



Background: The Progression from Tufts University to Baghdad

Politics of Fear Symposium at Tufts University (February 2006) → Iraq: Moving Forward Conference at Tufts University (January 2007) → Helsinki I (September 2007) → Helsinki II (April 2008) → Launch of the Helsinki Principles and Mechanisms for Implementation Regarding Conflict Resolution in Baghdad, Iraq (July 2008)

Conveners:

- Institute for Global Leadership, Tufts University
- The John W. McCormack Graduate School of Policy Studies, University of Massachusetts/Boston
- Crisis Management Initiative, Helsinki, Finland

Director of the Iraq Project:

- Pdraig O'Malley, John Joseph Moakley Distinguished Professor of Peace and Reconciliation, University of Massachusetts/Boston, and INSPIRE Fellow, Institute for Global Leadership, Tufts University

Key Participants from Tufts University:

- Robert Bendetson, Chair, Institute for Global Leadership External Advisory Board and University Trustee
- Jamshed Bharucha, Provost and Senior Vice President, Tufts University
- Sherman Teichman, Director, Institute for Global Leadership

Politics of Fear Symposium, Tufts University, February 2006



The 21st Norris and Margery Bendetson **EPIIC*** International Symposium was on “The Politics of Fear.” The most powerful aspect of the symposium was the participation of the panelists from South Africa. Through the intervention of **Padraig O’Malley**, who had been working in South Africa for the last decade on issues of reconciliation and who has been a friend of and active participant in the **IGL** since EPIIC began in 1985, and through the generosity of IGL Executive Advisory Board Chair **Robert Bendetson** and his wife Jo Ann Bendetson, **EPIIC** was able to bring four individuals from South Africa who had been key actors during the apartheid years and who continue to influence the country’s path to reconciliation. The mix of histories that they represented provided the students with insight rarely found through books and scholars – this was a riveting aspect for all involved.

The participants from South Africa were:

- Hentie Botha, Former Lt. Col, with 25 years service in the South African Police, of which 21 years was within the Security and Crime Intelligence environment; former commander of a small intelligence unit with special focus on the African National Congress’s military wing, Umkhonto weSizwe; Founder, Global Strategic Initiatives
- **Aboobaker Ismail**, Former Commander of Special Operations, Member of the Military High Command, and Chief of Ordnance, Umkhonto weSizwe, African National Congress; Former Chief of Policy and Planning, Department of Defence, South Africa; General Manager and Head of Department, Currency and Protection Services, South African Reserve Bank
- **Mac Maharaj**, Former Secretary and Commander of Operation Vula, African National Congress Underground; Member, African National Congress Negotiating Team and Joint Negotiation Secretary to the Multiparty Talks, South Africa; Former Minister of Transport, South Africa
- **Roelf Meyer**, Chairman, Civil Society Initiative, South Africa; former Minister of Defence and Minister of Constitutional Affairs, South Africa (during both the De Klerk and Mandela presidencies); Chief Negotiator, National Party, talks to end apartheid

About the South Africa component, Anastasia Konstantakatou, one of the seniors in the EPIIC class and who is in the five-year Fletcher School program, wrote, “What occurred in Alumnae Lounge was something of tremendous vigor and importance: here at EPIIC we witnessed leading figures of the Apartheid era from different political standpoints discussing Apartheid and democracy in South Africa. We heard about the atrocities committed, about resistance, transition, reconciliation, and resilience. Such a discussion was extremely difficult for all the parties involved: Hentie Botha, Roelf Meyer, Aboobaker Ismail and Benjamin Pogrand all had distinct and often contradictory roles in the Apartheid era and the period immediately after. Earlier in the semester we had debated whether we should host such a panel in our symposium; we never expected at the

*EPIIC is the foundation program of the Institute for Global Leadership at Tufts University

time how enriching and how important this panel would be for us and for the panelists themselves; we found a neutral and supportive environment to raise issues that elsewhere are taboo. We are truly grateful to have been able to witness such a discussion.”

