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Report on the Visit to the Soviet Union by the Palestine Liberation Organization Delegation

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Summary:

Report on the meeting between Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) delegation and the Soviet Union on the situation in the Middle East. The Soviet Union emphasizes their position on anti-imperialist action in Arab lands and on strengthening the relationship between Arab states.

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REPORT

on the visit to the Soviet Union by the Palestine Liberation Organization delegation, headed by Y. Arafat, on 12-14 November of this year

The Palestinian delegation, composed of the leading members of the Executive Committee of the PLO and leaders of the most important Palestinian organizations, was received in Moscow by the request of Y. Arafat, who wanted to consult with us regarding the situation in the Middle East on the eve of the all-Arab summit conference in Tunis.

During the course of the talks with the Palestinians, we maintained the principled line, coordinated with friends, for socialist cooperation in Middle Eastern matters. It was emphasized that the Soviet Union is unswervingly dedicated to reaching an all-encompassing settlement that would provide for the liberation of the Arab lands captured by Israel in 1967, the protection of the legal rights of the Arab people of Palestine, including their right to establish their own state, and the guarantee of the rights of all countries of this region for independent development and security. We are not just in favor of any settlement, but a fair settlement, reflecting the fundamental interests of the people of the Middle East. This is the very essence of our policy on Middle Eastern matters.

Having affirmed our well-known view toward the separate Egyptian-Israeli treaty as a pro-imperialist, anti-Arab action, we stated directly that the plan for the so-called "administrative autonomy," currently being discussed between Israel, Egypt and the USA, is a betrayal of Arab interests and an attempt to legalize Israeli occupation of Arab and Palestinian lands. However the initiators of this plan try to embroider it, the fact remains that it is indeed they who stand in the way of the establishment of an independent Palestinian state and the realization of other inalienable rights of the Palestinians.

We focused particular attention on the importance of strengthening the unity between the Arab countries and the mobilization of their efforts in the struggle against defeatism and the policy of separate deals. The decisions of the Baghdad conferences serve, in our opinion, as a good foundation for collective Arab action in this direction. We expressed our hope that the conference in Tunis will also assist in the realization of the task faced by the Arabs--to destroy the separate agreement.

The Palestinians were openly told that this can be achieved if the PLO, Syria and other progressive Arab states act with cohesion and coordination, bringing other Arab countries to their side. In this respect, of great importance is the work of such countries as Jordan and Saudi Arabia, which, particularly in recent times, has brought in a positive addition to Arab unity.

On our part, we decisively condemned Israel's continuing aggressive actions in Lebanon and its attempts to interfere in the internal affairs of this country. We warned the Palestinians of the danger of the American plans for a so-called settlement in Lebanon and of their intentions to internationalize the Lebanese question, which are spearheaded against the PLO, Syria and even Lebanon itself.

Right now it is most important, in our view, to put an end to Israeli aggression and not to allow the destruction of the Palestinian resistance movement. Much here depends

on the coordinated actions of the PLO and Syria, as well as other progressive countries. The more cohesively the Arab states act in this matter, the more carefully will the Israeli aggressors have to conduct themselves.

Y. Arafat affirmed with strong statements the decisiveness of the PLO to continue a course of opposition of the separate agreement and the defeatist policy of Sadat, emphasizing the importance of further strengthening of Arab states' unity on the platform of the Baghdad conferences. According to him, the economic sanctions against the Sadat regime, adopted during these conferences, have been carried out at 90 per cent and continue to do their work. The Palestinians intend to pursue the unswerving continuation of the political and economic isolation of Sadat by the Arab countries. In Y. Arafat's opinion, the conference in Tunis must also be dedicated to this task.

Y. Arafat focused particular attention to south Lebanon, where, in his words, Israel, with the USA's support, is carrying out an open "war of impoverishment" against the Palestinians. The Palestinians are also concerned by the increasing attempts to impose a settlement of the Lebanese crisis at the expense of the Palestinian resistance movement in Lebanon. He characterized the American plans on this account as a Lebanese Camp David. Their purpose, according to Y. Arafat, consists of forcing the Palestinians out of Lebanon and foisting on this country a separate agreement with Israel. He said that the PLO, Syria and other progressive Arab countries intend to speak out at the conference in Tunis against the realization of such schemes.

Touching on the latest events in Iran, Y. Arafat noted that the PLO does not intend to act in the role of an intermediary between the Iranian government and the USA in connection with the takeover of the American embassy in Tehran, and that its sympathies are entirely on the side of the Iranian revolution.

In all, we view the talks with Y. Arafat as positive. They reaffirmed the closeness of the positions of the Soviet Union and the PLO on fundamental questions concerning the situation in the Middle East.