

Occupied Elsewhere: Selective Policies on Occupations, Protracted Conflicts and Territorial Disputes

Featuring Svante Cornell and Brenda Shaffer. Moderated by Jonathan Schanzer

SCHANZER: Hello and welcome to the Foundation for Defense of Democracies. I am senior vice president here, my name is Jonathan Schanzer. Today's event marks the release of a new FDD report. It's right here. If you haven't grabbed one, please do so outside. It's called *Occupied Elsewhere: Selective Policies on Occupations, Protracted Conflicts and Territorial Disputes*. I can promise you that when we scheduled today's event, we had no idea that it would come after the President's deal of the century, which directly addresses the Palestinian-Israeli territorial dispute. But the timing of the report was obviously perfect and we're glad that you've all joined us today.

The new report provides a groundbreaking comparative assessment of how foreign governments, the United Nations, and NGOs have handled eight occupied or disputed territories. Rather than developing consistent standards applied globally, they use a case by case approach. A broad examination of these cases reveals not just inconsistent standards, but rather a persistent bias, and this probably won't come as a shock to most of you, but that bias is one that singles out Israel consistently.

We commissioned this new report to highlight the double standards of the international community. Our hope is that by calling attention to the problem, we can begin to push the policy community to adopt more consistent approaches while also helping governments, international organizations and businesses avoid the legal challenges associated with the double standards that now prevail.

We're pleased to have with us the authors of this assessment, Brenda Shaffer and Svante Cornell to discuss their remarkable new report. Before jumping into the conversation, I want to note that today's program is one of many that we host here at FDD throughout the year. For more information on all of our work and our areas of focus, we encourage you to visit our website, FDD.org. We're glad to be joined today by a distinguished audience of ambassadors, senior diplomats, officials from across the executive branch, experts in academics from the policy community, and the media.

Many of you know that FDD is a nonpartisan policy institute. It's also important to note that we take no foreign government or foreign corporate funding and we never will. I'll note that today's event is on the record and will be live streamed and recorded. Just a quick housekeeping note. If you could please just silence your cell phones now, we'd greatly appreciate that. And if you want to join in today's conversation on Twitter, you can do so @FDD.

So with that, let me now introduce our panel. To my far right is Svante Cornell. He's the director of the Central Asia Caucuses Institute at the American Foreign Policy Council. And he's also co-founder of the Institute for Security and Development Policy in Stockholm. And next to me here is Brenda Shaffer. She's a foreign policy and international energy specialist focusing on global energy trends and policies, politics and energy in the South Caucuses in greater Caspian

and Black Sea regions, Iranian natural gas exports, ethnic politics in Iran, and Eastern Mediterranean energy.

So with introductions behind us, I want to dive right in. I am going to try to ask as many questions as I can in the time that's allotted to me. So they will be short questions, hopefully somewhat short answers. And then when we get past that, we're going to open up the floor to your questions. So please have them ready and we'll call on you. We'll have a microphone that gets to you, so please wait for that mic before you start speaking.

So let me kick things off with Svante. Why should we care about unresolved conflicts or whether one country occupies another person's territory? Is it not just better to accept the new reality and move on? After all, did the US not take territory from Mexico? Why are we not litigating that right now? Why does all of this matter?

CORNELL: Well, thank you. And first of all, it's great to be here and to have this audience to discuss this issue. I think there are a number of reasons why these territories matter. One is because after the second World War in particular, after having failed in the 20s. The United States took the lead in building an international system that was based on a certain world order in which countries shouldn't just take territory from others. And we end up also in a situation where you have conflict zones that are uncontrolled, which means you don't really know who's in charge. And we see this particularly in areas where you have proxies, a government that's really highly influenced by another power. So you have this lack of clarity about who's in charge of a territory, which becomes a very easy weapon in many cases for other powers that don't have our interests at heart to undermine American allies, to undermine security in important areas to the world that matter to the United States. And I think therefore it's in our interest to have consistent policies towards these territories.

SCHANZER: And they're not terribly consistent in your view?

CORNELL: No, I think that's the gist of the report that there seems to be very little of an approach of trying to see if a conflict zone erupts that are certain similarities with something that happened before. It seems that both the US and the EU and many international organizations are reactive. They don't think strategically or on the basis of principles about how they should approach this. They just take it on a case by case basis.

SCHANZER: Okay. Well, we'll get back to that in a little bit. Brenda, I want to focus on one thing that you guys have in your report that we've talked about in the past. You say that the expulsion of populations in occupied territories works. That's a pretty provocative statement. Explain.

SHAFFER: Well, I wish it wasn't true, but I could say in the case, as we pointed out in the report that really the focus of the international system, whether it's the United Nations, whether it's international NGOs like Human Rights Watch or Amnesty International, all the focus is on Israel's occupation. While there are variety of occupations or disputed territories around the world, where actually in the case of Israel, by and large, the population, the native population when Israeli forces came was actually stayed in their homes. We have in contrast, for

instance in our report, conflict where the whole population was expelled. Let's take for instance 700,000 Azerbaijanis that were expelled by Armenia's forces. And yet we don't hear anything in the international system about this expulsion. And in fact I could say one of the reasons that I became very interested in the South Caucasus, well, seeing that on one hand having some – there was sort of this justification in the international system for Palestinian violence against Israel, well, they lost their land, they lost their territories. And I was thinking, wait, these 700,000 refugees from the war with Armenia actually have not used terrorism to call attention to their issue. And that actually is – so the international system rewards terrorism. If you use terrorism, we're going to address it. We're going to have UN resolutions. We're going to do something. If you don't use terrorism and you kind of count on the international system, these rules based order, which Svante mentioned, then you don't get anything. So none of us know about – most of us don't know about 700,000 Azerbaijani refugees because they don't use terror. If they blew up buses, we probably would be interested in their topic.

SCHANZER: So terrorism works?

SHAFFER: Terrorism works, expulsion works. Hopefully through – that's something we can start a dialogue about changing.

SCHANZER: So in other words, just to put it another way, we create a more consistent system for addressing occupations, territorial conflicts and disputed territories, you might actually begin to solve some of these more systemic problems.

SHAFFER: Well, I think one of the best examples, Russia occupies five regions right now. Donbass, Crimea, two regions of Georgia: Abkhazia and South Ossetia and Transnistria in Moldova. Yet the only region that's sanctioned is Crimea. Meaning that we do have, even you can say one country's occupations, we have a policy towards one and we don't have a policy towards the others.

SCHANZER: Okay. I'm sure we can get back to that as well a little bit later. Let me maybe ask you both. You both talk about having proxies as particularly hazardous. This phenomenon is an issue that you say is kind of a danger to the international system. Maybe explain. I don't know who wants to go first, but would love to hear you guys talk about this.

