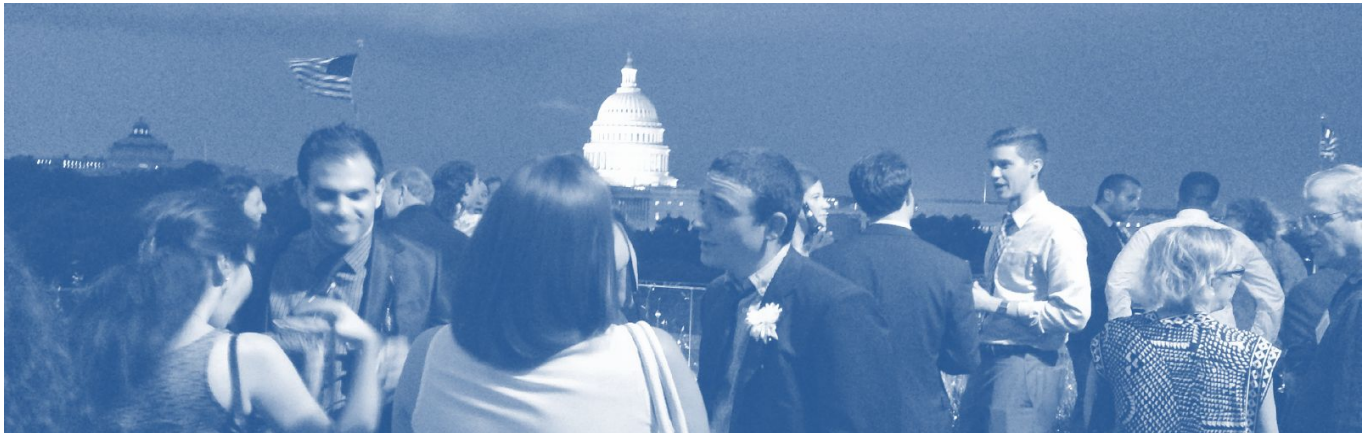




PLO DELEGATION TO THE UNITED STATES



The Washington Scene

March 2017

Staff members of the PLO Delegation are keen on attending key events in the capital that relate to Palestine and the Middle East. This bulletin offers a brief summary of these important conversations that take place in academic and policy circles. The views expressed in these events and reported here do not necessarily represent the views of the General Delegation of the PLO to the United States.

Reports in this issue

The Occupation of the American Mind

Where: Perry Auditorium - Washington National Cathedral, 3101 Wisconsin Ave NW, Washington, DC

When: Sunday, March 05, 2017, 2:30 pm

About: Israel's ongoing military occupation of Palestinian territory and repeated invasions of the Gaza strip have triggered a fierce backlash against Israeli policies virtually everywhere in the world -- except the United States. The Occupation of the American Mind takes an eye-opening look at this critical exception, zeroing in on pro-Israel public relations efforts within the U.S. Narrated by Roger Waters and featuring leading observers of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and U.S. media culture, the film explores how the Israeli government, the U.S. government, and the pro-Israel lobby have joined forces, often with very different motives, to shape American media coverage of the conflict in Israel's favor. From the U.S.-based public relations campaigns that emerged in the 1980s to today, the film provides a sweeping analysis of Israel's decades-long battle for the hearts, minds, and tax dollars of the American people in the face of widening international condemnation of its increasingly right-wing policies. Narrated by Roger Waters, and featuring Amira Hass, M.J. Rosenberg, Stephen M. Walt, Noam Chomsky, Rula Jebreal, Henry Siegman, Rashid Khalidi, Rami Khouri, Yousef Munayyer, Norman Finkelstein, Max Blumenthal, Phyllis Bennis, Norman Solomon, Mark Crispin Miller, Peter Hart, and Sut Jhally. Welcome address by Rabbi Joseph Berman, Jewish Voice for Peace - D.C. Metro Chapter. Film discussion moderated by Bud Hengsen, Unitarian Universalists for Justice in the Middle East - Northern Virginia Chapter.

