

PRESS BULLETIN

Jerusalem, December 2, 1998

Sayings of Chairman Arafat in 1998

(communicated by the Israel Government Press Office)

Speaking in Washington this week, Chairman Arafat again violated the Oslo 1, Oslo 2, Hebron and Wye Accords by announcing his intention to unilaterally declare a Palestinian state in May 1999.

This is consistent with Mr. Arafat's record of blatant violations of the accords with Israel. He threatens Israel with violence, invokes the PLO's Phased Plan for Israel's destruction, glorifies terrorists, incites against Israel and likens the accords to a temporary truce.

Following are selected examples of Arafat's remarks in the past year:

1) *Arafat Threatens Violence Against Israel*

- Addressing a rally in Ramallah, November 15, 1998 (*Al-Ayyam*, November 16, 1998):

“Our rifles are ready and we are ready to raise them again if anyone tries to prevent us from praying in holy Jerusalem... There are agreements and they better be carried out, because the ‘generals of the stones’ [i.e. intifada rioters] are ready...”

- Interview with the Algerian newspaper *Sawt al-Ahrar* on August 1, 1998:

“The Palestinian Authority has taken steps to actively struggle against the Israeli Judaization scheme... **The Palestinian Authority is ready to restart the *intifada* in order to stop the assault on the Arab character of Jerusalem.**”

- Speech to the Organization of the Islamic Conference's Jerusalem Committee in Morocco on July 29, 1998 (*Al-Hayat Al-Jadeeda*, July 30, 1998)

“The Israeli policy of ethnic cleansing has taken on the ugliest of forms in recent months... Israel has started the war over Jerusalem... but with Arab and Islamic assistance, **this shall be our faithful *jihad* (holy war) - to defend holy Jerusalem from the danger of Judaization and the Zionist plot.**”

- Speech broadcast on official Palestinian Television, July 1, 1998:

“The battle for Jerusalem is a battle of life or death, life or death, life or death”

- Leading Palestinian marchers in a chant, broadcast on official Palestinian television on May 14, 1998:

“With our soul and blood we will redeem you O Palestine!”

- Message marking the tenth anniversary of the slaying of PLO leader Abu Jihad, chief of terrorist operations against Israel, published in the official PA newspaper *Al-Hayat Al-Jadeeda*, April 16, 1998:

“My colleagues in struggle and in arms, **my colleagues in struggle and in jihad [holy war]**... **Intensify the revolution and the blessed *intifada***. Reinforce the strong stance and strengthen the faith. **We must burn the ground under the feet of the invaders.**”

- Interview on Egyptian Orbit TV, April 18, 1998:

Q: If a violent incident occurs, Netanyahu will exploit it and say that it is for this reason that he is not hurrying to make an agreement with the Palestinians, since they are incapable of controlling the situation.

Arafat: I know his tricks. Everyone must know that **all options are open before the Palestinian people**, and not just the Palestinian people, but before the entire Arab nation.

Q: Eight or nine years.

Arafat: Or twenty years. I say that **all options are open before the Palestinian people**. The Israelis are troubled by this phrase, but I ask them: “Why are you troubled by this phrase? Is it because you do not wish to implement the agreements?”

Q: If your rival, and I don't want to say enemy, will not respect the accord, what will you do?

Arafat: We will cross that bridge when we come to it. As I said, **all options are open before the Palestinian people**.

...**Q:** Is Arafat still the same revolutionary fighter? Is he capable of taking to the streets when necessary?

Arafat: This nation of giants has created 100,000 Arafats. **We are a nation of giants which has been struggling with World Zionism for 101 years, and we are capable of beginning it all again.** I say this not in the name of Arafat but in the name of the new generals.

...**Q:** There are Western observers who say that something must happen on the ground for things to start moving. Do you think that something must happen on the street, or is it enough to have effective American pressure?

Arafat: The only answer which you will get from me is that **all options are open before the Palestinian people**.

2) *Arafat Likens Accords With Israel to a Temporary Truce*

Chairman Arafat frequently compares the accords with Israel to the **Khudaibiya** agreement made by the prophet Muhammad with the Arabian tribe of Koreish. The pact, slated to last for ten years, was broken within two years, when the Islamic forces - having used the peace pact to become stronger - defeated the Koreish tribe. Comparing agreements with Israel to the Khudaibiya pact is tantamount to stating that they are temporary arrangements.

- Address at a rally in Ramallah broadcast on official Palestinian Television, November 15, 1998:
“We chose the peace of the brave out of faith in the prophet, in the **Khudaibiya** agreement.”

- Newspaper interview, *Al-Quds*, May 10, 1998:

Question: Do you feel sometimes that you made a mistake in agreeing to Oslo?

Arafat: No... no. **Allah’s messenger Mohammad accepted the al-Khudaibiya peace treaty** and Salah a-Din accepted the peace agreement with Richard the Lion-Hearted.”

[Note: Salah a-Din (Saladin) was the Muslim leader who, after a cease-fire, declared a jihad against the Crusaders and captured Jerusalem]

- Interview on Egyptian Orbit TV, April 18, 1998:

Question: How do you explain that you occasionally ask the Palestinian street not to explode?

Arafat: When the prophet Muhammad made the **Khudaibiya agreement**, he agreed to remove his title “messenger of Allah” from the agreement. Then, Omar bin Khatib and the others referred to this agreement as the “inferior peace agreement.” Of course, I do not compare myself to the prophet, but I do say that **we must learn from his steps and those of Salah a-Din**. The peace agreement which we signed is an “inferior peace”. The conditions [behind it] are the intifada, which lasted for seven years.