The power of these discussions led **Robert Bendetson** to think of how the lessons from South Africa could benefit the stalled to non-existent reconciliation process in Iraq. According to Mr. Bendetson, “The genesis of Helsinki II and beyond started as far back as EPIIC’s symposium on ‘The Politics of Fear.’ There, the **IGL** and Padraig were able to bring together some of the negotiators and the perpetrators from the apartheid years in South Africa to discuss the difficult and challenging, yet peaceful, transition from apartheid to democracy. Drawing on those experiences, it seemed absolutely necessary to begin a dialogue in Iraq.”

Iraq: Moving Forward, Tufts University, January 2007 →

In 2006, in an effort to think about ways to enable the campus to understand the complexities of the war in Iraq, **Mr. Bendetson** and the **IGL** sought to bring Iraqi National Security Adviser Dr. Mowaffak al Rubaie to campus. When security concerns and controversy swirled in the aftermath of his involvement at the execution of Saddam Hussein, the Institute persisted in trying to create an environment that would enable the campus to understand the realities and intricacies of the Iraq conflict.

In January 2007, the IGL’s new **Robert and JoAnn Bendetson Global Public Diplomacy Initiative** hosted “Iraq: Moving Forward,” a three-day forum that brought together key international players from several divided societies, the United States and the Middle East, including both participants in the conflicts that at one time consumed their own countries and the practitioners of conflict management who have explored the dynamics that underpin reconciliation.

The purpose of the program was to bring the lessons of their collective narratives of violent confrontation and subsequent efforts to mediate differences through peaceful means to bear on the situation in Iraq. **Dr. O’Malley** was one of the lead organizers. He provided the context for the gathering, writing, “Iraq is convulsed with indiscriminate killings and rampant sectarian violence. Whether Iraq is in the throes of a civil war or heading in that direction is moot (and it is really only a debate that is more about the semantics of body counts than a contribution to a fuller understanding of the dynamics that drive the cycles of vengeance and retribution). The only certainty is that unless all the parties to the conflict can pull themselves and the communities they represent back from the brink of self destruction, Iraq will disintegrate and its people will be devoured by a war in which people kill because they fear that if they do not kill first, they will be killed.”

The three days consisted of both public and private meetings. The public events began with a panel discussion on “The Future of Iraq” which filled the more than 500 seats in

Cohen Auditorium. The other public panels were “Confronting Violence and Extremists: Experiences from Bosnia, Guatemala, Northern Ireland, and South Africa” and “Iraq, Iran, and the Middle East.” This forum was also co-sponsored by the Institute's strategic ally, now in residence at the IGL, **The Project on Justice in Times of Transition**.

The participants in all of these discussions included:

- **Haider Al Abadi**, Member, Iraqi Council of Representatives; Chairman, Economy, Investment and Reconstruction Committee, Council of Representatives, Former Minister of Communications, Iraqi Government; a Leader, Al-Dawa Party
- **Ali Allawi**, Former Minister of Defense and Minister of Trade, Interim Iraq Government Council; Former Minister of Finance, Iraqi Transitional Government; Author, *The Occupation of Iraq Winning the War, Losing the Peace*
- **Jose Maria Argueta**, Former National Security Advisor of Guatemala
- **Hossein Askari**, Iran Professor of International Business and Professor of International Affairs, The George Washington University; Author, *Middle East Oil Exporters: What Happened to Economic Development?*; Former Mediator between Iran and Saudi Arabia, Iran and Kuwait
- **Brigadier General Khalid Hamid Al Doori**, Deputy Chief of Operations, Ministry of Defense, Iraq; Fellow, US Army War College
- **Sami Al-Faraj**, Adviser, National Security, Crisis Management, and Strategic Planning, Gulf Coordinating Council Secretary General; President, Kuwait Center for Strategic Studies, Kuwait; former EPIIC student and TA, “The West Bank and Gaza”
- **Peter Galbraith**, Author, *The End of Iraq: How American Incompetence Created a War Without End*; Former Staff Member, US Senate Foreign Relations Committee, where he documented Iraqi atrocities against the Kurds
- **Andrew Hess**, Professor of International Diplomacy, The Fletcher School, Tufts University; Faculty Advisory Committee, Institute for Global Leadership, Tufts University
- **Feisal Amin al-Istrabadi**, Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations for Iraq; Former Deputy to the Speaker of the Iraqi Parliament
- **Jacques Paul Klein**, Former Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Coordinator of United Nations Operations, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Liberia
- **Wendy Luers**, Co-Chair, Project on Justice in Times of Transition
- **Chris MacCabe**, British Joint Secretary, Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Conference
- **Brett McGurk**, Director for Iraq, National Security Council; Former Associate General Counsel, Coalition Provisional Authority, Baghdad
- **Mac Maharaj**, Former ANC Lead Negotiator in talks with the National Party Government, South Africa; Former Joint Secretary of the Transitional Executive Council
- **Padraig O'Malley**, John Joseph Moakley Distinguished Professor of Peace and Reconciliation, McCormack Graduate School of Policy Studies, University of Massachusetts; Visiting Professor of Political Studies at the University of the Western Cape
- **Timothy Phillips**, Member, External Advisory Board, Institute for Global Leadership, Tufts University; Co-Chair, Project on Justice in Times of Transition
- **Omar Ghazi Al-Shahery**, Deputy Director General, Defense Intelligence and Security,

