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This was, after all, the message the prophet Mohammed himself brought to peoples of other faiths when he said, ''There is no argument between us and you. God will bring us together, and unto Him is the homecoming.'' And this was the message Moses spoke to the children of Israel, when for the last time he spoke to them as they gathered across the River Jordan into the Promised Land, when he said, ''I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live.''

This week, once again, the people of Israel made a homecoming. Once again, you chose life. Once again, America was proud to walk with you.

The Prime Minister mentioned a story in his remarks that he never asked me about. Wouldn't it be embarrassing if it weren't true? [*Laughter*] The truth is that the only time my wife and I ever came to Israel before today was 13 years ago with my pastor on a religious mission. I was then out of office. I was the youngest former Governor in the history of the United States. [*Laughter*] No one thought I would ever be here; perhaps my mother, no one else. [*Laughter*] We visited the holy sites. I relived the history of the Bible, of your Scriptures and mine, and I formed a bond with my pastor. Later, when he became desperately ill, he said he thought I might one day become President. And he said, more bluntly than the Prime Minister did, ''If you abandon Israel, God will never forgive you.'' He said, ''It is God's will that Israel, the biblical home of the people of Israel, continue forever and ever.''

So I say to you tonight, my friends, one of our Presidents, John Kennedy, reminded us that here on Earth, God's will must truly be our own. It is for us to make the homecoming, for us to choose life, for us to work for peace. But until we achieve a comprehensive peace in the Middle East and then after we achieve comprehensive peace in the Middle East, know this: Your journey is our journey, and America will stand with you now and always.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:25 p.m. in the Chamber at the Knesset. In his remarks, he referred to Shevach Weiss, Speaker of the Knesset, and Beinyamin Netanyahu, leader of the Lekud Party. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel in Jerusalem, Israel

October 27, 1994

Prime Minister Rabin. Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, I believe that we experienced during the visit of President Clinton in the region a real move towards peace. No doubt that the visit of President Clinton was crowned yesterday by the second peace treaty between an Arab country and Israel, the first one after the convening of the Madrid peace conference.

We look, from Israel's point of view, to President Clinton as a friend of Israel and a President that works very hard to bring about what we dream for, aspire to: to achieve comprehensive peace, that is to say, peace with our four neighboring Arab countries. With two, it has been accomplished. And no doubt, the visit of the President in Damascus, I believe that it will bring about through certain changes, a movement toward better negotiations, better possibilities to overcome the gaps between the positions of Israel and Syria.

No doubt in my mind that during the term of you, Mr. President, as the President of the United States, we have seen dramatic change in the relations between those Arab partners with whom we negotiate. We signed the Declaration of Principles between us and the PLO on the lawns of the White House. It was followed by the negotiations to bring about the first phase of its implementation in the Gaza-Jericho first. We are engaged today in continuation of our negotiations with the Palestinians about Arab empowerment, elections, and no doubt, yesterday we signed a peace treaty that the President helped to bring about and witnessed.

For 2 years, to reach two agreements, one, with the Palestinians with which we have a long story of suspicion, hatred, prejudice, bloodshed, and with the Jordanians, that I remember over 46 years ago that in this city I fought them and they fought me, and we look forward to make it possible to overcome

yet the differences between Syria and Lebanon and us.

I might take time. One has to be patient. One has to understand that there are problems. And I believe that it will not take long, and hopefully, we'll find ways and means by which to overcome these gaps.

I hope, Mr. President, that you will continue sending Secretary Christopher, who worked very hard and tried in your name to move between Damascus and Jerusalem with the purpose to find ways to overcome the differences.

