

DOI: 10.31110/consensus/2023-03/061-069

УДК (UDC) 327.5 (73 : 569.4-076) "1993/2001" (043.3)

**THE OSLO AGREEMENTS AND THE 2000 CAMP DAVID SUMMIT: THE ATTEMPT OF US  
PRESIDENT B. CLINTON AND HIS ADMINISTRATION TO SETTLE THE ARAB-ISRAELI  
CONFLICT PEACEFULLY IN 1993-2001**

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**Abstract**

The article analyzes the Oslo 1 and Oslo 2 agreements, the 2000 summit in Camp David as attempts to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict with the direct participation of U.S. President Bill Clinton and his administration in 1993–2001. Considerable attention is paid to the analysis of the content of the agreements and the positions of the parties regarding the peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The main structural elements of the Oslo 1 and Oslo 2 agreements have been identified. The opinions of the leaders of Israel and Palestine regarding the possibility of a complete settlement of the conflict are analyzed. US President Bill Clinton's views on the process of settling the Arab-Israeli conflict during the Camp David summit are provided. The principled positions of the leader of the Palestinian Authority Yasser Arafat regarding Jerusalem and the creation of an independent Palestine are highlighted.

**The purpose of the research** is to analyze the Oslo 1, Oslo 2 agreements and the 2000 Camp David summit as an attempt by U.S. President B. Clinton and his administration to implement the process of peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

**The methodological basis** of the research was the principles of objectivity, historicism and systematicity with the use of general scientific research methods: analysis, synthesis, generalization of information.

**The scientific novelty** of the publication consists in a comprehensive analysis of the peace talks Oslo 1, Oslo 2 and the summit in Camp David in 2000, as the attempts of U.S. President B. Clinton and his administration at the negotiating table to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict in 1993–2001.

**Conclusions.** The agreements Oslo 1, Oslo 2 and the summit in Camp David in 2000 became a real breakthrough in relations between Israel and Palestine, for the first time in the last decades of the 20th century there were real reasons to believe that the Arab-Israeli conflict would still be possible resolve peacefully. However, despite all attempts, the Oslo-1, Oslo-2 and the 2000 Camp David summit did not finally resolve the conflict in the Middle East. In the societies of both states, new radical options for resolving the conflict were maturing, which eventually led to a new intifada of the Palestinian people.

**Keywords:** Arab-Israeli conflict, Middle East, B. Clinton, peace process, Oslo 1, Oslo 2, Camp David

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**УГОДИ ОСЛО ТА САМІТ У КЕМП–ДЕВІДІ 2000 Р.: СПРОБА ПРЕЗИДЕНТА США  
Б. КЛІНТОНА ТА ЙОГО АДМІНІСТРАЦІЇ МИРНО ВРЕГУЛОВАТИ АРАБО–ІЗРАЇЛЬСЬКИЙ  
КОНФЛІКТ У 1993–2001 РР.**

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**Анотація**

У статті проаналізовано угоди «Осло-1» та «Осло-2», саміт 2000 року у Кемп-Девіді, як спроби врегулювання арабо-ізраїльського конфлікту за безпосередньої участі президента США Білла Клінтона та його адміністрації. Значну увагу приділено аналізу змісту угод та позиції сторін щодо мирного врегулювання арабо-ізраїльського конфлікту. Визначено основні структурні елементи угод «Осло-1» та «Осло-2». Проаналізовано думки лідерів Ізраїлю та Палестини щодо можливості повного врегулювання конфлікту, а також думки президента США Білла Клінтона щодо процесу врегулювання арабо-ізраїльського конфлікту після саміту у Кемп-Девіді.

**Метою дослідження є** аналіз угод «Осло-1», «Осло-2» та саміту у Кемп-Девіді 2000 року як спроби президента США Б. Клінтона та його адміністрації здійснення процесу мирного врегулювання арабо-ізраїльського конфлікту.

**Методологічною основою** дослідження стали принципи об'єктивності, історизму та системності із застосуванням загальнонаукових методів дослідження: аналізу, синтезу, узагальнення інформації.

**Наукова новизна публікації** полягає у комплексному аналізі мирних перемовин «Осло-1», «Осло-2» та саміту у Кемп-Девіді 2000 року, як спроби президента США Б. Клінтона та його адміністрації за столом перемовин врегулювати арабо-ізраїльський конфлікт у 1993–2001 рр.

