

# Blue White Future

## Keeping Israel Jewish and Democratic



**BLUE WHITE  
FUTURE**

**11/2012-11/2013 Report**

## **About the Organization**

Founded in 2009, *Blue White Future (BWF)* is a non-partisan, registered Israeli non-profit organization that seeks to help resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on the basis of a “two states for two peoples”. *BWF*'s efforts operate on two parallel tracks. First, we seek to encourage the Israeli government to make tangible progress towards a reality of two-states. Second, *BWF* focuses on methods to absorb the settlers within Israel's 1967 borders.

In 2013, the international pressure on Israel to return to the negotiations' table was successful and a new cycle of negotiations were launched under US mediation, this time with a clear and specific deadline: April 2014. While we, as a majority of the Israeli people and a majority of MK's, all heartedly wish the negotiations will succeed, we are also realists. If past experience teaches us anything, it's that dissolved negotiations lead to a vacuum, quickly filled by a new outburst of violence. Under these circumstances, it is ever more crucial that Israel will prepare a sustainable, feasible and comprehensive alternative. *BWF*'s **constructive unilateralism** paradigm presents the Israeli decision-makers with a set of practical tools needed to facilitate an independent, Israeli-led progress towards the two-state solution. With the deadline of April 2014 fast approaching, we at the *BWF* movement will be obliged to promote the **constructive unilateralism** paradigm, as it is the only viable alternative to negotiations.

## **Field and Public Work**

### 1. Electoral Debate



*BWF* held an **electoral debate** between the Zionist parties on **December 23<sup>rd</sup>**, 2012. The debate was widely covered by major Israeli news outlets. [Photos from the debate](#) and the [complete debate](#) are available online.

Due to the success of the debate, the movement has decided to make a public debate an annual priority, in the framework of which a panel of politicians of all Zionist and democratic parties will take place. These debates will be scheduled for December each

year; at the debates we will publicly expose the results of a comparative survey, *The Jewish and Democratic Index*. **This year's debate, scheduled to take place in December 29<sup>th</sup>, is currently in the making.**

## 2. The Gatekeepers



BWF has utilized the global success of the Oscar nominated documentary *The Gatekeepers*, featuring one of the movement's co-founders, Mr. Ami Ayalon. Since **May 2013**, the movement has been conducting routine screenings of the film, followed by a lecture of Mr. Ayalon, in campuses across Israel. These events are highly

successful, with each being attended by 250 students.

## 3. Conventions



In addition, the movement has partnered with the *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung* in organizing a special convention, on the occasion of the visit of the President of the European Parliament (ret.), Chairman of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung and Member of the European Parliament Prof. Hans-

Gert Pöttering. The conference, *sustaining the Israeli-Palestinian negotiation effort*, was held on **October 2<sup>nd</sup>** and attracted a viable audience.

## 4. Field work

The name of our major field project was changed from "**Zionism on both Sides of the Fence**" to "**Dialogue on the Line**". The third cycle of the program is currently being concluded; the screening process for the fourth cycle, scheduled to commence **early 2014**, is underway. BWF see this project as its flagship project; the dialogue facilitated by this project dramatically promotes the two-state solution as it extends its public legitimacy and increases national unity. Therefore, the organization is highly interested in extending the

project, both with regards to the number of annual cycles and with regards to the length of each cycle. BWF's "**Dialogue on the Line**" program will begin its fourth cycle in 2014.

#### 5. Roundtables



Also, BWF has conducted dozens of parlor meetings, intimate lectures by senior officials of the movement in private homes, including two roundtables: political (held in **May**) and planning (held in **November**). In 2014, BWF will continue to hold a series of roundtable events, once every four months on various aspects of settler absorption.

#### 6. Meetings with Ambassadors

The movement's senior officials continued to meet Ambassadors to Israel, including those of the USA, the UK, Holland, Sweden, Denmark and Finland.

#### 7. Legislation

BWF has drafted and is actively promoting a law designed to provide a framework for voluntary evacuation and appropriate compensation. The law ensures compensation for those settlers wishing to relocate prior to reaching an agreement. It will allow settlers who recognize the inevitability of relocation to do so of their own accord.

### **Research and Planning**

#### 1. Public surveys

We have partnered with the Smith Institute in order to conduct periodic public opinion surveys regarding the future of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state. The survey is conducted among 500 individuals who constitute a representative sample of the adult Jewish population in Israel. Results of **December 2012** survey are available [here](#), and the **April 2013** results are available [here](#).

#### 2. Research

Substantial progress was made in our **research department** as well. Our **Urban Absorption** research, conducted in cooperation with *Macro*, will be published on **January 2014**. The second phase of our research efforts is a joint venture with the Interdisciplinary

Center Herzliya's esteemed School of Psychology: a research of the psychological aspects of the relocation process; this research is also due to be completed and published early 2014.

## **Media and Public Relations**

### 1. International

On the **international sphere**, we made substantial efforts to promote the movement's policy plan among **US decision-makers** as well, in light of the renewed negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. To that end, the movement has established a strategic partnership with a P.R agency in New York. The impact of these efforts was meaningful: BWF officials were interviewed<sup>1</sup> and invited to publish op-ed columns<sup>2</sup> by major US news outlets; the organization and its work were also covered by the media<sup>3</sup>. To view all BWF's international press coverage [click here](#).

