

Statement By World Bank President James D. Wolfensohn On His Appointment As Special Envoy For Gaza Disengagement

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WASHINGTON, April 14, 2005—World Bank President James D. Wolfensohn Thursday made the following statement on his appointment by the Quartet Principals as Special Envoy for Gaza Disengagement:

"I am deeply honored to have been appointed by the Quartet as Special Envoy for Gaza Disengagement. I believe that there is no more important issue for global peace than an equitable and secure solution to this problem. I look forward to assisting the Israelis and the Palestinians as they strive to reach and implement a peaceful solution that restores hope and confidence to the people of the region."

Earlier today, the following statement was released by the Quartet Principals.

SPECIAL ENVOY FOR GAZA DISENGAGEMENT

The Quartet Principals (US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, and UN Secretary General Kofi Annan) announce the appointment of Mr. James D. Wolfensohn as Special Envoy for Gaza Disengagement.

The Special Envoy is charged by the Quartet with leading, overseeing and coordinating the international community's efforts in support of the disengagement initiative. He will report to the Quartet.

The Special Envoy will be the single international interlocutor at the political level on disengagement and the address for specific needs for assistance to support disengagement. The Special Envoy will work with the Palestinians on specific reforms and steps to promote economic recovery and growth, democracy, good governance and transparency, job creation and improved living standards.

The Special Envoy's mission is to promote coordination and cooperation between the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority on implementation of Israel's disengagement initiative from Gaza and parts of the northern West Bank. This mission does not extend to the military and security aspects of disengagement.

This will require close collaboration with both Israel and the Palestinians to identify and implement those actions and policies to ensure smooth and successful implementation of the disengagement initiative.

The Special Envoy will focus his efforts on two areas in particular:

- Methodology of withdrawal, including disposition of assets.
- Economic issues related to post-withdrawal revival of the Palestinian economy, including investment and financing issues

The Special Envoy will assume his duties effective June 1 for a mission lasting no longer than December 31, 2005. In view of the urgency of this mission, and taking into consideration the role the World Bank already plays in this process, its Board has authorized Mr. Wolfensohn to conduct some preparatory work immediately.

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