

Secretary-General congratulates Israel's Sharon on vote in favour of Gaza pullout

27 October 2004 – United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan today congratulated Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel on what the UN leader described as the historic vote in the Knesset, which produced a clear majority in favour of the Israeli leader's initiative to withdraw from Gaza and parts of the northern West Bank.

"The Secretary-General remains supportive of a full and complete Israeli withdrawal, leading to the end of the occupation of the Gaza Strip," a spokesman for Mr. Annan said in a [statement](#).

He "very much hopes that the Israeli withdrawal will have the effect of reviving peace efforts, which must be based on the [Road Map](#)," the statement added, referring to the plan sponsored by the Quartet of the UN, European Union, Russian Federation and United States.

The statement also said withdrawal "could be an important step towards a process that will eventually result in the end of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, paving the way for the establishment of a sovereign, democratic, viable and contiguous Palestinian state living side by side in peace with a secure Israel."

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=12353&Cr=middle&Cr1=east#.WRRYyvI96vE>