

Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni:

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my honor to be here tonight and I will speak about the Middle East, I mean after the war in Lebanon of course, but I will refer to the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestinians as well. So it is as I said a pleasure to be here.

As you know, Israel is a country that receives a great deal of international attention far exceeding its size. Some of this attention is positive, some less so, and all of it makes the task of foreign minister very challenging.

Throughout history this tiny piece of land has been at a crossroad between cultures, values, and conflicts and it is no less so today. Too often, however, the analysis of events in the Middle East tends to be confused. Symptoms are mistaken for causes and too often decisions are made based on images rather than reality.

I believe that in order to make wise decisions, prudent decisions, especially in the Middle East, it is often necessary to take an outsider point of view – a kind of an alien point of view – because we need to rise above daily events and try to identify processes and trends in order to define and to make the right decisions and we must try as much as possible to be guided by principle rather than subjective emotions.

On this basis I would like to try something a little unorthodox with you today. I would like to speak first at a level of principle and consider together with you how these principles should be applied to the troubled difficult reality in the Middle East. So I'll speak now in terms of principles, but I will try to translate it into the situation of the Middle East.

Principle 1: The first principle is an understanding that the world faces conflicts over values, not over territory. Anyone observing the present global situation sees that today's conflicts are really about values. As Prime Minister Blair had said, this is not so much a clash between nations or religions, but between moderates and extremists, between those who are tolerant of differences and those who reject the legitimacy of any ideology but their own. This conflict crosses borders. As we have seen in the case of global terrorism – and I will translate this principle to the players in our regions – and because this is also important to understand that because this is a clash of values alliances in this conflict are not necessarily based on religious, national, or ethnic identity.

And I will give just a few examples referring to the war in Lebanon. Israel was attacked by Hizbullah from Lebanon – an unprovoked attack – and it was clear that we share the same interest. I mean Israel, the moderates in Lebanon -- especially Siniora and his group in the Lebanese government, the international community, and the moderate Palestinians. So we share the same interest and the idea was to transfer Lebanon into what is called a normal state and not a state which was controlled by Hizbullah, a militia which represents the Iranian interest in the region.

When we are looking at the Israeli-Palestinian conflict I believe that we can see the same interest between Israel and between Abu Mazen/Mahmoud Abbas, who is the

president of the Palestinian Authority, believes like most of the Israelis in a two-state solution, but unfortunately he also has to face the extremist Hamas, which won the elections about a year ago. And I believe that the interest of Israel, the interest of Abu Mazen, and the interest of the international community -- plus the interest of moderate Arab leaders in our region -- are the same interest. So we share the same interest and we can share the same goals and the same processes only if we can understand that we share the same interest and the same goals.

And when we are talking about moderate Arab states or moderate Arab leaders, of course they are facing forces of extremism and radicalism within their own states and I believe that nobody wants to see the success of Hamas in the Palestinian Authority in an understanding that [the] Hamas leadership is not only a threat to Israel, it's not only a threat to the moderate Palestinian society, but it is also or can be a threat and it can send a wrong message to the extremists within these moderate Arab states.

This is the understanding and I believe in trying to find out what is the common-denominator between the moderates in our region when it comes to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and I believe that the vision of two-state solution is the common-denominator between all of us, I mean between Israel and I believe that I represent not only the current Israeli government but [the] vast majority of Israeli public and we all believe in [a] two-state solution, the moderates in the Palestinian society and moderate Arab states.

Now we have to understand also that, as long as the extremists have the power to torpedo the chances for peace, we cannot achieve stability in the Middle East. These forces have a strategic and ideological interest in sabotaging the two-state solution, so the next understanding is that, and this is why the view that the Israeli-Palestinian is the cause of extremism is misleading. I know that this view is popular, especially in Europe, but the truth is that the conflicts in the Middle East are a consequence, not a cause, of radicalism and terrorism.

So the conclusion and the challenge that we face is to empower the moderates who share our values, who share our goals and interests, and disempower the extremists who threaten us all or threaten them. This is of course something that we are all talking about. It is easy to say -- more difficult to find out what is the best way to strengthen the moderates in our region and I will refer to it later.

Principle 2: The second principle is that radical forces are empowered by rogue states that export extremism and weak states that incubate or tolerate it. Now few factors are more effective in empowering extremists than the assistance provided by -- I will call it [a] dysfunctional state.

