



## **28 The Jarring initiative and the response- 8 February 1971**

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### **VOLUMES 1-2: 1947-1974**

## **XII. THE WAR OF ATTRITION AND CEASE FIRE**

### **28. The Jarring initiative and the response, 8 February 1971:**

*On 8 February, Ambassador Jarring sent identical letters to the Governments of Israel and Egypt. Israel was asked to give a commitment to withdraw its forces to the former Mandatory border between Palestine and Egypt, on the understanding that arrangements would be made for the freedom of navigation in the Straits of Tiran and the Suez Canal, and that demilitarized zones would be established, and that United Nations forces be stationed there. Egypt was asked to terminate claims to a state of belligerency and end all hostile acts; it was not asked to sign a peace treaty with Israel. Israel delivered its reply on 26 February, and the Egyptian Government replied on 15 February. The Jarring mission had now reached another impasse.*

I have been following with a mixture of restrained optimism and growing concern the resumed discussion under my auspices for the purpose of arriving at a peaceful settlement of the Middle East question.

My restrained optimism arises from the fact that in my view the parties are seriously defining their positions and wish to move forward to a permanent peace.

My growing concern is that each side unyieldingly insists that the other make certain commitments before being ready to proceed to the stage of formulating the provisions to be included in a final peace agreement. There is - as I see it is a serious risk that we shall find ourselves in the same deadlock as existed during the first three years of my mission.

I, therefore, feel that I should at this stage make clear my views on what I believe to be the necessary steps to be taken in order to achieve a peaceful and accepted settlement in accordance with the provisions and principles of Security Council Resolution S242/67, which the parties have agreed to carry out in all its parts.

I have come to the conclusion that the only possibility to break the imminent deadlock arising from the differing views (of) Israel and the United Arab Republic as to the priority to be given to commitments and undertakings - which seems to me to be the real cause for the present immobility - is for me to seek from each side the parallel and simultaneous commitments which seem to be inevitable prerequisites of an eventual peace settlement between them.

It should thereafter be possible to proceed at once to formulate the provisions and terms of a peace agreement not only for those topics covered by the commitments but with

equal priority for other topics and in particular the refugee question.

Specifically, I wish to request the Governments of Israel and the UAR to make to me at this stage the following prior commitments simultaneously and on condition that the other party makes its commitments, and subject to the eventual satisfactory determination of all other aspects of a peace settlement, including in particular a just settlement of the refugee problem:

Israel would give a commitment to withdraw its forces from occupied UAR territory to the former international boundary between Egypt and the British Mandate of Palestine on the understanding that satisfactory arrangements are made for:

- a. Establishing demilitarized zones;
- b. Practical security arrangements in the Sharm el-Sheikh area for guaranteeing freedom of navigation through the Straits of Tiran; and
- c. Freedom of navigation through the Suez canal.

The UAR would give a commitment to enter into a peace agreement with Israel and to make explicit therein to Israel -on a reciprocal basis - undertakings and acknowledgements covering the following subjects:

- a. Termination of all claims or states of belligerency;
- b. Respect for and acknowledgement of each other's independence;
- c. Respect for and acknowledgement of each other's right to live in peace within secure and recognised boundaries;
- d. Responsibility to do all in their power to ensure that acts of belligerency or hostility do not originate from or are not committed from within the respective territories against the population, citizens or property of the other party; and
- e. Non-interference in each other's domestic affairs.

In making the above-mentioned suggestion I am conscious that I am requesting both sides to make serious commitments, but I am convinced that the present situation requires me to take this step.

### ***The Egyptian response***

*(The UAR Government submitted the following reply to Dr. Jarring on 15 February 1971; the text was made public on 10 March 1971 by the UAR Government.)*

The UAR has informed Your Excellency that it accepts to carry out on a reciprocal basis all its obligations as provided for in Security Council Resolution 242/1967 with a view to achieving a peaceful settlement in the Middle East.

On the same basis, Israel should carry out all its obligations contained in this Resolution. Referring to your aide-memoire of February 1971, the UAR would give a commitment

covering the following:

1. Termination of all claims or states of belligerency;
2. Respect for and acknowledgement of each other's sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence.
3. Respect for and acknowledgement of each other's right to live in peace within secure and recognised boundaries.
4. Responsibility to do all in their power to ensure that acts of belligerency or hostility do not originate from or are committed from within the respective territories against the population, citizens or property of the other party; and
5. Non-interference in each other's domestic affairs.

The UAR would also give a commitment that

6. it ensures the freedom of navigation in the Suez canal in accordance with the 1888 Constantinople Convention;
7. It ensures the freedom of navigation in the Straits of Tiran in accordance with the principles of international law;
8. It accepts the stationing of a United Nations peace-keeping force in Sharm el-Sheikh.

