

בלמ"ס/מידי

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מאת: מח' מידע ואינטרנט – אגף תקשורת

### הנדון: הנשיא פרס נפגש עם מזכ"ל האו"ם 20.3

Jerusalem, 20 March 2010

#### **President Peres meets with UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon**

(Communicated by the President's Spokesperson)

President Peres met today (20 March) with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. At the start of the meeting, President Peres said:

"Mr. Secretary-General, heartily welcome to Israel, to Jerusalem. We have high regard for the different tasks that the United Nations is fulfilling in the Middle East; for example, the UNWRA activities, the peace keeping activities on the Lebanese border, and your involvement in the overall attempt to bring peace to the Middle East. We are following closely the [\[Quartet\] meeting in Moscow](#) and we heard your summary of that meeting. May I say that we fully agree that we have to put a target date so as to complete the peace negotiations as soon as possible.

May I just add that the problem is not how to complete but how to start. If you want to complete in two years we have to start right away. I know that our government is ready to start right away. If I may, I call upon our Palestinian neighbors, and President Abbas, let's start right away. Let's not waste much time." The President added that "I know that people say that nothing has moved. I think in spite of the difficulties and the hurdles many things did move in the peace negotiations."

On the issue of Gaza the President stated, "We have left Gaza. Gaza is no longer under occupation. There are no Israelis there - neither soldiers nor civilians. To this very day we do not understand why they are firing from there and continue to fire. The day before yesterday we lost another life of an innocent civilian. But the fact is, we did [left Gaza] unilaterally and we don't intend to return there." The President added that "we are very sensitive to the humanitarian situation there. We watch very carefully that the people will not be ill, that [there will not be a shortage of either water or food or medical supplies](#). When it comes to the restoration of Gaza we are ready to help, provided that we are going to restore a peaceful Gaza and not a belligerent Gaza."

On the issue of [Gilad Shalit](#) the President stated, "Not to permit a medical check of a man that has been held in prison for three years? Unbelievable! I think that

the United Nations should take a very clear position about it. It's not of less of human importance than any other issue."

On the issue of [Iran](#) the President stated, "Iran is continuing to play a negative role in the Middle East, supplying arms, encouraging terror, and threatening the destruction of Israel, which is against the United Nations Charter - one member cannot threaten the existence of another member. [In response to such acts] we expect a very clear position by the Security Council."

The President added, "I remain true to my optimistic view that peace is possible, the sooner the better, and we shouldn't listen to all the skeptical and pessimistic views. Let's start right away, move as fast as we can, and bring an end to the conflict, to the danger, [and protect] the life of young and innocent people."

The UN Secretary-General opened his remarks by stating:

"It is a great pleasure and honor for me to be back in Israel. I remember that I was standing here together with Mr. President a little over one year ago. I was here January last year. It was a very critical period of the Gaza conflict. My visit this time is at a critical and important juncture... I am bringing here a clear [message from the Quartet which was held yesterday in Moscow](#). That is, negotiations for a two-state solution are the only way for Israelis and Palestinians to realize their rights and aspirations.

For Israelis, negotiations must lead to real and permanent security. I am very much aware and appreciate the challenges of security of your people and of your government. As the Secretary-General I have been and will always continue to be fair and objective and open-minded in working together with the international community in bringing peace in the Middle East so that Israel and Palestinians will be able to live together, side by side, in peace and security. As we seek a diplomatic way forward, it is vital to ease tensions on the ground. We have got to have an immediate end to all violence, calm the situation, and protect civilians. I welcome the commitment by the Israeli government to the two-state solution. The main focus should be to create the conditions in which efforts toward peace can succeed and to refrain from actions that undermine trust or seem to prejudge or undermine the outcome of the negotiations, this includes a settlement freeze."

On the issue of negotiations the Secretary-General added, "Our common goal, as stressed by the Quartet, is to complete negotiations on a settlement of all core issues within 24 months. For this to happen we have to get negotiations under way. And I fully agree with your point, Mr. President, which is that the negotiations should start. I fully support the efforts of the United States to facilitate proximity talks and the eventual resumption of talks. I urge both Israeli and Palestinian leadership to take advantage of this opportunity. I believe that this proximity talks should eventually lead to bilateral, direct talks.

Today in the West Bank I encouraged the Palestinian Prime Minister Fayyad to engage fully in the process and I will do the same when I meet the current Palestinian President Abbas and other Arab leaders at the Arab League Summit meeting in Libya next week. I also have an opportunity to the Security Council when I return to New York. The Palestinian Authority has a committed and able leadership. They are working hard and achieving progress in delivering on Palestinian commitments. I urge Israel to do more to support them. They can be good partners in working together to reach peace."

On the issue of Gaza the Secretary-General stated, "Tomorrow I will visit Gaza, where the situation is deeply worrying. I appreciate the steps, the positive steps, the Israeli leadership has taken to allow some United Nations Civilian Recovery projects. This enables me to bring the people there a small message of hope. I understand and share Israel's concern about the security challenges presented by Hamas. But Israel blockade continues to impose unacceptable hardship while empowering extremists. I am confident that blockade can be lifted while addressing Israel's legitimate security concerns. In Gaza I also repeat my call on Palestinian militants to immediately end rocket fire and release Gilad Shilat on humanitarian grounds."

On the issue of Iran the Secretary-General stated, "There is an international consensus on the need to address the Iranian nuclear issue."

On the issue of regional peace the Secretary-General stated, "We must also address the wide regional picture. Peace between Arabs and Israel must be comprehensive. The situation between Israel and Lebanon remains a priority and I appreciate Israel's commitment to implement the Security Council Resolution 1701. I support a resumption of negotiations between Israel and Syria."

Finally, on the issue of Haiti, the Secretary-General stated, "I would like to express my sincere gratitude as the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the Israeli government and people for the [quick and very generous and very effective response to the earthquake in Haiti](#). Israeli action helped many Haitians as well as the United Nations mission. Your field support and hospital and search and rescue teams were very courageous and effective. I met them myself and I applaud you for such generous support. This was a wonderful expression of global solidarity and great humanity. Thank you very much. Todah."

Following the remarks, the two held a working meeting over dinner at the President's Residence. They discussed the Iranian problem, the situation in Gaza, the geo-political situation of the region, and the strengthening of relations between Israel and the UN.

Over the course of the meal the President addressed the Iranian problem and said, "The UN must take a more serious and rigid approach to the Iranian threat. On the one hand Iran threatens another state with destruction, and on the other

hand it receives red carpet treatment at the UN. Why don't you enforce the rules of the UN? Why do you continue to let Ahmadinejad enjoy being a member of the UN when his actions violate your very charter? This must stop. You must enforce the UN Charter and human rights. All of us must take Ahmadinejad's speeches seriously. We are following his behavior: his smuggling of arms, his financing and support of Hamas and Hizbullah, his enrichment of uranium, and his development of long-range missiles capable of hitting any location."

The President also addressed the handling of the [Goldstone Report](#): "The UN's management and handling of the Goldstone Report is simply scandalous. The report was written in a one-sided fashion with complete disregard to the facts and reality. You cannot use old instruments to judge a democratic country fighting a lawless terrorist group. Israel investigates and examines itself after every military action. We must understand that fighting terrorists operating out of civilian centers is a completely different war than the conventional war of the past."

עד כאן.

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