

Addressing Racism through Shared “Rules of the Game”

An Initiative to Reduce the Violence and Discrimination engaging Supporters of Beitar Jerusalem and Bnei Sakhnin Football Clubs in a consensual code of ethics

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Executive summary

This proposal is an initiative to meaningfully contribute opening a new page between Arab and Jewish Israeli citizens. Through the bottom up search for common ground it aims at drafting and applying a “code of ethics” or “rules of the game” addressing the violence and racial discrimination exhibited between the supporters of football clubs. Engaging fans of Beitar Jerusalem and Bnei Sakhnin, some being more part of the problem and some

potentially more a part of the solution, is a challenging but doable endeavor. Racial slurs and physical violence during the games are accompanied by acts of increasing violence off the pitch. Recent racist acts of Beitar have raised the issue of discrimination to our national discourse and had international coverage. As such, the conflict extends beyond the realm of sport, and is fed by the ethno-political roots of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict.

A conflict transformation project aimed at reducing discrimination - expressed often as football hooliganism - between the two teams as well as others could have a positive ripple affect on the domestic relations between Israelis and Palestinians. While the situation is not the same in both teams, differences does not preclude the possibility of joint endeavor to become both part of the solution. So far, the violence has not escalated to massive confrontation but the club authorities' efforts have been not sufficient to control their supporters. At this stage, it seems that the majority of hard core supporters do not have the tools/desire to maintain a minimum behavioral transformation by themselves alone. If not addressed, this conflict could spiral and increase tensions within both the Jewish Israeli and the Palestinian communities.

This approach, based on the long and rich experience of the Center for International Development and Conflict Management (CIDCM) of a multi-communal approach to bring together a wide range of stakeholders- from supporters as a core group and then involving the players, the institutional leaders, the Israeli Football Association and governmental officials- to the conflict to better guarantee the effectiveness of any consensus reached. This initiative should produce a consensual document for supporter behavior, and put in place a set of guidelines that can be implemented to alleviate violence on and off the pitch. Similar efforts have been successful in Europe. A transformation of racist violence both physical and verbal in the realm of football is a step toward a more peaceful society. The following proposal is divided in three parts, borrowing methodology from the medical profession:

- a) **DIAGNOSIS:** the first, is a conflict assessment to be based on a thorough diagnosis involving interviews with the stakeholders and lateral thinking- gathering information about best practices and lessons learnt here and elsewhere . A first analysis of the issue at stake based on secondary sources is presented in this proposal, although it is clear that if funding will be available that intensive work is required to take place both involving the core groups of Beitar Jerusalem and Bnei Sakhnin and the other stakeholders. (two months)
- b) **PROGNOSIS:** A shorter second part will present several scenarios of potential developments if no effective intervention takes places. It also estimates the potential

of involving the “partners in conflict” in embarking into a process that may be perceived as more attractive than their current “Best Alternative to No Agreement” (BATNA).

- c) TREATMENT, INTERVENTION, THERAPY: The third part is more detailed and provides a thorough description of the stages of the conflict transformation process, through three steps: trust, skills and consensus building stages, bringing the “partners in conflict” into a shared document. The fourth and most difficult stage is to translate the agreement into an action plan, now involving all official, leadership and active members of both clubs.

The estimated duration of the project is one year (from conception to implementation) with an estimated budget of approx \$70,000 . A second stage of consolidation and institutionalization of the code of ethics as a permanent and shared document of the Israeli Football Association may require a smaller budget (approx \$40,000 for each of two additional consecutive years).

