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**RABIN AND ARAFAT SHAKE HANDS  
AS ISRAEL AND PLO SIGN ACCORD**

By Deborah Kalb

WASHINGTON, Sept. 13 (JTA) -- In a sight that would have been inconceivable just weeks ago, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasser Arafat shook hands at a White House ceremony commemorating the landmark peace agreement the two sides reached two weeks ago.

President Clinton presided over Monday's historic ceremony on the White House lawn, as Israeli and PLO representatives, long bitter enemies, signed an agreement that would grant limited self-rule to Palestinians, first in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho.

Several thousand dignitaries, including American Jewish and Arab leaders, crowded onto the White House lawn amid extra-tight security to witness an event that many compared to the fall of the Berlin Wall or the collapse of the Soviet Union.

In addition to signing the Gaza-Jericho agreement, Israel and the PLO have agreed formally to recognize one another.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and Mahmoud Abbas, a member of the PLO executive committee, signed the self-rule agreement, as Rabin, Arafat, Clinton, Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev looked on.

The signing took place on the same brown wooden table on which the previous landmark Arab-Israeli agreement, the Camp David accord between Israel and Egypt, was signed during the Carter administration.

The crowd, seated for most of the ceremony under bright blue skies, applauded and often stood up as each of the seven leaders delivered his remarks.

Rabin's comments, which evoked the years of war and terrorism the Israelis have undergone, were somber yet cautiously hopeful.

"We who have fought against you, the Palestinians, we say to you today, in a loud and clear voice: Enough of blood and tears -- enough!" the prime minister said to loud applause.

**A Chance To Know 'Season Of Peace'**

The fact that Rabin had led Israeli forces in the 1967 war made his comments especially noteworthy.

Many of the speakers referred to the difficult tasks ahead, involving such sensitive and critical issues as the future of Jerusalem, a city claimed by both Israelis and Palestinians.

In his remarks, Rabin referred to the city as "the ancient and eternal capital of the Jewish people," a comment that sent a ripple through the crowd.

The prime minister concluded his remarks with "Oseh Shalom," a Jewish prayer for peace.

His longtime enemy, Arafat, also spoke of the potential for peace in the Middle East.

"We will need more courage and determination to continue the course of building coexistence and peace between us. This is possible, and it will happen with mutual determination," said the PLO leader, sporting his trademark kaffiyeh.

During the ceremony, Arafat extended his hand to Rabin, who responded with a strong handshake, as the crowd applauded and rose to its feet.

In the audience were former Presidents Jimmy Carter and George Bush, Cabinet officials, members of Congress, diplomats and other dignitaries, many of whom were excitedly shaking hands and patting one another on the back before the ceremony began.

The lawn was ringed with TV camera platforms and lights, as the major networks broadcast the historic event live.

During his remarks, which began the ceremony, Clinton spoke of peace for future generations of Israelis and Palestinians.

"For too long, the young of the Middle East have been caught in a web of hatred not of their own making. For too long, they have been taught from the chronicles of war. Now we can give them the chance to know the season of peace," the president said.

Present in the audience, clad in green T-shirts, were several dozen Arab and Israeli youngsters from the Seeds of Peace program, designed to bring the two groups together.

Clinton spoke of the U.S. commitment to the Middle East peace process, which also involves Israeli negotiations with Syria, Lebanon and Jordan.

"I pledge the active support of the United States of America to the difficult work that lies ahead," the president said. "The United States is committed to ensuring that the people who are affected by this agreement will be made more secure by it, and to leading the world in marshaling the resources necessary to implement the difficult details."

**'A Sense Of Great Excitement'**

Peres, in his remarks, said that "we will convert the bitter triangle of Jordanians, Palestinians and the Israelis into a triangle of political triumph and economic prosperity."

And Abbas said that "peaceful coexistence and cooperation are the only means for reaching understanding and for realizing the hopes of the Palestinians and the Israelis."

Both Arafat and Abbas spoke in Arabic with interpreters, while the other leaders spoke in English. Also speaking were Christopher and Kozyrev. The Russians have served, along with the Americans, as co-sponsors of the peace process.

Many thanks were offered to the Norwegian government, which sponsored the secret talks between Israelis and Palestinians that led to the breakthrough.

Jewish organizational leaders attending the ceremony voiced cautious optimism about the agreement.

"There is a sense of great excitement, tempered by the sobering actions of terrorism in the region yesterday," said Lester Pollack, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.

Rabbi Marvin Hier, dean of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, described Monday's event as "the engagement party. Everyone showed up, but whether the two people are compatible to live

together depends on what happens now in Jericho and Gaza.

"The event today was strong enough," he said, that the situation will "never be able to go back to politics as usual in the Middle East."