We can see it in two different types of states. The prime example is of the rogue state and I will take the example of Iran. I mean we are talking about a leader, about a regime who denies the Holocaust, mocks the Holocaust, has his own idea of wiping Israel off the map, supports terrorism while pursuing the nuclear weapon to do so. I mean this is the vision and this is the meaning of a rogue state.

On the other hand – and I will use again the example of Lebanon, which is a good example of a weak state – and the war in Lebanon. We faced during the war in Lebanon a situation in which a rogue state was using a proxy Hizbullah and the fact that Lebanon is a weak state in order to attack Israel. So this is the understanding, this is the principle, and it is crucial and the application in the region is insisting on responsible and functioning statehood. This is critical in order to face extremism and in order to achieve I hope peace and stability in the Middle East and I would like to take these two examples that I used before, Iran and Lebanon and I will also refer to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as well.

In the case of Iran it means that this is / it means an end to hesitation – there needs [to be an] end to excuses in a way. It means that the international community has to put the needed sanctions, not soft ones, on the Iranians, because it is crucial that the international community will be willing to defend its own values more [than to] protect the price of oil.

I would like to say also a few words about the Iranian issue from another perspective and it is also important to understand: The problem is of course - the Iranian problem - this is not only the [Israeli] / it's not only a threat to Israel and I believe that it is well understood right now that Iran is a threat to the world but it is also a threat to the region. I referred before to the moderate Arab states, to the states which are facing this threat in the region and this is the common understanding right now.

Now our concern is that as a result to the Iranian threat some of other states in the region will try to achieve this nuclear capacity in the future. We are talking in the future about proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, not only to states but to terrorist organizations in our region, and I hope that the possibility will not be in the future to be part of an axis against Iran but part of my concern is that in the future, if the international community is not strong enough, so we will face some states that will try to appease Iran in order to gain the protection of the bully of the neighbourhood in a way.

In the case of Lebanon, what is needed of course is ensuring full implementation of Resolution 1701. There is a need to release the two abducted soldiers and there is a need to enforce fully and completely the arms embargo and this is something which is the role and the task of the international community. I believe that Resolution 1701 represents as well the interest of the moderates in the region as I stated before and there is - this is also an example - a need to help weak leaders and it is clear that Siniora, who is in a way the achievement of the international community in the last few years in Lebanon, is too weak to act alone against Hizbullah or Syria in Lebanon.

In the case of the Palestinians, this means that we have a common interest in ensuring the establishment of a responsible and viable Palestinian state side by side, that will live I hope side by side, in peace side by side with Israel – a state that will end the conflict - and I believe that when we are talking about interest in the region this is not a zero sum game. Not every Israeli interest is anti-Palestinian interest. As I said before, those who believe in a two-state solution share the same interest and we should work together in order to find out what is the best process to promote this future Palestinian state.

But not less important, I speak not only about statehood but about a responsible, viable, Palestinian state that will not transfer into a rogue state, terror state, or weak state that will be used by terrorist organizations or other rogue states in the region.

The third principle: I will refer now to weak leaders: Moderate leaders are strengthened more by international demands that they live up to their basic obligations rather than by international concessions that they do not have to. And I know that it is tempting to embrace the weak ones and unfortunately in our region moderate leaders are weak leaders unfortunately or being perceived as weak. So the desire to strengthen and sympathise with their needs is tempting, but on the other hand, especially when it comes to weak leaders, the role of the international community is to be strong enough in the demands from the weak leaders because it makes it easier [for] this leader to make these demands from the extremists and not to compromise with the extremists within their own states or society and I will take this principle and I will transfer it into examples of course in our region.

Lebanon – the first example of course: There is a need as I said before of full implementation of Resolution 1701 and I'll just give you another example from Resolution 1701.

During the negotiations on the draft of 1701 we asked to take three words off this resolution and the three words were "at its request" and I will explain. When it comes to the need of the international community to send forces and to help the Lebanese government to exercise its sovereignty on the south part of Lebanon, it was clear that this is part of the resolution, that international forces are going to come and help the Lebanese government in order to exercise its sovereignty in the south part of Lebanon. When it comes to the arms embargo, especially on the Syrian-Lebanese border, it was clear that help is needed because it was clear that Siniora is too weak to enforce the arms embargo, especially on the Lebanese-Syrian border, because it is more easy to enforce this embargo, to send forces to the south part of Lebanon to the Israeli border, because Israel supported Resolution 1701 and it is more difficult to do it on the Syrian borders because the Syrians are not players that will coordinate and cooperate with Resolution 1701. But it said as part of the resolution that international forces will come to assist the Lebanese government to enforce the arms embargo only at the request of the Lebanese government.

