

**MINUTES**

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**Permanent Status Negotiations****Taba, Egypt****January 25, 2001****Security Session**

**Palestinian side:** Mohammad Dahlan (MD), Omar Dajani (OD)

**Israeli side:** Mike Herzog (MH), Pinas Meidan (PM), Daniel Reisner (DR)

MH: Following on your discussion with Yanai, I'd like to discuss the issue of the right to deploy forces in the Jordan Valley during emergencies. I'd like to note two things in advance: (1) This is part of the parameters of President Clinton. For us, this is a very important issue, and I'd like to explain some additional points about our position. (2) We're talking about extreme emergency situations, not something that happens every day, in which there is a *concrete* threat.

MD: You're talking about Israeli forces or international forces?

MH: No, Israel, though international forces are also there to play a different role. We have to defend ourselves. So how do we define "emergency"? Clinton put it as a demonstrable, immediate threat leading to our calling a national state of emergency.

DR: The last time this occurred was during the Yom Kippur War of 1973.

MH: From our perspective, this phrasing by President Clinton expresses the situation. When the emergency ends, our forces will go; it will not be a reoccupation. If you ask me, this is a historic case – very rare. We'd like to find a solution that will answer our concern and meet your sensitivities. We don't want a situation of emergency in which we send forces into your territory without having solved this problem in advance. It is a big decision whether to declare a national state of emergency and to send our forces into another State, but we're asking for the principle to be recognized by you. If we have a solution in the agreement, it will make things easier when the time comes. It is better to send forces to the Jordan Valley than to have to send them to areas west of the Jordan Valley.

PM: This is better than sending them to the interior of Palestine.

MH: Since we recognize the problem, we're willing to define emergencies within the terms of President Clinton and to agree that the forces will withdraw after the time of emergency.

MD: I'd don't want to return to the same discussion as at Camp David. I understood the proposal and rejected it. This is not only a problem of sensitivity; it's a principal subject that deals with Palestinian sovereignty; it's not just a matter of form. I understand

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your points, but I don't see the difference between problems from a third party. I'm not judging how you see the threat. But from our point of view, when you did your peace agreement with Jordan, you did not agree to defend your country from Jordanian soil. If you want peace, you have to change your point of view. I don't want to emphasize Israeli capacity with missiles and air power, but you know that you can defend yourselves.

MH: But our countries are much closer together. We're talking about the heart of Israel here.

MD: What's the distance between Jerusalem and the areas we're discussing?

MH: Twenty kilometres.

MD: This distance is nothing, with the new technologies available. You're not going to use tanks to defend yourselves against the Iraqi army. We will not give you or the Arab States permission to fight on our soil. We're not a combat cabaret. We'll not do anything that harms our sovereignty. The Interim Period provides many lessons regarding the friction created by having daily relations between soldiers on the two sides. I won't repeat that. You see, your concept is basically the continuation of the occupation. Later you'll say you need five locations for emergencies, two roads for access, 500 soldiers on a permanent basis. I know you and can anticipate your demands. Generally speaking, you need to change your attitude.

MH: First, you say that we have to change our mentality for peace. We're thinking of something totally different from what exists now. We're talking about a peace situation, with the problems that involves. Neither of us can guarantee what will happen in years to come. We're not worried about problems from you, but from others.

Second, regarding Jordan, of course we have peace, and it gives us strategic depth, but if this changes and the treaty is violated, we have to take action. Missiles and planes cannot guarantee that we'll succeed, though we hope they can.

MD: When you left Lebanon, what was your guarantee that the Syrians would not attack you?

PM: We received no guarantee, but we have our forces on the border with our other enemies.

MH: From a strategic point of view, the importance of the West Bank to the hinterland of Israel must be taken into consideration.

MD: Who can guarantee that they won't come from the North?

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DR: With the Syrians, we have a line of contact in the Golan, and we had a hidden wall in Lebanon. The Syrians are straightforward. The Iraqis are not – they attacked us three times – in 48, 73, and 91.

MH: This is one of the parameters of Clinton. Do you reject the parameters?

MD: [Didn't get response.]

OD: If hostile forces entered Jordan and posed an existential threat, would you take action against them?

MH: It would depend, but for an existential threat – yes.

OD: Do you have an agreement with Jordan to provide for such a situation?

MH: No.

OD: But you'd do it anyway?

MH: Yes probably.

OD: Then why place us in the impossible political situation of demanding such an agreement?

[Meeting breaks up.]