leaders accountable and show leadership toward a sustainable peace."¹³ Incidentally, J Street U is the largest Jewish group on many American university campuses.

Riffing on a Beyonce song, J Street recently started a campaign called, "If you like it then you should put a border on it." Go online, and sign it if you believe that peace is an urgent necessity, not a luxury that can wait.¹⁴

Be willing to be a vocal critic of the occupation and to stand up against hatred, injustice, and violence, both Palestinian *and* Jewish.

A nepotistic plug: Attend Danny London's class, "What's Happening in Israel?" Over the last few years, this has been a constructive forum to explore, in depth, beyond the sound bites, what's really happening in Israel and to debate the issues in a constructive and informed manner.

Come hear Gershon Baskin speak at Beth Emet on November 13. He was the primary Israeli negotiator in the release of Israeli soldier, Gilad Shalit, who was held by Hamas in Gaza for five years. He is one of the only Israelis who has direct contact with Hamas. You won't want to miss his insights.

I'd like to conclude with Rabbi Ron Kronish's words; the end to his story about the people wanting falafel:

"So what's to be done?" he asks. "Give up? Resign ourselves to an endless ongoing irresolvable conflict? Continue ignoring the problem and just worrying about the price of cottage cheese, tomatoes and apartments? (which was the focus of the big social protest movement of 2011 which brought out into the streets hundreds of thousands of Israeli demonstrators for so-called "social issues" but not for peace!).

We must not allow ourselves to bury our heads in the sand, and wallow in apathy and despair. If we learn anything else from the Jewish Holiday season now upon us, it is the mighty mitzvah of teshuvah, or "returning" to what we really believe and acting upon our beliefs."

Rabbi Kronish continues: "So, let me state my belief clearly: I believe that peace is an imperative, not just a luxury. It will allow Israel to focus its energies not only on grossly inflated budgets for "defense" and "security" but on pressing social, educational and religious needs that have been neglected for too long. Only a genuine peace agreement between Israelis and Palestinians in the form of a two-state solution will provide security

¹³ Op. Cit., Cannon.

¹⁴ J Street's petition, http://act.jstreet.org/sign/border_on_it/.

and rights to people on both sides. Only a real peace agreement will end the hopeless cycle of wars with Gaza and Lebanon, which cause so much death and destruction rather than enabling life and development.”

I cannot put it any better than that. May we choose a life of justice and peace in the coming year.