**Висновки.** Угоди «Осло-1», «Осло-2» та саміт у Кемп-Девіді 2000 р. стали справжнім проривом у відносинах між Ізраїлем та Палестиною. Вперше за останні десятиліття ХХ ст. були реальні підстави вважати, що арабо-ізраїльський конфлікт все ж можна буде вирішити мирним шляхом. Проте, попри всі спроби, угоди «Осло-1», «Осло-2» та саміт у Кемп-Девіді 2000 р. остаточно не вирішили конфлікт на Близькому Сході. У суспільствах обох держав визрівали нові радикальні варіанти його вирішення, що врешті-решт привело до нової інтифади палестинського народу.

**Ключові слова:** арабо-ізраїльський конфлікт, Близький Схід, Б. Клінтон, мирний процес, «Осло-1», «Осло-2», Кемп-Девід

**Цитування:** Motsak, S. & Tokarenko, I. (2023). The Oslo Agreements and the 2000 Camp David Summit: the Attempt of US President B. Clinton and His Administration to Settle the Arab-Israeli Conflict Peacefully in 1993–2001. *Consensus*, 3, 61–69.

**URL:** <https://konsensus.net.ua/index.php/konsensus/article/view/75>

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**The Problem Statement.** The Arab–Israeli conflict is one of the main problems of the Middle East region at the present stage of its development. After the proclamation of the independent State of Israel in 1948, the Palestinians have been constantly striving to achieve justice and create their own independent state. Because of this, the conflict has taken on radical forms and it has become almost impossible to resolve it without peaceful negotiations.

After the Madrid Conference in 1991, favorable conditions were formed for attempts to resolve the Arab–Israeli conflict at the negotiating table. The United States of America, as a superpower, representing its interests in the Middle East, sought to resolve the Arab–Israeli conflict, which prevented it from fully realizing its interests in the region. Therefore, U.S. Presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton sought to bring the parties to the conflict closer to a peaceful resolution.

**Historiography of the problem.** A significant number of foreign scholars have studied the peace process of resolving the Arab–Israeli conflict of the 1990s. In particular, the place of the Oslo 1 and Oslo 2 agreements in the system of the peace process of the Arab–Israeli conflict was studied by A. Schlime<sup>1</sup>, G. Usher<sup>2</sup>, and W. Laqueur<sup>3</sup>. The results of the Camp David Summit are analyzed in the works of A. Hanieh<sup>4</sup>, J. Raymond<sup>5</sup>, G. Usher<sup>6</sup>.

**The purpose of this article** is to analyze the Oslo 1, Oslo 2 and Camp David summit of 2000 as an attempt by US President Clinton and his administration to implement a peaceful settlement of the Arab–Israeli conflict.

**The main text of the article.** After the escalation of the situation in the Middle East in 1987, the tension between the Arab states and Israel increased significantly. On December 9, 1987, the intifada (from the Arabic – uprising) began, which marked a new stage of the Arab–Israeli confrontation. According to the organization “B’Tselem” (Israeli non-governmental human rights organization), during 1987–1993, 111 Israelis and more than 2000 Palestinians were killed in the intifada<sup>7</sup>. In this context, the issue of continuing the peace process has become an important factor in reducing the tensions in the Middle East.

To this aim, with the direct mediation of the United States, negotiations began between Israel, namely Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, and the Palestine Liberation Organization (hereinafter – PLO) with the participation of its leader Yasser Arafat, to end

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<sup>1</sup> Avi Shlaim. The Rise and Fall of the Oslo Peace Process. *International Relations of the Middle East* / Fawcett L. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. 242 p.

<sup>2</sup> Graham Usher. *Dispatches from Palestine: the rise and fall of the Oslo peace process*. London: Pluto Press, 1999. 197 p.

<sup>3</sup> Laqueur W., Rubin B. *The Israel–Arab reader: a documentary history of the Middle East conflict*. New York: Penguin Books, 2008. 627 p.

<sup>4</sup> Akram Hanieh. The Camp David Papers. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (Winter 2001), Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 75–97.

<sup>5</sup> Raymond G. Helmick *Negotiating outside the law: why Camp David failed* London: Pluto Press, 2004. 352 p.

<sup>6</sup> Graham Usher. *Dispatches from Palestine...*

<sup>7</sup> Fatalities in the first Intifada. URL: [https://www.btselem.org/statistics/first\\_intifada\\_tables](https://www.btselem.org/statistics/first_intifada_tables)

the confrontation between Arabs and Israelis. The international secret platform for negotiations between Israel and the PLO was the city of Oslo, the capital of Norway.

