In 1984, after many intense discussions, we reached consensus on a statement urging Americans to help enable "the representatives of the Palestinians and Israelis, presently the Palestine Liberation Organization and the government of Israel, to recognize each other explicitly and simultaneously undertake mutual negotiations towards a just and lasting peace." The Consensus statement also supported a suspension of all military operations and all acts of violence against civilians and an Israeli freeze of all settlements on occupied territories. It received a great deal of attention in the Post Standard and in the Jewish Observer.

In 1987, SAMED assisted Richard D. Schwartz in organizing the major international conference, "Human Rights and Peace in the Middle East," sponsored by the Syracuse University College of Law. We also played an essential role in the establishment of the American Coalition for Middle East Dialog (ACMED), active from the mid-1980s into the early 1990s in linking local dialog groups across the country. Gordon V. Webster, one of SAMED's first members, served as ACMED's Executive Director.

The tireless dedication of SAMED was recognized on September 13, 1993. Three of its members—Richard Schwartz, Ahmed El-Hindi, and David Shomar—were present at the White House as President Bill Clinton presided and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin and PLO leader Yasser Arafat signed the Oslo Accords, the historic peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinian people.

Today we are a resource for the wider Syracuse community: we present our views and discuss our approach in numerous settings, including the WCNY program, Central Issues (August 25, 2006), the Thursday Morning Roundtable (November 13, 2008) and churches, synagogues and civic organizations. We also provide information about Israeli-Palestinian relations and about the dialog process to local teachers, college students, and international visitors. Additionally, we arrange events and presentations that include representatives from the Middle East: an exhibit of Israeli and Palestinian children's paintings from Neve Shalom/Wahat Al-Salaam/The Oasis of Peace (2009); a musical performance by Yoel Ben-Simhon and the Sultana Ensemble (2005) and a presentation by Rabbi Arik Scherman of Rabbis for Human Rights (2003).

At present, SAMED members are: Minna Buck, Shirley DeHority, Ahmed El-Hindi, Miriam Elman, Carol Fadda-Conrey, Ken Frieden, Julia Fuleihan, Nadim Jabaji, Mohamed Khater, Louis Kriesberg, Mary MacDonald, Kathleen Nash, Anis Obeid, Marilyn Pinsky, Elaine Rubinstein, Martin Sage, David Shomar, Farha Ternikar, Thomas V. Wolfe, and Colleen Zawadski.

Alone, we cannot shape U.S. policy toward the Middle East. Working with others, we have fostered mutual respect and understanding in our communities and supported U.S. efforts to engage all players in the resolution of Israeli-Arab conflicts. We may be small, but we are also steadfast; that in itself is an example of understanding and coexistence.