Link: [Voice from the Holy Land](#)

Why Americans Misunderstand The Middle East, Terrorism, And Islam — And Always Will

Where: Congregation Adath Jeshurun, 7763 Old York Road Elkins Park, PA, US, 19027

When: Sunday, March 5, 2017, 10:30 am

About: Dr. Adam Garfinkle is founding editor of The American Interest and a Robert A. Fox Fellow of the Foreign Policy Research Institute. He served as principal speechwriter to the Secretary of State (S/P, Policy Planning), as a member of the National Security Study Group (as chief writer) of the U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century (the Hart-Rudman Commission), and as an aide to Senator Henry M. Jackson. He has also taught at the School for Advanced International Studies (SAIS) of the Johns Hopkins University, the University of Pennsylvania, Haverford College, and other institutions of higher learning.

Link: [FPRI](#)

The Tragedy Of U.S. Foreign Policy

Where: 6th Floor, Woodrow Wilson Center

When: Monday, March 6, 2017, 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

About: Dr. Adam Garfinkle is founding editor of *The American Interest* and a Robert A. Fox Fellow of the Foreign Policy Research Institute. He served as principal speechwriter to the Secretary of State (S/P, Policy Planning), as a member of the National Security Study Group (as chief writer) of the U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century (the Hart-Rudman Commission), and as an aide to Senator Henry M. Jackson. He has also taught at the School for Advanced International Studies (SAIS) of the Johns Hopkins University, the University of Pennsylvania, Haverford College, and other institutions of higher learning.

Link: [Wilson Center](#)

A Conversation With Ambassador Deborah Jones

Where: Johns Hopkins SAIS, 1619 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington , DC, Rome Auditorium

When: Monday, March 6, 2017, 4:30 pm - 6:30 pm

About: Join us for a Conversation with Ambassador Deborah Jones, former U.S. Ambassador to Kuwait and Libya. The conversation will be moderated by Dean Vali Nasr.

Link: [DC Linktank](#)

Building The Programs That Can Better Build The Peace

Where: United States Institute of Peace, 2301 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, District of Columbia 20037

When: Tuesday, March 7, 2017, 9:30 am - 11:00 am

About: In countries worldwide, governmental and private agencies run programs to prevent violent conflicts and reduce their causes—notably broad social injustices, corruption and human rights abuses. But how effective are these programs? Join USIP as a consortium of peacebuilding organizations present improved ways to measure and maximize the impact of programs to prevent violence, stabilize conflict zones and build peace and security abroad.

Increasingly, peacebuilding organizations are pressing for greater evidence that their limited resources are having impact. Some organizations have difficulty collecting data about their programs that can show which ones are most effective. Some have faced internal resistance to innovations intended to improve the evaluation and accountability of programs.

Yet the work of accountability is vital to prove the case for peacebuilding as a strategy—and to sustain support from donors and taxpayers. Several non-government organizations—including Alliance for Peacebuilding, CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, Mercy Corps and Search for Common

Ground—have formed a Peacebuilding Evaluation Consortium. This group is developing better tools for the design, monitoring and evaluation of programs abroad. On March 7, members of the consortium will describe their findings, including new tools that can assess and improve the effectiveness of peacebuilding programs.

Link: [Link](#)

Human Rights Reading Group

Where: AU Washington College of Law, 4801 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20016

When: Tuesday, March 7, 2017, 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

About: Join us for the Center's Human Rights Reading Group! Throughout the year, students participating will confront the dilemmas and issues that arise in connection with human rights, focusing in particular on how acknowledgement of such critiques can help human rights advocates better navigate the field with creativity and critical reflection. To register, please email humlaw@wcl.american.edu by Friday, March 31.

