

משרד

הר"ה
מנכ"ל משרד

מדינת ישראל

משרד הממשלה

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5155/7
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לשכת מנכ"ל משרד הר"ה

בן-אהרון - חוקי ארץ

תכנון - רשות מקומית - א.מ.ב. 88-97

14.1.1988 - 29.12.1988

מחלקה

מדינת ישראל

ארכיון המדינה



שם תיק: בן-אהרון - תכתובת ראשי מדינה
ארצות-הברית - שנים: 1987-1988

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תאריך הדפסה

מס' תיק מקורי

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MESSAGE FROM SECRETARY BAKER TO PRIME MINISTER SHAMIR

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

I have just returned from my trip to Moscow and Ottawa. I must tell you that there are extraordinary changes underway in Europe and in East-West relations, that present great opportunities for reducing tensions globally and bringing about new relationships among states. Bill Brown will be briefing you and your Government in detail on my discussions in Moscow on issues of particular importance to you.

First, I made it clear to the Soviets that they must restore diplomatic relations with you if they were serious about demonstrating their commitment to this process and that it was up to them to discuss this issue directly with you.

Second, I raised the issue of direct flights, although I did not make much headway. The Soviets feel pressure from the Arabs on the Jewish emigration issue, and are concerned that these emigrants will be resettled in the West Bank and Gaza. In this connection, they raised with me your statement of a "Big Israel" of some weeks ago. I pointed out that you had subsequently clarified your remarks and were now aware of the problem of resettlement in the territories.

Third, I did raise our concerns about the increase in anti-Semitism. I made it clear that glasnost should not give rise to intolerance and I urged the Soviets to take steps to counteract these trends. Specifically, I raised with the Soviets the importance of sending clear signals to Soviet Jewry that their future in the Soviet Union could be a secure one. Allowing a Hebrew cultural center to develop and permitting the instruction of Hebrew in the schools would be concrete demonstrations of this reality.

Mr. Prime Minister, I understand you have just gone through a difficult several weeks complicated by the tragic and despicable attack on Israelis in Egypt and by your own domestic politics. I have also been preoccupied with my meetings in Moscow. But I want to refocus our energies on moving the peace process forward. So, I would like to be in touch again early next week to resume actively our joint efforts to convene a trilateral meeting of ministers leading to the convening of an Israeli-Palestinian dialogue.

Sincerely,

James Baker



EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Tel Aviv, Israel

December 29, 1988

Dear Mr. Minister:

Secretary Shultz asked me to forward
the enclosed message to you.

With warm regards,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "William A. Brown".

William A. Brown
Ambassador

Enclosure: A/S

His Excellency
Yitzhak Shamir
Prime Minister of the
State of Israel
Jerusalem

MESSAGE FROM SECRETARY SHULTZ TO PRIME MINISTER SHAMIR

December 29, 1988

Dear Yitzhak:

Congratulations on forming a new government to lead Israel into the decade of the nineties. We have accomplished much in the past several years in strengthening and broadening our relationship, and I know that U.S. support for Israel will remain rock solid. We look forward to working with you in the coming years on issues of mutual concern, especially our shared goal of peace in the Middle East.

With warm personal regards,

Sincerely yours,

/s/

George P. Shultz



7-5/21

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Tel Aviv, Israel

December 22, 1988

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

President Reagan asked me to forward
the enclosed letter to you.

With warm personal regards,

Sincerely,

Thomas R. Pickering
Thomas R. Pickering
Ambassador

Enclosure: A/S

His Excellency
Yitzhak Shamir
Prime Minister of the State of Israel
Jerusalem

MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT REAGAN TO PRIME MINISTER SHAMIR

December 22, 1988

Dear Yitzhak:

In your letter of December 13, you expressed your deep concern about the repercussions of a United States decision to begin a dialogue with the PLO. I would like to add my personal assurances to those already made to you by Secretary Shultz, that nothing in this decision should be construed as weakening the United States' commitment to Israel's security, diminishing our fight against terrorism in all its forms, nor indicating our acceptance of an independent Palestinian state.

I am under no illusions about the PLO. Their words will have to be supported by actions, namely a continuing renunciation of terrorism everywhere and disassociation from those who perpetrate it. Nevertheless, I believe that our dialogue with the PLO potentially can encourage realism and pragmatism within the Palestinian leadership and thus contribute to a comprehensive resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, in which the long-term security of Israel can be achieved.

Building on our friendship and strengthening the close ties that bind us have been among my proudest achievements as President. I understand you are about to form a new government, for which I congratulate you. I am confident that through our joint efforts nothing can destroy the mutual trust, confidence and commitment we have built and that the next U.S. Administration will move quickly to work with your government toward our mutual goals.

Sincerely,

/s/

Ronald Reagan

ראש הממשלה
THE PRIME MINISTER

Jerusalem, December 15, 1988.
237-5

Dear George,

Ambassador Pickering has delivered your message to me concerning the U.S. dialogue with the PLO. We were bitterly disappointed by the news.

The new U.S. move will not, in our view, contribute to the promotion of the desired peace process. Rather, it may encourage the instigators of violence to feel that they have been rewarded and that violence, in fact, pays. I can only reflect sadly about Abu Abbas' cynical smile.

It is our conviction that the PLO has not fulfilled the U.S. conditions. The double talk, the ambiguity, the game that Arafat has been playing with the American conditions, should have cast grave doubt on his press conference statement. Even if he had uttered a rhetorical acceptance of the U.S. conditions, the U.S. government should have insisted on a testing period before starting the dialogue. Now it will be a different, and much more difficult task to retreat from the dialogue, once it began.

The PLO should be judged not by what it says to the western media. It should be judged, first and foremost, by its deeds. There is no doubt in my mind that, despite the commencement of the U.S.-PLO dialogue, other elements, in the PLO, including Arafat's own Fatah, are busy preparing for the next terrorist attack.

I should add sadly that both the letter and spirit of our relationship should have provided for consultation with us prior to your decisions, since this is a matter of vital importance to our national interests. I regret that this was not done.

The Honorable George P. Shultz
Secretary of State
Washington, D.C.

Our attitude towards the PLO is founded on a national consensus. The PLO is anathema for us because of its terrorist record and because its covenant, which calls for our destruction, has never been renounced. Moreover, the PLO minimal demands are an independent Palestinian state at the gates of Jerusalem, considered by all of us as a mortal danger. I need hardly reiterate the obvious: We shall never commit national suicide.

The Camp David Accords have set the procedure for negotiations. Israel, Egypt and the U.S. are committed to the formula, which provides for participation of Palestinian Arabs from the areas or other Palestinians as mutually agreed. We do not agree to PLO participation in any negotiations.

It saddens me to think that in the final weeks of this U.S. Administration, with which we have worked so closely and so well because of our mutual values and interests, this grave step has been taken.

It will not diminish our personal and national affection for President Reagan and yourself - but it is a wound, and it will not promote the process of peace. Needless to say, our determination to seek any serious opening to peace remains unaffected and we shall resume our efforts promptly after the inauguration of the new government. Of course this objective has become considerably more difficult to achieve because of your dialogue with the PLO.

With warm regards,

Yours sincerely,

Yitzhak Shamir

MESSAGE FROM SECRETARY SHULTZ TO PRIME MINISTER SHAMIR

December 15, 1988

Dear Yitzhak:

Today, in a press conference in Geneva, Yasser Arafat made a statement in which he unconditionally accepted UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, clearly recognized Israel's right to exist, and renounced terrorism. I have studied the text of Arafat's remarks carefully, and have concluded that this satisfies longstanding American conditions for opening a substantive dialogue. We therefore plan to act as we have often said we would, most recently in the President's statement of December 8, by entering into a substantive dialogue with the PLO. I will be issuing a public statement to this effect, shortly after finalizing this letter. The initial U.S. contact with the PLO will be carried out by the American Ambassador in Tunis.

I know how sensitive an issue this is for you and the people of Israel. Our decision was not taken lightly. For thirteen years, every American Administration has remained committed to the agreement we made with the Israeli Government concerning contacts with the PLO. During this period, we insisted upon a change in the PLO's position, as represented in a clear and unambiguous statement on the critical issues of Israel's right to exist, on 242/338, and on terrorism. In the past few weeks, we maintained a firm stand on these conditions, refusing to be drawn into accepting less than what we have insisted upon since 1975. Today, such a statement was issued by Mr. Arafat.

The dialogue about to be launched is not an end in itself. It must focus on the core issue of negotiations to end the Arab-Israel conflict. We will also be watching closely the PLO's performance of the obligations it has undertaken as a result of its renunciation of terrorism.

We also intend to make clear to the PLO that nothing can upset or adversely affect our relationship with Israel. What motivates us to play an active role in the peace process is the desire to see a safe and strong Israel, living in peace with its neighbors. Nothing will shake the foundation of our relationship.

We will, of course, remain in closest contact, and will keep you fully informed of what transpires in our talk with the PLO. We enter this dialogue with our eyes open and our guard up. With warm regards.

Sincerely,

George P. Shultz

Jerusalem,

December 13, 1988.

217-5

Dear Ron,

This personal message will reach you towards the end of your term as President of the U.S. Looking back at the last eight years, I can say without any hesitation that, thanks to your own leadership and statesmanship and your appreciation of Israel's steadfast and devoted alliance with the U.S., the relationship between our two countries has flowered and reached unprecedented heights of mutual trust, confidence and commitment.

I am informed that your government is on the verge of a decision to establish contacts with the organization known as the PLO. This issue may turn out to be a most serious test of our mutual relationship and commitment and I appeal to you, before the final word is given, to take into consideration the full range of implications of such a step, and their impact on Israel, on the situation in the Middle East and on the peace process.

Since 1975, the U.S. has held to the position that it would not deal with the PLO unless it met certain conditions. The PLO may now convey to the U.S. the impression that it is meeting these conditions. They are eager to break through the consistent American opposition to a terrorist organization that has no credibility and whose history is full of deception and stained with the blood of thousands of innocent victims. I therefore submit, first of all, that the PLO must be judged by its actions, and by its statements to its Arab constituency, rather than by commitments of its leaders to Western ears. In fact, the PLO continues to engage in acts of terror against Israel to this day and is not capable of terminating them.

