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# CEGI

October 16, 2007

## An Open Letter to Condoleezza Rice Please set two tables at the proposed November Peace Conference

With all due respect, may I suggest that, as you plan for the November 2007 peace negotiations to help resolve the issues between the Israelis and the Fatah, you consider setting a Table# 2 for invited business executives from Israel, the West Bank, Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and, of course, the USA to discuss business development in the area.

Why do I suggest the creation of a business Table #2 for business executives in addition to a diplomacy Table #1? I think that you will agree that strong "business to business" discussions will lead to job creation between Israelis and Palestinians. This could well be the driving force to bring about peace. Joint ventures will lead to furnishing the cement to hold the peace agreement together and move its terms forward.

I base my suggestion for creation of Table #2 for business executives on the following:

1. The Palestinians need peace via business development. A large number of Palestinians are unemployed and desperately need jobs. They want paychecks so that they can bring home bread and other food to feed their families. They expect President Abbas to develop business deals that will, not only provide jobs, but entrepreneurial opportunities for them as well. Business executives, working at Table #2 for economic development, can provide thousands of needed jobs. This is of interest to the Palestinians and Israelis.

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2. Many Israeli business executives are willing to enter joint ventures with the Palestinians. I urge you to invite the following persons to be participants at Table #2 for business executives. They can help move the peace process forward.

- ❑ Mr. Shraga Brosh, President, Manufacturers' Association of Israel
- ❑ Mr. Gunter Verheugen, Vice-President, European Commission in charge of Enterprise and Industry
- ❑ Mr. Eli Hurvitz, Chairman of the Board, Teva Pharmaceutical Industries
- ❑ Mr. Lev Leviev, Chairman, Africa Israel
- ❑ Mr. Elisha Yanay, General Manager, Motorola Israel, Ltd., and Chairman of the Board, The Israel Association of Electronics & Software Industries
- ❑ Mr. Amnon Dotan, Chairman, Federation of Bi-National Chambers of Commerce and Industry
- ❑ Mr. Greg Brown, President & Chief Operating Officer, Motorola Inc., USA
- ❑ The Honorable Bassem Awadallah, Director of the Office of His Majesty, King Abadallah the II
- ❑ Joseph Vardi
- ❑ Stef Wertheimer.

3. The Jordanians and the Egyptians have entered into economic agreements with Israel. I believe that they can present patterns of business cooperation for use at Table #2 set for business executives.

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4. Many American companies operate facilities in Israel. They could expand their production in the area by employing Palestinian labor.
5. Invite the President of Israel, Shimon Peres, to participate at both tables. Invite him to sit at Table #2 because he can present economic developments initiated by the Peres Center for Peace.
6. Invite a representative of the World Bank. Funding to accomplish the plans at Table #2 will be required. The World Bank may be the provider of start-up funds.
7. Invite business representatives of the Saudis, Bahrain, etc., to be at the Table #2. Top Palestinians and other Arab leaders have been warning that there is little point in attending a conference that doesn't produce substantive progress towards ending the Palestinian conflict. That will come through economic development in the area.
8. American corporate executives can offer job opportunities to Israelis and Palestinians. Invite a number of U.S. business executives such as Jeffrey Immelt, Chairman and CEO of General Electric; Warren Buffett; Jack Welch; the President of the U.S. Manufacturing Association; Presidents of U.S. Chambers of Commerce and others to participate in the discussions at Table #2.
9. Invite Tony Blair to participate in the Table #2 negotiations on behalf of Europe.

I suggest that you read the statement of Ed Balls, Mr. Brown's (of England) closest ally in the British Cabinet, reported in the *Financial Times* on September 18, 2007 as follows:

"As the US prepares to sponsor an international meeting in November aimed at restarting the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, Gordon Brown's government is all too aware of the political and security obstacles facing all sides."

"But launching a detailed report on the Palestinian economy in London yesterday, some of the most prominent figures in the Brown government underlined that any progress in peace talks must be underpinned by a radical improvement in economic conditions on the ground."

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The report has been written by Ed Balls, Mr. Brown's closest ally in the cabinet, and Jon Cunliffe, a senior foreign policy adviser to the prime minister. It sets out what it deems to be five "building blocks on an economic road map" that must be achieved if the economy in the West Bank and Gaza is to recover.

The authors argue that the Palestinian Authority must stabilize its economy through a credible medium-term financial action plan; it must establish a stable relationship with the Israeli economy; improve security and remove obstacles to movement; encourage Palestinian economic diversification and support the Palestinian private sector.

Mr. Balls may have been reading some of my previous articles urging economic development as an important ingredient in any peace negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

Please note the comments in *The Jerusalem Post* (September 23, 2007) in an editorial, "Here's a challenge to Israeli CEOs":

"So I pose a new challenge to the CEOs and directors of Israeli firms: Seat Jews and Arabs next to one another in front of computers – not in order to settle differences of opinion between them, but rather to encourage them to talk 'computerese' with one another to resolve software problems."

I urge you to give serious consideration to my suggestion for providing participants at Table #2. Without economic development between the Israelis and Palestinians, we can expect that there will increased mutual distrust, blockage of Palestinian exports and high unemployment in the West Bank and Israel. Without a peace agreement, many reports stress that this could lead to another intifada.

I wish you success in November as you bring the interested parties together.

Very truly yours,

*Elmer*

Elmer L. Winter  
Chairman

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P.S.: Listen to the words of Shimon Peres who stated (*International Jerusalem Post*, September 12 – 20, 2007):

“The drive to peace must follow two tracks – political and economic. The political track must be bilateral, and only bilateral – between the Israeli leadership and the Palestinian leadership – because that negotiation has to be carried out simultaneously with the other side and at home.”

P.P.S.: I suggest that you Invite Mr. Fayad to participate in the discussions at both tables. *The Jerusalem Post* reported (July 3, 2007):

“Fayad is a strong advocate of the concept of ‘one authority – one gun.’ He is aware that the single biggest challenge to his government is to ensure that what happened in Gaza does not happen in the West Bank. He is also keenly aware that any acts of terror that emanate from the West Bank and penetrate Israel will derail his attempt to stabilize the West Bank and move forward toward the creation of the political horizon that Secretary Condoleezza Rice talks about.”

**PLEASE NOTE:** All information contained in this report has been obtained from sources believed to be reliable, but the accuracy, completeness, timeliness or correct sequencing of the information is not warranted by the Committee for Economic Growth of Israel (CEGI) or Elmer Winter, or the information providers.

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