

PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION

Palestine National Authority

Office of the President



منظمة التحرير الفلسطينية

السلطة الوطنية الفلسطينية

مكتب الرئيس

Address

Of

H.E President

Yasser Arafat

President of the State of Palestine  
Chairman of the Executive Committee  
Of the Palestine Liberation Organization (P.L.O)  
President of the Palestinian National Authority (P.N.A)

At

The Summit Conference of the Organization  
Of African Unity (OAU)

Ouagadougou – Burkina Faso

8-10 June 1998

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Mr. President

Your Majesties, Excellencies and highnesses

Ladies and Gentlemen

In the beginning, it is my great pleasure to be here with you at this important conference convening here on the soil of the friendly Burkina Faso, where we are welcomed and entertained by H.E President Blaise Compaore. We would like to convey to his Excellency, his government and his friendly people our thanks and appreciation for the generous reception and hospitality, and for the efforts that he has made to convene this African Summit in the city of Ouagadougou, the beautiful capital of Burkina Faso. I also would like to express my deepest gratitude to H.E President Robert Mogabi, president of the friendly Republic of Zimbabwe, for the great efforts that he has exerted in leading the Organization of African Unity " OAU " to realize its noble aims and serve its just causes as well as promoting its prestige and role in the world. We appreciate his permanent support for the just causes of the peoples including the just struggle of our Palestinian people for self-determination and establishing their independent state with holy Jerusalem as its capital.

I am also pleased to convey my profound thanks to all brethren and friendly African States for their firm solidarity and support to the Palestinian people in their just and legitimate struggle and to achieve the establishment of the just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, the peace of the brave, to which we do our utmost to make it a just, comprehensive, and balanced peace based on the resolutions of the international legitimacy and on principle of land for peace according to the rule of the peace conference in Madrid, this peace that must depends on cooperation, coexistence, understanding and mutual respect, which



guarantees progress, prosperity and stability for all the States and peoples of the region.

I have to extend also my personal regards and appreciation to H.E brother Dr. Salem Ahmed Salem, the Secretary General of the Organization of the African Unity, for his devotion and sincere efforts in leading the Organization of the African Unity and for elevation its performance and activities for achieving the noble aims and objectives for which it was established, and for confronting the obstacles and challenges standing against the march of its peoples and states for development, progress and prosperity, besides his great efforts for strengthening and consolidating bonds of fraternal Afro-Afro and Arab -Afro cooperation and providing all support and to the struggle of the Palestinian people for attainment of their freedom and national independence.

Mr. President  
Ladies and Gentlemen

The peoples of African Continent who waged bravely their liberation struggle from the colonialism and from the apartheid regimes and economic dependency continued their own march of development and construction. These peoples now facing the same challenges, but in variable circumstances, because of what our world has witnessed in the last years under the international changes, and what the globalization is drawing as a future for the peoples of developed countries, carrying important and grave signs for the majority of these countries.

No doubt that the agenda of your summit is overburdened with important and main issues which are presented here for discussion and debate, whether regarding



the political, economic, social, and cultural levels, as well as other subjects concerning your states and peoples, in addition of following-up what has been implemented of the resolutions and recommendations in the previous summit.

I am confident that you will deal with all these topics in a spirit of fraternity cooperation, more wisdom and awareness and to be far above the minor disputes and giving priority to the supreme African interests, serving the ambitions and aspirations of your peoples', in order to make Africa an active and efficient force capable to confront the current and future challenges and to go a head with steady steps towards the next century more united and cooperative, especially, the next century will be the century of major economical and political blocks which will have the final word and effect in several regional and international developments.

From this point appears the importance of advancing and activating the performance of the central apparatus that was established to lay down flexible mechanisms to prevent conflicts in the African Continent, as well as, to manage and settle them in the framework of the Organization of African Unity, away from foreign intervention and influences, and you have achieved a great success on this level. We cherish hope this approach will continue in order to contain and settle the standing disputes.

In this context, we have to make every active effort, in the framework of the Arab-Afro cooperation to achieve the comprehensive reconciliation among the members of the one and only people of the bretherly Somalia by dialogue, understanding and by peaceful means.



My motive for addressing these issues and my call to treat them patiently and deliberately is my care to see this friendly Continent lives entirely in peace, security, prosperity and stability. Certainly you share me this desire and concern and you agree with me that the strength of Africa is a power for all, including Arabs and Africans. Consequently, achieving, consolidating, security, stability and peace in the continent serves the interests and objectives of us all, as well as, the global peace and security. After two years, we will enter a new century, carrying new perspectives and a lot of challenges.

Mr. President

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am confident that you are closely following-up the events and accelerating developments taking place in our region concerning the peace process in the Middle East, despite the great challenges and problems which keep you busy. This peace process now is in acute crisis and complete stalemate led it to impasse and made it going around in a vicious circle. I do not exaggerate when I say that nothing in this process moves forward, but there is a constant retreat and denial of the obligations and the signed agreements.

You all aware of the reasons that lead the peace process to a deadlock, this process on which all our peoples in the region pending great hopes. Since Mr. Netanyahu's government, took office in Israel, it is persisting on placing obstacles and impediments on the road of peace. Moreover, it seeks to impede and hinder the peace process in the region. Sometimes the Israeli government wants to impose new interpretations on the reference of the peace process that may undermine and cancel all the resolutions of the international legitimacy on which the peace process based and once again



it wants to replace the principle of land for peace by the principle of peace for security. Peace here is for Israel alone which insists to confiscate lands in order to construct settlements on them, as well as building bypass roads, demolishing houses and other unilaterally actions which may destroy all the bases and principles on which the peace process has been based. This is in addition to its continuation to punish the Palestinian people by various ways, means, tactics and plots such as closures, blockades and suffocation, in an attempt to paralyze the Palestinian economy and hindering the process of development, building and construction which we began from zero, because it was completely destroyed by the Israeli occupation.

