
**PREPARATORY MEETING FOR PRESIDENT ABBAS MEETING WITH PRIME
MINISTER SHARON
FEBRUARY 3, 2005
MEETING NOTES**

Attendees:

Palestine: Dr. Saeb Erekat, Dr. Hassan Abu Libdeh, Mohamad Dahlan, Habib Hazzan

Israel: Dov Wiesglass, Amos Gilad, Shalom Tourgman, Asaf Shariv.

Dov Wiesglass (DW): We know the Palestinians are spending efforts but we are shivering because of the summit. Palestinians have to act strongly and visibly to stop acts of terror. Sooner or later something will happen and our ability to give up things is a function of PA achievements on security.

We just came from a 4 our meeting of the Israeli cabinet which was very stormy and the cabinet has decided the following:

1. Mutual cessation of violence. Palestinians will stop acts of terror against Israelis anywhere and the PA will take all actions necessary to stop such acts including collection of weapons, action against weapon production, action against Kassam rockets, action against weapon smuggling through tunnels and all chain of prevention necessary. Israeli commits not to perform arrests, demolish houses, deport or do anything other than required immediate action against clear danger of ticking bombs where such actions will be approved only by the Israeli Minister of Defense or the Chief of Staff.
2. Israel will handover security responsibility in Jericho and then gradually in other four cities (Ramallah, Bethlehem, Tulkarm and Qalqyia) when the Israeli security forces are convinced that the Palestinian security forces are able to assume control over them.
3. Fugitives: the Army and the PA will agree a list of fugitives. As of an effective date all these fugitives will handover weapon to the PA and undertake to stop acts of terrorism against Israelis. The fugitives can be in areas handed over to Palestinian security forces responsibility and may return to their home towns once these towns were handed over to Palestinian security forces responsibility. As long as they oblige to these conditions Israel undertakes not to harm or kill them regardless of terrorist past.
4. Steps to change atmosphere: removal of roadblocks, ending closure and allowing freedom on transportation. Details agreed jointly and steps taken gradually.
5. Prisoners: We responded to PA request 900 prisoners + 2 from a list of 6 personally submitted by Abu Mazen (Qassam Barghouti, Abed El Nasser Abu Aziz)
6. Tawfik Tirawi & Rasheed Abu Shbak – lifting all transportation limitations on them but Tirawi can not head a security organization dealing of facing Israel.

7. Bethlehem church deportees can go back.
8. Work on harbor can immediately start but airport reconsidered in the future.

Hassan Abu Libdeh (HAL): These were already declared in the media so you are telling us what you decided or are we here to discuss and agree on things.

Saeb Erekat (SE): Cessation of violence mutual agreed but we can not accept the “Ticking Bombs” we can not leave it to the IDF and we can not authorize killing of Palestinians. Instead of unilateral we make it bilateral, joint crisis management and damage control.

DW: Mofaz and Yaallon know that anything that can be transferred to PA to handle will be transferred to PA. We prefer you do it. But the “last resort” must be in our hands.

Amos Gilad (AG): If it is a matter of 30 minutes we can not rely on the PA.

DW: This is in Mofaz hands. Work out a procedure with Mofaz about when to tell Palestinians, when to talk to Dahlan and when to act alone when there is no chance for anyone but the IDF to act.

SE: Let’s leave this aside for now and conclude that we do not agree yet on “Ticking Bombs”.

DW: Jericho first then other four cities gradually.

AG: The plan is to remove the two checkpoints for Jericho.

Mohamad Dahlan (MD): We did not accept to start with Jericho. The army is not there in the first place and there are only two checkpoints. Jericho alone would be a joke. I propose and we are able to take Jericho & Bethlehem now. I propose then two more, and then Ramallah and the handover complete for the five cities in two weeks.

DW: One day after the fuss and smoke of the summit Mofaz and Dahlan sit and meet together and agree timetable. We can in the summit declare package of 5 cities and say that a gradual withdrawal will take place at later stage according to a schedule agreed by the two sides. We take out the phrase “when the Israeli security forces are convinced that the Palestinian security forces are able to assume control over them” and replace it by “according to criteria agreed between the two sides”

HAL: We want the summit to be successful but we need to agree all parameters earlier.

MD: Nablus Jenin and Hebron should be also handed over. We agree it is too early so we form a committee to coordinate and work out procedure and timetable for them. I do not see what is wrong with two, two and Ramallah and then committee for the rest. Jericho alone is a joke.