CORNELL: Sure. I think this feeds into a bigger question, especially because you have an international system that's supposed to be rules based and the United States has been, in many cases, an enforcer of the system. So you have this tendency by a lot of players to use asymmetric types of warfare. Terrorism is an example of that. User proxies, like you wrote recently about in the Iranian case, I think the Iranian user proxy across the Middle East is a way to deflect blame. It's not us, right? It's these little militias. You can't really say that it's us or General Soleimani who was behind it. Now this administration called that bluff.

But I think all over, especially in the Eurasian conflict, this really actually started in Cyprus when the Turkish government decided that, but a little belatedly. That's the mistake they made. If they had immediately 1974 after the invasion created a proxy regime and said this is an independent country, it might have been accepted, but they waited for a decade before they say

now it's an independent state. So that's probably why Israel should not right now declare a Republic of Judea and Samaria. If they'd done it after 1967, they would have also I think escaped a lot of the blame.

But that's what you see happening. The Turks started that and then you see Armenia with Nagorno-Karabakh, Russia doing the same of course. You see the charade of the 2008 war when Russia invades Georgia, basically takes control over these two territories and then recognizes them as independent States and saying, this is not us anymore. We're a mediator between Georgia and these two independent countries. Whereas you have thousands of Russian soldiers there.

This is a way that's actually unfortunately been quite successful because if you see the international response, you see that where there are proxies, the U.S. government has been very reticent in the case of Georgia to say this is occupation. Hilary Clinton said it when she was Secretary of State, but it's not a systematic policy of the U.S. government to say this is Russian occupation and we will treat it as such. And I think that's why we have to pay attention to this issue.

SCAHNZER: So, so far I'm taking away terrorism works and fake government by proxy works.

CORNELL: Absolutely.

SCHANZER: Agree? Disagree?

SHAFFER: Well, I think as you pointed out in your very interesting paper for *Commentary* last week that the Trump Administration, part of the whole change with the killing of Soleimani is that no, we're not going to accept the proxies. We're going to not try to catch the sun rays. We're going to try to catch the sun. To deal with actually who's sending it. And hopefully this same approach will take place towards these proxy regimes. Because I think it's just been very convenient because if we actually look at the truth and recognize these occupations, wow, we've got to do something about it. We have – we have real problems in the international system.

But there's actually no way, when you look at the case – Armenia tries a lot to try to create this idea that, oh, that's not us. That's Artsakh. That's a separate country. Armenian military is there. The previous so-called foreign minister of Nagorno-Karabakh is now the special ambassador of the prime minister of Armenia. The current so-called Secretary Of Defense, Minister Of Defense of Nagorno-Karabakh was previous Deputy Minister Of Defense of Armenia. We document this in the report. You really can't buy it. But again, it's convenient for people because then you can have a peace process and then you don't have to really do anything about it if you accept these proxies.

SCHANZER: Okay. So we've kind of established that the U.S. doesn't have the best policy on proxies and on dealing with these disputed territories. Svante, what about the EU?

They're closer to the conflict zones than the U.S. They do more trade. Are they dealing with these conflicts better than the United States or are they more the same?

CORNELL: It's more of the same, where actually in many ways it's worse. The difference is that because of several EU judicial institutions, especially the European Court Of Justice and European Court Of Human Rights, there have been many cases that have been tried and litigated here that have actually put a finger on these discrepancies. So you have, I think the most glaring one is comparing how the EU treats Israeli-Palestinian conflict and especially goods coming from the settlements where they say that this cannot be accepted as being Israeli goods.

Whereas in the case of Morocco, which has a very similar situation in Western Sahara, the EU has gone out of its way to include Western Sahara in the territory of Morocco for the purposes of their free trade agreements. And that's even been struck down by the European Court of Justice that said you can't do this because this is completely inconsistent. And then they actually doubled down, they made some changes and had an exchange of letters with the Moroccan government to be able to continue to do exactly that. So you're seeing that very much obviously in the EU you have different – I think in the case of Morocco, you have France and Spain especially that have a heavy influence on the policy, but the inconsistency is very obvious.

SCHANZER: At the risk of leading the witness, why do you think we see these major discrepancies where they decided to double down on punishing or maybe being more explicit about Israel's disputed territory but not dealing with Morocco or in fact encouraging?

CORNELL: Well, that's actually an interesting question because if you see, these two cases are probably the only ones that have a strong NGO lobbying activity. We don't have a lot of lobbying on behalf of Western Sahara here in the United States, but in Europe it's actually an issue. It's in some countries more than others obviously, but it's nowhere near as big an issue of course as you have a whole boycott and divestment and sanctions movement against Israel. There is no such movement against any other country involved in any of these conflicts. I think that obviously is a fact that politicians are reactive and they don't think that these conflicts are necessarily related in any one way or another. And therefore they let themselves be guided by short term interests and by lobbies and how they influence them.

SCHANZER: Okay. So Brenda, these discrepancies across disputed territories, you say they present a business risk. That if you are a country, you're an NGO, UN, your business in particular though, when you have policies that conflict across conflict zones, you say it's a business risk. Why?

SHAFFER: So if you're in government, yeah, policies are inconsistent. We could say that about a lot of policies. People accept it to a certain degree. But actually companies are going to get sued when they have discrimination. So you can't really sue the U.S. government for being discriminatory towards one conflict versus another. But actually companies you can and we see this in the case of Airbnb. Airbnb had a feel good moment. Let's not list Israeli settlements and felt, hey, I'm a great guy, great human rights. Well, suddenly activists from Abkhazia, from South Ossetia who had lost their homes call up Airbnb, send documents in. They say, oops, well, this is also not very nice.

Even there were Azerbaijani refugees and we showed this in the report, their specific homes are advertised on Airbnb. This isn't like in the case of Israel where, well, I'm not justifying settlements in any conflict, including in the Israeli-Palestine conflict. But the Israeli settlements are built on government land. They're not built in homes of refugees. But we have like specific ethnic Georgians that could see their home in a Abkhazia. Specific Azerbaijanis that that's the home I was born in. This is my picture. We only put one in the report, but there were really dozens of options. This is the home that I was bombed and I ran from in Susha.

The pain of these refugees of seeing their homes on Airbnb, booking.com, Travelocity, but yet Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, their campaign is only about Israel. So why it's a business risk where it's not a political risk, like we said, politics can be inconsistent. People don't like it, but they move on. But when you go to court and you say, hey, why this conflict and not the other, it's really easy. And we've seen this with the case of Airbnb the minute they had a legal challenge.

