

Division for Palestinian Rights

**DEVELOPMENTS RELATED TO THE MIDDLE EAST
PEACE PROCESS**

Issue 23 • January – December 2008

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**Press release issued by the President of the General Affairs and
External Relations Council of the European Union**

Ljubljana, 9 January 2008

After meeting Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Palestinian Authority Riyad Malki, who was on a visit to Ljubljana, the President of the General Affairs and External Relations Council of the European Union, Slovenian Minister for Foreign Affairs Dimitrij Rupel, issued a press release, the text of which is reproduced below:

The Middle East peace process will continue to be one of the European Union's central concerns during the Slovenian presidency, underlined the current President of the General Affairs and External Relations Council, Slovenian Minister for Foreign Affairs Dimitrij Rupel, after meeting the Palestinian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Riyad Malki.

Mr. Rupel said that the Annapolis Conference and the International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State, held in Paris in December 2007, at which the European Union and the Member States had guaranteed €1.5 billion in support for the Palestinian State, had initiated a new era of talks to be conducted by the Israeli and Palestinian Governments in cooperation with the United States. The European Union was therefore taking a back step while awaiting developments. "I look forward with great interest to the outcome of the visit to Israel and Palestine by the United States President, George W. Bush," stressed Mr. Rupel, announcing that the issue of the Middle East would remain on the agenda of the European Union and that he would consult the Member States on any initiatives, which might include a meeting of the Middle East Quartet. However, such matters would certainly be discussed at the meeting of the General Affairs and External Relations Council. Mr. Rupel assured the Palestinian Minister that the EU presidency had an absolute commitment to speeding up the Middle East peace process.

**Excerpts from statement by United States President George W. Bush on the
Israeli-Palestinian peace process**

Jerusalem, 10 January 2008

At the conclusion of his visit to the Middle East, during which he visited Israel and Palestine and met with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and later with Palestinian Authority President Abbas, United States President George W. Bush made a statement, excerpts from which are reproduced below.

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I underscored to both Prime Minister Olmert and President Abbas that progress needs to be made on four parallel tracks. First, both sides need to fulfil their commitments under the road map. Second, the Palestinians need to build their economy and their political and security institutions. And to do that, they need the help of Israel, the region and the international community. Third, I reiterate my appreciation for the Arab Peace Initiative, and I call upon the Arab countries to reach out to Israel, a step that is long overdue.

In addition to these three tracks, both sides are getting down to the business of negotiating. I called upon both leaders to make sure their teams negotiate seriously, starting right now. I strongly supported the decision of the two leaders to continue their regular summit meetings, because they are the ones who can, and must, and – I am convinced – will lead.

I share with these two leaders the vision of two democratic States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. Both of these leaders believe that the outcome is in the interest of their peoples and are determined to arrive at a negotiated solution to achieve it.

The point of departure for permanent status negotiations to realize this vision seems clear: there should be an end to the occupation that began in 1967. The agreement must establish Palestine as a homeland for the Palestinian people, just as Israel is a homeland for the Jewish people. These negotiations must ensure that Israel has secure, recognized and defensible borders. And they must ensure that the State of Palestine is viable, contiguous, sovereign and independent.

It is vital that each side understands that satisfying the other's fundamental objectives is key to a successful agreement. Security for Israel and viability for the Palestinian State are in the mutual interests of both parties.

Achieving an agreement will require painful political concessions by both sides. While territory is an issue for both parties to decide, I believe that any peace agreement between them will require mutually agreed adjustments to the armistice lines of 1949 to reflect current realities and to ensure that the Palestinian State is viable and contiguous. I believe we need to look to the establishment of a Palestinian State and new international mechanisms, including compensation, to resolve the refugee issue.

I reaffirm to each leader that implementation of any agreement is subject to implementation of the road map. Neither party should undertake any activity that contravenes road map obligations or prejudices the final status negotiations. On the Israeli side, that includes ending settlement expansion and removing unauthorized outposts. On the Palestinian side, that includes confronting terrorists and dismantling terrorist infrastructure.

I know Jerusalem is a tough issue. Both sides have deeply felt political and religious concerns. I fully understand that finding a solution to this issue will be one of the most difficult challenges on the road to peace, but that is the road we have chosen to walk.

Security is fundamental. No agreement and no Palestinian State will be born of terror. I reaffirm America's steadfast commitment to Israel's security.

The establishment of the State of Palestine is long overdue. The Palestinian people deserve it. And it will enhance the stability of the region, and it will contribute to the security of the people of Israel. The peace agreement should happen, and can happen, by the end of this year. I know each leader shares that important goal, and I am committed to doing all I can to achieve it.

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Press release issued by the International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State

Paris, 22 January 2008

On 22 January 2008, a press release was issued by the Chair and the Co-Chairs of the International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State, held in Paris on 17 December 2007, the text of which is reproduced below.

1. In accordance with the commitment they made at the International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State, the Chair and Co-Chairs met tonight in Paris to launch the in-depth follow-up of contributions announced at the Conference, of the Palestinian Programme and of all relevant elements concerning its implementation. This was prepared by a meeting in Ramallah of the enlarged group of the Friends of the Chair of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLC).
2. The total amount of aid pledged in Paris has now reached \$7.7 billion. The Paris Conference demonstrated the high degree of confidence on the part of the international community in the plan prepared and to be implemented by the Palestinian Authority (PA).
3. A number of donors began disbursing their pledges in the very first days of January. A significant number of donors intend to transfer their aid to the single treasury account of the PA. This is a mark of these donors' confidence in the PA's capacity to comply with its commitments. The Chair and Co-Chairs welcome the imminent implementation of the European mechanism for support to Palestinians (PEGASE) and the creation of the World Bank Multi-Donor trust fund. These mechanisms are complementary. The budgetary support pledged for 2008 has still to be confirmed. The Chair and Co-Chairs invite donors to put it in place as soon as possible.
4. While recognizing that there has been some improvement in the Palestinian economy following the Paris Conference, the Co-Chairs noted that further efforts by all parties are required. The situation in Gaza is a source of great economic and humanitarian preoccupation. Efforts by all parties are required for the economic situation to improve: by donors to fulfil rapidly their commitments, by the PA to ensure prompt and full implementation of the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan and by Israel to encourage improved movement of goods and persons, which, as highlighted by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, is a prerequisite to a full economic recovery. We encourage participants in the Paris Conference to maintain the present economic momentum by swiftly providing their contributions and ensuring that recurrent expenditures will receive adequate funding.
5. Welcoming security-related efforts on the part of the PA, the Chair and Co-Chairs invite donors who have not yet decided upon the allocation of their project aid to allocate part of that aid to security projects for financing equipment, infrastructure and training of personnel.
6. The Chair and Co-Chairs welcome the proposed conference for the mobilization of private investors to be held in Bethlehem in the spring. Confident in the capacity of Palestinian and Israeli private sectors to build up a momentum for the benefit of all, the Chair and Co-Chairs call on the parties to create the conditions conducive to the development of projects by private investors.
7. The Chair and Co-Chairs have decided to meet again at the end of March in Brussels. They have noted the intention of the AHLC Chair to convey a meeting of the committee on 2 May in London.

**Conclusions by the General Affairs and External Relations Council
of the European Union on the Middle East peace process**

Brussels, 28 January 2008

On 28 January 2008, following its 2846th meeting, the General Affairs and External Relations Council of the European Union issued its conclusions on the Middle East peace process, the text of which is reproduced below.

The European Union welcomes the start of negotiations between Israeli and Palestinian officials on all outstanding issues, including all final status issues, with a view to concluding a peace agreement before the end of 2008, as agreed in Annapolis last November. The Council reaffirms that this is a crucial opportunity for regional and international partners to support effectively a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. In this context, the Council calls for a continued broad and constructive involvement by Arab partners, building on the Arab Peace Initiative. The Council urges the parties to implement their road map obligations in parallel with their negotiations. The goal remains the establishment of an independent, democratic, contiguous and viable Palestinian State in the West Bank and Gaza that will unite all Palestinians, living side by side in peace and security with Israel and its other neighbours.

The European Union considers that settlement-building anywhere in the occupied Palestinian territories is illegal under international law. This includes Israeli settlements in both East Jerusalem and the West Bank. Settlement construction is an obstacle to peace. The European Union is therefore deeply concerned by recent settlement activity, particularly the recent tenders issued for new construction in Har Homa. The road map is clear that Israel should freeze all settlement activity, including the natural growth of existing settlements, and dismantle all outposts erected since March 2001.

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The Council commends and supports efforts by the Government of Egypt to find a peaceful and orderly solution to the current situation, and expresses European Union readiness to contribute to its implementation in the framework of an agreement involving the Palestinian Authority, Egypt and Israel. The European Union is ready to consider resuming its monitoring mission at Rafah under the provisions of the relevant international agreements related to movement and access concluded in November 2005.

The European Union reaffirms its commitment to remain actively involved in order to support the parties' efforts to keep the negotiation on track, working closely with other members of the Quartet and partners in the region. The European Union remains determined to contribute significantly to this effort, as laid down in its Action Strategy, "State-building for Peace in the Middle East", which covers the broad range of its assistance activities. The European Union welcomes the agreement reached on the accreditation procedure of the European Union Coordinating Office for Palestinian Police Support, which will allow the European Union to support Palestinian civilian police in order to further strengthen security and law and order.