PART 1 - Conflict assessment- A first approximation

As mentioned, this diagnosis is based mostly on secondary sources, and will require an in-depth analysis based on field research (two months). At first glance, this conflict is about the clashes both verbal and physical experienced during and after football matches in general when Arab players are involved, and more specifically between the supporters of Beitar Jerusalem and Bnei Sakhnin. Football matches between the two have become increasingly confrontational since Bnei Sakhnin's rise to the league in 2003. Cries of 'Death to the Arabs,' 'Mohammed is dead, and 'Terrorists! May your village burn,' are often reciprocated with cries of 'Garbage' sounded during the national anthem, the flying of PLO flags, and calls for the death of Jews. These racist insults are accompanied by acts of violence out of the stadium and directed at civilians such as the Beitar Jerusalem supporters' recent assault of Arab cleaning personnel in the Jerusalem Malha shopping mall (Haaretz, 2012; ForeignPolicy, 2012). . The recent assault on Arab cleaning staff at the Malkha mall in Jerusalem by Beitar Jerusalem supporters is the latest in a line of violent racist attacks against Palestinian Arabs. In this particular case, the police didn't arrest anyone - despite the attack being captured on close circuit television - because complaints were not filed (Rosenberg, 2012).

Additionally, protests against the hiring of two Chechnyan Muslim players have raised the issue of discrimination on a wider anti-Islamic stand, and the burning of Beitar's headquarters in Jerusalem by fanatic youth has culminated in the arrest of the perpetrators and a higher level of tension.

This conflict between the football supporters of two different clubs – one Jewish and one Palestinian-Israeli, extends beyond the realm of sport – it is fed by the ethno-political roots of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, and as such is affected by outside events. And yet there are other common factors within both camps that drive the conflict between them. Both groups experience a strong sense of injustice and perceive themselves to be greatly disadvantaged in relation to the rest of society. Many of Beitar Jerusalem supporters traditionally come from Mizrahi families of lower socio-economic status who grew up in Jerusalem and the surrounding area. Although politics may not be as dominant in football today, the political image of the team is - and Beitar supporters are right-wing Likud [evolving more xenophobic that the original founders and sons from the Herut nationalist party] voters who harbor animosity toward the Labor-affiliated Hapoel clubs - the Labor (Mapai) government in power until 1977 – still perceived by many of their descendants in Beitar fans as unevenly allocating state services (Ben-Porat, 2008) within society. To a large extent, it reflects a strongly

resentment- the perceived Ashkenazi/Mizrahi divide in society- feeling themselves treated like second-class citizens. The majority of Bnei Sakhnin supporters are both Israeli citizens and Palestinian Arabs, with a strong feeling of being a discriminated minority in Israel. Located in this small [Arab Galilee](#) town, the stadium was built with public funds largely from the [State of Israel](#) and the [Qatar National Olympic Committee](#), and was named after the Qatari city of [Doha](#).ⁱ

In general, they too feel themselves to be treated like second-class citizens. The residents of Sakhnin are very proud of their football club, the only one to play in the Premier league, and use football to put forward a positive identity to the Jewish public – however, it is said that their obsession with football is the main cause for the violence at games (BiologyDaily, 2006). Their violence is as much directed against the police as it is against Beitar Jerusalem and its supporters – feeling that the authorities discriminate against them because of their being Palestinian-Israelis. Both groups are strongly identified with their team, using football matches to give voice to the hatred each side feels toward the other.

Conflict at present

Currently, the conflict can be seen as escalating. There are hard-core Beitar Jerusalem supporters – often linked to a delinquent network called “La Famiglia”, have been notorious for their hatred toward Arabs. This hard core is accused of being a magnet for chauvinist and racist extremists and has a long standing-policy of not hiring Arab players – even though many of them are considered among the strongest players in Israeli football today and take part in the selection of the Israeli national team (ForeignPolicy, 2012)

While club owners condemn the violence, their attempts to deal with it in-house are not considered effective – they oftentimes leave the matter to the care of the authorities. Penalties in the form of league points reduced, and games played without fans only address single acts of violence – they don’t address the underlying issues that trigger each outburst, and cannot transform the conflict. If some hard and fast framework regarding racial slurs is not established, and if supporter violence that targets the other group and innocent bystanders is not firmly dealt with, then ethnic clashes of this type will become more violent. Further clashes may even increase the Israeli/Palestinian divide in society. A bottom up initiative can address the deep-rooted hatred and feelings of discrimination and give the supporters the tools to express their competitiveness on the field, and leave the animosity behind when the game is over. Furthermore, such an experiment taken at the grassroots level may also have a positive ripple effect on society as a whole.

