In the history of armed warfare, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of the longest-lasting, as well as one of the most analyzed and discussed. It is highly significant because it is seen at the heart of conflict in the Middle East, between radical Islamists and the Western world.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is characterized by some as an intractable identity conflict between two social-identity groups, enduring for generations and resistant to resolution (Crocker et al. 2005). For others, it is a colonial conflict involving a minority that expelled the indigenous people with the help of the colonial powers and established a regime of occupation (Pappe 2006; Rouhana forthcoming; Hanafi 2005). In any case, efforts to resolve the conflict, whether by traditional means, such as negotiation and mediation, or by military means have failed time and again over many decades.

In this chapter, we focus on the role of civil society (CS) in peacebuilding in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict since the 1993 signing of the Oslo Accords. Although much has been written on this topic, especially since Israeli statehood, most studies discuss specific actors; few examine the functions fulfilled by CS actors. To bridge this gap, we concentrate on how CS actors perform peacebuilding functions according to the framework outlined in Chapter 4. In our analysis we focus on the period from the 1993 signing of the Oslo Accords through the present, since the attention to peacebuilding came about after 1993. Before 1993, peacebuilding was mostly composed of individual contacts (Salem and Kaufman 2006). In addition, before 1993 Palestinian CS had boycotted Israeli institutions, and Israeli authorities had for a long time repressed civil society activism. After presenting an overview of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, we discuss its context. We then focus on civil society’s relevance to peacebuilding. Finally, we discuss and assess CS peacebuilding functions.
Context
The conflict dates to the turn of the twentieth century, with the Jewish immigration to Palestine after 1898 and Zionist Jews’ search for an independent state. In 1948, the British Mandate in Palestine, established in 1917, ended with a UN partition plan and the establishment of the state of Israel. Initially, this was an Arab-Israeli conflict, as the Arab states opposed the partition and fighting commenced in earnest over territory. The Arab states refused to accept the terms of the partition because, they argued, the United Nations, under the influence of the colonial powers in the region, gave the Jewish population 55 percent of the best land, yet Jews constituted only 31 percent of the total population at the time, and most were immigrants (UNSCOP 1946, 143). The building of the Israeli state resulted in the destruction of many Arab localities and the deportation of the Palestinian population. Some 750,000 Palestinian refugees would be thrown out, representing perhaps 70 percent of Palestine’s Arab population at the time (Gidron et al. 2002, 56). For Palestinians, this event was known as Al Nakba, a disaster that forced many people to leave their homes and flee to neighboring countries. Few remained behind in Israel to become the Arab citizens of Israel; many remained internally displaced.

The Arab-Israeli wars continued off and on during the following decades: the 1956 Suez War, 1967 Six Days War (the June War), the 1973 October War (the Yom Kippur War), and the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon. The 1967 Six Days War drastically changed the nature of the conflict: it resulted in Israel’s occupation of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and other territories belonging to Egypt, Syria, and Jordan. These became known collectively as the Occupied Palestinian Territories (hereby Occupied Territories) and lay at the heart of the conflict even today.

Palestinian resistance to the occupation, as well as pressures from international community and developments within the Israeli society, changed the focus of the conflict. What had been a regional Arab-Israeli conflict became an interminable period of enmity and violence between Israelis and Palestinians. Egypt and Jordan signed peace treaties with Israel (in 1979 and 1994, respectively), the only other Middle east conflict was between Syria and Israel over the occupied Golan Heights. The Palestinian component of the Arab-Israeli wars took center stage after 1967 because of Israel’s occupation of the West Bank and Gaza and its direct administration of Palestinians living there. After 1967, local Palestinian resistance against occupation culminated in the first intifada (uprising) in 1987. The Oslo peace process, which began in 1993, made Palestinians a direct party to peace talks with Israel.

The 1993 Oslo Accord was an important step toward recognizing a two-state solution. Following the recognition of Israel by the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) was founded under Oslo II in 1995. Oslo adopted a gradualist approach and left final-status issues to later negotiation. However, neither party completely fulfilled its promises,
even after signing the accords. The area of Israeli settlements increased three-fold, and the number of settlers doubled, during the negotiations.\textsuperscript{3} Suicide bombings by Palestinians took place inside Israel during the same period. And the entire process began to teeter after the assassination of Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1995 by a Jewish fanatic and the subsequent election of the hard-line Benjamin Netanyahu in 1996. The collapse of the Oslo process with the outbreak of the second intifada (the Al-Aqsa intifada) in 2001 was a turning point. Until then, none of the efforts to end the occupation and violence proved successful, and the conflict devolved into a series of unilateral actions by both parties that complicated any path to peace: Israel withdrew from Gaza in 2005; Hamas won democratic Palestinian elections and took over Gaza in 2007.

Considering the interests of the mainstream and moderate political actors, it can be said that for Palestinians peacebuilding means ending the Israeli occupation and building a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip with East Jerusalem as a capital. For mainstream and moderate Israelis, the goal is to sustain the Zionist state with Jerusalem as the capital recognized by its Arab neighbors and to maintain its security. The hard-line actors on both sides are not satisfied with such goals. Right-wing parties in Israel oppose the establishment of a Palestinian state and ending settlement activity. Religious right-wing Palestinian groups, such as Hamas, seek resistance while negotiating. Historically, Hamas claimed to “liberate” the whole of Palestine and rejected the recognition of an Israeli state. Recently, Hamas leaders have made statements about accepting a Palestinian state within the 1967 boundaries, provided that the right of return for refugees to Israel is assured.

Besides the establishment of a Palestinian state, the character of its borders, and an assurance of security for Israel, other major issues include: sovereignty over Jerusalem, water resources, the return of Palestinian refugees, Jewish settlements built after 1967 on Palestinian lands, and the economic regime between the two countries.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been waged mostly as an armed conflict since the earliest violence in the 1920s. The latest round of fighting (the Al-Aqsa intifada) started in September 2000 after Ariel Sharon’s visit to the Haram al-Sharif, among the holiest places in Islam (and known to Israelis as Temple Mount, which is holy for Judaism). Violence further grew with the excessive retaliation from Israeli security forces. The Al-Aqsa intifada turned out to be more violent than the first intifada, which was much less violent. The psychological impact of the second intifada was massive on both parties (Halperin and Bar-Tal 2007; Shikaki 2004).

Following the failed negotiations, the second intifada led to hardened positions: a decline of public support for the peace process, an increase in support for military and armed groups, coupled with fear and hopelessness. Several joint Israeli-Palestinian public opinion polls, conducted after 2000 on a regular basis
by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (2006–2008) and the Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Research at Tel Aviv University (2003–2005), indicate that after the collapse of the final-status negotiations more Israelis and Palestinians—including those in the center—lost faith in peace negotiations in the short term and began to support military solutions. This shift in opinion also led to the weakening and shattering of the part of the society—also known as the peace camp—mobilized to support a peace process throughout the years (Halperin and Bar-Tal 2007 for Israel; Shikaki 2004).

Since Israel’s withdrawal from Gaza in 2005, unilateral moves have dominated the conflict. Attempts to move the parties from unilateralism to cooperation, such as within the Annapolis process initiated in 2007, have not been fruitful.

