

The National Conciliation Document

A conference, tasked with coming up with a comprehensive Palestinian national dialogue, was held in the cities of Ramallah and Gaza on May 25 and 26, 2006. The event was held under the patronage of Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), Secretary of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and President of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), in response to a call by the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) and in partnership with the head of the Government and representatives of the National and the Legislative councils, representatives of national and Islamic forces and representatives of civil society organizations. The closing statement highlighted the conciliation document composed by prisoners in Israeli jails, which was considered as a basis for maintaining the dialogue. The decision was taken to form a national dialogue committee headed by Abbas and which, after lengthy discussions, concluded the following agreement on a national conciliation document.

*In the name of God, the Compassionate and the Merciful,
“Abide by the decree of God and never disperse” (a verse from the Holy Qur’an)*

Preamble

Emanating from a high sense of national and historical responsibility, and because of the dangers facing our people, and stemming from the principle that rights cannot be relinquished and the occupation cannot be legitimized, and with the intention of reinforcing and consolidating the internal Palestinian front and preserving national unity in the homeland and in the Diaspora, and for the purpose of confronting the Israeli design which aims to impose an Israeli solution on our people, crushing their dreams and hindering their right to establish their independent fully sovereign Palestinian state — the scheme that the Israeli government intends to implement during the upcoming phase, comprising the construction and completion of the separation wall, the Judaization of Jerusalem, the expansion of Israeli settlements, the seizure of the Jordan Valley, the annexation of vast areas of the West Bank, and the blocking of our people from exercising their right of return; And with the end of preserving the accomplishments and acquisitions our people have achieved throughout their long struggle, and in loyalty to our martyrs, prisoners, and injured, and because we are still in the phase of liberation, grounded in a high sense of nationalism and democracy; all this dictates the adoption of a political and resistance strategy commensurate with these challenges, and the success of the comprehensive Palestinian national dialogue, based on the Cairo Declaration and the urgent call for unity and solidarity, we therefore present this document (the national conciliation document) to our great steadfast people, to President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) leadership, to the Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh, to the Cabinet, to the Speaker and members of the Palestinian National Council (PNC), to the Speaker and members of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), to all Palestinian forces and factions, to all non-governmental and popular organizations and institutions, and to the leaders of Palestinian public opinion in the homeland and the Diaspora.

This national conciliation document is considered an integral package and the preamble is part and parcel of it.

- 1.** The Palestinian people in the homeland and the Diaspora seek to liberate their land, to obtain the evacuation of the settlements and settlers, the removal of the separation wall, to stop the annexation, and to achieve their right to freedom, return and independence. In this spirit, they look to exercise their right to self-determination, including the right to establish their independent state on all the territories occupied in 1967, with al-Quds al-Shareef [Jerusalem] as its capital; to secure the right of the refugees to return to their homes and properties, from which they were driven out, and their right to compensation; to obtain the liberation of all prisoners and detainees, without exception or discrimination, basing their claims in all this on the historical right of our people on the land of their fathers and forefathers, on the UN Charter, and on international law and legitimacy.
- 2.** To accelerate the implementation of that which was agreed upon in Cairo in March 2005 pertaining to the reinvigoration and reactivation of the PLO and the incorporation of all the forces and factions in accordance

with democratic principles, which solidifies the position of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of all the Palestinian people wherever they may be, and in keeping with the changes on the Palestinian scene and which strengthen the position of the PLO as the competence that can meet the changes on the Palestinian arena and can assume its responsibilities in leading and mobilizing our people in the homeland and the Diaspora; and to defend their national, political and human rights in the various forums and circles in all the international and regional arenas. Furthermore, our national interest calls for the formation of a new PNC before the end of 2006 through elections whenever possible, according to the principle of proportional representation, and by consensus if elections are not possible, according to mechanisms to be laid down by the higher committee deriving from the Cairo Declaration. It also calls for the preservation of the PLO as a broad front and framework and a comprehensive national coalition that incorporates and will remain the highest political reference of all the Palestinians in the homeland and in the Diaspora.

3. To affirm the right of the Palestinian people to resist the occupation, to preserve the option of resistance by various means, and to concentrate the resistance in the territories occupied in 1967, concomitantly with political action, negotiations and diplomacy. To pursue the popular resistance against the occupation in all its forms and policies and to focus on the expansion of the participation of the various groups, fronts and sectors of our people in this popular resistance.

4. To formulate a Palestinian plan aimed at comprehensive political action; to unify Palestinian political discourse based on the Palestinian national goals as put forth in this document and on Arab legitimacy and international resolutions that grant justice to our people and that safeguard the rights and constants of our people, implemented by the PLO and its institutions and the PNA with its president and government, the national and Islamic factions, civil society organizations, and public figures and operatives. To accomplish this with a view to mobilize and consolidate Arab, Islamic and international political, financial, economic and humanitarian backing for our people and its PNA; to win their support for the right of our people to self-determination, freedom, return, and independence; and, furthermore, to confront Israel's plan to impose any unilateral solution on our people, and the oppressive siege against us.

5. To protect and strengthen the PNA as it is the nucleus of our future state and was born out of the struggle, sacrifices and sufferings of the Palestinian people; to stress that higher national interests call for the upholding of the PNA Basic Law and the laws in force, and to respect the authority and responsibilities of the president who was elected according to the will of the Palestinian people through free, open and democratic elections. Also, to respect the authority and responsibilities of the government that was given the vote of confidence by the PLC elected in free, democratic and fair elections.

