What is your past Model UN experience?

Last year I competed in the Boston College model UN Conference

What do you believe are the three most important issues related to developing a final framework agreement between Israel and Palestine?

First and foremost, Palestine must be able to organize into a central group with aligned interests instead of the current factions of multiple militant groups. Only then can Israel be sure that what is agreed upon with the government will also be carried out by Hamas. Second, Israel must be willing to negotiate with Palestine and recognize that Palestinian lands as defined by the United Nations are currently controlled by Israel. Finally the world must be willing to accept Palestine as a formal state and give it the rights of a nation contingent upon Palestine’s agreement to stop terrorist groups such as Hamas from aggressing against Israel.

How does the unification of Fatah and Hamas affect negotiations between Israel and Palestine?

The unification of Fatah and Hamas creates an entity with which to negotiate. Whereas before Israel had no specific group to negotiate with, it is a step in the right direction to creating a legitimate non militant government in Palestine that will be mutually beneficial to both independent Palestinians and defensive Israelis.

Please discuss some of the potential outcomes of negotiations between Israel and Palestine (i.e. joint government in one state, two separate states, etc.), and the costs/benefits of each scenario.

Israel can become one state which has the benefit of allowing all people to travel freely throughout the region. However this has the potential to create more strife in which Israelis gain more power in the government and Palestinians feel vindictive because of it. Two separate states are an option as well, however it is important to recognize that neither will be happy with the area they receive from the agreement and thus could lead to war with a legitimate Palestinian army. A third scenario entails a government with an equal number of Muslims and Jews to ensure neither party gets the upper hand. However, each side will claim they deserve larger representation.

How can Israel balance its stated desire to be formally recognized by the international community as a “Jewish state with its constitutional commitment to democracy? How does this impact the negotiations process?

Israel must recognize that by barring any other religious group but Jews they cannot truly be democratic. If Jews would recognize other religious people as part of their community perhaps some of the strife could be cut down. While Israel hopes to be a Jewish state they must realize that to ever hope to end the violence they must at some point accept that there are other cultures in their region and work with them to expand their horizons, not try to shut them out.