I think that we're going to see a similar challenge to the European Court of Justice decision on Psagot wine because when you see, as you can see from the report and some of the papers here, that European market has many goods from these conflict zones, whether it's wines produced in Nagorno-Karabakh, whether it's fish from Western Sahara, these goods are in the European market. And I think activists from different conflicts will actually bring their cases to court as well.

SCHANZER: Okay. I want to ask you, Brenda, also about the labeling issue. What is so complex about this? Can you explain how this works, the labeling of goods produced in disputed and occupied territories? You actually spent a decent amount of time here in the report diving into this. Explain just a bit.

SHAFFER: Right. And I wanted to say that I'm not a lawyer, but I do like to shop. So that's why I took an interest in his labeling issue. But there's two issues on the label initiative. One is certificate of origin. So when you import to any country, there is an expectation that there's truthfulness in a certificate of origin. So on one hand, say it's goods that are labeled, let's say outside the borders of Israel, are labeled as such that whether they're produced in settlements or in territories that are recognized by, let's say certain countries as Palestinian held, that would make sense if this certificate of origin was enforced for all conflict zones. Meaning that if it was just a technical –

So first thing we have a situation in the United States, and this was highly documented in the report, where explicit guidelines that were even reissued in 2016 under the Obama Administration that goods produced in Israeli settlements, Jewish settlements in the West Bank have to be labeled as such. But every other conflict except for Crimea, which where there's full sanctions on a goods front from Crimea, every other good, these goods end up in the U.S. market with deceptive certificates of origin. Meaning let's say something produced by Kotaro Winery in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan saying Products of Armenia. And even though they advertise a company that's registered in Yerevan that will sort of halal kosherize this into a product of Armenia, right? So they have a mechanism to deceive the U.S. customs. But every other conflict, these products end up in the US market. The same in Europe.

Another issue is more than more theoretical issues. So these certificates of origin are about food safety, right? So we're supposed to know where it was produced so we know, do we trust their food safety? Do we trust their labels? But when you bring in issues, ethical considerations as the European Court of Justice has – so they also up until now have only related to animal safety or GMOs, sort of the ethical considerations that are connected to food production. Do we really want to turn the certificate of origin to a foreign policy tool? If we do, fine with me, but it should be applied to all the conflict zones.

SCHANZER: And they're not? Not now?

SHAFFER: Yeah, just one.

SCHANZER: Just one. Again, the same one. Okay. So this is a question I'm going to pose to both of you. So we've just had the deal of the century unveiled. It was as promised, huge. What do we think about the plan? In general, the focus, the attention given by the administration to this one conflict above all the others, I think it's probably worth noting that in the context of this report. And then in general, I think also a question of the annexation that may or may not happen as a result of this plan, where does that put Israel in the context of the territories that we've discussed here? Svante, you want to start?

CORNELL: Sure. Well, I think there are several things. One, the issue of annexation is I think a complicated one, because if you accept annexation in one place, you risk having other actors feel that, well, maybe I should engage in annexation as well. And that's a slippery slope. And we can see that, for example, again in what happened in 2008, which is when the, it's not quite annexation, but when the Western powers recognized the independence of Kosovo. And then Russia said, well, if you're doing that in Kosovo, why should I not do that in Abkhazia and South Ossetia?

And they followed through. Condoleezza Rice was Secretary of State says, well, we don't accept that this is a precedent. We don't accept that there is a comparison between these cases. And Russian says, well, actually we do. And then they did. And there was nothing we could really do to stop it. And I think that's something we should keep in mind when we start redrawing boundaries. And I think you saw the same thing happening after Russia's annexation of Crimea. It had immediate implications for the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict because in Azerbaijan people felt, hey, wait a minute, Russia annexed Crimea, they got sanctions. Well, Armenia didn't annex formerly Karabakh. But other than that it's fairly similar.

In Armenia, I'm sure a lot of people said, well, if Russia can annex Crimea, why shouldn't I annex Karabakh? So I think in many cases you see this happening. Even in India where the new government or rather the reelected government under Modi abolished the autonomy that had existed in Kashmir. So that's one thing.

The other important thing I think is that we tend again to focus very much on one conflict. Not only the people who go after Israel and try to focus on the Middle East conflict, but everybody else as well. It seems like there's only oxygen in the media and in the blogosphere for one conflict. Whereas if you look at the geopolitical risk that different conflicts pose, I would

submit that this is the one right now that poses among the lowest geopolitical risks. Nobody sees really how this conflict is going to spiral out of control, as it did in the past with the intervention of many neighboring powers. Well, the Iranians are already in Israel's border. Yeah. But that's a separate, very specific Iranian issue. But you're not going to get Jordan, Syria, Egypt, and others the way it was 50, 60 years ago.

Whereas if you look at the situation, very unclear situations in the caucuses, even in the Eastern Mediterranean with the new gas discoveries and the shifting alignments with Turkey on one side, Israel with Egypt, Greece, and Cyprus on the other. This is a very dangerous situation. And I think even if you look at what's happening in Kashmir for now the worst hasn't happened, but many of these places are more dangerous it seems to me than what's going on between Israel and the Palestinians. Maybe we should focus a bit more on trying to resolve some of these conflicts and not only on this one.

SCHANZER: Do you think that it's because of the focus of think-tanks and special interest groups and lobbies that this is the reason why we're focusing on this? I mean –

CORNELL: Well, I don't know. I mean, I'm sure there are people in this room who – I've always failed to understand it frankly. It doesn't make sense to me why we only – Maybe because I've been spending my professional life for 20 or more years working on the other conflicts, and I think people should care about them. Right? But I've never for the life of me understood why we only focus on this one. Well, of course –

SCAHNZER: Well, you've got your moment now, so.

CORNELL: It's got to do with interest groups. It's got to do with this idea that's out there that a lot of things that happen in the Middle East, in the Muslim world at large, which is somehow fueling anti-Americanism somehow has its roots in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Whereas I think the Islamist ideology would be alive and well even without this conflict. If this was resolved tomorrow, it doesn't mean that our enemies are going to suddenly say, "Oh, the Americans did something good. We're going to stop killing them." So I think that's based on a fallacy.

SCHANZER: This is what we call linkage, which has been around for a good decade or so now, but existed I think maybe even before then without having stated so.

Brenda, your take on the deal of the century, which was huge.

SHAFFER: First thing, we're definitely in a more – I mean, it's obvious we're in a more interconnected world. And if in the past something could happen in one conflict and people wouldn't know about it, again, that's why this is a much bigger business risk because people that are concerned with one conflict know about the situations in other conflicts and act accordingly. So I think, I guess I agree with Svante that in some ways the movement on between Israel and the Palestinians, this will create precedence for other conflicts and others will try to say, "Okay, well if they can have some of the settlements incorporated, why can't we have some of the settlements incorporated?" I think there is this interlinkage today because of conflicts.

