

Summit ends with upbeat vows from all

At Aqaba, Abbas outlaws 'terrorism'; Sharon says outposts to go 'immediately'

By Aluf Benn and Arnon Regular
Haaretz Correspondents and Agencies

The Aqaba summit ended yesterday on an upbeat note, with Palestinian Prime Minister Abu Mazen pledging an unequivocal end to terrorism, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon promising to immediately dismantle settlement outposts, and President George Bush reiterating America's commitment to two states - "Palestine" and "a vibrant Jewish state" - living side by side in peace and security.

The speeches ended the three-way meeting between the leaders. Before that, Bush met separately with Sharon and Abu Mazen. For Israel, perhaps the most significant elements of Abu Mazen's speech were his description of attacks on Israelis as "terrorism" - something no Palestinian leader has done before - and his equally novel acknowledgment of "the suffering of the Jews throughout history." He added: "It is time to bring all this suffering to an end."

"There will be no military solution for this conflict, so we repeat our denunciation and renunciation of terrorism against Israelis wherever they might be," he said, speaking in Arabic. "Such methods are inconsistent with our religious and moral traditions and are a dangerous obstacle to the achievement of the independent sovereign state we seek. These methods also conflict with the kind of state we wish to build, based on human rights and the rule of law. We will exert all our

efforts, using all our resources, to end the militarization of the intifada, and we will succeed."

Sharon, reiterating his commitment to a two-state solution, said "it is in Israel's interest not to govern the Palestinians, but for the Palestinians to govern themselves in their own state. A democratic Palestinian state fully at peace with Israel will promote the long-term security and well-being of Israel as a Jewish state. Ultimately, permanent security requires peace," he added. "There can be no peace, however, without the abandonment and elimination of terrorism, violence and incitement."

Israel, Sharon continued, "understands the importance of territorial contiguity in the West Bank for a viable Palestinian state" and "accepts the principle that no unilateral actions by any party can prejudice the outcome of our negotiations. In regard to the unauthorized outposts, I want to reiterate that Israel is a society governed by the rule of law. Thus, we will immediately begin to remove unauthorized outposts."

Bush opened by declaring his commitment both "to Israel's security as a vibrant Jewish state" and to "freedom and statehood for the Palestinian people. All here today now share a goal - the Holy Land must be shared between the state of Palestine and the state of Israel, living at peace with each other and with every nation of the Middle East."

After summarizing the pledges made by both sides - as well as the pledge to help Abbas



President George W. Bush looking on as Prime Ministers Ariel Sharon, right, and Mahmoud Abbas shake hands in Aqaba yesterday.

fight terrorism made by Arab states at Tuesday's Sharm al-Sheikh summit - he added: "All sides have made important commitments, and the United States will strive to see these commitments fulfilled... We expect both parties to keep their promises."

Bush also reiterated his statement to the Sharm summit that "the issue of settlements must be addressed for peace to be achieved." For the Palestinians, Bush's speech contained one unpleasant surprise: His statement that America is committed to Israel's security "as a

vibrant Jewish state."

"We were surprised by the fact that Bush used the term 'Jewish state' in his speech. There was no mention of this expression in the drafts we received," said PA Minister for International Cooperation Nabil Shaath.

However, he added, "Bush's declaration does not, in my opinion, necessarily rule out the right of Palestinian refugees to return within the 1948 lines should they so desire." Other senior Palestinians were downright furious, with some even calling this state-

ment an "ambush."

In the wake of the summit, which was hosted by King Abdullah of Jordan, Israel plans to dismantle 15 to 20 settlement outposts over the next few weeks, defense sources said last night. In addition, Palestinian sources said, Bush and Abbas agreed that the Israeli-Palestinian-American committee on monitoring incitement will resume its activities immediately.

Next week, Sharon and Abbas will hold their third meeting, at which they will discuss ways to further the process be-

gun at Aqaba. Israel will be expected to hear details of the Palestinians' plans to suppress terrorism. In addition, Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz is expected to meet soon with Abu Mazen's security chief, Mohammed Dahlan, though no date has yet been set. The two conferred briefly at Aqaba.

American "coordinators," headed by Ambassador John Wolf, are due to arrive in the next few days to oversee implementation of the road map. The delegation will have some 10 members, drawn from the State Department and the CIA.

Summit Analysis

One small step for regional mankind

By Ze'ev Schiff

The Aqaba summit formally concluded another violent and bloody round of the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, in which 781 Israelis and 2,085 Palestinians were killed and thousands more were wounded. But the conflict still has not ended, and leaders on both sides have still not said how they intend to translate their positive declarations into actions.

Both leaders - Ariel Sharon and Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) - are talking about small steps toward a

solution rather than sweeping measures. This opens the door for opponents of an agreement, like Hamas, which is threatening acts of terrorism, or extremist settlers, who are threatening lawless land grabs.