To guarantee the peaceful settlement and the territorial inviolability of every State in the area, the UAR would accept:

- a. The establishment of demilitarized zones astride the borders in equal distances; and
- b. The establishment of a United Nations peace-keeping force in which the four permanent members of the Security Council would participate.

Israel should, likewise, give a commitment to implement all the provisions of the Security Council's Resolution 242 of 1967. Israel should give a commitment covering the following:

1. Withdrawal of its armed forces from Sinai and the Gaza Strip;
2. Achievement of a just settlement for the refugee problem in accordance with United Nations resolutions;
3. Termination of all claims or states of belligerency
4. Respect for and acknowledgement of each other's sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence;
5. Respect for and acknowledgement of each other's right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries;
6. Responsibility to do all in their power to ensure that acts of belligerency or hostility do not originate from or are committed from within the respective territories against the

population, citizens or property of the other party;

7. Non-interference in each other's domestic affairs.

To guarantee the peaceful settlement and the territorial inviolability of every State in the area, Israel should accept:

- a. The establishment of demilitarized zones astride the borders in equal distances; and
- b. The establishment of a United Nations peace-keeping force in which the four permanent members of the Security Council would participate.

When Israel gives these commitments, the UAR will be ready to enter into a peace agreement with Israel containing all the aforementioned obligations as provided for in Security Council Resolution 242.

The UAR considers that just and lasting peace cannot be realized without the full and scrupulous implementation of Security Council Resolution 242 of 1967 and the withdrawal of the Israeli armed forces from all the territories occupied since 5 June 1967.

### ***The Israeli response***

*(Israel's answer was handed to Dr. Jarring on 26 February 1971 and made public by the Israel Government on 8 March 1971.)*

Pursuant to our meetings on 8 February and 17 February, I am instructed to convey to you, and through you to the UAR, the following:

Israel views favourably the expression by the UAR of its readiness to enter into a peace agreement with Israel and reiterates that it is prepared for meaningful negotiations on all subjects relevant to a peace agreement between the two countries.

The Government of Israel wishes to state that the peace agreement to be concluded between Israel and the UAR should inter alia include the provisions set out below.

A. Israel would give undertakings covering the following:

1. Declared and explicit decision to regard the conflict between Israel and the UAR as finally ended, and termination of all claims and states of war and acts of hostility or belligerency between Israel and the UAR.
2. Respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of the UAR.
3. Respect for and acknowledgement of the right of the UAR to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries.
4. Withdrawal of Israel armed forces from the Israel-UAR cease-fire line to the secure, recognized and agreed boundaries to be established in the peace agreement. Israel will not withdraw to the pre-June 5, 1967 lines.
5. In the matter of the refugees and the claims of both parties in this connection, Israel is

prepared to negotiate with the Governments directly involved on:

- a. The payment of compensation for abandoned land and property.
- b. Participation in the planning of the rehabilitation of the refugees in the region.

Once the obligations of the parties towards the settlement of the refugee issue have been agreed, neither party shall be under claims from the other inconsistent with its sovereignty.

6. The responsibility for ensuring that no war-like act, or act of violence by any organization, group or individual originates from or is committed in the territory of Israel against the population, armed forces or property of the UAR.

7. Non-interference in the domestic affairs of the UAR.

8. Non-participation by Israel in hostile alliances against the UAR and the prohibition of stationing of troops of other parties which maintain a state of belligerency against the UAR.

B. The UAR undertakings in the peace agreement with Israel would include:

1. Declared and explicit decision to regard the conflict between the UAR and Israel as finally ended and termination of all claims and states of war and acts of hostility or belligerency between the UAR and Israel.

2. Respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Israel.

3. Respect for and acknowledgement of the right of Israel to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries to be determined in the peace agreement.

4. The responsibility for ensuring that no war-like act, or act of violence, by any organization, group or individual originates from or is committed in the territory of the UAR against the population, armed forces or property of Israel.

5. Non-interference in the domestic affairs of Israel.

6. An explicit undertaking to guarantee free passage for Israel ships and cargoes through the Suez Canal.

7. Termination of economic warfare in all its manifestations, including boycott, and of interference in the normal international relations of Israel.

8. Non-participation by the UAR in hostile alliances against Israel and the prohibition of stationing of troops of other parties which maintain a state of belligerency against Israel.

The UAR and Israel should enter into a peace agreement with each other to be expressed in a binding treaty in accordance with normal international law and precedent, and containing the above undertakings.

The Government of Israel believes that now that the UAR has through Ambassador Jarring expressed its willingness to enter into a peace agreement with Israel, and both parties have presented their basic positions, they should now pursue their negotiations in a detailed and concrete manner without prior conditions so as to cover all the points listed in their respective documents with a view to concluding a peace agreement.