

Annan welcomes Israeli acceptance of Middle East peace plan

27 May 2003 – Secretary-General Kofi Annan today welcomed the decision taken by the Israeli Government to accept the Road Map, and underscored the commitment of the United Nations, along with the other Quartet partners - the European Union, Russian Federation and United States - to helping both sides achieve the plan's vision of two states within three years.

"He expects the parties to embark swiftly on implementing the Road Map by taking parallel and reciprocal steps in the security, humanitarian, economic and political fields," said a statement issued in New York by a spokesman for Mr. Annan. "The Secretary-General reiterates his firmly held belief that only such steps can put an end to terror and violence, provide security and peace, and fulfil the vision of two states living side by side: a secure and prosperous Israel and a viable, democratic and sovereign Palestine."

The statement added: "The Secretary-General underscores the commitment of the United Nations along with the other Quartet partners to helping the Israelis and Palestinians to proceed along the road of peace and reconciliation as operationalized through the Road Map."

Meanwhile earlier Tuesday, the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Terje Roed-Larsen, who has been in Beirut for the last two days and had met with Lebanese President Emile Lahoud, said the Road Map is a more radical and far-reaching document than any previous peace plan in the Middle East.

"I think all these elements...are good reasons to have hope that we will have a peace process back on track again and also that it is more realistic now than in a very long time that we will achieve these goals of a lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East," Mr. Roed-Larsen told reporters after the meeting.

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