The political systems in Israel and the Occupied Territories shows significant differences. There is a functioning parliamentary democracy in Israel, with formal democratic institutions and processes in place since its establishment. The Israeli state ensures free and fair elections, the distribution of power, and the existence of democratic political institutions, according to the Israel Democracy Institute (Arian et al. 2003; cf. Halperin and Bar-Tal 2006). However, problems persist regarding the internalization of basic democratic values and norms, such as lack of respect for the rule of law, institutional discrimination against minorities (especially Palestinian citizens of Israel and foreign laborers), breaches of freedom of the press, military involvement in government affairs, the existence of influential antidemocratic, ultrareligious groups, and human rights violations (Halperin and Bar-Tal 2006).

The Israeli political system has also been criticized by some scholars (e.g., Yiftachel 2006) for being an ethnocracy, referring to an ethno-class stratification and polarization. This stratification and polarization go beyond the Arab-Jew distinction. When the Israeli state was founded, it claimed to be a melting pot for any Jewish immigrant coming from any part of the world. However, in time the divide among Jews of different ethnic and religious backgrounds (i.e. Ashkenazim, Sephardim, Russian, secular versus Orthodox) grew and has become a major fault line within Israeli politics (Peled and Navot 2005; Kop and Litan 2002). Such divisions within Israeli politics and society have major implications for CS and its support of the peace process.

Palestinian society within the Occupied Territories is in the process of state- and democracy-building, a major political influence on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and CS. An important characteristic is external involvement, as Palestinian political institutions rely heavily upon foreign aid. The involvement of the donor community has negative and positive consequences for the development of Palestinian CS and democratization.

Western governments have incorporated a concern for good governance and postconflict reconstruction into funding and aid programs, in which they emphasize development of multiparty elections, the rule of law, protection of
civil and human rights, and various sorts of development and infrastructure projects (Brynen 2000). However, these programs pressured mostly PNA, the main aid recipient, and did not sufficiently address Israeli policies and Israel’s military. Furthermore, donors conditioned aid on the development of an enabling environment for some civic groups, mainly secular peacebuilding NGOs, and excluded other types of CS actors. Another program for which donors have allocated funds is People-to-People projects. This program funds joint projects that bring together groups from Israeli-Palestinian civil societies to promote dialogue and cooperation.

The effect of the conflict on the economic situation is asymmetrical. While the Israeli economy managed to maintain its vitality during the Al-Aqsa intifada despite some initial difficulties, the Palestinian economy experienced severe structural shocks and readjustments.

At the moment, the Palestinian economy is in deep stress, characterized by a chronic trade deficit, 40 percent unemployment, dismal economic growth, with almost half the population living below the poverty line (Merriman 2006). The most severely affected are those living in Gaza and those living in the West Bank close to the newly built Wall, which is often situated inside the Palestinian area and separates different Palestinian localities (UN 2003; Daoudy and Khalidi 2008).

Overall, three main factors emanating from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict detrimentally affect the Palestinian economy: (1) closures that increase transaction costs; (2) the Revenue Clearance System, according to which Israel is required to transfer money to the PNA but withholds payments frequently; and (3) the reduction in the Palestinian labor flow to Israel after the two intifadas.

Status of Civil Society

There is considerable asymmetry between the Palestinian and Israeli civil societies. Palestinian CS is “stateless” in that the state structure is not fully formed and has different institutions compared to Israel. The level of CS development in the Occupied Territories differs from one area to another. Jerusalem and Ramallah in the West Bank are the most developed areas; refugee camps and Gaza are the least developed (Hanafi and Tabar 2005, 50).

Palestinian Civil Society

The history of CS in Palestine is rich (Hanafi and Tabar 2005, 46–55). A long tradition of Islamic and secular charitable societies, as well as local and missionary Christian organizations, have been observed in Palestinian society. In contrast to the labor unions in the Occupied Territories, professional associations (especially engineers) have been active politically and socially. With the donor policy favoring the new form of professionalized NGOs, some organizations changed to meet donor requirements while others collapsed.
Despite a succession of encounters with foreign rule, Palestinian social institutions and political factions have arisen to advance Palestinian national and social agendas. Local development was constrained in the absence of structures for local populations to determine social and developmental options outside Israeli military authority. Events in the 1970s, in particular the Camp David Accord between Egypt and Israel and the recognition of the PLO as the only representative of Palestinians, led to an awareness of the need for greater Palestinian self-reliance as well as a new strategy of resistance (Barghouthi 1999, 76). Within this context, a new generation of activists emerged. These newcomers created an infrastructure of mass organizations through the national movement, thereby expanding the existing roster of social organizations, including voluntary charitable societies, the oldest type of NGO in Palestine. Popular organizations were also formed, including women's committees, labor unions, student organizations, and volunteer initiatives. This was followed by the creation of developmental NGOs and Islamic organizations providing services in areas like health and agriculture (Barghouthi 1994).

Thus, NGOs established the basis for a system for providing services in the Occupied Territories. They also took a role within the broader national movement, forming an institutional network that enabled resistance against Israeli rule and sustained the first intifada for the first two years (Usher 1995, 18). Palestinian NGOs (PNGOs) were linked to the Palestinian political factions; the parties Popular Front of Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), Democratic Front of Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), Palestinian Communist Party (PCP), and Fatah each set up their own women's, students', labor, medical, and agricultural committees (Hilterman 1990, 47); in this regard the PLO, as an umbrella organization, played a major role (Giacaman 1998). Organizational forms reflected the broader effort to organize the grassroots: organizational structures were informal, and emphasis was put on volunteer work. Also, many organizations reflected a popular character, and attempts to incorporate the masses into these new structures were evident in the way that committees and organizations became grounded in diverse social groups and regions (Taraki 1997). To this end, organizational practices were shaped by a combination of nationalist and developmental goals. This meant that organizations extended services to marginalized social groups to empower them and to mobilize them politically (Giacaman 1998, 14). Independent NGOs also proliferated: professionalized centers, such as research institutes and media groups, were set up—a trend that accelerated after the decline of the national movement in the 1990s.

In 2002, after the first two years of the first intifada, the popular-based NGOs underwent rapid changes. Rima Hammami describes the transformation of PNGOs over time in three phases. First, the initial drive to mobilize the grassroots in the 1970s was organized across factions. Second, this was quickly succeeded by the rise of factionalized committees in the mid-1980s that operated their own popular and development organizations. And third, party-affiliated NGOs became institutionalized over time and by 1991 were run by
professionalized staff, with activists identifying themselves as professional development practitioners seeking to empower the population through development rather than through mobilization (Hammami 1995, 54–55). The shifts in donor characteristics contributed to these turning points, as suggested by Hammami. According to Benois Challand (2008b, 408), until the late 1980s and early 1990s most of the funding for CS came from regional Arab contributors. After the 1990s contributions from regional Arab donors dried up and were replaced by Western governments.

Therefore, many Palestinian activists, intellectuals and community leaders were embedded in the popular struggle and bound up in a mass-based national movement in late 1980s and early 1990s also with the help of many international organizations (IOs) (Hanafi and Tabar 2005, 14). This flourishing of CS intensified during the Oslo peace process. However, it did not necessarily mean that space created for CS has become more autonomous. The relationship between the PNGOs and the IOs and donors has gone through a transition from solidarity forms of support to politically driven aid to bolster the peace process with Israel (Hanafi and Tabar 2005, 39; Challand 2008b).

