



Press Release

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Français

SECRETARY-GENERAL HIGHLIGHTS KEY ELEMENTS OF QUARTET PLAN FOR MIDDLE EAST PEACE

Following is the text of Secretary-General Kofi Annan's introductory remarks to the press following the meeting of the quartet at United Nations Headquarters today:

There is a communiqué of today's meeting. You should be receiving the communiqué later.

What I want to do instead of summarizing the communiqué as we did the last time, is to give you the highlights of what we agreed on.

The Quartet is continuing to work with the parties and key regional actors on an implementation road map, to achieve final and comprehensive settlement within three years.

Comprehensive security performance is essential, as is an end to the morally repugnant violence and terror. But we are all in agreement that the overall plan must address political, economic, humanitarian and institutional dimensions. It should spell out reciprocal steps to be taken by the parties in each of the phases. In short, we need a process that is both performance-driven and hope-driven. Because we need both: performance and hope.

The implementation road map will be in three phases. Progress between each phase will be based on the parties' compliance with performance benchmarks to be monitored and assessed by a mechanism of the Quartet.

The first phase will see Palestinian security reform, Israeli withdrawals, and support for Palestinian elections to be held in early 2003. There will also be an Ad Hoc Liaison Committee meeting in November to review the humanitarian situation and identify priority areas, including the reform process, for development assistance in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

In the second phase, during 2003, our efforts should focus on the option of creating a Palestinian State with provisional borders and based on a new constitution, as a way station to a permanent status settlement.

In the third phase (from 2004 to mid-2005), we envision Israeli-Palestinian negotiations aimed at a permanent status solution.

Both the Palestinian reform effort and political progress must include Israeli measures to improve the lives of Palestinians: to allow the resumption of economic activity and the movement of goods, people and essential services, and to ease or lift curfew and closures. Israel must also return the tax revenues owed to the Palestinian Authority, and all Israeli settlement activity in the occupied territory must stop.

The Palestinians must work with the US and regional partners to reform their security services and combat terrorism, and both sides should work to allow policing and law and order for the civilian population of the West Bank and Gaza. Israelis and Palestinians should re-establish security cooperation.

The Quartet is continuing to discuss the timing and modalities for an international conference.

As you know, the Quartet also had two other meetings this morning: and I think I have indicated that to you. The Quartet remains committed to the search for a just, lasting and comprehensive settlement in the Middle East, including the Syrian/Israeli and the Lebanese/Israeli tracks.

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