

**Miller: There is no deal the Israelis and the Palestinians cannot say no to**  
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Former US State Department adviser Aaron Miller, an expert on American involvement in the Arab-Israeli peace process, ruled out conflict in settling the current stand-off between the current Palestinian Authority and the current government of Israel in a lecture, “Gulliver’s Troubles: Barack Obama in the Middle East,” delivered at AUB on April 26, 2010, under the auspices of AUB’s Issam Fares Institute’s Bill and Sally Hembrecht Distinguished Peacemakers Lectures.



Miller directed two questions at the Obama administration: “Are the current leader’s masters of their political houses?” and “Is there enough pain and gain?” For Miller, will is not enough to make the peace process a reality. A successful peace treaty needs three things: leadership, a sense of urgency, and a sense that the project is actually doable. Miller sees all breakthroughs in a peace process as following a surge of violence or war or pain, and that is where the “pain-gain balance kicks in.”

Miller feels there is no deal the Israelis and the Palestinians cannot say no to. “The Middle East,” said Miller, “is littered with the remains of the ambitions and dreams of great powers who believed wrongly they could impose their will on small tribes.” Miller said that although he never believed in “perfect justice,” he did once believe “equitable peace” was possible. But, “after 16 years of Bill Clinton and George W. Bush,” he sees America failing, “or, if we want to be more generous, not succeeding.”

Aaron David Miller, author of *The Much Too Promised Land: America’s Elusive Search for Arab-Israeli Peace* (Bantam, 2008), is currently Public Policy Fellow at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.