Ministry of Defense, Iraq

- **John Shattuck**, Former Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, US Department of State; Member, External Advisory Board, Institute for Global Leadership, Tufts University

- **Lt. Col. Isaiah (Ike) Wilson III**, US Army, Academy Professor and the Director of American Politics, Public Policy and Strategic Studies, United States Military Academy; Former Chief of Plans, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), Mosul, Iraq\

After the event, **Ali Alawi**, the first civilian Minister of Defense in the post Saddam government, wrote, *“I was pondering on the marvelous outcome of the Global Leadership Initiative while flying back home across the Atlantic yesterday. The well organized conference, the quality of people attending, and the friendly atmosphere have all opened up somewhat alternative horizons in our thinking and inspired optimism in my colleagues and I, to face up to the challenge at home....To know that there are so many peace loving intellectuals and friends from around the globe and among those who have gone through traumatic situations is indeed a valuable experience. Achieving peace requires not only a good intention, but mastering the art of reconciliation, conflict management, and understanding the strengths and weaknesses of rival communities. The Global Leadership Initiative is certainly a good step in the right direction, which compels me to express my utmost gratitude.”*

Also, in an article on “Iran and the United States: How Likely Is Reconciliation?” in the March 2007 Foreign Policy Forum, **Hossein Askari**, Iran Professor of International Business and Professor of International Affairs at The George Washington University, wrote, *“In January of 2007 I was fortunate to participate in an unusual conference organized by the Institute for Global Leadership at Tufts University. The goal was to initiate reconciliation between the warring factions in Iraq. To bring substance to the discussion, the organizers invited senior members of the African National Congress from South Africa, Protestant and Catholic leaders from Northern Ireland and leaders from the factions involved in Central American conflicts. Without really doing justice to the wealth of suggestions that came out of this remarkable conference to support reconciliation in Iraq, several lessons stood out in my mind: in all cases of civil strife the one common element is the erosion of trust. Establishing trust is a slow and painful process, but the need to do so is paramount. One thing is certain: trust does not come about in an environment of threats and killings. Actions that appear to be inconsequential can mushroom into seemingly insurmountable obstacles to reconciliation. To establish trust and to move forward, all parties have to talk; there is no escaping this simple yet forgotten fact. One must start talking early on and put further killing (and harmful rhetoric) aside, because it can only make reconciliation ever more difficult. In talks, all parties must acknowledge past transgressions and demonstrate a willingness to change course.”*

Helsinki I (September 2007) →

Based on the potential witnessed during the Iraq: Moving Forward Conference, plans were made to pursue further meetings and gathering a broader representation of Iraqis.

Padraig O'Malley went to Iraq in June 2007 to explore whether or not the political parties in Iraq would benefit from hearing the South Africans and Northern Irish share their respective experiences. He met with **Vice Presidents Adil Abdul al-Mahdi and Tariq al-Hashimi** – one Shia, one Sunni – who gave their approval. The Shia and Sunni parties in parliament also gave their approval and the government of Finland, through former President **Marti Ahtisaari**, provided a neutral venue.