Apart from American conditions relating to the PLO, the U.S. government has a comprehensive policy and a vast range of commitments that have a direct bearing on this issue.

The U.S. is against international terror and the PLO is the single largest terror organization in the world today. Recognizing the PLO will inevitably be interpreted as an American recognition of terrorism as a legitimate means of achieving political objectives.

The U.S. has always espoused the position that dialogue is the only means of solving disputes. Legitimizing the PLO will deal a heavy blow to all those who opposed violence and believed in negotiations as a means of achieving solutions, not only in the Middle East, but throughout the entire world. I am convinced that it will precipitate a wave of violence in our area that will cause more bloodshed and loss of life.

In our region an American dialogue with the PLO will constitute a severe setback to the chances of peace through negotiations. It will also assist those who are endeavouring to separate the U.S. from Israel and to elicit American pressure on Israel.

Finally, to conduct negotiations with the PLO will inevitably signal the message that the U.S. is granting legitimacy to the idea of a Palestinian state in territories to the West of the Jordan River. This, too, is contrary to the declared and consistent U.S. policy against the establishment of such a state, and will undermine the validity of the Camp David Accords, to which both our governments are committed.

Over the last fifteen years, successive governments of Israel have consistently informed the U.S. that Israel will not recognize nor negotiate with the PLO under any circumstances.

This principle is enshrined in the basic guidelines of the outgoing government of national unity in Israel and will be repeated in the guidelines of the government which is in the process of formation. For us, the very idea of negotiating with the PLO is revolting in character and destructive in terms of political objectives which we are trying to achieve. Therefore, an American move in the direction of the PLO will be a most serious blow to us, to the friendship between our two nations, as well as to the peace which all of us so ardently wish to advance. It will be a parting of the ways between the U.S. and

Israel on an issue that is of vital, even existential importance to us, with possible tragic consequences with regard to the future of this region.

Dear Ron, I therefore very earnestly call on you to pause before taking such a fateful decision and to cause a dialogue and consultation to be launched immediately between our two governments, as behooves friends and allies. We must find ways together to contend with any move that may have such a far-reaching impact on our relations and on the situation in our region.

As you may know, I am committed to resuming the efforts toward a negotiation process together with Egypt, Jordan and representatives of the Palestinian Arabs. The chances of achieving such a breakthrough and preventing the delivery of the Palestinian Arabs into the ruthless mercy of the PLO are dependent on the extent to which we succeed to divest the PLO of any stature or role with regard to the status and future of the Palestinian Arab population.

We have worked closely and well together over the last eight years. It is a mark of your leadership that, in spite of occasional differences, U.S.-Israel relations have remained steadfast. This wise and vital element in your policy contributed immensely to stability, to the confidence and trust that the states in the region have in the United States and, hence, to creating an atmosphere conducive to dialogue and peace negotiations. I appeal to you not to endanger these historic achievements.

Yours sincerely,

Yitzhak Shamir

President Ronald Reagan
The White House
Washington DC



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**EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**
Tel Aviv, Israel

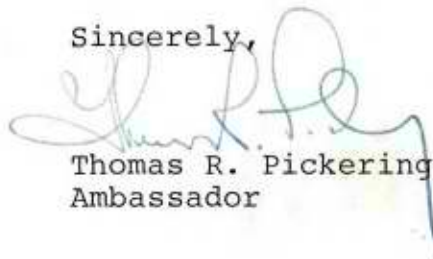
December 22, 1988

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With warm personal regards,

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Thomas R. Pickering
Ambassador

Enclosure: A/S

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ראש הממשלה
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With warm regards,

Yours sincerely,

Yitzhak Shamir

MESSAGE FROM SECRETARY SHULTZ TO PRIME MINISTER SHAMIR

December 15, 1988

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We also intend to make clear to the PLO that nothing can upset or adversely affect our relationship with Israel. What motivates us to play an active role in the peace process is the desire to see a safe and strong Israel, living in peace with its neighbors. Nothing will shake the foundation of our relationship.

We will, of course, remain in closest contact, and will keep you fully informed of what transpires in our talk with the PLO. We enter this dialogue with our eyes open and our guard up. With ward regards.

Sincerely,

George P. Shultz

ראש הממשלה
THE PRIME MINISTER

Jerusalem, October 4, 1988

Dear George,

I am grateful to you for sending me the speech you gave on 16 September. I understand it was characterized as a major statement of US policy toward the Arab-Israel conflict and I therefore read it very carefully.

Of course, there are some differences of view between the United States and Israel on the ways to advance the peace process and on the character of the settlement itself. Nevertheless, our friendship and alliance are so deep-rooted and wide-ranging - thanks to President Reagan's and your own dedication - that these differences have not harmed or impeded them. This close relationship and mutual confidence are also based on a mutual undertaking to maintain close consultation on the Arab-Israel issue, so as to minimize differences and to achieve maximum progress in those areas in which we agree.

I was therefore somewhat surprised and disappointed to read your repeated and novel references to "political rights" of the Palestinian Arabs in your speech. The reference to the legitimate rights of the Palestinians in the Camp David Accords was a result of very difficult and heated debate. Every word was weighed and its implications carefully considered by the negotiators. We were opposed to any reference to political or national rights, as well as to self-determination, because they denote, in one form or another, acceptance of a Palestinian state. The term "legitimate rights" therefore appears at Camp David in a specific context. It is connected

The Honorable
George P. Shultz
Secretary of State
Washington DC

with the resolution from the final status negotiations and, in accordance with the language of the Accords, this resolution "must also recognize the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and their just requirements".


Although you did express opposition to a Palestinian state in your speech, your support of political rights for the Palestinians can only be construed as a gradual shift of the United States position toward acceptance of statehood for the Palestinian Arabs. As a matter of fact, this particular reference in your speech has already been welcomed by the PLO. In addition, some statements by State Department officials have encouraged the PLO and leaders of the disturbances.

I have had occasion to caution our friends to refrain from statements that could encourage the leaders and inciters of violence in Judea, Samaria and Gaza. We are devoting immense effort to quelling the disturbances with minimum casualties and in a manner that will leave no doubt whatsoever that violence does not pay and will achieve nothing for the Palestinian Arabs. It would be a great pity if these efforts and our hope to move the peace process forward as soon as possible, would be undermined by a perceived shift in the United States position in the direction of PLO objectives.

I have no doubt whatsoever that you have the best intentions in mind and you are anxious to move matters in a positive direction. But I felt I must register my deep concern on an issue that is most sensitive and vitally important to us. Nevertheless, I am determined, following the elections, to pursue all possible avenues toward the rejuvenation of the peace process, in accordance with our policy.

Please accept my assurances of friendship and best wishes.

Sincerely,


Yitzhak

Jerusalem, December 13, 1988.
217-5

Dear Ron,

This personal message will reach you towards the end of your term as President of the U.S. Looking back at the last eight years, I can say without any hesitation that, thanks to your own leadership and statesmanship and your appreciation of Israel's steadfast and devoted alliance with the U.S., the relationship between our two countries has flowered and reached unprecedented heights of mutual trust, confidence and commitment.

I am informed that your government is on the verge of a decision to establish contacts with the organization known as the PLO. This issue may turn out to be a most serious test of our mutual relationship and commitment and I appeal to you, before the final word is given, to take into consideration the full range of implications of such a step, and their impact on Israel, on the situation in the Middle East and on the peace process.

Since 1975, the U.S. has held to the position that it would not deal with the PLO unless it met certain conditions. The PLO may now convey to the U.S. the impression that it is meeting these conditions. They are eager to break through the consistent American opposition to a terrorist organization that has no credibility and whose history is full of deception and stained with the blood of thousands of innocent victims. I therefore submit, first of all, that the PLO must be judged by its actions, and by its statements to its Arab constituency, rather than by commitments of its leaders to Western ears. In fact, the PLO continues to engage in acts of terror against Israel to this day and is not capable of terminating them.

Apart from American conditions relating to the PLO, the U.S. government has a comprehensive policy and a vast range of commitments that have a direct bearing on this issue.

The U.S. is against international terror and the PLO is the single largest terror organization in the world today. Recognizing the PLO will inevitably be interpreted as an American recognition of terrorism as a legitimate means of achieving political objectives.

The U.S. has always espoused the position that dialogue is the only means of solving disputes. Legitimizing the PLO will deal a heavy blow to all those who opposed violence and believed in negotiations as a means of achieving solutions, not only in the Middle East, but throughout the entire world. I am convinced that it will precipitate a wave of violence in our area that will cause more bloodshed and loss of life.

In our region an American dialogue with the PLO will constitute a severe setback to the chances of peace through negotiations. It will also assist those who are endeavouring to separate the U.S. from Israel and to elicit American pressure on Israel.

Finally, to conduct negotiations with the PLO will inevitably signal the message that the U.S. is granting legitimacy to the idea of a Palestinian state in territories to the West of the Jordan River. This, too, is contrary to the declared and consistent U.S. policy against the establishment of such a state, and will undermine the validity of the Camp David Accords, to which both our governments are committed.

Over the last fifteen years, successive governments of Israel have consistently informed the U.S. that Israel will not recognize nor negotiate with the PLO under any circumstances.

This principle is enshrined in the basic guidelines of the outgoing government of national unity in Israel and will be repeated in the guidelines of the government which is in the process of formation. For us, the very idea of negotiating with the PLO is revolting in character and destructive in terms of political objectives which we are trying to achieve. Therefore, an American move in the direction of the PLO will be a most serious blow to us, to the friendship between our two nations, as well as to the peace which all of us so ardently wish to advance. It will be a parting of the ways between the U.S. and

Israel on an issue that is of vital, even existential importance to us, with possible tragic consequences with regard to the future of this region.

