

The President
of the Arab Republic of Egypt

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Brother
Dear President Carter,

I was pleased to receive your special envoy, Ambassador Atherton and exchange views with him on how best to achieve a meaningful progress.

I am confident that he will convey to you my remarks in full.

In addition, I wanted to share with you a few thoughts and observations in keeping with the tradition we established to maintain close consultations in the interest of world peace and friendship among our two nations.

Let me congratulate you first, dear friend, on the timely ratification of the second Panama Canal treaty. Undoubtedly, this came as a testimony to the depth of the favourable sentiment towards your policy in Congress.

I am sure also that it was a true reflection of the general feeling of the American public. I believe that such a development will strengthen your hand even further in the conduct of foreign policy for the good of your people and the world at large.

As you know, I am determined to do everything I can to help the United States continue to assume a pivotal role in bringing about

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a peaceful settlement in the middle east. It was for that reason in particular that I kept the door always open, even when there were some discouraging signs on the Israeli side.

On the other hand, I have no doubt that you will continue your firm policy in pursuit of a just peace, regardless of adverse manouvers and pressures. I am sure that you know that any softening of your stand will be misinterpreted by Mr Begin. It would only whet his appetite for further erosion of the american position, thus doing the cause of peace a disservice of immense magnitude.

In the final analysis, this would lead to a stumbling bloc at this crucial turning point.

Therefore, it would be extremely beneficial if Mr Begin gets the unmistakable message that your balanced policy remains unchanged, as it is based on solid ground, and can not be said to favour the arab side, at the expense of Israel.

With regard to the declaration of principles, I am certain that you agree with

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me that it must be unambiguous and unequivocal in order to serve as a plausible and valid basis for a meaningful progress. Such a declaration can be a step forward only if it leads to the following:

First: Attracting other arab parties to join us in the process of the negotiations which is one of our common objectives.

Second: Facilitating, rather than complicating future negotiations.

To meet such a requirement, the concepts embodied in the declaration, as well as its wording should be of such a nature as to yield solutions to the remaining problems, and not to confuse the already complex issues.

The absence of such element would render the declaration in reality, and in the eyes of most arabs, a regression.

I am sure that you do not like to see that happen.

With respect to the West Bank and Gaza, we are willing to work out some detailed formulae.

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However, you know that there is a certain point beyond which we can not proceed in the absence of other arab participants. More detailed ideas can be thrown into the process as we go along in later stages.

Before concluding, let me emphasize to you the necessity for a speedy Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon. The continuation of their military presence there is an aggravating factor that inhibits progress. It forms a dark cloud that reflects a gloomy picture in the eyes of many arabs. It sheds doubt on Israeli intentions. I am certain that you will tackle this problem with the usual vision and determination.

Dear friend,

I foresee some testing days ahead. But I firmly believe that you can overcome all difficulties and eliminate various obstacles. The strength of your faith, and the soundness of your judgement can bring us closer to our goals, which have been endorsed by the overwhelming majority of people in the four corners of the world. To my mind, no one is more equipped

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or better qualified to carry out that mission than you dear friend and brother.

I pray to God almighty to give you the strength and support you are entitled to in the discharge of your awesome responsibilities

Jehan joins me with best wishes and regards to you and Rosaline

Paris,

Success
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