

PANEL II

Keys without Locks



The man-made storm has come with a vengeance and has left nothing but rubble, utter destruction and a traumatised people. As hundreds and thousands of Palestinians flee for their lives, family homes, historic towns and ancient villages are occupied by Jewish settlers from post-war Europe or else razed to the ground. The tent is the refugee shelter – once temporary and now a permanent symbol of housing for refugees in exile. The keys portray those still carried by Palestinians who believe that they will one day be able to unlock the doors of their former homes now occupied without leave by strangers. And while the argument continues that the Palestinians sold or voluntarily left their homes and land, it is inconceivable that of a 700,000 population, every homeowner and landholder would have acquiesced in selling their homes - or more significantly their homeland - at any price in order to live in permanent exile. A lone flower spouting through the rubble is dwarfed by the sheer scale of destruction yet is a plaintive symbol of hope for a return to the lush fields and peaceful land of pre-1948 Palestine.

PANEL VII

Protests without End

After 54 years of occupation, disenfranchisement, oppression, vilification, wanton destruction and displacement, the voices of the Palestinian people have not been stilled. Instead they are raised even more strongly today than in those early years when few could believe that not only their country, but the very word Palestine would be systematically and deliberately erased from the pages of history. The shock waves running through the one and a half million Palestinian population when the Partition was announced in 1947, is finally gathering momentum. Protests are resonating around the world to end the oppressive and brutal occupation of the Palestinian people, despite attempts to portray them as troublemakers and terrorists. The stone in a bloodied hand is their only weapon against far more powerful forces. This time the Hebrew story of *David and Goliath* plays itself out again in a reversal of roles - Palestine as David and Goliath as Israel and the Western world. This panel, against a backdrop of protests, depicts the symbols of the Palestinian struggle – the stones, the flag and the black and white *kaffir*. And, amidst the stones, the Star of Bethlehem flower is seen emerging – a sign that hope and the quest for peace are never entirely eradicated from the human condition. Perhaps a free and recognised Palestine is not such an impossible dream after all.