Link: [Link Tank](#)

Chasing War: The Struggle For Journalism In ISIS' Middle East

Where: Elliott School of International Affairs, 1957 E Street, NW Washington, DC

When: Tuesday, Mar 7, 2017, 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm

About: Shaheen Pasha is an Assistant Professor of Journalism at the University of Massachusetts - Amherst. She previously worked as the Middle East Regional Editor for The Brief, a legal magazine published by Thomson Reuters. Prior to launching the magazine, Pasha was the Islamic finance correspondent at Thomson Reuters, based in Dubai. She has been an assistant professor of journalism at The American University in Cairo, teaching print and online journalism for undergraduate and graduate students, and has worked at CNNMoney.com as a banking and legal reporter, covering the Supreme Court and the Enron trial. Pasha was also a reporter at Dow Jones Newswires, where she had a daily column in the Wall Street Journal and appeared as a regular correspondent on CNBC Asia, covering the ADR market.

She has a master's degree in journalism from Columbia Graduate School of Journalism and a bachelor's degree in speech communication from Pace University.

Pasha will join us at the Elliott School on March 7 to discuss the challenges for those in the journalism and media industries in covering the war in Syria and the ongoing conflict in Iraq. She will give some background on the conflict, bringing in a discussion of the difficulties journalists are facing on the

ground, and ISIS' own media efforts in the form of their magazine, Dabiq. This event aims specifically to engage journalists and other media specialists, but is open to all.

Link: [Link](#)

Speed Sisters Film Screening

Where: Songbyrd Music House & Record Cafe, 2477 18th St NW, Washington, DC 20009

When: March 7, 2017 at 6:00pm - 8:00 pm

About: In the spirit of International Women's Day, join ANERA in celebrating the boldness and drive of women in the Middle East.

On Tuesday, March 7 at 6PM, ANERA will host a screening of the documentary film Speed Sisters at Songbyrd Music House & Record Cafe. The film tells the story of the first all-women race car team in the Middle East, which happens to be made up of two rebellious and resilient Palestinian women from the West Bank. Proceeds from the event will benefit ANERA's development and aid work for refugees and poor communities in Palestine and Lebanon.

Join us on an exhilarating journey that showcases the strength of Palestinian women to triumph over obstacles and stereotypes - whether behind the wheel or not.

Link: [Link](#)

The View From Israel: A Conversation With Reuven Azar, Deputy Chief Of Mission, Embassy Of Israel

Where: The Wilson Center

When: Thursday, March 9, 2017, 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

About: Israel sits in the middle of a volatile Middle East and at a nexus of issues critical to regional stability, security and American national interests. Join us as a veteran Israeli diplomat offers observations on the U.S.-Israeli relationship, the Iran nuclear deal, the pursuit of Arab-Israeli peace, Russia's role in the region and Israel's relations with its Arab neighbors.

This event is part of the Joseph and Alma Gildenhorn Middle East Forum of the Middle East Program.

Link: [Link](#)

Middle East Dialogue 2017

Where: Whittemore House, 1526 New Hampshire Avenue, Washington, DC

When: Friday, March 10, 2017, 8:00 AM – 9:00 PM EST

About: The Middle East Dialogue is for policy makers, scholars, business and social leaders, to discuss current issues. Its purpose is to promote multidisciplinary conversation about topics that include, but are not limited to education initiatives, social, economic and political reforms, nuclear proliferation, interfaith dialogue, women's gains and challenges, peace initiatives, and potential areas of conflict. We welcome a spectrum of political and religious persuasions to discuss issues in a spirit of tolerance and free discourse. \$250 fee

Link: [Link](#)

