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PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO THE KNESSET

SUMMARY

1. PRIME MINISTER PERES SUMMARISED AS FOLLOWS THE MAIN POINTS OF A STATEMENT ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN THE KNESSET ON 19 MA

"FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW, IMPROVEMENT OF RELATIONS WITH EGYPT IS THE IMMEDIATE ISSUE, AND IT MIGHT EXPAND THE CIRCLE OF PEACE. A LOWERING OF THE TENSION WITH SYRIA WHILE ATTEMPTING TO INSTITUTIONALIZE A BINDING SYSTEM OF RELATIONS OUT OF THE CURRENT SITUATION ENCOURAGEMENT OF SELF-ADMINISTRATION IN THE TERRITORIES: AND A CONTINUATION OF THE EFFORT TO OPEN NEGOTIATIONS WITH OUR NEIGHBOUR TO THE EAST."

DETAIL

2. TERRORISM.

PERES GAVE WARM PRAISE TO THE UNITED STATES FOR LEADING THE STRUGGLE AGAINST TERRORISM AND ORGANISING THE FREE WORLD AGAINST IT.

3. SYRIA

SYRIA HARBOURED TERRORIST ORGANISATIONS. IT ALSO HAD A SECURITY BODY WHICH MAINTAINED A BROAD NETWORK OF AGENTS AND ACTIVISTS WHOSE PURPOSE IS ABETTING TERRORIST ACTIONS. ASSAD HAD USED THESE ORGANISATIONS AS INSTRUMENTS OF SYRIAN POLICY, BUT HE HAD NOW FOUND THAT HE HAS TO PAY A COST FOR HARBOURING THEM. HE WAS DENYING THE SYRIAN PLOT TO ATTEMPT TO PLANT A BOMB ABOARD AN EL AL PLANE, AND HAS EXPRESSED HIS READINESS TO HELP OBTAIN RELEASE OF THE AMERICANS HELD BY HIZBOLLAH. THIS IS VERBAL PROGRESS. BUT THE QUESTION THAT ARISES IS: WILL IT BECOME CONCRETE PROGRESS OR WILL IT REMAIN PURELY VERBAL? THE TEST IS NOT IN THE WORD BUT IN DEED.... WHETHER SYRIA CONTINUES TO SERVE AS THE MOTHER-SHIP FOR ALL THESE TERRORIST ORGANISATIONS: IF ITS INTELLIGENCE BODY CONTINUES TO ABET TERRORISM: IF THE KIDNAPPERS OF CIVILIANS CONTINUE TO ENJOY A SURE HAVEN IN THE BEKA'A, AT BA'AL-BEK AND IN BEIRUT? THE ATLSVPT TO PLANT A BOMB ON A CIVILIAN PLANE HAS ALSO BEEN RECORDED - AND CERTAINLY ANSWERS WILL HAVE TO BE GIVEN TO THESE QUESTIONS. AND IF DESPITE ASSAD'S DECLARATIONS, SYRIA CONTINUES TO CONSTITUTE A HOST-BODY FOR TERRORISM THE WORLD TODAY IS EQUIPPED WITH A SERIES OF COUNTER-MEASURES BOTH DIPLOMATIC AND ECONOMIC. IT IS NOT ESSENTIAL TO TAKE THE WEAPONS ROUTE.... DEALING WITH TERRORIST ASPECTS OF SYRIA IS NO LONGER AN EXCLUSIVELY ISRAELI MATTER. THERE IS TODAY AN INTERNATIONAL COALITION WHICH HAS AT ITS DISPOSAL A RANGE OF MEANS RICHER THAN OUR OWN IN ORDER TO DEAL WITH STATE TERRORISM OR WITH A TERRORIST STATE.... WE READ WITH INTEREST THE REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT OF SYRIA ON THE ABATING OF THE TENSION. AND WE REITERATE THAT IF SYRIA IS BENT ON A NEW FUTURE, A FUTURE OF PEACE, WE WILL BE READY TO ENTER INTO NEGOTIATIONS WITH IT."

4. LEBANON

ISRAEL WOULD NOT DESPATCH SOLDIERS TO PLAY A ROLE IN LEBANESE POLITICS BUT WOULD SEE TO IT THAT LEBANON DOES NOT SERVE AS A "MISSILE LAUNCHER AGAINST IT NOR A SPRINGBOARD FOR TERRORISTS".

5. THE "MARSHALL PLAN"

WITH THE DECLINE OF WORLD OIL PRICES REGIONAL ECONOMIC PROBLEMS WERE BECOMING SERIOUS AND THIS WAS OF CONCERN TO ISRAEL. "ECONOMIC AND ALONE WILL NOT LIKELY BRING PEACE. BUT BECAUSE OF SHAKINESS, FOLLOWED BY RADICALISATION AND UNREST, WILL CERTAINLY POSE A THREAT TO THE PROSPECTS OF PEACE. ONE LEBANON IN THE MIDDLE EAST IS ENOUGH: THERE IS NO NEED FOR LEBANONISATION OF THE ENTIRE REGION".

6. EGYPT

IMPROVEMENT OF BILATERAL RELATIONS WAS "THE IMMINENT ISSUE". THE TABA NEGOTIATIONS WERE "MORE OF A LEGAL THAN A POLITICAL NATURE AND IF THE JURISTS DO NOT FIND A REDEEMING FORMULA, THEN THE LEGAL ARGUMENT IS LIABLE TO REND THE POLITICAL PROSPECT, AND A GREAT EFFORT WILL HAVE BEEN WASTED... ISRAEL AND EGYPT MUST SEIZE MEANS THAT WILL BUILD TRUST, AND ARRIVE AT DIRECT AND INTENSIVE DIALOGUE, BOTH IN ORDER TO RESOLVE THE ISSUES IN DISPUTE BETWEEN THEM, AND IN ORDER TO ADVANCE THE PEACE IN THE ENTIRE REGION".

7. PLO/JORDAN

ISRAEL STILL STOOD READY TO OPEN DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS WITHOUT PRIOR CONDITIONS WITH JORDAN OR WITH AN AGREED JORDANIAN/PALESTINIAN DELEGATION. "WE ARE READY TO HAVE THE NEGOTIATIONS OPEN WITH INTERNATIONAL ACCOMPANIMENT WHICH WOULD PLAY A SUPPORTIVE BUT NOT DICTATING ROLE. UNTIL THEN ISRAEL IS READY TO OFFER, THOUGH NOT TO IMPOSE, SELF-ADMINISTRATION OF THE ONGOING LIFE IN THE TERRITORIES: IT IS READY TO AID IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND IN THE COMMENCEMENT OF CONTACTS BETWEEN RESIDENTS OF THOSE TERRITORIES WHO ARE JORDANIAN CITIZENS, AND THE KINGDOM OF JORDAN. ISRAEL DOES NOT INTEND TO APPLY UNILATERALLY ITS SOVEREIGNTY OVER THESE TERRITORIES, AS IT UNDERTOOK AT CAMP DAVID.... WE MUST SAY TO OUR NEIGHBOUR AT THE EAST THAT TIME DOES NOT STAND STILL. SITUATIONS ALSO CHANGE. WHAT IS NOT OBTAINED TODAY WILL PROBABLY NOT BE OBTAINABLE TOMORROW".

SQUIRE

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