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TALKS

Continued from Page 1

to solve the Palestinian problem while still building new settlements and taking in immigrants from the Soviet Union," Elgharabli said. "Israel's actions are going the opposite way of solving problems."

Ziyad Abdessalam, a graduate student who was born and raised in Baghdad after his family fled the West Bank, said he believes Israelis and Palestinians have different views of what peace is.

"There is a big gap between the definition of peace between Israelis and Palestinians," Abdessalam said. "There is not a common ground, no commonplace definition. I still see that Israel is ignoring Palestinian self-determination and ignoring the representatives of Palestine. These are big blockades to reaching any definition of peace."

Elgharabli noted, however, there is a move in Arab countries and within Israel to recognize the legitimacy of each other and move toward a peaceful co-existence.

"There is a big movement among Israelis and Palestinians who want to peacefully co-exist," Elgharabli said. "I see more people in that area who want to live in peace. The process of a change doesn't come quickly. My pessimistic feeling comes from the fact that the government controlling Israel is not looking for peace. This government is not a part of these people."

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's hardline stance toward Palestine is contrary to the attitudes of many Israeli Jews, Elgharabli said.

Phil Zuckerman, co-director of the Jewish Student Union, agrees there is a gap between the attitudes of the Israeli government and some of the citizens.

Peace movements among Jews within Israel — including protests against the Israeli occupation of the West Bank — are common occurrences, said Zuckerman, who also sees little reason to be optimistic about the talks.

"Negotiations are always a step in the right direction," he said. "The fact that Arab countries are going to sit down with Israel is a good sign, but it doesn't look like Shamir is in a peaceful frame of mind."

A peaceful resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict calls for both countries to compromise, Elgharabli and Zuckerman said.

"I would like to see an end to Israeli settlements in the West Bank and an end to the Arab boycott of Israel, economically and politically," Zuckerman said. "There needs to be a mutual respect. As an American Jew, I'm willing to say 'Palestine, yes,' but I need to hear them say 'Israel yes.'"

Elgharabli also sees mutual respect and recognition as the only hope for a peaceful future.

"Peace doesn't come by hoping for it, but rather by working for it, by being willing to pay the price for it." Elgharabli said. "The price for peace, for Israel, is to give up Gaza and the West Bank. The Palestinian price is to recognize Israel."

Elgharabli's family moved from the West Bank to Libya after the Six Day War of 1967, in which Israel captured the West Bank. But he would not be allowed to return and live there now, he said. Elgharabli plans to live in the United States indefinitely, but ideally, he "would like to to have a Palestinian state to go home to."

Leaders urge Arabs, Israelis to end old feuds

MADRID, Spain (AP) — President Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev urged Middle East antagonists on the eve of a historic peace conference to put aside ancient feuds and "act responsibly with great understanding." Israel and Palestinians made last-minute declarations of good intentions.

A senior Palestinian official signaled new flexibility on Tuesday, endorsing negotiations for autonomy within the occupied territories, as Israel has demanded, rather than immediate statehood.

And Israel said it would participate in the talks despite attacks on its soldiers in Lebanon and on settlers in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

"Let's just open the conference and start working," Gorbachev said at a joint news conference with Bush at the Soviet Embassy. Promised Bush: "We are here to be a catalyst."

There was an air of suspense and anticipation as the world awaited the first Mideast peace conference in nearly two decades and the first-ever direct, formal negotiations among Israel and all her Arab neighbors, including the Palestinians.

Bush and Gorbachev, cosponsors of the conference, will convene the meeting on Wednesday. The actual negotiations, if they stay on track, could stretch into months or even years.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir has offered the Arab nations peace after 43 years of conflict, but has ruled out relinquishing territory. The Arabs are insisting that they recover the West Bank, Gaza and the Golan Heights, which Israel won in the 1967 six-day war.

Shamir has also offered limited self-rule for Palestinians, who in a policy shift seem to be edging away from demands of immediate statehood.

Shamir, arriving in Madrid, said Israel would participate in the conference despite attacks this week on its soldiers in Lebanon and its settlers in the West Bank. Three Israeli soldiers and two Jewish settlers were killed.

"Some might have expected that in the face of this terror Israel would not attend the conference," Shamir said. "But despite this violence, our quest for peace is unrelenting."

In Beirui, meanwhile, a rocket fired from a hillside blasted the wall of the U.S. Embassy compound. There was no immediate claim of responsibility. Iranian and Arab radicals had promised to attack targets of the United States and others involved in the peace conference.

In Madrid, Faisal Husseini, leader of a group of advisers accompanying the Palestinian delegation, said the Palestinians hoped to secure an agreement for autonomy within Israeli-occupied territories as a stepping stone to an independent state. That state, he added, would later join in a confederation with Jordan.

Israel rejects the idea of an independent Palestinian state, but agrees to the idea of Palestinian confederation with Jordan, with whom the Palestinians are participating in a joint delegation in Madrid.

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