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## December 13, 2007

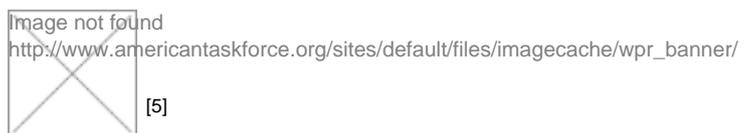
### Middle East News: World Press Roundup

A Washington Times opinion by ATFP president Dr. Ziad Asali elaborates on why developing a strong and effective Palestinian security service is in Palestinian, American and Israeli interests (1.) Reuters reports on a Red Cross statement critical of the effect of Israeli restrictions on Palestinians across the West Bank and Gaza (3.) In a Salon opinion, Greg Greenwald analyzes the results of an American Jewish Committee poll of American Jewish opinion and finds that rightwing opinions are held by few in the community (4), while in Inter Press Service, Jim Lobe looks at the same survey to find declining support for the establishment of a Palestinian state (8.) The Forward reviews the new book on former U.S. ambassador Kurtzer and USIP scholar Lasensky that takes a historical look at shortcomings in Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking by successive U.S. administrations (6.) The Independent (UK) looks at the less than auspicious start to Israeli-Palestinian peace talks (10.) An Arab News (Saudi Arabia) opinion by Uri Avnery analyzes Israel's reaction to the recent National Intelligence Estimate report on Iran's nuclear weaponization program (12.) Haaretz (Israel) looks at a World Bank report warning that even if all donors fulfill their pledges to the Palestinians, the Palestinian economy will not improve without a relaxing of Israeli movement restrictions in the West Bank (14.) Also in Haaretz, an opinion by former Israeli FM director general Shlomo Avineri takes a historical look at the reasons for the success or failure of American foreign policy in the Mideast (15.)

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### Icrc Says Israeli Clamps Worsen Gaza And W.bank Crisis

**Article Author(s):** Stephanie Nebehay

**Media Outlet:** Reuters

**Date:** December 13, 2007

**Source Link(s):** <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/12/13/AR2007121300738...> [6]

Israeli restrictions have caused a humanitarian crisis in Gaza and the West Bank that is growing worse, leaving hospitals unable to treat the sick and keeping farmers off their land, the International Committee of the Red Cross said.

In a statement issued on Thursday, the neutral humanitarian agency called on Israel to "lift the retaliatory measures which are paralyzing life in Gaza" and urged Palestinian factions to stop targeting civilian areas and putting lives at risk.

## **Democrats Show Beltway "strength," Avoid Being Depicted As Weak**

**Article Author(s):** Glenn Greenwald

**Media Outlet:** Salon.com

**Date:** December 13, 2007

**Source Link(s):** <http://www.salon.com/opinion/greenwald/index.html> [7]

Democrats show Beltway "strength," avoid being depicted as weak

(updated below - Update II)

In the world of the Beltway pundit, Bush Dog Representative, and Democratic strategist, this is how Democrats prove how "strong" and tough they are and avoid being demonized as "weak" and "soft"; this is all just from today:

From The Hill:

From The Washington Post:

From CNN:

From The Hill:

## **Aiming To Translate Politics Into Hope For Palestinians**

**Article Author(s):** Steven Erlanger

**Media Outlet:** The New York Times

**Date:** December 13, 2007

**Source Link(s):**

[http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/13/world/middleeast/13blair.html?\\_r=2&oref=slogin...](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/13/world/middleeast/13blair.html?_r=2&oref=slogin...)

[8]

Tony Blair had that practiced politician's half grin, his eyes in semi-focus, as the Palestinian minister of tourism, Khoulood Daibes, showed him around a display of Palestinian products at the Chamber of Commerce here Tuesday night. Mr. Blair, the former British prime minister and now the Western envoy for Palestinian development, posed for photos with businessmen and praised the quality of the local marble tiles.

## Prerequisites For Peace

**Article Author(s):** Mustafa Barghouthi

**Media Outlet:** The Baltimore Sun

**Date:** December 13, 2007

**Source Link(s):** <http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/opinion/oped/bal-op.palestine13dec13,0,2680401....> [9]

As one who for decades has supported a two-state solution and the nonviolent struggle for Palestinian rights, I view the recent conference in Annapolis with a great deal of skepticism - and a glimmer of hope.

Seven years with no negotiations - and increasing numbers of Israeli settlers, an economic blockade in Gaza and an intricate network of roadblocks and checkpoints stifling movement in the West Bank - have led us to despair and distrust. Any commitment must be made not only to conclude an agreement before the end of 2008 but also to end Israel's occupation.

## Thanks, But No Thanks

**Article Author(s):** Samih Khalidi

**Media Outlet:** The Guardian

**Article Type:** Commentary

**Date:** December 13, 2007

**Source Link(s):** <http://www.guardian.co.uk/israel/Story/0,,2226615,00.html> [10]

The Palestinian state has now become the universal standard for all solutions to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The international community applauds the concept. President Bush proudly proclaims it as his "vision". The Israelis have come to it belatedly, after years of steadfast refusal and rejection.