Dear Ron, I therefore very earnestly call on you to pause before taking such a fateful decision and to cause a dialogue and consultation to be launched immediately between our two governments, as behooves friends and allies. We must find ways together to contend with any move that may have such a far-reaching impact on our relations and on the situation in our region.

As you may know, I am committed to resuming the efforts toward a negotiation process together with Egypt, Jordan and representatives of the Palestinian Arabs. The chances of achieving such a breakthrough and preventing the delivery of the Palestinian Arabs into the ruthless mercy of the PLO are dependent on the extent to which we succeed to divest the PLO of any stature or role with regard to the status and future of the Palestinian Arab population.

We have worked closely and well together over the last eight years. It is a mark of your leadership that, in spite of occasional differences, U.S.-Israel relations have remained steadfast. This wise and vital element in your policy contributed immensely to stability, to the confidence and trust that the states in the region have in the United States and, hence, to creating an atmosphere conducive to dialogue and peace negotiations. I appeal to you not to endanger these historic achievements.

Yours sincerely,

Yitzhak Shamir

President Ronald Reagan
The White House
Washington DC



EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Tel Aviv

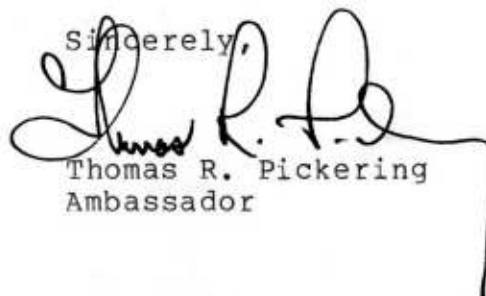
October 24, 1988

Excellency:

Secretary of State Shultz has asked that I deliver the enclosed message to you.

With warmest personal regards,

Sincerely,



Thomas R. Pickering
Ambassador

Enclosure: As stated

His Excellency
Yitzhak Shamir
Prime Minister of the
State of Israel
Jerusalem

MESSAGE TO PRIME MINISTER SHAMIR FROM SECRETARY SHULTZ

October 24, 1988

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

I appreciate your kind expression of condolence on the death of Ambassador Raphel and have conveyed it to his family. Ambassador Raphel was respected and liked by all who knew him. His loss in such tragic circumstances is a grievous one for his country, his family, and colleagues.

Sincerely yours,

George P. Shultz

MESSAGE FROM SECRETARY SHULTZ TO PRIME MINISTER SHAMIR

Dear Yitzhak:

Thank you for your letter of September 5. Let me reiterate my hope that you, Shulamit and the Israeli people will have a peaceful and prosperous New Year.

I take your point regarding the PLO. Let me assure you that our own position has not changed. We will not recognize or negotiate with the PLO until they first accept Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, recognize Israel's right to exist, and renounce terrorism and violence.

I was delighted to read that you intend, after your elections, to renew the attempt to start a process of active negotiations. I look forward to hearing more of your ideas in this regard as they develop. You should be aware that I will be delivering a speech on September 16 that will set forth my own views on the peace process. It will come as no surprise that I plan to make the point that the initiative we launched this year remains valid, with its underlying principles reflecting realities that have not changed.

Let me assure you that I fully understand your concern about the emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel, and I recognize that it springs from your deep dedication to the preservation and unity of the Jewish people. As I explained in my July letter to you on this subject, we must take the position that Soviet Jews should be free to choose where they will live. I agree with you that Soviet Jewry is at risk, and it is for this reason that we should work to avoid placing any new obstacles in the path of those who wish to emigrate.

Yitzhak, we are both committed to keeping the peace process alive. I thought it would be important to try to do something toward that end in New York in the context of the United Nations General Assembly session. In that spirit, I mentioned to Ambassador Arad in New Orleans on August 18 that I envisioned a tripartite meeting in New York involving Israel, Egypt and the U.S. My hope is that

such a meeting will remind the world that Israel and Egypt have been at peace for nearly ten years and that negotiations are still the only way to resolve conflicts -- particularly in the Middle East. I sincerely hope my time together with Foreign Ministers Peres and Abdel Meguid will accomplish that purpose.

Again, please accept my best wishes for the New Year.

Sincerely yours,

George P. Shultz



EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Tel Aviv, Israel

September 15, 1988

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

Secretary Shultz has asked that I deliver
the enclosed message to you.

With highest regards,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Arthur H. Hughes", followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Arthur H. Hughes
Charge d'Affaires, a.i.

Enclosure: A/S

His Excellency
Yitzhak Shamir
Prime Minister of the
State of Israel
Jerusalem

MESSAGE FROM SECRETARY SHULTZ TO PRIME MINISTER SHAMIR

Dear Yitzhak:

Thank you for your letter of September 5. Let me reiterate my hope that you, Shulamit and the Israeli people will have a peaceful and prosperous New Year.

I take your point regarding the PLO. Let me assure you that our own position has not changed. We will not recognize or negotiate with the PLO until they first accept Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, recognize Israel's right to exist, and renounce terrorism and violence.

I was delighted to read that you intend, after your elections, to renew the attempt to start a process of active negotiations. I look forward to hearing more of your ideas in this regard as they develop. You should be aware that I will be delivering a speech on September 16 that will set forth my own views on the peace process. It will come as no surprise that I plan to make the point that the initiative we launched this year remains valid, with its underlying principles reflecting realities that have not changed.

Let me assure you that I fully understand your concern about the emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel, and I recognize that it springs from your deep dedication to the preservation and unity of the Jewish people. As I explained in my July letter to you on this subject, we must take the position that Soviet Jews should be free to choose where they will live. I agree with you that Soviet Jewry is at risk, and it is for this reason that we should work to avoid placing any new obstacles in the path of those who wish to emigrate.

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Again, please accept my best wishes for the New Year.

Sincerely yours,

George P. Shultz



EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Tel Aviv, Israel

September 9, 1988

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

President Reagan has asked me to forward the
enclosed message to you.

With warm personal regards,

Sincerely,

Arthur H. Hughes
Charge d'Affaires, a.i.

Enclosure: A/S

His Excellency
Yitzhak Shamir
Prime Minister of the State
of Israel
Jerusalem

*Please also
accept my own
best greetings for
Nosh Hashanah.*

MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT REAGAN TO PRIME MINISTER SHAMIR

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

My countrymen join me in extending to you our warmest greetings on the occasion of Rosh Hashanah.

We can look back with satisfaction at the cooperation our two countries have enjoyed over the past year. I hope that the coming year will bring opportunities to resolve problems and to find a path to peace in the Middle East.

Please accept my best regards.

Sincerely,

Ronald Reagan

ראש הממשלה
THE PRIME MINISTER

Jerusalem, September 5, 1988.
905-4

Dear George,

I am writing you this letter on the eve of Rosh Hashana, which is a time of reflection, of soul-searching and of judgement. I look back on the six years of our work together with immense satisfaction, because of the mutual understanding, confidence and close cooperation that developed between us, in spite of occasional differences.

Dan Meridor has reported to me in detail on his conversations with you and with Charlie Hill. I value these exchanges of views and I thank you for sharing your thoughts with us. Of course, I am very interested in maintaining these, and similar, contacts in the future.

King Hussein's recent steps have not contributed to the improvement of the situation or towards its stabilization, to say the least. However, we cannot fault him for doing what he believes to be in his best interests. The important point is that he has not removed himself from the peace process. We remain hopeful and committed to peace negotiations with Jordan and the Palestinian Arabs.

King Hussein shares some of our views on the PLO and its potential danger to his Kingdom. He has no faith in them, or in their constantly fluctuating positions, nor in their attempts at projecting a moderate image. We cannot be expected to have any trust whatsoever in them, and American beckonings in their direction can only strengthen the PLO and hamper our attempts to develop communication with non-PLO Palestinian elements. We, therefore, look to Jordan to help form a Palestinian Arab delegation with which we can negotiate, together with a Jordanian delegation, when circumstances will be ripe for peace negotiations.

The Honorable
George P. Shultz
Secretary of State
Washington DC

We believe that the way to advance toward peace is by stressing constantly that direct negotiations are the inevitable and only way and to deny the terrorist organizations any role or standing in the peace process.

Peace must be the one and only objective of the peace talks. Linkage between territory and peace is unhelpful because it constitutes a precondition to peace negotiations.

In this context I note with regret statements by U.S. officials implying that Israel is interested in maintaining the status quo and criticizing our actions in quelling the Palestinian Arab riots. It is important to understand that any sign of weakness on our part in the face of violence will trigger a wave of terror throughout the country. You should know that the terrorist organizations are consistently planning and trying to mount terror attacks against us, luckily without success. We are doing what we believe is the best way to put an end to the riots while keeping the door open to negotiations with, and encouragement of, the moderate elements. These have always been our objectives based on our own understanding of the interests of peace. We will maintain our course, while hoping to enlist your understanding.

In this regard, I have to state that the Egyptian government is not playing a constructive role. The Egyptians are taking the easy way. They have not responded to our repeated calls to join us in resuming the talks, together with Jordan and a Palestinian delegation, on the establishment of the Autonomy, in accordance with the Camp David Accords. Instead, they prefer to support the PLO and the disturbances in the territories. Surely, they must recognize the futility of such a course.

It is my intention, after the elections, to renew the attempt at starting a process of negotiations with Egypt, Jordan and the Palestinian Arabs. I hope they will soon realize that the disturbances will get them nowhere and an international conference will not be convened. The only viable option left will be direct negotiations. In such a negotiation context, we will consider placing on the table some of the ideas I have discussed with you privately in the past.

I now have to mention another subject, which I have had occasion to raise with you several times. We are more and more concerned regarding the issue of Soviet Jewish immigration to Israel. The number of exit permits which the Soviets are issuing is still relatively small. Of these, the number of Soviet Jews who actually come to Israel is, painfully, even more insignificant. I fear that we are missing an historic opportunity to bring home to Israel a substantial portion of the Jewish people, who have been cut off from us and from their Jewish roots for so long. They have been exposed to vicious propaganda against Israel, which accounts, to a great extent, for the drop-out phenomenon.

