

## **UN envoy welcomes Israeli cabinet's decision on settlement withdrawals**

7 June 2004 – The senior United Nations envoy for the Middle East, Terje Roed-Larsen, today welcomed the Israeli cabinet's decision to begin preparations for a withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and parts of the West Bank.

Mr. Roed-Larsen said he took positive note particularly of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's announcement that his intention is to evacuate all settlement in the Gaza Strip.

The international community, led by the Quartet, Mr. Roed-Larsen said, has repeatedly pledged its support to any Israeli plan that would lead to an end of the occupation of the Gaza Strip.

Last month, after meeting in New York, the Quartet of the UN, European Union, Russian Federation and United States issued a positive reaction to Prime Minister Sharon's plan, calling it a "rare moment of opportunity" and a possible restart to its Road Map peace plan for the Middle East.

That plan calls for a series of parallel and reciprocal steps by the Israelis and Palestinians leading to two states living side-by-side in peace by 2005.

*Source: UN News Centre*

*Link: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=10978&Cr=Palestin&Cr1=#.WQxUaGI95eM>*