The European Union welcomes the results of the International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State, held in December 2007, namely over \$7.4 billion in pledges, and calls on all donors to deliver on their pledges in support of efforts to build the future Palestinian State in accordance with the Reform and Development Plan presented by PA Prime Minister Salam Fayyad. In this context, the European Union recalls the utmost importance of the full implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access. The European Union is committed to providing substantial financial support for the Palestinian people, and welcomes the work of the Commission to launch a new funding mechanism: the European mechanism for support to Palestinians (PEGASE), which will constitute a key channel for European Union and other international assistance. The European Union continues to support the work of the Quartet Representative, Tony Blair.

**Resolution adopted by the Organization of the Islamic Conference
on the Middle East peace process**

Dakar, 13 March 2008

At the Eleventh Ordinary Conference of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Member States on 13 March 2008 adopted resolution 5/11-PAL (IS) on the current situation of the peace process in the Middle East, the text of which is reproduced below.

The Eleventh Session of the Islamic Summit Conference (Session of the Islamic Ummah in the 21st Century), meeting in Dakar, Republic of Senegal, from 6 to 7 Rabiul Awwal 1429H (13-14 March 2008),

Referring to the Islamic Conference resolutions;

Having examined the grave situation resulting from the continued policies of successive Israeli Governments hostile to peace, and their persistent failure to abide by the resolutions of international legality and signed agreements,

1. Reaffirms its unwavering full solidarity with the Palestinian people for the recovery of their established and inalienable national rights, including their right to return, self-determination, and the establishment of their independent State on their national territory with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

2. Reaffirms the total solidarity of the Member States with the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon to confront the continuous Israeli aggressions and threats against them, and **invites** all the Member States to express this solidarity in a practical manner and by the use of all means, as well as to stand firm with the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon against any Israeli aggressions targeting them.

3. Reiterates its adoption of the Arab Peace Initiative for settling the cause of Palestine and the Arab-Israeli conflict, which was adopted by the 14th Arab Summit held in Beirut, Lebanon, on 28 March 2002; **decides** to act by all ways and means to promote this initiative, explain its dimensions, and gain international support for its implementation; and **welcomes** the resolution of the 19th Session of the Arab Summit which was held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in March 2007 on affirming and implementing the Arab Peace Initiative.

4. Reaffirms also its commitment to a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East and **emphasizes** that the peace process is an indivisible task based on Israel's implementation of the relevant resolutions of international legality, particularly Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), and 425 (1978), the principle of land-for-peace, and the Terms of Reference of the Madrid Conference, which guarantee Israel's withdrawal from all occupied Arab and Palestinian territories, including Al-Quds Al-Sharif and the Syrian Golan, back to the June 1967 lines and from the Lebanese territory still under occupation to the internationally-recognized borders as well as securing the Palestinian people's inalienable national rights, including the right to return to their homes and properties in line with General Assembly resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948, and to establish their independent State on their national territory, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

5. Invites the Quartet to resume its diligent action for the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace in the region on the basis of the terms of reference of the peace process, including the relevant United Nations resolutions and the two principles of land-for-peace and the

inadmissibility of the appropriation of others' land by the use of force, as well as on the basis of the Arab Peace Initiative and the road map.

6. Reiterates the Islamic stand rejecting the Israeli unilateral measures; and **urges** all States and international organizations not to recognize them or entertain any guarantees or promises that may entail any detraction from the Palestinian people's legitimate rights or any reward for the Israeli occupation, which is trying to impose unilateral and segmented solutions through its persistence in expanding settlements and building the separation wall in the occupied Palestinian territories, including Al-Quds Al-Sharif and its surroundings, in violation of the rules of international law and the fundamental terms of reference and foundations underpinning the peace process.

7. Holds Israel fully responsible for the stalemate in the Middle East peace process on all tracks as a result of the Israeli Government's intransigence, its reneging on the foundations of the peace process, especially Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and the land-for-peace principle, as well as its failure to honour all the signed agreements within this framework and to comply with the terms of the road map, in addition to wrecking the positive climate generated by the Annapolis Conference.

8. Requests the Secretary-General to follow up the implementation of the present resolution and to report thereon to the 12th Session of the Islamic Summit Conference.

Excerpts from final communiqué issued by the Organization of the Islamic Conference

Dakar, 13 March 2008

Following the completion of the work at the Eleventh Ordinary Conference, the Member States of the Organization of the Islamic Conference issued a final communiqué, excerpts from which are reproduced below:

1. In response to the kind invitation of His Excellency Maitre Abdoulaye Wade, President of the Republic of Senegal, the Eleventh Session of the Islamic Summit Conference (Session of the Islamic Ummah in the 21st Century) was convened in Dakar, capital of the Republic of Senegal, on 6-7 Rabi Al-Awal 1429 H (13-14 March 2008).

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6. In his statement, His Excellency Mahmoud Abbas, President of the Palestinian National Authority, emphasized the worsening situation in Gaza resulting from the continuing Israeli aggression against Palestinian people in the occupied territories. He expressed grave concern on the current danger facing Al-Quds as the result of the Judaization of the city and the ongoing excavation under the Al-Aqsa Mosque. He emphasized that there will be no final peace without resolving the issues of Al-Quds and refugees and strongly rejected unilateral solutions and a State with temporary borders.

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22. The Conference expressed grave concern about the deteriorating socioeconomic conditions and the intensification of the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip, in particular due to Israel's continuing illegal closure, siege and blockade and other illegal measures against the Palestinian people there. It was alarmed by the rising poverty, unemployment and hunger, as well as by the

declining health status among the Palestinian civilian population, including widespread malnutrition and anaemia among children, due to Israel's deliberate obstruction of access to adequate food, medical supplies and health care and reduction of fuel and electricity supplies. It determined that such collective punishment of the civilian population by Israel is tantamount to a grave breach of international humanitarian law and that the occupying Power should be held accountable for such war crimes. It thus called upon the international community to pressure Israel, the occupying Power, to immediately cease its siege and collective punishment of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip by lifting the siege and opening all of Gaza's border crossings to allow for the movement of persons and goods into and out of the Gaza Strip, including unfettered access for humanitarian aid and personnel and movement of sick persons requiring medical treatment outside of Gaza (Palestine). The Conference emphasized the significant role played by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Arab Republic of Egypt in order to ensure the provision of such assistance through their intensified diplomatic efforts.

23. The Conference called once again for urgent efforts by the Quartet and the entire international community, including the Security Council, to address the current political and humanitarian crisis. It also called for efforts to support the peace process, the resumed bilateral negotiations between the two sides and the full implementation of the road map towards ending the occupation of the Palestinian territory that was occupied in 1967, including East Jerusalem, and thus realizing the two-State solution, based on the relevant United Nations resolutions and the terms of reference and principles of the Middle East peace process. It welcomed the revival of the peace process and took note of the recent convening of two important international conferences, held respectively at Annapolis in November 2007 and at Paris in December 2007, and called for building on the momentum of Annapolis Conference and its ensuing understandings, until a final settlement agreement is reached before the end of year 2008, and for the establishment of an independent and viable Palestinian State. The Conference further called for the exertion of serious efforts by all concerned parties to achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as well as to the Arab-Israeli conflict as a whole. In this regard, it also reaffirmed the importance of the decisions of the Arab Summit in Riyadh in March 2007, especially the reinvigoration of the Arab Peace Initiative, adopted in Beirut in March 2002.

24. The Conference expressed concern about the continuing divisions between the Palestinian political factions. It reiterated the demand that the situation that exists on the ground in the Gaza Strip be restored to that which existed prior to the events of June 2007, to allow for the restoration of the legitimate authority's role in the Gaza Strip and for the maintenance of its territorial integrity and preservation of the unity of the Palestinian people. In this connection, it stressed the need for national dialogue among Palestinians to achieve national reconciliation and restore unity in order to serve the Palestinian people's higher national interests. It reaffirmed its full support for the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and the Palestinian Authority, under the leadership of President Mahmoud Abbas, and reaffirmed its support for all democratically-elected Palestinian institutions.

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27. The Conference called on Israel to effect a full withdrawal from the occupied Syrian Golan up to the 4 June 1967 borders in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973); the land-for-peace formula; the Madrid Peace Conference terms of reference; and the Arab Peace Initiative, which was adopted by the Arab League Summit held in Beirut on 28 March 2002, and reaffirmed by the Arab League Summit held in Riyadh in March 2007.

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**Excerpts from press release issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
Russian Federation**

Moscow, 20 March 2008

On 20 and 21 March 2008, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov visited Israel and the Palestinian territories. A press release was issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs covering his visit, excerpts from which are reproduced below.

Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov on 20 and 21 March stayed in Israel on a working visit. He had conversations with President Shimon Peres, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Tzipi Livni and Minister of Defense Ehud Barak.

The talks focused mainly on the situation in the Middle East. Both sides emphasized the importance of continuing Israeli-Palestinian talks with the aim of achieving ultimately a comprehensive political settlement on an international legal basis.