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<sup>1</sup> Tovah Lazaroff, *Former negotiator: 100,000 settlers need to be evacuated*, The Jerusalem Post, November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2013; Steven Dishler, *Amid peace talks, a call for a Blue White Future*, JUF News, August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013: <http://www.juf.org/news/israel.aspx?id=422923>; Benni Avni, *A different path to peace*, New York Post, March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013: <http://nypost.com/2013/03/20/a-different-path-to-peace/>; Carlo Strenger, *Keepers at the gates of our democracy*, Haaretz, January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013: <http://www.haaretz.com/blogs/strenger-than-fiction/keepers-at-the-gates-of-our-democracy.premium-1.494358>.

<sup>2</sup> Gilead Sher, *The time to prepare for evacuation of the West Bank is now*, Haaretz, November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013: <http://www.haaretz.com/opinion/.premium-1.559038>; Ami Ayalon and Orni Petruschka, *Lower the bar for two states*, Jerusalem Post, October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013: <http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Op-Ed-Contributors/Lower-the-bar-for-two-states-331099>; Gilead Sher and Daniel Kurtzer, *Kerry's next move*, The Los Angeles Times, July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013: <http://articles.latimes.com/2013/jul/30/opinion/la-oe-kurtzer-sher-peace-kerry-20130730>; Ami Ayalon, Gilead Sher and Orni Petruschka, *Why Israel must make bold move to secure Palestinian peace talks – and Israel's future*, July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013: <http://www.csmonitor.com/layout/set/r14/Commentary/Opinion/2013/0730/Why-Israel-must-make-bold-move-to-secure-Palestinian-peace-talks-and-Israel-s-future>; Orni Petruschka, *Teaching Israel how to negotiate*, Haaretz, June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013: <http://www.haaretz.com/opinion/.premium-1.531884>; Gilead Sher and Amos Yadlin, *Unilateral Peace*, March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013: [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/03/19/unilateral\\_peace\\_israel\\_palestine](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/03/19/unilateral_peace_israel_palestine); Ami Ayalon, *Obama in Israel: The start of a new era?*, Los Angeles Times, March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013: <http://articles.latimes.com/2013/mar/08/opinion/la-oe-ayalon-israel-obama-20130308>; Gilead Sher, *Time has come for 2 states*, Ynet News, January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2013: <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4338374,00.html>; Ami Ayalon, *The red line should go from Tehran to Ramallah*, The Jerusalem Post, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2013: <http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Op-Ed-Contributors/The-red-line-should-go-from-Tehran-to-Ramallah>.

<sup>3</sup> Lolita Brayman, *Constructive unilateralism – Israel's insurance policy*, Haaretz, August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013: <http://www.haaretz.com/opinion/.premium-1.540529>; Leslie Susser, *Coalition consequences*, January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2013: <http://www.jpost.com/Jerusalem-Report/Israel/Coalition-consequences>.

## 2. The Israeli Media

Aside from designated operations with regards to the general elections, *BWF* continued its efforts to promote its agenda in **the media**. In that respect, we have made significant progress in positioning the movement within the Israeli media: [items featuring senior movement officials](#), regarding the settlements, the peace process and so on, were broadcasted and/or printed every couple of weeks; a major media event was held – the aforementioned debate.

## 3. Advertisements' Campaign



Also prior to the elections, *BWF* launched a **public advertisements campaign**. The campaign included advertisements and banners in Israel's major news outlets. The aim of this campaign was to encourage voters to make the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict a priority in their voting. The advertisement was signed by 34 prominent figures, members of our Board and of our Public Council.

## 4. On-line Presence

In the **online sphere**, *BWF* has succeeded in substantially increasing its exposure. The number of monthly entrances to our website has doubled and the number of our social networks' subscribers has increased significantly.

## International Operations

### 1. Europe

In **November 5<sup>th</sup>**, 2013, Ami Ayalon was invited to take part in a special screening<sup>4</sup> of *The Gatekeepers*. Following the movie was a Q&A session, in which Mr. Ayalon presented

<sup>4</sup> The screening was made possible by the *Yachad* organization, a group of British Jews who believe that Israel's best hope for safety and security lies in a stable, enduring, comprehensive peace with its neighbors – and that only a two-state solution can ensure a safe, secure and democratic national home for the Jewish people within universally-recognized borders, alongside a viable, sovereign and democratic state for the Palestinian people, allowing both nations to exercise at last their right to live as free peoples.

BWF's agenda. Mr. Ayalon then met senior British journalists and discussed the current state of affairs with regards to Israeli-Palestinian peace process and BWF's paradigm with regards to this process.



BWF's senior leadership was also invited to take part in a special conference, held **February** 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013 by the *Hans Seidel foundation* and the *Centre for European Studies* in Brussels, Belgium. The conference, *Constructive Unilateralism: Invigorating Two-State-Dynamics in the Middle East Peace Process*", dealt with the concept of

constructive unilateralism, which facilitates the withdrawal of Israeli settlements in the West Bank, proposes interim steps to reinvigorate two-state-dynamics with out-of-the-box thinking.

Attn. Gilead Sher was invited to speak at the Heinrich Boel Stiftung's "*20 years after Oslo: new ways out of the crisis in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?*" convention, held in Berlin, **November** 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013. Attn. Sher participated in a roundtable on *the Analysis and Evaluation of Current Political Debates in Israel and Palestine* and in a panel on *Peace Process without Peace – How to continue 20 years after Oslo?*

## 2. USA

Attn. Gilead Sher was invited to discuss Israel's current challenges and opportunities at the "*Peace and War: The View from Israel*"<sup>5</sup> conference held by the *Woodrow Wilson Center's Middle East Program*.

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<sup>5</sup> Available at the Center's website: <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/event/peace-and-war-the-view-israel>.