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**Quartet Statement on upcoming Palestinian elections**  
**28 December 2005**

The Quartet welcomes the upcoming Palestinian Legislative Council elections as a positive step toward consolidation of Palestinian democracy and the goal of a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Quartet calls on the Palestinian Authority and the Central Elections Commission to ensure a free, fair, and open process in accordance with Palestinian law. The Quartet noted the continued importance of security in this regard, and calls on the Palestinian Authority to take immediate steps to ensure law and order, prevent terrorist attacks and dismantle the infrastructure of terrorism. The Palestinian Authority must also assure the security of polling stations and of Central Election Commission personnel, enforce existing law, regulations, and decrees, particularly those prohibiting the public display of weapons, external financing of campaigns, and the use of religious facilities for campaign purposes.

The Quartet recalled its September 20 statement, together with the Secretary General's subsequent statement on behalf of the Quartet that ultimately those who want to be part of the political process should not engage in armed group or militia activities, for there is a fundamental contradiction between such activities and the building of a democratic state. In this regard, the Quartet calls on all participants to renounce violence, recognize Israel's right to exist, and disarm. The Quartet is encouraged by the negotiation of a Code of Conduct governing participation in the legislative council election. It calls on all parties and candidates in the Palestinian Legislative Council elections to agree and fully adhere to this Code to ensure an environment conducive to free and fair elections and international observer support. The Quartet welcomed the Palestinian Authority's invitation to international election observers.

Furthermore, the Palestinian Authority should take additional steps to ensure the democratic process remains untainted by violence, by prohibiting political parties from pursuing their aims through violent means, and by moving expeditiously to codify this as Palestinian law. In particular, the Quartet expressed its view that a future Palestinian Authority Cabinet should include no member who has not committed to the principles of Israel's right to exist in peace and security and an unequivocal end to violence and terrorism.

The Quartet believes it is essential that direct dialogue begin immediately between the Israeli government and the Palestinian Authority to coordinate preparations for the Legislative Council elections. Proactive measures are essential to the movement of voters, elections committee staff and materials, and international observers throughout the election process, as outlined in the Roadmap. Both parties should work to put in place a mechanism to allow Palestinians resident in Jerusalem to exercise their legitimate democratic rights, in conformity with existing precedent.