Sixteen representatives from Shia and Sunni parties met for four days in early September 2007 with teams of Irish and South African negotiators, who then became the facilitators for Helsinki II.

The facilitators from South Africa and Northern Ireland each played a major part, on both sides of their respective conflicts, in bringing an end to apartheid in South Africa and a settlement in Northern Ireland. **Cyril Ramaphosa** (Chief Negotiator for Nelson Mandela's ANC) and **Martin McGuinness** (Chief Negotiator for Sinn Fein) co-chaired the process. They were supported by nine other senior experts from the two countries, including **Dr. Matthews Phosa** (Treasurer of the ANC), **Aboobaker (Rashid) Ismail**, **Mac Maharaj** and **Roelf Meyer** (Chief Negotiator for the South Africa Government of F.W. de Klerk) from South Africa; and **Jeffrey Donaldson MP**, **Dr. Sean Farren**, **Billy Hutchinson**, **Alex Maskey** and **Joe Brosnan** from Northern Ireland interests. (Ismail, Maharaj, and Meyer had all participated in EPIIC's "The Politics of Fear" symposium; Maharaj and Meyer also received the IGL's Dr. Jean Mayer Global Citizenship Award that year.)

The Iraqis set the agenda, and throughout the conference, each of the Iraqis had the opportunity to meet individually with the representatives from South Africa and Northern Ireland.

The Helsinki I Principles were agreed in Helsinki in early September 2007. They laid out a basis of a framework within which future negotiations on matters relating to Iraq would be conducted, including (2) To prohibit the use of arms for all armed groups during the process of negotiations; (6) To commit to protect human rights; (7) To assure the independence and efficiency of the legal and justice systems, especially the constitutional court; and (10) To establish an independent consultative body to explore ways to deal with the legacy of the past in a way that will unite the nation.

There was also the decision, by the Iraqis, that there should be a Helsinki II.

Helsinki II (April 2008) →

During the last weekend in April 2008, 36 Iraqis -- senior figures in their respective political parties and tribal communities -- convened in Helsinki, Finland to discuss principles of future engagement. After three days of intense discussions, the conferees adopted a set of principles for joint national action in addition to a set of implementation mechanisms with the aim of advancing national reconciliation in Iraq.

Most importantly, they agreed that dialogue and negotiation was the primary means of resolving political disputes and that all political parties and factions would have to abide by the principles they had adopted in order to participate in negotiations.

In a landmark step, supported by a joint statement, they proposed that their work in progress be advanced in Baghdad. The Iraqi participants agreed to meet again within the next three months in Baghdad to finalize their work in progress and refine the principles and mechanisms that would enable them to reach a national agreement. These Talks will also finalize discussions on the outstanding issues not agreed to Helsinki, which include the question of identity, demilitarization and the rights of minorities. They also invited the Northern Irish and South African facilitators to Baghdad to continue to assist them.

Minister for Reconciliation in the Iraqi Government, **Akram Al-Hakim** stated: "We have agreed to engage with a wider range of actors in the conflict with the only precondition that they agree to comply with the Iraq Principles. Our conflict is not easy to solve, but with the renewed vigour and confidence we have gained from this process, we return with redoubled commitment to tackle these difficult challenges."

This meeting, Helsinki II (Seminar in Divided Societies), was convened by **The John W. McCormack Graduate School of Policy Studies, University Massachusetts/Boston, the Institute for Global Leadership at Tufts University, and the Crisis Management Initiative**, with the support of the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Among the Iraqi delegates at Helsinki II were **Minister Al-Hakim**, Minister of Dialog and National Reconciliation; **Sheikh Hamoudi**, Chairman of the Constitutional Review Committee (CRC) of the Iraqi National Assembly; **Dr. Fouad Maasoom**, a senior member of the CRC and leading member of the Kurdistan Patriotic Union (PUK); **Dr. Ali Adeeb**, parliamentary leader of the Dawa Party; and **Dr. Osama Al-Tikriti** from the Iraqi Islamic Party (IIP).

Tufts University Provost **Jamshed Bharucha** and two Institute students, Joseph "JJ" Emru ('08) and Kelsi Stine ('10), also attended the proceedings, the students participating as note takers and providing logistics assistance.

