

Quartet Statement on Middle East Peace

December 5, 2005

Representatives of the Quartet – U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, U.K. Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, High Representative for European Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, and European Commissioner for External Relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner – consulted today on the situation in the Middle East.

The Quartet condemns today's terrorist attack in Netanya in the strongest possible terms. Representatives of Palestinian Islamic Jihad have claimed responsibility for the bombing through al-Manar television. The Quartet repeats its demand that the Syrian government take immediate action to close the offices of Palestinian Islamic Jihad and to prevent the use of its territory by armed groups engaged in terrorist acts.

The Quartet denounces all acts of terrorism and urges all parties to exercise restraint, avoid an escalation of violence, and keep the channels of communication open. The Quartet encourages and supports the Palestinian Authority's efforts to take immediate steps to prevent armed groups from acting against law and order and the policy of the Authority itself. The Quartet reiterates its support for efforts to assist the Palestinian Authority in the reform and restructuring of its security services.

The Quartet believes it is imperative that all involved act decisively to ensure that terror and violence are not allowed to undermine further progress in accordance with the Roadmap.

The Quartet will remain seized of these matters.