

# **REVITALIZING THE MULTILATERAL PEACE PROCESS-REGIONAL COOPERATION**

Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Middle-East Bureau

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# WHY NOW, WHAT HAS CHANGED, AND WHAT IS NEW

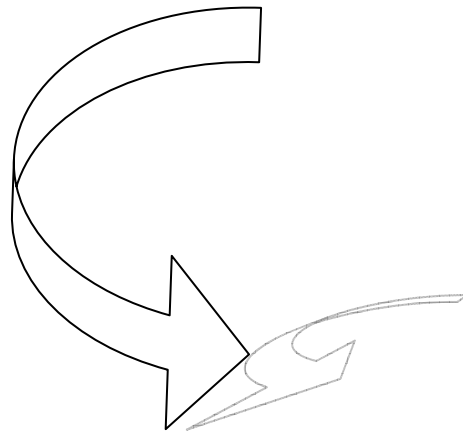
## **The Change:**

- **9/11, Afghanistan and Iraq, reforms in the Middle East**
- **Improved atmosphere between Israel & the Palestinians**

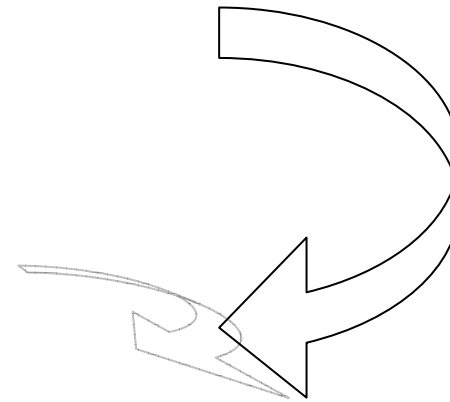
**Regional cooperation is important to the  
states in the region**

**Integrating new elements into the multilateral  
framework: fighting terrorism, building  
capabilities within the society, science &  
technology**

