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An action plan for the Palestinian Presidency – 2007

I. Introduction:

In case that the unity government fails to meet the Quartet conditions, the PA Presidency proposes an action plan to move forward on all fronts: governance and reform, security, and political negotiations leading to an independent Palestinian state.

To this end, the PA Presidency is presenting a concrete performance-based action plan that should enhance its positions ahead of discussions with the Israelis and the US, including during the U.S. Secretary of State's expected visit in March 2007. Moreover, the plan would maintain the attention and focus of the international community and the US on channeling support where it can be most effective in moving the political process forward.

The elements of the plan include both the necessary components in the process of building a Palestinian State (governance, sound economic management, institution building and rule of law), as well as a meaningful political process.

The plan is based on, and takes account of, international law and legality and previous agreements and proposals (in particular the Oslo Accords, the Roadmap, President Bush's vision of two states, and the Arab Peace Initiative.)

II. Objectives

1. Maximize the chances for political horizon and the return to negotiations, with the goal of an independent Palestinian state.
2. Improve daily living conditions of the Palestinian people.
3. Maintain the Presidency as the center of gravity in the Palestinian political scene to the international community.
4. Affirm and maintain the role of the PLO as the main interlocutor in all negotiations regarding the establishment of a Palestinian state.
5. Underscore the basis of the peace process and the requirements on all parties to abide by established international parameters.
6. Provide sufficient support (financial and political) for the PA Presidency to enable the President to move forward with the political negotiations towards the establishment of a Palestinian State and build the political capital should there be a need to hold early elections.
7. Hold Hamas accountable for its failure to meet international conditions, while not punishing the Palestinian people as a whole for Hamas' policy, by providing for the Palestinian people's immediate economic needs through the Presidency as well as improving and strengthening the governance structures, and rule of law institutions within the PA.
8. Provide the necessary tools for the Presidency to strengthen and increase control over the security institutions and enforce law order on the Palestinian street. This would also deter attempts for escalation by any armed groups as long as the superiority of the PA forces is well established.
9. Tie the plan to a timeline that focuses efforts of all parties on performance-based targets within a short period of time 3-9 months.
10. Ensure US and Israeli buy-in and cooperation in achieving the objectives outlined above.

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III. Components:

1. Political: *Timeline 9 months*

Moving ahead with political negotiations on permanent status issues, the defined goal being the end of the occupation and the establishment of a Palestinian State on the 1967 border, in addition to steps that change the current situation on the ground in the short term, are essential prerequisites for building the political capital of the PA Presidency and the PLO.

To enhance the credibility of the process, the PLO and Israel should publicly adopt a set of agreed principles to guide the negotiations. These should be endorsed by the Quartet and the key Arab and Islamic states. Simultaneously, a quiet track to work out the details of a peace agreement would be pursued. Launching political negotiations publicly in this manner, while conducting them secretly would produce the needed optimism while protecting the parties from political pressures.

Moreover, certain Israeli measures (in conjunction with progress on the Palestinian security plan) are needed to move the political process forward. Most importantly, this requires Israeli action on:

- Release of withheld customs revenues to the PA Presidency;
- Implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access (AMA) by removal of barriers to movement within the West Bank and between the West Bank and Gaza, allowing the opening of the crossings, the airport and seaport;
- Cessation of all activities in and around the Haram As-Sharif area in Jerusalem.
- Prisoner release;
- Immediate settlement freeze as called for by the Roadmap; and,
- Phased withdrawals.

In parallel to the above, the Palestinian leadership would ensure the adherence to the elements below in its political plan:

- Strengthening the institutions and role of the PA Presidency;
- In accordance with the Roadmap, beginning sustained, targeted and effective operations aimed at restoring the rule of law, including consolidation of the security authority (as discussed in section 3 below and according to the Security Plan (see attached annex).
- Achieving comprehensive cessation of violence, including ending the chaos of uncontrolled weapons and the deteriorating internal situation by enforcing law and order
- The government program will restrict itself to the internal agenda.

2. Governance: *Timeline 9 months*

Concrete steps should be taken to ensure the strengthening of the Palestinian leadership, and to provide the Presidency with the legal and administrative tools necessary to govern, strengthen its legitimacy, and be ready to call and conduct early elections by the Autumn of 2007, if necessary.