The American position on this subject is especially distressing for us. As we see it, the problem is not just one of human rights. It is important to understand the exodus of Soviet Jewry in the context of Jewish history. The Jewish people is probably the only people on earth whose numbers towards the end of this century are smaller than they were at the beginning of it, because of deliberate attempts at extinguishing them physically or spiritually. We cannot sit by and watch this process continue without taking whatever measures we can to change the situation.

Israel was established as a state to save the Jewish people from spiritual extinction, in addition to the physical extermination to which they were exposed just prior to Israel's reestablishment.

The principle of freedom of choice must be exercised in Israel after the immigrant has had a chance to see it for himself.

Our responsibility is to bring the Jews of the Soviet Union home to their motherland. Therefore, it is inconceivable and painful to us that two of our best friends, the U.S. and the Netherlands should unintentionally be hampering the historic process of bringing the Soviet Jews to Israel. I want to assure you that those Jews who want to be saved, will be saved and given a home in Israel. Those who reject Israel's offer to give them a home and a return to the Jewish fold are victims of years of intensive Soviet propaganda about conditions of life in Israel.

Dear friend, as you and I move towards the completion of our present Administrations prior to the elections in both our countries, let us make a supreme effort together to lead the majority of the Soviet Jews, who are granted exit visas, back to Israel. I believe with all my heart that it would be in the best interests of the individual Jews and their families and also in the best interests of the Jewish people and the Jewish State.

I have learned from the media that President Reagan has expressed a wish to preside over a meeting of representatives of Israel and some of its Arab neighbours. I would gladly have responded most favourably to such an idea, which is precisely what we have been pressing for ever since you raised a similar proposal last October.

However, the direction which this idea seems to be taking may give grounds for a negative interpretation that the meeting is intended for election purposes.

The Jewish people in Israel and around the globe are about to celebrate Rosh Hashana, our New Year. We shall offer prayers of thanksgiving for what we have accomplished in the past and prayers for wisdom and strength to meet the challenges and opportunities of the year ahead.

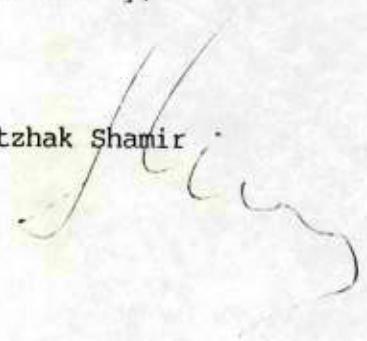
On a personal level, the past year has been meaningful and, I hope, beneficial for our people.

I appreciate our nation's close bonds with the United States and the friendship that has developed between you and me. I cherish that relationship and look forward to continuing it in the New Year.

Shulamit joins me in best wishes to Helena and you.

Sincerely,

Yitzhak Shamir



ראש הממשלה
THE PRIME MINISTER

Jerusalem, July 15, 1988.
518-4

Dear George,

I was informed that some questions were raised regarding our Government's decision relating to visas and routing of Soviet Jews. You and I have discussed this issue - to which we attach vital importance - several times, and I am sure our position and the basis for our decision are well known to you. For this reason I was somewhat surprised to hear that our decision was received with some criticism and I therefore thought it would be useful to recapitulate the developments.

On June 19, 1988, the Government of Israel adopted a decision to take the necessary steps to ensure that Israeli visas will be issued from here on to those Soviet Jews who intend to come to Israel. It was adopted by almost all the members of the Cabinet and supported by virtually all the parties in our Knesset.

The decision was taken against the background of a number of developments:

First, the rate of "dropouts" has reached the alarming figure of over 90%.

Second, in my conversation with the Soviet Foreign Minister, I raised the subject of direct flights to Israel. Mr. Shevardnadze assured me that there are no limitations regarding points of exit from the Soviet Union, and it is left to us to decide on Bucharest or other points.

Third, those who wish to emigrate to the United States (or other countries besides Israel) can apply for a visa to those countries as long as they meet the requirements of the Soviet authorities.

The Honorable George Shultz
Secretary of State
Washington DC

ראש הממשלה
THE PRIME-MINISTER

We have investigated this problem from every aspect and deliberated at great length before we reached our decision. We have concluded that the present situation is intolerable. There is no longer any justification for perpetuating the practice of abusing invitations from Israel and visas to Israel for the purpose of emigrating to another destination. Israel's Law of Return, which is the loftiest expression of our State's ideological foundation, was designed to facilitate the ingathering of the dispersed Jewish people to their ancient homeland. We cannot sit by and permit it to be distorted and violated.

The Soviet Government's agreement to permit Soviet Jews to be repatriated to Israel was one of the most momentous achievements in modern Jewish history. It enabled us to save hundreds of thousands of Jews, who had been cut off from their people, from their faith, their culture and their roots for more than sixty years. We need them in Israel, but much more importantly, we must ensure that this remnant of a large community that was wiped out by the Nazis, will retain its Jewish identity. This objective can be achieved only in Israel. In every other country the ravages of assimilation are taking away ever growing numbers of our people. We have come to the realization that Soviet Jews, who have had virtually no Jewish education, have a very small chance of retaining their Jewish identity, unless they come to Israel. In addition, we attach great importance to bringing Soviet Jewry to Israel so that they may contribute to our country's strength, its economy and its future.

Of course, we cannot - and we do not want to - force Jews to come to Israel or to remain in Israel. After coming to Israel they will enjoy the same rights and privileges as other residents, including the right to emigrate. The least we feel duty bound to do is to expose them to the reality of Israel and deliver them from the horrendous impact of the intense anti-Israel propaganda which was forced on them by the Soviet Union for many years.

I realize that the implementation of our decision would cause some problems for those who intended to use the documents we sent them for the purpose of emigrating to the U.S. and countries other than Israel. But you should know that this year alone we have sent requests for family reunions for close to one hundred thousand persons. Many of them intend to come and live in Israel. At the present rate of exit

ראש הממשלה
THE PRIME-MINISTER

dictated by the Soviet authorities, the great majority of them will have to wait several years before they can leave. We believe we have to exert every effort in order to help them fulfil their desire and bring them home as soon as possible. Those who do not want to come to Israel under any circumstances will have the choice of applying for a visa to another country, or coming to Israel and receiving the same rights as all Israelis, including the freedom to leave for another destination. But on no account will they qualify as stateless refugees after receiving Israeli visas and entering Israel.

My colleagues and I have made great efforts to explain and convince Jewish leaders in the U.S. and elsewhere of the justice of our steps. The recent session of the Jewish Agency Assembly, which was attended by leaders of all the world Jewish organizations, as well as the leadership of American Jewry, unanimously endorsed our decision.

I know how deeply attached you are to this issue. I am confident that you will understand the great importance and sensitivity we attach to it and the reasons for our decision.

Sincerely,

Yitzhak Shamir



ראש הממשלה
THE PRIME MINISTER

Jerusalem, July 3, 1988.
926-3

Dear George,

I was happy to receive your letter of 21 June, because I, too, felt that we have to continue the dialogue.

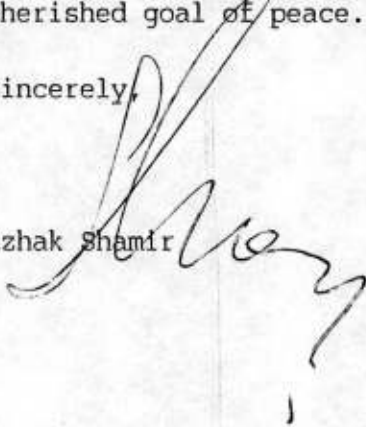
Your proposal to have Dan Meridor come over to Washington is therefore a very good one. I understand that he has already been in touch with Ambassador Pickering regarding the date of such a meeting.

We are devoting much thought to the ways of continuing the search for movement toward peace negotiations. I fully agree with you that peace process activity is necessary because it focuses the attention and efforts of the parties concerned to a constructive objective. I have tried to convey this message in my public statements and shall continue to probe every potential opening.

I am truly touched by your sincere and persistent efforts at making progress toward peace in our region, in spite of so many other pressing issues on your agenda. I hope we shall find an agreed approach that will bring us closer to the cherished goal of peace.

Sincerely,

Yitzhak Shamir



The Honorable George Shultz
Secretary of State
Washington DC
U S A

SECRET

TEXT OF LETTER TO PRIME MINISTER SHAMIR FROM SECRETARY SHULTZ

June 21, 1988

Dear Yitzhak:

As we agreed when we last met in Jerusalem June 5, I am sending these thoughts to you privately so that we may continue by this means our dialogue about the attainment of true peace and a better future for all the Middle East. Ours has been a discourse that, over the years, has been marked by depth and directness; this has allowed for intellectual and conceptual exploration.

It was in this spirit that the United States formulated its present initiative. In blending the best from agreements to which we both remain committed, with ideas designed to attract new partners to the search for peace, we have sought to strengthen Israel by securing its future through peace. I understand your views on elements of our initiative, and I respect the deep sincerity of feeling on your part. But, the process must continue and expand, and so I will persist in efforts to bring about negotiations as soon as possible.

I know you share this goal, even as we disagree over some of the means. It was in this spirit that I heard you speak about the need to create the political conditions by which Israel and the Palestinians can live together in a productive, peaceful and mutually respectful relationship. I sensed in this conversation the kind of creative thinking that is essential as we search together for ideas to move us closer to peace.

Yitzhak, it seems to me that, even as we struggle with the procedures and political realities of the peace making process, there is room -- indeed a need -- for us to engage on this other level of creative, conceptual thinking. This dialogue cannot substitute for an active process; in fact, peace process activity, even if it includes some difficult features, is in the interest of all parties. But this kind of private dialogue -- out of the public eye, free-wheeling, open -- might hold promise, as we grapple with bold concepts and visions of the future.

On reflection, it seems to me that instead of putting our substantive thoughts on paper at the outset, it might be better to start off with an informal conversation with Dan Meridor. Should you wish to send Dan to talk to Charlie Hill and to meet with me, we would do everything possible to arrange a mutually convenient time and place. I look forward to your reply, which I will of course protect completely. I welcome any opportunity to talk further with you.

