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Shimon Peres - THE ONLY SOLUTION FOR MIDDLE EAST PEACE!  
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The Oasis Plan for Mideast Peace:  
[http://members.tripod.com/~american\\_almanac/oasis.htm](http://members.tripod.com/~american_almanac/oasis.htm)

The November 2000 Al-Riyadh Oil & Energy Conference:  
<http://www.energyforum.gov.sa>

The Grail Message:  
[http://www.grailnet.org/toc\\_page.htm](http://www.grailnet.org/toc_page.htm)

[Source: Uri Savir, "The Process: 1100 Days That Changed the Middle East; Shimon Peres, "The New Middle East"]

THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO DOUBT THAT IT WAS CHANGES IN THE AXIOMS UNDERLYING ECONOMIC POLICY WHICH WAS KEY TO OSLO, as a brief summary of the arguments put forward by two of the architects of Oslo makes clear. Uri Savir, a long-time protege of Shimon Peres, was the top Israeli negotiator in Oslo, once the process received the full support of Prime Minister Rabin. In his introduction, Savir demonstrates that the toast made by Rabin at the signing of the accord, in Washington, D.C. in September 1993, in which he said, "It is time to change axioms," was not an arbitrary choice of words. "In responding to change," Savir writes, "society tends to linger in a kind of psychological jet lag as long-standing perceptions resist the impact of new ideas and realities. Peacemaking tries to reset perceptual clocks."

Savir's account of the negotiation process in Oslo indicates that the Grand Design was shaped by economic considerations. In establishing the ground rules for the negotiations, Arafat's chief representative, Abu Ala, made two proposals: That the talks should be a "pragmatic progression from easier to more difficult issues, which would allow for the development of trust between the parties; and Palestinian-Israeli cooperation, mainly in the economic field."

In the first meeting between Abu Ala and Savir, Abu Ala opened by discussing the importance of developing the region, including "encouraging the creation of a Marshall Plan for the Middle East; developing our economies, so that we (the Palestinians) can open the doors to the Arab world to you and to freedom for ourselves." Commenting on this in his book, Savir writes, "I was surprised by the degree of Palestinian interest in economic ties with Israel. They saw such cooperation not just as beneficial to their economy but as a bridge to regional development."

Immediately following the famous White House handshake in Sept. 1993, Peres met with Abu Mazen, a top Arafat aide, in which they agreed to make the economy the top priority. Savir writes that they agreed "to focus on the key issue of economic development in the territories." To implement this, Norway had agreed to set up a mechanism for international aid. This led to the meeting in Washington, D.C. on Oct. 1, the so-called Donor's conference, at which agreement was reached on an initial package of \$2.5 billion in grants and loans. This, of course, was never delivered, due to sabotage by a combination of the IMF and World Bank, which was never challenged by President Clinton. Savir laments in his book, "Unfortunately, economic cooperation, which had been so prominent in our thinking at the start of the talks, would be overshadowed by security concerns and political considerations for the Palestinians and for us." (hcs)

[Source: Same as above]

ECONOMIC GRAND DESIGN WAS THE KEY TO BREAKTHROUGH AT OSLO, FOR SHIMON PERES, who was the mentor of Uri Savir and Yossi Beilin. In his book, "The New Middle East", Peres reports that it was a meeting in the 1950s with Jean Monnet, the architect of the European Common Market, which gave him the inspiration for the kind of regional economic development that he believed held the key to peace in the Middle East. "The Middle East needs a Jean Monnet approach today," he wrote.

In this book, he sets forth a three-stage approach to overcome the obstacles for peace. First, there must be "bi-national or multinational projects, such as a joint research institute for desert management or cooperative desalination plants." Secondly, he proposed the establishment of international consortiums to carry out projects requiring large capital investments, e.g., "Red Sea-Dead Sea canal...a joint Israeli-Jordanian-Saudi Arabian port; development of hydroelectric power for electricity and desalination; well-planned, rapid development of Dead Sea industries. When these desert projects are completed, they will fulfill Ben Gurion's dream of developing the Negev [desert], opening new horizons for countries of the region and creating real interest in preserving the peace." The third area would then be what he called regional community policy.

For Peres, as for his mentor, David Ben Gurion, economic development is the essential ingredient. He writes that development of "water, biotechnology and the war against the desert" is necessary. "It aims to paint the desert green, to supply abundant food for its many inhabitants."

Though in recent years, Peres has dropped his insistence on nuclear technologies, he is the "father" of Israel's nuclear capability, and was previously outspoken in favor of sharing nuclear technology to make the desert bloom. In the immediate aftermath of the signing of the Oslo accord, Peres spoke of guaranteeing peace through "removing the sand from the desert, the salt from the water, and the hate from the heart." It is this outlook that earned him the hatred of the fanatical proponents of Greater Israel. (hcs)