

Taba Statement, 21 October 1993.

The negotiations in Taba focused attention on Security, the size of the Palestinian police force, its authority, the protection of Israeli settlements, the size of the Jericho area, control of the Jordan River bridges and related issues. A major problem was the release of Palestinian prisoners. The following statement describes the prisoners' categories and their gradual release. It was made clear by Israel that those involved with serious cases of terrorism, or "with blood on their hands, will not be released Text:

The Confidence-Building Measures sub-committee, in its meetings yesterday and today, discussed mutual measures in order to build confidence between the two peoples. An agenda on matters of common concern, to be dealt with in the following meetings, has been agreed upon. The release of prisoners will be implemented gradually and continually. As a first step, it was decided that the release of prisoners in the following categories will begin next week: A) prisoners who are ill; B) prisoners below the age of 18; C) prisoners over the age of 50; and D) women prisoners. The next meeting will deal with other categories. Both sides expressed the hope that this first step will contribute to the advancement of the peace process and to the prevention of violence.

In response to questions, the Israeli delegation spokesman issued the following clarifications: People in the above categories who were involved in severe cases of terrorism will not be released. The cases of prisoners in other categories will be discussed in the ongoing talks at Taba.