Parties to the conflict

The main parties to conflict include the hard core of supporters of both teams, perhaps in different proportions. In both cases we are convening contending groups but sharing a common denominator: all participants are deeply interested in football and are strong supporters of their teams. Such stakeholders are identified as “partners in conflict”. While the majority of the supporters are ethnical and personally identified with their football club, most do not condone racism or violence. However, there is a group of hard-core Beitar Jerusalem supporters called La Familia who are responsible for organizing other supporters before matches such as handing out Kach flags [an extreme Jewish organization advocating the expulsion of the Arabs from Greater Israel] at matches and for issuing the ever present ‘Death to Arabs’ cry heard at matches. They stand behind the groups refusal to add an Arab player to the team with their ‘not on our team’ policy. At a recent match, they flew banners reading ‘Beitar is pure forever’ and ‘70 years of principles’ – emphasizing the clubs 70 year old policy of not hiring non-Jewish players. They resent the club working together with the police, seeing the club as their own – ‘it’s our dreams and it’s our life (CNN, 2010). In addition, they are fed from the political culture of the extreme right - and treat all Arabs as foreigners that threaten their personal and collective security. They perceive themselves as “true” leaders of the Jewish Zionist character of the state and want to preserve Beitar Jerusalem as Jewish only. As such they can be viewed as spoilers and may block any attempt at conflict transformation.

Other parties involved in the conflict include the club’s authorities, the city elected officers, the football and sports national associations, the ministry of culture and sports and the media who are present in every game as much to report on crowd behavior as to report on the match. The press is filled with sensationalist articles about supporter behavior that actually contribute to the conflict by predicting certain behavior – supporters relish the coverage, and actively seek it (Frosdick & Marsh, 2005). Any initiative at transforming the conflict should take the media onboard – they could cover good behavior and solidly ignore the bad.

In short, we suggest that this citizens diplomacy initiative is to be seen, in the second stage as involving the wider communal group of parties involved in the conflict, and make them stakeholders in the outcome – this would include club managers, owners, team captains, the authorities and the mayors of Jerusalem and Sakhnin.

Barriers to peace

The supporters of both teams view each other through a number of lenses. They both hate the other. Hatred is an extreme, negative emotion that can cause irreparable harm to intergroup relations - groups that view their opponent through a prism of hatred believe that the character of the opponent is rooted in evil, and therefore will support violent action and escalation of conflict against the opponent – they also believe that the other cannot change (Halperin, Sharvit, Gross, 2009).

Each group, albeit in different degrees, delegitimizes the other – each one is convinced the other is to blame for the conflict. They both hold long-standing views that they absorbed through their environment while growing up. Many in among hard core of Beitar Jerusalem supporters believe Arabs are potential terrorists, and likely to support Hezbollah, and therefore want the death of Jews. Not a few Sakhnin supporters believe Jews to be fascists who want to transfer the Palestinian-Arabs out of Israel.

Both groups have a negative view of each other, experience a sense of victimhood and have strong feelings of patriotism all of which are known to feed a conflict and prevent efforts at resolution (Halperin & Bar-Tal, 2011). The hatred both sides feel will prevent each one from considering that the other is capable of changing their behavior - which in turn, leads them to believe that violence is the only way forward. Both groups many reject any positive information about the other and have been skeptical about attempts to negotiate. In addition, the conflict extends beyond the immediate groups and filters out through the community and into society at large.

