



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

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Appendix K

Statements by Yasir Arafat and George Shultz, December 14, 1988

STATEMENT BY YASIR ARAFAT, GENEVA

Let me highlight my views before you. Our desire for peace is a strategy and not an interim tactic. We are bent to peace come what may.

Our statehood provides salvation to the Palestinians and peace to both Palestinians and Israelis. Self-determination means survival for the Palestinians.

And our survival does not destroy the survival of the Israelis as their rulers claim.

Yesterday in my speech, I made a reference to the United Nations resolution 181 [on the partition of Palestine] as the basis for Palestinian independence. I also made a reference to our acceptance of resolutions 242 and 338 as the basis for negotiations with Israel within the framework of an international conference. These three resolutions were endorsed at our Palestinian National Council session in Algiers.

In my speech also yesterday it was clear that we mean our peoples' right to freedom and national independence according to resolution 181 and the right of all parties concerned in the Middle East conflict to exist in peace and security and, as I have mentioned, including the state of Palestine and Israel and other neighbors according to the resolution 242 and 338.

As for terrorism, I renounced it yesterday in no uncertain terms, and yet I repeat for the record that we totally and absolutely renounce all forms of terrorism, including individual, group and state terrorism. Between Geneva and Algiers, we have made our position crystal clear.

Any more talk such as the Palestinians should give more—you remember the slogan, the Palestinians should give it more—or it is not enough, or the Palestinians are engaging in propaganda games and public relations exercise will be damaging and counterproductive.

Enough is enough. Enough is enough. Enough is enough. All remaining matters should be discussed around the table and within the international conference.

Let it be absolutely clear that neither Arafat nor any [one else] for that matter can stop the intifada, the uprising. The intifada will come to an end only and only when practical and tangible steps have been taken toward the achievement of our national aims and the establishment of our independent Palestinian state.

In this context, I expect the EEC [European Economic Community] to play a more effective role in promoting peace in our region. They have political responsibility, they have moral responsibility and they can deal with it.

Finally, I declare before you and I ask you to kindly quote me on that: We want peace. We want peace. We are committed to peace. We want to live in our Palestinian state and let live.

STATEMENT BY GEORGE SHULTZ, WASHINGTON, D.C.

The Palestine Liberation Organization today issued a statement in which it accepted U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, recognized Israel's right to exist in peace and security and renounced terrorism. As a result, the United States is prepared for a substantive dialogue with PLO representatives.

I am designating our ambassador to Tunisia as the only authorized channel for that dialogue. The objective of the United States remains, as always, a comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

In that light, I view this development as one more step toward the beginning of direct negotiations between the parties, which alone can lead to such a peace.

Nothing here may be taken to imply an acceptance or recognition by the United States of an independent Palestinian state. The position of the United States is that the status of the West Bank and Gaza cannot be determined by unilateral acts of either side, but only through a process of negotiations. The United States does not recognize the declaration of an independent Palestinian state.

It is also important to emphasize that the United States' commitment to the security of Israel remains unflinching.

The text for both statements comes from the Washington Post, December 15, 1988.

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