Mr. Lavrov laid emphasis on the necessity of promptly ending the military confrontation, of which Israeli and Palestinian civilians are becoming victims, and of establishing favourable conditions for advancing the peace process successfully. Moscow does not accept terrorist acts and rocket fire against Israeli cities and recognizes the right of Israel to protect the lives and security of its citizens. At the same time, it was stressed that retaliatory measures and the struggle against terrorism should not lead to suffering among innocent civilians.

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The Israeli side expressed interest in the Russian Federation continuing to make an active and useful contribution to efforts for establishing an enduring peace in the region, particularly in the context of the preparation and holding of a Moscow meeting on the Middle East.

In examining practical questions of Russian-Israeli relations, the sides expressed satisfaction with their onward development and stated the broad prospects for continued expansion of the multifaceted cooperation between their countries.

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On 21 March, Mr. Lavrov visited Ramallah, where he held talks with Palestinian National Authority (PNA) President Mahmoud Abbas and Prime Minister Salam Fayyad.

The Russian Minister expressed support for the efforts of the PNA leadership, aimed at stabilizing the situation in the Palestinian territories and continuing the negotiation process with Israel. He accentuated the importance of restoring inter-Palestinian consensus in the interests of solving the principal task: that of achieving a Palestinian-Israeli settlement the ultimate aim of which will be the creation of an independent, viable and territorially integral Palestinian State.

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**Statement by the White House on the trilateral meeting among the United States,
Israel and Palestine**

Washington, D.C., 30 March 2008

On 30 March 2008, upon the conclusion of a trilateral meeting involving United States Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Salam Fayyad and Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak, the White House issued a statement, the text of which is reproduced below.

The process launched at Annapolis includes several components – including the realization of President Bush’s vision of two States living side by side in peace and security and implementation of Phase I obligations of the road map to improve the quality of life and the security of ordinary people on both sides.

Today, Prime Minister Salam Fayyad and Defense Minister Ehud Barak agreed on concrete steps to implement the road map. This is a programme that will improve the daily lives of Palestinians and help make Israel secure.

Lieutenant General William Fraser and others will continue their involvement in this effort to help the two sides implement their obligations. Secretary Rice was pleased to be able to join in those efforts today.

Prime Minister Fayyad and Defense Minister Barak agreed on points of special, immediate emphasis and work:

- Israel has pledged to reduce the impediments to access and movement in the West Bank. This will begin with the removal of about 50 roadblocks and immediate steps to upgrade checkpoints to reduce waiting time without sacrificing security.
- Both sides also agreed that the PA security forces in the West Bank should assume greater responsibility. Prime Minister Fayyad and Defense Minister Barak agreed to begin by bringing new life and hope to Jenin.
- For its part, the PA will deploy security forces to provide law and order, and work to prevent terror.
- For its part, Israel will take steps to ease access and movement to the city and its surrounding environs.
- The United States and others in the international community will fund projects and, in an integrated governance and development effort, help the PA develop institutions for governance and rule of law.
- The two sides will improve security coordination, so that PA security personnel can perform their vital duties and are equipped properly.
- Prime Minister Fayyad and Minister Barak also agreed on steps to promote economic development, especially projects, in the West Bank more generally.

- Both sides are committed to success of the Bethlehem investment conference, and special arrangements will be made so that international visitors may attend.
- Both sides have agreed to create a major new industrial park in Tarqumiya sponsored by Turkey.
- The parties have completed connection of 27 Palestinian villages in the West Bank to the Israeli power grid and, in an unprecedented action, have connected Jericho to the Jordan power grid.
- The two sides approved in concept the development of new housing in the West Bank for Palestinians.
- Master plans for 25 Palestinian villages in Area C have been approved.
- Israel offered to expand significantly opportunities for Palestinian workers and businessmen to travel to Israel from the West Bank.

All of these steps can provide meaningful improvements in the lives of ordinary Palestinian and Israeli citizens, if they are successfully implemented. As implementation is a key to success, Lieutenant General Fraser will be following closely each side's efforts to implement the agreed-upon steps. Secretary Rice is confident that both Prime Minister Fayyad and Defense Minister Barak are committed to implementing these steps. They have also agreed to continue their meetings.

Chair's summary of Ad Hoc Liaison Committee meeting

London, 2 May 2008

During its meeting on 2 May 2008 in London, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee reviewed its efforts in support of Palestinian institutional capacity-building and economic development and assessed donors' performance on the pledges made at the International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State, held in Paris in December 2007. At the conclusion of the meeting, the Chair's issued a summary of the meeting results, the text of which is reproduced below.

Ministers and senior officials of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLC) met at Lancaster House in London today to reaffirm their strong commitment to a two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. For the first time, ministers outside the AHLC circle participated in the meeting. Their participation demonstrates the renewed commitment of the donor community expressed at the Donors' Conference in support of the Palestinian Authority (PA), held in December 2007 in Paris. United Kingdom Foreign Secretary David Miliband hosted the meeting. As Chair, Norway wishes to thank the participants, in particular the Palestinians and Israelis, for their spirit of cooperation and their positive contributions during the deliberations.

- The AHLC took note of the Quartet statement issued after its meeting earlier in the day.
- The AHLC reaffirmed that the international community, the PA and Israel must act together to make significant economic growth in the Palestinian territory possible.

- The AHLC welcomed the support provided by donors to the Palestinians in the form of the \$7.7 billion pledged in Paris and the disbursements made since December 2007. The AHLC welcomed the two new financing mechanisms, the PEGASE and the World Bank Trust Fund.
- For 2008, the amounts disbursed or confirmed are adequate to cover financing needs for the first half of the year. However, without additional assistance, a shortfall of NIS 1.4 billion (\$0.4 billion) is projected in the second half of 2008. Adequate and timely disbursements from donors, closely coordinated with the PA, are critical to prevent liquidity problems and payment arrears. Donors are urged to reallocate part of their development commitments to budget support.
- The AHLC commended the reform steps undertaken by the PA in difficult circumstances. A strict government employment policy has been followed, and utility subsidies are being reduced. The public financial management system has also been strengthened. These measures represent a significant step toward fiscal sustainability.
- While acknowledging Israel's security concerns, the AHLC expressed concern that access and movement restrictions have increased over the last seven months and continue to constrain economic development. The AHLC welcomed the recent announcement by the Israeli Government that a number of obstacles in the West Bank would be removed and affirmed that there is a clear need, however, for a more substantial relaxation of restrictions on movement and access in 2008.
- The AHLC emphasized that the removal of significant restrictions was likely to stimulate private sector confidence and economic growth. In this context, the AHLC looked forward to the Palestine Investment Conference in Bethlehem later this month.
- The AHLC emphasized the importance of close cooperation and coordination between Quartet Representative Tony Blair, the international community, Israel and the PA on promoting economic growth and institutional capacity-building.
- The Quartet Representative has also identified a set of concrete deliverables that, if adopted by the parties, could help trigger a much-needed private sector response. Easing of checkpoints and crossings are essential measures to boost private sector revival.
- The AHLC expressed deep concern over the deteriorating situation in Gaza. As aid in itself will not be an efficient remedy, the private sector should be stimulated and crossings opened. The AHLC deplored the escalation in attacks from Gaza on Gaza crossings.

In order to support the current dialogue among the parties and achieve results on the ground, AHLC members stressed the following:

- It is necessary to accelerate trilateral action to boost economic growth and create functioning institutions to serve as a solid foundation for a Palestinian State.
- Development assistance is not sufficient to create a sustainable economy and produce tangible results on the ground. The easing of Israeli restrictions on movement and access is necessary for the revival of the Palestinian economy. Israel's genuine security concern should be taken into account.

- The PA should continue to implement its reform and development plans with a view to actively continuing to improve governance, strengthen Palestinian institutions and particularly improve the security environment. The international community should continue to actively support the PA, particularly its reform and development efforts. Israel should provide an enabling environment to ensure the success of these efforts.
- The AHLC recognized that budget support is critical to keep the Palestinian public institutions running and agreed that donors should increase their budget support to the PA, with due regard to equitable burden-sharing. The budget support should be aligned with the PA reform and recovery priorities and be provided through direct transfer to the PA Central Treasury Account.

The AHLC Chair plans to call for a new meeting during the General Assembly in New York.

Package of proposals by Special Representative of the Quartet Tony Blair

13 May 2008

On 13 May 2008, Special Representative of the Quartet Tony Blair announced an initial package of measures to improve the social and economic situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the text of which is reproduced below.

Towards a Palestinian State

Israel and the Palestinian Authority (PA) are working to reach a viable lasting peace agreement with the aim of establishing a Palestinian State that will reside peacefully alongside the State of Israel. The Quartet supports these efforts and is encouraged by the ongoing negotiations between the parties. In this framework, I have received the support of the Government of Israel and the PA in promoting a package designed to allow greater movement of people and goods, helping the Palestinian economy grow and its people achieve increased prosperity, in a way consistent with protecting fully the security of Israel and its people.

For Palestinian statehood to be possible in the eyes of Palestinians, there must be hope that the occupation will over time be lifted. For Palestinian statehood to be possible in the eyes of Israelis there must be hope, over time, that the security of Israel will be improved and not harmed by the way Palestinians run their territory.