In short, after 2000 several factors have threatened the existence of a vibrant and autonomous Palestinian CS. The first threatening factors were related to the limitations imposed by the ongoing Israeli occupation. The second threat was imposed by the PNA and various armed Palestinian groups. The third group was the result of policies followed by international donors.

Within the first category, threats to CS include the Israeli financial embargo and the Israeli control over daily life. Such restrictions prevent free participation and mobility in CS. In the second category, one example of a PNA activity undermining the autonomy of the CS is the conflict between the PNGOs and the PNA over drafting the NGO law. In the third category was the dependence of PNGOs on Western donors and the choices made by donors about whom to fund and how much to limit the autonomy of CS (Challand 2008b). The capacity of local NGOs to make their own decisions about priorities in communities became severely hampered (Challand 2008b, 411), and this outcome altered the nature of NGOs’ relationship to the grassroots.

A similar threat to CS from increasing professionalization was also observed in Israel during this time. Increased professionalization of CS organizations led to a decrease in grassroots support, mainly because volunteerism decreased (Hermann 2002, 114). Also as a result of professionalization, collaboration between the peace groups decreased, and a division between more and less professionalized CSOs emerged (Hermann 2002, 115).

In sum, the Oslo peace process, which allowed for the creation of the PNA and the commencement of state-building with the assistance of donor countries, carved a space for the growth of NGOs and civic institutions in the Occupied Territories and in Israel. However, the creation of this space was also accompanied by a detachment of local organizations from society and their grassroots base.
Israeli Civil Society

In Israel, historically, there have been two camps in civil society: the active peace camp, mostly including politically left, Ashkenazi, middle-class, educated, and secular Jews; and the “national” camp, mostly composed of the religious and nationalist right. Although there are some examples of peace-building by religious actors (e.g., Oz Ve’Shalom, Rabbis for Human Rights) or by those traditionally opposed to dialogue (e.g., the few dialogue attempts between settlers and Palestinian refugees), the peace camp has historically supported the establishment of a Palestinian state in return for security and recognition of Israel. The peace camp has also been active in CS since 1967, organizing activities within Israel, such as antigovernment rallies, and in cooperation with Palestinians across the divide.

The Israeli peace camp began to be more active after 1978 with the emergence of the Peace Now movement in response to the obstructionist policies of the Likud-led government during the Israel-Egypt peace talks (Hermann 2002, 101). Tamar Hermann suggests that the peace camp has become mostly elitist and outside the political mainstream; thus it had limited influence despite the fact that it was successful in creating a cognitive change and an eventual attitude change in society (Hermann 2002, 118–119).

In contrast, an antipeace CS also existed in Israel, and its influence in politics and society has grown over time (Sprinzak 1991). These were right-wing religious groups such as Gush Emunim, the Haredi camp, as well as the extreme Zionist nationalists seeking a Greater Israel. This second group claims that all the land belongs to the Jews, and some even argued for the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians. The Kach movement is one of the most notorious examples (Sprinzak 1991).

On the Palestinian side, defining the boundaries of the peace constituency of civil society is more difficult. Because of the occupation and lack of a proper state structure, the peace constituency in Palestinian civil society was primarily involved with service delivery and human rights activism. NGOs, human rights activists, trade unions, and voluntary associations became the main actors. CS was also mostly limited to the middle and upper classes in urban areas (Hassassian 2006, 61). Historically, few individuals or notable families shared a common social space, including both Jews and Palestinians (especially in Jerusalem) or were willing to reach out to the other side (Dockser Marcus 2007). However, the sharing of common social space decreased with the ascendance of nationalist movements and armed conflict. Furthermore, Palestinian civil society found it more appropriate to resist occupation through armed resistance and boycotts, rather than through participation in CSOs (Hassassian 2006, 64). As mentioned above, it was only after the flow of Western funding after 1993 to peacebuilding NGOs that a Palestinian professional class emerged, working mostly with peacebuilding NGOs. However,
for the most part these were elites who remained disconnected from the mass political movements engaged in national struggle.

In the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, CS actors working toward peacebuilding can be grouped as follows: local NGOs (mostly secular but also a few religious ones), social networks and constituencies, campaigns and rallies, voluntary associations, international NGOs (INGOs), and initiatives by private citizens. NGOs became the most common type of CS actor in peacebuilding for several reasons: (1) other CS actors, like Islamic charities in the Occupied Territories, are mostly involved with service delivery, and some are affiliated with Hamas (Levitt 2006, Tamimi 2007); (2) the Israeli law that encourages civil society to organize as formal organizations (Hermann 2002, 111); and (3) the preferences of Western donors toward NGOs.

Before discussing the functions of peacebuilding and the CS actors involved, we need to look more closely at the peacebuilding-related NGOs in Israel and the Occupied Territories. The data used for this overview (from the Directory of Israeli and Palestinian NGOs) were coded according to the peacebuilding functions following the framework in Chapter 4.

By looking at the establishment years of the NGOs in the Directory, we can determine that 62 percent of Israeli peace NGOs were founded before the signing of the 1993 Oslo Accord. The number of Israeli organizations founded during the peace process years is 33 percent. By contrast, there is a sharp decrease in the number of peace NGOs founded after the outbreak of the second intifada (only 5 percent).

When we look at the establishment years of the Palestinian peace NGOs, there are important differences. PNGOs working in peacebuilding are much younger. Unlike Israeli NGOs, the majority of Palestinian peace NGOs were founded after the signing of the Oslo Accord in 1993. This is understandable, because until 1993 there were few Palestinian institutions in the Occupied Territories. Also, the sharp increase in peace NGOs after 1993 coincides with the increase of Western funding to Palestinian CS and the decrease in Arab funding. In addition, the number of PNGOs founded after the collapse of the Oslo peace process is higher compared to that of Israeli ones.

As for the focus on gender, 20.6 percent of Israeli NGOs and 29.7 percent of Palestinian NGOs involved in peacebuilding also work on women’s issues. Gender played an important role in shaping the peace camp, especially in Israel. During the 1980s, women led the Israeli peace movement by establishing movements such as Mothers Against Silence, Bat Shalom, Four Mothers, and Women and Mothers for Peace (Hermann 2002, 117).

Before we turn to an in-depth discussion of each function performed by CS, it is useful to look at the overall functions performed by NGOs. Figures 10.1 and 10.2 show the distribution of Israeli-Palestinian NGOs according to the functions identified in Chapter 4.
Figure 10.1 Israeli Peace NGOs’ Focus of Activities (n = 63)

- Social cohesion: 22%
- Advocacy: 30%
- Socialization: 23%
- Intermediation: 1%
- Service delivery: 11%
- Monitoring: 9%
- Protection: 4%

Figure 10.2 Palestinian Peace NGOs’ Focus of Activities (n = 37)

- Social cohesion: 26%
- Advocacy: 31%
- Socialization: 28%
- Intermediation: 4%
- Service delivery: 7%
- Monitoring: 3%
- Protection: 1%
A survey of activities carried out by sixty-three NGOs in Israel indicates that they are mostly involved with the functions of advocacy, in-group socialization, and intergroup social cohesion. Furthermore, many organizations carry out activities of socialization and social cohesion at the same time. The other four functions are not very frequent. Protection and intermediation are especially rare. Interestingly, 11 percent of Israeli NGOs are engaged in service delivery. The nature of these functions is detailed in the next section.

