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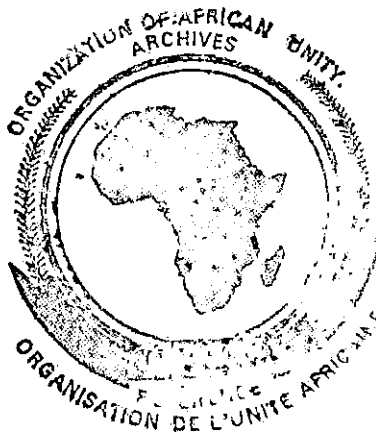
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COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE
MIDDLE EAST SITUATION



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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE
MIDDLE EAST SITUATION

The Middle East situation has seen a great change since the Thirty-First Ordinary Session of the last Conference of the Council of Ministers held last year in Khartoum, Sudan.

2. On 17 September 1978 and under the auspices of the United States President, President Anwar Sadat of the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Israeli Prime Minister, Mr. Menachem BEGIN, signed the Framework of a Middle East Peace Treaty at Camp David (U.S.A.).

3. Following the signing of this Treaty, the Middle East became a scene of intensive diplomatic activities which continued until early this year. These negotiations finally resulted in the signing of a Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel on 26 March 1979 in Washington, U.S.A. - Treaty which the United States President also signed as witness. Israeli Prime Minister Menachem BEGIN visited Cairo on 27 March 1979.

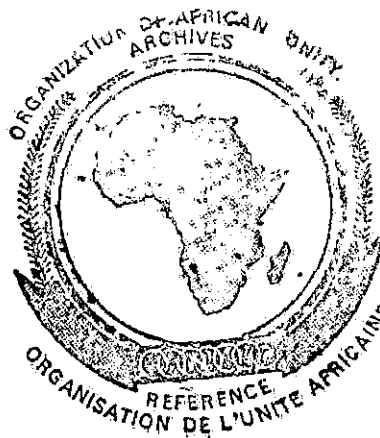
4. The main provisions of the Israeli - Egyptian Peace Treaty are, among others:-

- (i) Total withdrawal of Israeli armed forces and civilian population from parts of Sinai occupied by Israel to be carried out in stages covering a period of three years. The Israeli forces should pull out of most parts of Sinai within nine months following the signing of the Treaty after which Egypt will re-establish its sovereignty over the whole of Sinai up to its International Borders before the 1967 war.

- (ii) Security measures agreed upon by both parties will be taken on either side of the Border between Israel and Egypt, especially the establishment of limited militarisation zones.
- (iii) Establishment of normal relations between Egypt and Israel.
- (iv) Negotiations should open between Egypt and Israel one month from the date of exchanges of instruments of ratification of the Peace Treaty with a view to reaching an agreement on the holding of elections to establish a Palestinian Government on the West Bank and the Gaza strip. The duration of these negotiations should not exceed one year and the elected authorities shall take office the month following the elections. A 5 - year transitional period shall begin as soon as the newly elected Government takes office. At the same time, talks to grant full national sovereignty to the West Bank and Gaza shall continue.
- (v) The Egyptian delegation to these talks could include representatives of the Palestinian People and Jordan was invited to take part.
- (vi) Israeli military Control and civilian administration over the said zone shall cease as soon as the government takes office. During the transitional period, most of these forces should pull out to agreed specific areas.

- (vii) Moreover, Israel has agreed to adopt measures to improve political situation in the West Bank and the Gaza strip. These comprise especially the lifting of the ban on political activities and the release of political detainees. Israel should allow refugees to return home.
- (viii) Besides, in a complementary note to the Camp David Agreement, Egypt maintained that Jerusalem should remain an integral part of the West Bank and that the Palestinians should exercise their legitimate and national rights over this town.
- (ix) The instruments of ratification were exchanged between Egypt and Israel on 25 April 1979 following approval of the Peace Treaty by the Governments of the two countries.

5. Following the signing of the Peace Treaty between Israel and Egypt, the Council of Arab Ministers and the PLO held a special session in Bagdad, Iraq, which was not attended by Sudan, Egypt and Oman. At this Conference, the Arab countries condemned the Egyptian Government for signing the Treaty with Israel. It will be recalled that, beforehand, the Framework of the Peace Treaty, worked out at Camp David, was rejected by a number of Arab countries.



6. At the Bagdad Conference, it was decided to end financial and economic assistance to Egypt, impose oil embargo on it and to break diplomatic relations with it. It was also decided to transfer the Arab League Secretariat from Cairo to Tunis although Egypt had resolved to keep the Secretariat in Cairo despite this decision. At the same Meeting, the Arab Countries reaffirmed their pledge to continue the fight against Israel to recover the other occupied territories and to win independence for the Palestinians.

7. At the meeting of the Islamic Conference in Rabat, Morocco, early May 1979, it was decided to suspend Egypt from this Conference. Of late, Egypt has been suspended from some Arab organizations including the Council of Arab Economic Union, the Arab Scientific and Cultural Organisation and the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa with Headquarters in Khartoum.

8. In conformity with previous decisions taken by the Council of Ministers, the General Secretariat will follow the development of the Middle East situation closely and submit the relevant report to the Council.

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