# Peace Process – Madrid 1991

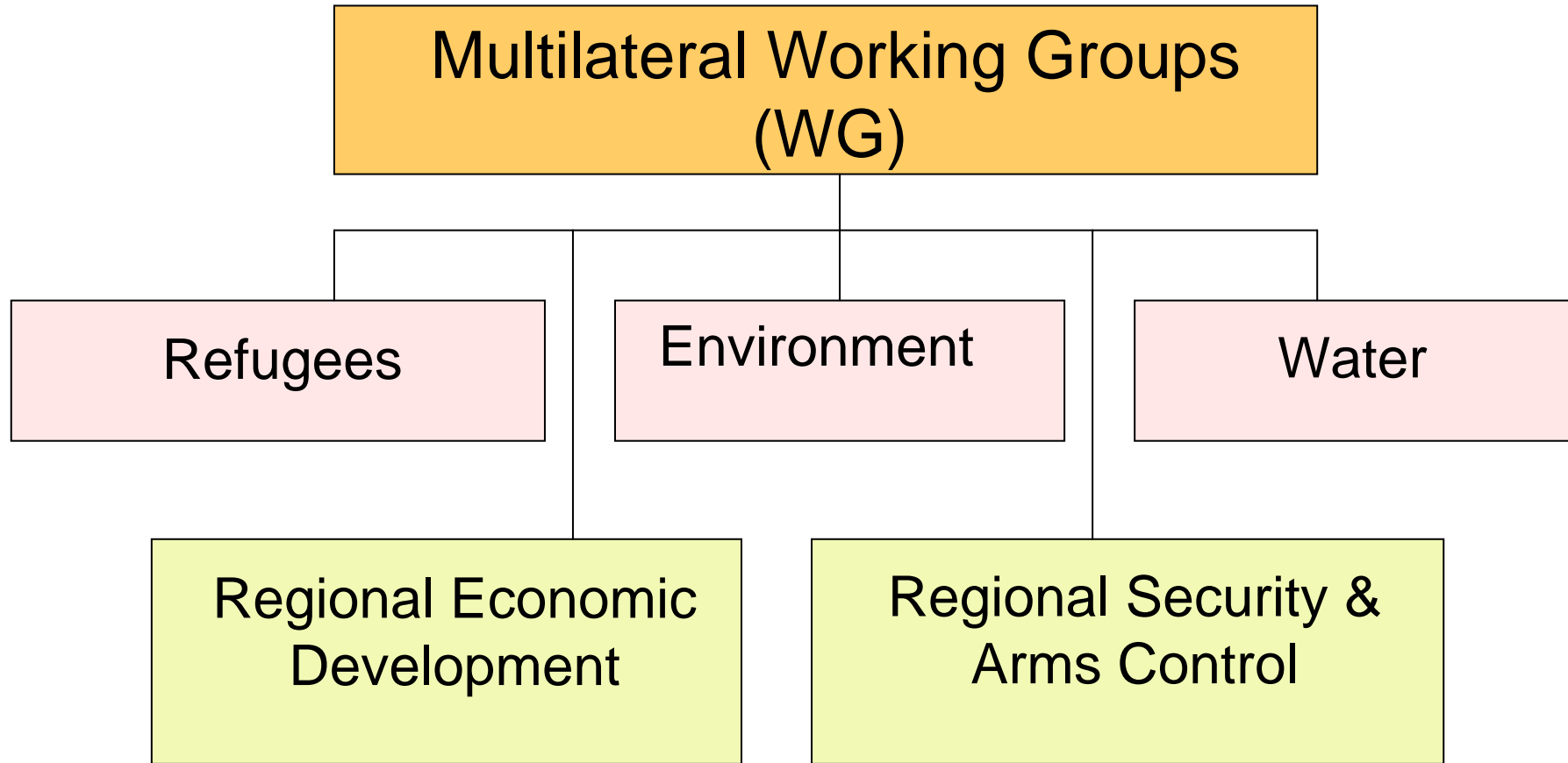


Multilateral



Bilateral

# MOSCOW 1992



## **Multilateral Goals, formulated in Moscow 1992**

- **To intensify ties among core partners: Jordan, PA, and Israel**
- **Expand ties with peripheral states: Oman, Morocco ...**
- **Confidence-building steps**
- **Formal framework for normalization process**
- **Finding solutions to acute problems that impact on the whole region**
- **Supporting solutions that are within the framework of a permanent agreement**
- **Laying the foundations for institutions and practical work models**
- **Promotion of projects in the field**

# Main Points

- **WG partners continue to operate!**
- **Core partners and the donors – are interested in expanding operations.**
- **This past year, activity was the most intense in four years.**
- **The last official meeting of the Steering Committee – Moscow, February 2000**
- **Political conditions today are conducive to upgrading multilateral activities.**

# Our Recommendations

- **Revitalization of WG operations and addition of new elements:**
- **As a positive political declaration**
- **As part of trust-building steps between Israel and its neighbors**
- **Israeli public opinion – normalization is a central condition for supporting a bilateral peace process**
- **Strengthening ties with Arab states through various channels and encouraging dialogue between Israel and its neighbors**
- **Regional cooperation as a need of the states in the region.**
- **As a tool for building a coalition between pragmatic and moderate forces in our region.**



# WATER

- **Regional Partnership**
- **Main points**
  - American gavel-holder
  - Nine plenum and hundreds of work meetings
  - Regional Steering Committee meetings – PA, Jordan, Israel (last one held on Dec.05)
- **Donor States - US, EU, France, Netherlands, Norway, Japan, South Korea**
- **New members**
- **Britain, Italy**
- **Extent of Investments**  
More than \$60 million





# Water Working Group Activities

## Determined in January 1992

Improved access  
to water data

Management &  
conservation of  
water resources

Increased supply  
of water

Concepts of  
regional water  
management &  
cooperation

Data Banks  
EXACT



Increased  
awareness of  
water  
conservation –  
Water Care, Rain  
Catcher

Study to  
examine water  
supply and use

Regional  
training  
programs

Norwegian  
WaterNet Project

Comparative  
Study: legal &  
economic  
aspects of water

Desalination  
Research Center  
in Oman MEDRC

Water Atlas  
(1994-5)

Luxemburg  
Project 1995-6

Regional  
cooperation -  
DOP (Oslo 1996)



