

Concept

Interim Agreement

11.1.04

Definition

The term "Interim Agreement" (9/95) (Official title: "Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement for the West Bank and Gaza Strip"; also known as "Oslo B" or "Taba Agreement") refers to the Second Interim Agreement signed between Israel and the Palestinians. The objective of this Agreement was to regulate the relations between Israel and the Palestinians during the interim period towards negotiations for a Permanent Status Agreement.

Background

The Interim Agreement is a part of the Oslo Process, which began with the Declaration of Principles (9/93). The principles of the declaration were intended to lead Israel and the Palestinians towards a Permanent Status Agreement on the basis of The Framework of Future Negotiations with the Palestinians, which was signed between Israel and Egypt as a part of the 1978 Camp David Accords.

According to the Declaration of Principles, Israel is required to gradually transfer powers and authorities to a Self-Governing Palestinian Authority over a five-year Interim Period, during which time, negotiations for a Permanent Status Agreement will commence.

According to this framework, the Gaza-Jericho Agreement (5/94) was signed between Israel and the Palestinians, which established a Self-Governing Palestinian Authority in Gaza and Jericho (the Palestinian Authority (PA)). The signing of the Gaza-Jericho Agreement (4/5/94) marked the beginning of the Interim Period.

The objective of the Interim Agreement was to regulate the relations between the parties within the aforementioned period. In fact, the Interim Agreement replaced the Gaza-Jericho Agreement as well as two additional detailed agreements dealing with the transfer of powers and authorities to the Palestinians.¹

The Interim Agreement deals with security arrangements, the elections to the Palestinian Legislative Council, transfer of authorities, justice, economics, and other joint issues.

Principles of the Agreement

- Israel's military administration will withdraw from the central cities of the West Bank.
- The West Bank and Gaza Strip will be divided into three areas: area A - jurisdiction over security and administrative responsibilities will be transferred to the Palestinians; area B - control over security will remain in Israel's hands, however, administrative duties will be transferred to the Palestinians; area C – Israel will retain security and administrative jurisdiction.²
- Israel will no longer retain administrative responsibilities in areas A and B. Administrative duties pertaining to the aforementioned territory will be assigned to the Palestinians.

¹ The transfer of authorities was specifically addressed in the "Preparatory Transfer Agreement" (8/94) and in the "Further Transfer Protocol" (8/95).

² See Article 11 – "Land".

- The West Bank and Gaza Strip will be recognized as a Single Territorial Unit, with the exception of issues that will be negotiated in Permanent Status negotiations.³
- Elections for the Palestinian Legislative Council and for the "Ra'ees" (i.e. President) of the executive authority of the Council will take place; They will be elected for a time period not exceeding five years from the signing of the "Gaza-Jericho Agreement" (5/94). The elected Palestinian Council will have legislative authority, executive authority, and the power to oversee and enforce police matters in the territories under its control; however, it will not have the authority to manage an independent foreign policy.⁴
- Except for issues that will be addressed in Permanent Status negotiations, jurisdiction over the territory of the West Bank and Gaza Strip will be transferred to the Palestinian Council. The transfer will take place gradually and will be completed within 18 months from the time of establishment of the Council.⁵
- A Palestinian police force will be established to maintain order and internal security, while Israel will retain responsibility over external security. Palestinian police officers in uniform will be authorized to carry weapons.⁶
- A joint committee including Israel, Jordan, Egypt and the Palestinians will decide the admission criteria for persons who were displaced from the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967.⁷
- Permanent Status negotiations will cover the Historical Issues between the two parties and will commence no later than May 4 1996.⁸
- Within two months of the establishment of the Council, the Palestinian National Council will convene and formally ratify the obligation of the PLO to change all relevant clauses of the Palestinian National Charter which refer to the destruction of the State of Israel.

Additional Sources

Yair P. Hirschfeld, **Oslo: A Formula for Peace**, Tel Aviv: Am Oved Ltd: , 2000, pp. 39, 159-167.

Uri Savir, **The Process**, Tel Aviv: Yediot Ahronoth/Hemed, 1998.

Itamar Rabinovich, **Waging Peace**, Israel: Or Yehuda: Dvir, 2004 pp. 39, 63-65.

End.

³ See Article 1 – "Transfer of Authority", Article 17 – "Jurisdiction", Chapter 2 – "Redeployment and Security Arrangements", and Appendix 1 – "Protocol Concerning Redeployment and Security Arrangements".

⁴ See Article 2 – "Elections", Appendix 2 – "Protocol Concerning Elections", Article 3 – "Structure of the Palestinian Council", Article 9 – "Powers and Responsibilities of the Council".

⁵ See Article 11 – "Land".

⁶ See Article 14 – "The Palestinian Police", Appendix 1 - "Protocol Concerning Redeployment and Security Arrangements".

⁷ See Article 27 – "Liaison and Cooperation with Jordan and Egypt".

⁸ See Article 31 – "Final Clauses".