To focus on the importance and need for creative cooperation between the presidency and the government, and on the importance of joint action and periodic meetings between them to bring about and reinforce cooperation and complementarity according to the Basic Law and for the sake of the higher interests of the Palestinians; additionally, to focus on the need for comprehensive reforms in PNA institutions, especially the judiciary, abiding by its authority, and securing the implementation of all its rulings, and the consolidation and endorsement of the sovereignty of the law.

6. To work on forming a national unity government that secures the participation of parliamentary blocs, and the political forces desirous of participating on the basis of this document and a joint program designed to advance the Palestinian condition on the local, Arab, regional and international levels. To confront any challenges through the building of a national and strong government that enjoys Palestinian popular and political support from all forces, as well as Arab and international backing. To implement a program of reform to develop the national economy and encourage investment, to fight poverty and unemployment, and to extend the best possible care to the groups that have borne the brunt of steadfastness, resistance and intifada and have been victims of Israeli aggression, especially the families of martyrs, prisoners and injured, and the owners of homes demolished and properties destroyed by the occupation.

7. To acknowledge that the task of conducting the negotiations falls within the jurisdiction of the PLO and the President of the PNA, predicated on the adherence to the Palestinian national goals as stated in this document with the condition that any agreement pertaining to the matter be referred to the new PNC for ratification and endorsement, or presented for a general referendum in the homeland and the Diaspora whenever possible ac-

ording to a law that regulates it.

8. To recognize the liberation of the prisoners and detainees is a sacred national duty that must be assumed through all possible means by all Palestinian national and Islamic forces and factions, and by the PLO and the PNA President and government, the PLC and all the resistance forces.

9. To double the efforts to support and care for the Palestine refugees and defend their rights and to work for the holding of a popular conference for the refugees, proceeding from follow-up committees, with its duty to stress on the right of return, to adhere to this right, and to call on the international community to implement Resolution 194 which stipulates the right of the refugees to return and to be compensated.

10. To work on forming a unified resistance front to be called “the Palestinian resistance front,” to lead and engage in resistance against the occupation and to unify and coordinate action and resistance, and to define a unified political reference for the front.

11. To observe the democratic system and to hold regular, general, free and open elections in accordance with the law, for the presidency, the PLC, and local and municipal councils, and unions, syndicates and societies, and to respect the principle of a peaceful and smooth transfer of authority; and to ensure the principle of separation of powers, to undertake to protect the Palestinian democratic experience and any democratic choice and its outcomes; and to respect the sovereignty of the law, individual and public freedoms, human rights, freedom of the press, and equality among the citizens in rights and duties without discrimination; and to protect the achievements of women and to enhance and promote them.

12. To reject and denounce the oppressive siege that is being led by the U.S. and Israel against our people and to call on the Arab brethren at the popular and official levels to support the Palestinian people, the PLO and the PNA and to call on the Arab governments to implement the political, financial, economic resolutions of the summits and the decisions carried by the media supporting the Palestinian people and their national cause; to stress that the PNA is committed to the Arab consensus and to joint Arab action that supports our just cause and the higher Arab interests.

13. To call on the Palestinian people to strive for unity and solidarity, to unify their ranks and to support the PLO and the PNA with its president and government; to endorse the people’s steadfastness and resistance in the face of Israeli aggression and siege and to reject any interference in internal Palestinian affairs.

14. To denounce all forms of rifts and discord and whatever leads to internal strife; to condemn and ban the use of weapons, and to forbid the use of arms among the members of one people in settling internal disputes regardless of the justification; to stress on the sanctity of Palestinian blood and to adopt dialogue as the sole means of resolving disagreements. To promote freedom of expression via all means, including the opposition to the Authority and its resolutions, based on the endorsement of the law for the right of peaceful protest and the organization of marches, demonstrations, and sit-ins, on the condition that these are peaceful and weapon-free, and to proscribe any acts of vandalism against private or public property.

15. To look for the most appropriate means and mechanisms to allow for the continuing participation of our people and their national, political, and social forces wherever they may be in the battle for freedom, return, and independence; and to take into consideration the new situation of the Gaza Strip which makes it a true force of the steadfastness of our people and an example in the use of efficient means and methods in resisting the occupation while taking the higher interests of our people into consideration.

16. To reform, develop and modernize the Palestinian security apparatus in all its branches in a manner that allows them to better assume their task in defending the homeland and the people, and to confront aggression and occupation; to maintain security and public order, to enforce laws, to end the state of chaos and lawlessness, to end armed parades and the public display of weapons and to confiscate them as this brings considerable harm to the resistance and distorts its image and threatens the unity of Palestinian society; to coordinate and restructure the relationship between the security forces and the resistance forces and formations, and to regulate and protect the possession of weapons.

17. To call on the PLC to continue issuing laws that regulate the work of the security apparatus in its various branches and to work towards issuing a law that bans the exercise of political and partisan involvement by members of the security services, and to require them to abide by the elected political reference as defined by law.

18. To work on the expansion of the role and presence of international solidarity committees and peace-loving groups to support our people in their steadfastness and just struggle against the occupation and its practices, against settlements, the separation wall, and annexation, and to work towards the implementation of the ruling of the International Court of Justice at The Hague pertaining to the dismantlement of the separation wall and the settlements and their illegal presence.

Signed by: FATEH, HAMAS, Islamic Jihad Movement, PFLP, and DFLP.

Note: Islamic Jihad expressed reservations on the clause pertaining to the negotiations.

*Translated from Arabic by the **Palestine-Israel Journal.***