Now Siniora is too weak to ask. So the situation right now is that we have this arms embargo as part of Resolution 1701, Siniora is too weak to ask and the international community doesn't send forces in order to enforce the arms embargo on the Lebanese-Syrian border. Just imagine a situation in which these three words could be taken out of the resolution and today we could have seen a situation of full enforcement of the arms embargo on the border between Syria and Lebanon.

Another example – I will refer now to the situation in the Palestinian territories and this is something that we are facing today: We have these requirements of the international community when after the elections in the Palestinian Authority when the Hamas took power the Quartet, the international community as such, put these three requirements and any future Palestinian government should meet and comply to these requirements

– I mean to accept the right of Israel to exist, renounce violence and terrorism and accept and adopt former agreements between Israel and Palestinians; I mean basic requirements, not much to ask from any government and especially when we would like to see a process in the region. These requirements are basic, because without it it can take us back -- I mean to 1947 -- because the Israelis and the Palestinians in the last years achieved something in their bilateral relations in terms of promoting a peace process, even though we have difficulties in implementing and in continuing these processes.

Now while we are talking, Mahmoud Abbas/ Abu Mazen is talking with the Hamas in order to form maybe a new coalition, a new government in the Palestinian Authority. Now the only ... or we can empower him by saying that these are the strong demands of the international community and in fact for the first time Hamas leaders, Haniyeh, said that he is willing to give up his chair, his post as a prime minister in an understanding that he needs and the Hamas needs to get the legitimacy from the international community -- not because they need this legitimacy [but] because they need the money and the support of the international community in order to help the Palestinians.

So even though it is so tempting to embrace Abu Mazen and to say that it's not needed or to compromise on these three requirements, it gives Abu Mazen more strength to demand the Hamas to meet fully and completely these requirements as long as the international community is strong enough in demanding these from Abu Mazen and as well from the Hamas.

In the long run I believe that the international community should also take [a] stand when it comes to some of the hard core, when we are talking about the conflict or the process or any kind of peace process, but I will refer to it later. I also believe that, in the case of moderate Arab leaders, the meaning or the demand should be that these leaders should be called upon to say publicly what many of them are willing to concede privately. The understanding for example that Iran is not only a threat to Israel, an understanding that Israel and these states can share the same interest, that this is not a zero sum game, that supporting Israel meaning maybe or supporting the process, supporting the two-state solution as a vision is not something which is against the Palestinians, but something that can bring, I hope, the Palestinians to a future in which they can live in their own state; but unfortunately - I know that this is the understanding - but unfortunately we cannot see these kinds of public statements.

The fourth principle is that democracy – talking about democracy and the democratic processes – is that democracy is not only or not about voting, but about values; because – and we face this in our region -- I mean we are facing a situation in which a terrorist organization, Hamas, used the democratic system in order to gain power. We see the situation right now in Lebanon. I mean a militia, an armed militia, is part of the government and there is a need to dismantle Hizbullah as a militia. But on the other hand, this is a kind of a party, legitimate party, in Lebanon and I believe in the democratic process but I believe that there is a need to demand any party as part of a democratic system to meet or to adopt the values of democracy before participating in elections.

By the way, this is part of any democratic system in the world except in the Middle East. I mean this is part of the democratic system in Europe and in Israel as well. I mean in Israel a party that supported racism couldn't participate in elections, because our Supreme Court said that this is against the values of democracy. And in a way we are facing a situation in our region in which extremists use the democratic system in order to gain power and now we are using the demands of the international community to send the right message, but we lost in a way a year. I mean a year [has] passed after the elections in the Palestinian Authority.

So I would like to take these principles and to translate it into the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the way we see the future process between us and the Palestinians and I would like to say - and the situation is complicated and we are facing extremists in power in the Palestinian Authority and weak leaders or moderate leaders are the weak ones and Abu Mazen is a moderate leader but unfortunately he's maybe too weak - but I do believe that stagnation is not in our interest and it's not our policy.

Well the meaning is not that any process is the right process, because we should find out what is the right process, but we are not looking for stagnation and in the past when we faced, Israel faced stagnation and we were standing on the first phase of the Roadmap waiting for the Palestinians to dismantle terrorist organizations and we could have used it as an excuse, but instead we decided to promote what we call the disengagement plan, the withdrawal from Gaza Strip, in order to open a new window of opportunity to peace, to give the right message to the Palestinians that Israel means business; that we are willing to dismantle settlements and to take our forces out of the Gaza Strip in order to give them the possibility to live on their own or to promote something that can lead to a future Palestinian state. Unfortunately, what we got as a response was a terror nest in the Gaza Strip and the daily terror attacks on Israeli cities from the Gaza Strip into Israel.