"The agreement is based on trust. While one has to feel good about this start, it is only a beginning, and now the difficult work will begin," said Dan Mariaschin, director of international, governmental and Israel affairs for B'nai B'rith.

"There must be trust on both sides" for the accord to work, said United Jewish Appeal President Marvin Lender.

"This is peace, change and a sign of the times," said Alan Tichnor, president of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. "It has to be done."

Across the street from the White House, in Lafayette Park, a large crowd of demonstrators, many of them members of the Chabad movement of Lubavitcher Hasidim, voiced their displeasure with the peace agreement.

Arab protesters demonstrated down the block.

## TEXT OF RABIN'S REMARKS

*WASHINGTON, Sept. 13 (JTA) -- Following is the full text of remarks made by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin at Monday's White House signing ceremony.*

President Clinton, the president of the United States, your excellencies, ladies and gentlemen. This signing of the Israeli-Palestinian declaration of principles here today, it's not so easy, neither for myself as a soldier in Israel's war, nor for the people of Israel, nor for the Jewish people in the Diaspora who are watching us now with great hope mixed with apprehension.

It is certainly not easy for the families of the victims of the wars, violence, terror, whose pain will never heal; for the many thousands who defended our lives in their own and have even sacrificed their lives for our own. For them, this ceremony has come too late.

Today, on the eve of an opportunity, opportunity for peace, and perhaps end of violence and wars, we remember each and every one of them with everlasting love.

We have come from Jerusalem, the ancient and eternal capital of the Jewish people. We have come from an anguished and grieving land. We have come from a people, a home, a family that has not known a single year, not a single month, in which mothers have not wept for their sons.

We have come to try and put an end to the hostilities so that our children, our children's children, will no longer experience the painful cost of war, violence and terror. We have come to secure their lives and to ease the sorrow and the painful memories of the past, to hope and pray for peace.

Let me say to you, the Palestinians, we are destined to live together on the same soil, in the same land. We, the soldiers who have returned from battles stained with blood; we who have seen our relatives and friends killed before our eyes; we who have attended their funerals and cannot look into the eyes of their parents; we who have come from a land where parents bury their children; we who have fought against you, the Palestinians, we say to you today, in a loud and clear voice: "Enough of blood and tears. Enough!"

We have no desire for revenge, we harbor no hatred toward you. We, like you, are people -- people who want to build a home, to plant a tree, to love, live side by side with you in dignity, in affinity, as human beings, as free men.

We are today giving peace a chance and saying to you -- and saying again to you, "Enough."

Let us pray that a day will come when we all will say farewell to the arms. We wish to open a new chapter in the sad book of our lives together, a chapter of mutual recognition, of good neighborliness, of mutual respect, of understanding. We hope to embark on a new era in the history of the Middle East.

Today, here in Washington at the White House, we will begin a new awakening in the relations between peoples, between parents tired of war, between children who will not know war.

President of the United States, ladies and gentlemen, our inner strength, our higher moral values have been derived for thousands of years from the Book of the Books, in one of which, Kohelet, we read:

"To every thing there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven. A time to be born and a time to die, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to love and a time to hate, a time of war and a time of peace."

Ladies and gentlemen, the time for peace has come.

In two days, the Jewish people will celebrate the beginning of a new year. I believe, I hope, I pray that a new year will bring a message of redemption for all peoples: a good year for you, for all of you; a good year for Israelis and Palestinians; a good year for all the peoples of the Middle East; a good year for our American friends, who so want peace and are helping to achieve it. For presidents and members of previous administrations, especially for you, President Clinton, and your staff, for all citizens of the world, may peace come to all your homes.

In the Jewish tradition, it is customary to conclude our prayers with the word "Amen" -- as you say, "Amen." With your permission, men of peace, I shall conclude with words taken from the prayer recited by Jews daily, and whoever of you volunteer, I would ask the entire audience to join me in saying "Amen."

*Oseh shalom bimromav, hu ya'aseh shalom, aleinu va'al kol Yisrael, v'imru Amen.*

## TEXT OF ARAFAT'S REMARKS

*WASHINGTON, Sept. 13 (JTA) -- Following is the full English translation of remarks made in Arabic by Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasser Arafat at Monday's White House signing ceremony.*

In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Passionate. Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to express our tremendous appreciation to President Clinton and to his administration for sponsoring this historic event, which the entire world has been waiting for.

Mr. President, I am taking this opportunity to assure you and to assure the great American people that we share your values for freedom, justice and human rights -- values for which my people have been striving.

My people are hoping that this agreement which we are signing today marks the beginning

of the end of a chapter of pain and suffering which has lasted throughout this century.

