

**THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE:  
THE PALESTINIAN DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND  
THE TWENTY-YEAR STRUGGLE FOR A TWO-STATE SOLUTION**

**TALKING POINTS FOR PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVES**

November 2008

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- **November 2008** marks the **20th anniversary** of the Palestinian Declaration of Independence. The Declaration was made in Algiers by the PLO at the 19th Session of the Palestine National Council (PNC), the highest Palestinian legislative authority, and provided the **first official Palestinian endorsement of a two-state solution**.
- The PLO's recognition of UN Security Council **Resolution 181**, along with its acknowledgment (in the same session of the PNC) of UNSC **Resolutions 242 and 338** as the basis for negotiating a settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, signalled the **Palestinians' formal recognition of the state of Israel, and thus, endorsement of a two-state solution**.
- The Palestinians' endorsement of a two-state solution represents a **historic compromise** because it focuses Palestinian independence efforts on only **22 per cent of their historic homeland** – namely, the West Bank including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip.
- Twenty years after the Declaration, Palestinians are still waiting for Israel to respond to this **historic compromise** by ending its **41-year old occupation** of Palestinian territory and supporting the establishment of **an independent, viable, sovereign Palestinian state** living side-by-side with Israel in peace and security.
- Unfortunately, Israel continues to build settlements and related infrastructure within the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, in defiance of international law. Israel's **settlement enterprise, which has reached unprecedented pace during the Annapolis process of negotiations**, seriously **undermines** the prospect of a **viable Palestinian state** being established alongside Israel.
- Since Israel and the PLO renewed their respective commitments under the Road Map at the Annapolis Conference on 27 November 2007, **Israel has failed to implement any of its obligations** with respect to freezing settlement activity;

ending attacks against Palestinians and their property; lifting internal closures; and reopening Palestinian institutions in Jerusalem, among other commitments.<sup>1</sup>

- In fact, settlement activity has dramatically **accelerated** since Annapolis:
  - For example, in the first nine months following Annapolis, Israeli government-initiated settlement construction **increased by 45 percent** compared with the previous nine months.
  - In the 11 months after Annapolis, Israeli authorities issued 19 tenders for the construction of **2,260 new housing units**, which is more than **16 times** the number of housing units tendered in the 11 months before Annapolis (137 units).
- The past few days alone have witnessed **a wave of home demolitions and family evictions** in the heart of occupied East Jerusalem, as Israel strengthens its control over Jerusalem; attempts to maintain an Israeli Jewish majority in the Holy City; and prepares the ground for more settlements.
- If the international community is serious about the prospect of a viable two State-solution and the establishment of a durable peace in the Middle East, it has now become urgent that it demonstrates seriousness in enforcing a settlements freeze.

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<sup>1</sup> For further details see: NSU, *Summary of Road Map Violations*, 2008, available at: <http://www.nad-plo.org/news-updates/IsraeliRoadMapViolations-FINAL.pdf>, last viewed November 1, 2008.