

Israeli-Palestinian Road Map plan is “historic window of opportunity” – Annan

8 May 2003 – The Road Map plan for peace between Israelis and Palestinians was “a historic window of opportunity” opening up “after a terrible period of death and destruction on both sides of the conflict,” United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan said today in a [message](#) issued at a meeting on Arab-Israeli peace.

“No previous peace plan has enjoyed such broad support from such important actors as this one does: the US, Europe, Russia, and key Arab states, including Egypt and Jordan,” Mr. Annan said to the International Alliance for Arab-Israeli Peace conference in Copenhagen, Denmark.

The alliance brings together influential people from Egyptian, Palestinian, Jordanian and Israeli societies participating in their private capacities and representing a wide range of political trends but united by the wish of realizing peace in the region.

Mr. Annan said the Road Map, formally presented last week by the diplomatic Quartet of the UN, United States, European Union and Russian Federation, was very clear about the end goal, “which is a secure and prosperous Israel and an independent, viable, sovereign and democratic Palestine, living side-by-side in peace and security, in a Middle East from which terror and violence will at last be banished.”

He also noted that it was equally clear about steps for getting there, not only who must do what, but also when. “It recognizes that peace will not be achieved if each side waits for the other to move first,” he said. “At every stage in the process, both sides must be able to see a tangible improvement in their situation, and an unmistakable movement towards the end goal. Otherwise they will not have the confidence to move on.”

But, he warned, “Let’s be clear: the Map may come from the Quartet, but it is Israelis and Palestinians who must travel the Road. The continuing violence shows that both sides have tough decisions to take, as rejectionists try to drive them off the road with new terror attacks. Both must hold firm to their commitments, and not allow extremists to dictate the future.”

The Road Map calls for a series of parallel steps by the Israelis and Palestinians over the next three years towards a realizing the vision of two states, Israel and Palestine.

Source: UN News Centre

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