I stress the following package is only a start. Of course, much more needs to be and will be done. But it has four elements to it that represent four aspects to creating a Palestinian State:

- Economic and social development;
- Lifting access and movement restrictions;
- Developing Area C, which is 60 per cent of the West Bank, on a case-by-case basis;
- Proper security capability and performance by the Palestinians.

All of these aspects then come together in a package specifically set around Jenin in the north of the West Bank, which will, in effect, be an economic and security zone. Should that package work, it can be extended to other parts of the territory. But it will require both sides to fulfil their obligations. It is also clear that in order to achieve economic progress the issue of security should

be duly addressed, and there is still a lot to be done on the Palestinian side to achieve this goal. With that notion in mind, I shall further elaborate on the following measures:

1. Economic and social development

The following projects have now been cleared for work to begin:

- *Jenin industrial park*

Preparations for the establishment of the Jenin Industrial Estate have advanced significantly over the last few months, and construction can now start with the support of the German Government following agreement reached by the Government of Israel and the PA on arrangements for water and electricity services and access to the site. Construction of the industrial park will stimulate Palestinian economic activity by attracting (foreign) investments and creating sustainable employment and income generation in the region of Jenin. The park will improve services for the Palestinian industries and offer opportunities for regional and international business cooperation.

- *Tarqumiya industrial park*

Following the decision of the Ankara Forum on Tuesday, 13 November 2007, the Government of Israel and the PA have agreed to establish the Tarqumiya Industrial Estate, which will be located in Areas C and B, and for which the precise location still has to be decided. Construction of the industrial park will stimulate Palestinian economic activity by attracting (foreign) investments and creating sustainable employment and income generation in the region of Hebron.

- *Wataniya telephony licence*

The Government of Israel has agreed to approve this enterprise and to release a frequency of 2.4 MHz in the 900 bandwidth. The Government of Israel will commit in writing that within 6 to 8 months, the assignment of frequency will be amended to a total bandwidth of 4.8 MHz at the 900/1800 MHz bands and will assign a frequency of more than 4.8MHz in due course.

This deal will contribute to the overall growth of the Palestinian economy. First, it will involve an injection of funds into the PA of over \$354 million in licence fees (with an immediate transfer of \$100 million). Second, Wataniya will invest more than \$700 million in the PA over 10 years, create 750 jobs for Palestinians and generate from 1,500 to 2,000 indirect jobs.

- *Bethlehem tourism*

Tourism to the Holy Land is on the rise, with positive effects for both the Palestinian and Israeli tourism sectors. This has had a significant impact on hotel occupancy rates, for example, in Bethlehem. However, investments are needed to rehabilitate hotels and rooms to increase overall capacity to meet pre-Intifada levels. A number of permanent improvements in the tourism sector have been agreed in order to encourage private investments. It was agreed among both sides that immediately after the Palestine Investment Conference, the facilitation of access from and to Bethlehem will be improved on a permanent basis. Five hundred new trader permits and the existing

Ministry of Defense permits for tour guides will be renewed, on an ongoing basis. The Government of Israel will allow the transport of goods and services to go directly from Bethlehem to Jerusalem through the existing checkpoints, except for specific defined categories, pending security arrangements.

- *Allenby Bridge*

The Government of Israel has recently extended the opening hours from 18.00 to 20.00, and has expressed its general willingness to extend the opening hours even more. The Government of Israel will seriously consider at the earliest possible date the presence of a limited number of Palestinian customs officials – under existing arrangements and procedures – at the bridge as part of the larger long-term effort to create a professional Palestinian border authority.

- *Jericho agro-industrial project*

The parties are cooperating and facilitating the efforts of the Japanese International Cooperation Agency in establishing an agro-industrial park in the area of Jericho.

- *Water/sanitation projects*

- I. Projects agreed on the West Bank:

- a. Construction of wastewater treatment plant in Nablus-Wadi Ziemar Project, Part A;
- b. Construction of wastewater treatment plant in Tulkarem-Wadi Ziemar Project, Part B;
- c. Construction of wastewater treatment plant in Salfit;
- d. Construction of wastewater treatment plant in Ramallah based on the outcome of ongoing negotiations between Israeli and Palestinian water authorities;
- e. Supply and installation of main transmission line and internal network for Aqraba cluster of villages.

- II. Gaza water and sanitation

- a. North Gaza Sewage Treatment Works

Phase 1 of the North Gaza Sewage Treatment Works (the construction of two infiltrations basins, a pumping station and pipe network) is expected to be completed in the first or second week of June. The Palestinian Water Authority (PWA) will tender the contract for Phase 2 – the treatment plant – in June. The Ministry of Defense will provide a letter of comfort to the PWA in order to encourage potential bidders. The Ministry of Defense will also pre-clear a list of goods provided by PWA. This part is likely to take two years to complete, as it involves a state-of-the-art water treatment facility. However, sewage will start to be partially redirected from the dangerous Beit Lahia lake as of the completion of Phase 1 in June;

- b. Construction of wastewater treatment plant in Khan Younis, Gaza;

- c. Construction of wastewater treatment plant in Gaza Middle Area to allow the entry of critical goods for the maintenance of the water and sanitation sector in Gaza.

The Coastal Municipal Water Utility has provided the Ministry of Defense and Mekorot with a list of critical items to ensure the continued provision of water and sanitation services to Gaza's population. Immediate clearance of this list is critical without prejudice to Israel's legitimate security needs.

- *Entry permits to Israel*

The Government of Israel has now approved an additional 5,000 entry permits to Israel for Palestinian workers and will issue an additional 3,000 permits pending Government approval. Five thousand permits out of the total number shall include permits for an overnight stay in Israel. In addition, the period of validity of entry permits to Israel for representatives of approved non-governmental organizations shall be double (from three to six months). This shall substantially ease their ability to carry out their humanitarian activities.

- *Housing projects*

A \$500 million mortgage facility has already been created for the construction of affordable homes. The Government of Israel will discuss with the PA specific housing development projects which shall be proposed.

2. Access and movement

Attention has focused on the number of roadblocks. The number is important, but the most important thing is the strategic nature of where they are placed and their significance. So there could be a numerically large reduction with little practical difference. Alternatively, there could be a small but key strategic number of changes. There should be a continued re-assessment of the large number of mounds and blocks; but the Office of the Quartet Representative has focused on trying to remove, change or improve 11 key strategic obstacles to free movement and access. The Israelis are prepared to make changes as outlined below, but have emphasized that their implementation will start now and then be phased over the coming period of time, subject to and depending on a continuous security assessment.

These measures shall be implemented in addition to the checkpoints and scores of roadblocks which have been already removed, in particular the Rimonim, the 408 and Beit Haarava checkpoints, with the latter now open five days a week.

The following measures will be taken:

- The Kvasim checkpoint will be removed this week. The following checkpoints identified by the Office of the Quartet Representative, namely, Container and Shave Shomevron checkpoints, as well as the Halhul Bridge roadblock, will be removed and the Beit El checkpoint will be relocated once Israel determines that the security situation so allows. This security assessment has started and is currently being carried out with a view to removing these checkpoints at the earliest possible date.
- Through flow at Tayasir and Hamra will be improved in order to better facilitate the expected increase in traffic of agricultural workers and their vehicles from the West Bank down to the Jordan Valley.

- Work to upgrade Hawarrah and Beit Iba has already started. Work to upgrade Einav will start as soon as possible. Finally, the through flow in the Jericho District Coordination Office will be improved to facilitate increased tourism and activities related to the Jericho agro-industrial park.

The purpose of making these changes is to open up significantly North-South movement and that out to the East. When fully implemented, they would make the following practical differences in how the West Bank operates.

The above measures, together with a general improvement of the management of the checkpoints, should significantly improve commercial traffic for the whole of the West Bank.

3. Area C

Area C comprises 60 per cent of the West Bank, and under the Oslo Accords, some administrative and all security responsibilities in this area rest with Israel. It has been a long-standing grievance felt by Palestinians that they have been unable to improve or develop Area C. While it is clear that changes in status of Area C shall be made only in the framework of Israeli-Palestinian political agreement, specific requests relating to these areas can be approved on a case-by-case basis.

Israel has already approved master plans for 13 villages in Area C, and it will now approve an additional 14. The following have been approved:

1. Fazail North (Jericho)
2. Rashida (Jericho)
3. Khirbat a-Tih (Tulkarm)
4. Brukin North (Qualqilya)
5. Khirbat A-Tawani (Hebron)
6. Khirbat A-Shama West (Hebron)
7. Jabel Harsa (Bethlehem)
8. A-Sheikh West (Bethlehem)
9. Hermel (Bethlehem)
10. Zabrat Kabira (Tulkarm)
11. Adna east (Hebron)
12. Tarkumiya South (Hebron)
13. Khirbat Ta'anach (Jenin)
14. Khirbat Um Reihan (Jenin)

Approval of these master plans shall facilitate the development, building and upgrading of schools, clinics and other facilities within these villages. This is an important beginning, and it is our intention to work to proceed along these lines to apply this model to other villages in the West Bank.

The Government of Israel will re-examine the current demolition and land orders in Area C.

Tarqumiya industrial park, the exact location of which still requires specific agreement between the Government of Israel and the PA, as stated above, will have land from Area C for development. The Government of Israel will agree to allow Palestinian agricultural workers to cultivate the land.