As a result of the first stage of negotiations, on August 20, 1993, a preliminary agreement entitled “Declaration of Principles of Peace” was concluded. Which showed that the peace process is no longer illusory and it can be not only at the level of rhetoric, but acquire legal norms.

At the second stage of negotiations, which was actually the main one, on January 26, 1993, Israel recognized the Palestinian Authority, which included Jericho and the Gaza Strip<sup>8</sup>.

As a result of the third stage of negotiations, the leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization confirmed the right to existence of the state of Israel. September 9, 1993, Y. Arafat sent a letter to Israeli Prime Minister Y. Rabin, in which Israel was recognized as an independent state, and also emphasized the observance of previous agreements on the settlement of the conflict.

And the last, fourth stage of negotiations was the solemn signing on September 13, 1993 in Washington of the “Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements”, better known as the “Oslo Agreements”. For the first time in decades of the Arab-Israeli confrontation, the Prime Minister of Israel and the leader of the PLO shook hands. The declaration consisted of 17 articles and 4 annexes.

The goal of the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations within the framework of the Middle East peace process was to establish an interim Palestinian Authority – an elected Council in the West Bank and Gaza Strip for a transitional period not exceeding five years. This body was supposed to enable the settlement of the conflict on the basis of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 of 1967 and 338 of 1973. It is understood that these temporary measures were an organic part of the entire peace process and further full settlement of the conflict on the basis of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338<sup>9</sup>.

Having analyzed the “Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements”, we can conclude that the most important points of this declaration are:

- the official recognition of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which will be governed by an elected PLO Council;
- the formation of a transitional period and negotiations on permanent status. The transitional period was to be five years after the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area, and permanent status negotiations were to begin as soon as possible, but no later than the third year of the transitional period;
- formation of a joint force to maintain public order and security. The PLO Council would establish a police force, while Israel would continue to be responsible for defense

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<sup>8</sup> Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements (Oslo Accords). URL: <https://peacemaker.un.org/israelopt-osloaccord03>

<sup>9</sup> Ibidem.

against external threats and the responsibility for the common security of Israelis for their internal security and public order<sup>10</sup>.

In general, the “Oslo Accords” or as they are also called the Oslo 1 agreements have become an important factor in the resumption of the peace process of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The overall result of these agreements was the mutual recognition of the PLO and Israel, as well as the end of the intifada.

The next stage of negotiations was the approval of the permanent status of the PLO in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. To this end, before the conclusion of the Oslo 2 agreement, two more important agreements were signed, “Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area (Cairo Agreement)” of May 4, 1994 and “Agreement on the preparation of the transfer of powers and responsibilities” of August 29, 1994<sup>11</sup>.

The “Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area (Cairo Agreement)” provided for the withdrawal of Israeli units from the territory of the Gaza Strip and Jericho, as well as the transfer of power in these regions from the Israeli Civil Administration to the Palestinian National Authority.

The “Agreement on Preparation for the Transfer of Powers and Responsibilities” became an important element in the implementation of the “Declaration of Principles on Provisional Measures for Self-Government” of September 13, 1993. According to this agreement, the Palestinian National Authority took over education, culture, social security, tourism, health care and taxation in the territory under its jurisdiction. This agreement was finally implemented on December 1, 1994<sup>12</sup>.

To continue the implementation of the Oslo Accords, on September 28, 1995, the next stage of peace talks between the PLO and Israel took place in Washington, DC. As a result, the Interim Palestinian-Israeli Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza was signed. This agreement was called Oslo 2 (Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip). The agreement consisted of 5 chapters and 31 articles.

After analyzing the content of the Oslo 2 Accords, it can be concluded that the most important achievements of this agreement were:

- transfer of authority from Israel to the PLO;
- determination of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip as a single territorial unit, the integrity and status of which shall be maintained during the transition period;
- approval of the procedure and principles of elections to the Palestinian governing bodies;
- consolidation of provisions on the executive body and its powers<sup>13</sup>.

However, in September 1996, the confrontation between Israel and Palestine gained new momentum. Palestine insisted on a partial redeployment of Israeli troops from

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<sup>10</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>11</sup> Avi Shlaim. *The Rise and Fall of the Oslo Peace Process...* P. 78.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. P. 80.