Dr. Bharucha commented, "The Helsinki conference was nothing short of extraordinary. The participants and facilitators were impressive in the experiences they brought to the table, as well as in the manner in which they advanced the goals of the conference. The dialogue and debate were positive, constructive, and thoughtful. The participants worked hard to establish and maintain a tone of mutual respect, even though many of the topics discussed were difficult ones. The conference represented the best of what a democracy could be like: smart, passionate, and dedicated leaders seeking to resolve differences peacefully, to find areas that unite them, and to take responsibility for building a society that will serve its people well into the future.

"I am immensely proud of Tufts' role in this. The concept grew out of the Institute for Global Leadership, which was also a co-organizer, working with the University of

Massachusetts. Universities are uniquely positioned to provide civilized forums for dialogue and debate and to promote the exchange of ideas, however difficult. I was amazed at how eagerly the Iraqi participants embraced this opportunity to talk amongst themselves, in the environment we helped create. The world needs more such forums, not fewer."

Sheikh Humam Hammoudi, Chair of the Constitutional Review Committee of the Iraqi Parliament, commented: "Having worked constructively during Helsinki II with an expanded representation of parties and blocs, I am positive about further deepening and widening of Talks soon. We absorbed a lot from our learned facilitators, from being away from the conflict in a neutral venue (for which we thank the people of Finland) and from each other. I am satisfied with the progress we achieved in the difficult circumstances of our on-going conflict, and trust that we can achieve yet more in coming months."

Dr. O'Malley explained, "A peace process is a matter of many starts but each start is a step forward. We [the conveners] are delighted that it is the Iraqis themselves who have taken ownership of this process by inviting us to Baghdad for the next meeting. Ownership of the processes of engagement by the Iraqis is the key to settling the issues that still stand in the way of political reconciliation in Iraq. Helsinki II is about to become 'Iraq I.'"

Asked for his reflection in the days immediately following Helsinki II, **Dr. O'Malley** commented on several issues that reflect the importance and the potential of the conference. He said that a key factor was the breadth of representation, noting that the senior officer of the Department of Foreign Affairs in Baghdad said that, as far as he could recall, the group that attended this conference was the highest level of people from Iraq ever to go abroad to talk about the peace process. **Dr. O'Malley** added that two of the senior attendees were part of the high delegation sent to Iran by Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki to discuss Iran's role in arming militias in Iraq two days after their return from the Helsinki conference.

Regarding the process and outcomes, **Dr. O'Malley** said that the attendees expanded on the principles developed under the first conference in September 2007, Helsinki I, and while the abandonment of some principles was disappointing, the breadth of the additions more than compensated. He added that the Iraqis also identified 15 mechanisms to be used to monitor the implementation of those principles. He also said that they have an agreement that was signed off on by the five leading political figures there, which they were to share with their colleagues on the journey back to Iraq, which indicated a willingness to move forward and not allow a few dissenting voices to hold matters up.

Baghdad I (July 2008) →

Senior Iraqi Parliamentarians will launch the results of the Helsinki talks process by publishing a coherent set of principles of joint national action, accompanied by a set of comprehensive mechanisms for moving the political process forward. The event is

scheduled for 14.00 Iraq time, on Saturday 05 July 2008, at the Al Rasheed Hotel, Al Zawraa Hall.

Minister for National Reconciliation and Dialogue **Akram Al-Hakim**, who has been part of the Helsinki process, explained: “I am satisfied with the progress we have achieved in the difficult circumstances of our on-going conflict and am certain that the time is right to launch the results of this exercise; I remain confident that we can achieve more in the coming months. We thank those who have assisted us to reach this important moment.” He will be joined, amongst others, by **Sheikh Humam Hamoudi**, Chair of the Iraqi Parliament’s Constitutional Review Committee, also a Helsinki participant.

The co-stewards of the talks are **Vice President Abdul al Madhi and Vice President Tariq al Hashimi**. Their enthusiastic support for the innovative process and their belief that it would produce a real outcome and not simply degenerate into another conference of chattering colleagues has been amply justified.