Why I think in a way it's actually kind of almost counterintuitive because we think of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict it's so violent and so many deaths over the years. I think it's much more solvable because we have actually very few powers that are against resolving this conflict. Right? So you have maybe Iran is the only kind of spoiler and Iran seems pretty busy with its own internal situation that I don't know how much could actually affect if Israelis and Palestinians really wanted to make peace to derail it.

The problem with many of the conflicts which we've discussed in the report and especially in the South Caucasus, is that you do have major powers, especially in the case of Russia that like the existence of these conflicts, they give a permanent lever, they give it permanent control over the region. And so actually the Israel-Palestine conflict is much more solvable than many of the conflicts that we've addressed, especially in the South Caucasus.

SCHANZER: Can you unpack that just a little bit more? I mean, Northern Cyprus, Kashmir, do you see others trying to sustain these conflicts or to fuel them from the outside? I mean Kashmir, I guess Pakistan, right, that's a major player. But do we see this consistently across the board?

CORNELL: No.

SHAFFER: Well-

CORNELL: No, I was just going to say the EU is keeping the Cyprus conflict alive, right? I mean the EU basically ensured not so long ago when the Annan Plan was proposed and they basically because of Greek pressure on the EU, they promised Cyprus membership in the EU, whether or not the conflict was resolved. If you had told them you are going to get, become members of the EU if you vote for the peace plan, that would have been a very different proposition. But that didn't happen. So they effectively ensured that this conflict would go on. So yeah, whether by accident or by design, there are powers that keep these conflicts alive.

SCHANZER: Agree?

SHAFFER: So in the case of the South Caucasus we've had three times. And actually even today the foreign ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan are meeting today in Geneva. We'd have three times where, and I think we have some of the representative U.S. ambassadors here in the room that maybe we can call upon. We've had three times that the overall, what the settlement looks like has been agreed between the leaders of Azerbaijan and Armenia, and each time this was derailed by Russia, that basically made it impossible for the – Or we see even that the military conflict itself at times when the leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan have very good visits in the United States and while their planes haven't even landed, full-scale war disrupts, emerges between Armenia and Azerbaijan. So clearly there is a major country that wants to keep these conflicts going.

SCHANZER: Mm-hmm. Okay. I want to continue on the Israel issue for a second. Svante let me ask you this. Has Israel been treated differently or has it behaved differently from other conflicts involved in or other countries involved in similar conflicts?

CORNELL: Well, working on this study was interesting for me as somebody who hasn't made the Middle East and the Israel-Palestinian conflict into one of my chief career objectives. But I have to say I came away, or rather, I started off having a general sense that Israel was being singled out. But going through all these cases, it just blew my mind how big the double standard is, how much the – It's not that Israel is behaving in a way that other countries are not. In fact, take the example of Morocco which built a sand wall across the entire territory of Western Sahara to keep out the Polisario Front. Nobody really complains about that and calls it inhuman impediments to human rights and so on.

You can go down all these cases and you find that whatever Israel is doing, you might think is right or wrong. It's a completely different issue. But you find out a lot of people are doing either that or worse, and nobody calls them out on it.

SCHANZER: And Brenda, you see from Israel's perspective, they have actually claimed to be the administrator, right? I mean, they've actually taken some responsibility, some legal responsibility, as you note. Has any other country done this in the report that you've written here? And what are the implications of that? I mean, it seems as though Israel is actually being punished for having taken responsibility for the territory that it controls, correct?

SHAFFER: Right. So also kind of revealing, I personally as – spending a great portion of my life in Israel, I've always actually been against the settlements. I didn't think they were in Israel's interest. I thought they were an obstacle to peace. I thought they're a big waste of public funds.

But just like Svante when we sat down and actually researched this thing, I did feel in the comparative international perspective that, while maybe I have some personal views why the settlements aren't in Israel's interest, I certainly on the international scale suddenly realized like how actually Israel is not exceptional, in the sense that, one, as you pointed out, where countries that either Israel takes upon itself humanitarian aspects of Geneva Convention as the occupier. And that very important Supreme Court judgments about every soldier should carry in his pack the rules of the Geneva Convention. So meaning that yes, is occupation nice? Is it a good thing? I'm sure many Palestinians are not happy with it. But at least there is someone taking responsibility for the security and safety in the territory. And at least when someone says, "Yeah, that negotiating let's say a peace deal, that we're there in the territory."

Well, these conflicts that we research, we're seeing that most of the occupiers aren't even admitting their occupation. It would be like, if someone says to me, "Hey Brenda, it's not right that there are Jewish settlers in Hebron." I said, "Oh, that's not us. That's the Judean forces. That's –"

But this is the situation in half of the conflicts that we research, that through this proxy system, and I think, and I hope if there's something that comes out of this discussion that we really have to stop with these proxies. Take responsibility. You're there. Your responsibility for the security. It's not in good faith to hold negotiations if you don't even admit that you're actually the occupier of this territory.

SCHANZER: So I mean, just to be clear, and maybe I'll have both of you guys respond to this, but is Israel's settlement project unique in some way that has earned it the ire of the international community of all of the NGOs? Is there something that's happening there that is so different that has earned them this opprobrium?

CORNELL: Well, I think again, the – if you look at all of these conflicts, there are settlements in many places. Obviously the biggest one is Morocco. Morocco's settlement in Western Sahara, which has had a very clear intention of – They've created incentives that make it monetarily speaking better to live in Western Sahara for Moroccans than to live in Morocco proper, in order to get people to move in there to essentially dilute the Sahrawi population and ensure that any future referendum would result in staying in Morocco. So in that sense, I think those are the two biggest ones, obviously with Turkish-Cyprus being the third one.

So no, I don't think there's anything. And if anything, and then Brenda pointed this out before that the – in many places, Cypress being a perfect example, Nagorno-Karabakh being another, you have the houses of refugees being taken over by settlers, whereas in Israel that's not the case. In fact, Israel in fact imposes certain limits on the settlements. What do they call them? Unauthorized outpost. Is that the term?

SHAFFER: Yeah.

CORNELL: I don't think any –

SHAFFER: Your Hebrew is pretty good Svante.

CORNELL: There you are. So, no, I think there is a – The size of it is of course rather large, but I don't think there's anything that makes it unique. Brenda.

