
Quartet on Middle East outlines three-phase roadmap for final settlement by 2005

17 September – Members of the diplomatic Quartet on the Middle East - comprising the United Nations, European Union, Russian Federation and United States - today outlined a three-phase roadmap to achieve the shared vision of two States - Israel and Palestine - living side by side in peace and security.

Following a meeting at UN Headquarters in New York, the Quartet's principals issued a [communiqué](#) in which they unveiled their plan, which aims to achieve a comprehensive final settlement within three years.

The initial phase of the plan, from now until the first half of 2003, involves performance-based criteria for comprehensive security reform, Israeli withdrawals to their positions of September 2000 as security improves, and support for the Palestinians to hold free, fair and credible elections early next year.

The first phase should also include a ministerial-level meeting of an "Ad Hoc Liaison Committee" to review the humanitarian situation and prospects for economic development in the West Bank and Gaza, and to identify priority areas for donor assistance, including to the reform process, before the end of the year, according to the communiqué.

In the plan's second phase, next year, "our efforts should focus on the option of creating a Palestinian State with provisional borders based upon a new constitution, as a way station to a permanent status settlement," said the participants: UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan; Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov; United States Secretary of State Colin Powell and Foreign Minister Per Stig Moeller of Denmark for the EU. Also taking part in the talks were Javier Solana, the EU's High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, and Chris Patten, the European Commission's External Relations Commissioner.

In its final phase, from 2004 to 2005, the plan envisages Israeli-Palestinian negotiations aimed at a permanent status solution in 2005. "Consistent with the vision expressed by [US] President Bush, this means that the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 will be ended through a settlement negotiated between the parties and based on UN resolutions 242 and 338, with Israeli withdrawal to secure and recognized borders," the Quartet said.

Concerning reform of the Palestinian Authority, the Quartet welcomed "a number of significant achievements" realized "under very difficult circumstances," and pledged to continue supporting Palestinian efforts to prioritize reform benchmarks, particularly on the issue of elections, judicial reform, and the role of civil society. "Both the reform effort and the political process must include Israeli measures, consistent with Israel's legitimate security concerns, to improve the lives of Palestinians, including allowing the resumption of normal economic activity, facilitating the movement of goods, people and essential services, and to lift curfew and closures." The communiqué welcomed Israel's decision to release part of the Palestinian revenue it has withheld, and calls for a continuation of this process and the re-establishment of regular monthly revenue transfers to the Palestinian Ministry of Finance. In addition, the Quartet stressed that "Israeli settlement activity in the occupied territories must stop."

On the humanitarian situation, the communiqué called on Israel and the Palestinians to move quickly to ameliorate the sharply deteriorating situation in the West Bank and Gaza. "In particular, Israel must ensure full, safe and unfettered access for international and humanitarian personnel," it says.

The Quartet also called on the Palestinians to work with the United States and other regional partners to reform the Palestinian security services, strengthen policing and law and order for the civilian population, and "fight the terror that has severely undermined the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinians."

The communiqué stressed that the plan "will not succeed unless it addresses political, economic, humanitarian, and institutional dimensions." Progress between the three phases "would be strictly based on the parties' compliance with specific performance benchmarks to be monitored and assessed by the Quartet."