Allow me also to add that the Government of Israel of today is determined, on one hand, to continue all our efforts to bring about comprehensive peace. But at the same time, we are fully aware that there are enemies of peace. For us, the enemies of peace are the extreme Islamic radical terror movements. Among the Palestinians, they are the Hamas and the Islamic Jihad. Ninety percent of the terror activities against us are carried by them. And there is a tendency for oversimplification, to identify those parts of the Palestinians with whom we reach an agreement and we try to implement it and extreme radical Islamic elements that are enemies of peace and enemies of the Palestinians that reach agreement with us, from Lebanon, Hezbollah, which is a part of the ugly wave of Khomeinism without Khomeini that is all over the Arab world and the Islamic world. Whatever happens in Algeria is not related whatsoever to the Arab-Israeli conflict or in Sudan or in fighting within Egypt. It's an ugly wave that threatens not only the peace—they are the infrastructure of the international terrorism. And behind it, to a certain extent there are certain parties, to a larger extent is Iran. And therefore, Mr. President, we support your policy of dual containment. We believe it's vital to the peace in the Middle East, to stability among the Arab and the Muslim world, and to prevent international terrorism.

We thank you very much. You heard today in our Knesset the government and opposition together joined in the support of the peace treaty with Jordan, in expressing thanks to you, Mr. President, for the way that you have stood and stand in support of Israel's security while trying your best to bring about advancement, which was successful so far in bringing about peace to the region.

Therefore, today, here in Jerusalem, the united city, the capital of Israel, and, no doubt, the heart of the Jewish people, we thank you.

Thank you very much.

The President. Thank you, Prime Minister.

Ladies and gentlemen, because I had the opportunity to speak at length at Knesset this evening and to outline my position on a number of matters, I will be very brief. I would like to make just a couple of points.

First of all, at my first meeting with Prime Minister Rabin shortly after I became President, he told me he was prepared to take risks for peace. And I told him that that being the case, the job of the United States was to minimize those risks. For 20 months now, we have both done our best to do our jobs, and I think it's fair to say that we have had a reasonable amount of success in which the people of Israel can be proud and in which they can feel secure and one in which I hope the American people take pride.

Secondly, I would like to congratulate him and the people of Israel again on the peace treaty with Jordan. We have responsibilities there that relate to the security of both Israel and Jordan, and I have been working on that even since the peace treaty has been signed. I was in conversations with the King well past midnight last night. We are attempting to do our part to make sure this peace is as wildly successful as everyone believes that it can be.

Thirdly, I thank the Prime Minister for his comments about terrorism and his support for our policies, especially I think I should mention something I did not mention in my speech tonight which is that of the steadfast support of Israel for our policies in the Gulf and for our recent action in the Gulf. I will be going to Kuwait tomorrow to see our troops and on to Saudi Arabia. I appreciate the support of Israel.

Finally, with regard to what the Prime Minister said about Syria and my trip there today, I went there because I was convinced we needed to add new energy to the talks. And I come away from Syria convinced that we have, that some significant progress has been at least made possible, and that there

has been some change in positions that offer the hope of more progress. And I have instructed the Secretary of State to return to the region within a few weeks to continue. Meanwhile, other discussions continue at other levels. And I am confident that we can be successful by simply pushing ahead.

So on all these fronts, I feel better tonight than I did when I came here. And again, I thank the Prime Minister for this welcome and for the opportunity to address the Knesset.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President and Prime Minister Rabin, you are talking about significant developments coming from Damascus. From what we heard publicly until now, your visit to Damascus seems a disappointment for the Israelis. I mean, you gave the Syrians maybe one of the biggest gestures America has, a personal visit of the President of the United States. And President Asad responded publicly in his general words of peace which we heard in the past. So what else is new, Mr. President? And Mr. Rabin, what did you hear maybe privately from the President about this visit?

The President. Well, I would like to make three points if I might. First of all, I don't think it's accurate to say that he had ever said to me and to rest of the world and to the people of Israel that he wanted to make peace with Israel and wanted to have normal, peaceful, constructive relations with Israel.

Secondly, he made some statements in our private conversations about the details of this process which I would be wrong to discuss because the essence of these negotiations is that they can proceed in some confidence. But they did show some forward movement in ways that I believe are not insignificant.