My people are hoping that this agreement which we are signing today will usher in an age of peace, coexistence and equal rights. We are relying on your role, Mr. President, and on the role of all the countries which believe that without peace in the Middle East, peace in the world will not be complete.

Enforcing the agreement and moving toward the final settlement, after two years, to implement all aspects of U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338 in all of their aspects, and resolve all the issues of Jerusalem, the settlements, the refugees and the boundaries will be a Palestinian and an Israeli responsibility.

It is also the responsibility of the international community in its entirety to help the parties overcome the tremendous difficulties which are still standing in the way of reaching a final and comprehensive settlement.

Now, as we stand on the threshold of this new historic era, let me address the people of Israel and their leaders, with whom we are meeting today for the first time, and let me assure them that the difficult decision we reached together was one that required great and exceptional courage.

We will need more courage and determination to continue the course of building coexistence and peace between us. This is possible, and it will happen with mutual determination and with the effort that will be made with all parties on all the tracks to establish the foundations of a just and comprehensive peace.

Our people do not consider that exercising the right to self-determination could violate the rights of their neighbors or infringe on their security.

Rather, putting an end to their feelings of being wronged and of having suffered an historic injustice is the strongest guarantee to achieve coexistence and openness between our two peoples and future generations.

Our two peoples are awaiting today this historic hope, and they want to give peace a real chance.

Such a shift will give us an opportunity to embark upon the process of economic, social and cultural growth and development, and we hope that international participation in that process will be extensive as it can be. This shift will also provide an opportunity for all forms of cooperation on a broad scale and in all fields.

I thank you, Mr. President. We hope that our meeting will be a new beginning for fruitful and effective relations between the American people and the Palestinian people.

I wish to thank the Russian Federation and President Boris Yeltsin. Our thanks also go to Secretary Christopher and Foreign Minister Kozyrev, to the government of Norway and to the foreign minister of Norway for the positive part they played in bringing about this major achievement.

I extend greetings to all the Arab leaders, our brothers and to all the world leaders who contributed to this achievement.

Ladies and gentlemen, the battle for peace is the most difficult battle of our lives. It deserves our utmost efforts because the land of peace, the land of peace yearns for a just and comprehensive peace. Thank you.

Mr. President, thank you, thank you, thank you.

## EXCERPTS OF CLINTON'S REMARKS

*WASHINGTON, Sept. 13 (JTA) -- Following are excerpts of remarks made by President Clinton at Monday's White House signing ceremony.*

... Today we bear witness to an extraordinary act in one of history's defining dramas, a drama that began in a time of our ancestors when the word went forth from a sliver of land between the River Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea. That hallowed piece of earth, and land of life and revelation is the home to the memories and dreams of Jews, Muslims and Christians throughout the world.

As we all know, devotion to that land has also been the source of conflict and bloodshed for too long. Throughout this century, bitterness between the Palestinian and Jewish people has robbed the entire region of its resources, its potential, and too many of its sons and daughters.

The land has been so drenched in warfare and hatred, and conflicting claims of history etched so deeply in the souls of the combatants there, that many believe the past would always have the upper hand.

Then, 14 years ago, the past began to give way when, at this place and upon this desk, three men of great vision signed their names to the Camp David Accord. Today we honor the memories of Menachem Begin and Anwar Sadat, and we salute the wise leadership of President Jimmy Carter.

Then, as now, we heard from those who said that conflict would come again soon. But the peace between Egypt and Israel has endured. Just so, this bold, new venture today, this brave gamble that the future can be better than the past must endure. . . .

Today, the leadership of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization will sign a declaration of principles on interim Palestinian self-government. It charts a course toward reconciliation between two peoples who have both known the bitterness of exile. Now both pledge to put old sorrows and antagonisms behind them and to work for a shared future, shaped by the values of the Torah, the Koran and the Bible. . . .

A peace of the brave is within our reach. Throughout the Middle East, there is a great yearning for the quiet miracle of a normal life. We know a difficult road lies ahead. Every peace has its enemies, those who prefer the easy habits of hatred to the hard labors of reconciliation.

But Prime Minister Rabin has reminded us that you do not have to make peace with your friends. And the Koran teaches that if the enemy inclines toward peace, do thou also incline toward peace.

Therefore, let us resolve that this new mutual recognition will be a continuing process in which the parties transform the very way they see and understand each other.

Let the skeptics of this peace recall what once existed among these people. There was a time when the traffic of ideas and commerce and pilgrims flowed uninterrupted among the cities of the fertile crescent.

In Spain, in the Middle East, Muslims and Jews once worked together to write brilliant chapters in the history of literature and science. All this can come to pass again.

Mr. Prime Minister, Mr. Chairman, I pledge the active support of the United States of America to the difficult work that lies ahead. . . .