Current conflict transformation initiatives have tried to involve the players as role models and attempted through them addressing these issues. This proposal would work more with the supporters and then bottom up break down the psychological barriers so that each of the groups are able to stop dehumanizing the other, be open to positive information regarding the other and recognize that the way forward would be through consensus. Currently, the stadium is the only place the groups meet – a workshop would enable the groups to meet out of the stadium, and communicate beyond the discrimination and violence that is given legitimization through the competitiveness of sport. A systematic challenge seeking a suitable conflict transformation project could be made in a phased innovative problem-solving workshop; starting with unilateral meetings, and ending with consensus being reached in a multi-communal framework, as described in detail below.

Needs and interests

Both groups share similar needs and interests. The supporters of Beitar Jerusalem would like to watch football and support their team. The majority would prefer that there would be no discrimination or violence. However, the more hard-core supporters feel duty-bound to defend their team's honor, and if the team loses, feel no compunction in avenging this loss with violence off the pitch directed at Palestinian Israelis. They also consider themselves guardians of Zionist Israel and will use violence to protect their inner circle against the 'other.' However, they feel themselves discriminated against in society.

Many Bnei Sakhnin supporters are interested in putting forward a good face to the Israeli public. They want to belong to a society that systematically marginalizes them. They feel that the only way they can do this is by playing football. In the words of one-time owner Mazen Ghnaim, they would like to create a 'cultural rainbow' – they have Jewish players on their team. They would like to watch football and support their team. They too have a need to protect both the honor of their team and of the Palestinian-Arab population at large, and often direct racial slurs toward the authorities who they perceive as oppressing them and their people. A popular chant in matches is 'With our spirit, with our blood, we will redeem you oh Sakhnin!' , which reminds of similar nationalistic slogans.

Attempts to reduce conflict

Previous attempts to reduce violence have mostly been limited to reprimands from the Israel Football Association and attempts to stop mob violence by the police off the pitch.

Authorities and club managers have tried to reduce the tensions before a match by handing out flyers. There have been attempts to sponsor visits by players to schools to discuss correct behavior at games, distribute literature calling for good sportsmanship, and calls to make efforts on the community level to prevent outbreaks of violence (Niskov & Ahmed, 2005). In other countries, there are country-wide campaigns aimed at reducing racism in sport such as Britain's 'Let's Kick Racism Out of Football' or the Europe-wide initiative "All different – All equal' which have been proved to combat racism. Europe has also developed 'fan coaching' schemes that involve social workers working with groups of fans (Frosdick & Marsh, 2005).

A search of the online media shows that there is an Israeli equivalent of Let's Kick Racism Out of Football sponsored by the New Israel Fund and called 'Kick Racism out of Israeli Football.' It shames by publishing a racism index that collects the racial slurs sounded at games. (Kraft, 2004). However, the last entry on their website is from September 2011, and it appears that there have been few reported proactive attempts made recently to combat racism.

This could be linked to the fact that efforts to transform conflict within the larger Israeli/Palestinian conflict have reached a stalemate, with increasing claims on behalf of Israeli policy makers that there is no partner for peace.

MANDY, PLEASE CHECK AND UPDATE NEW ISRAEL FUND INITIATIVE OF ACTING AGAINST RACISM IN THE STADIUMS THROUGH THE PLAYERS AND CLUBS, SINCE THEY ARE LIKELY TO BE A POTENTIAL FUNDER.

PART 2- Alternative future scenarios [prognosis]

If unaddressed, the conflict may proceed as per one of the following scenarios:

Scenario 1 - Escalation of the conflict

Tensions between the two groups, already high due to the start of 14th season of the Israel Premier league will escalate if either team wins the league, and the supporters of the losing team feel the need to ‘defend their honor.’ If feelings of discrimination, hatred of the other, and an inability to look at each other through a lens other than that of the enemy are not addressed – inside and outside the stadium - the situation could end up with the loss of life. This could happen during this league, particularly due to the rather poor performance of both teams and the serious financial situation.