Thirdly, there's one thing I do regret about the press conference today. I regret that President Asad did not take the opportunity to say in public what he said to me in private about his deep regret about the loss of innocent lives and, particularly, the bus bombing. He said to me, "You know, we have to end the killing of innocents wherever it occurs, whether it was on that bus or in Hebron. I deplore it all. And I am convinced that only by making peace can we end it. And when we do make peace, it will end." That is what he said to me.

I think the way the question was posed to him, I think, led him to give an answer which may have been somewhat misleading, not intentionally, but because he did not say that. I also want to reaffirm that there was absolutely no discussion in our private meeting, as he said, about the question of the United States removing Syria from the terrorist list. He did not ask for that; he did not bring it up. And I certainly did not bring it up. There has been no mixing of those two issues.

So, I think that his statement did break some new ground. I know that his private conversations broke some new ground. And I was particularly encouraged by what he said in private to me about the killing of innocent people. I regret that that was not said in public, but I can tell you that it was said in private. And what I said in the press conference is now, as I understand it, even being rebroadcast on a regular basis in Syria tonight to reaffirm that that is in fact what happened.

Prime Minister Rabin. I am accustomed to the prolonged and sometimes difficult period of negotiations. If one would have told us 2 years ago that we'd make a strategic understanding with Chairman Arafat and the PLO, people would not believe.

In the process towards peace, we have to overcome on both sides certain perceptions, certain sometimes prejudices, one about another. Therefore, I believe that all the partners to the Madrid peace conference—and by now remain the Palestinians with which we reached an agreement in principles—Syria and Lebanon would like to have peace.I don't know any one of the partners who don't want to have peace. The only question is, what is the meaning of peace? What is the price of peace? It takes time to overcome differences. And whatever I heard, this first: that Syria strategically decided for peace. Second, they are ready to continue the negotiations, not in the best way to my opinion, but as long as there is any avenue of negotiations, we should follow it. Thirdly, I don't believe it will be right on the part of Israel, regardless what was said or didn't say on the press conference today in Damascus, which I would like that he would say different

things, but it doesn't discourage me to continue our negotiations.

And this is the essence of the peacemaking process, to be patient, to be determined, and not to be misled by ups and downs of public statements. Therefore, we will continue the way that it will be possible in negotiations with Syria. I am aware that there are gaps between our positions. But I can't recall any negotiations in the past that there were no gaps. And whenever we succeeded to reach an agreement, came about as a result of the capability to make the compromise that breached the gap.

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, if you'll forgive us, we're going to keep pressing still. The President is speaking of change in positions; you're speaking in change of perception. We have the issues tattooed on our forehead. The issues have been here for 3 years. We know there are major gaps. Are you talking about new atmospherics 3 years after Madrid, or have you been told something about Syria's position on Golan, on security, on the terms of peace? Have you heard sufficiently for you to reverse your election stand and surrender the Golan Heights?

Prime Minister Rabin. Well first, I believe that whoever sees what has taken place in the last over 3 years, he cannot ignore the tremendous change as a result of the Declaration of Principles between the PLO and us, the signing of the peace treaty, the openness in the Arab world that a foreign minister of Israel can fly to Bahrain, that multilateral negotiations can be taking place in Amman and Qatar and who knows where else, that the decision of the six members of the Gulf Community Council about ignoring, not counseling the Arab boycott. There is a trend, a move that no doubt will have its implications in other Arab countries, I hope in the short run or in the long run, even on the issues that have not yet been solved between Syria and Israel.

I believe that the mere fact that there is a continuation of negotiations with all the partners, it creates new realities in the region. From Maroc tomorrow, our big mission headed by the Foreign Minister will go to the Casablanca meeting. When did you expect that such a meeting would take place in an Arab country? We have to see beyond technical or tactical or certain important issues between us and one of our partners, the changes that have taken place in the whole region in the attitude, a change of attitude. This is what realities speak about. And therefore, don't ask me today about details of this part or that part of the negotiations. The fact that we are moving Palestinians, yesterday Jordan, openness in the Arab world, different kind of relations—Maroc, Tunisia, and I believe there will be other Arab countries, this is the importance. You don't have to look at it on a limited point of view. You have to look at: Are there changes in the region; are there changes in the attitude of so many Arab countries towards relations to Israel, or not? This is the issue. And it will continue. And we will continue regardless to the terrible atrocities of the Islamic radical terror groups against us. I believe you will see more changes and more in the right direction.