<sup>13</sup> Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (Oslo II). URL: <https://peacemaker.un.org/israelopt-osloII95>

Hebron. However, thanks to the actions of B. Clinton and M. Albright, B. Netanyahu still partially fulfilled the conditions of the Palestinians<sup>14</sup>.

Thus, the Oslo 1 and Oslo 2 agreements became an important factor in the continuation of the peace process of resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict after the beginning of the Intifada in 1987. The Oslo 1 Agreement was a breakthrough in the relations between the Palestine Liberation Organization and Israel, as they recognized each other and Palestine gained autonomy. In turn, the Oslo 2 Agreement consolidated the provisions of the previous agreement, and approved the procedure and principles of the Palestinian government and elections.

Although the Oslo 1 and Oslo 2 agreements haven't had an absolute success that would have led to a complete settlement of the conflict, they served as a factor in the further settlement of the Arab-Israeli confrontation on other international platforms in the following years.

In this context, an important initiative was the Camp David Summit, which was supposed to consolidate the provisions of the Oslo 1 and Oslo 2 agreements and fully resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. The summit was initiated by U.S. President Bill Clinton, for whom the settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict was a top foreign policy priority.

The summit was scheduled for July 11, 2000, at the US President's country residence, Camp David, near the town of Thurmont in Maryland.

Before the summit, Israeli Prime Minister E. Barak addressed the Israeli people with a speech in which he emphasized: "The moment of truth is near and I am ready for it. One hundred years of hostility and struggle meet at this moment in time. We have lost too much, and both sides have suffered because of the unbearably high price of not only defeat but also victory. The time has come to end the conflict and allow our children to thrive in peace<sup>15</sup>."

This demonstrated Israel's readiness to resolve the conflict peacefully. In his speech before the summit, E. Barak outlined the principles that the future agreement should contain:

- United Jerusalem must remain under Israeli sovereignty;
- the borders of 1967 should be revised;
- the vast majority of settlers in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip will live in settlement blocs under Israeli rule;
- absence of foreign military formations in the entire territory west of the Jordan River;
- solving the refugee problem outside the sovereign territory of Israel<sup>16</sup>.

E. Barak, together with the Israeli government, was ready for compromises, but only those that would not contradict Israel's state security.

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<sup>14</sup> Graham Usher. *Dispatches from Palestine...* P. 113

<sup>15</sup> Laqueur W., Rubin B. *The Israel-Arab reader...* P. 549.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* P. 550.

In turn, the Palestinian side was critical of the upcoming negotiations, even seeing them as a possible trap.

Close to the leader of the Palestinian Authority Yasser Arafat, A. Haniyeh, editor-in-chief of the Palestinian daily “Al-Ayyam” and one of the main political advisers to the PLO Chairman, on the eve of the summit published a quote from Yasser Arafat’s talks with US Secretary of State M. Albright in June 2000: “Madam Secretary, if you send an invitation to the summit and it is held and fails, it will weaken the hope among the [Palestinian] people in the possibility of achieving peace<sup>17</sup>”. July 4, 2000, Y. Arafat received a phone call from B. Clinton, in which the US President explained the need for a summit without preparatory talks. Y. Arafat three times tried to explain to B. Clinton his concern about the expected consequences of the Summit, but B. Clinton, based on the recommendations of M. Albright and other White House advisers, insisted on the Summit<sup>18</sup>.

Before the summit, the PLO Council formed a Palestinian consensus on what they consider a fair solution to the conflict with Israel and determined its position before the start of negotiations. This position contained the following items:

The right to return “or adequate compensation” for Palestinian refugees, in accordance with UN General Assembly Resolution 194;

- Israel’s withdrawal to the 1967 borders, in accordance with Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338;

- removal of Israeli settlements from the entire occupied Palestinian territory;

- formation of East Jerusalem as the future capital of an independent Palestinian state<sup>19</sup>.

That is, the positions of the parties on the eve of the summit were radically different. These differences immediately called into question the rationality of holding the summit these days, however, the Camp David was held anyway.

The negotiations were based on an all-or-nothing approach. No requirements were considered binding and agreed upon until the results were ratified by the parties. The negotiation process itself was mostly oral. The final text of the agreements was not reached.