Other Area C measures have been included in the section on Jenin below.

Developing Palestinian Security Capabilities

The measures on economic development, movement and access and Area C are all those that can be done within the existing security arrangements for the West Bank.

However, there are measures already being taken by the PA to improve their security capability. In addition, there are plans and proposals for: security sector reform, done in conjunction with General Dayton; for civil police reform, done with the European Union Coordinating Office for Palestinian Police Support mission under Colin Smith; and for wider justice reform – prisons, courts and judiciary – done with the help of the European Union and the United States Agency for International Development.

These plans are well advanced. The Berlin Conference at the end of June gives the PA and the international community the chance to bring them all together into a coherent set of proposals for the radical upgrading of Palestinian security capability and performance.

But certain steps are already being undertaken. As a result, we can bring the first three elements together with security improvements to try creating a fundamentally different way of working. The Palestinians are working to create an area in and around Jenin City where Palestinians take control of security, where there is substantial economic and social development, access and movement restrictions are significantly lifted and land in Area C can be developed. If this works, and it depends on both sides fulfilling their obligations, then the intention is to expand it.

4. Jenin Area

Security

General James Jones and General Keith Dayton are working intensively to help develop the Palestinian capability to instill law and order and to combat terrorism in the area.

In this area, the security arrangements will be:

Israel will retain overall security responsibility in the West Bank and reserves the right to act where its security is at risk. But subject to this, in the designated area, the PA will be given control of security under unique and different arrangements, the details of which are subject to an ongoing discussion between General Jones' team, the Government of Israel and the PA. The PA will construct new prison capacity for Jenin prisoners, whether in Jenin or elsewhere, and rebuild the Muqata'a detention facility. The PA will also open the new courthouse facility by the end of July to process cases.

In addition, the Government of Israel has agreed to the opening of four new police stations in Area B, in approved locations in Jenin, out of a total of 20 police stations approved throughout the West Bank.

Access and movement

There will be no roadblocks in the designated area, and other changes will be made to facilitate Jenin-Nablus and Jenin-Jordan Valley traffic, as referred to in the movement access section above.

There will be greater ease of access into Jenin, and the crossings will open at Jalameh and Reihan until midnight. The Government of Israel intends to upgrade the Jalameh crossing. All these measures shall be undertaken with due consideration of the security conditions on the ground.

Economic and social development

There will be the new industrial park at Jalameh announced above, to begin in early 2009.

There will be 1,000 work permits for Jenin residents to work in Israel and 300 Jenin traders will be given access to Israel.

The Government of Israel will allow the construction of a new storage facility at the border to allow the storing and passage of grain and the import and export of agricultural products.

As stated above, the Government of Israel has agreed to grant permits for 150 vehicles for landowners from the West Bank to access the Jordan Valley. Additional requirements will be positively considered.

There will be a large number of smaller-scale economic and social projects implemented by the PA. Many will begin immediately. These projects will upgrade schools, providing additional classrooms where needed. New schools will be built in Jalboon and Jenin City. Several health clinics will be upgraded, and community and youth centres will receive additional facilities.

Pending the decision of the Joint Water Committee, work will begin to provide water to 25,000 residents of six villages that currently lack access to safe water. Work will also start in the coming months on providing electricity to several villages that lack services. Sewage lines within Jenin city and in surrounding villages will be upgraded, and the rehabilitation of Jenin city's sewage treatment plant will begin soon. Municipalities will soon receive \$750,000 worth of equipment to manage solid waste.

Area C

Permission will be given to develop a children's centre and park in a site in Area C to be decided.

The Jenin Governor's proposal for a new school near Jalameh, outstanding for several years, has been approved in principle, with details to be concluded between the two sides

There will be the master plan approval and the PA security force activity, as set out above, in Area C.

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**Excerpts from remarks by United States President George W. Bush on the
Israeli-Palestinian peace process**

Sharm el-Sheikh, 18 May 2008

On 18 May 2008, at the World Economic Forum held in Egypt, United States President George W. Bush made a number of remarks on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, excerpts from which are reproduced below.

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We must stand with the Palestinian people, who have suffered for decades and earned the right to be a homeland of their own – have a homeland of their own. I strongly support a two-State solution – a democratic Palestine based on law and justice that will live with peace and security alongside a democratic Israel. I believe that the Palestinian people will build a thriving democracy, in which entrepreneurs pursue their dreams, and families own their homes in lively communities, and young people grow up with hope in the future.

Last year, at Annapolis, we made a hopeful beginning towards a peace negotiation that will outline what this nation of Palestine will look like – a contiguous State where Palestinians live in prosperity and dignity. A peace agreement is in the Palestinians' interests, it is in Israel's interests, it is in Arab States' interests, and it is in the world's interests. And I firmly believe that with leadership and courage, we can reach that peace agreement this year.

This is a demanding task. It requires action on all sides. Palestinians must fight terror and continue to build the institutions of a free and peaceful society. Israel must make tough sacrifices for peace and ease the restrictions on the Palestinians. Arab States, especially oil-rich nations, must seize this opportunity to invest aggressively in the Palestinian people and to move past their old resentments against Israel. And all nations in the region must stand together in confronting Hamas, which is attempting to undermine efforts at peace with acts of terror and violence.

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**Conclusions by the General Affairs and External Relations Council of the
European Union on the Middle East peace process**

Brussels, 27 May 2008

On 27 May 2008, the General Affairs and External Relations Council of the European Union adopted a number of conclusions on the Middle East peace process, the text of which is reproduced below.

1. The European Union reaffirms its commitment to support the parties in the ongoing negotiations on all outstanding issues, including all final status issues, with a view to concluding a peace agreement before the end of 2008, as agreed in Annapolis last November. These negotiations must urgently press ahead. In this context, the European Union also welcomes the recent meetings of the Quartet principals, including with Arab foreign ministers, and of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee on 2 May in London. The European Union re-emphasizes the continued and constructive involvement of Arab partners and the importance of the Arab Peace Initiative as a major element in moving the Middle East peace process forward. The Council recalls that peace in the Middle East requires a comprehensive solution and in this regard welcomes the

announcement that the Syrian Arab Republic and Israel have agreed to initiate peace negotiations under the auspices of Turkey.

2. The European Union underlines the urgent need for swift and tangible results on the ground in order to sustain Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. Action from both sides to implement their road map obligations in parallel to the negotiations is vital in order to retain the confidence and support of the Israeli and Palestinian populations, the region and the wider international community.

3. The European Union is deeply concerned by recent accelerated settlement expansion. The European Union reiterates that settlement-building anywhere in the occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem, is illegal under international law. Settlement activity prejudices the outcome of final status negotiations and threatens the viability of an agreed two-state solution. It reiterates its call on Israel to freeze all settlement activity, including natural growth, and to dismantle outposts erected since March 2001.

4. The European Union condemns the continued firing of rockets from Gaza on southern Israel, including the recent attack in Ashkelon, and all other activities which are contrary to international law and endanger civilians. While recognizing Israel's legitimate right to self-defence, the European Union calls for an immediate end to all acts of violence. The European Union urges all parties to ensure the protection of affected civilians in accordance with international law. The European Union continues to support Egyptian efforts to bring about a cessation of violence and a solution that will allow for the reopening of all crossings.

5. The European Union calls for the progressive removal of Israeli restrictions on movement and access in order to improve the situation on the ground and living conditions in the West Bank and revitalize the Palestinian economy. The European Union welcomes as a step in the right direction the decision to remove a limited number of roadblocks, but underlines the fact that much more remains to be done.

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7. The European Union remains committed to assisting Palestinian State-building efforts across a broad range of areas. It welcomes the efforts by the Palestinian Authority (PA) to develop an effective and reformed security sector and encourages ongoing efforts towards the fulfilment of its road map obligations in this field. In this regard, the Council expresses its full support to the international conference in support of Palestinian civil security and the rule of law to be hosted by Germany on 24 June 2008. It has decided to expand the mission of the European Union Co-ordinating Office for Palestinian Police Support to support the criminal justice sector namely in the fields of the judiciary and the penitentiary, in cooperation with international partners. It welcomes the recent package of measures agreed by the Quartet Representative with the Israeli and Palestinian authorities, aimed at enhancing both economic activity and the capacity of PA security forces, by improving their ability to operate freely. It emphasizes the importance of early implementation of these measures. The Council also welcomes the success of the recent Palestine Investment Conference in Bethlehem in taking forward the economic development agenda.

8. The European Union underlines the need to deliver on pledges made at the International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State in Paris in December 2007. In this context, it highlights the importance of keeping the institutions of the PA running in the second half of 2008, for which additional budget support is urgently needed. As the largest contributor of financial

assistance to the PA, the European Union calls on other donors to increase their budget support to the PA, with due regard for equitable burden-sharing."