Q. Mr. President, the restoration of Israel's exact fulfillment of over 300 Bible prophecies proves the Bible is God's true word. Genesis 17:8 says God gave Israel ''all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession.'' And Leviticus 25:23 forbids her ever to sell it. How can it produce real peace to induce Israel to defy God by selling Judea and Samaria for Arafat's or Asad's paper promises of peace?

Prime Minister Rabin. Do you ask the President of the United States this question? He is not representing Israel, to the best of my knowledge.

The President. That was the answer I was going to give. [*Laughter*]

The people of Israel, through their elected leaders, will decide what they are required to do for their own existence, their own security, their own future, and for their patience and peace with God.

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, in the agreements you signed with some of your Arab neighbors, the issue of Jerusalem remained unresolved, the whole status of east Jerusalem. And that's also true at the U.N. and in most of the world, it's unresolved. Why did you assert such absolute control? Were you trying to put President Clinton on the spot tonight?

The President. You mean in his speech to the Knesset?

Q. Yes.

Prime Minister Rabin. First, we are independent states. And we have our positions, and the United States has got its position. I can speak only on the Israeli position. We believe that Jerusalem must remain united under Israel's sovereignty. But we did not reject that the Palestinians, once we negotiate permanent solution, will raise the issue. We know their position; they know ours.

I believe that in the long run, the Jerusalem problem should be solved on two levels, the political one, that is to say, what will be the sovereignty over the united Jerusalem, which we have no doubt that it must be Israeli sovereignty and the question of the holiness of Jerusalem to the other two religions. And you'll see a sign in the Washington Declarations, in the peace treaty that we signed between Jordan and Israel, that we distinguished between the holy shrines to the Muslims that in the last 27 years we allowed free access, free practice. But even beyond that, the administration of the holy shrines to the Muslims and the Christians is done by the respective churches. We don't intervene. In that way that they run something within the holy shrines that derived from their own religion as long as it doesn't affect the security of the area. It works for 27 years. And I believe we have in the Hebrew an expression *Jerusalem shall maala, Jerusalem shall matta.* Jerusalem in the heavens, and Jerusalem on the ground.

I believe this is the key to the real solution in the long run of Jerusalem. But we are committed if they want to raise this issue. We know our position when we negotiate the permanent status between us and the Palestinians. We negotiate the solution to the refugee problems, a much wider scope not only with one partner, on a regional basis. Therefore, from my point it's very clear.

[*The following question was asked and answered in Hebrew, and both were translated by an interpreter.*]

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, I should like to take this opportunity to ask you a question in Hebrew. President Clinton and the Secretary of State have spoken about progress in Damascus. Following your meeting with President Clinton, do you share their estimation that, indeed, there is progress towards peace? And if so, in what areas?

Prime Minister Rabin. To begin with, I heard from President Clinton about his meeting with President Asad. His impression, whereby on certain subjects there has been some progress, is relevant. We must bear in mind that we are now negotiating with the Syrians. In fact, this has been going on for 3 years, ever since the Madrid convention. And we are advancing in tiny steps, inch by inch.

In the talks between us, we reached an agreement whereby Secretary of State Christopher, within a period of 3 or 4 weeks, would examine the progress being made in order to implement or to put into practice what we hope will be done. In other words, we are interested in reaching peace with Syria. We do want a peace treaty with Syria. In principle, we have agreed to a withdrawal. There is no agreement between us and Syria as to the final borders of peace, and there are other areas which have not yet been resolved.