A Tribute to Dr. Halim Barakat

Where: The Palestine Center

When: Saturday, March 18, 2017 12:30 pm – 2:00 pm

About: Join us in celebrating the accomplishments of Dr. Halim Barakat, retired Research Professor of Society and Culture at The Center for Contemporary Arab Studies of Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. and a vital contributor to the establishment of the Palestine Center, who worked closely with the late Dr. Hisham Sharabi and Dr. Samih Farsoun. It is not an exaggeration to say that Dr. Barakat's writings have indelibly marked the fields of sociology and Arab literature. Through his work he has examined and illuminated the paradigmatic shifts in modern Arab society, the social fragmentation that followed in the wake of the 1967 defeat, the death of Arab nationalism, and the political climate and nuances of pre and post-civil war Lebanese society. Dr. Barakat's long academic career has also included positions at The American University of Beirut (1966-72), The University of Texas at Austin (1975-76), and as Research Fellow at Harvard University (1972-73). Born in Kafrun, Syria, and raised in Beirut, he received his BA (1955) and MA (1960) degrees in sociology from The American University of Beirut, and a PhD in social psychology from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor (1966). Dr. Barakat was a prolific writer. His many published books, numbering more than 17, include the most well-known sociological studies, *The Arab World: Society, Culture and State* (University of California Press, 1993), and *Lebanon in Strife: Student Preludes to the Civil War* (University of Texas Press, 1977). His numerous essays on society and culture have appeared in edited books and professional journals including *The British Journal of Sociology*, *Middle East Journal*, *Mawakif*, and *al-Mustaqbal al-Arabi*. His op-ed articles have appeared in several Arabic weekly journals and daily papers including *al-Hayat* and *al-Nahar*. Dr. Barakat also published six novels and a collection of short stories in Arabic. Translations of his fictional works have appeared in English, French, German and Japanese including *Days of Dust*, *Six Days*, and *Le Vaisseau Reprend Le Large*. His novel *Six Days* (*Sittat Ayam*, 1961), presciently imagining a real war yet to come in 1967, became a prelude to his later novel *Days of Dust* ('*Awdat al-Ta'ir ila al-Bahr*, 1969), which dramatizes the events of that said war. His other works of fiction include *al-Qimam al-Khadra'* (*Green Summits*, 1956), *al-Samt wal-Matar* (*Silence and Rain*, 1958), *al-Rahil Baina al-Sahm wal-Watar*

(A Journey Between The Arrow And The Cord, 1979), Ta'ir al-Hawm (The Crane, 1988), and Innana wal-Nahr (Inana and The River, 1995). Reflections on Dr. Barakat's legacies will be given by Dr. Edmund Ghareeb, Senior Scholar of the Palestine Center where he served in an advising role for many years, and Dr. Michael C. Hudson, the Seif Ghobash Professor of Arab Studies and International Relations, Emeritus, in the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University. Introductory remarks will be given by George Hishmeh, Founding Board Member of The Jerusalem Fund and long-time colleague on the Palestine Center Committee.

Link: [Link](#)

JVP DC Metro Passover Seder

Where: The Palestine Center

When: Sunday, March 19th, 2017, 5:00 -8:00 pm

About: Please join the DC Metro Chapter of JVP for an inter-faith Passover Seder dedicated to freedom and justice for all people. We will use a blend of traditional and contemporary readings, poems and songs to shed a new light on the Passover story.

Link: [Link](#)

Gender, Development, And Armed Conflict: Maksoud Lecture Series

Where: Intercultural Center (ICC), 37th & O Streets NW, Washington, DC 20007, USA

When: Monday, March 20, 2017, 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm

About: You are cordially invited to a lecture by Professor Jennifer Olmsted of Drew University. This lecture will be the second installment of the Clovis & Hala Maksoud Memorial Lecture Series. Jennifer Olmsted is currently Professor of Economics and Director of Middle East Studies at Drew University. She recently also served as the Gender Advisor at the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) and has served as a consultant for UN ESWCA, UNFPA, UNDP, UN Women, and the World Bank. She completed her BS in Foreign Service from Georgetown University and her PhD in Economics from the University of California, Davis. Her areas of specialization include gender, development, globalization, and labor economics. Her current research focuses on gender issues related to sustainability, as well as on the role that armed conflict plays in (re)shaping norms and economic opportunities and challenges. Dr. Olmsted was a guest editor of and also contributing author to a 2014 issue of Feminist Economics focusing on gender and economics in Muslim communities. She has also published numerous other articles, in a range of books volumes and journals including in History of the Family, Industrial Relations, Journal of Development Studies, Journal of Middle East Women's Studies, Women's Studies International Forum, and World Development, among others.