During the negotiations, it became known that Israel:

- refused to assume any responsibility for the refugee problem, but proposed to create an international fund to compensate both Palestinians and Jewish immigrants to Israel;

- airspace was to remain under Israeli control;

- the Palestinian Authority had to be strictly demilitarized, and Israel had to maintain full control over all borders;

- according to E. Barak’s proposal, in Jerusalem, the Palestinians would be left with a large number of pieces of land in the outer suburbs, while “Greater Jerusalem” would be under Israeli control;

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<sup>17</sup> Raymond G. Helmick *Negotiating outside the law...* P. 128–129.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* P. 129.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem.*

- the Old City with its holy sites was to be under Israeli sovereignty, and the Palestinians were to be granted local safe passage to the mosque and the temple mountain of Al-Haram Al-Sharif<sup>20</sup>.

In view of this, the proposal was unacceptable to the Palestinian side in the form in which it was formulated by the Israeli delegation.

Analyzing the results of the summit, it can be concluded that Y. Arafat sought to create an independent Palestine with its capital in East Jerusalem, and he was almost not interested in E. Barak's "land for peace" proposal. Since the ideological position was not subject to discussion, since Jerusalem is one of the most important shrines for Palestinians.

The result of the Camp David Summit of July 25, 2000, was a trilateral statement on the peace process in the Middle East:

The Camp David Summit of July 25, 2000, resulted in a trilateral statement on the peace process in the Middle East:

Between July 11 and July 24, 2000, under the auspices of US President Clinton, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian Authority leader Yasser Arafat met at Camp David to reach a permanent status agreement. Although they were unable to overcome disputes and reach an agreement, their negotiations were unprecedented in both scope and detail. Building on the progress made at Camp David, the two leaders agreed on principles to guide the negotiations:

1) Both sides agree that the goal of their negotiations is to end the century-long conflict with a just and, above all, lasting peace.

2) Both sides commit to continue their efforts to reach an agreement on all permanent status issues as soon as possible.

3) Both sides agree that negotiations on the basis of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 are the only way to reach such an agreement, and they commit to creating an environment for negotiations free from pressure, intimidation and threats.

4) Both sides understand the importance of avoiding unilateral actions that are contrary to the outcome of the negotiations and that their differences will be resolved only through peaceful negotiations.

5) Both sides agree that the United States remains a vital partner in the search for peace and will continue to consult closely with President Clinton and Secretary of State Albright in the period ahead<sup>21</sup>.

After the summit, U.S. President B. Clinton gave a closing speech: "After 14 days of intense negotiations between the Israelis and Palestinians, we regret to say that the parties will not be able to reach an agreement at this time... At the end of this summit, I fully recognize the deep disappointment felt by both sides. But it was important for the Israelis and Palestinians to finally start making the most difficult decisions in the peaceful

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<sup>20</sup> Akram Hanieh. The Camp David Papers. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (Winter 2001), Berkeley: University of California Press, P. 81-84.

<sup>21</sup> Mideast peace process/Camp David Summit (July 2000) – Trilateral statement/Non-UN document. URL: <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-193931/>



settlement of the conflict. Only they can make these decisions, and they have both committed to make them..."<sup>22</sup>.

The failure of the Camp David peace talks was one of the reasons for the radicalization of Palestinian public sentiment, which, combined with other internal factors, led to the continuation of the 1987 intifada, which was called the Al-Aqsa Intifada and began on September 27, 2000.

**Conclusions.** The Oslo 1 and Oslo 2 Accords became an important factor in the continuation of the peace process to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict after the outbreak of the Intifada in 1987. The Oslo 1 Agreement was a breakthrough in the relations between the Palestine Liberation Organization and Israel, as they recognized each other and Palestine gained autonomy. In turn, the Oslo 2 Agreement enshrined the provisions of the previous agreement and approved the procedure and principles of the Palestinian authorities. At the same time, the Camp David summit in 2000 aimed to finally resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict by approving the previous agreements and resolving the most painful territorial problems of Israelis and Palestinians. All of these negotiations were initiated and mediated by the United States, led by President Bill Clinton, who sought to fully resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict by the end of his second term.

Despite all attempts, the Oslo 1 and Oslo 2 agreements and the Camp David summit of 2000 did not finally resolve the conflict in the Middle East. New radical options for resolving the conflict were emerging in the societies of both states, which eventually led to a new intifada of the Palestinian people.

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<sup>22</sup> Laqueur W., Rubin B. The Israel-Arab reader... P. 551.