

From: Ziyad Clot
Sent: Thursday, July 24, 2008 3:59 AM
To: Ziyad Clot; Zeinah Salahi; LPU
Subject: RE: Jerusalem / Refugees: way forward

?

I understand that everybody is incredibly busy these days.

Still, I think this is important.

Merci !

Z.

From: Ziyad Clot
Sent: mercredi 23 juillet 2008 13:54
To: Zeinah Salahi
Cc: LPU
Subject: Jerusalem / Refugees: way forward
Importance: High

Zeinah,

1- Refugees

As you know, SE decided to share our position on refugees very early in the negotiation process with the Israelis. He was willing to show to the US the Palestinians' serious intentions to engage on the core issues. At the same time, he also did not feel that he had the expertise to handle real (oral) negotiations with the Israelis on this and preferred to proceed via an exchange of Is/Ps with T. Becker.

In parallel, AM offered an extremely low proposal for the number of returnees to Israel a few weeks only after the start of the process.

However, in the scope of the SE-TB track, we have not given away anything despite the pressure put by the Israelis, and now the US, and despite a very awkward and dangerous process (these exchanges of papers between TB & SE). The Israelis have also recently accepted the structure we have suggested for the Article on refugees (recognition of refugee rights and then implementation, rather than implementation via the international mechanism).

I remain convinced that the refugee file remains one of Israel's main concerns but that they believe that they can get a good deal on this considering the Palestinian leadership's weaknesses and the US recent involvement on the issue.

Strategically, it is in our best interest to keep the discussion over the substance of the file until the end in order to avoid giving any guarantee to the Israelis before we have a more

precise idea of what the PLO might be able to get regarding the other files (??), and on Jerusalem, in particular.

We have now reached a point where a lot of pressure is going to be put on AM, AA and SE on the refugee file, with the US acting in support of Israeli interests. There is clear risk that SE and AA will have no choice but to comply with US instructions and discuss the issue under the conditions imposed by the US.

2- Jerusalem

On the contrary, until now, **the Israelis have not given us any indication as to what they could accept for Jerusalem.**

It is the PLO position that Jerusalem is part of the package and that no agreement will be signed if this question is not included.

I think that it has now become urgent to say to the US and the Israelis that the Palestinians will not discuss further the refugee issue before the Israelis engage seriously on Jerusalem.

I would appreciate to have LPU's views on this before tonight. This point could be made to SE during the meeting tomorrow. In my view, SE and AA should stick to this position during their meetings in DC.

Best,

Ziyad