Both sides have reached the conclusion that there is no military solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Sharon has also understood that there is no security without peace. Even so, without the aggressive intervention of President George Bush after his victory in Iraq, it is doubtful that

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What Sharon sowed, now he reaps

By Akiva Eldar

Exactly 21 years after a Palestinian terrorist shot Shlomo Argov, Israel's ambassador to London, giving then-defense minister Ariel Sharon the excuse to begin the war to eliminate "the terrorist organization called the PLO," the same Sharon as prime minister stood beside the senior PLO representative and promised to support an independent Palestinian state.

This was no mere chronological coincidence. The road to the Aqaba road map summit began with the war in Lebanon that Sharon carries on his shoulders to this day. That's where the two

nations began sobering up from their dreams of solving the conflict through their armed forces. That is where Sharon sowed the seeds of the partition of the Greater Land of Israel (Palestine). Now he is reaping the crop.

In 1982, Sharon's goal was to dislodge Yasser Arafat from Lebanon and end the PLO campaign to destroy the state of Israel. But Arafat escaped by the skin of his teeth to Tunis and six years later, in 1988, the PLO accepted UN Security Resolution 242, in which the Palestinians agreed to make do with only 22 percent of Greater Palestine.

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Jerusalem gets first Haredi mayor

Haaretz Staff

Jerusalem's acting mayor, Uri Lupolianski, became the first ultra-Orthodox candidate to be elected to the capital's highest office, defeating independent contender Nir Barkat by 52 to 42 percent, according to final election results announced yesterday. In Tuesday's municipal elections, religious parties took a majority of seats on the city council.

In Haifa, Yona Yahav, who headed the Shinui-Greens list, won the mayoral election with 52 percent against 43 percent of the votes that went to Likud-One Nation candidate Shmuel Arad. It is the first time in Israel's history that Haifa has a non-Labor mayor.

Israeli left wing praises Aqaba speeches, but with reservations

Haaretz Staff

The Israeli left generally praised the speeches made by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas and U.S. President George W. Bush yesterday at Aqaba - but there were reservations ranging from demands to see action on the ground to complaints about nuances they detected either as present or missing from the speeches.

Labor Party Secretary General Ophir Pines-Paz, speaking on behalf of the party, praised what he called "the start of the process," adding "Labor now anticipates the implementation. The first step of the road map began with festive declarations, which are important for the atmosphere and the ability to cooperate, but the road map's success depends on the sides turning the rhetoric into practice. The Palestinians must act with determination

against terror and incitement, and Israel has to immediately evacuate the illegal outposts and freeze the settlements."

Yossi Beilin, chairman of the Shazar movement, called the "unconditional renewal of the political peace process" the greatest tidings of all to come out of the Aqaba summit. He said "while it is very good news, after two and a half years of violence, if the summit had taken place 32 months ago, we could have possibly avoided the cost in blood." He said Bush's commitment to the referendee in the implementation of the road map is a guarantee that this time, "the American involvement will be very different than in the past."

Meretz MK Yossi Sarid said "for some reason, one thing missing from the Aqaba speeches was the total settlement freeze, including natural growth, that is explicitly mentioned in the road map document as an Israeli commitment

in the first stage." He said that "even if the outposts are removed, it will be impossible to conduct negotiations while the construction continues in the settlements." His colleague, Ran Cohen, said that "Abu Mazen's announcement to fight terror and incitement against Israel is a dramatic commitment."

Hadash-Ta'al MK Ahmed Tibi said he hoped the speeches signified a change. "If the implementation is dramatic on the ground, then we will see a change in direction that will lead to the end of the occupation and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state." He said he found "positive points" in Sharon's speech, including the "talk about an independent Palestinian state," for example.

But Tibi added he was disappointed Sharon "couldn't bring himself to say the word Palestine and speak directly about

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Only 20,000 answer settlers' battle cry

By Nadav Shragai and Gideon Alon
Haaretz Correspondents

Around 20,000 settlers and their supporters rallied last night in Jerusalem's Zion Square to protest against the deal struck at the Aqaba summit between Israel and the Palestinians to implement the U.S. and internationally backed road map for peace.

But despite promises of support from Likud, National Union and National Religious Party ministers, as well as prominent MKs from the right, there were few political representatives. Three ministers from the right who voted against the road map and ministers who abstained did not appear at the rally. Minister Uzi Landau said he would campaign against the road map inside Likud institutions. Agriculture Minister Yisrael Katz said he was busy preparing the Likud convention for Sunday. Transport Minister Avigdor Lieberman's press advisor said he



Eyal Warshavsky / BaitBau

RIGHT ON: Thousands of people demonstrating against the road map in Jerusalem last night.

had prior commitments.

The Council of Jewish Settlements in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza District (Yesha Council) issued a statement calling the Aqaba summit "a humiliating ceremony in which the Israeli government celebrated its surrender to Palestinian terrorism."

Yesha Council Secretary-General Adi Mintz said the government was likely take steps that would cross "red lines."

Speaking at the rally - held in the same venue where Yitzhak Rabin was famously compared to a Nazi SS general a month before he was assassinated - was National Religious Party Minister Effi Eitam, and MKs Zvi Hendel and Uri Ariel, of the National Union. They earlier sent a letter to Sharon indicating that the moment the government starts implementing the road map and evacuating outposts, they will quit the ruling coalition.

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