

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**AUTHOR PHYLLIS BENNIS TO SPEAK ON CURRENT STATUS OF PALESTINE–ISRAEL PEACE TALKS AT PORTLAND CONFERENCE APRIL 4**

Middle East analyst and author Phyllis Bennis will speak on the current status of the U.S.-brokered peace talks between Israel and Palestine Friday, April 4 at First United Methodist Church, 1838 SW Jefferson St. in Portland, Oregon.

The lecture is part of a two-day conference and call to action, SEEDS OF JUSTICE AND HOPE FOR PALESTINIANS AND ISRAELIS: WHAT IS REQUIRED OF US, hosted by the Portland action group of Friends of Sabeel – North America on April 4 and 5. Sabeel is an international peace movement initiated by Palestinian Christians.

Phyllis Bennis has been a writer, analyst, and activist on Middle East and UN issues for many years. In 2001 she helped found and remains on the advisory board of the U.S. Campaign to End Israeli Occupation. She directs the New Internationalism Project at the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, DC.

Zaha Hassan, a Portland Palestinian-American attorney, writer and human rights advocate will join Bennis for the plenary session.. Hassan worked as a legal advisor to the Palestinian negotiating team during the lead up to and following Palestine's application for UN membership. She is a co-host with Ned Rosch of the program One Land Many Voices on KBOO Portland Oregon, a radio program that explores the Palestine/Israel conflict through a human rights and international law lens

According to Bennis, the U.S. role in Palestine–Israel negotiations “should focus on rights, not on political arrangements which are ultimately not our business. Our goal should be to change the policies of our government, whose military aid and unlimited political and diplomatic protection enable Israel's policies and sustain its power. We should focus on ending the U.S. policy of support for occupation and apartheid, in favor of a policy based on international law, human rights, and equality for all.”

Bennis is the author of eight books, including *From Stones to Statehood: The Palestinian Uprising* (1990); *Calling the Shots: How Washington Dominates Today's UN* (2000); *Before & After: U.S. Foreign Policy and the September 11th Crisis* (2003); *Challenging Empire: How People, Governments, and the UN Defy US Power* (2006); and *Understanding the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Primer* (2009).

She writes and speaks widely across the U.S. and around the world as part of the global peace movement. She continues to serve as an informal adviser to several top UN officials on Middle East and UN democratization issues.

Information about speakers and tickets to the available at <http://sabeel-pdx.brownpapertickets.com/>

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NOTE TO MEDIA: Advance interviews with Phyllis Bennis and other speakers on Israel-Palestine issues may be arranged by contacting:

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