

him, such as getting personal permission from Sharon himself, and letting Sharon censor the content of the speech to be delivered by Arafat. The real problem, however, was not Sharon. It was the Bush Administration's unwillingness to put pressure on Sharon and force him to give all the assurances necessary for Arafat's safe round trip.

This prompted a serious reaction from the one Arab nation which is the leading U.S. ally and has a peace agreement with Israel—Egypt. According to the Egyptian State Information Service, President Hosni Mubarak advised the Palestinian President not to go to the summit; Mubarak, as well, did not go himself. He told an interviewer on March 27 that his advice to Yasser Arafat had actually saved the summit. "The Arab leaders would have been put in an intolerable fix had Arafat gone to Beirut and been denied access back to the Palestinian

territories, especially as the Arabs have no party to resort to in order to convince Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to allow Arafat back," Mubarak said.

Mubarak stayed away not only in solidarity with Arafat, but as a protest against the U.S. Administration's lack of interest in facilitating Arafat's participation in a summit which could bring about historic changes toward peace with Israel. Mubarak's protest action was followed by a last-minute decision by Jordan's King Abdullah also not to attend.

"The conditions set by the Israelis have turned the whole matter into a means to blackmail the Palestinian Authority and people," Mubarak said. "They do not want to implement [the] Tenet plans, for they keep making remarks to change them, and also to change [the] Mitchell recommendations, and then they come out with Zinni's paper, and later on they

Arab Summit Endorses Abdullah Peace Plan

The following resolution, entitled "The Arab Peace Initiative," was passed by the Council of Arab States during its session on March 27-28, 2002.

The Council of Arab States at the Summit Level at its Fourteenth Ordinary Session,

Reaffirming the resolution taken in June 1996 at the Cairo Extraordinary Arab Summit, that a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East is the strategic option of the Arab countries, to be achieved in accordance with international legality, and which would require a comparable commitment on the part of the Israeli government,

Having listened to the statement made by His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz, Crown Prince of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in which His Highness presented his initiative calling for full Israeli withdrawal from all the Arab territories occupied since June 1967, in implementation of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, reaffirmed by the Madrid Conference of 1991 and the land-for-peace principle, and Israel's acceptance of an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, in return for the establishment of normal relations in the context of a comprehensive peace with Israel,

Emanating from the conviction of the Arab countries that a military solution to the conflict will not achieve peace or provide security for the parties, the Council:

1. Requests Israel to reconsider its policies and declare that a just peace is its strategic option as well.

2. Further calls upon Israel to affirm:

I. Full Israeli withdrawal from all the territories occu-

pled since 1967, including the Syrian Golan Heights, to the June 4, 1967 lines, as well as the remaining occupied Lebanese territories in the south of Lebanon.

II. Achievement of a just solution to the Palestinian refugee problem to be agreed upon in accordance with UN General Assembly Resolution 194.

III. The acceptance of the establishment of a sovereign independent Palestinian state on the Palestinian territories occupied since June 4, 1967 in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

3. Consequently, the Arab countries affirm the following:

I. Consider the Arab-Israeli conflict ended, and enter into a peace agreement with Israel, and provide security for all the states of the region.

II. Establish normal relations with Israel in the context of this comprehensive peace.

4. Assures the rejection of all forms of Palestinian repatriation that conflict with the special circumstances of the Arab host countries.

5. Calls upon the government of Israel and all Israelis to accept this initiative in order to safeguard the prospects for peace and stop the further shedding of blood, enabling the Arab countries and Israel to live in peace and good neighborliness and provide future generations with security, stability, and prosperity.

6. Invites the international community and all countries and organizations to support this initiative.

7. Requests the chairman of the summit to form a special committee composed of some of its concerned member states and the secretary general of the League of Arab States to pursue the necessary contacts to gain support for this initiative at all levels, particularly from the United Nations, the Security Council, the United States of America, the Russian Federation, the Muslim states, and the European Union.