The survey of thirty-seven Palestinian NGOs (PNGOs) reveals similar results in the functions performed most frequently. Again, advocacy, intergroup social cohesion, and in-group socialization are the most common functions performed by the PNGOs. The remaining four functions are less common. Israeli organizations are slightly more involved in protection, monitoring, and service delivery when compared to PNGOs. Figure 10.2 summarizes the distribution of functions among Palestinian peace NGOs.

**Peacebuilding Functions**
The following section compares the seven different functions: protection; monitoring; advocacy; socialization; social cohesion; intermediation and facilitation; and service delivery.

**Protection**
In the Israeli-Palestinian context, Israeli, Palestinian, and international CS actors carry out protection of civilians, not only from the insecurity created by occupation but also from the armed groups engaged in intra-Palestinian fighting. Protection is performed by NGOs, INGOs, and some local militias. Any protection provided by local militias is often directed at kinship relations, but it has gained more importance in the climate of Gaza.

In addition to this classical sense of security, we can identify other important aspects of security and protection. One is the need for security against criminal activity in the Occupied Territories, especially in areas where there is Palestinian civil control but no police force. This function is performed by local notables (mukhtars), neighborhood-level local administrators, rather than CS per se.

The other aspect is economic and environmental security for Palestinians. Such functions often are not addressed by CS, although a few organizations, such as Bustan L’Shalom and Friends of the Earth Middle East, fight the degradation of resources and other damage resulting from the ongoing armed conflict.

Even though armed conflict marks the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (since 2000), the protection function is performed by a few CS actors, mostly through intervention in specific crises and support for disadvantaged groups, such as women and children. Several Israeli human rights organizations (HROs), such as Kol Halsha, protect battered women—both Palestinian and Jewish—and
some, such as the Defense for Children International (DCI, which includes the Israel and Palestine sections), focus only on protecting children. These organizations monitor the conditions affecting children and intervene in prison situations on behalf of juveniles. DCI-Palestine additionally provides support to prisoners and for watchdog activities.

Another example includes solidarity activities undertaken by private citizens and organizations. The Ta’ayush—Arab-Jewish Partnership is an Israeli movement of Palestinians and Jews fighting for full civil equality in Israel and against the occupation (Ta’Ayush 2008). This movement has new forms of activism for protecting populations under occupation. It has been active since the beginning of the second intifada and is known for directly protecting Palestinian peasants harvesting crops and demonstrating against the wall.

A second example of solidarity is civil missions. There is a growing number of individuals arriving in the Occupied Territories from European and North American countries to demonstrate solidarity and to call for the protection of Palestinian people. By April 2005, about 4,000 individuals had arrived. Some have been denied entry to Israel, and some were detained (Hanafi forthcoming).

Another important example is in the health sector. There have been initiatives to protect Palestinian ambulances and paramedics to help them to perform medical duties. We also see some activities for the protection of Palestinian civilians at checkpoints. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the Danish NGO Dan Church Aid, and the Israeli Physicians for Human Rights conducted several protection missions to smooth the passage of Palestinian Red Crescent ambulances through checkpoints. Doctors Without Borders, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch (HRW), and the ICRC are IOs that carried out a series of protection missions in the Occupied Territories.

In sum, the protection function is highly relevant, as there is daily violence on the ground; civilian security is a daily need. The role of CS in this context is vital because on the Palestinian side there is not an efficiently functioning state mechanism to provide security to its own civilians. It is also vital because there is no international peacekeeping force situated on the ground to perform this function.

Protection is closely linked with risk assessment and early warning. Given the limited resources of CS actors, such supplementary functions are crucial to increasing the overall effectiveness of protection. Even though CS alone cannot undertake protection, it can bear witness and mobilize international public opinion for organizing protection campaigns.

The effectiveness of protection varies from one incident to another. Although there are successes in protecting individuals and villages, it is hard to say whether CS actors make an important impact at the macro level by changing the protection policies of the occupying Israeli forces or of the armed Palestinian groups.
**Monitoring**

Monitoring is directed at all sorts of issues: civil and human rights, implementation of peace agreements, building of facts on the ground (e.g., water usage, settlement activity), and violation of international legal documents, including the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. The monitoring function is performed by a number of Israeli, Palestinian, and international CS actors. Most combine monitoring with advocacy (as in the case of B’Tselem and al-Haq), with protection, and with service delivery (mostly in the form of pro-bono legal representation).

CS actors that undertake monitoring are mostly human and civil rights activists and organizations. They usually have a mission to make the state adhere to the law, for example by accompanying monitoring with public advocacy and free service delivery to victims in the form of legal counsel. And even though CS monitors many issues that are linked to the peace process (settlements, prisoners, etc.), monitoring the implementation of a peace agreement is largely missing. An exception is Bringing Peace Together, a joint Israeli-Palestinian local CS committee consisting of intellectuals and activists formed to monitor the Annapolis Peace Initiative.

While some of the monitoring organizations such as Arab Association for Human Rights or B’tselem have a broader scope and monitor various issues, others focus on very specific issues within the conflict, such as the status of children (DCI- Palestine section), budget distribution (Adva), demolitions of Palestinian houses inside Israel (the Association of Forty), security checkpoints (Machsom Watch), and water use (Applied Research Institute of Jerusalem—ARIJ). Some add a monitoring function to their advocacy initiatives. Some organizations (e.g., ARIJ and Palestinian International Peace and Cooperation Center, or IPCC) engage in research and collect data, especially facts on the ground. Data collection and dissemination are especially relevant during peace negotiations.

Although most CS actors involved in monitoring are either Israeli or Palestinian, a third category includes Israeli CSOs founded by Palestinian citizens. Some try to achieve civic equality between Jewish and Palestinian citizens in the state and to correct discriminatory policies against Palestinian citizens of Israel.

Overall, monitoring is highly relevant in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, although it is not often a stand-alone activity. Monitoring campaigns succeed because they effectively use monitoring reports for advocacy in the international community. Campaigns, such as the one against the torture of Palestinian prisoners in Israel, fail due to their lack of international leverage.

**Advocacy**

Advocacy is one of the most frequently performed functions and refers to advocacy to improve civil and human rights, and legal representation, as well as...
as advocacy to influence agendas present in the peace process and other negotiations.

CS actors engage in both public and nonpublic forms of advocacy. Most perform other functions as well, like monitoring, protection, in-group socialization, service delivery, and intergroup social cohesion. Very few focus solely on advocacy. Among these are social movements that bring people around a cause, such as “refusenik” organizations like Courage to Refuse, Shministism, Youth Refusal Movement, and Kvisa Shchora (an antioccupation gay and lesbian movement). Another group that performs advocacy primarily includes think-tanks and research centers that combine research and advocacy, such as the Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace.

As for the nature of CS actors doing advocacy work, we see that human rights organizations create awareness in the international and domestic political arenas. These include local organizations (B’tselem, Ir Shalem, Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group) and IOs (HRW).

Human and civil rights advocacy is also performed by individual lawyers and law firms. This is categorized separately because legal representation and related activities have become important in the Israeli-Palestinian context, bridging advocacy, service delivery, and protection. Lawyering became a privileged and widespread means of collective action since the beginning of the 1990s in the wake of the “judicialization of politics” (Tate and Vallinder 1995). The transfer of political questions to the courtroom has transformed legal skill into a form of political capital and legal professionals into experts of cause-building. From the defense of disadvantaged and minority groups to sectarian sociopolitical interests, so-called cause lawyers are now believed to play a role in the democratic game; their actions are no longer viewed as a transgressive activity.