Sincerely yours,

George P. Shultz

SECRET



EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Tel Aviv, Israel

June 21, 1988

Dear Minister Shamir:

It is my pleasure to provide you (enclosed)
the text of a letter which Secretary of State
George Shultz is sending to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Pickering".

Thomas R. Pickering
Ambassador

Enclosure: A/S

His Excellency
Yitzhak Shamir
Prime Minister of the State of Israel
Jerusalem

SECRET

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George P. Shultz

SECRET

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ראש הממשלה
THE PRIME MINISTER

Jerusalem, May 9, 1988

Dear George,

I received your communication regarding your visit with us in June. I understand that in spite of our travel plans, a meeting has been arranged on 5 June 1988.

As usual, we welcome you wholeheartedly and hope to resume the exchange of views between us in the spirit of friendship and trust that has characterized our relations.

On the eve of the next round of talks with the Soviet leaders, it is necessary to mention that the Soviet government has not changed its policies regarding Israel and the peace process in any tangible way. On the contrary, the Soviet Union continues to support an Arab consensus that would encompass Syria and the PLO, thus strengthening the more extreme elements in the Arab camp. I fear that the Soviets will try to secure some formal American recognition of a Soviet role in the Arab-Israel peace process and an American acceptance of the Soviet long-sought objective of an international conference.

It seems to me that the greater the Soviet profile in relation to the Arab-Israel peace process, the lesser the chances of achieving substantive, direct negotiations between the parties. Therefore, if we want to maintain and develop the chances of conducting direct negotiations between Israel and Jordan, the Soviets should not be given any role.

The Hon. George P. Shultz
Secretary of State
Washington, D.C.

We are highly appreciative of President Reagan's and your own resolve to press the Soviet government continuously on the subject of Soviet Jewry. However, the Soviets, beyond a willingness to listen and discuss the subject, are doing little or nothing to improve the situation.

They should be made to realize that the free world can no longer accept Soviet equivocation. They should give concrete expression to their declared openness by lifting restrictions on Jews who wish to leave the Soviet Union and enabling Soviet Jews to conduct their educational, cultural and religious lives as Jews. Such measures as permission to open a Kosher restaurant in Moscow are insignificant window-dressing. I might add that we hear from Soviet Jews that they are aware of the Soviet tactics and are becoming frustrated.

We were told that King Hussein has responded positively to your initiative of 4 March. However, what we have been hearing from Amman in recent weeks points to a tough, uncompromising position. King Hussein and his Prime Minister repeatedly declare that Jordan will not speak for the Palestinians, that only the PLO represents them, and that a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation will be in name only, because Jordan will not speak for the Palestinian part of the delegation. We also have reason to believe that King Hussein is firmly linked to Syria and the Syrian position. In addition, the King keeps proclaiming his support of the Palestinian Arab disturbances, in spite of the fact that he is afraid of their impact on his own situation and on the stability of his kingdom.

Meanwhile, we discern that the Palestinian Arabs here are distancing themselves from King Hussein. They are becoming disenchanted with the King, with the Arab states and even with the PLO. There are elements among them who are coming to the conclusion that they should find a way to deal with us.

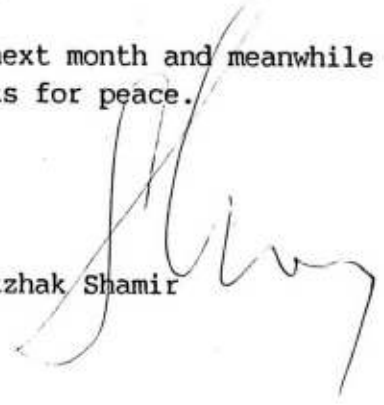
This turn of events will make negotiations with King Hussein even more difficult to achieve. Nevertheless, we do not despair and we remain ready to negotiate peace with Jordan. We are convinced there is no alternative to direct talks and sooner or later, King Hussein will reach the same conclusion.

You may recall that during my last visit to Washington, we discussed the problem of the proliferation of ground-to-ground missiles in our area, against the background of the Chinese-Saudi deal. The subject was discussed in detail by Ambassador Allen Holmes, the U.S. Chairman of the J.P.M.G. with Defense Minister Rabin. I believe the intelligence information that was exchanged led both sides to the conclusion that we are facing a new quantum jump in the arms race in our region. We are especially concerned by this trend in light of the unpredictable and sometimes ruthless nature of the totalitarian regimes in this part of the world, as is so horribly demonstrated in the Iran-Iraq war.

Even more threatening is the introduction and spread of chemical weapons. We find it very disturbing that the use of these weapons in the Gulf war seems to have been accepted by the civilized world. There is no outcry and a campaign to put a halt to this inhuman practice. I hope the U.S. will take the lead in mobilizing world opinion and initiating some action that would induce the governments involved to put an end to this dangerous phenomenon.

I look forward to meeting you next month and meanwhile wish you success in your deliberations and efforts for peace.

Yitzhak Shamir



ראש הממשלה
THE PRIME MINISTER

Jerusalem, May 8, 1988.

Dear Mr. Vice President,

I was moved by the warm and meaningful words of your letter of April 20 congratulating us on the 40th. anniversary of our independence.

Indeed, our people has traversed a long and very difficult road and we achieved our freedom at great cost. Therefore our people cherish it and defend it with so much determination and dedication.

Our nation must be strong in order to deter aggression and prevent war. We must be innovative and educated in order to build and develop without respite. And we work ceaselessly in order to bring our people the blessing of real peace.

Our special relationship with the United States, with the President, with you, Mr. Vice President, with the Administration, the Congress and the people is one of the most significant and precious achievements of these first forty years. Our ties to the leading nation of the free world gives us assurance, confidence and hope.

On this occasion I recall with much gratitude the support you have given us over the years, but especially in our struggle for the repatriation of the Jews of the Soviet Union, and the evacuation of the Ethiopian Jews. Your dedication to these causes and your efforts have been inscribed in the history of modern Israel.

With good wishes to Mrs. Bush and you,

Yours sincerely,

Yitzhak Shamir



The Honorable George Bush
Vice President
United States of America

Jerusalem, May 3, 1988.

Dear President Reagan,

On behalf of the Government and people of Israel I thank you wholeheartedly for the wonderful message you sent us for the celebration of the 40th. Anniversary of our independence. Your meaningful and warm words are a source of encouragement to us all.

The festivities were preceded by a Day of Remembrance for the 16,000 men who fell in the wars to establish the State, to secure it and to protect it. This is a staggering number for a small nation like ours. Therefore we cherish with such depth of feeling that which we have accomplished at such high cost.

I have been reflecting on the special blessing we were given to enjoy a close, warm and meaningful relationship with the United States, the leader of the free world from the time of President Truman, who extended recognition to our new State in 1948, to this very day.

It is symbolic that exactly 40 years after that significant act of recognition, we signed the Memorandum of Agreement between our two countries. It reflects the amount of cooperation achieved by us during these years, and I would certainly like to commend you and Secretary Shultz, whose special contribution to this process is highly appreciated, for your efforts.

The MOA in a way summarized and crowns these efforts, and as I said during the signing ceremony in Jerusalem, by concluding it we gave special expression to our unique partnership in common values and interests, and in the desire for peace.

President Ronald Reagan
The White House
Washington DC U S A

I read with interest the White House statement on the day of signing in Washington: I would like to state unequivocally that, as you know, there is no question regarding our commitment to peace. We all agree on the importance of peace as a strategic pillar. I also trust that there is no doubt in your mind as to where the real responsibility lies regarding the problem of making progress in the process of peace. It is the continued reluctance of most of our Arab neighbors to come to grips with the fact that Israel is here to stay.


We shall continue our pursuit of peace and security. I also believe that free world interests and the common values and interests of both our countries, unfortunately far from being shared by most of our neighbors - require us to continue our cooperation on its merits, while never abandoning the noble search for peace.

Mr. President, you have earned our people's eternal gratitude for your understanding, your steadfast support and your leadership of the free world, which is so important to us.

We wish you and Mrs. Reagan good health and strength in the years ahead.

Yours sincerely,

Yitzhak Shamir





EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Tel Aviv

April 19, 1988

Excellency:

The President of the United States of America has asked me to deliver to you the enclosed message on the occasion of Israel's fortieth anniversary.

I extend my personal congratulations and best wishes as well on Israel's fortieth anniversary.

With warm regards,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Thomas R. Pickering".

Thomas R. Pickering
Ambassador

His Excellency
Yitzhak Shamir
Prime Minister of the
State of Israel

TEXT OF MESSAGE TO PRIME MINISTER SHAMIR FROM PRESIDENT
REAGAN April 16, 1988

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

On May 14, 1948, eleven minutes after the proclamation of the State of Israel, President Truman was the first world leader to recognize Israel and welcome Israel into the family of nations. It is my wish to be the first to congratulate you on the fortieth anniversary of Israeli independence.

I have admired for four decades the great courage of the Israeli people as they have built a nation in the face of enormous challenges. The Israeli dream to live in peace and harmony with all countries has yet to be realized.

It is my fervent prayer that the people of Israel should soon enjoy the blessings of the peace they richly deserve.

Sincerely,

/S/ Ronald Reagan

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I have been reflecting on the special blessing we were given to enjoy a close, warm and meaningful relationship with the United States, the leader of the free world from the time of President Truman, who extended recognition to our new State in 1948, to this very day.

It is symbolic that exactly 40 years after that significant act of recognition, we signed the Memorandum of Agreement between our two countries. It reflects the amount of cooperation achieved by us during these years, and I would certainly like to commend you and Secretary Shultz, whose special contribution to this process is highly appreciated, for your efforts.

The MOA in a way summarized and crowns these efforts, and as I said during the signing ceremony in Jerusalem, by concluding it we gave special expression to our unique partnership in common values and interests, and in the desire for peace.