Link: [Link](#)

Companion Diocese Committee for Jerusalem - bi-monthly meeting

Where: National Cathedral Library, Washington DC

When: Monday, March 20, 2017, 7:00 pm

About: For more info: e-mail tojo@att.net

Twitter Town Hall: NATO's Role In Counterterrorism: Toward A Southern Strategy

Where: Atlantic Council, 1030 15th St NW, Washington, DC 20005, USA

When: Tuesday, March 21, 2017. 9:00 am

About: Join us for an interactive Twitter discussion with senior Atlantic Council experts on the multi-front challenges that face NATO on its southern flank and the important role that the Alliance plays in counterterrorism. With large migration flows and recent terror attacks in Europe, NATO's counterterrorism efforts have come under the spotlight and renewed calls for a strategy for the south. Tweet your questions and discuss these challenges on Tuesday, March 21 at 9AM ET/ 2PM CET! Fabrice Pothier is a nonresident senior fellow with the Brent Scowcroft Center on International Security and has over 15 years of experience in leading international public policy campaigns and strategic communications efforts. Before joining Rasmussen Global as a senior associate, Pothier served as Head of Policy Planning for two successive NATO Secretary Generals Anders Fog Rasmussen and Jens Stoltenberg for whom he developed some of the Alliance's most consequential initiatives and wrote some landmark speeches and articles. Before his time at NATO, Pothier founded Carnegie Europe part of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, which quickly became one of Europe's leading think-tanks. He was the co-founder of the International Council on Security and Development where he led global advocacy campaigns on public health and security issues. He started his career in London as a senior risk analyst for Japanese energy group Osaka Gas. He holds two Masters degrees in communications and politics from the UK and France, and speaks French, English, and Spanish. Jorge Benitez is the Director of NATOSource and a Senior Fellow in the Brent Scowcroft Center on International Security. He specializes in NATO and transatlantic relations, European politics, and US national security. He has been interviewed or cited by a broad range of media sources such as CNN, the BBC, the Los Angeles Times, the Christian Science Monitor, US News and World Report, Bloomberg News, Defense News, POLITICO, the National Interest, Xinhua, the Global Times, Russia Today, Kommersant, Hurriyet, Handelsblatt, Al Arabiya, Al Hurra, Al Jazeera, Sky News, and the Congressional Research Service. Benitez previously served as Assistant for Alliance issues to the Director of NATO Affairs in the Office

of the Secretary of Defense. He has also served as a Specialist in International Security for the Department of State and the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis.

Link: [Link](#)

America Abroad: The United States' Global Role In The 21st Century

Where: Cato Institute, 1000 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001

When: Tuesday, March 21, 2017, 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

About: Featuring the authors Stephen G. Brooks, Associate Professor of Government, Dartmouth College; William C. Wohlforth, Daniel Webster Professor of Government, Dartmouth College; with comments by Eugene Gholtz, Associate Professor, LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin; Adjunct Scholar, Cato Institute; and Benjamin H. Friedman, Research Fellow in Defense and Homeland Security Studies, Cato Institute; moderated by John Glaser, Associate Director of Foreign Policy Studies, Cato Institute.

What is the proper global role for the United States in the 21st Century?

Since World War II, the United States, as the most powerful state, has chosen to be deeply engaged in the world. It has assumed responsibility for global peace and stability, guaranteed the security of dozens of foreign nations, promoted free trade, and posed as the policeman of the world by intervening in distant disputes with little direct relevance for core U.S. interests. The bi-partisan consensus in support of this role has recently shown signs of wear. President Donald Trump criticized it, and won. Public opinion polls for the first time in recent years show significant support for pulling back from this activist foreign policy and pursuing a more modest, less costly approach to the world. In *America Abroad: The United States' Global Role in the 21st Century*, Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth make a powerful case that America should continue its strategy of deep engagement. But what are the merits of an alternative approach, a grand strategy of restraint? Please join us as we discuss competing ideas about the future of U.S. foreign policy.