DW: If you can agree this with Mofaz before summit it is OK with me. The text I propose:

“Israel will handover security responsibility in the following five cities: Ramallah, Jericho, Bethlehem, Tulkarm and Qalqyia. The cities will be handed over gradually according to modalities and timetable agreed between the parties”.

SE: The only thing I can agree to is what Dahlan suggested and not this open ended paragraph. It is very vague.

MD: We can not go to summit before we agree this.

DW: We want to release these agreements today.

HAL: there will be no negotiations in Sharm El Shiekh all has to be agreed before summit.

HAL: There are 356 fugitives on a list given to us. The concept is “town arrest” in towns handed over to PA they can stay in these towns. When their home town is handed over to the PA then they can move there as well.

DW: “The parties work together a list of fugitives handed to PA and on effective date these fugitives can surrender arms to the PA, retire and discontinue any terrorist activity. Fugitives that wish to live in cities handed over to PA security authority can move to these cities and stay within city limits and can return to their home town once they are transferred to PA security control. They must be under PA supervision. Those who live in a city not handed over to PA security responsibility will live in a designated area and the modalities of supervision will be agreed by committee.

MD: Not a designated area but rather “modalities of supervision” as long as modalities are followed they are protected.

DW: I agree. As long as modalities are followed no targeted killings, arrests and Israel undertakes not to take any measure against fugitives covered by this agreement. What about fugitives that do not agree to these arrangement and not following modalities? We want something to say that we are able to work against them.

MD: it is understood.

SE: But you can not include an explicit text on that.

DW: But then they are covered by general cease fire.

Habib Hazzan: The solution is dependent on where you place this statement.

DW: True, after the general cease fire paragraph we will say “parallel to this Israel will discontinue all actions against fugitives covered by the fugitives arrangements including targeted killings, arrests etc...” “ then at a later stage we will details what we agreed above regarding fugitive arrangements.

SE: The general ceasefire issue “Palestinians undertake to stop violence against Israleis any where”. And we can not accept the ticking bombs.

HH: for ticking bombs I suggest: "Security coordination will be resumed to try to act jointly whenever possible against imminent threats of harm to Israelis or Palestinians whenever such threat to the peace process occurs". Nothing more giving "licensee to kill".

SE: That is the only text reasonable and acceptable to us.

Prisoners issue is detailed above.

DW: Bibi threatened to resign over this. If we are so lucky to coordinate the Gaza disengagement then many other prisoners are released and the criteria will change. Even the "blood on hands" problem.

MD: As if nothing changed. Your way of thinking is outdated and traditional, This criteria is unilateral, you decide, you release and we come here like pupil to hear a lecture. As if Arafat is still in Muqata and as if there were no elections of a man that called to stop the armed Intifada. You are killing Abu Mazen. Last time you killed him together with Arafat this time you are killing him alone.

Even if Abu Mazen agrees to this, I do not work in the PA , I will come out against this and against Abu Mazen and Abu Ala'a. You are back at the same old stories.

You sat on the same table with Hizbullah. You negotiated with them and sat at the same table and you do not want to give us names and discuss with us but dictate names to us. What do you think you did to Abu Mazen then? Can he settle now for less than a committee to coordinate names.

We want the 360 prisoners or so, I am submitting list of names, of prisoners from before Oslo. They were imprisoned before Oslo and they are mostly Fatah. You speak with their leader but not with them? Most of them are old people and sick. You released Abu Sukar last time, there is a precedent.

Give Abu Mazen something you did not give Arafat. OK, so Arafat was for you many bad things as you kept claiming and what about Abu Mazen? This agreement will weaken Abu Mazen. We do not want you to release only the taxi driver and the worker that entered Israel with no permit and someone with few days left for sentence. This is ridiculous.

Why tie prisoner release to disengagement? What is the connection? We are hearing this for the first time and it is a reversal of positions.

DW: I will go back to Prime Minister and explain what Dahalan said. But consider this just a beginning more will come in the future.

SE: Our position joint committee to coordinate names and pre-Oslo prisoners. 200 of quality better than 900 car thieves.

DW: We can not workout modalities for further release before summit.

SE: That is why there is a committee established at the summit according to all agreements we had in the past. You changes your position on Tirawi , he must be able to head a PA security body and deal with Israel.

I urge you to carry our message about the prisoners and other disagreements to your Prime Minister and we have four days before the summit. We are ready to meet 24 hours a day and get to an agreement but we must agree all details before the summit. Please come back to us with an answer.

Meeting concluded.
4:00 PM to 7:30 PM.
Crown Plaza Hotel in Tel Aviv
February 3, 2005.