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resources are used efficiently, it is hereby ordered that Executive Order No. 12901 of March 3, 1994, is amended in section 1 by inserting in the first sentence ''1996'' in place of ''1994'' and ''1997'' in place of ''1995.''

William J. Clinton

The White House,
September 27, 1995.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:26 a.m., September 29, 1995]

NOTE: This Executive order was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 28, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on October 2.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestine Liberation Organization

September 28, 1995

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. Chairman, do you think this will lead to a Palestinian state, this signing today?

Chairman Arafat. The most important thing, it will lead to a permanent and just solution and peace in the Middle East.

Q. But will it lead to a Palestinian state? You want a Palestinian state, you want a capital in Jerusalem. Is this a step in that direction?

Chairman Arafat. And we have expressed our—from the first day, we were talking with the Israelis, even during the Sadat period, when he was making his invitation with Mr. Begin.

Q. Mr. Chairman, are you worried about another outbreak of terrorism in the wake of this agreement, as there have been in the past? Are you worried about another outbreak of terrorism?

Chairman Arafat. Look, there are many enemies against this, the peace process. And for this, we call it ''the peace of the braves.'' And we are in need of all our efforts and this extensive help to overcome all of these obstacles, including the terror and the oppositions on the two sides.

Q. Have you solved all the problems with the Israelis, particularly the date for a military pullout from——

Chairman Arafat. Yes, the last one has been informed to us from Mr. Dennis on the phone. And there is—there was a contact with Abu Alaa when we were in the meeting with His Excellency, Prime Minister Major, which were the most important points which had been changed——

Q. But all the issues have been solved?

Chairman Arafat. Yes.

Q. ——including the—[*inaudible*]——

Chairman Arafat. There is now—there is now a committee to finalize the whole situation.

Q. Mr. President, what is the U.S. policy on a Palestinian state? What is the U.S. policy, currently? What is the U.S. policy?

Q. President Clinton, could you maybe tell us how you defined the U.S. role in today's events and what transpired here?

The President. Well, we've continued to work to try to help the parties make peace and to help them reach their own agreements. And that is what they have done in good faith and with very difficult negotiations. And now that they have taken this other important step, as they take successive steps, we will try to make sure each step succeeds, that we build on it and we keep working until we have a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

And I am very proud of the work that the Secretary of State has done, that Dennis Ross has done, and that the others involved in our team have done. But the credit here, the ultimate credit, belongs to the parties, to the Palestinians and the Israelis, who have been working through this in a very difficult way. We have said that our job was to support the peace process and to help make sure it succeeds once an agreement is reached. This is another important agreement. We'll do our best to make sure it succeeds.

[*At this point, one group of reporters left the room, and another group entered.*]

Q. Mr. President, do you think after this signing ceremony that you will be going to the Middle East and visit these peripheries, the Palestinian periphery, the Israeli periphery, the Egyptian periphery, and the Jordanian periphery, as well as Syria and Lebanon?

The President. I don't know the answer to that, but I know we will do everything we can to make sure these signing ceremonies are successful. We have worked very hard, the United States has, with your leaders, with the Israelis, with others, to try to help make peace in the Middle East and to try to help make sure each step along the way is successful. And we will keep working until we finish the job.

[*At this point, a question was asked in Arabic, and no translation was provided.*]

Chairman Arafat. According to the agreement, they will be released, all—[*inaudible*]—on three schedules. The first one, directly after the signing of this agreement here, under his extensive supervision and after that, before the election. And the third one, later on.

[*A question was asked in Arabic, and no translation was provided.*]

Chairman Arafat. The most important thing is we work together for the new history in the Middle East on the platform of comprehensive, lasting peaceful solution in the whole—[*inaudible*]—not only with the Egyptians, not only with the Palestinians, not only with the Jordanians. And also we hope that it will continue to be with the Syrians and with the Lebanese, too.

NOTE: The exchange began at 8:45 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In the exchange, the following persons were referred to: Dennis Ross, Special Middle East Coordinator; Abu Alaa (Ahmed Qurei), chief Palestinian negotiator; and Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel

September 28, 1995

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, do you think this agreement today will be a step toward a Palestinian state?

Prime Minister Rabin. I'll answer questions later. I came—we came to visit with the President. After the signing he will be able to ask questions. I prefer not to answer—not to respond to them at this stage.

Q. Maybe the President will be less shy. Mr. President, U.S. policy has been against Palestinian statehood. But you appear to be moving in that direction. Has U.S. policy shifted?

The President. We're not moving anywhere. We're moving with the parties to help make a peace. The parties are making the peace. Every agreement along the way is an agreement between the parties. We are supporting the peace process, and that's all we're doing, and that's all we will continue to do.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—need their own state, Mr. President?

Prime Minister Rabin. Allow me not to answer you on specifics. I would like to thank the President for the way that he encouraged, assisted, and helped the peace process in the last almost 3 years. I believe that the approach that was taken by the President, the way that he just said so, is to encourage the parties to the conflict to be the parties for peace. The responsibility, the main responsibility of the peacemaking process lies with the parties to the conflict. We appreciate and are thankful to the President for his assistance and encouragement to reach agreements, the kind that we have reached—started 2 years ago almost in signing the DOP, then the Washington Declaration with Jordan, then the peace treaty with Jordan, hopefully today, the second phase of the implementation of the DOP after the Cairo agreement to the whole West Bank. And I believe what has happened in the last over 2 years is a remarkable progress with tranquility, stability, and peace in the region.

Q. Mr. Rabin, progress on the Syrian front hasn't been very swift. Do you have any thoughts about whether this will provide impetus for agreement on another front?

Prime Minister Rabin. Be patient.

[*At this point, one group of reporters left the room, and another group entered.*]

Q. Mr. President, is there a chance to see President Asad sitting in this room next to you and the Prime Minister?

The President. Well, we would like to see a peace, a comprehensive peace in the Mid-