But let's see what are the interests and translate it to the region: We are talking about [a] two-state solution. Important to understand what is the real meaning of two-state solution, because everybody is using the term two-state solution. Now Israel of course is the national homeland for the Jewish people. I think that this was used in 1917 by Lord Balfour the first time and Israel by its own establishment gave refuge to the Jewish people, especially after the Holocaust; but the meaning is that we have our own national homeland in Israel as a Jewish and democratic state -- but this is homeland for the Jewish people.

So the future Palestinian state is by its own nature homeland or should be a homeland for the Palestinian people. Those who live in the territories and those who left in 1948 and are being kept as pawns in refugee camps and dreaming a false dream in a way about something that will never happen because the vision of a two-state solution, the real meaning of a vision, is to give them an answer by an establishment of a Palestinian state. Unfortunately some of those who believe in two-state solution are using on one hand the term of two-state solution, but on the other hand demand what they call the right of return of refugees to Israel - the Jewish state out of the two states - and this is against the concept.

And I said before that there's a need and this is the role of the international community. I know that it is too difficult to any Palestinian leader to express it directly to his own people, but it could have been much easier. When the international community says clearly that this is the vision, so the Palestinian leaders, the moderate ones, can face their own people in saying to their own people: We want to establish our own homeland and the meaning is that our dream, or the translation of the dream, our dream will come true within or by the establishment of our own homeland and not in Israel. This is the real historic reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians.

And I would like to see - and President Bush made this statement -- that the answer to the refugees issue is through the establishment of a Palestinian state before the disengagement plan. I would like to see more European leaders sending the right message in order to strengthen the moderates in our region. It's not against the concept. This is part of it. It can only support the concept.

Of course we are talking about two states living side by side in peace, so we cannot afford another terror state in the Middle East. I mean this is not part of the concept. So there is a need of renunciation of violence and terrorism. This is the real reason for the demand or the three requirements of the international community and this is why the first phase of the Roadmap demands the Palestinians to dismantle terrorist organizations. So this is also not an Israeli interest but this is part of the concept and part of the region that we can all share, Israel and moderate Palestinians, and the international community as such.

Now it is true that we'll have to discuss the future borders between Israel and Palestinians and maybe this is the only thing that - I cannot say that this is a zero sum because when we are talking about a land, if this place is part of Israel it's not part of the Palestinian State - but I would like to say something to those who believes in, maybe a naïve way, but who believes that if we can roll back the wheels of history and come back to 4th June 1967 and we can redefine '67 borders or the '67 lines so we can live in peace happily ever after.

But it is important to understand that in 1967 or a viable Palestinian state cannot be established in 1967 borders because in 1967 there was no Palestinian state, there was no connection between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and the demand of the Palestinians right now is '67-plus - something, a connection between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

So this is something that we have to discuss between Israel and Palestinians and I have my own ideas about the future borders. I'm not going now to outline the future borders, but it is important to say that I believe that we can find the common denominator when it comes to the future borders in our understanding that there's a need for a viable contiguous Palestinian state and on the other hand the Palestinians has to understand that when they [are] asking for this connection between connection and the West Bank there is something that they have to give in return to Israel. And as an Israeli leader, I can share with you that my responsibility in a way is to try and find a way to keep most of the Israelis in the places in which they are living; that most of the

Israelis are living in less than 10% of the West Bank and this is also part of the historical fact that we have to understand.

Now I hope that we can find a way to end the conflict the next day. I think this is impossible. I think that final-status agreement is not feasible, especially in the current situation, but as I said before stagnation is not an option and I believe that you should find a way to promote a process maybe in stages, to work with Abu Mazen as the moderate leader and to find a way to strengthen him and to promote a process, which is not easy. I mean it is easy also to say, not easy to find a way but now we are all waiting to see what is going to be the outcome of the negotiations between Abu Mazen and the Hamas.

Only a few more words – I know that I'm running out of time – only a few more words about Israel, because this is part of my frustration -- not only as an Israeli leader, but as an Israeli citizen in a way -- because there [is] a huge gap between Israel's image and between what we really are. And in a way from the outside it looks like the conflict is a reversed story of David and Goliath, in which Israel is the new Goliath in the region, the aggressive one, and Israel is willing to be judged by the international community.