Peace and conflict resolution organizations also perform advocacy, usually in combination with in-group socialization and intergroup social cohesion. Some (such as the Israel/Palestine Center for Research and Information, or IPCRI) also perform research in conjunction. They include local actors (the Coalition of Women for a Just Peace, IPCRI, Economic Cooperation Foundation, or ECF) and international actors (Search for Common Ground).

Social movement networks are the third group of CS actors that perform advocacy. Most are local, but there are several international networks as well. One example, an important social movement network engaged in both advocacy and intergroup social cohesion, is the People’s Voice initiative led by Sari Nusseibeh and former Shin Bet Chief Ami Ayalon. It aims at gathering public support for a two-state solution on both sides of the conflict (People’s Voice 2002).

Advocacy work can be distinguished according to the strategies and tactics that are pursued. While some of the strategies used by CS favor “insiders,” meaning they try to influence decisionmakers and elites, whereas other strategies
focus on the “outsiders,” focusing on motivating the masses (Fitzduff and Church 2004, 2–6).

Looking at strategies employed by the Israeli peace camp, we see that in the 1970s and 1980s most peace activities focused on mass protests to raise consciousness and to mobilize the grassroots (Hermann 2002, 112). However, in the 1980s the popularity of mass protests in Israel declined, and there was a shift toward “insider strategies”; peace activities shifted from grassroots mobilization and public communication to nonpublic advocacy (Hermann 2002). The professionalization and domination of NGOs in general also contributed to this trend, which resulted in the disconnection of peacebuilding activities from the grassroots.

In addition to insider and outsider strategies, international advocacy is a distinct strategy. For example, Palestinian CS has long attempted to lobby the PNA against torture, but the PNA began to take measures only after it was criticized by Amnesty International and HRW in 2000. As a result, local CS actors prefer helping international HROs to monitor human rights violations at the local level but publicize their findings mainly in Europe and North America in order to make a policy impact on their own governments.

Agenda-setting was an important aspect of CS advocacy during the peace negotiations. CS actors advocated and lobbied for greater CS involvement in the peace negotiations, as well as for the inclusion of certain proposals developed jointly in problem-solving meetings and/or for the inclusion of certain people in peace negotiations. Several problem-solving groups working on final-status issues (e.g., Jerusalem, refugees) constitute examples of this type of advocacy. For example, the Panorama Center in Ramallah and an Israeli consultancy group conducted a survey of Palestinian refugee real estate holdings. The result of such cooperation can be crucial to the compensation of refugees once negotiations begin. A three-day workshop (titled “Right of Return and Resolving Palestinian Refugees Issue”) was organized in 2003, gathering many prominent Israeli and Palestinian scholars, as well as international experts. The meeting generated new knowledge and ideas that could be essential to negotiations once they are revised (see Benvenisti, Hanafi, and Gans 2006).

In the case of Jerusalem, the Arab Studies Society, the Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA), Israel-Palestine Center for Research and Information (IPCRI), the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, and the Economic Cooperation Foundation (ECF) have attempted to influence final-status negotiations (Abdul Hadi 2005; Hassasian 2002; Çuhadar 2009).

When advocating behind closed doors (nonpublicly), CS actors used various tactics. Contacting negotiators, decisionmakers, and official third parties led to the inclusion of certain people and ideas in the peace negotiations (Çuhadar 2009). For example, some Palestinian participants in these problem-solving groups were part of Palestinian political circles, and others participated
in problem-solving meetings and final-status negotiations, including some scholars from the Palestinian Center for Refugees and Diaspora (Shaml) and the Panorama Center. These two organizations provided valuable information to the Negotiation Unit of the PLO.

A study conducted by Esra Çuhadar and Bruce Dayton (2008) on problem-solving workshops between 1989 and 2004 found that after the Camp David failure and the outbreak of intifada, more of the problem-solving groups directed advocacy openly at public opinion, instead of nonpublic advocacy directed at elites and decisionmakers. The Geneva Initiative is a good example of this shift in strategy. While the same group used an elite-oriented advocacy strategy before Camp David, it shifted to public opinion-oriented advocacy after the Camp David negotiations failed. The Geneva Initiative’s proposal was disseminated through public mailings, and campaigns were initiated to garner public support for the proposal (Beilin 2004). Furthermore, public opinion polls were conducted to measure support for the initiative, and the results were used for additional advocacy work on the initiative (Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research 2003). In sum, advocacy for the masses, rather than for elites (People’s Voice, the Geneva Initiative), became more popular after the failure at Camp David, although any success or effectiveness is debatable.

In general, advocacy efforts contributed insights to the process of negotiation, but they hardly impacted the outcome of the negotiations themselves (Çuhadar 2009). In addition to the effective formulation of an advocacy strategy, the organizational capabilities of the advocacy actor, the openness of the decisionmaking and negotiation system to outside information, and the type and flow of information to and the receptiveness of the decisionmaking unit (whether symmetrical or not), are among the variables that determine the effectiveness of nonpublic advocacy (Çuhadar 2009).

There has been an important barrier to effective public advocacy since the 1990s: NGOs have become disconnected from their grassroots bases. This mostly affected the advocacy function, especially in the Palestinian context. At the beginning of the intifada, NGOs were generally absent from the popular demonstrations in the Occupied Territories. Instead of propeace CS, radical elements of CS—such as some Islamic organizations and paramilitary groups—took over this role in popular demonstrations.

Besides the NGOs’ disconnect from the grassroots, timing also limited the effectiveness of advocacy. Especially before the Camp David negotiations, certain issues were taboo and many feared being cast as traitors; CS actors thus refrained from openly advocating for certain ideas and solutions. One example was the Israeli position on Jerusalem. It was well known by elites that excluding Jerusalem from the negotiation agenda was a political nonstarter, and opinionmakers and CS actors started talking about Jerusalem very late in the process. Therefore, by the time negotiations began it was too late to generate public support to rally around a mutually acceptable solution. The mirror image
of this debate in Palestinian society concerns the different modalities of resolving the Palestinian refugee issue.

**In-group Socialization**

Socialization is one of the three most frequently performed functions. In this context it means socialization for democratic attitudes and values, for handling conflicts peacefully, and for consolidating an in-group identity supportive of peace.

The following data about the Israeli society indicate how socialization for democracy and peace values is necessary in the Israeli-Palestinian context. Reconciling the Jewish nature of the state with democratic values has always created tension in Israeli politics (Cohen and Rynhold 2005; Kop and Litan 2002). Consider the following two pieces of evidence.

According to a survey by the Israeli Institute for Democracy, 53 percent of Jews in Israel oppose equal rights for Jewish and Arab citizens, and only 4 percent support CSOs that cut across the ethnic divisions and challenge the discriminatory system (Dichter and Abu Asba 2006, 175).

Several studies regarding democratic education in Israel (e.g., Halperin and Bar-Tal 2006) also reveal the shortcomings in the Israeli education system for socializing youths in the values of a liberal democratic state. They argue that education for a Jewish and Zionist identity has historically been prioritized over education in liberal democratic values and that democratic education in Israel is largely dependent on the ideological views of the government.

