



SECURITY WORKING GROUP

**THE JERUSALEM OLD CITY INITIATIVE**  
**SECURITY ASSESSMENT**

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## FOREWORD

1. Over three years ago, we concluded that an exclusive preoccupation with the Intifada and its consequences was insufficient, if the ultimate goal for Israelis and Palestinians remained a fair-minded, comprehensive peace. Despite the disappointment and bitterness that many experienced during that troubled time, we felt that a fresh examination of core issues was warranted and, indeed, necessary. Since then, political developments on the ground have further convinced us that neither community's needs could be met by today's political *status quo*.
2. We determined that our varied experiences with the Israeli/Palestinian conundrum might allow us to engage in a positive dialogue with academics, policy experts, officials, and civic leaders and that, by enlisting partners with functional expertise, creative ideas could be developed. We hoped that the experience, knowledge and understanding of our partners would guide us well. We have not been disappointed.
3. Our goal in the Jerusalem Old City Initiative has been to develop creative options for the governance and management of the Old City which we hope will spark the imagination of negotiators and political leaders, once final status issues are again on the table. Consequently we have developed a modular needs-based approach integrated into special governance arrangements, treating the Old City as a single unit under a single administrator, having executive authority.
4. We do not believe an Old City, geographically divided between Israel and Palestine, to be sustainable; indeed we are concerned that it would threaten the viability of any comprehensive peace, given the mosaic of Holy Sites within it, their intense symbolism and the potential for confrontation over them. Our view has been that the wounds of war do not permit a divided Old City, particularly when sacred space therein is indivisible.
5. In December 2005, with the publication of "New Directions for Deliberation and Dialogue," the Initiative held a project launch in Istanbul attended by an array of Palestinian and Israeli experts and thinkers. There was naturally a wide variety of opinion respecting our ideas, but there was universal accord that options for the Old City had to be explored in detail hitherto absent, if there was to be any hope of a negotiated settlement.
6. The problem of exactly where to start had been a dilemma for us: governance, Holy Sites, property ownership, economic and social needs, a legal framework, the list seemed endless. But in Istanbul, there was unanimity that security was paramount.
7. We therefore looked for a top flight team of experts who could take the lead, with our Israeli, Palestinian and other partners, in pooling their collective wisdom and authoring a study with integrity and merit. We found them in John de Chastelain, former Chief of the Canadian Defence Staff and currently Chief Arms De-commissioner for Northern Ireland; Roy Berlinquette, a former Deputy Commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police; and Ambassador Art Hughes, a former Director General of the Multinational Force and Observers in Sinai.

8. We could not have been more fortunate. Working effectively as volunteers, they spent hours, weeks and months, meeting, talking, debating, researching and exploring this most complex of issues. Their dedication and good humour made working with them immensely satisfying. The result is exactly what we hoped it would be: incisive, comprehensive, and deeply informed.

9. Herein is a package of suggested security arrangements for the Old City of Jerusalem which, we are convinced, can become a critical tool for political leaderships in seeking the peace agreement we all hope for.

Michael Bell, Michael J. Molloy, John Bell  
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SAMPLE

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Old City of Jerusalem is perhaps the most contentious issue in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Its sovereignty, administration and control are questions of great dispute, and its holy sites resonate powerfully in the hearts and minds of Muslims, Jews and Christians. If questions respecting the Old City remain unresolved, stability in Jerusalem cannot be assured and peace between Israelis and Palestinians will be impossible.
2. The Jerusalem Old City Initiative aims to develop creative options for the effective governance and management of the Old City, including security arrangements addressed in this paper. This goal is predicated on ensuring the integrity of the Old City and its holy space; the area is too small, densely populated and architecturally linked to be managed viably by a mix of different authorities and police forces.
3. Special governance arrangements are therefore proposed (dealt with in detail in a separate governance paper), treating the Old City as a single unit under an Administrator with executive authority, accountable to a Governance Board composed of the parties themselves and international stakeholders acceptable to both. These arrangements would be within the framework of an agreement between the parties, with two national capitals, Al Quds and Yerushalayim. It should be stressed that this initiative is not designed to resolve the conflicting claims of the parties respecting sovereignty over the Old City and in no way prejudices them. Rather, the initiative outlines practical mechanisms which can be implemented under various sovereignty options.
4. These proposed security arrangements are designed to address the fundamental security and law enforcement needs of the Old City and its residents, while ensuring freedom of worship, dignity, access, and equity of treatment for all stakeholders. They require close coordination with Israeli and Palestinian authorities. Indeed, their success will depend on the ability of Israelis and Palestinians to agree on the implementation of such special governance arrangements and to develop conditions that permit coexistence in this most contested and sacred of cities.
5. Within such a framework, and after careful consideration of the recommendations of Israeli and Palestinian security experts, the following security recommendations have been developed:
  - a. The Administrator should be accountable to an international governance board composed of international stakeholders and the Parties themselves;
  - b. A single Old City Police Service should be established, reporting to the Administrator, who should have ultimate responsibility for security arrangements in the Old City;
  - c. The Administrator should be responsible for naming a Chief of Police, in consultation with the international governance board, to serve for a fixed period of service;

- d. The police service should function under a unified command structure headed by a Chief of Police to whom all on the force will be accountable;
  - e. The police service should be professional, effective, impartial, accountable and integrated, and composed of international officers from countries acceptable to the Parties and with clear hiring criteria consistent with international standards. The issue of whether Palestinians and Israelis should be taken into the police service should be examined by the Administrator and the Chief of Police in the context of the satisfactory implementation of the agreement and the establishment of trust between the Parties. Their deployment should be determined by the Chief of Police;
  - f. Police responsibilities should include community policing, enforcement of civil and criminal laws, implementation of security arrangements affecting movement and access to and through the Old City, security and intelligence functions, counter-terrorism, and protecting the rights of all the City's residents and visitors. The police service should be organized and staffed to be able to deal with all contingencies;
  - g. The police should have the authority to investigate, question, arrest and detain suspects in conformity with accepted international norms, and to remand them to the custody of Israeli or Palestinian authorities, or, in appropriate cases to be defined, to an Old City judicial system.;
  - h. The police service should, by necessity, coordinate its efforts closely with Israeli and Palestinian security authorities, including in matters of "pursuit" and access control to the Old City;
  - i. A special emphasis should be placed on learning, training and development, as keys to achieving professionalism and performance success in the police service, given the unusually complex and sensitive environment; and
  - j. Arrangements touching on the sanctity of holy sites and access to them should be dealt with to the satisfaction of the religious communities, subject to the requirements of public order. Special security arrangements should be developed for these sites in close coordination with advisory religious and heritage bodies.
6. From our reading of the papers produced by Israeli and Palestinian partners, and our consultations with them, we are aware that there is not full agreement respecting these proposals. It is our strong belief however that the points of difference are resolvable and an effective, fair-minded and sustainable security system for the Old City is achievable.
7. It is possible that a situation of major unrest could occur that includes the complete breakdown of the Palestinian Authority in the region prior to any agreement being reached to set up the special regime for the Old City that we are proposing in this paper. We believe that such a circumstance would make it extremely unlikely that the special regime could be activated, and it is not considered further here.