SHAFFER: Yeah. Yeah, in a sense, maybe just the scale, the fact that Israel's been in these territories since '67. So these settlements have been larger actually, but it's kind of – When we were looking at this report, it's very interesting. U.S. foreign policy and any aid money, whether it's either direct aid or through USAID projects that ends up in the settlements, Israel's had to return this money. The U.S. Congress is not willing to allocate money to settlements. But when you study this more carefully, you see that actually, and we see this. You can see it's in the report. There's been \$40 million over a decade allocated to settlements in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, in Nagorno-Karabakh even by Armenian authorities that are very – Armenian American lobby it's very proud of their accomplishments. They talk about how they've actually gotten funds for these settlements.

So I think also the U.S. government needs to – It has a completely inconsistent policy on U.S. funds, U.S. taxpayer dollars going to settlers. I understand why something that's not even in consensus in Israel that there shouldn't be U.S. taxpayer money going to settlements in Israel or Israeli occupied territories. I hope there'd be a similar policy for other conflict zones.

SCHANZER: Before we wrap up and we're going to have to go to Q&A in just a few moments, there's one little anecdote that's been highlighted recently in the *Wall Street Journal*,

which I thought you might want to share. There's a certain person working for a certain NGO that has been vehemently against Israeli settlements but is seemingly okay with others, other settlements. Do you want to maybe just explain that for a second?

SHAFFER: So, yes. So Ms. Sarah Leah Whitson, who – I mean, there's people that get to wake up every morning, "I'm a human rights activist." The fact that they get salaries for that, I mean, but they get to have a lot of feel-good moments. She's been probably the most personifying the BDS, the boycott, divestment, and sanction movement against Israel very effectively, has no problem chairing the gala of ANCA, the Armenian American more extreme lobby that on every page of the report is how much money they've sent to settlements, how they've moved congressmen.

By the way, members of Congress, you have Rashida Tlaib. Palestine is her life. Yet votes on legislation in Congress to improve direct U.S. ties with the Republic of Artsakh, the proxy regime in the occupied territory. So, yeah. And in fact, Sarah Leah Whitson actually tells us that she loves Kataro wines, which are produced in the occupied territories. And I think maybe we should send her a bottle of Psagot and Kataro together.

SCHANZER: Sure. Along with the report.

SHAFFER: Yeah.

SCHANZER: So just to wrap up, a couple of policy recommendations from each of you, if you will. Svante, if you want to start? I mean what should we be thinking about here? How can we improve this situation so that we have policies that are consistent across U.S. government, Europe, UN, NGOs, et cetera. What should we be looking at?

CORNELL: Well, I think the – Look, we like to believe that we're pragmatic, realistic people. So we don't think this is going to change anytime soon necessarily everything. On the other hand, if you look at U.S. policy in general, there's always perennial balance between norms and interests. And I think we have to look at that and see how allowing these unresolved conflicts to just fester is a challenge to U.S. interests. And I would start with the proxy situation, the proxy issue, the fact that it pays off. And I think one of the main things that this report shows is that using a proxy regime, if you do it early on, actually works. It absolves you from responsibility for your actions.

Now, there are actually very in Europe. Again, I mentioned the European court cases. There are court cases that have actually already been on three conflicts, on the Cyprus conflict, on the Moldova conflict, and on Azerbaijan-Armenia. The European Court of Human Rights has basically said that, "No Turkey, there is no Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. It's independent. You are in charge militarily of the territory and of the security of the population." Then they went on to use that as a precedent to say the same thing about Moldova and the Russian dominance in Transnistria and most lately about Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, and there are cases with Georgia that are in front of the court. I have no doubt they'll result in the same thing.

So not only is it us as scholars saying this. Now you have very established courts in Europe that are saying that these occupiers are actually in charge, should be held responsible and have been held responsible for the security of the population in these territories. And I think it's time that we – And this, I come back to what you wrote yourself about Iran and proxies. Proxies are a new feature of the international system. And we can't only go after Iranian proxies. We have to somehow make – We have to stop making it a useful policy tool to have proxies when you're playing these kinds of games on the international scene.

SCHANZER: Brenda.

SHAFFER: I completely concur with Svante that probably number one would be the proxies, especially, we have representatives of the State Department here, former U.S. representatives, that essentially we shouldn't buy into these fictions that the country isn't where its armed forces are. And they should take responsibility. They should take security responsibility. And that they can't have negotiations in good faith if they don't at least admit what all of us know that they're actually in these territories.

Second, I would say, something very small but I think symbolic. European Union's given a lot of funds or some funds to Armenia to settle Syrian immigrants, which are generally Armenian origin to make sure that those funds are not used to settle them in the occupied territories. Things like just a very – There's a small enough number of these refugees from Syria that those funds could be tracked. And I think it's an important symbolic issue.

And the same with Congress. I hope that there would be perhaps a hearing or a meeting to discuss, hey, right, we don't allocate funds to Jewish settlements in the West Bank. We get that that should be across the board and there shouldn't be that generally thought, it's generally about \$5 million a year allocation from the – of Congress, for instance, to the settlers in the Nagorno-Karabakh. There could be to some of the other conflict zones to make sure that U.S. taxpayer money doesn't get to settlements anywhere, not Israeli settlements, not Armenian settlements, no one's settlements.

SCHANZER: Okay. So we're going to now open up the floor for your questions. Please wait for the microphone to come to you and also please, as always, ask your question in the form of a question. Try to keep it short as well if you don't mind. We're going to start right over here with the ambassador to Georgia, Ambassador David Bakradze.

BAKRADZE: Thank you very much. First of all, congratulations to Brenda and Svante. Wonderful, interesting comprehensive work. Also to FDD for the very timely event. Just for the sake of fairness, I want to mention that term occupation, which was mentioned a couple of times earlier, since 2017 has been embedded into the U.S. legislation in the Consolidated Appropriations Act in the NDAA, so it has become as legit as possible.

Also, to move on with the last question that was asked about the policy recommendations in Georgia's two occupied regions, the humanitarian situation is devastating, and therefore for the sake of the confidence building, the policy of engagement of our population living beside the occupation line for the free healthcare programs, for the free trade with European Union, for the

free education is something that starts to work well, it's something that is difficult to be opposed by the Russian Federation, by the occupier.

I would like to ask whether you see, given the comprehensive work that has been done on other conflicts, other policies of the national governments and the international engagement other than supporting the efforts of the national governments? Thank you.

CORNELL: Well, I mean I think the – If I understand your question correctly, it relates to how a government like your own deals with the situation and with the population that are your citizens but are not under your control. And that's a very difficult question because when you, especially when you have an occupier and that has a regime in charge that may have some support within parts of the local population, but is still influenced very strongly or even almost exclusively in some cases, South Ossetia, for example, by that foreign occupier, you're in a bind because if you try to engage with the population, for example, by providing as Georgia is doing healthcare or education and so on, what prevents the occupying power from just thinking, "Well, this is great. Somebody is relieving me of my monetary responsibility to care for these people," while maintaining the military domination and also ensuring that the conflict never gets resolved.

