

violence and for sovereignty, because only the defeat of violence will lead to sovereignty.

Mr. President, the United States and the international community applaud your rejection of terrorism. All who engage in terror are the enemies of a Palestinian state and must be held to account. We will stand with you, Mr. President, as you combat corruption, reform the Palestinian security services and your justice system, and revive your economy. Mr. President, you have made a new start on a difficult journey requiring courage and leadership each day, and we will take that journey together.

As we work for peace, other countries must step up to their responsibilities. Arab States must take concrete measures to create a regional environment conducive to peace. They must offer financial assistance to support the peaceful efforts of President Abbas, his Government, and the Palestinian people. And they must refuse to assist or harbor terrorists.

Israel must continue to take steps toward a peaceful future and work with the Palestinian leadership to improve the daily lives of Palestinians, especially their humanitarian situation. Israel should not undertake any activity that contravenes roadmap obligations or prejudice final status negotiations with regard to Gaza, the West Bank, and Jerusalem.

Therefore, Israel must remove unauthorized outposts and stop settlement expansion. The barrier being erected by Israel as a part of its security effort must be a security, rather than political, barrier. And its route should take into account, consistent with security needs, its impact on Palestinians not engaged in terrorist activities. As we make progress toward security and in accordance with the roadmap, Israeli forces should withdraw to their positions on September the 28th, 2000.

Any final status agreement must be reached between the two parties, and changes to the 1949 Armistice Lines must be mutually agreed to. A viable two-state

solution must ensure contiguity on the West Bank, and a state of scattered territories will not work. There must also be meaningful linkages between the West Bank and Gaza. This is the position of the United States today; it will be the position of the United States at the time of final status negotiations.

The imminent Israeli disengagement from Gaza, parts of the West Bank, presents an opportunity to lay the groundwork for a return to the roadmap. All parties have a responsibility to make this hopeful moment in the region a new and peaceful beginning. That is why I assigned General Kip Ward, who is with us today, to support your efforts, Mr. President, to reform the Palestinian security services and to coordinate the efforts of the international community to make that crucial task a success. The United States also strongly supports the mission of the Quartet's special envoy, Jim Wolfensohn, to make sure that the Gaza disengagement brings Palestinians a better life.

To help ensure that the Gaza disengagement is a success, the United States will provide to the Palestinian Authority \$50 million to be used for new housing and infrastructure projects in the Gaza. These funds will be used to improve the quality of life of the Palestinians living in Gaza, where poverty and unemployment are very high. I've also asked Secretary Rice to travel to Jerusalem and Ramallah before the beginning of the Israeli withdrawal. Secretary Rice will consult with Israelis and Palestinians on the disengagement, their shared commitments, and the way back on the roadmap.

As we work to make the disengagement succeed, we must not lose sight of the path ahead. The United States remains committed to the roadmap as the only way to realize the vision of two democratic states living side by side in peace and security. It is through the roadmap that the parties can achieve a final permanent status agreement through direct negotiations.