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Excerpts from the 2008 European Union-United States Summit Declaration

Brdo, 10 June 2008

At the conclusion of the 2008 European Union–United States Summit, which took place on 10 June 2008 in Brdo, Slovenia, the participants adopted a Declaration, excerpts from which are reproduced below:

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We welcome the recent steps forward towards peace in the Middle East and will pursue complementary efforts to support the parties' efforts to reach a political agreement by the end of 2008, as foreseen at the Annapolis Conference. We are determined to support the subsequent implementation of that agreement, and call again on Israel and the Palestinians to implement their road map obligations in full. The European Union and the United States are doing important work in the area of Palestinian capacity-building to pave the way for a future democratic Palestinian State, living side by side in peace and security with Israel and its other neighbours. We underline the importance of continued broad and constructive involvement by Arab partners and commend the Arab League's Peace Initiative and its goal of promoting a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. We call on donors, especially those in the region, to follow through on and, if possible, increase their pledges and deliver assistance to the Palestinian Authority.

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Excerpts from the Chair's statement on the Middle East during the Group of Eight Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs

Kyoto, 27 June 2008

On 26 and 27 June 2012, Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of Eight (G-8) met in Kyoto, Japan, to discuss a range of global and regional issues. Excerpts from the Chair's statement on the Middle East are reproduced below.

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Middle East

Foreign Ministers reiterated the G-8's full support for the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian negotiations with a view to reaching an agreement by the end of 2008 on the establishment of a viable Palestinian State in the West Bank and Gaza and an end to the conflict. We call on all parties to refrain from any action that would undermine the negotiations and to implement their road map obligations, such as freezing all settlement activities and ending all acts of violence, terrorism and incitement. We also emphasized the importance of improving the situation on the ground and call on the parties concerned to take positive steps to that end, including those on facilitating

movement and access. We welcome the truce in Gaza that came into effect recently and call for its observance. We remain committed to continuing to provide assistance to the Palestinians, including those in Gaza, and helping to strengthen the Palestinian institutions and call on other donors to do the same. We look forward to a comprehensive peace between Israel and its neighbours, and in that regard welcome the ongoing indirect peace talks between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic under the auspices of Turkey. We support the statement of the Quartet made in Berlin on convening an international meeting in Moscow, which is expected to lend support to the process launched in Annapolis. The Ministers also welcomed the recent political progress in Lebanon and reaffirmed the support for a sovereign, independent and democratic Lebanon. We call on all parties to comply with relevant Security Council resolutions and encourage them to rapidly proceed in the formation of the new Government without resorting to violence.

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**Excerpts from the statement by the Chair and Co-Chairs of the International Donors'
Conference for the Palestinian State**

Paris, 7 July 2008

On 7 July 2008, the Chair and the Co-Chairs of the International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State, after reviewing donors' delivery on pledges, issued a statement, excerpts from which are reproduced below.

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4. The Chair and the Co-Chairs welcome the efforts of the Palestinian Government to improve the financial and fiscal situation of the Palestinian Authority in a challenging and constrained environment, including external economic factors. They welcomed in particular the efforts being made to control the public sector wage bill. Nevertheless, it is essential that the Palestinian Government maintain a rigorous fiscal policy in relation with the future disposable revenues and contributions: in that respect, the critical issues are clearly the management of civil servants payroll, the reimbursement of arrears to the public and private sectors and the reduction of subsidies of the utilities bill.

5. The success of the Palestine Investment Conference in Bethlehem in May is very encouraging and sent strong positive signals to the Palestinian private sector. The massive attendance of foreign investors and the positive business climate generated, thanks in part to close cooperation with the Government of Israel, should be maintained in the coming months to ensure the implementation of actual business deals and development projects struck in Bethlehem. The Chair and Co-Chairs underlined that the economic impact of the Conference will be muted in the absence of an enabling environment for economic recovery. Restrictions by the Government of Israel on Palestinian movement and access continue to weigh heavily on the economic outlook. Without a significant lifting of such barriers in the West Bank, and a relaxation of the restrictions on humanitarian and commercial flows to the Gaza Strip, there is a much-reduced prospect for private sector recovery, public and private investment programmes will continue to be delayed, and consequently any economic recovery will continue to be inhibited.

6. While there has been some progress on the package of measures (economic and social development, lifting access and movement restrictions, developing currently restricted areas of

the West Bank, proper Palestinian security capability and performance) agreed with Israel and launched by Quartet Representative Tony Blair on 13 May to boost the Palestinian economy and aid preparations for statehood, Israel should make the full and rapid implementation of the package it agreed to a high priority.

7. The Chair and Co-Chairs welcome recent political developments and notably the truce in Gaza. A lasting solution to the situation in Gaza can only be achieved through peaceful means. They urged that the calm be respected in full and expressed the hope that it would endure, and lead to a return to normal civilian life and the rule of the PA in Gaza. They called on all parties to sustain the controlled reopening of the crossings in and out of Gaza for both humanitarian reasons and commercial flows, and stand ready to assist in the economic rehabilitation of Gaza.

8. The Chair and Co-Chairs agreed to continue their efforts to ensure that the Paris Conference outcome is successful in order to change the situation on the ground. They agreed to meet again in September and took note of the forthcoming Ad Hoc Liaison Committee meeting in New York on 22 September.

Excerpts from the Declaration of the Non-Aligned Movement on Palestine

Tehran, 30 July 2008

After reviewing the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of members of the Non-Aligned Movement adopted a Declaration on Palestine, excerpts from which are reproduced below.

1. The Ministers of the Non-Aligned Movement reviewed the continuing critical situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. They considered further approaches and strategies to be undertaken by the Movement to continue strongly supporting the Palestinian people and their leadership and for advancing the revived peace process towards the achievement of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace settlement and the exercise by the Palestinian people of their inalienable right to self-determination in their independent and sovereign State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital. The Ministers reaffirmed their adherence to the principled positions adopted in this regard, including in the Declarations on Palestine adopted by the Committee on Palestine on 25 September 2007 in New York, as well as on 16 September 2006 in Havana during the Fourteenth Summit Conference of Heads of State or Government, and the clear positions concerning Palestine adopted by all other previous summits and ministerial conferences of the Movement.

2. The Ministers expressed their deep regret that 60 years have passed since the 1948 Al-Nakba that befell the Palestinian people, by which they became a stateless and dispossessed people, dispersed and displaced from their homeland of Palestine, and that more than half of the Palestinian people continue to live in exile in refugee camps throughout the region and in the diaspora. In this regard, the Ministers called upon all Members of the Movement to solemnly commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Palestinian Al-Nakba this year and to reaffirm their solidarity with the Palestinian people on this occasion and redouble their collective efforts for the just and peaceful resolution of the question of Palestine in all its aspects.

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15. The Ministers reiterated their hope that the international community and the Quartet will continue to exert serious efforts during the current critical period to advance the peace process and to salvage the road map and promote its implementation towards ending the occupation of the Palestinian territory that began in 1967, including East Jerusalem, and thus realizing the two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the right of all States and peoples in the region to live in peace and security. The Ministers reaffirmed the continued relevance of the Arab Peace Initiative, adopted by the Fourteenth Arab Summit in Beirut in March 2002 and reaffirmed by Nineteenth Arab Summit in Riyadh in March 2007, and welcomed the Twentieth Arab Summit in Damascus in March 2008, which reaffirmed the commitment by all Arab States to the Arab Peace Initiative and stressed that such commitment is subject to adherence by Israel to its obligations under the terms of reference for achieving peace in the region, and called for intensification of efforts in this regard. They called on all concerned parties to remain actively engaged with the Palestinian and Israeli sides to promote substantial negotiations and encourage immediate positive steps on the ground to promote genuine progress in the peace process on all final status issues towards the achievement of its stated aims and goals.

16. In this connection, the Ministers took note of the timely international conferences convened at Annapolis in November 2007 and at Paris in December 2007, aimed at ending the occupation that began in 1967 and actualizing the two-State solution and at providing urgently needed assistance to the Palestinian people and the Palestinian Authority, and called for serious and continuous follow-up efforts. In this regard, the Ministers reiterated their support for convening the follow-up Conference before the end of 2008 to take stock of progress achieved in the peace process. The Ministers further reiterated their support for convening this Conference in Moscow.

17. The Ministers also reiterated their call upon the Security Council to assume its responsibilities and to act on the basis of its own resolutions to compel Israel to respect international law and to bring an end to all of its illegal practices and its occupation. The Ministers expressed appreciation to the members of the Non-Aligned Movement Caucus of the Security Council for their efforts concerning Palestine and called upon them to continue coordination on the issue and to remain actively involved. Moreover, they urged the Security Council to engage the Quartet, considering the Council's Charter responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. In this context, they reaffirmed the permanent responsibility of the United Nations towards the question of Palestine until it is resolved in all aspects on the basis of international law, including a just resolution of the plight of the Palestinian refugees in accordance with General Assembly resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948.

18. The Ministers reaffirmed their conviction that a vital role should continue to be played by the Movement vis-à-vis the question of Palestine and entrusted the Chair, assisted by the Committee on Palestine, to lead the efforts of the Movement with regard to the pursuit of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the region. They stressed the importance of active contacts and dialogue by the Movement at the Ministerial level with the members of the Quartet, the members of the Security Council and other relevant parties in the peace process in order to convey the Movement's principled positions and advance efforts aimed at promoting the peace process and at ensuring respect for international law, the keys to a peaceful settlement of the conflict.

