
Annapolis Conference

President George W. Bush

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I am pleased to welcome Prime Minister Olmert, President Abbas, and representatives of more than forty countries to the United States for the November 27 Annapolis Conference. The broad attendance at this conference by regional states and other key international participants demonstrates the international resolve to seize this important opportunity to advance freedom and peace in the Middle East.

This conference will signal international support for the Israelis' and Palestinians' intention to commence negotiations on the establishment of a Palestinian state and the realization of peace between these two peoples.

It will also provide an opportunity for the Israelis, the Palestinians, and their neighbors to recommit to implementing the Roadmap, with the U.S. monitoring their progress by the parties' agreement. Finally, the conference will review Palestinian plans to build the institutions of a democratic state and their preparations for next month's donors' conference in Paris.

I remain personally committed to implementing my vision of two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security.

The Israelis and Palestinians have waited a long time for this vision to be realized, and I call upon all those gathering in Annapolis this week to redouble their efforts to turn dreams of peace into reality. I look forward to my discussions with Prime Minister Olmert and President Abbas this week, as well as to addressing the conference along with them on Tuesday.