President Ronald Reagan
The White House
Washington DC U S A

I read with interest the White House statement on the day of signing in Washington: I would like to state unequivocally that, as you know, there is no question regarding our commitment to peace. We all agree on the importance of peace as a strategic pillar. I also trust that there is no doubt in your mind as to where the real responsibility lies regarding the problem of making progress in the process of peace. It is the continued reluctance of most of our Arab neighbors to come to grips with the fact that Israel is here to stay.

We shall continue our pursuit of peace and security. I also believe that free world interests and the common values and interests of both our countries, unfortunately far from being shared by most of our neighbors - require us to continue our cooperation on its merits, while never abandoning the noble search for peace.

Mr. President, you have earned our people's eternal gratitude for your understanding, your steadfast support and your leadership of the free world, which is so important to us.

We wish you and Mrs. Reagan good health and strength in the years ahead.

Yours sincerely,

Yitzhak Shamir

PERSONAL

Jerusalem, 3-APR-1987

Dear George,

I would like to share with you some of my thoughts concerning the peace process, having closely followed the current contacts with the governments of Egypt and Jordan in this regard.

Reviewing the attempts over the years to move the Middle East peace process forward, I was struck by the fact that, whenever the U.S. tried to act in concert with other powers, such as the USSR, or with international fora, such as the U.N., the results were mostly negative, both to Israeli and American interests and to the chances of peace. On the other hand, whenever the U.S. brought its influence to bear on the side of direct, bilateral contacts, the results were positive.

Reintroducing the Soviet Union in an active and influential role in our region and agreeing to its participation in an international peace conference will not serve the cause of peace. This has nothing to do with our own readiness to have diplomatic relations with the Soviets and a decent dialogue with them like with all other nations, and of course with one more important urge - to free our brethren in the Soviet Union and have them come to their homeland.

An international conference will probably have a dynamism of its own, which would unite the Arab states around the extreme posture championed by the radicals and supported by the USSR. The chances that such a conference will produce peace are highly questionable. Meanwhile, it will place Israel in a corner, facing an array of states that will support demands that Israel cannot entertain. In fact, the participants arraigned against us would perform the double role of accuser and judge, since I sincerely doubt the chances that less than an active role of the plenary can or may be achieved.

Secretary of State
George Shultz
Washington D.C.

A conference will inevitably create friction between Israel and the U.S., which we have successfully avoided for a great number of years. It will become a lever for the granting of legitimacy to the PLO terrorists and for their participation in the conference. A failure of the conference will take us back a few steps and increase frustration and confrontational tendencies among Arab states. The stability on our borderline with Jordan, sustained during almost seventeen years - may collapse with the failure of the conference, and damage may also be inflicted on our relations with Egypt. Let us remember: We succeeded, with great efforts by the U.S., Egypt and Israel to create an island of stability and sanity in our area, the cornerstone of which is the Peace Treaty with Egypt. Great caution is required to maintain this great historic achievement and nurture it. Besides these considerations, the international conference issue will cause internal feuds in our nation and probably through the dissolving of the National Unity Government, may also severely damage the process of economic recovery, to which you so devotedly contributed. All of that - without achieving the august goal of peace.

We are told that Jordan needs the protective umbrella of a conference to enable it to negotiate with Israel. Any sign that Jordan is demanding or accepting anything less than the extreme Arab positions, will inevitably bring upon it criticism and attacks by the Arab rejectionists, irrespective of whether it takes place in direct negotiations or in the bilateral talks under the so-called international umbrella. That umbrella will not be capable of providing King Hussein with any protection against these attacks, unless he takes the decision to confront it and stay the course, together with us, until a peace agreement is achieved.

On the other hand, if the plenary becomes a player in the conference, which goes beyond the "umbrella" idea, the conference will take the undesirable shape that we can by no means accept.

At the present stage, Jordan has a close relationship with Syria, and attaches much importance to it. It is highly improbable that Jordan will antagonize Syria by adopting a position on the international conference that differs from that of Syria. The Syrian position on this issue is even more extreme than that of the Soviet Union. It makes no secret of its demand that the conference should deal with substance and impose a solution on Israel.

King Hussein is surely aware of this probable scenario - at least as well as we are. While I do respect King Hussein and wish him well, I am sure that you will agree with me regarding the position I must take on it. We can only conclude that Jordan may be depending on the participants in the international conference to relieve her from the risk of compromise and to impose on Israel solutions that would meet Jordan's - and the other Arabs' - demands.

I am not surprised by the European support to the idea of the conference; the Europeans reacted reservedly to the Camp David accords, because they were attained without their participation, and since they have that mysterious fear of American dominance in the process, some of them do not mind granting the Arabs an "achievement" at the cost of the U.S. and Israel.

I am, therefore, convinced that the international conference idea - even as a transition stage to direct talks, and because there are virtually no chances for this being the real case - is dangerous to our interests. I call on you to set it aside and join us in the search for more promising and practical avenues toward our common objectives.

I suggest that the U.S. take the initiative and propose holding talks between Israel and Jordan, with the participation of Egypt and the U.S. The talks can be termed preparatory, so as not to provoke antagonism to them. They can be pursued in various avenues, both bilateral and in a larger group, and can be conducted both openly and confidentially. We intend to begin right away with negotiations on substance, taking the autonomy proposal as a basis for discussion.

The question of Palestinian Arab representation will be addressed at a later stage, but there is no doubt that there will have to be such representation by responsible Palestinian Arabs, because their cooperation is essential. The talks can be held on a ministerial level, but may be supported by other levels. We would also welcome any regional cooperation, at the Red Sea area, with Egypt and Jordan, taking - if needed - into consideration Jordan's sensitivities to overt activities.

A positive response from Jordan would demonstrate that they are serious and willing to take the responsibility for such a course. It is the only one that contains some promise of success. It can be attempted without delay and on Israel's part, it will enjoy the support of all our parties, unlike the proposal of an international conference. I urge you to look seriously into these ideas, and we may further consult on them.

I hope this letter finds you and Mrs. Shultz in the best of health and spirit, and I wish you a successful visit in Moscow.

Sincerely,

Yitzhak Shamir

Jerusalem, April 1, 1988.

Dear Mr. President,

I have received your letter of 30 March, 1988 with regard to the deployment of a missile system in Saudi Arabia, and I appreciate your sharing your concern and thoughts on this important issue with me.

Saudi Arabia has undoubtedly taken a grave step in two respects. The fact of the acquisition of the missile system is a quantum jump toward non-conventional weapons, which was bound to add to the tension in our region. In addition, it has chosen to begin the construction of the missile sites at a time when efforts are being made to reduce tension and violence and move towards stability and peace in our region. I might add that keeping the information on the acquisition of the missiles from its closest friend and ally casts some doubts with regard to Saudi Arabia's intentions and assurances.

We have already shared our grave concern over these developments with Secretary Shultz in the course of my recent visit to Washington. I want to assure you that we have no interest in raising tensions by statements or actions.

I hope that your efforts and intercession with China and with the Saudi government will produce positive results and mitigate our concern.

President Mubarak has also sent me a message on this subject. I have responded that Israel would like very much to improve its relations with the Saudi Kingdom, and I suggested that he might play a useful role in removing misunderstandings between us and the Saudi government.

President Ronald Reagan
The White House
Washington DC

I concur without reservation with your conclusion that peace agreements between Israel and each of its neighbours should be given top priority. At the same time, we cannot overlook the unfortunate reality that all the states in the Middle East, including those which are at peace with each other, are constantly acquiring sophisticated military equipment and raising their military profiles. This derives from the types of regime and the chronic tendency toward violence, fanaticism and terror in the countries of this region.

We have always welcomed, and will continue to welcome, the American role in promoting peace negotiations between us and the Arab states. We recognize that only the U.S. can fulfil a useful role in this sphere because of its credibility and friendly relations with both Israel and most Arab states. We are doing our best to cooperate with Secretary Shultz, whose friendship with Israel and understanding of our concerns have been unparalleled.

Sincerely,

Yitzhak Shamir

SECRET

(Text of letter to Prime Minister Shamir from President
Reagan March 30, 1988)

(Signed original will be forwarded)

I am writing to you about a matter of very grave concern to me and, I know, to you and others in the region. I refer to the missile system recently acquired by Saudi Arabia and to the controversy that has ensued. I raise this matter with you within the context of our close partnership, and as a friend who shares your fervent hope for peace in the region.

We have been in close touch with the Saudis and with the Chinese on this subject. King Fahd and his government can have no doubt that we take the situation very seriously. In response to our representations, they have assured me that they do not plan to acquire nuclear or chemical warheads for these weapons. I accept these assurances. For its part, the Chinese Government has told us that it will not export nuclear weapons to any government.

I know that George Shultz has kept you informed of developments, and I was therefore deeply disturbed to learn of the public statements made by a member of your staff concerning the possibility of unilateral Israeli action. Such remarks can only heighten tensions further and complicate the task of encouraging peace in the region. We are prepared to continue our close exchanges on these matters, but such sensitive issues must be treated with great discretion.

President Mubarak has written to me to express his fears that precipitate action could have extremely serious repercussions in the region, and I understand that he has also written to you. I agree that now is a time for calm reflection, and that intemperate acts and remarks by any party could have serious consequences for the entire region, including Israel. I therefore trust that Israel will act and speak with restraint in this matter.

The proliferation of sophisticated weapons in the Middle East reinforces my conviction that the future security and well-being of all nations of the region are best assured through a comprehensive peace settlement. That is why I have asked George Shultz to continue to pursue our efforts to find a basis for direct negotiations, of the kind that was discussed with you during your recent visit to Washington. I assure you that the United States will stand by Israel during negotiations and not allow outside parties to impose solutions.

I hope to hear from you soon on this matter. With best wishes,

Sincerely, Ronald Reagan

SECRET

משרד החוץ - מחלקת הקשר

סופס מברק צפון


אל : השגריר ווש'

דף _____ מתוך _____ דפים
סיווג בטחוני : בלח"ס
דחיפות : מידי
לשימוש } תאריך וזמן רישום: _____
מח' הקשר } מס. מברק : _____

רצ"ב מכתבי תודה מרה"מ לנשיא ולמזכיר. אנא העבירו אותם מיד לתעודתם. המקור -
בדיפ'.