...**Q:** For practical reasons, do you now suggest to maintain quiet despite everything?

Arafat: Yes, I suggest we maintain quiet. **We respect agreements the way that the prophet Muhammad and Salah a-Din respected the agreements which they signed.**

3) Arafat Invokes the Phased Plan for Israel’s Destruction

Chairman Arafat habitually invokes the June 8, 1974 resolution of the Palestinian National Council [PNC], known as the “Phased Plan” for Israel’s destruction. The decision contains two key elements: first, to create a Palestinian state on any territory vacated by Israel (paragraph 2); and second, to use that state as a base for mobilizing a general Arab assault on Israel (paragraph 8 of the resolution).]

- Interview on Egyptian Orbit TV, April 18, 1998:

Question: Were you under pressure from the Arab states then?

Arafat: No. **In 1974, at the Palestinian National Council meeting in Cairo, we passed the decision to establish national Palestinian rule over any part of the land of Palestine which is liberated.**”

- Interview, Palestinian daily *Al-Ayyam*, on the occasion of Fatah day, January 1, 1998:

Question: Have we made a mistake by entering the battle over a settlement, starting with Madrid, through Washington and until Oslo?

Arafat: Since the decision of the Palestinian National Council at its 12th meeting in 1974 [**known as the Phased Plan for Israel’s destruction**], the PLO has adopted the political solution of establishing a National Authority over any territory from which the occupation

withdraws. At other PNC meetings we developed this position, until the one held in Algiers in 1988, in which the declaration of independence and the peace initiative were ratified...”

4) *Arafat Glorifies Terrorists*

- Interview on Egyptian Orbit TV, April 18, 1998:

...**Q:** Does your position permit you to work without interruption, as you are wont to do?

Arafat: Without a doubt. I would also like to say that **I envy the martyrs and I hope to become one of them**, though it has been decreed thus far that I continue to live.”

- Message to the Palestinians marking the 10th anniversary of the slaying of PLO leader Abu Jihad, chief of terrorist operations against Israel, published in the official PA newspaper *Al-Hayat Al-Jadeeda*, April 16, 1998:

“The blood of the martyr is never spilled in vain! We say with complete faith, loudly and clearly, that the song of the martyrs is etched in the path of Palestine, and their pure blood is upon our necks....”

- Speech broadcast on official Palestinian Television referring to Yihya Ayyash, Hamas bombmaker responsible for the deaths of more than 50 Israelis, January 19, 1998:

“We are all candidates for holy martyrdom. Candidates for holy martyrdom. In memory of the noble and brave holy martyrs Abu Iyad, Abu Al-Hol, Abu Muhammad, and before them Abu Jihad and before them Yihya Ayyash and after them, Yihya Ayyash.”

5) *Arafat Incites Against Israel*

- Speech to the Organization of the Islamic Conference’s Jerusalem Committee in Morocco on July 29, 1998 (*Al-Hayat Al-Jadeeda*, July 30, 1998)

“We shall continue... to save holy Jerusalem from the Judaizing monster and the despised settlements... **they [the Israelis] are determined to destroy the Dome of the Rock and Al-Aksa Mosque on the Temple Mount and to replace them by building Solomon’s Temple....**”

- Interview with *Al-Jezira* television, June 28, 1998:

“Question: What will you do, or what have you done, to prevent him [Prime Minister Netanyahu] from implementing the Jerusalem plan?

Arafat: Let me tell you something. The issue of Jerusalem is not just a Palestinian issue. It is a Palestinian, Arab, Islamic and Christian issue.

Q: Can one also say that it is Jewish?

Arafat: No. Allow me to be precise - they consider Hebron to be holier than Jerusalem.

Q: More than the Western Wall?

Arafat: More than the Western Wall... until now, all the excavations that have been carried out have failed to prove the location of the Temple. It is 30 years since they [the Israelis] captured the city and they have not succeeded in even giving one proof as to the location of the Temple.

...*Q*: For the sake of Jerusalem and the problem...

Arafat: For the sake of Jerusalem, we have received very, very little [funding]. We are tightening our belts to save money for **the struggle against this Satan, the Satan of money, the Satan of influence, the Satan of discord, the Satan of the robbery which the Government of Israel is attempting to commit.**"

6) Arafat Threatens to Unilaterally Declare a Palestinian State in 1999 with Jerusalem as its Capital

- Addressing the Arab-American Institute in Washington, November 29, 1998:

"On the 4th of May, 1999, the interim period will end. And we should by that time be prepared to declare our independent Palestinian state. And its capital, Jerusalem, the Holy City... Holy Jerusalem is going to be the capital of our state, but western Jerusalem could be the capital of Israel...."

- Address to a rally in Ramallah broadcast on official Palestinian television, November 15, 1998:

"For a hundred years we have faced this enormous global power [i.e. Zionism] and our people are still steadfast in Jerusalem. Yes, we will establish a state on May 4, 1999."

- Addressing a rally in Nablus, November 14, 1998:

"We will declare our independent state on May 4, 1999 with Jerusalem as its capital, yes Jerusalem, the eternal capital of our state, whether they like it or not. Now we are on our land and we are regaining this holy land inch by inch until we set up our state in 1999."