Scenario II- Supporters are induced to modify their behavior – due to finances

Scenario two assumes that due to their financial situation, the managers of Beitar Jerusalem and Bnei Sakhnin may make sure that their supporters modify their behavior in order to appear more attractive to possible investors. Beitar Jerusalem is currently in financial straits following its owner Arcadi Gaydamak’s inability to rescue the team from its financial debt. Gaydamak abdicated responsibility to the team in June 2012 when the sale of the club to two American Jewish businessmen fell through. Bnei Sakhnin is also in financial straits. Its main sponsor Cellcom has not sponsored the club this year and it has not received its usual injection of money from the Arab countries. In the past, Qatar has been responsible for additional funding –for example the already mentioned Doha football stadium in Sakhnin. This scenario while possibly reducing violence, does not address the underlying ethno-political issues that trigger it and will not transform the conflict.

Scenario III – Beitar Jerusalem perceives it can go it alone

Beitar Jerusalem is looking for a new owner. The supporters have managed to contribute 2.1 million NIS to the club through the Supporter Trust fund, and in return have secured three

director positions on the board. They may even be able to purchase 100% of the club shares in 2015 if they find a suitable financial partner (SupportersDirect, 2012). This could cause a spiraling of the conflict if the new directors perceive themselves as ‘unstoppable’ – but it may also isolate them if hard-core supporter behavior is not moderated.

Scenario IV - no change

This scenario rests on the assumption that there is no change in the conflict. Neither team wins this season of the Israel Premier League. Both teams return to their home grounds and work on improving their performance for the next league. Just enough funding is found to enable both teams to continue their training. In this scenario – the discrimination continues unabated, and neither group will reach the necessary stalemate that will induce them to address the underlying causes of the conflict.

Preferred scenario

Out of the above scenarios, the preferred overall outcome for both groups would be no change in the situation. They see a football game as a place to let out all their frustrations. Both know how to trigger reactions in the other by pressing the required hot buttons. Despite attempts to reign in the violence, both maneuver their way round the authorities that are positioned inside and outside the stadium during matches. Neither group believes that anyone can ‘stop’ their nemesis. And both will continue to use football as an outlet to deal with their hatred.

Best Alternative to a Negotiated Outcome (BATNA)

Each group may perceive that it can do better without negotiating with the other side. Beitar Jerusalem supporters may perceive that its BATNA would be to continue to support the club financially and strengthen their position by eventually buying the club. However, a facilitator would be able to point out the flaw in this assumption. If current supporter behavior is not addressed, and the violence continues, two outcomes are possible - more moderate supporters may not come to matches to support the team resulting in a further loss of funding, and the team may end up being disqualified from participating in the next League due to increased supporter violence. Since 2005, Beitar Jerusalem has faced more than 20 hearings and has received various punishments, including point deductions, fines, and matches behind closed doors because of its supporters’ racist behavior (Dorsey, 2012).

While the Bnei Sakhnin supporters may have a lot to gain by sitting down to negotiate since most of the violence is addressed at their community, the Sakhnin community may perceive that their BATNA would be to decrease their multi-cultural approach. It hasn't enabled them to place an Arab player on the Beitar Jerusalem team, and may even have caused them to lose much needed funding. Mayor Ghanaim is convinced that the lack of Arab funding is due to the Arab countries fear of being seen donating funds to the state of Israel (Haaretz, 2012). A more anti-Israel, pro-Arab team may attract funding. The flaw in this assumption is as above, violence if not addressed may keep supporters away from the games, and end up in the team being disqualified from the league.