Now, if you're playing a very long game, which it's the only game that Georgia can really play, hoping that something will change in Russia that will change the situation down the road, then that's the right thing to do. But I think it's a situation that puts you, your government and every government that's objected to this situation in an almost impossible position because no matter what you do, there are big downsides to your – to the policies that you adopt.

SCHANZER: We have a question over here. Actually it looks like we've got two, and then in the back. We'll get to you as well sir.

COHEN: Ariel Cohen, The Atlantic Council. First part of my question, it's a two-part question. First part of my question is how do you distinguish the fact that what Israel came to control in 1967 was not a different country. It did not occupy a country. It occupied territories that were occupied by Jordan and Egypt respectively. A country was never proclaimed there, a country never existed there. And when you look at the implications, what are the implications because the constituent republics of the Soviet Union were countries with the right to secede from the Soviet Union as enshrined in the soyuznyy dogovor, the Union Treaty of 1922.

My second part of the question is what are the implications for Turkey for occupying Northern Cyprus? Are there sanctions? Are there UN resolutions? Are there other international sanctions or opprobrium because I did not register it on my radar screen despite the fact that I heard that the beaches are really nice. Thank you.

SCHANZER: I would actually just – One quick housekeeping note. We tried to differentiate here. FDD actually we got involved just in one thing, and that was in the title, and that was talking about the difference between occupation, protracted conflicts, and territorial disputes. So getting to your question to the West Bank and Gaza Strip, it's more of a territorial dispute than necessarily an occupation. It's semantics, but I think still important. But I'll let our – It's legal as well, but okay. Anyway, I'll let these guys weigh in.

SHAFFER: Right. So we do outline this in the report, that there is – I mean, even though often the international system lumps all these conflicts together and dislikes the word disputed, that actually only in the case of five of the conflicts, they were taken from actual states. And therefore the legal situation is different, the international response should be very different. So, all of the post-Soviet conflicts, whether it's Russia's capturing of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, Armenia's capture of Azerbaijan's territories, whether it's Russia's capture of Crimea, Moldova, and Transnistria, and Donbas. So all of these were taken from states. The legal situation is very clear.

Other were more combined. Israel initially took it from the West Bank, from Jordan, and Gaza Strip from Egypt. Those states relinquished their calls, and then it becomes much more complicated because there isn't a Palestine at this point. Morocco's similar. There wasn't a country that these territories were taken from. Similar to the situation of Kashmir. So in this sense, again, this is another, something that we try to point out on the report that the conflicts are different in their legal thing. Going back to John's question, here actually Israel is in a more comfortable group of – that were taken from non-indeed disputed territories versus all the post-Soviet conflicts in the case of Cyprus where actual chunks of territory were taken from sovereign states.

CORNELL: Can I just add there that I think, especially if you look at the three, the three cases where territory was taken from a non-state entity, it's as Brenda mentioned, it's Israel, Morocco and India and Kashmir, and that's one of the reasons why both India and Morocco have received relatively little international criticism for having done so. This wasn't really Pakistan's territory or there wasn't really a state of Kashmir, or there wasn't a princely state of Kashmir, but it was a part of the British Empire, right? And so on. So, if that was the case, then Israel should also be treated with a more understanding approach from the international community for having taken this territory. But we see that, that's not the case. So whether you take it from a state or not, it doesn't seem to influence how the international response to a situation like this.

Now in Turkey, if I could say. I think obviously there was a short lived US arms embargo a couple of years after the invasion. But I think the real implication this had for Turkey was in its relationship with the EU, that even before Erdogan and his guys reverted to their true origins and back to their Islamist roots. The EU's treatment of Turkey back in 2004, 2005 I think accelerated that regression, and the Cyprus issue was really the key one. The moment Cyprus had gained membership in the EU, they were free to just veto anything that had to do with bringing Turkey closer to, in the negotiations with the EU over a variety of issues that had nothing to do with the Cyprus dispute itself.

SCHANZER: We've got a question in the back. Sir?

BOSCO: My name is Joe Bosco. I was formerly with the defense department. My question is whether the report takes a look at China's occupation of Tibet and East Turkistan, which is now known as Xinjiang Province, and the kinds of activities that are going on there?

CORNELL: You want to answer that?

SHAFFER: Sure. So when we sat down to define the scope of the project, we decided – What's an interesting phenomena post World War II in the international system, is conflicts that don't find closure. So because of this desire in the international system of law-based, and that territory shouldn't be taken from other countries where probably prior to World War II, more or less if you held the territory, if you actually gained the territory you were able to actually have it legitimized.

What's a phenomena post World War II is a variety of conflicts that don't find closure, and that's why they have these trade issues, and the international mobilization because they're protracted conflicts. In the case of the Uyghurs or Ghurstan in China and Tibet, while there might be considered human rights issues, they're not – The borders of China are not contested by any other countries as far as I know. And so, we didn't include these two conflicts. They think they are more in the realm of human rights conflicts versus territorial conflicts.

SCHANZER: Doug?

FEITH: Doug Feith from Hudson Institute. Thank you for an interesting presentation. What would you say are the implications of your study, and the emphasis on the different principles being applied to the idea of international law? And what does it say about international law versus domestic law? I thought it was very interesting, the comments about when these matters get challenged in courts that are applying domestic law, the inconsistencies become important. But the inconsistencies from the point of view of international law are shrugged at by –

SHAFFER: What's that term you used? What's it? What's-

FEITH: Domestic law versus –

SHAFFER: No, the other. What's the other term?

FEITH: International law?

SHAFFER: What is that?

FEITH: Well, okay. I mean, that's what I'm asking you. I mean, are you implying that basically there is no such thing as international law? Or what are we supposed to learn about international law from these inconsistencies?

SHAFFER: I mean –

CORNELL: Well, go ahead.

SHAFFER: Go ahead.

CORNELL: No, I think the – No, we see right now – I mean, right after the end of the Cold War was a period in which we felt – And the EU is an example of this, right? That there's

going to be a new world order that's based on rules, and principles, and norms and so on. And we're seeing that gradually breaking apart. And I think the phenomena of these unresolved conflicts, and especially the use of proxies, both in unresolved conflicts, but also in places like what the Iranians are doing.

I think it's an example of that. That we've allowed this to slip, in a way. And I think that's part and parcel of what you're seeing, especially on the broader Eurasian continent in the middle East, which is where large powers that usually tend to be former empires, start behaving like empires again. Which means they basically do what they can get away with, whatever norms or rules there are. The Russians, we've seen this in Georgia, we've seen this in Ukraine, the Chinese, South China Sea and elsewhere. The Iranians across the Middle East, and increasingly Turkey's behaving that way, too. So, I think that's what's at stake here and this is an example of that.

