



Conflict in Cities and the Contested State

Roundtable Discussion on Jerusalem:
The Cost of Failure

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The situation in Jerusalem is volatile and is unfolding at a dynamic pace. In considering the future of Jerusalem, there is the tendency to focus only on solutions, with the emphasis mostly upon “best case” scenarios, avoiding the fact that the situation could become much worse.

On October 21st, Mick Dumper and Wendy Pullan organised a Roundtable Discussion in Jerusalem focussing on an examination of the future of the city in the event of a failure to come to an agreement over the future of the city which is acceptable to both Israelis and Palestinians. Entitled Jerusalem: the Cost of Failure, the Roundtable comprised

- Ray Dolphin, Director of UN-OCHA in Jerusalem.
- Danny Seideman, Director of Ir Amim.
- Dr Rami Nasrallah, Director of the International Peace and Cooperation Centre.
- Dr Menachem Klein, Associate Professor in Political Science in Bar Ilan University.
- Fouad Hallaq of the PLO Negotiations Support Unit (participating in his personal capacity).
- Professor Mick Dumper, Conflict in Cities, University of Exeter.
- Dr Wendy Pullan, Conflict in Cities, University of Cambridge.

The discussion was chaired by Dr. Claire Spencer, Head of Middle East and North Africa Programme at Chatham House. It was held at the Notre Dame Centre on the old border between East and West Jerusalem.

The “worst-case scenarios” were located along a spectrum:

- a) In which the Palestinian population is incrementally but systematically removed
- b) Where the Palestinian presence is recognised but heavily restricted in geographic area, movement and articulation of its interests
- c) In which Israeli control, jurisdiction and services are targeted to specific and more central areas and the others are left in suspension or abandoned (unilateral withdrawal)

Panelists were also asked to flesh out the likely consequences of Jerusalem moving in the directions outlined above in terms of quality of life, economic and political opportunities, infrastructural developments, housing construction, service provision, mutual understanding and personal security. The final session of the discussion looked at constructive interventions that could either halt or reverse or, as is more likely, provide a “less bad” alternative which could provide ideas for the policy-makers, donors, activists and media.

Wendy Pullan and Mick Dumper will be writing up a paper based on these discussions which will be published as a Chatham House Programme Briefing and launched during public meetings both in London and Jerusalem. The Department for International Development (UK) will be contributing to the costs of the Roundtable, its publication and launch.