In sum, considering the need for socialization in democratic values, the importance of CS should be highlighted. CS has to play a complementary role to government, regardless of the latter’s ideological position, in order to provide sustainability to socialization in democratic values. Activities may include fighting against institutional discrimination against Palestinian citizens of Israel; leveraging against influential antidemocratic groups; educating youths and children in human rights and democracy; and revealing violations of human rights.

In Israel, there is a major gap between the socialization of secular versus religious citizens. Compared to secular Jews, religious Jews are socialized in a way that makes them more hawkish toward the establishment of a Palestinian state and the recognition of Palestinian rights (Rynhold 2005). Jonathan Rynhold explains this by pointing to the ethnocentric characteristic of religious socialization. Religious and secular citizens are socialized in their own institutions and live in distinct neighborhoods. Furthermore, they do not mingle within the ranks and officer corps of the army, which is a powerful socialization agent that all Israelis must pass through.

Another historically powerful socialization agent in Israel has been the kibbutzim, especially during the early days of the Israeli state; in 1948, 7–8 percent of the population lived among 177 kibbutzim (Livni 2004). This communal
movement was especially important to elites. The movement declined in popularity after the 1970s, and perhaps 2 percent of the population lives in a kibbutz today (Livni 2004). Most kibbutzim have been secular, and some engage and encourage joint activities with Arab Bedouins in Israel (especially in agriculture; see Livni, Naveh, and Cicelsky 2006). However, the effect of liberal economic policies in Israel is not the only reason that kibbutzim have dwindled in number; secular values now compete with those in the Orthodox kibbutz movement, which are often directed against the establishment of a Palestinian state (Livni 2004).

Other important actors in socialization are Israeli-Palestinian academics and NGOs (the Adam Institute for Democracy and Peace, the Israel Democracy Institute, the Bethlehem Peace Center, Panorama) that teach people democratic and civic attitudes. The target populations of such initiatives vary from children to adults, depending on the activity. Some carry out systematic democracy education in coordination with the school systems, curricula, and the Ministry of Education; others engage in single events and are not necessarily coordinated with the authorities. In addition to NGOs, youth clubs teach democracy and citizenship to their constituencies. These grassroots clubs touch base with larger segments of society.

The second type of in-group socialization is training in conflict resolution skills. The goal often is to teach people to resolve conflicts peacefully and thereby contribute to a nonviolent and peaceful society. NGOs and individual scholar-practitioners carry out such training, in which they use teaching methods ranging from the use of media, soap operas, and psychodrama (Middle East Non-Violence and Democracy) to traditional peacemaking methods like sulha and the politics of persuasion (Wiam-Palestinian Conflict Resolution Center).

Concerning sulha, the major actors are leaders of tribal units and extending families. By browsing the Palestinian newspapers, one can realize announcements of sulhas almost daily, concerning any dispute between members of the same community. Sulha is used more to resolve disputes among feuding Palestinian families and communities.6

Finally, a number of CS actors work toward the consolidation of an in-group identity while teaching democratic attitudes. Several Israeli CSOs (Givat Haviva) and some scholar-practitioners teach citizens about the Holocaust and Jewish history and raise awareness and resistance against racism. Dan Bar-On’s (1989) work with Holocaust survivors and perpetrators, using the storytelling approach, is an excellent example.

However, not all CS actors consolidate in-group identity through democratic and peaceful means. There are examples of radicalization within civil society, such as some religious Jewish organizations that consolidate the in-group identity at the expense of the “other group” instead of using it as a means to resist racism and discrimination.
Overall, CS’s role in socialization has implications beyond the Palestinian-Israeli relationship, influenced by several factors. One is the tension between religion and democracy in Israel. Defining the Israeli state mainly as Jewish has been an obstacle to creating a truly pluralist Israeli democracy. Demands from Orthodox religious groups have become a major hindrance to creating liberal democratic and pluralist values. A similar argument can be made for Palestinian society, which is currently experiencing a tension between religious and democratic values, especially in Gaza. However, this debate is just beginning to emerge within Palestinian society after the takeover of Hamas; its effects are yet to be seen.

A second factor that influences this function is the ongoing armed conflict. Regardless of conflict-resolution training that focuses on replacing enemy images, the ongoing armed conflict and occupation make it difficult to sustain these efforts (Rosen 2006). Children on both sides are reported to be psychologically affected by violence, to the extent that some 33 percent of Israeli youths and 70 percent of Palestinian youths experience symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder, including anxiety, depression, and sadistic and aggressive tendencies (Jewish News 2004). These constitute a severe threat to any normal political socialization that emphasizes democratic values, respect for the other, and coexistence.

**Intergroup Social Cohesion**

Social cohesion refers to bridging ties between Israelis and Palestinians (both within Israel and in the Occupied Territories), between different ethnic groups and secular and religious Jews in Israel, and between Fatah and Hamas.

For Israeli CS and Palestinian CS, the peace process and the Oslo Accord ushered in new funding. Programs of cooperation increased significantly due to the interest of the donor community (especially the United States, Norway, and the European Union) to revive contacts between Palestinians and Israelis. Of the channeled funding, human rights and democracy absorbed an increasing proportion. In 1998, this sector represented 9.5 percent of all funding (US$5 million), whereas during the preceding four years (1994–1997) this area averaged only 4.4 percent of total funding (about US$11 million). A significant percentage of funding was also provided for people-to-people projects. Such funding went to all types of activities, including grassroots level, people-to-people, and dialogue and problem-solving efforts targeting elites and professionals.

In 2005, Çuhadar and Dayton (2008) conducted a study on the Israeli-Palestinian Track 2 initiatives and compiled a list of eighty initiatives undertaken between 1989 and 2004 (excluding those carried out inside Israel between Palestinian and Jewish citizens). The study indicates that the number of outcome- and relationship-oriented initiatives (see Chapter 4 in this volume) are about the same. However, more Track 2 initiatives were undertaken with
elites and professionals than with the grassroots. This is not surprising given that many of the Track 2 initiatives in the Israeli-Palestinian context were undertaken in preparation for the final-status negotiations. Furthermore, the study shows that grassroots-relationship and elite-outcome combinations dominate the others (see Figure 10.3, adapted from Çuhadar and Dayton 2008). Most of the relationship-focused initiatives tend to take place with grassroots populations, such as youths. In contrast, initiatives geared toward achieving an outcome for peace negotiations or toward a specific product are carried out mostly with professionals and elites. Less common are other combinations that create relationship-focused activities with elites and outcome-oriented activities with the grassroots.

Social cohesion initiatives between Israelis and Palestinians were organized by various Israeli, Palestinian, and international CS actors, including NGOs, academic institutions (e.g., American Academy of Arts and Sciences meetings in early 1990s), business associations (e.g., Turkish Chambers of Industries and Commerce), and scholar-practitioners (e.g., Herbert Kelman of Harvard University). They were also organized on almost any issue (trade, refugees, Jerusalem, water, borders) related to the conflict and with all types of participants (see Figure 10.3) from all levels of society, ranging from youths to high-level policymakers.

**Figure 10.3 Distribution of Track 2: Goals and Levels of the Initiatives**
The presence of a third-party mediator in these projects has often expedited cooperation. The EU-sponsored Barcelona Process and neighborhood policies, for example, have been occasions to create networks in many sectors (human rights, environment, media, etc.). In the academic field, joint projects between Israeli and Palestinian universities and research centers are prominent. In his inventory of these projects, Paul Scham (2000) counted 217 projects that were held in the 1990s between Israel and some of the Arab countries, of which about 62 percent (133 projects) were conducted directly with Palestinian partners.