(קשר - אנא הרצ"ב)


אריה מקל, לשכת רה"מ

השולח : אריה מקל, לשכת רה"מ אישור מנהל מחלקה : 
אישור לשכת המנכ"ל : 27.3.88 (לציין תאריך וזמן העברה לקשר)
תאריך וזמן חיבור (ימולא ע"י השולח) _____

לשימוש הקשר בלבד

התפוצה :

הנושא :

ראש הממשלה
THE PRIME MINISTER

Jerusalem, March 25, 1988

Dear George,

Please accept my thanks for your hospitality, your generosity of time and spirit, and your deep and considerate understanding during our recent trip to Washington. Your warm friendship is a great personal treasure which I shall always cherish.

I am looking forward to continuing our work for the goals we share - peace and security in our region - and I hope our efforts will be crowned with success. Shulamit joins me in conveying warmest wishes to Helena and you and to your family.

Sincerely,


Yitzhak

The Honorable George P. Shultz
Secretary of State
Washington DC
U S A

ראש הממשלה
THE PRIME MINISTER

Jerusalem, March 25, 1988

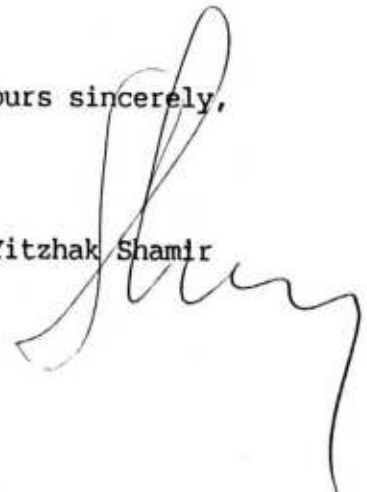
Dear Mr. President,

Please accept my heartfelt thanks for your gracious hospitality during our recent visit to the White House. The warm and generous welcome you afforded us is not only a personal compliment but a measure of your friendship for the Jewish people and the State of Israel. It is a friendship reciprocated by the love and admiration of all the people of Israel.

My wife joins me in wishing you and Mrs. Reagan continued success in a glorious presidential tenure, good health and fortune for many years to come.

Yours sincerely,

Yitzhak Shamir



President Ronald Reagan
The White House
Washington, DC

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON

March 4, 1988

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

I set forth below the statement of understandings which I am convinced is necessary to achieve the prompt opening of negotiations on a comprehensive peace. This statement of understandings emerges from discussions held with you and other regional leaders. I look forward to the letter of reply of the Government of Israel in confirmation of this statement.

The agreed objective is a comprehensive peace providing for the security of all the States in the region and for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

Negotiations will start on an early date certain between Israel and each of its neighbors which is willing to do so. These negotiations could begin by May 1, 1988. Each of these negotiations will be based on United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, in all their parts. The parties to each bilateral negotiation will determine the procedure and agenda of their negotiation. All participants in the negotiations must state their willingness to negotiate with one another.

As concerns negotiations between the Israeli delegation and the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, negotiations will begin on arrangements for a transitional period, with the objective of completing them within six months. Seven months after transitional negotiations begin, final status negotiations will begin, with the objective of completing them within one year. These negotiations will be based on all the provisions and principles of United Nations Security Council Resolution 242. Final status talks will start before the transitional period begins. The transitional period will begin three months after the conclusion of the transitional agreement and will last for three years. The United States will participate in both negotiations and will promote their rapid conclusion. In particular, the United States will submit a draft agreement for the parties' consideration at the outset of the negotiations on transitional arrangements.

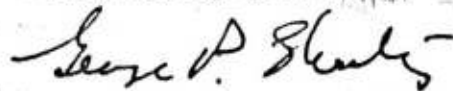
His Excellency
Yitzhak Shamir,
Prime Minister of Israel.

Two weeks before the opening of negotiations, an international conference will be held. The Secretary General of the United Nations will be asked to issue invitations to the parties involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict and the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. All participants in the conference must accept United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, and renounce violence and terrorism. The parties to each bilateral negotiation may refer reports on the status of their negotiations to the conference, in a manner to be agreed. The conference will not be able to impose solutions or veto agreements reached.

Palestinian representation will be within the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. The Palestinian issue will be addressed in the negotiations between the Jordanian-Palestinian and Israeli delegations. Negotiations between the Israeli delegation and the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation will proceed independently of any other negotiations.

This statement of understandings is an integral whole. The United States understands that your acceptance is dependent on the implementation of each element in good faith.

Sincerely yours,



George P. Shultz

Message to Prime Minister Shamir from Secretary of State
Shultz February 9, 1988

Dear Yitzhak:

I have received your letter of February 7, presenting your thoughts following your visit to Gaza.

It is indeed distressing to see these fine young people of the Israeli Defense Forces confronted by this most difficult and distasteful task of restoring calm to the territories. As you point out, they are trained for a very different kind of duty -- defending Israel from external attack -- rather than for the suppression of rioting and unruly crowds. I know they are doing their best in these harsh circumstances and that the stories of undue force are often exaggerated or taken out of context.

Like you, I am also distressed by the situation of the Palestinian refugees, who for the large part live under terrible conditions. I applaud your humanitarian instinct to do something to improve their housing in particular, and will be glad to hear your plans in this regard when you visit Washington next month. I should tell you, however, that I am convinced that neither the political support nor the financial backing necessary to deal with this problem will be forthcoming in the absence of meaningful steps toward a political settlement. In that context, of course, the situation of the refugees will have to be accorded a high priority.

I appreciate your encouragement and support for the peace process initiative we have undertaken in recent weeks. It is gratifying, and an indication of the urgency of the situation, that King Hussein and President Mubarak as well as yourself have encouraged us to proceed.

I have taken note of your specific comments regarding our approach. I understand your point about the timing of the respective negotiations and there is some logic in what you say. However, the concept of an interlocking sequence of negotiations, with final status talks beginning at an early date certain, is central to this approach and is key to its potential success. Our intention is to have as much of the process as possible unfold while this administration remains in office.

Regarding an international conference, you know my own misgivings which are of long standing. However, our concept would remove the potential damage of such an event. By focusing on what is to happen after an international event, indeed by achieving prior agreement to both the process and the substance of what will ensue, we should both be able to find the event itself much less threatening.

I am personally enthusiastic and committed to the concept and, again, I appreciate your encouragement to see where it leads. By taking what is best from the past and blending it with new and creative ideas, we may finally find the key to a peaceful and secure future for Israel and all the peoples of the Middle East.

Sincerely,

/S/ George P. Shultz

Jerusalem, February 7, 1988.

Dear George,

Last week I paid a visit to the Gaza Strip and I thought I would share some thoughts with you in connection with current events and the diplomatic effort in which we are engaged.

Our soldiers and officers in Gaza realize that they have to carry out an unpleasant task of preventing riots and attacks on our civilians and soldiers and restoring calm. The soldiers will remain in the area and carry out their duty for as long as is necessary.

Of course, they complained bitterly about the unfair and slanted treatment by the media that presents the Arabs as innocent protestors when the truth is that all confrontations were initiated by stone-throwing and violent rioters bent on attacking Israeli civilians, blocking traffic, and preventing the return to normal life. In Jerusalem alone, forty public transportation buses were attacked in the last two months by Arabs throwing stones and fire bombs.

The Honorable
George P. Shultz
Secretary of State
WASHINGTON DC

Our soldiers are trained to defend the country against attack by external enemies. They are now learning how to deal with this new challenge, with minimum loss of life and limb. They will have to restore calm, because if the rioters and their backers will register any gain, it will create more obstacles on the way to negotiations.

In Gaza, I met with Palestinian Arab refugees. I was struck by their feeling that they had been forsaken by their Arab brethren and by their eager entreatments, especially with regard to housing. I came away with the conviction that we have to give top priority to a renewed international effort to launch a plan to put an end to the refugee camps, to provide adequate housing for the refugees and thus improve their personal conditions considerably. It would be useful if the U.S. would enlist the support of as many participants as possible in this vitally important humanitarian project. I hope to discuss concrete plans in detail with you during my visit to Washington.

I want to reiterate my encouragement and support for the diplomatic effort that you have initiated as well as my trust in President Reagan and in you and in your intentions for the benefit of regional peace and the strengthening of U.S.-Israel relations.

Such an initiative is naturally accompanied by much confusion and ambiguity. Nevertheless, in our exchanges we shall continue to be completely open and frank. The apparent initially positive reaction by King Hussein is encouraging. However, we keep getting reports that the King is bound by a commitment to President Assad not to budge without Syria's consent and approval every step of the way. There is little chance of progress with such a veto power by Syria. Hence I agree that the only way to engage King Hussein in a constructive effort is by focusing on substance rather than on modalities so as to determine whether he is indeed ready to negotiate.

Let me recapitulate the essence of what I have tried to convey to you in recent days through Ambassador Pickering, Eli Rubinstein, and in my letter of 17 January.

- We support the U.S. initiative to bring about the renewal of peace negotiations.

- We agree with your attempt to focus on substance and try to bridge the gaps on the substantive issues.

- We are ready to begin secret or open talks with a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation on the Autonomy plan and its implementation.

The whole logic of the Autonomy is in its vital role as test of peaceful coexistence, for a duration of five years. It is designed to facilitate the eventual negotiations on the final status of Judea, Samaria and Gaza. If we begin such negotiations before the Autonomy has been implemented and tested, we will run into insurmountable obstacles, a deadlock will set in and the situation on the ground will be frozen in a negative atmosphere. Therefore, the only hope for real progress lies in an undertaking by both sides to postpone this issue, without prejudice to their claims, to a later agreed date, while achieving progress on the ground.

We keep hearing reports that an international conference is on the agenda. We see no useful purpose to such a conference. On the contrary, the present initiative has a chance of achieving progress so long as the international conference is removed from our agenda.