Fateh reform falls under this component of the plan. A plan specific reform plan would be presented with objectives and key benchmarks for Fateh overhaul in addition to the required budget for such a program to be concluded over the next 3-9 months. Key aspects of these reforms would be:

- Get members of the young guard into higher positions of power within Fateh;
- Election to a new Central Committee that empowers the new guard;
- Consolidate Fateh to be capable of presenting unified lists in upcoming elections;
- Close ranks within Fateh and control over Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade;

The institution and office of the Presidency would also be subject to strengthening *a priori* under the plan in order to build capacity to deliver on its financial, political and security responsibilities. Along with this, reform and capacity building of the governorates should be strengthened to allow for enhanced provision of services to the public. The plan also requires reforms as reinstating the Broadcasting and Television Commission as an independent administrative agency, and working with the judiciary to improve the function of judicial institution and support the rule of law, as well as the implementation of the security plan.

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3. Security: Timeline: 6 months

Ensure “one authority with one gun” policy called for by President Abbas and start taking necessary action against groups undermining the ceasefire with the goal of ensuring full control and responsibility over armed organizations, ultimately consolidating all armed groups within Palestinian security institutions in stages (between 2007 and 2008) and in line with benchmarks established by the international community.

The security component of the plan will build upon the security commitments already agreed upon between the Palestinians and the Israelis (Dayton – Dahlan), and understandings already reached with the Arab Quartet and the US. It must be time-lined and benchmarked to assure the serious commitment of the Palestinian leadership, and to ensure its acceptance and support by Israel and the other parties (see attached annex).

5. Economic: Timeline: 3-9 months

Salaries: In case the international community does not lift its restrictions on the PA government, the plan contemplates a formal mechanism for distribution of salaries in the Office of the President (focal depository and monitoring point) to be coordinated with the Minister of Finance (disbursement) that can channel salary payments to agreed upon sectors and employees while ensuring that such payments are not diverted by any faction. Such a system should credit the President as the guarantor of salary funding for the PA.

Development Projects: The Presidency should provide, in coordination with the World Bank and the EU, a development plan that determines key sectors, areas and projects that need funding and can have beneficial effects on the ground over a period of 6-9 months, focusing on poverty alleviation and unemployment. Funding for these projects would go to a fund under the Presidency and will be used by NGOs and the international community in implementing accelerated developmental programs. While the timeline for many such projects would exceed 9 months, it is important to ensure that sufficient progress is achievable within the 9 month timeline for projects initiated in order to guarantee maximum value from such initiatives before the next elections. (The average timeline for completion of vocational training centers, schools, health centers etc. is around 15 months).

Movement of goods and labor: Full Implementation of the AMA and the Paris Protocol by Israel is a prerequisite for any success in reviving the Palestinian economy, particularly the complete removal of internal closure in the West Bank and the full opening of all external crossings to full capacity

Notwithstanding progress on the AMA, special export enhancement initiatives that would avoid Israeli movement restrictions (for example, the proposed “Peace Corridor”, or exports from Rafah Crossing to Egypt) are possible ways of alleviating the crisis in the Palestinian economy.

IV. Implementation Steps: Prior to March 15th

The Palestinian side is amenable to participating in a joint task force (composed of representatives from Arab and Quartet parties) to produce the final draft of the plan to be politically endorsed by the members of the taskforce. The final plan may then be shared with Israel to prove that the Presidency has a clear and concrete plan of action, and to get Israel to engage in the process.

To maximize the chances of success, it is necessary for the plan to be clear (i.e. not subject to various interpretations/reservations), and implementable in order not to fall in the Road Map predicament and face further bottlenecks or excuses for Israeli recalcitrance

What Israel needs to do:

Israel would have to make parallel commitments in return for the presentation and agreement on

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this plan during the next summit. This will in turn trigger a positive statement from the Arab Summit in Riyadh supporting the political efforts, and confirming the Arab Peace Initiative.

Just as the Palestinians are required to come up with a plan, the Israelis have to show commitment and seriousness to move forward. This is particularly true if Israel is expecting to see the Arab engagement that it hopes for. Israel should establish a Committee on the Arab Peace Initiative. The Committee would be charged with assessing the Initiative and ways Israel can work towards finding common ground in advancing political negotiations taking advantage of the initiative. This would send an important message on Israel's willingness to establish a common platform with Arab countries in the pursuit of a final settlement.

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ANNEX

Outline Plan for the Transformation of the Palestinian Security Forces

General Objective

Building Security Capability and Capacity to enforce law and order in the West Bank and Gaza Strip enabling the two-state solution and capable of safeguarding the signed agreements on behalf of the Palestinian National Authority. The desired outcome of this effort will be transformed Palestinian Security Forces enabler of the two-state solution and provide the President of the Palestinian National Authority with the capability to take the required strategic political decisions in addition to be capable of safeguarding such decisions (such as dismissing the cabinet, establishing an emergency cabinet)

Specific Objectives (6-12 Months)

- Upgrade the existing capacity and capability of the Security Forces to deliver efficiently and effectively.
- Rationalize the size and structure of the Palestinian Security Forces according to coasted options that ensure affordability and sustainability.
- Restructure and reorganize the security forces agencies in accordance with vision of the Palestinian National Security Strategy.
- Design the necessary legal framework to realize the above-mentioned objectives.