Link: [Link](#)

Rebuilding Syria: Reconstruction And Legitimacy

Where: Atlantic Council, 1030 15th St NW, Washington, DC 20005, USA

When: Tuesday, March 21, 2017, 12:30 pm

About: While it is difficult to look past daily destruction as the war rages on in Syria, efforts to rebuild should not wait until the violence has stopped. With much of Syria lying in ruins, a history of weak governance, and vast parts of the country lacking even basic necessities, the international community

should not delay planning to rebuild the country. Even today opportunities exist to rebuild what the war has destroyed. The Atlantic Council's Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East is launching a new initiative, Rebuilding Syria: Reconstruction and Legitimacy. Over the next two years, the Hariri Center will pool expertise from multiple specialists to cover the many challenges of rebuilding Syria including in: economics, finance, development, infrastructure, political economy, civil society, food security, energy, law, and employment. More than just a cursory overview, the initiative will produce a strategic roadmap to reconstruction with the participation of Syrians and the support of the international community. The Hariri Center invites you to a discussion on the technical and political challenges ahead for rebuilding Syria with country and development experts on March 21, 2017 from 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. at the Atlantic Council headquarters in Washington, D.C. Our panelists will include Dr. Osama Kadi, president of the Syrian Economic Task Force, Mr. Todd Diamond, Middle East director for Chemonics International, Mona Yacoubian, former deputy assistant administrator for the Middle East at the US Agency for International Development, and Bassam Barabandi, former Syrian diplomat and co-founder of People Demand Change. The conversation will be moderated by Hariri Center Senior Fellow Faysal Itani. Mr. Omar Shawaf, chairman and founder of BINAA, will give introductory remarks.

Link: [Atlantic Council](#)

A Conversation With His Excellency Gebran Bassil, Minister Of Foreign Affairs And Emigrants, The Republic Of Lebanon

Where: The Wilson Center

When: Tuesday, March 21, 2017, 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm

About: A Conversation with His Excellency Gebran Bassil

Minister of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants, The Republic of Lebanon

The Lebanon Ideas Forum is an assemblage of scholars, journalists, policymakers, and diplomats who will discuss issues concerning Lebanon, its wider region, and relations with the United States and Europe. This event is the inaugural event in the Lebanon Ideas Forum series. The Lebanon Ideas Forum is part of a greater strategic partnership between the Middle East Program at the Wilson Center and Safadi Foundation USA, which was established in 2017.

Link: [Wilson Center](#)

Anti-Semitism Across Borders

Where: Rayburn House Office Building, 45 Independence Ave SW, Washington, DC, Room: 2172

When: Wednesday, Mar 22, 2017, 10:00 am

About: Mr. Paul Goldenberg

National Director
Secure Community Network
Rabbi Andrew Baker
Personal Representative on Combating Anti-Semitism
Office of the Chairperson-in-Office
Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Mr. Mark Weitzman
Director of Government Affairs
Simon Wiesenthal Center

Link: [Foreign Affairs](#)

The Interrogation Of Saddam Hussein And U.S. Policy In Iraq

Where: Brookings Institution, 1775 Massachusetts Avenue N.W., Washington, DC

When: Wednesday, March 22, 2017, 10:00 am - 11:30 am

About: In March 2003, U.S. coalition forces invaded Iraq on the allegations that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein had stockpiled weapons of mass destruction and developed ties to al-Qaida. The Iraqi president was deposed and his Ba'ath party disbanded, and in December 2003, Hussein was captured and interrogated. John Nixon, author of the new book, "Debriefing the President: The Interrogation of Saddam Hussein" (Blue Rider Press, 2016), acted as both the lead interrogator of Hussein and a briefer to President George W. Bush and his top administration officials. Drawing from insights gained during his interrogation of Hussein, Nixon believes Hussein was willing to negotiate with the United States on its security concerns, and that Iraq would look different today had he remained in power. Nearly 15 years after the U.S. invasion of Iraq, a battle wages between the Islamic State and Iraqi forces, and questions remain about both the past U.S. invasion and what current U.S. policy in Iraq should be. On March 22, the Brookings Intelligence Project will host former CIA analyst Nixon to outline his findings from his interrogation of Hussein, and what lessons he believes can be learned. Brookings Senior Fellow Bruce Riedel, director of the Intelligence Project, will provide introductory remarks and moderate the discussion. Following their remarks, Riedel and Nixon will take questions from the audience.

