

ACTION COPY


Middle East S



Note to Mr. Nambiar

SUMMARY OF QUARTET REPRESENTATIVE BLAIR'S LETTER

1. Please find attached a short summary of the letter received from Quartet Representative Blair today.


B. Lynn Pascoe
18 September 2009



Already given to SG before his mtg w/ Blair. NFA.
22/09

QUARTET REPRESENTATIVE BLAIR UPDATE ON TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE

Quartet Representative (QR) Blair's letter of 17 September provides a progress report on the core issues of his plan for transformative change in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) since the last Quartet meeting in Trieste. It describes the following main aspects of his agenda to improve Palestinian livelihoods:

- Increasing movement and access;
- Enabling economic development, including "flagship projects" and the use of Area C;
- Supporting continued Palestinian governance reform, rule of law and autonomous Palestinian security control; and
- Delivering a new approach on Gaza.

QR Blair first notes that the procedural machinery to deliver on this agenda is being re-established, most particularly the recent meeting of the Joint Economic Committee between the Government of Israel (GoI) and Palestinian Authority (PA).

The letter then addresses progress on the ground. QR Blair welcomes Israel's recent steps to improve movement and access in the West Bank, but adds that economic growth can only be sustained by a further easing of movement restrictions. The letter also welcomes PM Fayyad's state-building agenda and indicates that the OQR is positioned to directly support this. It further notes continued improvements in Palestinian security capacity, but states that legal and justice sector reform has not kept pace.

Turning to less positive news, QR Blair highlights the limited progress on two flagship projects: Wataniya (the second proposed Palestinian mobile operator) and Rawabi (the first new Palestinian town in modern times). The letter also elaborates on how Israeli restrictions on planning in Area C and the lack of resolution of property issues are inhibiting the realization of a number of key economic projects.

Finally, on Gaza, QR Blair describes the situation as highly combustible and unsustainable in the medium term. He expresses disappointment over the lack of GoI approval for the UN reconstruction package and states that no substantive change in GOI policy towards closure in Gaza appears possible as long as Cpl Shalit remains in captivity.