

**Statement by the Joint Israeli-Palestinian Delegation
at the Israeli-Palestinian Seminar on the Peace Process in the Middle East
Beijing, 15 December 2006**

1. We, Palestinian and Israeli representatives of the Geneva Initiative, have met in Beijing and conferred on the ways of reigniting the peace process.
2. We took note of the fact that no negotiations between Israeli and Palestinian officials have taken place in six years and that political, economic and humanitarian conditions have dramatically deteriorated in the region since. International attempts such as the Quartet's Roadmap, have unfortunately failed to move the process forward.
3. We reiterated our firm conviction that the only way to resolve the conflict between the two peoples is through political and agreed-upon means; that limited, unilateral, or violent actions will not bring about the end of the conflict; and that only a two-state solution will serve the real interests of the two sides and must be negotiated between the Government of Israel and the PLO, headed by President Mahmoud Abbas.
4. We underlined that acceptable guidelines toward such a solution have already been outlined in numerous forms, including the Clinton Ideas of December 2000, President Bush's Vision of June 2002, the Arab League Peace Initiative of March 2002, and the Geneva Initiative of December 2003. Common to all these suggestions is the principle that the borders between the two states will be based on the 1967 line, and that the agreement between the two sides will be comprehensive and will address all outstanding issues, including settlements and borders, water, Jerusalem, Palestinian refugees and security for both sides.
5. With regard to present conditions, we call upon the leaderships of both sides to take practical steps to ensure the continuation of the cease-fire in the Gaza Strip, and to make every effort to solidify the ceasefire and extend it to the West Bank. The full implementation of the ceasefire will mean complete cessation of violent actions by both sides, including such actions as the pursuit, arrests and targeting of Palestinians by the Israeli army.
6. We urge all relevant parties to do their utmost in order to bring about the immediate release of the Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit and of Palestinian prisoners held by Israel, including ministers and members of the Palestinian Legislative Council. The positive atmosphere that such reciprocal actions by both sides will create, however, will not be sustainable without real change on the ground, and every effort should be made to assure the movement of Palestinian persons and trade within and between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and to implement the Agreement on Movement and Access reached between the two sides in November 2005. At the same time Palestinian tax money held by Israel should be released by the Israeli Government.
7. We call upon the international community to play a more active role in monitoring the implementation of the agreements between the two parties, and in encouraging the parties to return to the track of negotiations which they abandoned six years ago. To this effect, we welcome the idea of an international conference, as has been recently proposed by various parties, including leading European figures as well as by the Iraq Study Group Report.

8. We thank the Chinese Government for extending its good offices to our joint delegation and for its sincere interest in our cause. As a permanent member of the UN Security Council as well as a friend and ally of the different parties to the conflict, the People's Republic of China enjoys a unique status that can contribute to advancing peace in the Middle East. We ask China to use this unique status, and call upon it to consider practical steps to increase its influence in the region, such as joining the Middle East Quartet of the U.S, E.U, Russia and the U.N., in order to make its interest in stability and peace in the world bear upon the future of our region.