Link: [Brookings](#)

U.S.- Iran Relations: Opportunities For The New Administration

Where: The Wilson Center

When: Wednesday, Mar 22, 2017, 11:30 am - 12:30 pm

About: Ever since the 1979 Iranian Revolution and subsequent hostage situation, Iran-US relations have been characterized by mutual misperceptions. The nuclear deal of June 2015 between Iran and the “P5+1” came to fruition against this backdrop, in large part due to the efforts of The Right Honourable Catherine Ashton, Baroness of Upholland, Former Vice President of the European Commission and former High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Ambassador Wendy R. Sherman, Senior Counselor at Albright Stonebridge Group and former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs at the U.S. Department of State. The July 2015 deal was an unprecedented step towards rebuilding that trust, though tensions are being fueled by military cooperation with Russia in Syria and new sanctions announced by the Trump administration. The new administration faces familiar challenges in relations with Iran, but also some key strategic and economic opportunities. Rob Litwak, Vice President for Scholars and Academic Relations and Director, International Security Studies, will moderate a discussion between Baroness Ashton and Ambassador Sherman who well know these challenges and opportunities, and can speak to how the U.S. can appealing to their strategic interests using diplomacy and negotiations.

Link: [Wilson Center](#)

The Impact Of Gender Norms On Women’s Rights In Saudi Arabia

Where: Elliott School of International Affairs, 1957 E Street, NW Washington, DC

When: Wednesday, Mar 22, 2017, 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

About: Dr. Hala Aldosari will lead a discussion on the impact of gender norms on the construction of women's roles and identity in Saudi Arabia. Analysis of key limitations of personal status laws, planning of women's health services and the concepts of legislation on violence against women will be presented. The talk will also delve into the role of state and non-state agents in shaping the discourse on gender norms and roles, in light of the recent economic and political trends. Hala Aldosari received her PhD and postdoctoral training in health services research and the social determinants of women's health. Her research and publications are focused on the intersection of gender, laws, health and political identity in Saudi Arabia. She works on different projects to promote women's rights and prevention from violence against women and girls. In 2016, she won the Freedom award for her leading role to promote human rights and democracy in Saudi Arabia.

Link: [Wilson Center](#)

Spring Mixer 2017

Where: 1606 20th St NW, Washington, District of Columbia 20009

When: Thursday, March 23, 2017, 5:30 PM - 7 PM

About: The Young Friends of UPA invites you to its first mixer of 2017. Come mingle with staff and learn about UPA's programs. UPA guests will be given a wristband and a one-drink ticket when they arrive so they can enjoy drink specials all evening. Come out to kick off spring and mingle with young supporters of UPA! Everyone is welcome! Mission is located off the Dupont Circle Q Street metro exit and offers a variety of Mexican food and beverages. For more information: events@helpupa.org

Link: [Link](#)

Peace At The Polls: Can We Prevent Election Violence?

Where: United States Institute of Peace, 2301 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, District of Columbia 2003

When: Thursday, March 23, 2017, 9:30 am - 1:00 pm

About: Violence around elections in the Philippines, Gambia, Haiti or the Democratic Republic of Congo in recent years highlighted the risks of that most fundamental element of democracy—elections—and the connection with efforts to achieve sustainable peace. On March 23, the U.S. Institute of Peace will hold a half-day event to discuss past and upcoming elections that illustrate the risk of violence, with the aim of identifying promising ways to realize peace at the polls. Panelists include ambassadors to the U.S., leading election scholars, and the contributing authors of *Electing Peace*, a new USIP book that examines the effectiveness of common practices to prevent election violence.

Link: [USIP](#)

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Link: [USIP](#)

Middle East Lecture Series: The Refugee Crisis in Jordan

Where: Geneva Hall, Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church, One Chevy Chase Circle, NW Washington, DC 20015

When: Thursday, March 23rd at 7:00 p.m.