# **PROGRESS REPORTED ON OTHER FRONTS AS CLINTON MEETS WITH RABIN, ARAFAT** **By Deborah Kalb and Steven Weiss**

WASHINGTON, Sept. 13 (JTA) -- Once the historic Israeli-Palestinian agreement was signed this week, Middle Eastern and American diplomats engaged in a flurry of diplomatic activity designed to move toward the next step in the peace process.

Monday's successful signing ceremony between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization has paved the way for more progress on the Israeli-Palestinian front, as well as in Israeli negotiations with other Arab countries.

The signing of the Israeli-Palestinian agreement for limited Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho was accompanied by rounds of meetings involving President Clinton, Secretary of State Warren Christopher, and Israeli and Palestine Liberation Organization leaders in town for the ceremony.

Clinton met Monday afternoon separately with both Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, who, until last week, was not even permitted to visit Washington.

In addition Monday, Clinton held an unusual joint session with Jewish and Arab American leaders.

One participant said that the president emphasized three actions necessary for the furtherance of peace.

First, the administration would approach Congress about the importance of security and economic aid to the region. Second, Clinton would seek the economic assistance of private citizens. And third, he would fully support the courageous decisions made by the Israelis and the Palestinians.

Also present at the meeting were Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Vice President Al Gore.

At the State Department, meanwhile, Christopher hosted a luncheon Monday in honor of the agreement, and among the guests were Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and PLO official Mahmoud Abbas.

## **Commitment To Israel's Security**

At the luncheon, Christopher pledged the United States' "unshakable commitment to Israel's security and well-being."

"Let us raise our glasses to the Israelis and the Palestinians and to all of those who helped make today's achievement possible. We affirm with this toast that even what had seemed to be the most intractable problem can be overcome," the secretary said.

Both American and Israeli leaders emphasized Monday the importance of the American role in helping to implement the Israeli-Palestinian agreement.

Rabin told reporters Monday afternoon that he thought Clinton "expressed his readiness to assist in the implementation, especially by minimizing Israel's security risk."

Rabin said that at his private lunch with Clinton on Monday, the two leaders discussed the readiness of the United States to play its part in the continuing peace process.

"We did not reach yet conclusions," said Rabin.

Clinton also met Monday with Arafat, as did Christopher. During the Clinton-Arafat meeting, the president reportedly told Arafat that quick

actions were needed to implement the Israeli-Palestinian agreement.

Prior to his meeting with Christopher, Arafat told reporters that Monday was "one of the most important days" of his political life.

He said the two officials would discuss how they could "coordinate and help to push forward the implementation of this agreement."

A senior administration official told reporters that the administration would seek international support for implementing the agreement.

"This is an international responsibility," the official continued, "but we will be working with the others," including Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf states.

Another country possibly willing to provide financial assistance to the region is Japan.

Not only was progress evident on the Palestinian front Monday, but on Tuesday, Israeli and Jordanian officials were expected to announce agreement on a joint agenda for the peace talks.

Jordanian official Marwan Muasher, appearing on CNN's "Newsday" program, said Monday that Jordan and Israel would "initial an agenda" for the two sides to negotiate.

Jordan and Israel have long been rumored to be close to an agreement, and the rapid progress between Israel and the Palestinians appears to be rubbing off on the Israeli negotiations with Jordan, Syria and Lebanon.

Muasher said the two sides would discuss issues including refugees, land and water, and "future fields in which we and Israel would cooperate after the rights issues are resolved."

## **ARAFAT IS INVITED TO E.C. MEETING, TO STUDY PALESTINIAN ECONOMY NEEDS** **By Joseph Kopel**

BRUSSELS, Sept. 13 (JTA) -- Having won recognition from Israel and at least a partial blessing from the United States, Yasser Arafat has now been invited to address the leadership of the European Community for the first time.

All 12 E.C. foreign ministers agreed to invite the Palestine Liberation Organization leader to Brussels, diplomatic sources said following an informal meeting of the ministers held last weekend in the eastern Belgian town of Alden Biesen.

This will be the first official encounter between the E.C. member states and the PLO chief. The proposal to invite Arafat came from British Foreign Minister Douglas Hurd.

Although no date has been set yet for the meeting, a source said it would take place "in the near future."

The sources reporting the story said the E.C. will also invite an Israeli government delegation to Brussels, which is the E.C. headquarters.

The E.C. reportedly wants to study the economic prospects created by the Israel-PLO agreement on Palestinian autonomy in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho, which was signed Monday in Washington.

Last week, the E.C. Executive Commission unveiled a \$500 million, five-year financial aid package for the Palestinians to "give a push" to the peace process.

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Because of the significance of the developments in the Middle East peace process, today's JTA Daily News Bulletin has been expanded to eight pages.

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