

Middle East: Annan 'encouraged' following Geneva Accord meeting

6 December 2003 – United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan was 'encouraged' by a meeting of signatories to the Geneva Accord, which he said offers "the hope of future reconciliation and peace" for both Israelis and Palestinians.

In a statement released by his spokesman following Friday's meeting with Yasser Abed Rabo, Yossi Beilin and others, Mr. Annan stressed that "the momentum needed for conflict resolution in the Middle East must come from people working together for change."

While noting that the Geneva Accord is not a substitute for official negotiations between the Israeli Government and the Palestinian Authority, he stressed that "it has already achieved the important goal of stimulating debate among Palestinians and Israelis on the factors that must be resolved to end this long conflict."

The Secretary-General also emphasized that the Road Map remains the "key mechanism" in moving towards broadly agreed goals. "The Geneva Accord and the Peoples' Voice Initiative, with their proposals for a two-State solution and an end to the occupation that began in 1967, are consistent and compatible with the Quartet's Road Map," he said, hailing what are known as "track-two initiatives" as a "positive and praiseworthy contribution to stimulate the process."

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