Digitizing rainfall data  
from strip charts  
in Amman



# REFUGEES

- **Canada is the gavel-holder**
- **Mandate – “Improved living conditions of refugees, without harming their political rights”**

- **Six Sub-groups**

**Public Health**

**Child Welfare**

**Information gathering**

**Professional training**

**Family unification**

**Economic development**

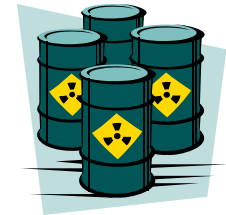


- **Activities in Track 2 channels**



# Environment

- Gavel-holder – Japan (Resuming activity)
- Main projects:
- Bahrain's behavior code for managing and preserving the environment – Cairo Consultation Group (CCG)
- Amman Regional Training Center for the Environment: toxic waste, economic incentives, solid waste, legislation (the Center does not exist, but the US continues to operate courses)
- Anti-desertification Project – Egypt, Tunisia, PA, Jordan and Israel, organized by the World Bank (project is over)
- Pesticide monitoring
- Sea pollution treatment in Eilat Bay (bilaterally with Jordan)
- Low-level Radioactive Waste treatment (LLRW)



# Regional Security

- **Gavel-holders – US and Russia**
- **Suspended Activities:**
- **Operation of computerized communications system among states in region**
- **Discussions on advance notice of unusual military activity**
- **Regional Security Centers in Jordan, Qatar, and Tunisia**
- **Preparation of agreements on joint maritime actions – prevention of incidents at sea (INCSEA) and search & rescue operations at sea (SAR)**
- **WG is inactive, mainly due to Egypt, which demands a discussion on nuclear topics**



# WG for Economic Development

- Gavel-holder – European Union
- Regional projects promoted in the past:  
Regional bank MENABANK  
Regional tourist organization MEMTTA  
Regional business council RBC  
Study of regional trade options and integration STIMENA  
Development of eastern Mediterranean coastline SEMED  
Overall development of Eilat Bay TEAM-A
- Taba Group – finding practical ways to increase regional trade
- The office in Amman is not operational



# **Subjects to focus on in the near future:**

- **Economic development –**

**Reactivation of the permanent secretariat in Amman (EU)**

**Resumption of the regional business council (Israel)**

**Regional tourist organization (Japan) – get it up & running**

**Regional workshop on transportation standardization**

**Coordination of communications frequencies in the region – Project Spectrum (US)**

**Micro-financing**

**Science & technology**

**Capabilities building – public administration, women's empowerment**

**Alternative energy and information society**

# **The Environment**

**Japan's resumption as gavel-holder**

**Setting up a professional training center in Amman**

**Renewal of the anti-desertification project**

**Activation of the CCG as the steering committee of the Cairo Working Group**

**Development of anti-pollution project in Eilat Bay & expansion to the Mediterranean**

**Regional plant gene bank to protect plant varieties**

**Medical & emergency sub-committee – disasters, plagues, disease prevention**

**Sustainable Development in the M.E.**



# **WATER**

**Convening of Working Group Steering Committee**

**Continuation of existing projects**

**Resumption of Project WaterNet**

**Addition of regional members to MEDRC**

**Increasing precipitation**

# Regional Security

- **Conceptual**  
**Creating trust between the sides (long-term)**  
**First stage – emphasis on security and trust-building**  
**Preference for regional concerns over global conventions in arms control negotiations**
- **Regional Security**
- **Operative**  
**Computerized communications among states in the region**  
**Advance notice of unusual military activity**  
**Setting up Regional Security Centers in Jordan, Qatar and Tunisia**  
**Agreements on joint maritime activities – prevention of incidents at sea (INCSEA) and search & rescue (SAR)**  
**New sub-committee for regional counter-terrorism cooperation**

# **REFUGEES**

**According to original goal:**

**Projects to improve living conditions of refugees in their current places of residence, while avoiding discussion on political aspects of the issue**

**Focus on:**

**Public Health (Italy)**

**Child Welfare (Sweden)**

**Professional Training (US)**

**Economic Development (EU)**

Food for Thought: Pilot projects in these fields in Gaza after the “Disengagement”

(The figures in the next page are based on FAFO data 2003)

