

**United States Department of State***Washington, D.C. 20520**www.state.gov***OCT 17 2003**

Dear Sa'eb:

I have read your October 12 letter regarding recent Israeli military action in the Rafah area of Gaza. I would like to emphasize that the United States has been clear privately and publicly that Israel should closely consider the consequences of its actions and avoid actions that heighten tensions in the region. We have urged the Palestinian Authority to do the same. We deplore the deaths of civilians, whether they are Israeli, Palestinian or American.

The United States remains committed to the vision of two states living in peace and security, and to the performance benchmarks set forth in the Roadmap. But this vision will not be achieved - a Palestinian state will not be established - on a foundation of violence and terror. The three Americans killed on October 15 are the latest tragic reminder of the consequences of the failure to end terrorism. President Bush was crystal clear October 15 when he said the Palestinian authority must act now to confront and crackdown on those whose use of violence and terror is an attack on our shared goal of a Palestinian state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Wolf'.

John S. Wolf  
Chief, U.S. Coordination and  
Monitoring Mission

Dr. Sa'eb Erakat  
Head of the Negotiations Affairs Department  
Palestinian Liberation Organization