The Israeli government tends through all these aggressive measures and actions which contradict the spirit of the signed agreements to humiliate and bring the Palestinian people and their National Authority to knees. This government also attempts to impose a unilateral solution on several of substantive issues of the final status negotiations. What is going on in the occupied city of holy Jerusalem, of complete planned Judaizing process, along with isolating the city of Bethlehem, in which we prepare to celebrate the second millennium of the birth of Jesus Christ, peace be upon him, is a concrete evidence that the Israeli government is not serious in implementing the signed peace agreements. As you remember, these agreements were signed at the White House under the supervision of president Clinton and signed by Russia, U.S.A, the European Union, Norway, Egypt and Jordan, where they became an international agreements.

It becomes very clear for the entire international community, who is responsible for disrupting the peace process in the region on all the negotiating Arab and



Palestinian tracks. However, we still adhere to peace, we did not cease to provide opportunities for the international efforts and initiatives aimed at protecting and saving the peace process. We accepted all of them on the basis of our belief that the mentality and will of peace shall overcome the mentality of occupation, settlements and arrogance. To reaffirm our obligations, we participated in all talks, including those held in London which produced nothing because of the intransigence of the Israeli government and its policies that reject the implementing of the signed agreements and their pending infringements, especially the Three Further Redeployments (FRD) as stipulated in the Hebron Protocol. More over, we accepted the American ideas and proposals despite they did not meet the minimum of our demands as well as the invitation to Washington, but until now, the Israeli side still refuse the American proposals.

Mr. Netanyahu's government bears alone the full responsibility for the impasse of the peace process and for the failure of the international efforts, especially the European, the Russian, the American and the Arab efforts, made to get this process out of its deadlock. This government will also bear the responsibility for any dire consequences and chaos that may erupt as a result of the collapse of the peace process in the region as a whole.

Opening fire, killing and wounding hundreds of our Palestinian people by the Israeli soldiers in the march of peace, the one million historic march, made by our masses to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Palestinian catastrophe, is no doubt, a concrete evidence that the Israeli government is still pursuing its hostile policy and approach to a just and a balanced peace in the region. This Israeli policy, and challenge to the will of the international



community, to the resolutions of the international legitimacy and denial to the signed agreements, makes our peoples ask: Is Israel indeed a force above the international law? To when the peace process remains hostage to this Israeli arrogance? Why all this international hesitation? Why did the double - standard is always being used whenever it comes to Israel, which since its creation, has been and still rebels on the legitimacy and the international will, throwing overboard, all its resolutions? All these are legitimate interrogations.

Mr. President

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Saving and protecting the peace process from the Israeli vaunting, became an international responsibility, because the agreements signed by us are an international agreements and not bilateral ones. Making peace in the region is a Palestinian – Israeli – Arab interest and necessity but it is an international interest and our peoples attach great hopes and aspirations on this peace. Accordingly, we, from this restorum welcome the Franco – Egyptian call for convening an international conference that help to rescue and get the peace process out from its grave deadlock.

The Israeli procrastination and evasion should not be allowed to continue, because the alternative, brotherly leaders, will be destructive, since a comprehensive chaos, including violence, devastation, wars and conflicts will prevail the whole region. None will survive from its catastrophic consequences. We all remember the previous decades characterized by wars, scourges and devastation suffered by all the peoples in the region and which obstructed the process of development, progress and prosperity. Hatred and frustration overcome the dialogue, cooperation and coexistence. After all of that, Mr.





Netanyahu's government, through its irresponsible policies and positions that rejecting peace and implementing the agreements and its requirements, comes to carry us back to the ghost of that past.

I am confident that the African leaders, who are well-aware of the importance and benefits of peace in the region, will not spare their efforts for enhancing and supporting the sincere efforts made by us, to establish the just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, because this peace alone will provide security and stability for all states and peoples in the region. Peace will secure for the Palestinian people to end the Israeli occupation of their land and holy places, as well as to regain their national inalienable rights of return, and self-determination and to establish their independent state with holy Jerusalem as its capital.

Mr. President  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me from this rostrum to reiterate our call and demand for ceasing the sanctions imposed on Libya and Sudan, as well as lifting the blockade, which has been imposed on Libya and Iraq for more than seven years, it is enough for the suffering of their two peoples and children, from tortures, pains and sorrows, as a result of this blockade.

It is my pleasure to invite you all to share us the celebrations of the second millenium of the birth of Jesus Christ, peace be upon him, which will take place in Bethlehem, which we prepare to celebrate this great religious and historic event by launching a great national and pioneered Project of Bethlehem 2000, because of the brotherly, friendly bonds that bring us closer to your peoples

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and states. We follow-up with much concern the events and developments in Africa, this giant Continent, we are all required to activate solidarity, cooperation and joint action in order to be all capable on settling and confronting obstacles and hindrances which stand against our march of development, progress and prosperity.

I sincerely wish all success and good fortune for your conference, hoping to conclude resolutions and recommendations which serve the noble aims and objectives of our peoples.

Finally, allow me to renew my thanks and appreciation for my brother, H.E President Blaise Compaore, for his efforts to let this conference succeed. We wish him good luck in his leading the Organization of African Unity.

Peace be upon you

1998-06-08

Address Of H.E Président Yasser  
Arafat Président of the State of  
Palestine Chairman of the Executive  
Committee Of the Palestine Liberation  
Organization (P.L.O) Président of the  
Palestinian National Authority (P.N.A)

H.E President Yasser, Arafat

OAU

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