SHAFFER: Yeah I would say – Sorry about the joke. But yeah, I would say that if there is not any legal system, the cornerstone is that you have to have some means of enforcement. So if we don't have any means of enforcement, international law, it's more on a normative level. Maybe it's an aspiration, it's a guideline but not actually something that we could implement.

But, I would say maybe something coming out. I think your point about differentiation between domestic law and international law, let's get our house in order, in the United States. Like you said, US Congress, get our house in order there. European Union on trade. Something simple like certificates of origin. Get our house in order. We don't need the whole international system to change. You need just some very specific issues where these inconsistencies are so glaring that it's really counterproductive to any kind of meaningful role in conflict resolution.

SCHANZER: We've got a question over here. We'll get you, Dext, I see you.

MARGARIAN: Ara Margarian, Embassy of Armenia. Actually, with your permission, I would make a small comment, if I may?

SCHANZER: Please keep it very, very short.

MARGARIAN: Yeah, I mean – This is – I mean, for regarding the report, maybe it's indeed an interesting read? I took a quick look, and unfortunately I can't congratulate because I see a very, very strong bias here, especially as far as I can underline it, as far as Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is concerned. And I'm not surprised of this, because Brenda Shaffer, this distinguished scholar is well known for her, very clear bias. And for us it's very unfortunate that FDD, such a respected organization is produced this very one sided –

SCHANZER: I'd like to ask you to get to your question, please.

MARGARIAN: My question is the following, you were complaining that there is no consistent approach to the conflicts. But every conflict there can't be a consistent approach, because every conflict has a different origin, has a different logic of development. And by just picking out a couple of things and presenting it, and blaming that there should be a consistent approach, and that there is no lack of it. And also, when you are mocking the lack of the

international law, but at the same time you are – In the report you are also alluding to many institutions that represent international law to justify your comments or your position. How you – My question is mainly –

SCHANZER: We'll let them respond. Thank you.

SHAFFER: Yeah. I agree, I think it's a good point that on one hand to say, well this a violation of international law but not to really believe in international law. I can understand – That is an effective force. I think how you could see an inconsistency, I think at the same time there's nothing blaming about saying that there are 700,000 people that were evicted from territories that Armenia controls. This is a fact. This is factual. You could say, "Well, we want to deal with the consequences of that." But it's not disputed in any sense that Armenian forces sit in these territories and 700,000 people lost their homes. This is just factual. So I don't know even how, why it's even connected to international law or other issues.

CORNELL: Well, I mean I think we could probably have a separate conversation, but I think the – You're right that every conflict is different. But at the same time, no matter if international law is actually able to be implemented or not, there are certain basic principles that apply across these, and we've just observed how they are applied very differently from one conflict to another. If there are some specific factual issues, or that you would take issue with, I'm glad to have that conversation. But otherwise, I don't really know how I should respond to you.

SCHANZER: Okay. Sorry, we're going to move on. You can certainly have a sidebar afterwards. In fact, I'd welcome it. Yes, ma'am?

BOUZO: Thank you so much. My name is Hayvi Bouzo, the bureau chief of *Orient News*. My question would be about the Russian intervention in Syria – Sorry, I retreat that. The Turkish intervention in Northeast Syria, and is that a part of what you described in your report, where there's a lot of people, also hundreds of thousands, who were evicted from their land? And there is the Iranian model where there are people who are displaced in Syria as well. And we know now that Lebanon, Syria and Iraq are occupied by Iran and Syria. There are hundreds of thousands of people who were forced out of their homes, and we're talking about half of the country being displaced. I just want to know a little bit more about the Iranian and the Turkish model, and obviously talk about Northeast Syria. Thank you.

CORNELL: Well, I think it would be relevant the moment they create separate states there, right? That's what will make it relevant from what we're doing. Right now you have states that have – This is a problem of failed states, collapsed states where other actors have moved in, and taken over territory and created de facto situations. I mean, I think you could say that there is a de facto-Turkish part of Syria and there's a de facto-Iranian part. But that hasn't been institutionalized in something that pretends to be a state, which is what you see in all of these territories, or most of these territories that we're dealing with, is this case – The proxy element comes in. If Turkey says that there is a Republic of Italy, for example, or something like that. And says that this is a different country, this is not me, this is somebody else.

This could happen, actually. I wouldn't be surprised, and I think at some point when you get to a position where certain states, relatively large states, cannot be put back together again, do you begin to see that these different areas of territorial control begin to be institutionalized? That's a big question for the future of this part of the world, and I don't know how it's going to end up. But it could very well be – I mean, I guess the direction we're going unfortunately is in the direction of more unresolved conflicts, more disputed territories, more proxy regimes, if you will. Not fewer.

SCHANZER: I would actually just want to make one quick note, that what we're seeing in places like Lebanon, Iraq and Syria are slow motion suffocation occupations. Yes, by Iranian proxy they're not claiming direct control. It's not even disputed right now by the local populations, to any significant level. We are seeing now the beginning of protests, where there is a recognition of the problem. But, I don't know if anyone has gone as far as saying, we are occupied by Iran. But we are well on our way to that. But this is a very specific Iranian model that is something, quite frankly, that FDD will be looking at in 2020. So, I don't know if there'll be an event anytime real soon, but keep an eye out. Yes, sir?

WEIL: Thank you very much for your time. My name is Benjamin Weil. We discussed the European Union, we discussed the United States, but one body that we didn't discuss is the UN and their inconsistency there. On page 10 of your report you refer to UNARA, how they have an agency for other countries, and a specific one for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. So I'd like to know what your take is on that, and then in your recommendations for policies, how the US can maybe change that inconsistency as well.

CORNELL: That's for you.

SHAFFER: Yeah. So, well I would think first thing that UN Human Rights Council, which keeps a database on businesses that operate in Israel's occupied territories. That database, either if you're going to have it, have it for all the conflicts. So all the businesses that are operating in Western Sahara, in Nagorno-Karabakh, in Abkhazia. All these businesses should be in the database. I would think that, that would be – It's such a glaring inconsistency that, that would be a really good place to start.

As we pointed out in the report, that even how it reports locations, which should be in line with its own security council decisions. Even that is not consistent. And so again, these are very technical issues that could be fixed very quickly. I think something that we explored a little bit, and maybe we'll explore in future publications, is this whole idea of right of return. So how many generations does that go? Right?

