



**Seun Adekoya and Connor  
MacDonald**  
Press Officers, Michaelmas 2016

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Cambridge, 26 October 2016

**Press Release: 26 October 2016**  
**ISRAELI AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED KINGDOM  
SPEAKS AT THE CAMBRIDGE UNION**

On October 26, the Cambridge Union was delighted to host His Excellency Mark Regev, the Israeli Ambassador to the United Kingdom. His Excellency opened his speech by noting “the rare privilege and honour” it was to speak at the Union. Immediately, Mr Regev said from the outset that he “wanted to talk about peace”. However, the Ambassador stated that many used to think of The Conflict in the Middle East “with a capital T”, but now it is clear now that there are many conflicts in the Middle East. “We are saying states implode”, he cited Libya, Syria, Yemen and Iraq, “and you are seeing some pretty nasty actors rise up”.

His Excellency underlined his point so that “we could put the Israeli-Palestinian conflict into perspective”. He noted that peace in Israel and Palestine will not necessarily solve the problems of the Middle East “but it will be good for Israel and good for Palestine”. He emphasized as well that peace will take “a grand bargain, an historic bargain” – “neither national movement will get all of what it wants”. He underlined the necessity of pursuing a two-state solution; the position of his government Regev noted, is “the immediate resumption of peace talks with no preconditions” as the best way to achieve such a bargain. “Peace has to be a two-way street”, under no illusions, his Excellency repeated that that both sides “will need to make compromises”.

Mr Regev then moved towards an examination of the conflict, citing three issues that are not given enough emphasis by the media. The first, Regev argued, was security; “a peace agreement not anchored in security will not last”. The Ambassador rejected the notion that “peace will bring security”. During the Oslo negotiations, Regev noted, there was an increase in terrorist violence, and the same would happen no. “A peace which cannot defend itself will not survive”; “it will not last two weeks” the Ambassador said. His Excellency moved to the second point, arguing that Arab states needed to get more involved in the peace process. “Israel is talking to more Arab governments than at any time in history”, “this is a big change” the Ambassador said. Finally, the Ambassador emphasized that the international community needs to have a “more critical dialogue with Palestine”. He noted that the Palestine’s have not been able to reject violence and terrorism and that they are not respecting Yasser Arafat’s “letter to Yitzhak Rabin...a foundational document for the peace process”. He stated that “today, a public school in the West Bank has just been named after the leader of the Munich plot...Fatah has even put up a post on their Facebook praising them.” The Palestinian Authority “is in direct contradiction of their responsibilities under the peace process.”

The Ambassador finished by noting that next year, “Israel will celebrate the Balfour Declaration”. “Mr Abbas, however, has argued that Britain should apologize” – “this is a denial of the Israeli right



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to self-determination”, he said. He emphasized that “Palestinians should be held accountable for failing to respect the peace process”. The Ambassador criticized Palestinian supporters who pushed the Palestinians to refuse to compromise – “that way there will never be a Palestinian state”. “The key to peace is compromise and dialogue”. He finished that any other way “is not hurting my country, but hurting the Palestinians”.

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For footage of the event go to <https://www.youtube.com/user/cambridgeunionsoc>  
Wednesday, 26 October 2016