About: The Middle East Lecture Series at the Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church is pleased to welcome Ambassador Dina Kavar of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to speak about the refugee crisis in Jordan. The lecture on Thursday, March 23rd at 7:00 p.m. in Geneva Hall is free and open to all. Dina Kavar was appointed as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the United States of America in June 2016. She also served as the Permanent Representative of Jordan to the United Nations from August 2014 to June 2016. She has led the Jordanian delegation during Jordan's nonpermanent membership of the United Nations Security Council from 2014 to 2015 and became the first Arab woman to ever preside over the Council. In February 2016, she was appointed by the President of the General Assembly as a co-facilitator for the high-level meeting of the plenary of the General Assembly on the large movement of refugees and migrants to take place in September 2016. Ambassador Kavar holds a master's degree in international affairs from Columbia University and a bachelor's degree in international relations from Mills College, both in the United States. She attended Harvard's Center for International Affairs from 1986 to 1987, and speaks fluent Arabic, French and English.

Link: [Chevy Chase PC](#)

Sundance Institute: Theater by Palestinians: Where Can I Find Someone Like You, Ali?

Where: Terrace Gallery

When: Thursday, March 23, 2017 7:30 PM – Friday, March 24, 2017 7:30 PM

About: In collaboration with the Sundance Institute, this U.S. premiere is written, produced, and performed by Raeda Taha, daughter of Ali Taha. In painful candor, she faces loss, the reality of being an orphan, and the absence of a father who can never be replaced, while turning the women of her family into real-life heroines.

Link: [Kennedy Center](#)

2017 Conference - The Israel Lobby and American Policy

Where: The National Press Club, 529 14th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20045

When: Friday, March 24, 2017 from 8:00 AM to 7:00 PM

About: Growing numbers of Americans question massive, automatic and unconditional U.S. support for Israel. The American Educational Trust, publisher of the Washington Report on Middle East Affairs, and

the Institute for Research: Middle Eastern Policy will host an historic fourth annual conference on March 24, 2017 at the National Press Club in Washington, DC focusing on the key issues.

Expert keynote speakers and panelists will present their analysis of:

U.S. foreign aid, intelligence and diplomatic support to Israel. Since 1948, the U.S. has provided more foreign aid to Israel than to any other country. In 2016 the U.S. signed a new pledge to provide it \$38 billion over 10 years. Is the aid unconditional? Will the U.S. provide it no matter how many illegal settlements Israel builds or what military actions it takes?

Israel as a U.S. ally. During the Cold War, many claimed Israel was America's "cop on the beat" in the Middle East, squaring off against Soviet client states and protecting U.S. access to oil. Were these claims ever true? Does Israel currently serve any identifiable U.S. strategic interest, or is it in fact a liability?

Israel lobbying organizations have launched many programs in the U.S. They transfer billions of dollars in tax-deductible charitable contributions to support Jewish immigration to Israel (including from the former Soviet Union), and fund Israel's clandestine nuclear weapons program. Do these programs further harm American interests?

Israel affinity organizations and prominent neoconservatives have long demanded that the U.S. should militarily engage Israel's rivals, including Hamas, Hezbollah, Iran, Syria and Iraq. Is the list of targets growing? What future wars are these neocons currently agitating for? How likely is it the U.S. will comply?

The Israel-Palestine conflict is the longest running confrontation in the region. It generates terrorist attacks and other blowback against the United States. What are the latest views from the region about prospects for a viable Palestinian state vs. Israel's continual territorial growth as a foreign-supported settler-colonial enterprise?

American public opinion is rapidly turning against unqualified support for Israel. How do Americans really feel about U.S. aid to Israel, Israel's huge influence with U.S. elites, and its treatment of Palestinians?

Beyond changing perceptions, increasing numbers of Americans are actively working against Israeli programs. What is currently being done at the grassroots level, in courtrooms and internationally to confront, expose and challenge Israel lobby initiatives?

Link: [Israel Lobby and American Policy](#)