

IPF Atid Voices from the Community

Deep down, I was a cynic. From what I saw growing up, it was hard for me to imagine peace between the Israelis and Palestinians. I didn't have Jewish summer camp or day school to shape my relationship with Israel or my opinions about its politics. Instead, I spent every summer in Israel with family in a small town near Rehovot. Summer seemed to provide the best weather for war - I was in Israel during several crises: the 2006 Lebanon War, Operation Cast Lead, suicide attacks and rocket fire, to name a few. Watching the news, hosting family members who lived near battlefields, and knowing people on the battlefields was traumatic. And I only had to face it a few months out of the year. I couldn't imagine what that would be like all year around. I felt it then and I know it now - the current situation is not sustainable. For the stability of the Middle East and the well-being of both peoples, there needs to be two states.



2013 was an interesting year. Secretary of State John Kerry was trying to broker talks between Israeli-Palestinian leadership, and I, a sophomore in college, found Israel Policy Forum. I joined IPF as an intern because it aligned with my conviction that two sovereignties need to be instituted. I appreciated that while the goal of establishing two states is a lofty but important one, IPF approached it realistically and with Israel's security being a main concern. What's more, at a time when developments in the peace talks occurred daily, IPF created a platform for discussion between Americans who had opinions on the current events and politicians who could impact it. To me, that was a beautiful thing.

It's important to keep the conversations going regardless of whether peace talks are in the works. The future, the *atid*, is what motivates us to act in the present. I believe one of the many problems of the conflict is a lack of honest conversation between (and among) all sides. By bringing the younger generations of American Jewish leaders to the table, I see IPF Atid as having an important voice in the talks to come. Thanks to the platforms and bipartisan conversations IPF Atid provides, deep down and on the surface I know the future is bright.

-Moriah Schervone, IPF Atid New York