PART 3- TREATMENT, INTERVENTION - Planning for a Conflict Transformation Initiative [treatment, intervention]

The goal of this project is to transform the parties' perceptions and attitudes toward each other, and enable them to reach some sort of consensus regarding acceptable behavior both during and after matches. A consensus could result in a basic "code of ethics" that is used during matches that prohibits racial slurs, better cooperation with the authorities, and more severe punishment for supporters that use violence against civilians pre/post a match. It may even induce Beitar Jerusalem to hire a Palestinian-Arab player. It should lead to healthy competition during a game, and change the zero sum outcome inherent in sport to a win-win situation. Any positive change in attitude between the participating two groups in the projects, then may impact on their respective teams, and then within the realm of football at large, may also result in a positive change in Israelis Jews and Israeli Palestinians' attitudes toward each other in society.

The initiative – based on an Innovative Problem-Solving Workshop (IPSW) ⁱⁱ

- The initiative is based on the methodology of Innovative Problem Solving Workshop that consists of bridge-building exercises that stress commonalities between the two groups – turning them into partners in conflict (Kaufman, 2003). The initiative should be conducted in three phases, taking place over Summer 2014 and three to four months out of the 2014/15 football season. There should be two facilitators, Arab and Jew. They should be chosen from a third-party [IDC and the Peres Center], ideally well versed in the passion of football but more importantly into the workings of both Israeli and Palestinian-Israeli society and the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. The workshops will be conducted in Hebrew, but it should be made clear that if a

participant would prefer to speak in Arabic he can do so and the facilitator can translate into Hebrew.

Phase I - Unilateral workshop

A one-day unilateral workshop convened by the Club's authorities that will prepare the groups for meeting with each other. These facilitated activities are to include icebreakers, training some basic skills of interpersonal communications aimed at making each group aware of its own needs and the needs of the other – and emphasize their commonalities. Both groups meet and learn collaborative problem solving, and acquire tools to build consensus. In this phase there will be two workshops conducted simultaneously – one for Beitar Jerusalem supporters and one for Bnei Sakhnin supporters.

Each workshop should have a similar number of 7-10 participants. The participants should be drawn from well known supporters of both groups. The management of each team should be able to provide a list of key supporters who may be interested in the project. It is important to select participants that are able to wield some influence over their group. Therefore, it is worth getting some of the periphery of the more hard-core supporters of each group on board – especially from Beitar Jerusalem. Some of them may be pragmatic regarding the team's future – and may even be open to a dialog that could help to secure a better future for their teams. The test will be to ensure that the selected individuals of both groups can make the biggest change in supporter behavior – and be able to respect the process.

The facilitators will run each unilateral workshop along the same lines, and prepare the groups for the second workshop in which they will work together. The facilitators should draw lines of accepted conduct, and explain how the second and third workshops are going to be conducted. The partners should discuss what they expect from the workshop.

The facilitators should compare notes at the end of each day, and identify the red lines of each group and be better prepared to help the groups work toward meeting with each other. They can do this with the help of the 'one minute evaluation' [see explanation under "Evaluation" section below] that each participant fills out at the end of the day. The groundwork covered in these two days, should put the groups at ease in their surroundings and prepare them for meeting face to face out of the stadium in a non-confrontational manner.

- *Phase II – five-day workshop consisting of both groups of "partners" search for common ground* To take place in a foreign neighboring country such as Cyprus. Generating awareness of being a pioneer pilot, the challenge of moving them from

“part of the problem” into “part of the solution”. Acquiring a gradual ownership of the process, through a series of exercises and interaction learn collaborative problem solving, and acquire tools to build consensus. They will be given the tools to move from an adversarial stance to a more collaborative attitude. The facilitators compare notes at the end of each day and prepare for the next day. Based on feedback received from the one-minute evaluation and their own observations, they can adapt and even modify the exercises accordingly. For instance, if more team-building is felt necessary, they can also organize joint activities between the groups, such as watching a “classic” top of the line football match on TV. The groups will also see each other at mealtime and in the spa facilities of the hotel. Below is an example of possible exercises:

