

## **Chicago Declaration of Support for the Geneva Accord**

On December 1, 2003 a high-profile delegation of Israelis and Palestinians—acting as individuals—participated in a public ceremony in Geneva, Switzerland, to sign a detailed model of a final status peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians, known as the Geneva Accord. The Accord is the fruit of over two years of meetings between a group of leading Israelis and Palestinians who have been working on a comprehensive solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. For the first time in more than 100 years of strife, a detailed and comprehensive solution was agreed upon which settles the most critical issues between the two peoples.

At this point in time, after the Palestinian government and the Israeli government have accepted the Road Map, which includes reaching a final status agreement by 2005, based on a two-state solution, we consider it to be of the utmost importance to present to the two peoples and the entire world an example of what such a final status agreement could include. This Accord is proof that despite all the pain entailed in concessions, it is possible to reach a historical compromise which meets the vital national interests of each side.

The Geneva Accord offers Israelis and Palestinians a realistic vision of a future that could be pursued if the heads of government had the courage to do so. The Accord lays out the concessions that both sides must make—on issues like refugees, Jerusalem, the settlements, and final borders—in order to achieve a viable solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The Geneva Accord is not about achieving maximum demands. Rather, it provides a reasonable, detailed blueprint of how two states, Israel and Palestine, could live side-by-side in peace and security.

We, the undersigned, pledge our support for efforts to mobilize Israelis and Palestinians, Arabs and Jews, on behalf of the Geneva Accord. We call upon leaders in Israel and Palestine to adopt these understandings, which are favored by a majority of Israelis and Palestinians, according to public opinion polls. We applaud the bipartisan resolutions, in support of the Geneva Accord and other peace initiatives, introduced into the US Senate by Senators Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), Lincoln Chafee (R-RI), and others, and into the US House of Representatives by Rep. Lois Capps (D-Calif.), Rep. Rahm Emanuel (D-Ill), and others. We call upon our representatives in Congress to lend their support to these resolutions. We note the letter of appreciation for the Geneva Accord sent by Secretary of State Colin Powell to its initiators. We call upon President Bush and Secretary Powell to integrate the Geneva Accord into efforts to implement the Road Map for Middle East peace.

The participants have proven by this model agreement that there are partners for peace on both sides and that a peace agreement is possible. We firmly believe that these understandings can radically change the mood of pessimism and despair, create emotional and political momentum and bring into every Israeli and every Palestinian home a sense of hope, confidence, security, and human dignity. With this agreement, years of conflict can finally give way to the dawn of a new era.

We join the Palestinian and Israeli signatories of the Geneva Accord, and the many Israelis and Palestinians, Jews and Arabs, who endorse its principles, in

> Reaffirming their determination to put an end to decades of confrontation and conflict, and to live in peaceful coexistence, mutual dignity and security based on a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace and achieving historic reconciliation;

> Recognizing that peace requires the transition from the logic of war and confrontation to the logic of peace and cooperation, and that acts and words characteristic of the state of war are neither appropriate nor acceptable in the era of peace;

> Affirming their deep belief that the logic of peace requires compromise, and that the only viable solution is a two-state solution based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 338 and 1397;

> Affirming that this agreement marks the recognition of the right of the Jewish people to statehood and the recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to statehood, without prejudice to the equal rights of the Parties' respective citizens;

> Recognizing that after years of living in mutual fear and insecurity, both peoples need to enter an era of peace, security and stability, entailing all necessary actions by the Parties to guarantee the realization of this era;

> Recognizing each other's right to peaceful and secure existence within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force;

> Resolving to establish relations based on cooperation and the commitment to live side by side as good neighbors aiming both separately and jointly to contribute to the well-being of their peoples;

> Declaring that this Agreement marks the historic reconciliation between the Palestinians and Israelis, and paves the way to reconciliation between the Arab World and Israel and the establishment of normal, peaceful relations between the Arab states and Israel in accordance with the relevant clauses of the Beirut Arab League Resolution of March 28, 2002; and in

> Resolving to pursue the goal of attaining a comprehensive regional peace, thus contributing to stability, security, development and prosperity throughout the Middle East.

We therefore call upon our fellow Palestinians and Jews throughout Chicago, and all who seek peace in the Holy Land, to lend their voices in support of this historic initiative.