Outputs (6-12 Months)

- Increase the level and capacity of 7 highly trained battalions on strong policing. The battalions consist of 4,700 security personnel in the West Bank and Gaza Strip governorates in order to limit and control the chaotic internal security situation,
- Increase the level and capacity of 15,000 security personnel in the West Bank and Gaza Strip including training, equipping, and basic capacity building to enforce law and order.
- Set up new organizational structure for the security institution with all of its formations. The structure would start with selected agencies such as the Presidential Guards and the National Security Forces.
- Complete development plans for every security agencies in accordance with the new vision starting with selected agencies such as the Presidential Guards and the National Security Forces.
- Develop a set of proposals for a legal framework regulating the function of the security agencies and issue a number of them in the form of Presidential Decrees with respect to specialty, leadership, command and control.
- Establish an effective national security office and appoint a national security advisor who will be in charge of following up on the reform programs of the security institutions as well as other tasks related to security strategies and policies.
- Form specialized security groups to work on realizing the reform program of each security agency.

Achievements as of December 7, 2006 to February 28, 2007

- Developed Palestinian strategic vision, which was approved by President Mahmoud Abbas after being discussed and agreed by General Dayton's team.
- Developed initial programs about the shape of the security institution, its distribution, and structures and agree with General Dayton's team on it.

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- Formed the core of the national security office through forming the Palestinian technical team for reform.
- Developed the tasks of the national security advisor.
- Developed the tasks and duties of the national security office.
- Developed and start implementing of the General restructuring of the National security Forces.
- Assign a large number of inefficient officers, below of the retirement age to early retirement.
- Assign a large number of officers who reach the age of retirement to retirement.
- The appointment of young qualified officers to serve in leading positions.
- Abolish, merge and unify several security departments in order to reach the Road Map plan of organizing Palestinian Security Agencies into three branches; National Security, Internal Security and General Intelligence
- Formed security groups that include the various security agencies as support groups of operations, tasks, and work mechanisms within the framework of detailed development plans.
- Initiated the selection of the appropriate human resources with respect to security clearance, health, and academic qualifications to form the core of the restructured security units. In this context, 15,000 national security personnel had been selected in Gaza and 5,000 in the West Bank to form the core of the transformed security agencies with enhanced policing capabilities on (gendarmerie type).
- Basic training of 3,700 security personnel had been initiated in Gaza Strip.
- Basic training of 1,400 security personnel had been initiated in the West Bank.
- Rehabilitation is now underway for three training centers in the West Bank and three training centers in Gaza Strip.

Next steps

1. Set up integral and specialized training plan for the security agency personnel -the Presidential Guards, National Security- including law and order, internal security, anti rioting, and anti terrorism.
2. Prepare security camps for the personnel who finish training and deployment in the governorates in accordance with internal security priorities.
3. Complete rehabilitation of the training camps and increase their capacities and equipment.
4. Specialized training abroad.
5. Prepare Palestinian trainers for leading the training operations.
6. Provide the security personnel with the necessary equipment and arms to carry out their missions.

Requirements

The accomplishment of the abovementioned objectives and arriving to better security situation in the coming phase -6 to 12 months- require immediate political, technical, financial, material, and logistic support as follows-

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No.	Item	Cost
1.	Technical support through providing international expertise and consultants to support the work of the technical team for reform in accordance with the best practices in this area.	
2.	Efforts to be made in order to create conducive regional environment enabling the success of the security service reform program (positive cooperation on behalf of the government of Israel.)	
3.	Serious financial support for training including training of Palestinian security personnel in Jordan and Egypt, this includes training the Presidential Guards, the national security personnel, and the border crossing guards in accordance with detailed training program.	96 million dollars -for the first year only-
4.	Serious effort to ensure the payment of salaries and dues of the Palestinian security personnel	53 million dollars a month 640 million dollars a year
5.	Cover the operational expenditure of the Palestinian national security personnel.	95 million dollars a year
6.	Cover the capital expenditure	49 million dollars a year
7.	Provide the needed security equipment – lethal and non-lethal	
8.	Provide the necessary financial means for institutional and capacity building	46 million dollars a year
9.	Develop training centers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip	53 million dollars
	Total	1.27 billion dollars

Note-

The costs and overall budget were developed jointly with General Dayton's team and the Palestinian technical team for reform.