Comparing the grassroots and relationship-building projects and the high-level Track 2 talks with elites and other influential people, some criticisms are common to both. However, in terms of effectiveness, initiatives that focus on a common task and are held with influential people of equal status are considered to be more useful than those that bring people together for the sake of dialogue and focus on relationships only.

Given the political nature of task-focused activities, they have been found especially effective as a complementary prenegotiation strategy (e.g., Agha et al. 2003; Kelman 2005; Çuhadar 2009; Kaye 2005). These meetings become avenues of new learning for Palestinians and Israelis and contribute to the process of negotiations by helping build Palestinian human capital, by developing ideas and strategic insights relevant to the negotiation process, and by making politically relevant contacts.

The effectiveness of intergroup social cohesion has been assessed and discussed by various scholars and practitioners. Several studies (Maoz 2000; Endresen 2001; Mu’allem 1999) have assessed the grassroots level, people-to-people workshops. Ifat Maoz (2000) looked at the degree of attitude change among Israeli-Palestinian youths attending a peace education seminar and found that the Palestinian attitude changed in a positive direction but did not reach a significant level, whereas the Israeli change in attitude did (Maoz 2000, 731). Maoz also suggested that the workshops, despite this Israeli-Palestinian asymmetry, helped the empowerment of Palestinians. The results of this study and that of Lena Endresen (2001) encourage further research on the accomplishments of initiatives that are purely oriented toward relationship-building, especially when there is power asymmetry.

People-to-people projects were also criticized on political grounds (Kuttab 1998; Rouhana 1997). First, Palestinian intellectuals criticized them for
not acknowledging Palestinians’ rights and called for a boycott on joint projects with Israeli organizations unless the latter “supports the Palestinian right to freedom and statehood and a comprehensive, just and durable peace that meets Palestinian national rights” (PNGOs 2000). Second, they were criticized for poor “transfer” of the effects and outcomes of the workshops to a larger level (Mu’allem 1999). Third, they were criticized for gathering people who lacked representativeness such as the “usual suspects” and “convenient” participants (Agha et al. 2003, 174–178). Finally, activities that avoided tackling the hard political issues were criticized by Palestinians for separating the political domain from the academic, economic, and cultural domains. It was argued that cultural cooperation between two civil societies hides the power imbalance and that it is impossible to separate the cultural from the political domain.

Furthermore, the efficacy of peacebuilding is related not only to the workshop approach itself but also to achievement in the ongoing peace process. Such projects suffer if the Track 1 negotiation does not succeed, if it does not allow freedom of movement for Palestinians, if extensive settlement activities continue, and if there is no prospect for economic development. Moreover, the social cohesion initiatives became less relevant after the peace process collapsed, with the further radicalization of the conflict. Still, some projects are a real success despite a lack of funding. This success can be attributed to the facts that participants addressed the root causes of conflict, criticized Israeli occupation practices publicly and through advocacy campaigns, and contributed to strengthening human capital and the knowledge base relevant to negotiations. Therefore, it is important to follow a more systematic research to identify the conditions and people-to-people projects that lead to greater success.

A second type of bridging activity by CS takes place between religious and secular Jews in Israel. As the secular and religious divide grows within Israeli society and the religious Zionist movement gains more influence in politics, bridging this divide is crucial for the future of the peace process. There are few attempts in this regard.

The most important is the “covenantalist” movement. This movement brought together religious and secular Jews to build consensus over religion-state relations (Cohen and Rynhold 2005, 726). The Gavison-Meidan and Chuka BeHaskama (Constitution by Consensus) initiatives were the most comprehensive attempts to reconcile differences between secular and religious Jews (Cohen and Rynhold 2005){. T}hese initiatives included different sections of society. So far the content of social covenants has been limited to issues related to tensions in the daily lives of Israelis, such as Shabbat rules and the definition of Jewishness. According to Asher Cohen and Jonathan Rynhold (2005), who comparatively studied these social covenants, they are vague as to details and are difficult to translate into practical solutions. For instance, the Kinneret covenant, which stated that “Israel is willing to recognize the legitimate rights
of the neighboring Palestinian people,” was vague as to whether or not this meant the far right’s idea of endorsing a Palestinian state extending to the eastern bank of the Jordan River (Cohen and Rynhold 2005, 738). Despite the fact that issues related to the Palestinian state and peace are not addressed directly in these covenants, Israelis find them useful because they are taking a step toward building trust between two parts of society that dislike one another.

Concerning Palestinian society, there has been little effort to initiate dialogue between secular and religious groups. One example is the Palestinian Model Parliament. Launched in 1997–1998, a series of activities involving secular and religious groups and organizations were organized around the theme of women’s rights, culminating in national debates in March and April 1998 on the status of Palestinian women under law. Since the split of the PNA between Fatah and Hamas, there is a rupture not only in polity level but also in the level of supporters in civil society.

Facilitation
Facilitation refers to the efforts of third-party CS actors to settle disputes between the main parties and between Palestinian factions. There are few of these CS activities that we can point to, because in the Israeli-Palestinian context most facilitation work is carried out in the form of social cohesion.

A couple of Israeli and Palestinian organizations trained youths and some professionals as mediators and then assigned them to mediate specific issues related to the conflict. One example is the Joint Environmental Mediations Team—a network of Israeli and Palestinian environmental mediators that IPCRI helped establish to address environmental disputes. Another example is the Jerusalem Mediation and Arbitration Center (1996), established jointly by the Israeli think-thank Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies and the IPCC. The center trains mediators to work on small disputes between Palestinians and Israelis in the Jerusalem area. It was created due to the refusal of Palestinians to deal with the Israeli court system and a need to create a dispute-resolution mechanism in the Jerusalem area that was more sensitive to cultural backgrounds.

Although there have been many people and organizations around the world trying to mediate between the Israelis and Palestinians over many decades, including Norwegian, European, and various Middle Eastern envoys, they have not been very effective in mediating intra-Palestinian disputes so far. Thus, the divide between the West Bank and Gaza continues to be a major obstacle to an effective peace process. This is one area that will most likely become more important to the agendas of facilitators in coming years.

Service Delivery
Service delivery as an entry point for peacebuilding also exists, though not as commonly as some other functions. More Israeli NGOs provide service delivery
compared to PNGOs. The motivation of Israeli NGOs for service delivery may be a result of expressing solidarity, the availability of resources, freedom of movement, and fundraising.

Services provide an entry point to other peacebuilding functions; through the provision of services, solidarity with a population under occupation is expressed (e.g., Ta'ayush and the Israeli Physicians for Human Rights-PHR). Some may provide services simply because they have resources that Palestinian society lacks. Finally, service delivery among Israeli NGOs may be more common because it helps to maintain the survival of NGOs and to raise funds for other activities that are not preferred by donors (Hermann 2002, 113). NGOs are concerned not only with solidarity; they are also concerned with raising funds, as service delivery is one area that may be prioritized by donors. In this way, some Israeli NGOs raise money and channel funds to other areas of peacebuilding that have not been previously funded by donors.