19. The Ministers welcomed the holding of the Asian-African Ministerial Conference on Capacity Building for Palestine, in Jakarta on 14 July 2008, with the main objective of assisting the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in clusters of refugee camps in the surrounding host countries, in the practical field of capacity-building, in order to prepare them for the eventual creation of a Palestinian State. The Ministers

highly commended the commitments made in the areas of economic development, including governance, women's empowerment and public works, which may entail the training of as many as 10,000 Palestinian people. In this regard, the Ministers also welcomed the follow-up mechanism established to ensure the success of the effective implementation of the commitments as agreed by the Conference.

20. The Ministers also underscored the importance of the work of non-governmental organizations, civil society and peace groups, particularly on the Palestinian and Israeli sides, and encouraged them to continue their positive work.

21. In conclusion, in light of the continuing severe economic, social and humanitarian hardships being endured by the Palestinian people as a result of the unlawful policies and measures being carried out by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, the Ministers reiterated the call upon the non-aligned countries to continue extending urgent assistance to the Palestinian people to ease their financial and humanitarian crisis. Moreover, the Ministers reaffirmed their long-standing, principled political support, reaffirming their strong commitment to continue supporting the Palestinian people and their leadership to bring an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967, in accordance with the rules and principles of international law and relevant United Nations resolutions, and their commitment to a just, peaceful and permanent solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and to the right of the Palestinian people to exercise self-determination and sovereignty in their independent State of Palestine, on the basis of the pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Chair's summary of Ad Hoc Liaison Committee meeting
New York, 22 September 2008

At the conclusion of the New York meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, at which members and donors reaffirmed their strong commitment to a two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a press release was issued, the text of which is reproduced below.

Ministers and senior officials of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLC) and other major donor countries met at United Nations Headquarters in New York today to reaffirm their strong commitment to a two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon hosted the meeting. Norway, as Chair, thanked the participants, in particular the Palestinians and the Israelis, for their spirit of cooperation and their positive contributions during the deliberations.

- The AHLC reaffirmed its political and economic support to Palestinian institution- building and the efforts made by the Palestinian Government led by Prime Minister Salam Fayyad. Despite the difficult conditions on the ground, the Palestinian Authority (PA) has continued to implement its reform and development agenda, particularly in the area of security, and to pursue prudent fiscal policies and reforms. Expenditure increases have been below the inflation rate, implying a retrenchment in real terms.
- The AHLC reaffirmed its view that economic progress in the Palestinian territory is an essential part of bringing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to an end. As a result of the Paris Conference, the international community has contributed \$1.36 billion in budgetary support this year. All funding instruments, including the PEGASE (the European mechanism for

support to Palestinians) and the World Bank Trust Fund, have proved crucial in mobilizing coordinated donor support. Although considerable external financial support has been mobilized, weak economic growth has taken place since the AHLC revived the three-party cooperation last year. While acknowledging Israel's security concerns, the AHLC expressed concerns that access and movement restrictions continue to constrain Palestinian economic development.

- In this context, the AHLC reiterates its support for the Quartet Representative and his intensive efforts, together with the PA and the Government of Israel, to fully implement the package of measures agreed on 13 May 2008, which are aimed at boosting the Palestinian economy and promoting greater freedom for the Palestinians, while taking Israeli security concerns into account.
- The AHLC regards the recent Israeli measures to dismantle roadblocks in the West Bank, to allow increased transport into Gaza, and the agreement enabling a second Palestinian mobile phone company to begin operations as concrete actions to facilitate Palestinian economic development. These are positive first steps. However, in line with the Quartet Representative's efforts, agreed with the parties, a more substantial relaxation of restrictions on movement and access, development of land and resources in Area C, and expansion of the types of items permitted into Gaza are crucial to foster a new reality on the ground, while taking Israel's security concerns into account. Greater movement of people and goods will give the Palestinian economy a major boost and increase the efficiency of development programmes, and thereby reduce the dependence on aid and lay the groundwork for a viable Palestinian State.
- Security, good governance and economic development are interlinked, and the positive experience gained in Nablus and the Jenin region should be expanded to other cities and areas in line with PA priorities. The AHLC welcomed the acceleration of United States and European Union efforts to develop Palestinian security and police forces, respectively.
- The AHLC members expressed their satisfaction with the Bethlehem Investment Conference and congratulated the PA on a successful initiative and Israel for its cooperation. This initiative should be built upon.
- Despite uneven disbursements from donors, the Palestinian Government has been able to pay salaries without interruption and reimburse the bulk of its arrears. There is, however, still a budget gap of \$320 million in 2008.
- The AHLC expressed its support for the ongoing bilateral negotiations undertaken in the context of the process launched at Annapolis, and expressed deep concern over the lack of progress in fulfilling the Quartet road map obligations, with many donors expressing concerns regarding settlement expansion. Also, the AHLC encouraged actions to support efforts to build peace, freedom and security for the Palestinians and the Israelis.

In order to support the ongoing negotiations on final status and achieve results on the ground, AHLC members stressed the following:

- The three-party cooperation between the PA, Israel and international donors must be further strengthened. To this end, the AHLC is reviving the Joint Liaison Committee, comprising the PA, Israel and major donors. The revival of three-party cooperation at the local level

should help rebuild confidence and trust between the parties, and secure effective progress on the overall aims defined by the AHLC.

- In order for external aid to have significant economic impact and facilitate economic growth, restrictions of movement and access in the Palestinian territory must be substantially relaxed, taking genuine Israeli security concerns into account. There is a need to accelerate this work.
- Palestinian security sector reform as well as institutional and capacity-building must continue.
- International donors approved and gave their support to the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan at the Paris Donors' Conference in December 2007. The AHLC urges donors that have not yet converted their budget support pledges into disbursements to transfer funds immediately. In addition, the donors are asked to cover the undefined budgetary gap for 2008. The AHLC asks donors to reallocate unutilized funds for project implementation to budgetary support for 2008.

The Chair called for a new meeting in the first part of 2009. Donors were asked to provide the PA with indicative figures on their support in 2009. The AHLC underlined the need for equitable burden-sharing by donors in this effort, and encouraged the donors to consider aligning funding cycles with the PA's national budget cycle. This will increase predictability and will enable the PA to improve its financial planning. The AHLC encourages donors to use the existing aid delivery mechanisms to coordinate their efforts, such as the World Bank Trust Fund or the PEGASE.

**Excerpts from the progress report on the implementation of the recommendations
of the Quartet
25 September 2008**

On 25 September 2008, the Quartet issued a report on the progress made in 10 areas laid down in its Berlin statement, including the cessation of settlement expansion and significant improvements in access and movement. Excerpts from the executive summary of that report are reproduced below.

The humanitarian crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory continues (see *The Gaza Strip: A Humanitarian Implosion*). Its population of 3.7 million people, 52 per cent of whom are children, struggle for their basic needs. Palestinian women, children and men are increasingly dependent on aid as their livelihoods are destroyed. The only sustainable solution to the crisis is a comprehensive peace settlement between Israelis and Palestinians based on international law. As humanitarian and development and human rights organizations, we believe that immediate steps can and must be taken to relieve suffering, as well as to ensure that a peace agreement is eventually reached.

As this report demonstrates, the lack of progress on key goals calls the Quartet's current approach into question. In its Berlin statement, the Quartet expressed the "urgent need for more visible progress on the ground in order to build confidence and support progress in the negotiations launched in Annapolis". This "visible progress" has not materialized. Analysis of the reality on the ground demonstrates that in 5 of the 10 areas in which the Quartet has laid down clear

recommendations, there has been either no progress or an actual deterioration in the situation. Clearly, a new approach is warranted. Moreover, the Quartet's capacity to encourage positive developments has been weakest in the three areas where progress is now most urgent: settlements, lifting obstacles to movement and access and bringing an end to the blockade of Gaza.

The Middle East Quartet, comprising the Russian Federation, the United States, the European Union and the United Nations, identified 2008 as a crucial year for the Middle East peace process and the period in which to realize agreements made at the Annapolis Conference on 27 November 2007. Quartet members committed to assisting parties to meet their specific obligations and to promoting a just, comprehensive and lasting settlement of the conflict in the Middle East. The deadline for an agreement by the end of 2008 is now looming and seems unlikely to be met. Indeed, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas stated: "So far there has been no achievement in the negotiations... I cannot say that there has been an agreement on a single issue. The gap between the sides is very large."

The Quartet's meeting in New York comes at a critical moment for the Quartet to demonstrate that it can play an effective role in bringing peace to the Middle East.

This report outlines the Quartet's own recommendations across six areas that it considered to be of vital importance for the broader peace process. It assesses the impact that limited progress has had on the daily lives of Palestinians and Israelis. The Quartet's Berlin statement provides a clear picture of the progress needed and, as the most recent declaration of the Quartet, will be used as a basis for this report. The statement, like this report, focuses on settlements, access and movement, Gaza, Palestinian security sector reform, donor pledges and the revival of private sector activity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

The Quartet has rightly emphasized that progress in key areas is the only way to prevent further deterioration in the everyday lives of Palestinians and Israelis and in the overall political process itself. The Quartet's meeting in New York provides an opportunity to regroup, recommit and decide on additional steps that can be taken to ensure that parties comply with their obligations under the road map and international law.

This report provides recommendations to Quartet members on how best to respond to ensure urgently needed progress. Unless there is a swift and dramatic improvement, it will be necessary to question what the future is for the Middle East Quartet.