Undoubtedly, there are many obstacles ahead, but we shall cooperate fully with you in your endeavours to overcome the difficulties and achieve a breakthrough for which we long. We are anxious to see the maximum progress whilst the U.S. Administration is headed by President Reagan and you. But we should guard against creating any illusions. Success in this undertaking will be an appropriate climax to our joint efforts for peace.

I am looking forward to meeting you in Washington in March. Meanwhile we shall make every effort to assist and cooperate with your emissaries in achieving progress.

Sincerely,

Yitzhak Shamir

ראש הממשלה
THE PRIME MINISTER

Jerusalem, January 17, 1988

Dear George,

As you may know, we are awaiting confirmation from the White House regarding the schedule for our visit to Washington in March. I am looking forward to seeing President Reagan and you and to having a comprehensive exchange of views about the present situation and the outlook for the future.

Meanwhile, I thought it would be useful to convey some of our thoughts on current events.

The disturbances in the Gaza region, which later spread to Judea and Samaria, are a negative and sad development. They are a setback to what we have always wanted to achieve, both in our relations with the Palestinian Arab population and in the peace process. Ironically, it seems that at least in part the disturbances were the result of our own leniency, our tolerant attitude to the influx of extremist influences and, even, our hesitation in applying strong measures at the very beginning of the violent demonstrations.

The Honorable George P. Shultz
Secretary of State
WASHINGTON DC
U S A

The recent terrorist hang glider attack on one of our camps, where six of our soldiers were killed triggered a wave of euphoric excitement and expectation that Israel's military strength could be broken. The terrorist organizations seized the opportunity to launch a campaign of incitement. Violent confrontations with our security forces followed. These developments, coupled with the very strict instructions to the army not to open fire except in very extreme circumstances, have made control of the situation much more difficult to achieve. As a result, there has been an erosion of our military's deterrent influence on potential trouble-makers.

In any case, those who incited and instigated the riots should not come away rewarded, or with the feeling that their actions can cause Israel to deviate from its policy. By signaling readiness to change our policy, we would be undermining the chances of restoring calm now, and creating incentives for riots in the future whenever Israel refuses to yield to Arab demands. More important, we would be forsaking and endangering the moderate leadership among the Palestinian Arabs, those who still believe in a negotiated settlement with us, thus delivering the arena to the extremists, the PLO terrorists and the Islamic fundamentalists. This would also jeopardize Jordan's participation in the peace process.

The Palestinian Arab population has been exposed to a massive barrage from Arab and international spokesmen, the media and a variety of visitors who came here to condemn and preach to us. This contributed to an impression that Israel was being unanimously condemned and that we were bending under the universal pressure. These factors have combined to create an atmosphere of tension and expectation, which fed the disturbances.

Of course, we are not oblivious to the fact that there are other underlying causes for the unrest. Arab governments have for a long time blocked any action to improve the lot of the Palestinian Arabs and especially housing for the refugees. Similarly, they have refused to hold peace negotiations with us and rejected our proposals and offers to move the peace process forward. Now they are saying that the absence of a political solution and frustration among the refugees were the causes of the unrest. Unfortunately, the international conference

proposal is being exploited by some of our adversaries as a means of evading their responsibility and shifting the onus on Israel. It is a mark of U.S. statesmanship and responsibility that you have maintained a restrained position on this controversial issue. In this context, I read with appreciation your statement on the unshakeable relationship between our two countries in your press conference of January 7, 1988.

As the various positions on the international conference have crystallized with time, it is absolutely clear that in such a setting we would be faced with a unanimous demand - except from the U.S. - to withdraw to the June 1967 lines and negotiate with the PLO. I am therefore as determined as ever in my opposition to the international conference.

I agreed, after some hesitation, to your last proposal to meet with King Hussein under the auspices of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., because I was eager to begin negotiations with Jordan. I was disappointed by the King's negative response. Had King Hussein been really interested in an international opening for direct negotiations, he would have responded favourably.

In this context, I would like to draw your attention to some developments in the recent Arab summit in Amman. We have all hailed the summit resolution that sanctioned the resumption of diplomatic relations with Egypt as a positive step. However, we have since discovered that the summit adopted a series of secret and very extreme resolutions on the Arab-Israel issue. It remains to be seen how much of an impact these resolutions will have on Egypt and its quest for a pan-Arab role.

The Amman resolutions could not have come about without a prior entente between King Hussein and President Assad, in which the King adopted Syrian positions and committed himself not to part with Syria in his policy toward Israel and the peace process.

The Arab leaders in Amman decided that Israel was a threat to the existence of the Arab nation, that the Arab governments should achieve "strategic parity" with Israel, that there should be no separate agreements with Israel and that they should remain committed to the Fez Plan that in effect calls for the establishment of a PLO state in the areas of Judea, Samaria and Gaza, and sanctions the "right of return" of Palestinians to pre-1967 Israel.

The Amman summit was a repetition of an inevitable phenomenon in Pan-Arab conferences: the adoption of the views of the most radical common denominator. It also illustrated what would happen at an international conference: the presence of radicals would make compromise impossible. I fear King Hussein has entrenched himself behind the international conference idea because it enables him to enjoy the support of the Arab states without requiring him to do anything to move the peace process forward. The peace process will not have much of a chance unless King Hussein musters the courage to begin dealing with us directly on the substantive issues.

Egypt, having returned to the Arab fold, is now at a crossroad. Because of its inherent pivotal position, it can either adopt a leadership role in influencing and moving other Arab states toward accommodation with Israel, or adopt the Arab consensus and position itself as a spokesman of Arab extremism. President Mubarak may be testing the various reactions before he makes his choice. In this connection, his visit to Washington and what he hears from you can play a crucial role. You might consider proposing to him that the U.S. would convene a preparatory meeting of representatives of Egypt, Jordan and Israel to discuss modalities for peace negotiations, including the participation of Palestinian representatives.

In his current visit to the Persian Gulf states, President Mubarak defended Egypt's relations with Israel and its commitment to peace with Israel. This is a positive move. But we are concerned with the rising profile of Egyptian relations with the PLO and the very rabid and ugly treatment of Israel and the Jewish people by the establishment media in Egypt. The pattern of Egypt's conduct seems to point to a policy of compensating for its diplomatic relations with Israel by engaging in anti-Israel activities in all other spheres. If

this should turn out to be the case, it would be a great pity. Egypt can afford to play a constructive role and help bring us, Jordan and the Palestinian Arabs to a negotiating context and influence the other Arab states to adopt a moderate course. In a revealing recent interview (in the Kuwait daily, "al-Anba'" Jan. 6, 88) President Mubarak chastized the Arab governments for pressing Egypt to break the Autonomy talks, adding that by now the Autonomy would have been well into its implementation stage.

Our first obligation now is to achieve a restoration of calm and to make sure that the disturbances will not be registered by the extremists as a victory over Israel. But we are also devoting much thought to the next steps in the political sphere.

I want to share with you some preliminary thoughts. I hope that by the time we meet in March we shall have a detailed presentation for discussion.

I believe in a two-pronged approach to the issue: one relating to the situation of the Palestinian Arab refugees and the other to the peace process.

The Refugee Problem : We can no longer afford to permit the Arab governments to block any move for their resettlement in order to perpetuate the issue and use it against Israel. We have already prepared a detailed master-plan for the resettlement of the refugees. Although we expect the Arabs to do everything in their power to sabotage its implementation, we are determined to go ahead with various housing projects, especially in the Gaza region. We would like to launch an international plan for the housing and resettlement of refugees. But we will proceed only after consultation with you and after the U.S. has considered the prospects of international support for the plan. The importance of solving this problem cannot be overstated. The camps are a shameful blot on the conscience of mankind and they are breeding grounds for terrorism and religious fanaticism. Unless dealt with now, the whole issue of the refugees can become an insurmountable obstacle to peace talks.

The Peace Process : We will try to counter the debilitating impact of the international conference idea by making our own peace proposal. It is based on the Camp David Accords, which remain our policy, but takes into consideration that Jordan was not a party to the Accords. It is composed of the following elements:

1. Negotiations between Israel and a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. They could be held under U.S. auspices and with Egyptian participation. The Palestinian delegates will be non-PLO representatives who are approved by both Jordan and Israel. We will devote special efforts to secure the participation of responsible and representative Palestinian Arabs in the joint delegation. The subject of the negotiations will be the establishment of a self-governing authority for the Arab inhabitants of Judea, Samaria and Gaza in all spheres, excepting security and foreign relations. The talks will be held without prejudice to the positions of the sides on the issues of borders and sovereignty.
2. When the self-governing authority is established, Israel and Jordan will start negotiating on means of cooperation on such matters as access, commerce, transit of Jordanian goods through Israeli ports, joint tourism programs, participation of Palestinians in the Jordanian parliamentary elections, etc.
3. A transitional period of five years is vital to the process because it is designed to enable the establishment of conditions of peaceful coexistence and create an atmosphere conducive to negotiations on critical issues that remain to be resolved. These talks will begin in the third year between Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian self-governing authority for the purpose of determining the final status of the areas in question.

The strength and validity of this approach lies especially in the attempt to postpone the treatment of the most sensitive issue of sovereignty until as latest possible date, without prejudice to the positions of the parties and without freezing the situation on the ground. King Hussein is constantly misrepresenting Israel's position on this crucial issue by stating that we consider the territorial issue non-negotiable. He knows very well that the Camp David Accords stipulate explicitly that negotiations on the final status are to begin in the third year after the Autonomy is established.

Let me conclude by saying that almost ten years after the signing of the Camp David Accords, it is clear that the logic behind them and the proposals contained in them offer the only workable concept for moving toward a solution. We are convinced that there is no other way, because they contain a framework that will preserve the interests of all sides to the maximum extent possible.

I intend to set up a special team to prepare and draft detailed proposals on both subjects.

I hope these thoughts provide you with a basis for discussion in our forthcoming meeting, to which I am very much looking forward.

With best regards and wishes,

Sincerely,

Yitzhak Shamir