



Press Release

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SECRETARY-GENERAL WELCOMES RELEASE OF MIDDLE EAST 'ROAD MAP'. URGES BOTH ISRAELIS AND PALESTINIANS TO EMBRACE PLAN

The following statement was issued today by the Spokesman for Secretary-General Kofi Annan:

The Secretary-General warmly welcomes the formal presentation of the "[road map](#)" for Middle East peace. He believes that this performance-based and goal-driven peace plan — the fruit of long and intense cooperation between the European Union, the Russian Federation, the United States of America and the United Nations — gives the Israeli and Palestinian peoples a real chance to end their long and painful conflict, and thus a chance for all the peoples of that troubled region to establish, at last, a just and comprehensive peace. He calls on the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority to embrace the road map, and to cooperate with the Quartet in implementing it.

The Secretary-General wishes to assure both Israelis and Palestinians that the United Nations will do everything it can to support them, as they follow the road map. He also looks forward to continued cooperation among the Quartet members and with the parties, as well as with the States in the region, which have an important role to play in the peace process.

The Secretary-General believes that, while the path to peace may be difficult, Israelis and Palestinians, as well as the international community, must stay the course. The road map's goal of two States, a secure and prosperous Israel and an independent, viable, sovereign and democratic Palestine, living side-by-side in peace and security, must be the focus of our energies and efforts.

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