President Clinton did not tell me that there was a historic breakthrough. He said that there was some progress on certain areas. Therefore, we must pursue these efforts. We must continue along the road on which the negotiations have been taking place so far. In other words, Secretary of State Christopher will continue shuffling between Damascus and Jerusalem. And indeed, we have agreed that this will be taking place within 3 or 4 weeks from today, if I'm not mistaken.

Q. ——have another day yet before the trip is over, and I know I'm getting you while you're somewhat tired. But even so, I'd like to ask you if you could to reflect a little bit, since this is the last press conference before you go home, if you could tell us a little bit about what have you learned on the trip the last couple of days? What will you take home with you that's different from what you came here with? And what do you feel has changed for yourself from the experiences that you've had in the last however many hours it's been?

The President. Well, this has been my first opportunity to see first-hand the potential for a new Middle East, the real potential

for peace and the yearning that I see everywhere.

In Damascus today, when I was riding along the road and people would stop their working or children would crowd around their buildings, the play yards, and wave a greeting, they did it because they see the United States as the instrument of peace to bring these two nations together or at least to make it possible for them to come together. These are all things that you know, but until you see it, it's a very different thing, indeed.

I also come away from this trip profoundly grateful to the leaders of Israel and Jordan for setting an example that I think will give confidence to the efforts that others will make now to resolve the problems in the Middle East.

I also came away, frankly, with a much clearer idea of what things the United States can do and indeed what we must try to do to help make peace successful from a security point of view and from an economic point of view.

So all these things I leave with. But the most important thing is the deep yearning for this to work. I saw it in the energy in the Knesset tonight. We saw it in the energy and the passion in the Jordanian Parliament last night. And I have seen it on the streets of every place I have been in the eyes of the people. I think we are on the right historic mission, and we need to redouble our efforts until we finish.

Prime Minister Rabin. May I, Mr. President? In the last 15 years, the President of the United States did help and attended signing of the peace treaty between an Arab country and Israel.

NOTE: The President's 77th news conference began at 12:55 p.m. in the Convention Center. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this news conference.

Statement on Signing Legislation on United States Policy on Haiti

October 25, 1994

Today I have signed into law S.J. Res. 229, "Regarding United States policy toward Haiti."

In signing this joint resolution, it is important to clarify the interpretation of a provision related to the President's authority and responsibility as Commander in Chief.

Section 2 of the resolution calls, *inter alia*, for a detailed description of "the general rules of engagement under which operations of the United States Armed Forces are conducted in and around Haiti." I interpret this language as seeking only information about the rules of engagement that I may supply consistent with my constitutional responsibilities, and not information of a sensitive operational nature.

Let me take this opportunity to associate myself unreservedly with the joint resolution's commendation of the professional excellence and dedicated patriotism with which the men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces are performing their mission in Haiti.

The combination of determined diplomacy and military resolve achieved, just 1 month ago, an agreement that permitted the peaceful deployment of U.S. and multinational forces to Haiti pursuant to the provisions of United Nations Security Council Resolution 940. And on October 15, culminating 3 years of international efforts led by the United States, Haiti's democratically elected President, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, stood on the steps of the Presidential Palace in Port-au-Prince and addressed tens of thousand of his countrymen and women in an atmosphere of joy, reconciliation, and rebuilding.

That historic achievement capped a breathtaking month of democratic restoration and the beginnings of Haiti's economic recovery, all made possible by the dedicated efforts of our service men and women in Haiti. The Haitian people no longer live in fear; they now have hope. The coup leaders are gone from Haiti and the thugs are no longer in control. Haiti's parliament is open. It has enacted an amnesty law and is busy laying the legislative groundwork for stronger democratic institutions. The Mayor of Port-au-Prince has been restored to office after 3 years of internal exile, the legitimate Prime Minister and Cabinet have reclaimed their offices, and the state media are back at the service of the people. The lights are on again in Cap-Haitian after 2 years of darkness as electrical service is expanded throughout the