- Day 1: The partners should spend this day in getting to know each other and in trust building. This can be done with exercises that will emphasize overlapping identities, show the partners things that they have in common, and start to build bridges, such as *Name Histories*, and *Ups and Downs* . Additional team building ideas could be built in into a trip to the vicinity or sea shore
- Day 2 and 3: Training with conflict transformation skills. The partners should now learn to face (and change) their perception of the other. Exercises will deal with dehumanization, and break down the fear and hatred each side has of the other by dealing with stereotypes. This includes exercises such as *Mirror, Mirror on the wall*. If there is time, the partners can personalize the conflict by sharing stories – this will help them view the person on the other side, and provide an opportunity to accept responsibility for the actions of one’s group.
They will also experiment with improvements the way they express themselves [non-violent communication, body language] and listen to the Other [active listening] with additional exercises such as *Hot Buttons*. This exercise will help to highlight the negative connotations of the slurs each side throws out at the other and perhaps assist in replacing them with other more acceptable slogans.
- Day 4 will focus on group skills (de-escalation, cooperation, creativity] leading to an exercise towards consensus around shared vision. These ideas when can motivate the partners to address their conflict by showing what the future could hold if there is an adversarial escalation among the football fans if the issues at stake are not addressed

and by highlighting a positive future when the issues are addressed. Backcasting from the future into the present may result in a “code of ethics”

- On the last day 5, the facilitators will prepare the group for a detailed action plan undertaking individual and collective responsibilities in implementation, as well as reaching consensus around the nature of an additional multi-community workshop. This last day includes a number of steps to facilitate re-entry, and addresses the constructive, future-based program created in step four of the workshop. The partners should be given tools that will help them to implement any consensus they have reached, for example a basic code of ethics, how to participate better with the authorities, and most importantly how to pass on what they have learned in the workshop. It is important to coach them in how to deal with negative reactions and provocative questions. They can also discuss ideas for spreading their message - such as printing the code of ethics on the football teams website and dissemination in the stadium. .

Phase III – Implementation- multi-community workshop, ending with a re-entry plan

Upon the return from the previous workshop, the group should now move into preparatory steps to present the “code of ethics” to the wider sports community framework. This phase involves all the stakeholders in the conflict. These include the partners in conflict from each of the first workshops, the facilitators, the representatives of the mayors of both Jerusalem and Sakhnin, the club owners, managers, coaches, and captains. In addition, the media should be represented and so should the authorities. While the specific nature of phase III should be determined by the “partners” themselves at the end of phase II, the potential planning could include

- A one day re-entry workshop in which the partners implement a consensus within a multi-community framework such as Ho-oponopono,[see Appendix 2) to take place respectively in Jerusalem and Sakhnin. This process involves taking local stakeholders to the conflict on board and extricates the partners in conflict from cycles of violence. Reaching consensus within such a framework provides partners in conflict with a large societal support network that will make any agreement reached easier to implement – with each other and within society. Each of the unilateral

workshops can be conducted locally under the auspices of their respective football club authorities.

- A two-day workshop involving representatives from all stakeholders of both teams as Action items for the future-based program must be issued to each stakeholder, and a follow-up plan should be laid out. This core group of stakeholders should meet two weeks before a match between the two teams to get organized and meet up again a couple of days after to discuss the outcome. This should be repeated throughout the season well as national officials and sports institutions responsible which, at that time sharing concrete ideas for implementation and the elaboration of an Action Plan. Such workshop could take place in an attractive but isolated place in Israel, such as Eilat.
- During the remaining months of the Premier League, to arrange for a welcoming visit for each other team in the city of the other, to include a tour, meal and working session.