Settlements: Despite efforts by Quartet members to signal strong opposition to continued settlement expansion in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, there has been a marked acceleration in construction and no serious attempts by the Israeli authorities to dismantle outposts. Settlements, outposts and the infrastructure that serves them, illegal in international law, devastate the Palestinian economy and the daily lives of ordinary Palestinians. While the Quartet can be commended for raising the issue of settlements and outposts, there has been a marked failure to hold the Israeli authorities to their obligations under the road map and international law. This highlights the urgent need to go beyond rhetoric and adopt concrete measures to ensure that Israeli authorities comply with their obligations under international law.

Access and Movement: The Quartet has failed in its efforts to secure the removal of checkpoints and other obstacles to access and movement for people and goods that would enable Palestinians to see a tangible improvement in their daily lives. There is no "new reality" in the West Bank: the economy continues to stagnate, and the blockade of Gaza continues. The failure of the Quartet in

this area will lead to further impoverishment and economic decline. It may also constitute a fatal threat to the broader peace process.

Gaza: Despite violations on both sides, the agreement on cessation of violence endures and there have been marked improvements in security for Israelis and Gazans alike. However, normal civilian life in Gaza has not resumed. The Quartet has been unable to end Gaza's isolation and facilitate adequate flows of humanitarian and commercial goods (consistent with the Agreement on Movement and Access).

There have been increased supplies of fuel to Gaza, but these supplies are not yet steady or sufficient. Despite their efforts, the Quartet has failed to prompt the immediate resumption of stalled United Nations and other donor projects. Overall, progress in Gaza falls far short of the Quartet's own stated recommendations. Despite its recognition of the urgency of the situation, the actions taken by the Quartet have been insufficient to kick-start meaningful changes on the ground.

Comprehensive Palestinian Security Sector Reform: The introduction of a European Union-trained Palestinian police force across the West Bank is reported to be beginning to deliver tangible and much-needed improvements in the stability of life across the West Bank. Nonetheless, concerns among Palestinian civilians about their personal security are said to remain. The focus on the rule of law for Palestinians, while welcome, has paid inadequate attention to human rights in the reform process.

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**Declaration by the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly
on the Middle East peace process
Dead Sea, 13 October 2008**

Following its extraordinary plenary session, the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly adopted a Declaration for the attention of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean Conference, to be held in Marseille, France, on 3 and 4 November 2008. The text of that declaration is reproduced below.

The Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA), meeting in extraordinary plenary session at the Dead Sea, in Jordan, on 12 and 13 October 2008, considers that the fact that the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean was attended by the most senior political authorities in the States concerned by, and involved in, the Middle East peace process demonstrates their shared goal of creating an area of peace, prosperity and mutual understanding; with that aim in view, our Assembly provides a unique forum for open and permanent dialogue between the elected representatives of the peoples on whom it is incumbent to establish peace in the region,

The EMPA unconditionally endorses action to mobilize the international community's political and economic support for the negotiation process launched at Annapolis and encourages all the States and international organizations bound by the commitments made at the Follow-up Conferences in Paris (17 December 2007), Bethlehem (24 May 2008) and Berlin (24 June 2008); and urges the donors' community to closely coordinate their actions and to persevere in their efforts and fulfil their pledges to support the strengthening of the institutional and budgetary

capacities of the Palestinian Authority (PA) with a view to supporting the creation of an independent and viable Palestinian State within the 1967 borders living side by side with the State of Israel in peace and security.

The EMPA recalls the reference documents to achieve this end: the relevant United Nations resolutions, the terms of reference and principles of the Madrid Conference, including “land for peace”, the road map, the agreements previously concluded by the parties and the Arab Peace Initiative,

The EMPA calls on the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean Conference of Foreign Ministers, whose members account for over 60 per cent of the promised contributions and, in many cases, play a mediating role, to continue to require strict compliance with the conditions on which the success of their (political, financial and material) commitment depends, by continuing to insist on respect for international law, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and international humanitarian law, and by systematically condemning any actions which imperil the security, dignity and physical integrity of the Israeli and Palestinian civilian population.

The EMPA:

1. Reiterates its total support for the current negotiations between Israel and the PA and stresses the need for them to be conducted in a limited time framework and in a climate of mutual trust, which can only be established by visible progress on the ground which has a direct impact on the living conditions of the civil populations; regrets, therefore, that the international financial support that has been mobilized has not yet produced an economic revival in the Palestinian territory because of the restrictions on access and movement which are still being imposed by the Israeli authorities and continue to jeopardize the prospects of Palestinian economic revival;
2. Welcomes the package of measures which the Quartet Representative has agreed with the Israeli and Palestinian parties, the purpose of which is to revitalize the Palestinian economy and prepare for the territories' future State status by means of development projects in pilot areas in the West Bank and Gaza; calls on the international community, however, to ensure that such projects are compatible with international law and do not prejudge the outcome of the final status negotiations;
3. Regrets that no progress report on the implementation of this package of measures is available; encourages the Representative's office, therefore, to make available information of this kind for the benefit of all donors along the lines of the progress reports produced by the World Bank and the European Commission; considers that concrete and visible progress is the best guarantee that the current high level of mobilization of the international community will be maintained; encourages the Parliaments of donor countries to assess the impact of the funds granted to development projects;
4. Pays tribute to the mediating role played by Egypt, which has made possible a truce in Gaza, albeit a fragile one, and urges the parties concerned to comply with and support the controlled reopening of all the crossing points to and from Gaza, both for humanitarian reasons and to allow the commercial flows which play a crucial role in economic reconstruction; calls for the work of the international humanitarian agencies to be facilitated and protected;
5. Encourages and promotes the role of regional actors to fulfil regional peace and prosperity. Within this context, initiatives like the Ankara Forum and the mediating role between Israel and

the PA undertaken by Turkey, a regional actor and a negotiating member of the European Union, will be welcomed;

6. Pays special tribute to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for its continuing hospitality to the Palestinian refugees;

7. Calls on the Quartet immediately to set up the monitoring mechanism and to take more effective action to reactivate the Agreement on Movement and Access, which it negotiated in 2005 and to which the parties subscribed, on the basis of the European Union's proposal to resume its supervision of the Rafah crossing under the aegis of the Border Assistance Mission in cooperation with the Egyptian authorities;

8. Continues to be very concerned by the continuing expansion of settlements, which is destroying trust between the partners, undermining the authority of the Palestinian negotiators and detracting from the credibility of the international community; draws attention to the fact that building settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, is illegal under international law and that settlement activities prejudice the outcome of final status negotiations and compromise the viability of an agreed two-State solution; calls on Israel to freeze all settlement activities, including natural growth, and to dismantle all settlements and outposts created since March 2001;

9. Encourages the parties to take further actions to demonstrate their goodwill with a view to strengthening the ongoing process of negotiations; welcomes the recent releases of Palestinian prisoners by the Israeli Government and urges it to continue along this path; welcomes the encouraging results obtained by the PA in its reform of the security sector, which greatly contribute to the restoration of the state of law in the areas it controls;

10. Reiterates its call for the release of all Palestinian former ministers, the Speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council, elected parliamentarians and mayors detained in Israel;

11. Reiterates its call for the release of the Israeli Corporal Gilad Shalit and demands that humanitarian organizations be given immediate access to ensure his well-being;

12. Recalls that no definitive resolution of the conflict will last unless it has popular support, and calls on both sides' political leaders and civil societies to step up their efforts to combat mutual distrust and prevent the idea that a lasting peace is possible between the neighbouring people from fading away; calls on the executive bodies of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean to help achieve this aim by setting up exchange programmes to bring young people together; supports human rights organizations and Israeli and Palestinian popular non-violent movements.

Excerpts from the 2008 Canada-European Union Summit statement
Quebec, 17 October 2008

On 17 October 2008 in Quebec, the leaders of Canada and the European Union issued a joint statement following their meeting, excerpts from which are reproduced below.

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We, the leaders of Canada and the European Union, meeting today in Quebec City, wish to enhance our strategic partnership and build our relationship for a better future. This Summit constitutes a fundamental opportunity to highlight our shared values and to strengthen the ties that bind us as we confront major global challenges. In response to the concerns of our citizens, we seek to undertake common initiatives and advance our objectives, particularly in three priority areas: our economic partnership, energy and the environment, and international peace and security.

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Peace and security

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Canada and the European Union remain committed to the Middle East peace process and stand ready to assist the parties in any way possible to reach a just, lasting and comprehensive peace. We support the Quartet's road map and the Annapolis process and call on the parties to fulfil their respective commitments. We condemn all acts of violence and terrorism. We remain strongly concerned by the continuation of Israeli settlement activities. We urge all parties to respect the commitments made at the Paris Donors' Conference in support of Palestinian reforms and the establishment of a future Palestinian State that is independent, sovereign, democratic and viable, coexisting in peace and security with the State of Israel.

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Cooperation in civilian and military crisis management is now a critical tool in our joint approach to global and regional issues. In an effort to strengthen our cooperation, we have approved a joint work programme dealing with crisis management, conflict prevention and training, including strengthened police cooperation in the field in Afghanistan, the Balkans and the Palestinian territories;

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