It's not like we are asking the international community to look aside when we have to fight for our existence, but we would like to be judged by the same values of the international community and I cannot live with this kind of comparison between terrorists who are looking for children to kill, who are looking for civilians to kill, who are targeting schools and kindergartens, and between Israeli soldiers who are looking for these terrorists in order to stop them and unfortunately – and this is I mean the grief of an Israeli mother who ... / a loss of a child is awful for an Israeli mother and a Palestinian mother; it's the same grief, it's the same sorrow – but in terms of values and in terms of being judged by the international community there is no comparison between a terrorist and an Israeli soldier even though during a war these kind of mistakes can happen, as there is no comparison in any kind of legal system which is based on the values of society between a murderer and between somebody who [is] killed by mistakes.

And I know that this is part of our problem because unfortunately international decision- making is being based not only on history / historical facts, not only on reality but unfortunately on public opinion and images. So this is something that I would like to change in the public opinion.

But to be more optimistic – this is the end – I just want to express my hope to find a way to live in peace in a very troubled region, but I believe as I said before that this is not only our interest but this is our dream, not only for us but for the Palestinians as well. Thank you.

QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION

Q:

Madam Secretary, thank you very much. You've spoken with great cogency and clarity. The challenges of the Middle East arising from a clash of values, weak states and weak leaders and you've elaborated with great clarity I think on the Palestinian question.

I wonder if I could just start by asking you a very brief question about another issue that has arisen in Washington with James Baker and his Iraq Study Group. One of the recommendations that has been put on the table apparently is the idea of more active regional dialogue, specifically with Syria as well as with Iran. You've touched on this issue indirectly but I wonder what your advice would be for Secretary Rice, Secretary Beckett, and other officials about how to engage effectively Syria or Iran for regional peace.

Livni:

No, it's not for me to advise the United States of America. But I will refer to the Iranian issue. I think clearly that a very strong decision by the United Nations Security Council is needed. I mean there is a decision from July 21st, I think Resolution 1696, saying that if the Iranians don't meet the requirements of cessation of enrichment so sanctions or decision / the next decision - in thirty days is a decision on sanctions. More than thirty days passed since this Resolution - a few months passed and nothing happened - and this is the wrong message to this rogue state and to this regime. And I believe that this is needed and I know that there are those who are questioning the future success of this kind of sanctions but I believe that it is needed and Israel works with the international community on this.

On the Syrian issue, anything I think in life is about also timing and not only ... and I would like to refer to the Syrian issue in terms of the current time and until now Syria takes a very negative role in the region and a kind of what can be understood / and sometimes the international community want to send one message and it is being misunderstood by the Syrians and the message right now should be that if they want to be part of the international community they have to behave. I mean they have to stop this support in terrorist organizations because the Syrians ... - it's not even about the Syrian interest - but they want to dictate the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

I was talking about the two abducted soldiers in Lebanon, but we have the first abducted soldier who is being held in captivity in Hamas hands and whenever there was a kind of a chance to release him the order came from Syria saying not to release him and when it looks like Abu Mazen and Hamas are working together in order to change the government the message came from Syria saying: Don't do it. And when we are talking about a chance for Lebanon and Siniora [it] is not to give Syria an option to enter I mean from the window back to Lebanon and to change or to help the extremists and Hizbullah in Lebanon and this is a very sensitive situation right now.

So I think that this is the time in which the message should be very clear in demanding the Syria[n]s to meet some basic requirements.

Q:

How do they factor in to the policy of Israel's democracy?

Livni:

Okay – Israel is based on two core values. One is being [the] homeland for the Jewish people and the other is being a democracy and this was the first choice of Israel [from] the moment of its establishment in 1948.

Now our goal as leaders is to live with two values and not to put them in contradiction, even though it is easy to do it, but part of our / because we believe that we should live with these two values are living together and not being in contradiction this is part of our responsibility. So Israel on [the] one hand is homeland for the Jewish people, on the other hand is a democracy. All the Israeli citizens are equal rights citizens, including the Arab minorities, and more than that, I do believe that part of our understanding that there's a need to give an answer to the Palestinian people, a national answer, a national answer in their own state is in order to keep Israel or to keep these two values living together. And part of our understanding that we have to give up what we believe are the rights on the entire Land of Israel is our need to keep these two values together and to keep [a] Jewish majority, but to give all I mean equal rights to all of the Israeli citizens, including the Arabs.

