



Peace Process: American Diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli conflict since 1967 (Third Edition)
William B. Quandt

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Appendix J

*Letter from Secretary of State George P. Shultz to Swedish Foreign
Minister Sten Andersson,
December 3, 1988*

SECRET

Dear Sten:

I received through Ambassador Wachtmeister your message concerning the meeting in Stockholm next Tuesday. I greatly appreciate the constructive approach which you are taking toward this issue.

The attached papers constitute my reply to the question you raised in your message. I want to make three points in this regard:

- First, we will not engage in any effort to make this the start of a negotiation over language; in other words, we will not accept counter-drafts.
- Second, I am aware that the PLO may wish to add, following the statement that we have proposed, certain positions to which they feel committed and from which they would claim their basic statement is derived. We would have no objection to their doing so, provided those positions neither condition nor contradict their acceptance of our conditions.
- Third, nothing here may be taken to imply an acceptance or recognition by the United States of an independent Palestinian state.

You may share this letter with your visitor if you believe it would be useful.

Sincerely yours,
George P. Shultz

Note: Shultz's letter was accompanied by two attachments. One was the text of a statement that the PLO should make to meet the known American conditions. The copy provided here contains the PLO handwritten changes that were agreed on after Swedish mediation. Arafat signed the revised version, reproduced here, and gave it to Andersson with a note saying that it had his approval and that "we will work to have it issued officially after being presented to the Executive Committee."

The second attachment consisted of a statement that the United States would be prepared to make in response to the proposed PLO statement. The original of that statement is not available, but a translation from the Arabic, as noted by the PLO, is provided.

FINAL STATEMENT SIGNED BY YASIR ARAFAT

SECRET

As its contribution to the search for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, assuming the role of the Provisional Government of the State of Palestine wishes to issue the following official statement:

1. That it is prepared to negotiate with Israel within the framework of the International Conference a comprehensive peace settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict on the basis of U.N. resolutions 242 and 338.
2. That it undertakes to live in peace with Israel and other neighbours and to respect their right to exist in peace within secure and internationally recognized borders, as will the democratic Palestinian State which it seeks to establish in the Palestinian occupied territories since 1967.
3. That it condemns individual, group and State terrorism in all its forms, and will not resort to it.

Y. Arafat
7/12/88

PROPOSED AMERICAN STATEMENT

The P.L.O. today issued a statement in which it accepted U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 and 338 and recognized Israel's right to exist and renounced the use of force. As a result, the United States is prepared to begin substantive discussions with representatives of the P.L.O. The United States believes that the negotiations to reach a peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict must be based on resolutions 242 and 338 and calls on all parties to renew their efforts in the search for peace without delay. The United States recognizes that the representatives of the Palestinian people have the right to raise in negotiation all subjects of interest to them.

Questions to be answered by Secretary Shultz:*

Q. Does your statement mean that the Palestinians can put on the negotiating table their position on a Palestinian state?

A. Yes, the Palestinians, as far as we are concerned, have the right to pursue their desire to establish an independent state through negotiations. It is through the process of negotiation and direct exchange between the concerned parties that a lasting result can be achieved.

(After Swedish mediation, the U.S. agreed to another question and answer)

Q. Do you agree that negotiations should take place within the framework of an international conference?

A. The United States has long made its support for direct negotiations clear, but we remain prepared to consider any suggestion that may lead to direct negotiations toward a comprehensive peace. The initiative suggested by Secretary Shultz in the beginning of the year called for an international conference to begin direct negotiations. Any conference of this type must be properly organized so that it does not become an alternative to direct negotiations.

**The PLO notes indicate that Secretary Shultz was to provide these answers personally, but this was denied by the American side. In reality, it was the American ambassador to the UN who provided these clarifications.*

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