

As you undertake the hard work of harnessing this new freedom to your rich culture, to your deep history, to your bold dreams, I hope you will remember that the American people are with you. We wish to be your partners and your friends because we have faith in your courage and confidence in your future. I hope that partnership will come about, will last a long time, and will bring to you the peace and prosperity that I wish for this country and for all the world.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:17 p.m. at the Academy of Sciences. In his remarks, he referred to Chairman Stanislav Shushkevich of Belarus.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Hafiz al-Asad of Syria in Geneva, Switzerland
January 16, 1994

Q. President Clinton, are you going to talk about terrorist issues at this meeting today?

President Clinton. We'll have a statement later when we finish. We just met. We haven't started the meeting yet.

Q. Are you happy to be here, and can you tell us what you expect from the meeting, sir?

President Asad. I'm delighted to be meeting with President Clinton and his assistants. We are at the table not to think about expectations but to do the work.

NOTE: The exchange began at 10:15 a.m. at the Intercontinental Hotel. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

The President's News Conference With President Hafiz al-Asad of Syria in Geneva
January 16, 1994

President Asad. At the conclusion of the important and constructive talks which were conducted today between President Clinton and myself, I wish to express my deep satisfaction for what these talks have effected in terms of the United States determination to do all it can in order to bring the peace process to its desired objective, the objective of establishing the just and comprehensive peace in the region through the implementa-

tion of the U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425, as well as the principle of land for peace. In this respect, I appreciate the fact that, notwithstanding the great importance that President Clinton attaches to the internal affairs of his country, he has attached a special importance as a full partner and honest intermediary to helping the parties reach a comprehensive peace that is in the interest not only of the peoples of the region but also the people of the world at large.

Today's meeting between President Clinton and myself came to crown a number of exchanges and telephone communications between us over the last year. I hope that our meeting today will contribute to the realization of the aspirations of the peoples in the region, mainly that this new year will be the year of achieving the just and comprehensive peace which puts an end to the tragedies of violence and wars endured by them for several decades.

During our meeting, I had the opportunity to stress to President Clinton Syria's firm commitment to the principles and bases of the peace process and our strong conviction that peace cannot be genuine and lasting unless it was comprehensive and based on the principles of international legitimacy and justice. This means endeavoring to reach a just solution on all tracks.

Historical evidence, both past and present, have proved that separate peace and partial solutions were not conducive to the establishment of real peace in the region. In this regard, I would like to express my satisfaction that President Clinton himself has committed to the objective of comprehensive peace.

On this basis, we have agreed to work together for the successful efforts aimed at putting an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict and at reaching a genuine and comprehensive peace that enables the peoples of the region to focus on the development, progress, and prosperity.

This meeting has also provided us with the opportunity to exchange views over a number of issues including those related to bilateral relations between our countries. We have agreed that the noble objective toward which we are working requires a qualitative move