Q:

Re: The 'fence sitters' in the Middle East who are looking at the Lebanon War in a way that suggests that Israel's deterrence has eroded?

Livni:

Mostly they are the moderates who are hesitating in saying that we are moderates.

Well it's a 'no win' situation. I mean when Israel is strong is the aggressive and it need[s] to change and when it appears that he is more weak so there is no need to make peace with Israel, but I do believe that in terms of a process, not as a result of a military operation the situation – we changed the rules in Lebanon and to compare the Israeli position or the situation between Israel and Lebanon before July 12th – and this is the day of the attack – and today, we are better now. I mean before July 12th the Lebanese government couldn't even make a decision to send / to deploy forces to the south part of Lebanon. It was completely legitimate to transfer weapon[s] from Iran through Syria to Lebanon and there was a Security Council Resolution 1559 that was not being implemented and right now we see a change on the ground and the situation is sensitive, the political situation now is sensitive in Lebanon but we have now 15,000 Lebanese forces in the south part of Lebanon, international forces assisting the Lebanese government not only to deploy but to exercise the Lebanese government's sovereignty and to do or to take Hizbullah out of the south part of Lebanon.

We have an arm[s] embargo. Unfortunately it's not being implemented as it should be, but we can see a change. I am more optimistic. I think that the problem of the Leb[anese] / what is called in Israel 'the second Lebanese war' is the gap between expectations and reality and unfortunately part of the leaders statements were – I mean I'm not blaming anybody in expecting something from a military operation -- but in a

way this was part of an Israeli decision because Israel was attacked from Lebanon. In a normal situation of two normal states, excuse me, the answer should have been attacking Lebanon as a state but the international community asked the Israeli government not to undermine Siniora. So instead of attacking Lebanon as a state – and believe me this could be not a six-day war but a two-day war; excuse me for saying so but we know / we understand that the Lebanese government is not strong enough to face this kind of a war – we decided to attack the militias, the terrorists in the places in which they are hiding as these are different rules of war and my understanding since the beginning was that we have to accompany this kind of a military operation with an international decision and with an international forces that will help the Lebanese government to deploy and to take / to transfer Lebanon into a normal state, not a weak state as it is.

So in terms of a process I believe that, as I said before, that things are changing on the ground but those who are sitting, what you described on the fence, mainly they are not extremists, because the extremists by their own nature are not sitting on the fence. They are doing something in order to promote their ideologic extremist idea and this is the reason why I tried and I am trying not only in these kind of forums but to explain to some of the other leaders in our region. I mean to make peace in Israel is not because Israel is strong but because this is their own need, because this is our understanding. We want to make peace with the Palestinians not because we are weak or strong – because this is part of our need, this is part of our values - and I hope that we will find partners on the Palestinian side sharing the same understanding.

Q:

One thing you haven't touched about is the occupation and what the international community is seeing and watching is the occupation of a strong state to the weak people.

As far as in the current scenario you see in Afghanistan, in Iraq, President Bush's Dad's Army has come in to help him or to bail him out and they have given him certain recommendations to – i.e. the Iraq Study Group – and also they have concluded / I mean the international view is that the occupation is causing new phenomenas in terms of war against terror, which is suicide bombing. For example, Iraq never had suicide bombing before – they have more than 700. In Afghanistan they never had any suicide bombings before. They're having suicide bombings there.

It's the occupation which is causing the main problem and I think it's time for the Israeli government to think that is it the future we want to leave our children or we are going to let go. I mean it's more often [an] abusive relationship, I must say that, when you don't let go of the situation.

Livni:

Thank you. I would like to answer this shortly. You know if the occupation is the reason the Israeli government decided to leave the Gaza Strip in order to stop being the Palestinian excuse for bombing, for suicide bombers.

Q:

That was a brave step, yes.

Livni:

Yes, and what we get in result? I mean if your terror is right, so the next day we should have seen prosperity in Gaza, people living peacefully, not looking for Israelis to attack, without any kind of Kassam rockets on our cities.

So unfortunately the situation in the Middle East that Israel wants to get out of territories and in a strange way we are stuck because the day after, instead of establishing something new for / in favor of the Palestinians, we are facing more attacks. So we have now in every next step we have to find out whether this kind of step can lead to more terrorism or can lead to peace and stability. And the example of the Gaza Strip, excuse me, by the Palestinians this is a huge mistakes that is being made by the Palestinian society. By embracing these terrorists, by taking these terrorists as their heroes they are sending the wrong message to Israel, because the understanding right now is not that the problem is occupation but the problem lies somewhere else.