

FOREWORD

Since the founding of Israel, successive U.S. administrations have tried various stratagems and tactics to bring about peace between Arabs and Israelis. Despite an outsized investment in diplomatic energy, foreign aid, and presidential prestige, however, this bitter conflict has endured, eroding the U.S. position in the region and undermining American interests.

To understand why the United States has had such a mixed record on Arab-Israeli peacemaking, and to explore what it would take for the United States to help broker peace, the U.S. Institute of Peace convened a study group in 2006–07 with some of America's most experienced senior authorities in the field. Led by Ambassador Daniel C. Kurtzer and anchored by Scott B. Lasensky, William B. Quandt, Steven L. Spiegel, and Shibley I. Telhami, the study group conducted countless hours of confidential interviews in the United States, Europe, and the Middle East with former negotiators, political figures, and civil society leaders from all sides of the conflict. The product of these efforts, *Negotiating Arab-Israeli Peace: American Leadership in the Middle East*, sets forth a compelling, interests-based framework for American engagement in the peace process; provides a critical assessment of U.S. diplomacy since the end of the Cold War; and offers a set of ten core lessons to guide the efforts of future American negotiators.

In this volume, Kurtzer and Lasensky deconstruct America's involvement in the peace process and identify both strengths and weaknesses with respect to policy formulation and execution. Many diplomatic insiders have made valuable contributions to

this assessment. *Negotiating Arab-Israeli Peace* is not mired in the details of day-to-day diplomacy nor shaped by the limited perspective of a memoir. Instead, the book is organized thematically to give readers the full scope of the group's experience and expertise. While many of the lessons are derived from the Arab-Israeli context, the book also serves as a general guide for negotiators, academics, and students of conflicts worldwide.

As part of the United States Institute of Peace's congressional mandate to promote research, education, and training on the peaceful management and resolution of international conflicts, *Negotiating Arab-Israeli Peace* is the latest in a distinguished list of volumes the Institute has published on this conflict. In 1991, Sam Lewis and Ken Stein authored *Making Peace Among Arabs and Israelis*, a report that delved deeply into the U.S. negotiating experience during the Cold War. More recently, the Institute has explored the conflict in *How Israelis and Palestinians Negotiate: A Cross-Cultural Analysis of the Oslo Peace Process* edited by Tamara Cofman Wittes, and *Jordanians, Palestinians, and the Hashemite Kingdom in the Middle East Peace Process* by Adnan Abu-Odeh. A recent Special Report on the conflict, *From Rejection to Acceptance: Israeli National Security Thinking and Palestinian Statehood*, was authored by Shlomo Brom.

Negotiating Arab-Israeli Peace represents an important addition to the growing body of scholarship on this seemingly intractable conflict. It provides present and future negotiators with both a resource for assessing past diplomatic efforts and a set of guidelines for shaping future initiatives.

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