Service delivery is performed by CS in several innovative ways. These include legal counsel and services to victims, especially in combination with advocacy work (Adalah); infrastructure services for demolished Palestinian villages (Association of Forty); sports, library, and recreational facilities for disadvantaged youths affected by conflict; free health services in the Occupied Territories (PHR); psychological counseling (Gaza Community Mental Health Program); and water services to Palestinian villages (Friends of the Earth Middle East).

In most cases, service delivery is provided in tandem with other functions, especially protection and advocacy. One example, mentioned above, combined protection and service delivery: NGOs sent drivers for Palestinian ambulances to safeguard passage through Israeli checkpoints. Most service delivery is in the areas of health, agricultural cooperation, and the environment.

**Conclusion**

In the Israeli-Palestinian context, advocacy, in-group socialization, and inter-group social cohesion have been the most frequently performed functions by CS. However, these functions are not by definition more relevant or urgent compared to the other functions. Protection, monitoring, facilitation, and service delivery are at least as relevant, if not more necessary.

The relevance of functions differs between the Israeli and Palestinian societies, as each has different needs. The two societies are at different social, political, and economic development stages. Because Palestinian society is stateless, suffers from severe economic hardships, and is fighting against the occupation and the creation of daily facts on the ground (e.g., settlements and the separation wall), protection, monitoring, service delivery, and advocacy are more relevant as CS functions. Furthermore, a peacebuilding strategy focusing on the advancement of and struggle for “rights” is more pronounced on
the Palestinian side. This has made human rights monitoring and advocacy the preferred functions of Palestinian CS.

And because one of the major obstacles to peace has been religious ideology and the rift between the secular and religious Israelis, socialization for democratic values and pluralism is currently more relevant for Israeli society. Contrary to the rights-based peacebuilding approach of Palestinians, Israeli CS has often adopted a more pragmatic approach to peacebuilding that emphasizes dialogue and negotiation. This has made social cohesion and facilitation the preferred functions within Israeli CS. However, donors have paid little attention to the priority of different needs within each society and have instead promoted a one-size-fits-all strategy to peacebuilding.

Several factors affect one or more of the peacebuilding functions of civil society:

1. The effects of the ongoing armed conflict and lack of peacekeeping forces;
2. Donor policies and a dependence on donors and their peacebuilding agenda;
3. Restrictions arising from the Israeli occupation, such as closures and human rights violations;
4. The weak nature of the Palestinian state, the authoritarian tendencies of the PNA, and in-fighting among factions;
5. Leverage wielded by international powers; and
6. The strategies and tactics used and their timing.

The effects of the ongoing armed conflict and the lack of international peacekeeping forces on the ground affect almost all the peacebuilding functions. While protection and monitoring have become more relevant, the effectiveness and relevance of social cohesion has been diminished.

Donor policies affect almost all peacebuilding functions. The clear preference among Western donors to fund people-to-people programs (i.e., social cohesion activities), especially after the Oslo Accord in 1993, has made this function among the most frequent. At the same time, less funding is channeled to monitoring, protection, and socialization.

Furthermore, the channeling of Western funding has led to the professionalization of CS and has resulted in the establishment of organizationally more complex NGOs. Although this increases efficiency and operability, it also leads to a weakening of ties between NGOs and their grassroots bases. Unlike the trend in the 1970s and 1980s, which made grassroots activism an important CS action, in the 1990s such activities decreased in number and took a backseat to elite-based and middle class–oriented dialogues. Such activities remained limited in scope, could not become part of the political mainstream, and could not incorporate the religious groups. This trend weakened the effectiveness of
advocacy. One could go farther and argue that the donor community contributed to, directly or indirectly, a process of “dedemocratization” at several levels of the Palestinian body politic (i.e., weakening the PLO versus strengthening the PNA; weakening unions and political factions).

Finally, by disconnecting civil society from politics, especially on the Palestinian side, donors’ policies diminished the effectiveness of political advocacy. The inefficiency created by aid systems and their “conceptual maps,” which envision the social field as neatly divided into political and civil societies, diminished the advocacy capability of PNGOs; rather than present their own conceptual map, they internalized the donors’ vision.

The ongoing Israeli occupation and the human rights violations (especially at checkpoints and prisons) make it harder for CS actors to perform certain functions like protection, monitoring, service delivery, and advocacy while increasing their relevance. Restrictions by Israeli authorities especially discourage small-sized or less formal CS to undertake such functions. Instead, large INGOs gain important advantages on the ground.

The weak nature of the Palestinian state structure and the authoritarian tendencies of the PNA also have implications for protection, service delivery, advocacy, and monitoring. Due to the lack of security forces and state agencies that provide services, CS for years has assumed the functions of protection and service delivery. Furthermore, some of the authoritarian policies of the PNA in the past have made monitoring, advocacy, and socialization functions especially relevant.

The leverage wielded by international powers has become an important variable, affecting especially the protection, monitoring, facilitation, and advocacy functions. CS actors have often used international leverage vis-à-vis governments to garner support for their own agendas. So far, such leverage has become more influential on the Palestinian side than the Israeli side.

Finally, CS’s strategies and tactics, as well as their timing, have influenced the advocacy and social cohesion functions. For instance, while non-public advocacy became more relevant and effective before and during peace negotiations, public advocacy was preferred after they failed. Furthermore, social cohesion activities focusing on a common task and outcome with professional people became more relevant and effective during the prenegotiation phase, and relationship-building social cohesion activities became more relevant after the end of the armed conflict.

In conclusion, we argue that social cohesion programs need to encourage cooperation between the Israeli and Palestinian civil societies in a way that promotes responsible action, such as taking a joint position against the occupation and facilitating a mutually agreed upon peace agreement. A joint Israeli-Palestinian position to end the occupation is an essential step for ending conflict. Failure to do so manipulates reality and presents a false image of the conflict itself.
Notes
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1. We draw on a variety of data sources. Information taken from an NGO directory was coded in line with the theoretical framework to provide an overview of NGO activities in the Israeli-Palestinian context and to present a quantifiable description. Data also were collected through field study and secondary analysis; different types of CS actors were taken into account, such as private citizens, social networks and movements, academic and research institutions, and think-tanks. Data regarding the assessment of advocacy, social cohesion, and facilitation functions were gathered by Çuhadar throughout her fieldwork between 2002 and 2005 and by Çuhadar and Dayton during a USIP-funded research project that involved surveying peace practitioners.

2. For further reading on the history of the conflict from various perspectives, see Lustick (1994); Morris (1999); Kimmerling (2003); Gilbert (2008); Lesch and Tschirgi (1998); Nazzal and Nazzal (1997); Shipler (1986); Nusseibeh (2007); Khalidi (2007); and Avnery (1975).


4. For Israeli public support for the peace process by left and right wings, see Hermann (2002, 96 and 115, and 2006, 43).

5. It should be noted that most of the organizations perform more than one function. For such cases, each function is coded separately. The activities were coded from the mission statements and by looking at the NGO activities listed in the directory or mentioned in other sources, such as websites published by the organizations.

6. Sulha refers to a formal public ceremony that marks the culmination of the peacemaking negotiations through mediation. Sulha entails reconciliation, cooperation, and forgiveness. For more details about the importance of the sulha in Palestinian society, see Lang (2002).

7. The effectiveness of this function should be treated separately for grassroots-oriented people-to-people and peace education projects, as well as elite-level Track 2 workshops. Although they have common characteristics, these activities have different goals that should be taken into consideration in any assessment.