## Angry Start To Palestinian Talks

**Article Author(s):** Donald Macintyre

**Media Outlet:** The Independent

**Date:** December 13, 2007

**Source Link(s):** [http://news.independent.co.uk/world/middle\\_east/article3247576.ece](http://news.independent.co.uk/world/middle_east/article3247576.ece) [11]

The first formal Israeli Palestinian negotiating process for seven years made an acrimonious start yesterday in the shadow of plans for new Jewish housing in Arab East Jerusalem and the threat of military escalation in Gaza.

Palestinian negotiators used the first session since the international Middle East conference in Annapolis to express their outrage over plans for an expansion of the settlement of Har Homa - already criticised by the US, EU and UK government.

## How They Stole The Bomb

**Article Author(s):** Uri Avnery

**Media Outlet:** Arab News

**Date:** December 13, 2007

**Source Link(s):**

<http://www.arabnews.com/?page=7&section=0&article=104562&d=13&m=12&y=2007> [12]

It was like an atom bomb falling on Israel. The earth shook. Our political and military leaders were all in shock. The headlines screamed with rage. What happened?

A real catastrophe: the American intelligence community, comprising 16 different agencies, reached a unanimous verdict: already in 2003, the Iranians terminated their efforts to produce a nuclear bomb, and they have not resumed them since. Even if they change their mind in the future, they will need at least five years to achieve their aim.

## No Peace Without Justice

**Media Outlet:** The Jordan Times

**Date:** December 13, 2007

**Source Link(s):** <http://www.jordantimes.com/?news=4332> [13]

Negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis started yesterday under a cloud. Understandably, both sides preferred to keep their talks as low-key as possibly, choosing a secret location in Jerusalem rather than, as expected, the King David Hotel [where Jewish terrorists once killed British soldiers].

One suspects that this decision came at the behest of the Palestinian team who could hardly afford to be seen grinning and backslapping at that place while Palestinians were being killed in Gaza and yet more land is set to be confiscated in the West Bank.

## World Bank: Pa Economy Depends On Mobility

**Article Author(s):** Avi Issacharoff

**Media Outlet:** Haaretz

**Date:** December 13, 2007

**Source Link(s):** <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/934078.html> <sup>[14]</sup>

A report released today by the World Bank warns that even if the donor countries meet all of the PA's demands for aid, the Palestinian economy will continue to deteriorate if Israel does not alter mobility and trade restrictions in the West Bank.

The dire message comes ahead of the Pledging Conference to the Palestinian Authority next Monday in Paris.

## On America's Strength And Weakness

**Article Author(s):** Shlomo Avineri

**Media Outlet:** Haaretz

**Date:** December 13, 2007

**Source Link(s):** <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/934088.html> <sup>[15]</sup>

All that the participants in the Annapolis conference agreed upon was to begin negotiations on several parallel channels. It is clear the results will depend, to a large extent, on the United States' ability to navigate these moves. In this context, it is worth trying to recall where in the past the U.S. was successful in its diplomatic efforts in the Middle East, and where it failed.

From the point of view of processes and events from past decades, the U.S. is successful in the Middle East if one of two scenarios is in place. When lacking, the U.S. fails.

## Soft Drink Fizz Goes Flat In Gaza

**Article Author(s):** Tim Mcgirk

**Media Outlet:** Time

**Date:** December 28, 2007

**Source Link(s):** <http://www.time.com/time/printout/0,8816,1694477,00.html> <sup>[16]</sup>

Every closed factory has its own kind of unbearable silence. The Yazegi Group's soft-drink plant in Gaza, with its maze of metal tubes and conveyor belts all switched off, has the hush of a futuristic mausoleum. Marketing manager Ammar Yazegi pauses beside empty 7Up bottles stacked in perfect emerald-green cubes up to the rafters and says, "I miss the music of the machines and workers. It's a beautiful noise. This silence drives me crazy."

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[6] [http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/12/13/AR2007121300738\\_pf.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/12/13/AR2007121300738_pf.html)

[7] <http://www.salon.com/opinion/greenwald/index.html>

[8]

[http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/13/world/middleeast/13blair.html?\\_r=2&oref=slogin&ref=middleeast&](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/13/world/middleeast/13blair.html?_r=2&oref=slogin&ref=middleeast&)

[9] [http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/opinion/oped/bal-op.palestine13dec13,0,2680401\\_story](http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/opinion/oped/bal-op.palestine13dec13,0,2680401_story)

[10] <http://www.guardian.co.uk/israel/Story/0,,2226615,00.html>

[11] [http://news.independent.co.uk/world/middle\\_east/article3247576.ece](http://news.independent.co.uk/world/middle_east/article3247576.ece)

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[13] <http://www.jordantimes.com/?news=4332>

[14] <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/934078.html>

[15] <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/934088.html>

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