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QUESTION OF PALESTINE

THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Letter dated 19 March 1979 from the Permanent Representative of
Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I kindly request that the message addressed to Your Excellency by Dr. Mustafa Khalil, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt, a copy of which is attached, be published as an official document of the General Assembly under items 24 and 25 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) A. Esmat ABDEL MEGUID
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

*A/34/50.

ANNEX

Letter dated 16 March 1979 from the Prime Minister and Minister
for Foreign Affairs of Egypt to the Secretary-General

In its consistent endeavours for the establishment of peace in the Middle East, Egypt has always emphasized full determination and belief in the necessity of adherence to the United Nations Charter and its lofty principles. Egypt also believes in the necessity of the implementation of the resolutions adopted by our Organization in the last 30 years, during which the Middle East area has been the scene of continuous conflict and its peoples the victims of its ravages.

Egypt's firm belief in the important role of our international Organization and the necessity to strive for peace within its framework and under its auspices led it to invite the United Nations to participate effectively in all the stages of the peace efforts which were started in November 1977 by the initiative of President Mohammed Anwar Sadat.

Pursuant to this conviction of the importance of consultation and participation, I have the honour today to inform you of what we are about to achieve, which constitutes an important step on the road to realizing a comprehensive peaceful settlement of the Middle East conflict.

What we are striving for is peace between Egypt and Israel based on the provisions of United Nations resolutions, especially Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 333 (1973) in all their parts.

The negotiations between the parties called for by Security Council resolutions in order to achieve a

just and lasting peace in the Middle East resulted in a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel stipulating the following:

(1) Total Israeli withdrawal from all Egyptian territory occupied since 1967 and the return of Egyptian sovereignty over this territory in implementation of the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war;

(2) Termination of the state of war between the two countries;

(3) Reciprocal guarantees for the territorial integrity of both parties.

Furthermore, we are striving to achieve the realization of the firm belief expressed in the resolutions of our Organization and by the entire world community that the Palestinian problem is the core of the Middle East conflict and that there will be no just and lasting peace in the area without the achievement of a just settlement to this problem in all its parts, ensuring the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

In this context, Egypt worked diligently to establish a firm linkage - political and legal - between an Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty and progress on the Palestinian problem. This linkage is contained in a supplementary agreement providing for a time-table for the implementation of the stages of establishing Palestinian authority in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

This supplementary agreement contains several elements, prominent among which are the following:

(1) To start negotiations between Egypt, Israel and Jordan - in the event the latter wishes to participate - one month after the ratification of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty in order to prepare for the elections of the Palestinian Council which will assume authority in the West Bank and Gaza.

(2) Those negotiations are to be completed within a target date of one year, following which the election will take place as soon as possible.

(3) Negotiations will deal with the competence of the Palestinian Council and the procedures for holding the elections.

(4) The Palestinian Council will assume its authority one month after the elections. In the meantime, Israeli forces are to be withdrawn and the rest of them redeployed in specified locations. The civil administration established by these forces is to be withdrawn according to the Camp David agreements.

(5) A transitional period of five years will be established, during which political negotiations will take place with the participation of the representative of the Palestinian people, in order to define the final status of the West Bank and Gaza and the measures for the fulfilment of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

The achievement of a just solution to the Palestinian problem has always been Egypt's primary goal; in so far as Egypt is concerned, this enjoys no less priority than the question of Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Egyptian territory and the return of Egypt's sovereignty over the Sinai; a matter which will be realized through the expected Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty.

This is only the beginning of the implementation of the stipulations of the United Nations resolutions concerning the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war, the illegality of establishing settlements, the need to work for a just and lasting peace in which every State in the area can live in security and the restoration to the Palestinian people of their inalienable rights.

(Signed) Mustafa KHALIL
Prime Minister and Minister for
Foreign Affairs of Egypt