So, if you see in response to the peace plan released yesterday, I saw that Amnesty International said, "Without right of return there is no peace." So I was trying to think, would Amnesty International give that same right of return to ethnic Georgians to Abkhazia? Does it give the same right of return to Azerbaijanis to Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding territories?

I mean, so I think even this idea of, we have to think in a very practical – In this way, actually, I do call for inconsistency. And again, being very practical. We are people – Like I say,

I personally would never disregard a Palestinians right to safety, freedom, security and say, "No, start going through international law, and history books and try to figure out some reason."

The person exists. Right? So you have to address their issues. The same thing, if someone from Shusha can look on Google Earth and see his apartment building, and see I saw something recently, a for sale sign of an apartment where someone else had lived in. That person has at least equal rights to the grandchildren and great grandchildren of a Palestinian refugee.

CORNELL: It's a question of legal standing, I suppose, at the end of the day. Right?

SCHANZER: Any other questions? Yes, sir? Just wait for the microphone, coming.

GURBANOV: Thank you. My name is Vugar Gurbanov, I'm from Embassy of Azerbaijan. I would like to thank the authors and the FDD for hosting this event. And I would like to especially thank the authors for facts based approach in the reporting. It's very important. All conflicts might be different, and that's always because in the employed methods of violence against civilians, including Azerbaijan and et cetera. But my question is, you mentioned about EU. Court deciding in EU on certain issues concerning goods produced in the West Bank at Gaza. Do you know about any case in the U.S. coast that would someone bring about cases of this produced in the occupied territories? And if yes, what was the court's decision or approach? Thank you.

SHAFFER: Yeah, so I'd say we have maybe two relevant issues, maybe someone from the audience can join in as well here. So one is that CBP directives on certificate of origin. So in the case of Crimea, there's been explicit that even before the sanctions on goods, that it has to say, "produce of Ukraine". in the case of goods produced in Israeli settlements, it has to say either, "West Bank Goods", or "Produced in Palestine", or "Produced in Settlements", or a variety of wordings. It can't say, "Produce of Israel".

All other conflicts including the Azerbaijan-Armenia conflict, goods enter the U.S. market with deception, with saying either, "Produce of Moldova", when they're produced in Transnistria. Maybe by factories owned by, even by Russian citizens, or a variety of specialty food goods that are produced in the territories of Azerbaijan that are under occupation, that enter the US market as produce of Armenia. Again, deception of that customs authorities. So, and I think the case of Airbnb it's also very informative, because here it didn't even get to a court, because Airbnb realized it was such a commercial risk to continue in this discriminatory behavior that it actually changed its behavior the minute it was challenged by a legal decision.

CORNELL: I don't know of any other court cases.

BABANLI: Hi, my name is Yusif Babanli, with *Azertac*. I want to thank FTD and the distinguished panel for the great report and presentation. So, my question is very short. The conflict in South Sterole and Olan Islands. How applicable is it for conflicts like the one between Armenia and Azerbaijan? And I know that time and time again these formats have been presented as a way to go, especially the last one in South Taro. So, please speak to it?

CORNELL: I think I'll find a way to answer your question. So there is a possibly true story of a Swedish professor of conflict resolution, who thought he'd resolved the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict. You may have heard this. He brought this delegation of people from Armenia, and from Nagorno-Karabakh, and they went to the Olan Islands, and they talked to the people there. And then they finally asked, do you think this is a solution? And the guys from Armenia and Karabakh said, "Yeah, this is a great solution." And he said, "Oh, I'm going to get a Nobel Prize." That's what he thought to himself, and said, "So, just to check," he said, "so you would accept this type of autonomy within Azerbaijan?" And the answer was, who's talking about Azerbaijan? We want autonomy in Finland. I think that answers your question. I think, Mr. Silverman at the back, you might not be able to see him because of the –

SCHANZER: Oh yeah, I –

CORNELL: The pole.

SILVERMAN: Yeah. Thank you, thank you Svante and Brenda. So I have kind of a devil's advocate question for you.

SHAFFER: Okay.

SILVERMAN: So if you're looking at the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from the lens of the Russian occupation of various regions, and also of Morocco's occupation. Would you not sort of welcome the precedent? This is a much higher profile case, the Israeli-Palestinian one, of an occupation. Wouldn't you want to sort of welcome a precedential value, a very tough international response to this and as a way of maybe leading to further examination of these other conflicts that involve occupations? In other words, this more high profile case that is clearly more in people's consciousness, would it lead to other recognition of these other lesser profile cases? And therefore, you're welcoming a very strict international standard on Israel's treatment of the occupied territories? Just wondering.

CORNELL: Well, I mean I think the international reaction to Israel's occupation has been going on for over 50 years. And we have not seen that in any way translate into any other conflict, whether one that existed at the time. Such as the one in Kashmir, for example, or others that emerged later. So, I think it works the other way around. Because the international response is so inconsistent, it actually weakens the case against Israel, if you will. It actually takes away from the arguments against Israel, because so many people, at least here in Europe, I'm not sure that everybody is able to see it. But can see just how Israel is being singled out in a way that is just not acceptable. Brenda?

SHAFFER: I'd say also, even in the Israeli public as well. The Israeli public is pretty split, 50-50, you served in the U.S. embassy in Israel. In all elections pretty much half of the Israeli population is for disengaging from the West Bank, for a two state solution against settlements. But when these kind of decisions, like the European Court of Justice says, "only your products", I think it really does mobilize people to say, "Well, it doesn't really matter if we make compromise or sacrifice, because in the end there's going to always pick out something, or it's going to be, what's that next level?"

I think actually, like I said, I would feel very comfortable with Israeli goods produced in settlements being marked, as long as goods produced in Abkhazia and Karabakh were marked. I have no problem with some sort of normative distinction of goods produced and settled. Me personally, right?

What I do – What I completely think is not only is it immoral, but it's actually counterproductive, is when you only single out one conflict. And I think also we're going to see, for instance, especially with the last European Court Justice decision, I can't imagine that there are Georgians from Abkhazia, Azerbaijanis, from Karabakh. They're not going to say, "Hey, what about our products?" I can't imagine that there isn't going to be a lot of new cases on this issue.

SCHANZER: Okay. Well we've reached the end of our time here. I want to say that if you haven't read the report, please do grab a copy. They're right outside. When we commissioned this report, we had an idea of how fascinating this topic would be. I would say that our authors exceeded our expectations, and we thank you for an excellent report. I will just say that the upshot of this, at least from my perspective is, is that there's clearly a decision on the part of the international community to focus on one country. And I would say the takeaway from that is, of course, discrimination and that this country happens to be the only Jewish state, takes that discrimination, I would say, to another level. But you can read the report and decide for yourself. In the meantime, you can find this discussion online shortly, and we welcome you to come back for future events.