These now multi-sector program will give all the committed stakeholder the opportunity to share their consensus about fair and ethical behavior, ways to reduce racism and violence in matches could lead to a concrete number of options for conflict transformation, such as (for illustration purposes only):

- Greater cooperation with the authorities before and after a match to ensure increased crowd control.
- Formulating a code of ethics that will govern supporter behavior during/after matches.
- Increased use of stewards to control crowds inside the stadium as a way to overcome supporter animosity to police presence within the stadium and to ensure greater compliance with the code of ethics.
- Municipality provision of transportation to and from games to prevent future cases of rampage.
- Reduced discrimination in the stadium may enter society and improve Arab/Israeli relations on a wider domestic scale.

Evaluating the initiative

If funding is available, the most effective assessment of the project should be conducted by an external independent team of an Arab and Jewish experienced evaluators. The best method

available has been coined by Prof. Jay Rothman (currently teaching at the Bar-Ilan MA program on conflict resolution), as “action evaluation” [see website ariagroup] The aim of the initiative is to reduce conflict between two groups of supporters, and provide them with constructive ways of competing in sport. The workshops themselves are to be evaluated using the “one minute evaluation” at the end of each day. Such approach allows the facilitators not only to learn from the appreciation of the daily activities by the participants but also has a second question where participants are requesting clarifications or expressing concerns. This way, the feedback allows for immediate response from the facilitators/organizers and makes sure that no one is left behind.

In the actual estimates of the impact of the project, ways of determining if there is a reduction in violence during matches could include:

- Accessing police reports of supporter behavior during and after matches.
- Reviewing the minutes from the before/after match meetings of the core group of stakeholders.
- Interviews with the “partners in conflict” before and after the project.

Requested funding

The required funding should be negotiated in detail, including the feedback of the potential funds, often with a rich experience in this field. Broadly speaking, the project should include support for the following items:

- 1) Conflict/needs assessment: 2 researchers 1/2 time each x 2 months [graduate students, one Arab speaker].
- 2) Conflict facilitation: 2 facilitators 1/4 time for 12 months, or full time 30 days. An overall project coordinator 1/4 time [organization, administration, minutes, follow up
- 3) Cost of travel and accommodation for the 2 and 5 workshops [the first one-day workshop funded by the Clubs.
- 4) Modest part time salaries for newly trained facilitators from Beitar and Bnai Sakhnin teams [2-3 per team]- supported by both municipalities – sharing also the “code of ethics” with their youth programs
- 5) Independent evaluation team [12 months, 15 working days]

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This detail proposal has been based both on theoretical and applied experience. Much has been acquired in other conflicts and within the Jewish/Arab conflict. The draft is subject to more detailed negotiations with the potential funders as well as subordinated to the findings of the first stage- conflict/needs assessment. The Arab/Jewish Center of Haifa University has a recognized track record for action research in coexistence. CIDCM at the University of Maryland has more than twenty years of experience conducting applied projects in ethnopolitical conflicts, like this particular one. IDC has been teaching and training into the skills of unofficial diplomacy for about a decade. We believe that pulling all these resources together may have the potential to transform behavior and set a precedent for future similar actions. Players that are familiar with the “rules of the games” will include the basic “code of ethics” into their professional behavior and personal advocacy in their contacts with their fans

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ⁱ The decision by the Qataris to build the stadium in Israel came after a meeting between Member of [Knesset Ahmad Tibi](#) and Secretary-General of the Qatar National Olympic Committee Sheikh Saud Abdulrahman Al Thani after Tibi expressed his concern on the conditions for sport in Sakhnin. The involvement of Qatar was to show that relations between the two nations are peaceful and with a similar interest.^[1] Nahmias, Ro'ei (2006-01-14). ["Why "Doha" Stadium and not "HaShalom"?"](#) (in Hebrew). [Yedioth Ahronoth](#)..

ⁱⁱ See detailed description of the method in J. Davies & Edward Edy Kaufman, (eds.) [Second Track/Citizens Diplomacy: Concepts and Techniques of Conflict Transformation](#), (Lanham, Rowman and Littlefield 2003). Chapters 10 and 11 drafted by E. Kaufman provide a day-by-day plan for the proposed activities.